

Yale University Library  
Yale Divinity Library

# Guide to the Abbie G. Sanderson Papers

RG 149



Compiled by Martha Lund Smalley

2012

409 Prospect Street  
New Haven, CT 06511  
(203) 432-5301

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<http://web.library.yale.edu/divinity/special-collections>

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Yale Divinity Library  
409 Prospect Street  
New Haven, CT 06511  
(203) 432-5301  
divinity.library@yale.edu  
<http://web.library.yale.edu/divinity/special-collections>

**CALL NUMBER:** RG 149

**CREATOR:** Sanderson, Abbie G.

**TITLE:** Abbie G. Sanderson Papers

**DATES:** 1907-1961

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 4 linear feet (10 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** Detailed family correspondence, writings, and collected material document the life and work of a single woman missionary in South China. Abbie G. Sanderson was an American Baptist missionary in South China from 1918 to 1937 and 1946 to 1953. She later taught at a girls' school in Sendai, Japan, and retired in 1959.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/divinity.149>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use on site, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/divinity.149>.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box  
f. folder

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Abbie Sanderson.

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### Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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## Preferred Citation

Abbie G. Sanderson Papers (RG 149), Special Collections, Yale Divinity School Library.

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## Processing Information

Place names were modernized in the description, with the name originally used in the collection material or in an older version of the finding aid in parenthesis: e.g. "Beijing (Peking)" or "Benin (Dahomey)".

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## Existence and Location of Copies

Portions of the collection have been digitized. See: <http://divinity-adhoc.library.yale.edu/AbbieSandersonPapers/>

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## Biographical / Historical

Abbie G. Sanderson was born in Greenville, New Hampshire on May 27, 1893. She graduated from Coburn Classical Institute and Colby College, Waterville, Maine. After teaching in Maine for two years, she sailed to Shantou (Swatow) in 1918. She served the South China Baptist Mission (American Baptist) in the Shantou (Swatow) area from 1918 to 1937 and 1946 to 1953, teaching at the Abigail Hart Scott Memorial School, also known as Kak Chieh Girls' School.

Primarily based in Shantou (Swatow), Sanderson spent some summer months in cooler areas such as Kuliang, Fujian (Fukien). She was on furlough in the U.S. during 1924, returning to China in December of that year. From May to October 1927 she was stationed in the Philippines due to disruptions in the Shantou (Swatow) area. Sanderson was on furlough in the U.S. in 1931, returning to Shantou (Swatow) in February of 1932. She extended her furlough in 1937 due to her father's health, and then was prevented by the war from returning to China until 1946. Sanderson was held in solitary confinement for twenty-one months prior to her release from Communist China in 1953. She taught at a girls' school in Sendai, Japan from 1954 until her retirement in 1959.

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## Scope and Contents

The bulk of this collection is Sanderson's detailed, regular letters to her family in the U.S. This record group complements the papers of other Baptist missionaries to South China held by YDSL, including those of the Campbell family, Hartwell family, Ellison and Lottie Hildreth.

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## Arrangement

- I. Correspondence
- II. Writings, Diaries, Notes
- III. Personal Items and Memorabilia
- IV. Collected Material
- V. Photographs

## Collection Contents

### Series I: Correspondence, 1907-1953

Much of the correspondence has been digitized. See: <http://divinity-adhoc.library.yale.edu/AbbieSandersonPapers/>

#### Family correspondence

b. 1, f. 1	Abbie G. Sanderson (AGS) to mother and father <a href="#">Abbie G. Sanderson to mother and father, 1907-1918 March 10</a>	1907-1918 Mar 10
b. 1, f. 2	Abbie Sanderson to family, enroute to China and arrival in Shantou (Swatow) <a href="#">AGS to family, enroute to China and arrival in Swatow, 1918 March 14 - April 29</a>	1918 March 14 - April 29
b. 1, f. 3	Abbie Sanderson to family from Shantou (Swatow) and Thai long ("up in the hills") <a href="#">AGS to family from Swatow and Thai long ("up in the hills"), 1918 May 7 - August 28</a>	1918 May 7 - August 28
b. 1, f. 4	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Thai long and Shantou (Swatow) <a href="#">AGS to family, from Thai long and Swatow, 1918 September-December</a>	1918 September-December
b. 1, f. 5	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow) <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow, 1919 January-April</a>	1919 January - April
b. 1, f. 6	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow) and Thai long <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow and Thai long, 1919 May - August</a>	1919 May - August
b. 1, f. 7	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Thai long and Shantou (Swatow), and from extended trip into countryside (81 page journal/letter begins from "The Gospel" houseboat on the River Hang) <a href="#">AGS to family, from Thai long and Swatow, and from extended trip into countryside, 1919 September-December</a>	1919 September - December
b. 1, f. 8	Abbie Sanderson to family, from boat on trip to countryside, from Shantou (Swatow), from Chaoyang <a href="#">AGS to family, from boat on trip to countryside, from Swatow, from Chaoyang, 1919 January-April</a>	1919 January - April
b. 2, f. 9	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow) and Kuliang, out Fuzhou (Foochow), Fujian (Fukien) <a href="#">AGS to family, from Shantou (Swatow) and Guling (Kuliang), out Fuzhou (Foochow), Fujian (Fukien), 1920 May 2- Nov 8</a>	1920 May 2 - November 8
b. 2, f. 10	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow) <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow, 1921 Jan - Jun</a>	1921 January - June
b. 2, f. 11	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow) <a href="#">AGS to family, from Shantou (Swatow), 1921 Jul - Dec</a>	1921 July - December
b. 2, f. 12	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow), Chaozhou (Chaochowfu), Guangzhou (Canton) <a href="#">AGS to family, from Shantou (Swatow), Chaozhou (Chaochowfu), Canton, 1922 Jan - Apr</a>	1922 January - April

## Family correspondence (continued)

b. 2, f. 13	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow), Chaoyang <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow, Chaoyang, 1922 May - Aug</a>	1922 May - August
b. 2, f. 14	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow), Chaoyang <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow, Chaoyang, 1922 Sep - Dec</a>	1922 September - December
b. 2, f. 15	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow) <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow, 1923 Jan - Jun</a>	1923 January - June
b. 3, f. 16	Abbie Sanderson to family, on furlough in U.S., en route back to China, arrival back in Shantou (Swatow) <a href="#">AGS to family, on furlough in U.S., en route back to China, arrival back in Swatow, 1924 Feb - Dec</a>	1924 February - December
b. 3, f. 17	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow) <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow, 1925 Jan - Apr</a>	1925 January - April
b. 3, f. 18	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow), Shanghai <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow, Shanghai, 1925 May - Aug</a>	1925 May - August
b. 3, f. 19	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shanghai, Xiamen (Amoy), Shantou (Swatow) <a href="#">AGS to family, from Shanghai, Amoy, Swatow, 1925 Sep - Dec</a>	1925 September - December
b. 3, f. 20	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow), Chaozhou (Chaochowfu) <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow, Chaozhou (Chaochowfu), 1926 Jan - Apr</a>	1926 January - April
b. 3, f. 21	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow), Hong Kong, Beidaihe (Peitaiho) <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow, Hong Kong, Beidaihe (Peitaiho), 1926 May - Aug</a>	1926 May - August
b. 3, f. 22	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow) <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow, 1926 Sep - Dec</a>	1926 September - December
b. 3, f. 23	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Chaozhou (Chaochowfu), Shantou (Swatow), Chaoyang, Shanghai <a href="#">AGS to family, from Chaozhou (Chaochowfu), Swatow, Chaoyang, Shanghai, 1927 Jan - Apr</a>	1927 January - April
b. 3, f. 24	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow) and Philippine Islands, where she was stationed due to disruptions in China <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow and Philippine Islands, where she was stationed due to disruptions in China, 1927 May - Aug</a>	1927 May - August
b. 4, f. 25	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Philippine Islands, returning to Shantou (Swatow) in October <a href="#">AGS to family, from Philippine Islands, returning to Swatow in October, 1927 Sep - Dec</a>	1927 September - December
b. 4, f. 26	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow), with some enclosed letters to/from others <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow, with some enclosed letters to/from others, 1928 Jan - Apr</a>	1928 January - April
b. 4, f. 27	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow), with some enclosed letters to/from others <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow, with some enclosed letters to/from others, 1928 May - Aug</a>	1928 May - August

## Family correspondence (continued)

b. 4, f. 28	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow) <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow, 1928 Sep-Dec</a>	1928 September- December
b. 4, f. 29	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow) <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow, 1929 Jan - Apr</a>	1929 January - April
b. 4, f. 30	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow) and while on vacation from Philippine Islands <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow and while on vacation from Philippine Islands, 1929 May - Aug</a>	1929 May - August
b. 4, f. 31	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow) <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow, 1929 Sep - Dec</a>	1929 September - December
b. 4, f. 32a	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow) <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow, 1930 Jan - Mar</a>	1930 January - March
b. 4, f. 32b	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow), Chaozhou (Chaochowfu) <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow, Chaozhou (Chaochowfu), 1930 Apr-Jun</a>	1930 April - June
b. 5, f. 33	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow) following return from furlough in U.S. <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow following return from furlough in U.S., 1932 Jan - Jun</a>	1932 January - June
b. 5, f. 34	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow), from Hong Kong and Philippine Islands during vacation <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow, from Hong Kong and Philippine Islands during vacation, 1932 Jul - Dec</a>	1932 July - December
b. 5, f. 35	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow) <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow, 1933 Jan - Apr</a>	1933 January - April
b. 5, f. 36	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow) and Kuliang <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow and Kuliang, 1933 May - Aug</a>	1933 May - August
b. 5, f. 37	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow), including enclosed letter to mission board in NY <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow, incl. enclosed letter to mission board in NY, 1933 Sep - Dec</a>	1933 September - December
b. 5, f. 38	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow) <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow, 1934 Jan - Apr</a>	1934 January - April
b. 5, f. 39	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow), Shanghai, Double Island (Swatow), including enclosed poems by Chinese students <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow, Shanghai, Double Island (Swatow), including enclosed poems by Chinese students, 1934 May - Aug</a>	1934 May - August
b. 5, f. 40	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow) <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow, 1934 Sep - Dec</a>	1934 September - December
b. 6, f. 41	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow), Shanghai <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow, Shanghai, 1935 Jan - Apr</a>	1935 January - April

## Family correspondence (continued)

b. 6, f. 42	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow) and Kuliang [Fuzhou], with enclosed poems by Chinese students and enclosed missionary circulars from others <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow and Kuliang [Fuzhou], with enclosed poems by Chinese students and enclosed missionary circulars from others, 1935 May - Aug</a>	1935 May - August
b. 6, f. 43	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow), with enclosed excerpts of article by Toyohiko Kagawa and circular letters from other missionaries <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow, with enclosed excerpts of article by Toyohiko Kagawa and circular letters from other missionaries, 1935 Sep - Dec</a>	1935 September - December
b. 6, f. 44	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow), with enclosed letter from Abbie Sanderson to Mrs. Humphreys, Baptist Foreign Mission Society <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow, with enclosed letter from AGS to Mrs. Humphreys, Baptist Foreign Mission Society, 1936 Jan - Apr</a>	1936 January - April
b. 6, f. 45	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow), with enclosed letter from Abbie Sanderson to Mrs. Humphreys, Baptist Foreign Mission Society <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow, with enclosed letter from AGS to Mrs. Humphreys, Baptist Foreign Mission Society, 1936 May - Aug</a>	1936 May - August
b. 6, f. 46	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow), Hong Kong <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow, Hong Kong, 1936 Sep - Dec</a>	1936 September - December
b. 6, f. 47	Abbie Sanderson to family, from Shantou (Swatow) <a href="#">AGS to family, from Swatow, 1937 Jan - May</a>	1937 January - May
b. 6, f. 48	Abbie Sanderson to brother Arthur, from Shantou (Swatow), Hong Kong, and ship, re: period "supervision by the People's Government" in Shantou (Swatow), awaiting exit permit, exit to Hong Kong in early 1953 <a href="#">AGS to brother Arthur, from Swatow, Hong Kong, and ship, re. period "supervision by the People's Government" in Swatow, awaiting exit permit, exit to Hong Kong in early 1953, 1950 - 1953</a>	1950 - 1953
b. 6, f. 49	AGS to family, undated letters, fragments, and misfiled letters <a href="#">AGS to family, undated letters, fragments, and misfiled letters, 1920, 1922, no date</a>	1920, 1922, no date
General correspondence		
b. 7, f. 50	Circular and general letters of AGS <a href="#">Circular and general letters of AGS, 1918-1949</a> Includes general letters to friends and to the churches that supported her.	1918-1949
b. 7, f. 51	AGS to/from representatives of Woman's American Baptist Foreign Mission Society in New York <a href="#">AGS to/from representatives of Woman's American Baptist Foreign Mission Society in New York, 1926-1937</a>	1926-1937
b. 7, f. 52	AGS to Mary Clough <a href="#">AGS to Mary Clough, 1946</a>	1946
b. 7, f. 53	AGS to Mary Clough <a href="#">AGS to Mary Clough, 1947</a>	1947
b. 7, f. 54	AGS to Mary Clough <a href="#">AGS to Mary Clough, 1948</a>	1948



## General correspondence (continued)

b. 7, f. 55	AGS to Mary Clough <a href="#">AGS to Mary Clough, 1949-1953</a>	1949-1953
b. 7, f. 56	AGS to Idella K. Fairman <a href="#">AGS to Idella K. Fairman, 1918-1935, n.d.</a>	1918-1935, n.d.
b. 7, f. 57	AGS to/from Shanghai College, Herman C. E. Liu, President <a href="#">AGS to/from Shanghai College, Herman C. E. Liu, President, 1928</a>	1928
b. 7, f. 58	AGS to/from other friends, colleagues, and students, A- L <a href="#">AGS to/from other friends, colleagues, and students, A- L, 1919-1965</a>	1919-1965
b. 7, f. 59	AGS to/from other friends, colleagues, and students, M - W <a href="#">AGS to/from other friends, colleagues, and students, M - W, 1921-1949</a>	1921-1949
b. 7, f. 60	Letters of others, including circular letters from Baptist missionaries such as Velva Brown, Elsie Kittlitz, Marion Stephens <a href="#">Letters of others, including circular letters from Baptist missionaries such as Velva Brown, Elsie Kittlitz, Marion Stephens, 1918-1951, n.d.</a>	1918-1951, n.d.

**Series II: Writings, Diaries, Notes, 1919-1961, n.d**

Much of this series has been digitized. See: <http://divinity-adhoc.library.yale.edu/AbbieSandersonPapers/>

b. 7, f. 61	<a href="#">"Diary and Daily Reminder" (bound volume with notes and diary entries, 1935); "Five Year Diary" (with brief entries for 1936)</a>	1935, 1936
b. 7, f. 62	Typescript writings of Abbie Sanderson, including: ""Description of a Trip on a Houseboat" (1919); "Laying the Corner Stone of the Jubilee Building, Swatow, China"; "The Appeal of the Present Situation in Young People's Work" <a href="#">Typescript writings of AGS, incl.: ""Description of a Trip on a Houseboat" (1919); "Laying the Corner Stone of the Jubilee Building, Swatow, China"; "The Appeal of the Present Situation in Young People's Work", 1919-1925, n.d.</a>	1919-1925, undated
b. 7, f. 63	Issue of "The New East" periodical including article by AGS: "The Kak Chieh Girls' School" (1921); fragments of writings <a href="#">Issue of "The New East" periodical including article by AGS: "The Kak Chieh Girls' School" (1921); fragments of writings, 1921, n.d.</a>	1921, n.d.

**Series III: Personal Items and Memorabilia, 1924-1961, n.d.**

b. 8, f. 64	Biographical documentation of AGS, including passport, brochure, Colby College information form, newspaper clippings <a href="#">Biographical documentation of AGS, including passport, brochure, Colby College information form, newspaper clippings, 1924-1961, n.d.</a>	1924-1961, n.d.
b. 8, f. 65	Dress designs, lists of names and household items, financial documents <a href="#">Dress designs, lists of names and household items, financial documents, 1937-1938, n.d.</a>	1937-1938, n.d.

**Series IV: Collected Material, 1925-1951, n.d.**

b. 8, f. 66	Documentation re: the Abigail Hart Scott Memorial School, Shantou (Swatow), and other Baptist mission work in South China <a href="#">Documentation re. the Abigail Hart Scott Memorial School, Swatow, and other Baptist mission work in South China, 1925-1935, n.d.</a>	1925-1935, undated
b. 8, f. 67	Tracts, pamphlets re. China, Japan, and Philippines, incl. "Woman in China" by Adele M. Fielde, "New Life from Within" by Madame Chiang Kai-shek; other miscellaneous typescript writings <a href="#">Tracts, pamphlets re. China, Japan, and Philippines, incl. "Woman in China" by Adele M. Fielde, "New Life from Within" by Madame Chiang Kai-shek; other miscellaneous typescript writings, 1932-1940, n.d.</a>	1932-1940, n.d.
b. 8, f. 68	Newspaper clippings regarding missionaries in China under Communists <a href="#">Newspaper clippings regarding missionaries in China under Communists, 1948-1951</a>	1948-1951
b. 8, f. 69	Chinese language material including two hymnals, tract titled "Be a Fiery Christian," words to hymns, music sheets for quartet In Shantou (Swatow) Chinese. <a href="#">Chinese language material incl. two hymnals, tract titled "Be a Fiery Christian", words to hymns in Swatow Chinese, music sheets for quartet, n.d.</a>	undated

**Series V: Photographs, ca.1918-1950**

Many of the photographs have been digitized. Search for Sanderson at <http://web.library.yale.edu/digital-collections/divinity-library-photographs>

b. 9, f. 70	Portraits of Abbie G. Sanderson	ca.1918-1950
b. 9, f. 71	Sanderson with friends and colleagues	ca.1918-1950
b. 9, f. 72	Sanderson with friends and colleagues	ca.1918-1950
b. 9, f. 73	Sanderson with friends and colleagues	circa 1918-1950, undated
b. 9, f. 74	Groups of colleagues and friends, including Shantou (Swatow) mission conferences	circa 1918-1950
b. 9, f. 75	Groups of colleagues and friends, including Shantou (Swatow) mission conferences	circa 1918-1950, undated
b. 9, f. 76	Students	ca.1918-1950
b. 9, f. 77	Chinese families and everyday life	ca.1918-1950
b. 9, f. 78	Buildings, including mission compound damage after typhoon and earthquake damage in Kak Chieh	ca.1918-1950
b. 9, f. 79	Scenery	ca.1918-1950
b. 9, f. 80	Scenery	ca.1918-1950
b. 9, f. 81	Large group photos - faculty, missionaries	ca.1918-1950
b. 9, f. 82	Large group photos - students, athletic teams	ca.1918-1950
b. 9, f. 83	Large photos - buildings, scenery	ca.1918-1950
b. 10	Duplicate and unidentified photographs	ca.1918-1950
b. OV-d2	Oversize photographs Five photographs, including Girls' School, Shantou (Swatow) (1925), faculty of Kak Kuang Academy (1937)	1920-1937

## **Selected Search Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### **Subjects**

Missions -- China  
Women missionaries

### **Names**

Sanderson, Abbie G.