

Biographical Sketches of the People in Dorothea Allison's Letters

Allison, Bob (Robert) 1871-1960:

Robert Allison was born in Claudy, County Derry, Northern Ireland, in April 1871. He was the eldest of eight children born to Dr. and Mrs. William Allison.

Robert Allison came to British Columbia in the early 1890s and spent time prospecting for gold in the Cariboo. In 1899, he joined the gold rush to the Klondike. Although he did not make a fortune in the gold rushes, he did make enough to later buy land and plant an orchard.

He settled in Oyama in 1907, making him one of the earliest settlers in that area. He married Dorothea Scott-Coward on 27 December 1913 in Vernon, British Columbia. As he was Protestant and Dorothea was Catholic, they were apparently married on the Catholic Church steps rather than inside the church.

Allison, Dorothea (Dorothea Agnes Scott-Coward) 1878-1981:

Dorothea Scott-Coward was born in 1878, in England. She was the fourth of nine children. Her mother, Agatha Stokes, was born in 1850. Her father was an Inspector of Roman Catholic schools in England.

In 1908, she took a lengthy trip to Burma and India to visit two of her sisters. Her eldest sister, Emily (Em) McDonnell had married T. F. R. McDonnell in 1903, and at the time of Dorothea's visit was expecting a baby. Dorothea stayed with the McDonnells until after her niece, Ursula McDonnell, was born December 19, 1908.

After visiting friends of the McDonnells in Mandalay, she travelled to India to visit another sister, Milborough (Mib) Mackay. Milborough was married to Charlie Mackay, a judge in the Indian Civil Service. Before returning to England at the end of 1910, Dorothea once again visited Burma. (There are a number of photographs of this trip to India and Burma available through the Lake Country Museum & Archives.) Although the first letter in this collection was written to Emily, the majority of the letters were written to Milborough.

In 1912, Dorothea Scott-Coward came to Canada to visit John Stokes, her first cousin. He had bought property in Oyama, British Columbia. He was suffering from tuberculosis and the family was concerned about his health. Dorothea was sent to report on his health. As the letter from Dorothea Allison to Emily McDonnell reveals, however, Dorothea was not always forthcoming with this information.

John Stokes returned to England in 1913, and later died. Around this time, there was an opening for a teacher at the one-room school in Okanagan Centre, a position for which Dorothea applied and was accepted. She had previously acquired a teaching diploma from Bedford College, London. While visiting John Stokes, Dorothea Scott-Coward met Robert Allison, whose orchard was located diagonally across the road. They fell in love and were married on 27 December 1913.

After marriage, though she no longer taught at the school, Dorothea Allison remained very active in the community. She served as a Trustee on the School Board for a number of years, taking quite an interest in the education of rural children. She was also a founding member of the Kalamalka Women's Institute, and in the 1940s served as the President.

Dorothea Allison also ventured into the literary world. During the Second World War she compiled a book of poetry written by local settlers. The *Songs of Kalamalka* was published in 1944 and was sold in order to raise money for the Red Cross. Dorothea Allison also wrote a children's book, *A Fairy's Garland of B.C. Flowers*, which was illustrated by a local artist, Janet Middleton. (Copies of both books are available at the Lake Country Museum and Archives and in the Special Collection of the OUC Library.) Dorothea Allison died in 1981, at the age of 103.

Bowsher, Hessie (Hessy Alexandra Smyth Allison) 18? -1980:

Mrs. Hessie Bowsher was Robert Allison's sister. With her husband, Fred Bowsher, she came to Canada around 1907. The Bowshers had three children, Pat (b. 1909), Dorothy (b. 1911), and Norman (b. 1913). They are the children referred to in the letter dated 9 March 1914. Norman was the baby who arrived a few days after visiting the Allisons.

Brown, Colin Campbell:

The missionary, to whom Dorothea Allison alluded, in her letter of 4 February 1917, was Dr. Colin Campbell Brown. He and his wife lived at Amory Ranch on Kalamalka Lake. Dr. Brown wrote several books on China, where he had been a missionary, including *China in Legend and Story*.

Goldsmith, Phil (Philippa Scott-Coward):

Philippa Scott-Coward was the eighth sibling, and the youngest sister of Dorothea Allison. When their sister Frances died in 1918, Philippa was the beneficiary of her estate. She married S. Gold-smith of Australia and had two children, Christopher and Timothy.

Hull, Judith (Judith Stokes):

Judith Stokes was a first cousin of Dorothea Allison. Judith was the eldest sister of John Stokes, of Oyama. She was the second child of May (Rapier) and Philip Stokes. Philip Stokes was Dorothea Allison's maternal uncle. Judith married Hubert Hull.

Mackay, Charlie (Charles):

Charlie Mackay was Milborough Mackay's husband. He was a judge in the Indian Civil Service.

Mackay, Mib (Milborough Scott-Coward):

Milborough Scott-Coward was the second child born to the Scott-Cowards. Milborough was a sister of Dorothea (Scott-Coward) Allison, and the majority of the letters in this collection were written to her.

Milborough obtained a Teacher's Diploma from a college in Liverpool, England. In 1904 or 1905, she went to South India to be the principal of a school that trained Indian women to be teachers. Between 1905 and 1907, Milborough met and married Charlie Mackay, a judge in the Indian Civil Service. At this time she gave up her job at the school. She later wrote a number of novels, under the pseudonym of C. R. Milton. She also wrote magazine articles for both *Punch* and *Cornhill*.

McDonnell, Em (Emily Agatha Scott-Coward) 1872-19?

Emily McDonnell, the eldest of nine children, was Dorothea Allison's eldest sister. In 1903, she married T. F. Robert McDonnell, who was a barrister in Rangoon, Burma. Their children, Ursula (b. 1908) and Peter (b. 1911), attended boarding schools in England, and often spent vacations with their maternal grandmother, Agatha Scott-Coward.

McDonnell, Peter 1911- :

Peter McDonnell is the second child of Emily (Scott-Coward) and T. F. Robert McDonnell. Peter was Dorothea (Scott-Coward) Allison's nephew.

Peter McDonnell and his wife, Nancy, contributed a great deal of the information provided as explanation for the letters.

McDonnell, Ursula (later Ursula Pearce) 1908-:

Ursula was the daughter of Emily and T. F. Robert McDonnell, who resided in Rangoon, Burma. She was born December 9, 1908. Emily McDonnell was Dorothea Allison's eldest sister, so Ursula was Dorothea Allison's niece.

Prince of Wales 1894-1972:

Dorothea Allison mentioned "the Prince" visiting Oyama in 1920, which is a reference to the Prince of Wales, born in 1894. He was the eldest son of George V. He succeeded his father in January 1936, becoming Edward VIII. He abdicated in December of the same year, in order to marry a divorced American woman, Mrs. Wallis Simpson.

Rimmer, Agnes:

Agnes Rimmer was the sister of Frank Rimmer. The Rimmers and the Scott-Cowards knew each other in England.

Rimmer, Frank:

Frank Rimmer lived in Oyama and was friends with Bob and Dorothea Allison. The Rimmers and the Scott-Cowards knew each other in England.

Scott-Coward, Chris (Christopher) 1895-1922:

Christopher Scott-Coward was Dorothea Allison's youngest sibling. He was in the Indian Police. After persistent pestering, he was eventually released by the Indian Police and seconded to the Indian Army. He was subsequently awarded the Military Cross. He died in action in 1922.

Scott-Coward, Frances:

Affectionately known as "Whanky" by her family, Frances was the fifth child. She took an Honours course in Classics at Newham College, Cambridge, and later qualified as a teacher. She died of tuberculosis in 1918, leaving everything she had to her youngest sister, Philippa.

Scott-Coward, Ro (Rodolph):

Rodolph was another brother of Dorothea Allison, the sixth child born to the Scott-Cowards. He trained as a Merchant Marine officer on the Conway in the Mersey River. He then joined the Irrawaddy Flotilla Co. in Burma.

Stokes, Enie (Irene Ionides):

She was Lady Stokes, married to Dorothea Allison's maternal uncle, Wilfred. Wilfred Stokes was an engineer and inventor.

Stokes, John 18? -1913:

It was to visit her cousin, John Stokes that brought Dorothea Scott-Coward to Canada in 1912. At the time, John Stokes was suffering from tuberculosis. He returned to England in 1913 and subsequently died. John was the eldest son of May (Rapier) and Philip Stokes. Philip Stokes was Dorothea Allison's maternal uncle.

Stokes, Phil (Philip):

Philip Stokes was Dorothea Allison's maternal uncle. He was a barrister. Two of his children, John Stokes and Judith (Stokes) Hull, are mentioned in Dorothea Allison's letters.

Strange, Madge (Margaret Scott-Coward):

Madge, who lived in England, was the third child of the Scott-Cowards. She married Fairbrothe Strange, who was a keeper of Oriental prints at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, England.

Venables:

The Venables were friends of the Allisons.

Venables, Mrs. Russell:

Mrs. Russell Venables was a sister of Miss Wentworth.

The Letters of Dorothea (Scott-Coward) Allison



Dorothea Scott-Coward in 1898

This collection of letters was written by Dorothea (Scott-Coward) Allison, a pioneer woman who lived in Oyama, British Columbia, Canada. She was British and came to Canada in 1912, to visit a cousin, John Stokes. While visiting, she met Robert Allison, and the couple married in December, 1913. A number of her letters written between 1913 and 1922 have survived. One of the letters in the collection was written to her sister, Emily McDonnell, who lived in Rangoon, Burma. The majority of the letters, however, were written to another sister, Milborough Mackay, who lived in India at the time.

Mackay apparently kept her sister's letters, storing them in a desk, where they were found decades after Mackay's death. Eventually, the letters reached Emily McDonnell's grandson, Nathaniel Pearce, the son of Ursula (McDonnell) Pearce. He lent the letters to his uncle, Peter McDonnell, of Okanagan Centre and in the late 1980s, the McDonnells offered copies of the letters to Dr. Duane Thomson, a history professor at Okanagan University College, in Kelowna, British Columbia. Typescripts of the letters were made, and the McDonnells provided a great deal of explanatory information and family background.

Nathaniel Pearce, who holds the original letters, kindly gave his permission for the letters to be published electronically. Under the direction and editorship of Dr. Duane Thomson, student Carolyn Webb added the collection of Dorothea Allison's letters to the Royal British Columbia Museum's *Living Landscapes* website during the summer of 1999. Biographical information and explanatory footnotes were based on information previously provided by Peter and Nancy McDonnell.

When she wrote the letters, Dorothea Allison rarely indicated the year in which her letters were written. Based on their knowledge of family history, Peter and Nancy McDonnell offered likely dates for the letters. In order to confirm these dates, other elements of the letters, such as the postmarks on the envelopes, can be scrutinized. There are also a few references to world events, such as the First World War, which confirm the dates of these letters. In one case, Allison neglected to refer even to the month in which she wrote the letter. This letter was likely written in the fall of 1920 because it appears to sequentially follow the letter dated 8 August 1920, in which she mentioned both her upcoming trip to England, and that the apple crop would soon be ready. In the undated letter, she expressed disappointment that the frozen apple crop could possibly prevent the trip home to England. Another of the letters, written by Bob Allison, also undated, was likely written in

March, 1920. Like the letter written by Dorothea Allison, 21 March 1920, it discusses the possibility of Dorothea travelling home to England for a visit. The fold lines on the original copies of the two letters match, so it is likely the two letters were mailed together in one envelope.



Dorothea (Scott-Coward) Allison in 1924



Bob Allison

Biographical sketches of the people mentioned in Dorothea's letters.

1913 June 27:

Dorothea Scott-Coward to Emily McDonnell 27 June [1913]

1914 March 9:

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay 24 August [1915]

1915 September 25:

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay 9 March [1914]

1915 August 24:

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay 25 September 1915

1916 October 7:

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay^L_{SEP} 2 December [1917]

1917 February 4:

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay 7 October [1916]

1917 December 2:

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay 4 February [1917]

1919 January 5:

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay 5 January 1919

1920 March:

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay 21 March [1920]

Robert Allison to Milborough Mackay Undated [March 1920]

1920 August 8:

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay 8 August [1920]

1920 Fall:

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay Undated [Fall, 1920]

1921 September:

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay 9 September [1921]

1922 December 11:

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay 11 December 1922

Dorothea Scott-Coward to Emily McDonnell, 27 June [1913]

Okanagan Centre

B.C.

June 27th

Dearest Em

I have today received your letter of May 23rd (the quickest any of yours have come!) & the photo of the babies with Robert. I do like it & what a dear old thing Robert looks. Everybody here says "What a nice fellow." But my dear how determined both your blessed Pledges look. I begin to think you will be bossed in your declining years. You say again you hoped for a letter from me but did not get one. You never seem to get any of my letters. I wonder if the last one via Mother has reached you. I hope Mother has sent off the spoons for the babies' birthdays — tho I fear they will be late for Peters birthday two years old poor lamb!

It is almost the anniversary of my starting out to this country. Tho I have had some fairly stiff times — I have never a moment regretted coming, the only time I was at all wretched was my first few weeks with John. poor boy his health makes one forgive him everything, he is dreadfully ill really, I hardly think he can recover. You know the people out here don't look upon him as quite a sane person. Keep this to yourself. I have been careful to say as little as possible about him in my letters. He is far more quarrelsome than Ro & only people like my Bob — (who are very few & far between) & who are too big in body & mind to trouble themselves about his lungs & only pity his unfortunate state — put up with him. He has always meant to be kind to me — but oh how patronizing in his ways!

Yes Judy is growing into a Beauty. She wrote & told me to write quite frankly to her about John but to use my judgement in what I said to his parents. As a matter of fact I have not spoken frankly (all I know about J!!) to any of them tho lately I have written openly to Aunt May about his health. I thought it only fair. I hope he won't hear I have done so!

It makes me tingle with shame to hear of Ro running up bills & treating them like that & having all the relations (probably) gossiping about the Cowards wanting help. Oh I'm so glad I am independent. But I am rather sorry — tho it is nice of them. Uncle Phil sent me back a cheque as he did not want me to pay back my fare. It is playing the fool to send it again. But I shd [should] have been happier had they kept it under the circumstances.

You are a darling girl to send me a silk kimona. I shall be so glad of it & it sounds so pretty. I think I shall like Peach for a change from blue.

About a Cotton Crepe. I shd [should] love a pretty blue one. Duty on cotton goods not so high. Please under estimate value & put "Not for Commerce." Your dark one has been & is being so useful. I made it myself of course. I am larger than formerly

Waist 24 1/2 Bust 36

Neck 12 1/2 Length of skirt 38 in front

I do like a dress out here to fasten down the front or side & the waist line a little bit raised.

My dear Em, my big Bob has been [indistinct] & he is such a great Man. He wants to have a ring make out of a nugget he dug himself out of the Klondike in the Great Gold Rush. And he has built his house with his own hands & will put a veranda round it for me if I will marry him. His father was a Doctor in North of Ireland so he is Irish Protestant — tho much too long out in the wilds to have any prejudices. I forgot to tell you his name: Robert Allison. Called Bob. Over 6 foot, light coloured & bone-y. But please keep all this to yourself for the present. I tell him I may want to get out of it yet!

It seems feeble how I am independent & in such a good “posish” to give it up & become a ranchers’ wife? But I know I am lucky for such a “straight” fine manly thing to like me at all. If the crops are good, he wants it to be in November. Everything here depends on the apples, peaches & tomatoes!!

Very much love,

Yr. loving D. S. C.

I have a letter from Lucy Wray to say she was at Fresole. Mrs Mc in her “most talkative mood & gay as a lark.” I have also had a very nice letter from Mrs Mac herself who never once mentioned herself [but?] full of [indistinct] & her illness.

Manuscript [1913]:

Okanagan Centre
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June 27th

Dearest Em,
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of May 25th (the quickest any of yours have come!)
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silk kimono. I shall be so glad
of it & it sounds so pretty - I think
I shall like Peach for a change
from blue.

About a cotton crepe. I sh^d love a
pretty blue one. <sup>Duty on cotton goods now is high. Please send international values
& put them for comparison</sup> ~~my dear one~~ has
been & is being so useful. I made it
myself of course. I am larger than formerly
waist $24\frac{1}{2}$. Bust - 36
neck $12\frac{1}{2}$ length of skirt 38 in front.

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I have also had my nice letter from Mrs Mac herself who never
once mentioned herself but full of fun & her "stories".

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay 24 August [1915]

Oyama BC

Canada

Aug 24th

Dearest Mib

, 's (!) blouse & your table centre turned up together just in time for my birthday. The blouse is very sweet — such awfully pretty stuff & very chic in make — Thank you immensely for it — clothes are most grateful & comforting here where I don't see a shop for months on end. The table centre pleases me also very much. I was longing for something to put in the middle & it is going to be brought out the first time I have guests who will probably be the dear people on a neighbouring ranch who a little time past announce "Us be going in for 'ogs" (i.e. hogs) I feel sure the gold and silver work will make a deep impression on them.

The War — tho we hear so little real news — fills every bit of our minds of course. I dream of it nearly every night. Belgium has had a cruel time evidently. The German prisoner we have here is not at all in sympathy with his country men about it. It is like reading stories of the middle ages — the way, if true — that they have burned up villages & shot down women!

I feel a fearful wretch not to be writing in time for your birthday — As to sending you anything I rack my brains the first and last thought is fruit — Quite an impossible thought too & I only go into one little town — 16 miles away once in a couple of months or so & when there was cheap jack stuff! & sold at a respectable price. Oh I knew one thing that I might be able to get hold of — muskrat skins. I had a collar made of three of them for your seal coat to wear to my wedding. Everybody who has seen it admired it. It is sold as marten. But the men who shot them call them muskrat. But you have all the fur you want!

Thank you ever so much for your two very nice presents. Both things I wanted and love.

How is Charlie! I am so glad you are keeping pretty well. Give Mrs. Alice my love when you see her.

I have had a pretty hard summer which sent my weight down — but I am very well again the weather being cooler. For weeks — months — the temp dropped much under 98° in the shade & even 100° . Not many days when it dropped much under 90° — and this when you are bottling fruit & making jam for winter use! Besides all the ordinary cooking and butter making. I have been having someone in to help me on ironing days lately. The most killing work in the week. She is the wife of a man who has left his ranch & gone off to the Front. She is left with practically no money & a kiddie to keep, so is very glad to do a little charring. She was a Miss Vuless by the way — niece to the portrait painter & one of the only Gentlewomen around here. — my precious Bob improves on acquaintance without a murmur wipes up the floor when I spill the sloppail. We are going to feel the effect of the war very badly I fear. Fruit is not bought in the towns as sugar has gone up a lot & people can't afford to make so much jam, etc. Bob sends his love. Much presses me to thank you again very much for the lovely presents & the best wishes for many happy returns of the day September 23.

Yr. Very afec'

D. Allison

Manuscript [1915]:

1915-16
 Oyam a Be
 Canada
 Aug 24
 Dear Mr. Mackay
 My dear Mr. Mackay
 The table centre
 I was long for something
 in the middle & it is going to be
 brought out the first time I have
 guests who will probably be the dear
 people in a neighbouring ranch who
 you immensely for it - clothes are
 most grateful & comforting here where
 I don't see a shop for months on end
 The table centre pleases me also very much
 such awfully pretty
 stuff & my chic in make - Thank
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Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay, 24 August [1915], page 1

2

a little time past announced "He be
going in for 'ogs" (i.e. hogs)
I feel sure the gold & silver work
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The War - Tho we hear so little
real news - fills every bit of our mind.
I dream of it nearly every
night. Belgium has had a cruel
time recently. The German prisoners
we have here is not at all in
sympathy with his country men about
it. It is like reading stories of
the middle ages - the way of
true. That they have burned
up villages & shot down women!
I feel a fearful wretch

not to be ^s writing in time for
your birth day. As to sending
me anything I rack my brains
the first & last thought is quite
quite an impossible thought too. &
I only go into one little town - 14
miles away once in a couple of
months or so & when there what
cheap jack stuff. & sold at a
respectable price. Oh I know one
thing that I might be able to get hold
of. Muskrat skins. I had a collar
made of three of them for your real
coat & wear to my wedding. My brother
who has seen it admired it. It is sold
as marten. But the men who
shoot them call them muskrat. But you

have all the fun⁴ you want!
Thank you so very much for
your two very nice presents. Both
things I wanted & love.
How is Charlie? I am so glad
you are keeping pretty well.
Give Mrs. & Alice my love when
you see them.
I have had a pretty hard summer
which sent my weight down - but
I am my weight again. The weather being
cooler. For weeks - months - The temp
used to go up to 98° in the shade
& even 100°. Not many days when
it dropped much under 90°. And
thus when I am bottling fruit &
making jam for winter use!
Besides all the ordinary looking & better making

I have been having someone in help
me on working days lately - The most
telling work in the West. She is the
wife of a man who has left his Ranch
& gone off to the Front. She is left
with practically no money & a kiddie
& keep, so is very glad to do
a little charring. She was a Miss
Dales by the way - niece of the portrait
painter & one of the only gentle women
around here - my precious Bob
impress on acquaintance - without a
new man wipe up the floor when I
spill the slip pail. We are going
& feel the effect of the War very badly I fear
fruit is not being brought in the towns as
sugar has gone up a lot & people can't afford
to make so much jam etc.

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay, 24 August [1915], page 5 (mis-numbered as a second page 4)

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay, 25 September 1915

Oyama, BC

Canada

Sept 25th 1915

Dearest Mib,

It is very sweet of you to send me the money for a present. Thank you ever so much. You are far better than I am at remembering things in time! But you must confess you have more leisure for remembering in! Summer out here is a nightmare to me. All August was 90° & over. And in this heat there was fruit picking, jam making & fruit bottling for the winter. Besides all the other work — but I always seem to be complaining at the poor old jam and it is very grateful & comforting to eat when the summer departs. Of course the thing is one ought to have a change and holiday from the continuity of work & this is just what one can't have in these hard times when money & labour are both scarce. Directly the heat goes [sic] — as it did on September 1st all is well again. I have a really nice lawn and some flowers — of course the mowing of the lawn gives one an extra bit of labour — but I think the pleasure makes it worthwhile. I have also one or two [interests?] now which tho they entail a little secretarial work I think really they do the mind good.

I was elected Trustee for the Public School of the District. This means communicating with the Education Dep't pretty often. Keeping the Banking Acct, Paying the Teacher etc. When the District elects one to the job — unfortunately it does not mean they pay you. — it is an honorary (?) job.

Also we are starting a Prohibition Movement for the duration of the war. The drink amongst the troops recruited since the war began, is pretty bad & the amount spent on drink thro'out the country is enormous — such a waste when wanted badly to help in the War!

You don't approve of your Governess! I can see. Poor dear she can't help having no taste & choosing common lace yokes! I blame her maid & her costumier. I am so glad to hear that Chris is getting on well.

Your house looks very grand as Lucy wd [would] say. For how long does Charlie remain in the High Court? Is he in the Judicial side of the ICS? And when do you expect to be home on leave. What a shattered family we are! Poor old Madge is having the worst of it at present.

It is happy for Judith to be able to be married soon but I am afraid she will leave rather a gap in her family. I do wonder what Hubert Hull is like?

It is hard to believe the Butterworths can behave so foolishly — one knows they are not & couldn't be disloyal but everyone especially in India ought to cling together & it is foolish to say the least of it — at the present state of Affairs to begin to stand up for the enemy! I hope for our sakes in Canada that the States won't go to war — the huge amount of Germans in the States & in Canada wd [would] make it very uncomfortable for us with out thousands of miles of undefended borders.

I have left it to the end to wish you many happy returns for your birthday. Are you feeling fairly well — or still an invalid?

With love and many thanks

from your affec sister

Dorothea Allison

Footnotes:

¹Governess: referring to the wife of the Governor of Madras Presidency, India

²ICS: Indian Civil Service

Manuscript 1915:

Oyama. B.C.
Canada

Sep 25th 1915

Dear Mr. Mac

It is my surety of you & send
me the money for a present. Thank you very
so much. You are far better than I
am at remembering things in time! But you
must excuse me I am more busy for remembering
in! Summer out here is a night mare to
be. All August was 90° & 90° & 90°. And in
this heat - there was fruit picking, jam
making & fruit bottling for the winter.
Besides all the other work - but I always
seen I'm complaining at the most old times
and really it's my grateful & comforting
to eat when the summer departs.
Of course the thing is one must have a
change & holiday from the continuity of work

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay,
25 September 1915, page 1

& this is just what one can't have in these
 hard times when money & labour are both scarce.
 Directly the heat goes - as it did on Sep 1st all
 is well again. I have a really nice lawn
 & some flowers. Of course the mowing of the
 lawn gives me an extra bit of labour -
 but I think the pleasure makes it worth while
 I have also one or two interests now which
 tho' they entail a little recreational work I
 think really they do the mind good.
 I was elected trustee for the Public School of
 the District. This means communicating with
 the Educⁿ Dep^t pretty often, keeping the
 Banking Acct, paying the teacher etc.
 When the District Elects one to the Bd - unfortunately
 it does not mean they pay you. It is an
 honorary (?) job.
 Also we are starting a Prohibition Movement for
 the duration of the War. So the drink amongst
 the troops recruited since the war began, is pretty
 bad & the amount spent on drink throughout the
 country is enormous - such a waste when
 wanted back & help in the War!

3

So tell me how much the War affects
your life - do dances go on as usual?
& entertaining?
You don't approve of your forbears I
can see. Poor dear she can't help
having no taste & choosing common lace
yokes! & flares for maid & for costumes!
I am so glad to hear that this is
getting on well.
Your house looks very grand so Lucy w^d say
for how long Mrs Charter remain in the High
Court? Is he to the judicial side of the P.C.S.?
And when do you expect to be home on leave
what a splendid family we are! Poor old Madge
is having the worst of it at present -
It is happy for Judith she's able to married soon
but I am afraid she will leave rather a gap
in her family & I do wonder what Ernest Hull is
like?

It is hard to believe the Bullworths can
 behave so foolishly - One knows they are
 not & couldn't be disloyal. But why are
 especially in India might sticking together
 & it is foolish to say the least & it is not the present
 state of affairs & to be taken up as the enemy!
 I hope for our part of affairs in Canada that
 the States won't go to war - the huge amount
 of money in the States & in Canada will
 make it very uncomfortable for us with our
 thousands of miles of unguarded border.

I have left it to the end & wish you very many
 happy returns of your birthday. Are you
 feeling fairly well - or still unwell?

With love & my many thanks

Yours for ever - Dorothea

Dorothea Allison.

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay, 7 October [1916]

Oyama BC

Canada

Oct 7th

Dearest Mib

The delightful little wooly has arrived I love it dearly & Bob does too. The detachable collar is such a good idea. And the white stripe near the face is a tremendous improvement to an ordinary me! Thank you ever so much. It is too sweet of you particularly as I am so bad about peoples [sic] birthdays. However I don't suppose other people do the work that I do. My job at present is apple-packing. I rush over the cooking washing etc in the morning — have one of the pickers in to dinner, wash up & go to our own packing house where we have two men, a woman & self packing & making boxes. There until 6 pm I stand picking out apples in sizes, wrapping each apple in paper & placing it symmetrically in the wooden box in which the apples are conveyed to the Prairies, to New York, to England etc. When the light is gone I go home, skim the cream, make supper — or rather late tea wash up and by then about 9 pm we are so tired we just have a look at the paper (if it is a mail day & there is a paper) & go to bed. I am still a novice at the packing work — but I can do about 350 lbs of apples in an afternoon. We have a much larger crop this year which makes heavy work but I hope will fill the pockets better! Labour is so scarce — nearly all our unmarried men have gone & some married ones. We are paying an American boy of 16 years old twelve shillings a day to nail up apple boxes. However we must pay for the war in some way & this is a small price compared to the people who are losing their sons!

I was sent to Penticton by the Women's Institute to read a Paper on a subject which I brought into being in B.C. I sent you a little notice in the Paper of it. It is my good work as the poor Ranchers in these out of the way districts get so little chance of educating their children after they have passed thro' our little elementary schools. Does it interest you?

Isn't it splendid BC has given women the vote, so we shall now be able to get the shocking Laws of this Province altered — they were made when there was hardly a white woman here & men who came round by the Horn & knew they wd [would] very likely never get back again married in to the Indian tribes & the Laws here remained tho' quite unsuitable for white women & children. For instance at present a girl of 12 may marry a boy of 14 & the mother may not raise her voice against it! Does this bore you?

It is such lovely sunny sparkling autumn weather but already 6 degrees of frost at night — I only hope the winter won't be as bad as the last one was.

I expect you hate having given up your house. Even my little shack I shd [should] hate to have to leave — it is so lovely to have a place really your own.

I don't know how much you know about Oyama — Frank Rimmer is our storekeeper you know? He has just married a dear little girl, so my dear friend Miss Francis (Fan knows her, also Madge, also Enie) who was helping him in the business has now gone home. I feel rather desolated — in India you have so many of your own sort that you wont realize how one woman who knows one's own sort of people makes such a gap.

You never tell me anything of Charlie. What does he do in the High Court and does it lead to a definite post? Does the [appointment?] of H. [High] Court exist for any length of time?? Is he still naughty about your bills? Tell me all the interesting things. Remember I am on the edge on the world here. I am glad to hear from Mother [that] Chris is a success. D. G.

Much love & my many Thanks

Yr Very affec D. Allison



Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay
7 October [1916], Newspaper Clipping

Manuscript [1916]

You won't
 tell me anything
 of Charlie -
 what does he
 do in the H. Cant
 & don't lead
 a definite part
 don't the concluding
 of H. Cant. Sent
 me any length of
 time? I am
 to be still here
 about 1916
 Canada
 Tell me
 the English
 things - I am
 in the edge
 of the world here
 I am glad to hear
 from the Ohio
 is a success. Did
 much for my team
 for my gift. D. Allison

Dearest Rob
 The delightful little woolley has arrived
 I love it dearly & Rob does too. The detachable
 collar is such a good idea. And the white
 stripe near the face is a tremendous improvement
 to an ordinary one! Thank you both so much
 It is too sweet of you particularly as I am
 so bad about people's birth days. However I
 don't suppose other people do the work that I do.
 My job at present is apple-packing. I rush
 in the morning washing etc in the morning - have
 me of the pickers in the dinner, wash up &
 do go to the packing house where
 we have two men, a woman & self packing
 & making boxes. Here until 6 p.m. I stand
 picking out apples in sizes, wrapping each
 apple in paper & placing it symmetrically.

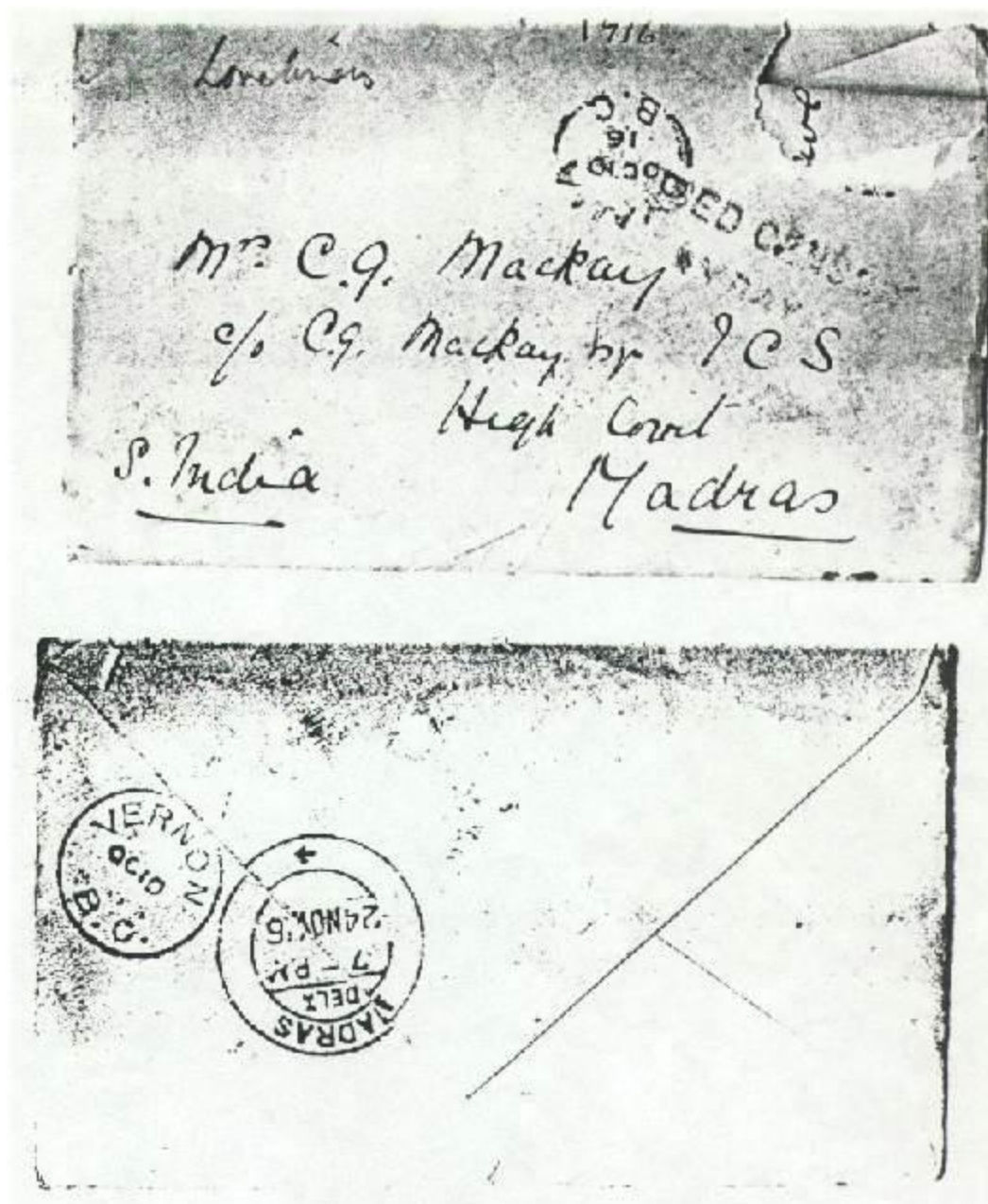
Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay, 7 October [1916], page 1

in the wooden box in which ~~the~~ the apples are
 conveyed to the Princes, New York, & England etc
 When the light is gone I go home, skew the
 cream, make supper - or rather late tea
 wash up & by then about 9 p.m. we are
 so tired we just have a look at the Paper
 (if it is mail day & there is a Paper) & go to bed.
 I am still a novice at the packing work - but
 I can do about 350 lbs of apples in one
 afternoon. We have a much larger crop
 this year which makes heavy work but I
 hope will fill the pockets better! Labour is so
 scarce - nearly all our unmarried men have
 gone & some married ones. We are paying
 an American boy, 16 years old twelve shillings
 a day to fill up apples boxes. However
 we must pay for the war in some way
 & this is a small price compared to the
 people who are losing their sons!
 I was sent to Pentucket by the Women's Institute
 to read a Paper on a subject which I brought
 with me in B.C. I send you a little

notice in the Paper of it. It is a very good
 work so the poor Ranchers ~~has~~ in there
 out of the way district yet so little
 chance of educating their children after
 they have passed their one little elementary
 schools. Does it interest you?
 Isn't it splendid B.C. has given women
 the vote, so we shall now be able to
 get the shocking laws of this Province
 altered. They were made when there
 was hardly a white woman here &
 men who came round by the Horn
 & knew they w^d my likely never get back
 again married in to the Indian tribes.
 & the laws have remained the same
 unsuitable for white women & children.
 for instance at present a girl of 12 may
 marry a boy of 14 & the father may
 not raise his voice against it!
 Does this bore you?

4

It is such lovely sunny sparkling autumn weather
but already 6 degrees of frost at night -
I only hope the winter won't be so
bad as the last one was.
I expect you hate having given up your house.
Even my little shack I sh. hate to have
to leave. it is so lovely to have a place
where really you own.
I don't know how much you know about
Oyama - Frank Rimmer is our store-keeper
you know? He has just married a dear
little girl, so my dear friend Miss
Francis (you know her, who Madge, also
Sue) who was helping him in the
business has now gone home. I feel
rather desolated - in India you know
so many of your own sort that you
don't realize how one woman was
known only our sort of people etc - makes such a gap.



Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay, 7 October [1916], Envelope

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay, 4 February [1917]

Oyama BC

Feb 4th

Dearest Mib

I was delighted with the humours of India you so kindly sent me. I often look at the Dherzi¹ & and the Dhobi² and laugh. The Dhobi reminds me of Kodai and our night gowns torn to ribbons & the way you insisted upon Mrs. Butterworth cutting the man's pay till there was no pay left: in fall I think he owed us in the end! I still have one nightie left that dear generous Mrs. B. insisted on buying to replace my torn ones! I hardly even wear it but keep it as a relic! Besides crepe ones are so much easier to wash — you don't have to iron them!

We have just had a horrid cold snap — luckily it only lasted a few days — 15 degrees below zero, that is -47 degrees of frost. I went out one day but my face was frostbitten before being out 10 minutes. Luckily Bob saw it before much harm was done. I gaily wore 3 wooly coats one on top of the other and then a fur coat. [Yours of yore?], and moccasins on my feet. The horses bits have to be brought into the kitchen and warmed for some time before harnessing — else the horses tongues are skinned by contact with the icy metal! However, it is not like last year I am thankful to say as it only lasted a short time and last year we had week after week below zero.

How is your book progressing, I long for news of it!

You laugh at me for attending meetings etc. Don't you have any to go to? You wd [would] make an excellent president of a Women's Institute! We have one or two women here who spoil things so by wanting to manage everything — by being very touchy & annoyed if anybody else wants to manage a little bit! & such little jealousies, it makes me loathe the whole lot of them sometimes. I suppose every little place is the same — but we have quite a little Methodist colony — awfully good people — but they are rather small, don't you think so? There is a very nice retired Presbyterian missionary from China & his wife. Both quite wide and generous in their ideas.

I meant to write before to ask you if you have the chance, or know anybody who could do so — to look up a man invalided at Wellington, Nilgeris:

Gunner J. Newton R9A

70829

Hut Barracks, Wellington Nilgeris

I daresay he may be better by now and moved on. He was invalided from Mesopotamia to Bombay for enteric and then in to Wellington.

A near ranching neighbour of ours and a very good fellow. You will have to try to remember that tho' he hardly posses an'th [anything] yet I dance with him out here!! He is probably frightfully homesick & it wd [would] be a great kindness to find him out. He gave up a lot here to go home & join — so deserves well of somebody.

Much luck and wish you everything good for 1917.

Yr. very affec.

D. Allison

Footnotes:

¹Dherzi: One who sews and mends — a kind of private tailor.

²Dhobi: A washer of clothes.

Manuscript [1917]:

much love
of which they
will be very
good for 1917
My G. & H.
D. Allison

Oyama BC
796 Hth - 1917

Dearest Mit

I was delighted with the
humors of India you so kindly
sent me. I often look at the Dhergi
& Dobi - I laugh. The Dobi reminds
me of Kodaie & our kept gowns
with ribbons & the way you
misted upon Mr. Butterworth cutting
the man's pay till there was
no pay left in fact I think he
owed us in the end. I still have
one nightie left that dear generous
Mr. B. misted on buying &
replace my torn ones. I hardly ever
wear it but keep it as a relic!
Bridles Cape ones are so much
easier to wash - you don't have to
iron them! -

2.
We have just had a horrid
cold snap - luckily it only lasted
a few days - 15 degrees below zero
that is - 44 degrees of frost. I went
out one day but my face was frost-
bitten before being out 10 minutes.
Luckily Bob saw it before much
harm was done. I quickly wore
3 woolly coats one on the top of
the other & then a fur coat. Mrs
of Gore! & moccasins on my feet.
The horses also have to be brought
in to the kitchen & warmed for
some time before harnessing. She
The horse's legs are skinned by
contact with the icy metal!
However it is not like last year I
am thankful to say so it only
lasted a short time & last year
we had week after week below
zero.

How is your book progressing - I
long for news of it!
You laugh at me for attending
meetings etc - but you have any
to go to? I must make an
excellent president of a Women's
Institute! We have one or two
women here who spoil things by
wanting to manage something -
just being very touchy & annoyed
if anybody else wants to manage
a little bit! & such little peevish
it makes me loathe the whole
lot of them some times - I suppose
every little place is the same
But we have quite a little Methodist
Colony - awfully good people - but
they are rather small - don't you think
so? There is a very nice retired
Presbyterian Miss. from China & his wife
both quite well & generous in their ideas

I meant to write before I ask you
if you have the chance - or know any
body who could do so - to look up
a man invalided at Wellington. Tilgner

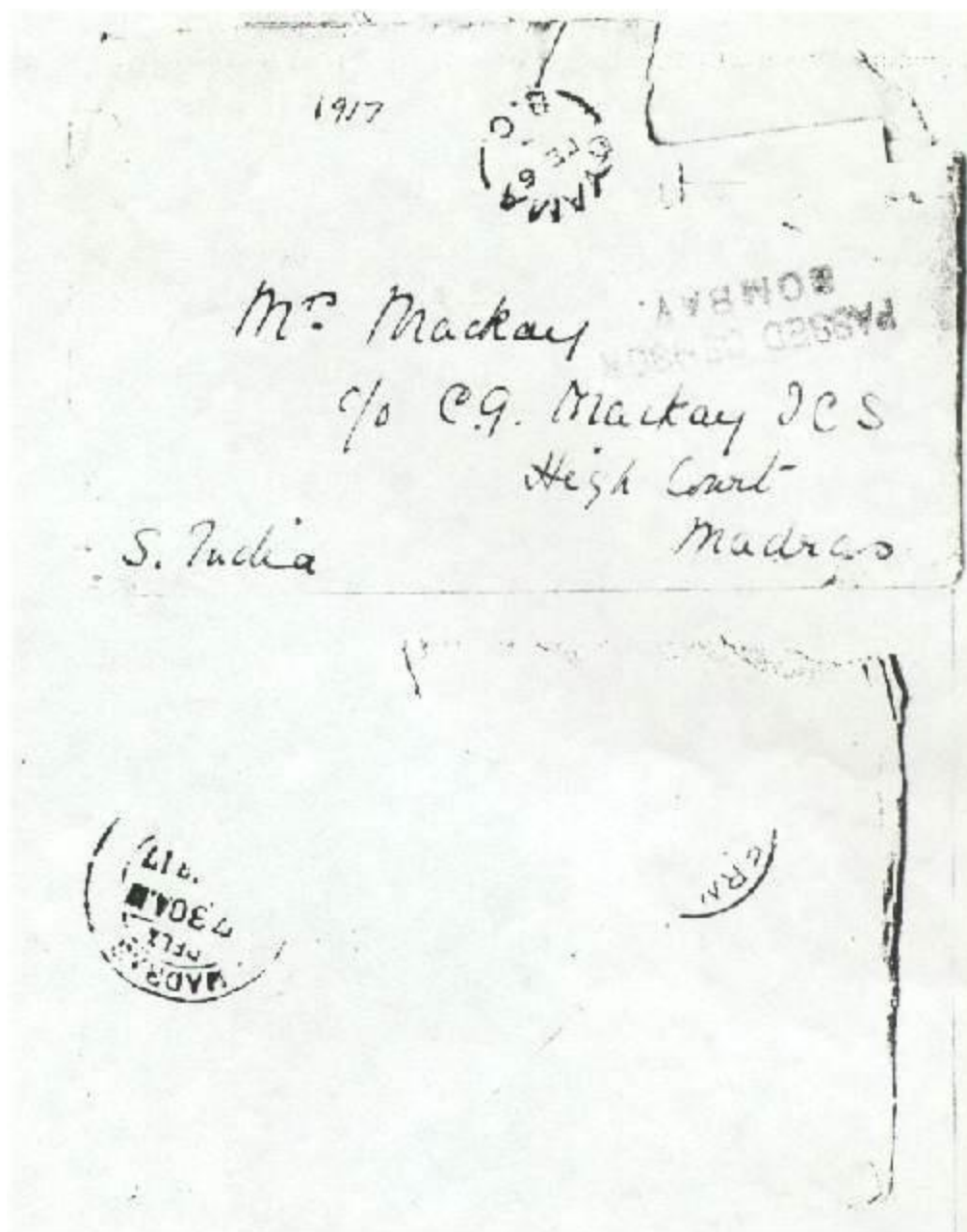
Gunner J. Newton RGA

70829

Hut Barracks. Wellington
Nilebris

I daresay he may be better by now I
moved on. He was invalided from
Mesopotamia to Bombay - for illness
& then on to Wellington.

A near ranching neighbor of ours
& a very good fellow - you will
have to try & remember that tho'
he hardly knows me I yet I
dare write him out here!!
He is probably frightfully homesick
& it will be a great kindness to find
him out. He gave up a lot here
to go home & join. So I know well of him.



Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay, 4 February [1917], Envelope

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay,^[SEP] 2 December [1917]

Oyama — BC

Canada

Dec 2nd

Dearest Mib

As I have just got a letter from you dated early September — I hardly think this will reach you for Xmas!! All the same I send you our best wishes for a very happy New Year. No — I don't think India is a nice place when I think of white ants — scorpions & the like — or when I think of the sickly heat — but then look at your hills — a perfect climate & then your incomes all roll in if you take it easy or not. You don't have to dig it out of the ground in the sweat of your brow. And you certainly don't have to face going to an out door dub' in zero weather i.e. from 32 to 50 degrees of frost! Generally by this time the ground is as hard as a rock — & if any one dies they have to make great fires and dig a bit of the grave out as it thaws — quite a to do! Everything is dead white with snow tho it is not very cold yet & this I am afraid I don't like — it makes me feel "sick in the stomach" as they call it here!! A nice little Canadian woman came to call on me the other day, & over a cup of tea told me she had a "gassy stomach" & "female trouble" — ! Another good lady wanted "to leave the room", so I showed her to the bathroom where I keep a P. O. She said it wouldn't do as she wished "to relieve her bowels" — I promptly dispatched her to the outside Dub of course!! And these same people are so ultra refined in their ways that we wouldn't dream of. They never talk of "cocks & hens" — it is most indecent here to mention a cock even on a Ranch — you must call cocks Roosters. Isn't it funny. At first I must often have made the other Rancher's wives blush — I naturally spoke of killing off my cocks for the table — but I found it is most indecent to mention a cock. It is always a Rooster!!! To me a "gassy stomach" is much more indecent than a cock. The Canadians are (or the average Canadian that one meets I ought to perhaps say) so essentially middle or lower middle class. Very proper yet disgustingly com: [common] in their expressions! If they feel a little faint they say "they take weak spells". Of course — they take everything from medicine to a confirmation class. They don't like the English people at all. I think myself they are jealous of us.

I am so glad about Chris — I always realized he was [clever?] — but I always dreaded something I didn't quite know what — a morbid streak? But for his [Chief?] to speak like that shows there is nothing much to fear. Is he going in to the Indian Army or what — he seems to be up at Simla? He never writes — so I have not perservered in my correspondence. I am so terribly busy for one thing — & another thing I followed Ro with letters for many years — & I don't know that it does any good & only hurts myself. So I shall just pretend [to myself?] that he is not particularly my brother and let it go at that.

I have been dying to hear of your book — you don't say any more & I do want to see it. Would the publishers not accept it now in wartime? Who is your sick friend? You don't sound sympathetic about her!

How are you — [indistinct] a change at home? Here prices for apples have been good — but the labour has been awful. You can't get help & the wage is 12 sh. a day for a boy. We picked & packed about 4000 boxes of fruit with a boy of 17 and 3 girls. It was killing work. We came in from the orchard exhausted & then had to light the fire, make supper & then churn. Sunday was the only time to do the house-hold laundry!! I have not recovered yet and next year will be harder still, I fear.

With much love and best wishes to you.

Love from

D. Allison

Footnote:

¹A dub is slang for a toilet.

Manuscript [1917]:

from you - without
 a change at - how?
 the price for the
 have been 4000 - but
 the Casner has been
 refused - in Jan! 1st -
 14 to 14.50 a 12 1/2
 - say for a 6000
 - picked 3 pounds
 - 4000 6000 of bread -
 - a bag of 17 & 3 1/2
 - to kill the work
 - came in
 - had things to do
 - in 1st
 - he says to me
 - 1917 - 1st Jan
 Sunday 13C
 time to do the household
 laundry!! I have
 but returned yet.
 And next year will be
 a very still, open
 with much snow & ice
 - 1917 - 1st Jan
 Dorothea Allison

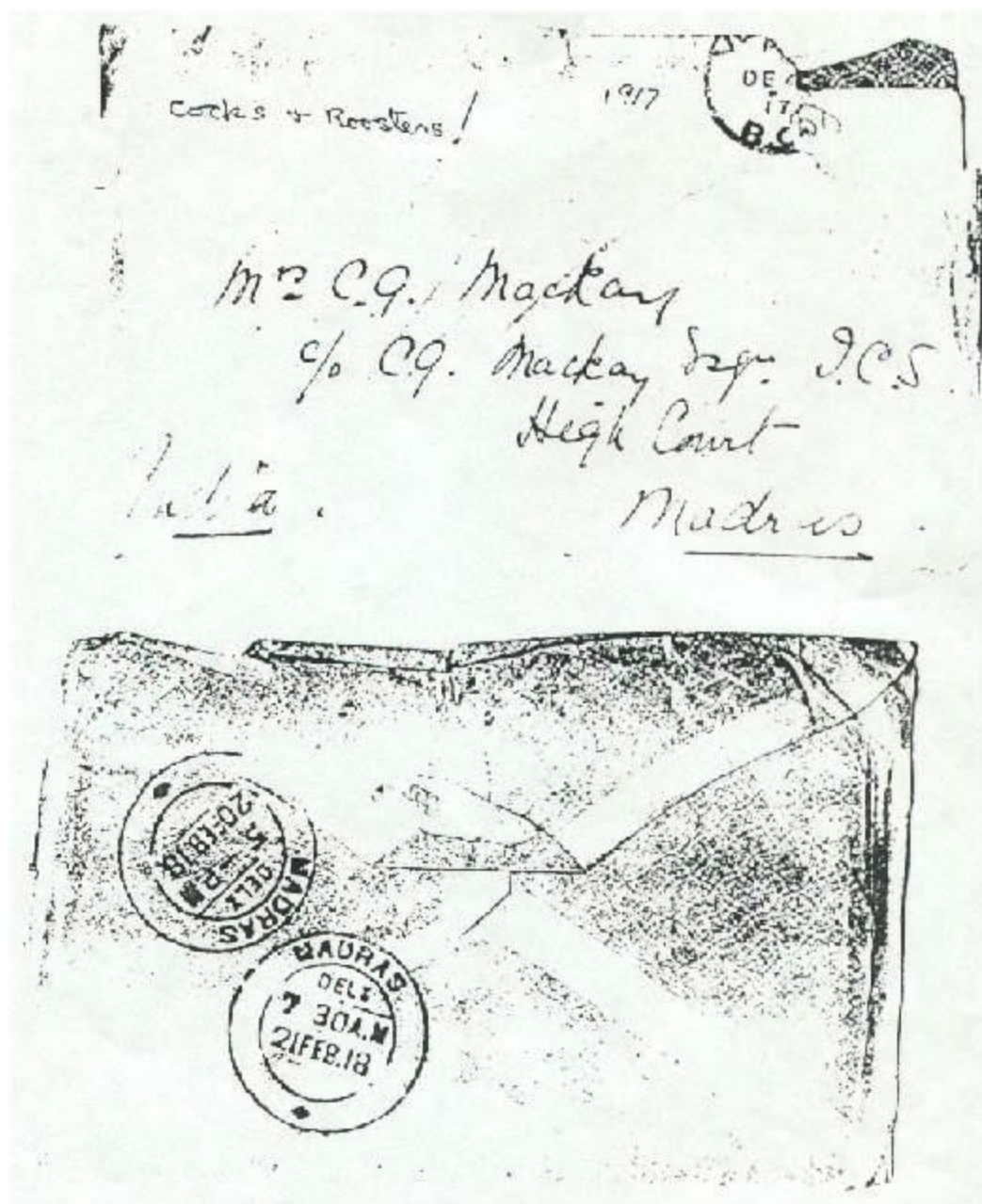
Dear Mr. Mib
 As I have just got a letter
 from you dated early September - I hardly
 think this will reach you for Xmas!!
 But to same I send you our best wishes
 for a very happy New Year. So. I
 don't think India is a nice place when
 I think of white ants - scorpions & the like -
 nor when I think of the sickly heat - but
 then look at our hills - a perfect paradise
 & then the balloons will roll in if you take it
 easy & hot - you don't have to dig it out
 of the ground in the sweat of your brow.
 And you certainly don't have to face
 going to an out door club in zero weather
 i.e. from 32 to 50 degrees of frost!
 We have been lucky so far - not more than 8 degrees here

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay, 2 December [1917], pages 1 and 4

They never talk of "Cocks & hens" - it is not indecent - here to mention a cock when on a Ranch - you must call cocks Roosters. Don't it funny. At first I must often have made the other Ranchers wince flush - I naturally spoke of killing off my cocks for the table - but I found it is not indecent to mention a cock. It is always a Rooster !!! To me a "Gassy stomach" is much more indecent than a cock. The Canadians are (or the average Canadian that one meets - or might perhaps say) so essentially middle or lower middle class. Very proper yet disgustingly can: in their expressions! If they feel a little faint they say "they take weak spells". Of course - they take everything from medicine to a Confirmation class. They don't like the English people at all - I think myself they are jealous of us.

I am so glad about this - I always
realized he was clever - but I always
half dreaded something I didn't quite
know what - a morbid streak? But
for his cheek & speak like that shows
there is nothing much to fear.
Is he going on to the Indian Museum
at what he seems to be up at London?
He wrote letters - so I have not pressed
a very independence. I am so terribly
busy for me thing - & another thing I followed
Ro with letters for many years - & I don't
know that it does any good & only hurts
myself. So I shall just pretend to myself
that he is not particularly my brother & let
it go at that.
I have been dying to hear of your book - you
don't say any more. & I do want to see it -
Would the publisher let me see it now in the time?
Who is your side friend? You don't seem to sympathize about her!

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay, 2 December [1917], page 3. Next text (page 4) is at the top of page 1



Letter from Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay, 2 December [1917], Envelope

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay, 5 January 1919

Oyama BC

Canada

Jan 5th 1919

Dearest Mib

I really can't understand about my letters never reaching you. Your gloves a year ago were taken out of their box & shown to every visitor. The velvet "coal [black] gloves" especially aroused great admiration! The books arrived in this fall & I am more than grateful for them. They did not send Buckroses but some perfectly inspiring ones— Sonia is I think my favorite. The Sixth Sense being also frightfully interesting. I had never read anything by that author before. I read your Language Difficulty in *Punch* without knowing anything about your writing it! & it made me think of you and your Boys¹. I am anxiously waiting for your book to come out and I read every review I come across in case your title is changed. Whose name do you write under? But I shall see! By the way whose photo (out of a picture paper) did you send me. I can't think it is like anybody I know, tho the eyebrows might be yours, but this is the only likeness to anybody. Ought I to know the lady? Very interesting and more then an Anglo Indian Society lady.

I am glad you will now be going home in May & hope Em will too. You have been long enough out there. The Armistice Terms imply Peace, what a heavenly relief! & I think it was a great relief to dear little Whanky. My dear, I simply can't get used to it! I have not spoken of it till now because one can't speak of anything else then. If only one could have got home this autumn! It was a sort of reprieve to hear of her wonderful improvement — & I went thro' Xmas praying and hoping she might be a wonderful cure. And then at the New Year one knew what had happened! And the most tragic and heartbreaking thing is that with her frail little body she shd [should] have earned & saved anything to leave anybody — some how it hurts more than anything. Well I don't know if I'll make any effort to go home now. Mother speaks of Phil coming out to me, but I hate the idea of mother being left, but of course if you & Em are home it would be different — however, I shan't urge or oppose it.

We are having rather a good winter so far — the coldest being 22° of frost. Much too cold for me but bearable till it goes below zero. That is over 32° of frost. Bob has put a dub and proper drainage into our little house, a great expense but it is untold help and comfort to me & I am resigning myself to live in these cold mountains.

Very much love and very many thanks for the books.

Your very affectionate,

Dorothea Allison

I am going to try my luck and address directly to you instead of as usual c/o Charlie. See if it reaches you any better.

Footnotes:

"... your Boys...": This is a reference to Milborough Mackay's servants.

Manuscript 1919:

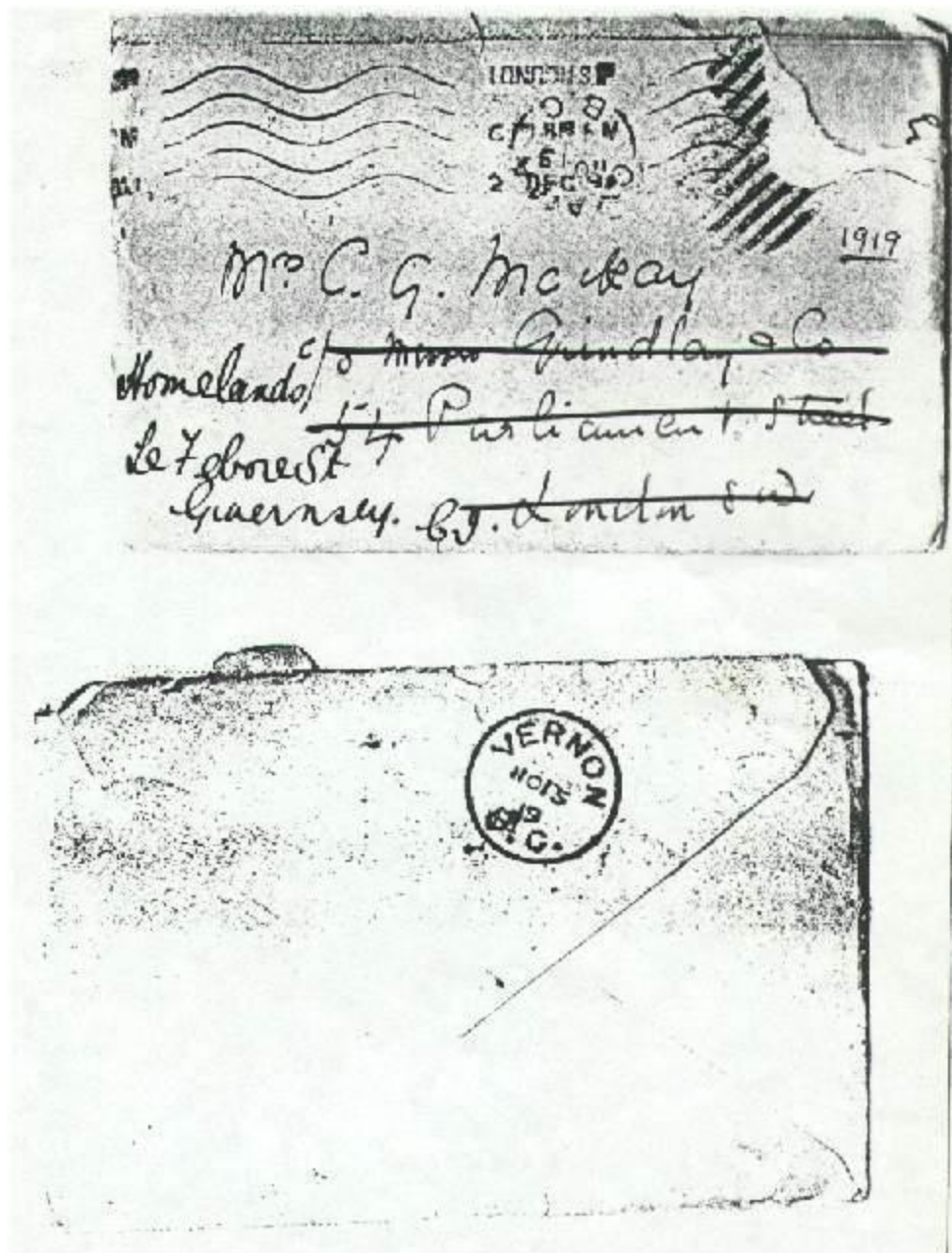
In my office "C"
 Dorothea Allison
 I am writing to
 my dear friend
 Dorothea Allison
 Canada
 Jan 5th 1919
 Dear Mil -
 I really cannot understand
 about my letters now reaching you -
 Your glass a year ago when taken
 out of the box & I thought I was
 the worst "coal glass" specially arising
 great admiration! The books arrived
 this fall & I am sure I am grateful
 for them. They did not send Buckle's
 but some perfectly inspiring ones -
 Sonia is I think my favorite. The
 Sixth Sense being also frightfully interesting
 I had never read anything by that author
 before. I read your language
 differently in French with art. Klemm

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay, 5 January 1919, page 1

anything about you writing it: & it made
me think of you & your Boys!
I am anxiously waiting for your
book to come out, & I read every
review I come across in case
your title is changed - whose name
do you write under? But I shall
see! By the way whose
photo (out of a picture paper) did
you send me - I don't think
it is ~~any~~ like anybody I know - tho
the eyebrows might be yours - but
this is the only likeness I anybody
ought to know the lady?
Very interesting & more than
an Anglo Indian Society Lady.
I am glad you will now be
young home in May - & hope
you will too. We have been long
enough out there - The Armistice
brings imply Peace. What a heavenly

relief! ² I think it was a
great relief to dear little Stanley -
his dear - I simply can't get
used to it! I have not spoken
of it till now because one can't
speak of anything else then -
if only one could have got home
this autumn! It was a
sort of reproach to hear of her
wonderful improvement - & I
wonder this I was praying & hoping
she might be a wonderful cure.
And then at the New Year one
knew what had happened!
And the most tragic & heart-breaking
thing is that with her frail
little body she sh^d have
earned & saved anything to
leave a my body - Somehow it hurts

more than anything. Well
I don't know if I'll make
any effort to go home now -
mother speaks of Phil coming
out time. But I hate the
idea of mother being left -
but of course if you & her are
home it will be different. - how-
ever I don't urge or oppose it.
We are having rather a good
winter so far. The coldest being
22° of frost. Much too cold for
me but bearable till it goes below
zero. That is not 22° of frost.
Bob has put a Dub & proper drainage
into our little house a great expense
but it is untold help & comfort to me - &
I am resigning myself to live in these cold mountains
Very much love & very many thanks for the books



Envelope of Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay, 5 January 1919

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay 21 March [1920]

Oyama

BC

Canada

March 21

Dearest Mib

I am dictating a letter to Bob — we often write each other's letters — so as it is now or never my letter will be spasmodic.

Thank heaven Bob has finished his letter to South Africa & I am free again. He, Bob, is so awfully like mother in some ways. Isn't it funny — He can't bear the sheet of his bed to be tucked in well at the foot he says it cramps his toes — and he is a lawyer at arguments & likes crusts & overdone outsides.

I wish you both a very happy Easter. Will you still be in Guernsey I wonder. We have a dear little Guernsey heifer calf. They are pretty creatures, aren't they?

I have now got your letter about the children & mother. I have been gathering from the letters lately that the children are much too much for mother. I can't imagine how they got arranged for in that way. Of course there is a side that makes you feel mother might be dreadfully lonely without something to look after. But still — children always made her nervous & undone & really she is rather old to start taking care of them after so long without.

I don't know what to think about going home in the summer — I shd [should] like to help mother — but I am no good about children. I can't bear them long in a room with me. Six years & a half alone in a house with a husband out at morn — no servant to speak to, nothing but the dogs & cows & chickens to speak to I really feel I shd [should] be as nervy as mother. Also after waiting so long to go home — it would be nice to have the benefit of ones husband when one is sick. Then there is the fact of leaving him to cook & do for himself in the hardest and busiest season. Remember a wife is almost a household necessity out here & then I help so much in the picking and packing of fruit. However I am thinking about it as I don't think mother ought to have them for the long holidays — is there a possible solution of the summer holidays — is mother bound to have them — poor dear Em it is awfully worrying for her & now I hear Ursula has measles. Madge writes that she went to see mother & Ursula — & tho she says mother was worried & nervy she doesn't at all imply that Ursula felt it. I only hope this impression is right. I feel lately the whole world is a great tragedy. There seems so little real happiness. I think the system of education for hundreds of years has been upside down. We ought to be trained & shown how to be happy instead of acquiring a lot of unnecessary & vague knowledge. Living surely ought to be a conscious joy instead of a burden. I believe the Buddhists come nearer to it than anybody in spite of Miss Judd. Isn't there something wrong in a system that makes children perverse & a nuisance instead of kicking up their heels like our calves in the yard & bringing joy to see & so joyful in their existence.

Hard work is not the key of life as those pretend who have not suffered from it. I myself now long never to have to help others or do anything that I needn't. I think it creates or develops selfishness. Hence labour

troubles. Poor Mib what a horrible sermon. I do so want to know what you are writing now. What gave you the idea of Kilpatrick?

Yours with much love

D. Allison

Manuscript [1920]:

Hand work is not the
key of life as those
pretend who have
suffered from it -
I myself was
long hours &
have & help others
or do any thing
that I need not -
I think of the
developments of the
times & the
poor people that
are in the world
I do so want to
know what you
are doing in 1920
what you give
the idea
of the book
with much love
D. Allison

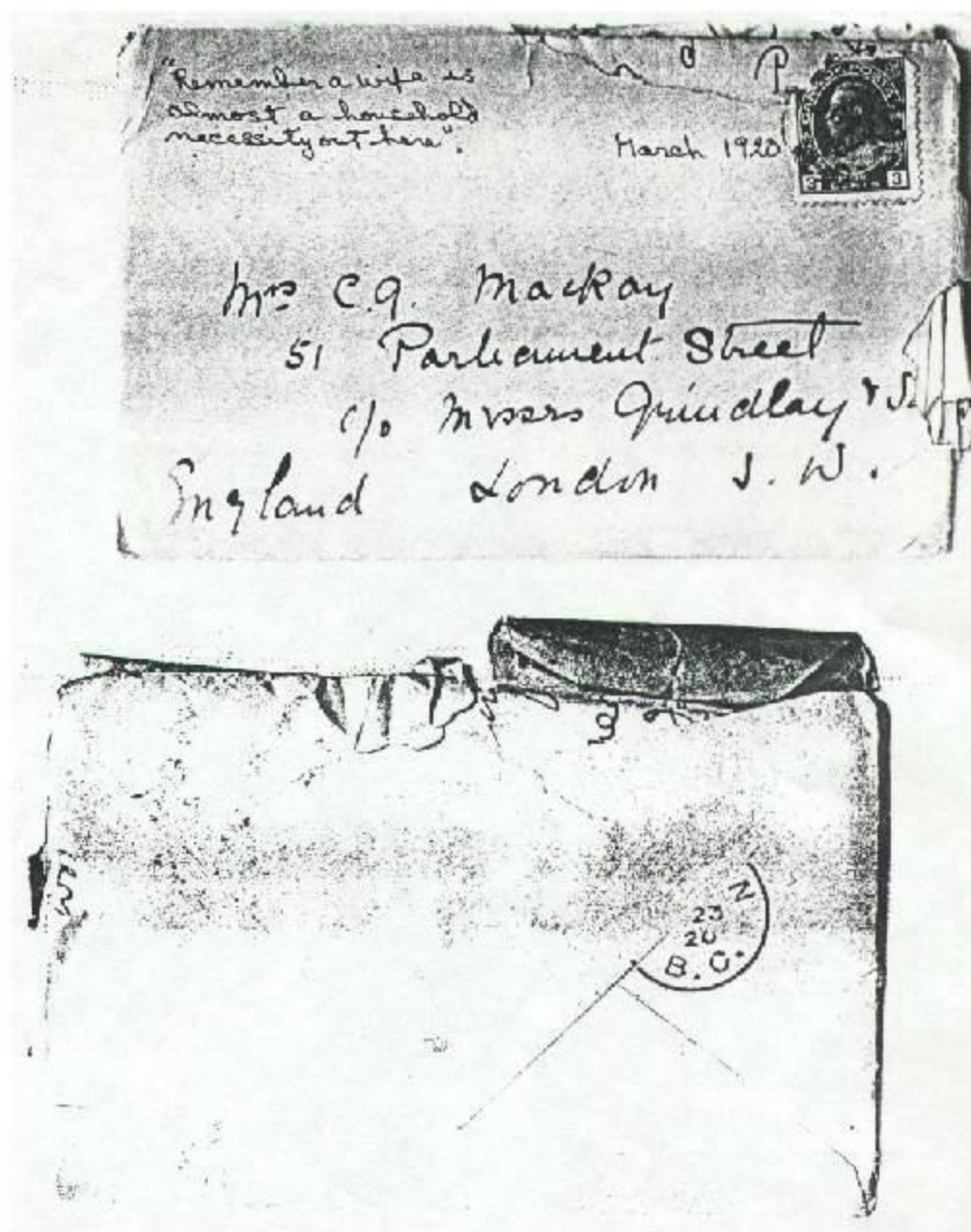
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often write each other's letters - so as it is
now or never - my letter will be sporadic -
I have heard Bob has smoked his
letter to South Africa & I am free again -
He. Bob is so awfully like mother
in some ways - isn't it funny -
He can't bear the steel of his bed
& be tucked in well at the foot - he
says it cramps his toes - And he
is a lawyer at arguments & likes
crusts & is done outside -
I wish you both a very happy Easter
Will you still be in Guernsey I
wonder - We have a dear little
Guernsey sheep - They are pretty
creatures aren't they?

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay, 21 March [1920], page 1

I have now got your letter about
the children & mother - I have been
gathering from the letters lately
that the children are much too
much for mother. I can't imagine
how they got arranged for in
that way. Of course there is side
that makes you feel mother must
be dreadfully lonely without some
thing to look after. But still -
children always made her
nervous & now she is really so
is rather old to start taking care of
them after so long without.
I don't know what to think about
going home in the summer -
I should like to help mother - but
I won't do good now at children
I can't bear them long in a
room with me - Six years & a half-

2 1000 1000 2
alone in a house - no servant
to speak to - nothing but the dogs
& cows & chickens & geese & I
I really feel I sh^d be as handy
as mother. Also after waiting
so long to go home - it would
be nice to have the benefit of
my husband when me is sick.
Then there is the fact of leaving
him to cook & do for himself
in the hardest & busiest season -
Remember a wife is almost a
house hold necessity out here.
& then she helps so much in the
pickings & packing of the fruit.
Now I am thinking about
it so I don't think mother
right to leave them for the
holidays - is there no possible
solution of the summer holidays - is mother

found & love them - poor dear Sam
it is awfully - worrying for her
I know I hear ^{her} ~~mother~~ has measles
madge writes - that she went &
see mother & Ursula - & that she
says mother was worried & very
she doesn't at all imply that
Ursula felt it - I only hope
this impression is right. I feel
lately the whole world is a great tragedy
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I think the system of education for hundreds
of years has been upside down - we ought
to be taught to know how to be happy instead
of acquiring a lot of unnecessary vague
knowledge - living only ought to be a
conscious joy instead of a burden - I
believe the Buddhists come nearer to it than
anybody - in spite of Miss Judd. Don't
there something wrong in a system that makes children
perverse & a nuisance instead of kicking up their heels like
our calves in the yard & being a joy to us & so I feel in their midst



Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay, 21 March [1920], Envelope

Robert Allison to Milborough Mackay, Undated [March 1920]

Oyama, B.C.

Dear Sister Milborough

I have tried to persuade Dolly to go home early in July but she seems to think she would rather wait till I'm at liberty to go — the end of October. It is a long trying journey to make alone, and it is only in the hope of seeing you I would suggest it. Atlantic travel is so crowded, & I fear not so comfortable as in the old days. Would it not be possible for you to postpone your departure till later in the year? It seems a pity to miss one another, and Dolly is so anxious to see you. Any how we are going to get our passports ready in case an opportunity offers to get away.

I have read your book with interest, and can understand your attitude. It is a difficult question and one not easily settled.

Your admiring brother-in-law

R. Allison

Manuscript Undated [March 1920]:

Oyama, B.C. March?
1920

Dear Sister Milborough

I have tried to persuade Dolly to go home early in July, but she seems to think she would rather wait till I'm at liberty to go - the end of October. It is a long & trying journey to make alone, and it is only in the hope of seeing you I would suggest it. Atlantic travel is so crowded, & I fear not so comfortable as in the old days. Would it not be possible for you to postpone your departure till later in the year? It seems a pity to miss one another. Dolly is so anxious to see you. Any how we are going to get our passports ready in case an opportunity offers to get away.

Robert Allison to Milborough Mackay, Undated [March 1920], page 1

I have read your book with interest
and can understand your attitude
This is a difficult question, and one
not easily settled.
Your admiring brother-in-law
R. Allison

Robert Allison to Milborough Mackay, Undated [March 1920], page 2

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay, 8 August [1920]

Oyama

BC

Aug 8th

Dearest Mib

Mother has sent me a book from you — or two books, one from her & one from you, both are most acceptable. I really don't know what I shd [should] have done without the books that have been sent to me while out here — with no library & nobody who has new books — except Mrs. Despard sometimes, but hers are unfortunately sometimes the same as mine — Young Visitors and Poor Relations. However I generally am very superior in having several that she hasn't had.

I do hope you did not have a very dreadful time & that you are back safe and sound. I wonder where? Did you have to fill in passports? We have yards of questions to answer about our appearance — Bob managed in the answers to make himself sound quite handsome & me hideous — so at the last question “any special peculiarity” I wanted him to say Plain for himself & Rather pretty for me else they won't recognize us from the description. However he wasn't pleased & quite annoyed with me for wanting to change his “brown hair” into ginger. So I left it especially as I shall look quite as bad as the description by the time I am an hour on board.

I was very interested in your article in the Cornhill — but poor Gen. Dyer & how bad for India.

We have taken berths on the Munedosa sailing from Montreal Nov. 20th. We shall have to leave here about the 14th I suppose — depending upon the amount of snow in the Rockies at the time. I can hardly believe we shall now start after 8 years almost in the same spot — 6 1/2 years absolutely in the same spot never even seeing a train! I am afraid it will be below zero in the Prairie in November — & tho trains are heated almost to extreme — it will be miserable getting out at the long stops. At present it is hard to think of zero — at temperature between 90 & 100 every day. One day it went up to 102. We sleep out on the lawn under the trees with a mosquito netting over us. I feel now as if servants must be an awful nuisance & dreadfully in the way after being without them for years.

It is so stupid of England when she rules a country with a native pop. to pretend the Sword has nothing to do with the Rule. Sometimes we deserve to be called a nation of Hypocrites.

It will nearly be your birthday when you get this — very many happy returns. When the apples are ready to pick I will send you a small box thro' the mail before we leave. Tho I wonder if they will carry all right.

Poor Em she will be glad to hear the children are well & happy.

Poor little Philippa — it is a hard life I'm afraid in front of her. Did you see her husband? If he is all right & a comfort to her then the rest will be more or less in her own hands — because out in the colonies once you have conquered the awful existence then your happiness depends almost altogether on yourself.

With much love & many thanks for the book

Yrs affec

Dorothea Allison

Can't you come home next spring with Em? It seems so awful to miss each other. What do you mean by paying calls at Oyama? I have a darling little spare room, bigger than the cabin of a ship, and a dub and a bath and lavabo and a telephone and a car — so should be deeply hurt if you didn't stop.

Manuscript August [1920]:

[illegible]

I do hope you did not have a very dreadful
time & that you are back safe & and
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in Passports? We have loads of questions
to ask about our appearance -
Bob managed in the answers to make himself
sound quite handsome & the hideous -
So at the last question "any special peculiarity"
I wanted him to say Plain for himself -
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he wasn't pleased & quite annoyed with me
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sailing from Montreal Nov 20th. We
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I can hardly believe we shall ever
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spot. 6 1/2 years absolutely in the same
spot never even seeing a train!
I am afraid it will be below zero in
the Prairie in November & the trains
are heated almost to extreme - it will
be miserable getting out at the long stops
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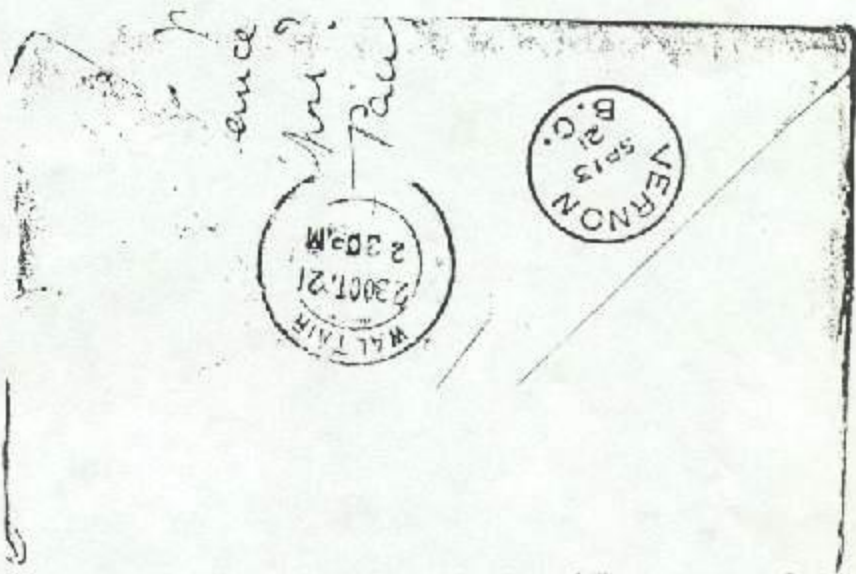
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country with a hot & pop. to pretend to
show her nothing to do with the Rule
Sometimes we deserve to be called a
nation of hypocrites.

It will nearly be your birth day when
you get this - Oh many happy returns
when the apples are ready to pick I will
send you a small box this the week
before we leave. Oh I wonder if they
will carry all right!

Poor Emma will be glad to hear the
children are well & happy

Poor little Philippa - it is a hard life
I am afraid in front of her. Did you
see her husband? If he is all right
& a comfort to her then the rest will be
more or less in her own hands - because
out in the colonies once you have conquered the unequal
fortune then your happiness depends almost altogether on yourself

Hard Life
 Return from home
 Both Dorothea & Bob
 went to England in
 late 1920. were there
 for Xmas. Peter & Linda
 were there spending the
 Mr. C. G. Mackay
 holiday with their Scott-Emeryd Granny. The three Strangers
 came & Judges & Sungen
 stayed too, over Xmas.
 Waltair
 Dances in boat house!
 S. India Madras Presidency



Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay, 8 August [1920], Envelope

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay, Undated [Fall, 1920]

Oyama

BC

Canada

Dearest Mib,

I have just finished "The Eyes"¹ & have been quite useless & hysterical from crying so much. I do think you are mean to make Danny die just for the selfish joy of drawing tears from us. Is Danny Baby Butterworth, the one I remember before Milburga? And is Mr. Dane a sort of Mr. Hammet (or Hammond), the judge I stayed with in Madura. Of course Mrs. Dane is not Mrs. H. I was dreadfully afraid Mary was going to marry the door-mat man. Mrs. Trotter is just like Mrs. Rayburn here, the good lady who was Lady Pentland's maid & is now comfortably wealthy (her own words) & likes to gather Oyama round her in "lawn socials" & other abominations & be very bright and flippant — with a little malice under it for those who do not care to be so patronised!!

Yes, the Prince² drove through one side of Oyama — not our side of the Lake. But I went to see the dear child. He got out of his car — we all gaped having no program ready. He turned red & turned up his collar & then down & stood most shy in the road while the children squeaked out a patriotic song (O Canada) out of tune. Then the Methodist minister (methodists always to the front in America) & shook hands with him, then turned his enormous tummy & beckoned his wife from the roadside & introduced her & she said something very like Pleased to meet yer. The poor Prince was very relieved to get into his car and drive away. I felt hot all down my back & found I was saying aloud Poor boy, poor boy!

Bob says its time for bed just when I am waking up — dear thing he fills my hot water bottle every night. We have had absolute winter for [unreadable number] weeks frost & snow. It is miserable picking apples with your feet in the snow & your hands numb — many days we could not pick because the apples were frozen solid on the trees. We have lost quite a lot, I fear but are lucky compared to some people who have lost half their crop.

Poor little Philippa! I do so hope for her happiness. I expect a baby brings a great deal of happiness & she may like the life very much.

I did enjoy The Young Visitors but I'm sure your Robina wd [would] have been quite as good, if edited by Barrie.

I do so hope to come home but this frozen fruit is quite a setback — & Bob being of the very cautious North of Ireland type (Scotch if ever was) will not make any plans till he knows just what price he has got for every apple on the Ranch & then I think he wd [would] rather stay here & prune the trees. This is home to him. He loves Canada, & never talks of going home because this is home and England is the "Old Country." But then he is Irish. Aren't you glad you're English?

Much love,

Your very affec.

D. Allison

Footnotes:

¹“The Eyes”: The Eyes of Understanding, a book written by Milborough Mackay under the pseudonym C. R. Milton.

²the Prince of Wales, later King Edward III.

Manuscript [Fall, 1920]:

about 1920

Much Love
to
D. Allison
I am a
BC
Canada

Dearest Kid

I have just finished
"The Eyes" & have been
quite useless & hysterical
from crying so much. I
do think you are mean
to make Danny die just
for the selfish joy of draining
tears from us.

So Danny Baby Butter with
the one I remember before
Milburga. And is it
some sort of Mr Hammet.

(Mr Hammond) the judge
I stayed with in Madras
of course Mrs Deane is not
Mr H. I was dreadfully
afraid many was going
to marry the dowd. mat
man. Mr Trotter is
just like Mr Rayburn
here. The good lady who
was Lady Fentlands maid
to is now comfortably wealthy
(her own words) & likes to
gather Pyram around her
in "lawn socials" & other
abominations & he is very bright
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malice under it for those who
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one side of by area - not
on side of the Lake. But
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Bob says its time for bed
just when I am waking
up - dear thing he feels
my ^{hot} little son right. We have
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the snow & one hand numb - many

2
days we could not pick because
the apples were frozen solid
in the trees - we have lost
quite a lot I fear - but
are lucky compared to some
people who have lost half-
their crops.

Poor little Philippa - I do
so hope for her happiness
I expect a baby brings a
great deal of happiness
& she may like the life
very much.

I did enjoy the young visitors
but I'm sure you Robinia
w^d. have been quite as fond
if visited by Bessie -

I do so hope to come home
but this frozen front is
quite a set back - & Bob
being of the very cautious north
of Ireland type (scotch if ever
was) will not make any
plans till he knows just
what ~~price~~ price he has put
for why apple on the Ranch
& then I think he w^d rather
stay here & prune the trees.
This is home to him. He
loves Canada - & never talks
of going home. But this
is home & England is the
"Old Country" but then he is ^{an} Irish.
Auntie & I had some English

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay, 9 September [1921]

Oyama

BC

Canada

Sept 9th

Dearest Mib,

Miss McMasters sent me the paper knife and I got it within a day of my birthday. Thank you so very much — it was good of you to think of me so long before. It is a lovely knife. Bob says we need a silver table to put it on — why a silver table I don't know — because it looks nice & precious, I expect. I'm afraid I am late for your birthday. Very many happy returns, anyway. I have been so busy with fruit since back here, & after the rest and being waited on at home it seemed awful & one felt very sorry for oneself out here. Up to the present we have picked & packed 1400 lbs of cherries, 7000 lbs of apricots, 6800 lbs of pears, 48,000 lbs crabapples, 4,600 lbs plums. And after this we are just going to start apples — probably 200,000 lbs. A lovely crop but a lot of work.

We have quite a nice lot of labour this year — better than usual in that way. And they happen to be rather nice people — one is an Oxford man, and old, or rather ex school master & one is a parson's son. So I have got up several little dances which we have over the boat house in a nice big empty room with a balcony hanging over the lake. Very lovely. It means more work making food for refreshments but it is rather jolly. Agnes Rimmer is also out here & picking fruit for us. It is very nice having her. The bright red apples against the blue sky rejoice her heart, though she finds the life hard as indeed we all do. The weather after great heat is almost too cool at present & tonight we are sitting round a log fire but it makes work easier & yesterday I bottled a dozen bottles of peaches amongst many other things I had to do.

I am glad mother got safely down to Buckfast. I felt worried after she had been ill. She is wonderfully good to the children & they really are devoted to her. I don't know if I'll have the courage to go home again. It is such agony to leave it all behind and turn one's face to this wilderness again, — a beautiful wilderness but still a wilderness. I expect you feel the same sort of thing about India. When do you expect to go home again? No chance of your coming this way, I suppose? We mean to go down to the Pacific coast for a few weeks this winter. I should really like to go down to California, or over to Honolulu, or even Japan, but must wait a little after our expensive trip home last winter.

Much love and very many thanks for the beautiful knife. Yes, we have a dub and bathroom combined, a cellar, a dressing room, spare room, bedroom, drawing room & dining room (joined by an arch!) a kitchen, back kitchen. So the paper knife will feel quite at home! really!

Loving remembrances to Charles.

Your affectionate

Dorothea Allison

Bob gave me a nice Kodak for my birthday and this is one of the first snaps. Agnes Rimmer took it of Bob & me picking apples. I wish you could see the colour of them! It is a 12 year old tree and loaded with red apples.



Dorothea and Robert Allison picking apples

Manuscript [1921]:

[illegible]

48,000 lbs crab apples
4,600 lbs plums. And after
this we are just going to start
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is also out here & picking fruit for us.
It is my nice having her.

She bright red apples against
the blue sky rejoice her heart -
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The weather after great heat is almost
too cool at present & tonight we are
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to go down to California or over
to Honolulu - or even Japan - but
must wait a little after our
separative trip ^{home} this winter.
Much love & my many thanks
for the beautiful knife ^{room} ^{embroid}
you've had a doubt ^{to} a cellar
a dressing room, a spare room,
bedroom, drawing room & dining
room joined by arch, kitchen, back kitchen
So the paper knife will feel
quite at home! really!
Love remembrances to Charles.
Yr affec. ally
Dorothea Allison

Hard Life
 Return from home
 Both Dorothea & Bob
 went to England in
 late 1920. were there
 for Xmas. Peter & Linda
 were there spending the
 Mr. C. G. Mackay
 holiday with their Scott-Emeryd & Granny. The three Strangers
 came & Judges & Ungelins
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 Waltair
 Dances in boat house!
 S. India Madras Presidency

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay 9 September [1921], Envelope

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay, 11 December 1922

Dec 11th

Oyama BC Canada

Dearest Mib — I hope this will do but it is the best I can do for the present at any rate, as we are in the midst of a Zero spell. 38 degrees of frost, 6 below Zero last night & a horrid wind blowing. So we can't very well drive in to town (Vernon) until it slackens up a little. Even to post this I must walk 4 miles in the snow, & I am such a fool at getting frostbite — it seems to attack me quicker than most people. An awful country to live in, isn't it!

With love & in haste

Dorothea Allison

[attached sheet]

I, Dorothea Allison of Oyama, B.C. Canada, hereby appoint Milborough Mary Mackay of Waltair, Madras Presidency, India, to act as my attorney in all matters concerning the Estate of my deceased brother, Christopher William Scott Coward (late Indian Police, Madras Presidency.)

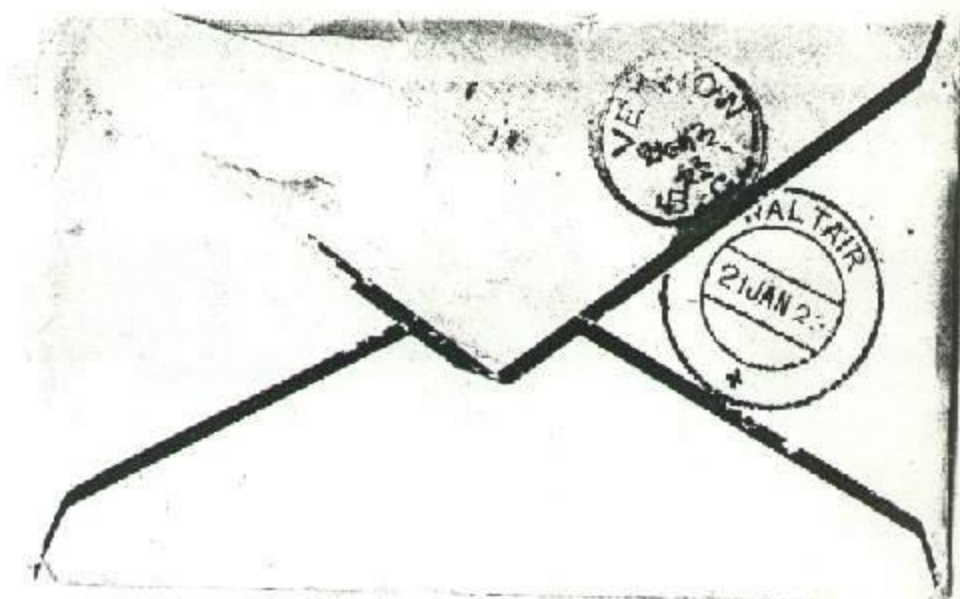
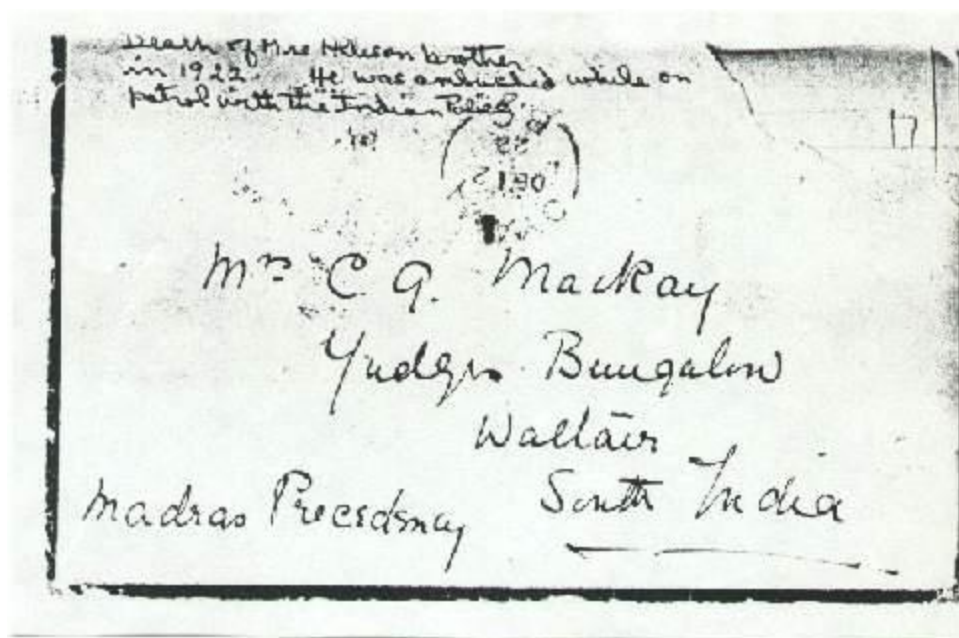
Dorothea Allison

Dec. 11th 1922

Manuscript 1922:

Dec 11th
 Oyama B.C. Canada
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 but it is the best I can do for the
 present at any rate, as we are
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 light & a hard blowing. So we
 can't say will chide in to town tomorrow
 until it warms up a little. Even
 to post this I must walk 4 miles
 in the snow. & I am such a fool at
 getting frost bite - it seems to attack me
 quicker than most people. An awful
 country & live in town it!
 With love I am Katie D. Allison

Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay, 11 December 1922



Dorothea Allison to Milborough Mackay, 11 December 1922, Envelope