

Looking for Julia Dudley

Marjolie Schreiber Kinsey

The initial appearance of the institution that would become Kobe College depended on the involvement and activity of Eliza Talcott and Julia Dudley. The purpose of this brief paper is to look at Julia Dudley's family and country for a sense of the context that motivated her and her idea of her calling. The ideas about Julia Dudley suggested here were formed by setting family letters which are now in the Kobe College Archives against the nature of the countryside in which she was raised and in the context of the culture and religion of America at the time when she made her decision to go to Japan. It is important to recognize from the beginning that this was shortly after the American Civil War and before modernist theology from Germany had begun to temper ideas about the mission of the church.

When I joined Julia's family through marriage in 1970, the memories of Julia were vague, several generations removed, but she was as great a source of pride as the relation of other branches of the family to Governor Bradford of the Massachusetts Colony or to Cotton Mather, the powerful religious leader of the northern colonies. The long trek from the east coast to the middle of America, first accomplished by covered wagon, meant that there were few material souvenirs of these early settlers—a few pieces of New England furniture, some handwoven items. But tangible memories of Julia, physical objects brought from Japan by her or by her cousin and colleague Martha Barrows, had become part of the numerous households descending from Julia's sister, Mary Dudley Gross. The aunts of my husband, Douglas Kinsey, remembered Japanese armour and masks in the hall of the house

where they were raised in Yankton, North Dakota, the frontier town to which Julia's sister and her husband moved shortly before Julia left for Japan.

Mary Dudley Gross also saved letters from her sister and other members of her family. Several years ago, Douglas' sister, Dea Kinsey Andrews, and I read through some of those letters with their aunt, Winifred Gross Felton. This is how I began to get some picture of Julia's life. Julia was dead before Winifred's generation was born so her interpretations were based on a few memories from her grandmother, Mary Dudley Gross, along with the sparse recollections of her father, Dean Dudley Gross, and his younger brother, Dr. Cheney Gross. These letters, which are now at Kobe College, are often not clearly dated and include letters to and from a variety of Marys and Julias. It was very typical to name a child after a favorite relative but this devotion makes a confusing situation for a twentieth century reader of the letters. More work must be done in sorting the letters, so this paper is based only on those which can be securely attributed to Julia through events recollected by Winifred Felton.

Julia's parents had migrated to Illinois from Vermont although her father's family had recently been from Connecticut. Julia's mother, Mary Barrows Dudley, kept in close contact with her family in Vermont by letter. At first the letters were hand delivered by travelers, but regular postal service quickly came to the frontier. Naperville, part of the sprawling greater Chicago area today, was then part of a generous scattering of farming communities on the virgin prairie. The rocky fields of New England had long since become unable to feed the growing population of the Eastern cities. By the middle of the nineteenth century, the "bread basket," the center of grain production, was moving from Ohio to Illinois and would continue westward to even broader fields.

Julia had the benefit of an excellent education for that period of time when most rural school systems extended for only eight

grades. She was sent to Rockford Seminary, forty miles away at Rockford, Illinois. This private academy provided a general education for young women and was considered a good credential for teaching the first eight grades. This type of secondary education, public or private, would be a prerequisite to admission to the bachelor's degree program in any of the colleges that accepted women. Such colleges had been proliferating in the middle west since Oberlin College idealistically opened its doors as a co-educational institution in 1834. Indeed, all these colleges had their own preparatory programs because of the dearth of secondary education. Many students, male and female, finished their education with the "preparatory department." In the same way, the seminary education was considered quite adequate for the educated man or woman at this period.

A great change in the nature of American higher education occurred after the Civil War, the time when Eliza Talcott and Julia Dudley were already experienced teachers and were moving to Japan. The younger women who followed them and who developed the academic potential of Kobe College were the product of a new emphasis on higher education which saw the virtual elimination of the "seminary" as Julia Dudley had known it. For instance, both Rockford Seminary and Mt. Holyoke, another school with Kobe College connections, developed bachelor's degree programs and their secondary or preparatory programs eventually withered away. But Julia Dudley would never have experienced this vision of higher education. The earlier pattern of Rockford Seminary was probably in her mind when she and Eliza Talcott developed Kobe Home.

The choice of Rockford for the education of both Julia and Mary was certainly motivated by the proximity of their uncle and aunt, the Reverend and Mrs. N.C. Clarke of Elgin, Illinois. Mrs. Clarke was Julia Barrows, variously addressed in letters as Julia, "sister" or "auntie." The fact that this uncle was one of the distinguished clergymen of the area was surely an important part

of the religious context around Julia. We know that she thought of him as an important advisor and that the last few years before her decision to go to Japan were spent teaching school in Elgin and living with the Clarkes. However the whole social context of these rural communities was built around the churches as far as people of substance were concerned. The letters between Julia and her sister Mary are full of meetings and social events connected with church activities. Ideas are discussed and news is conveyed on these occasions. Religious interest and questioning the quality of one's personal religious life were a natural part of the Dudley context. Julia's decision to enter the mission field did not have to come as a major change but could occur as a natural development.

However, many of the years between the time that Julia left Rockford Seminary and her departure for Japan were spent as a teacher in the public schools. The letters record some of these experiences. She is nineteen when she takes on a one room school in a community not too far from the Clarkes. It is referred to as a "dutch" community which probably means German. She has twenty students of various ages and the building to take care of. She writes cheerfully about her work, but the letters of her mother and her aunt belie this. (letters dated April 6 and April 12, no year) The school has not had a teacher for some time, and these "dutch" do not think that women can teach. Eventually the situation must have broken down, for she is living at home by that next December and feeling that she is "selfish." (December 6, 1860) Is this because she gave up in the face of an uncomfortable situation? How would this motivate her to keep on against difficulties later?

At the same time that she is experiencing her problems with the school situation, her younger sister is at Rockford Seminary. Julia's attitude is not to write about her problems but to probe her sister for what might be bothering her in this first adventure away from home. Is she lonely? Julia takes on a psychological role,

that of counselor, which seems prescient of the sort of ministry that she would carry in Japan, that of guide, counselor and teacher rather than preacher.

In a letter to Mary in September 28, 1862, Julia describes her current teaching as an enjoyable situation. She is also busy discussing boyfriends and prospects with her sister. The letters stop for a number of years because Mary finishes Rockford and returns to Naperville where she marries a young man of German descent, Daniel Nathaniel Gross. Julia is charged with taking care of her ailing mother as well as teaching. Sometime after her mother's death in 1867, Julia moves to Elgin where she can be under the counsel of the Clarke family. In an undated letter, probably from 1870, we hear her writing to Mary that she has been teaching for only five months in Elgin but that "I am beginning to think it's my future." With what tone of voice should this phrase be read? From what we know of Julia's future life, it can be safely assumed that she is not looking forward to teaching for the rest of her life in the same region where she was born. The bloom of learning how to teach has faded away. No viable proposals of marriage have appeared. The Civil War had decimated the ranks of men of Julia's age, and many of those who did return chose the opportunity to venture into the newly opened land further west. Mary's husband will do this. So what is the lively Julia Dudley going to do with the rest of her life?

By this time it has long been easy to visit the east coast by railway so it is not strange that Julia and Mary have paid visits to their relatives in New England and have developed good friendships with cousins such as Martha Barrows, who will follow Julia to Japan. Both Mary and Julia are in Middlebury, Vermont, with Barrows relatives in the summer of 1872. Mary is taking some time to rest and recuperate from the care of small children. Her letter to her husband in Naperville holds no clue that their family is moving to the frontier of the Dakota territories, but it is likely that she is taking the opportunity to visit relatives and gather

strength before moving to that more demanding and inaccessible spot. One would also expect to hear of Julia's impending departure for Japan. She will sail from San Francisco the next March. Yet by September 4, 1872, when Julia is back in Elgin and separated from her sister again, she writes only that she has not seen a certain man who has been appearing in her letters but about whom she seems to have questions and that "I don't know . . . but I'm not worried about the future."

The record of Julia's correspondance with the American Board begins in December of that year with a letter written from Elgin to the secretary, N.G. Clark. At this time she knows that she is on her way to Japan in a few months. In February she writes Clark from Yankton, her sister's home in the Dakota territories, which she rightfully describes as "the frontier." The major evidence of her departure in the family records was a letter from the Federal Government of the United States of America stating that she will have to sign the oath of allegiance in order to receive a passport. This small incident supports the evidence of her independent nature, that she was convinced of principles that led her to question a blind following of form. This act of omission questioned the authority of any nation over the higher allegiance that she owed to her God.

The picture that emerges of Julia Dudley in her early years is of an independent but not unusual woman. She might never have ventured into the mission field if she had found the fitting situation in which to mother a family of her own. But she had a grounding in her faith and close counsel within her family which would keep the mission field open to her as an option. At this time missionary work held a romantic allure for many thoughtful and venturesome young people of good education. Mission work was not just traveling to areas considered exotic, a kind of self-indulgence, but it was doing something of significant service. Julia needed this kind of justification, a defeat of the "selfishness" that she dispaired of in 1860.

It is interesting that her persona in Japan leaves behind the idea of the general education of youth, her experience both pleasant and unpleasant in America, and takes on the task of the specifically Christian education of adults and the service aspects of a ministry. It is obvious from her later letters to the American Board from Japan that she saw Kobe Home not as a Christian school but a school to train Christian workers. While the two ideas are not antithetical and many Kobe College graduates became distinguished Christian workers, the idea of training Christian workers did not entail the development of the sort of academic institution for the collegiate education of youth that was becoming the model in America at the time that Julia was beginning her ministry among the people of Hyogo and Shikoku. She seemed to feel a need for a change of vocation when she accepted the appointment to Japan. Her development of the Kobe Women's Evangelical School, offering training as religious educators to adult women, seems appropriate for a woman who herself accepted a reorientation of her personal direction within her adult years. The training course was indeed complementary to the education offered by Kobe College. The subsequent history of the College shows that Julia never lost her interest in the school. She is present as friend, advisor and even interim administrator. However she seems to find a greater satisfaction than she ever did as a school teacher in America by being a "minister" in Japan. She also develops for Japan something comparable to the programs in religious education that are beginning to be organized in America.

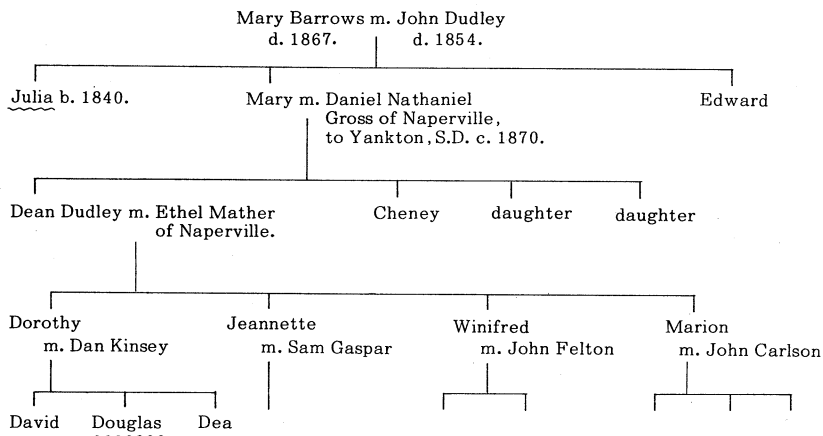
But would she have made so many distinctive contributions to education or the church in America? It is most likely that she would have continued as a school teacher, making a valuable contribution to society but nothing that would set her apart from a very usual role for a woman in America. By making a decision to change her life, by breaking with her comfortable and homely situation, by accepting new roles in new circumstances, she was able to accomplish things that she probably would not have ven-

tured in America. The discipline of her religious background and the mobility fostered by the constantly developing American frontier surely provided the basis for such a decision.

本稿は、1986—87年度 Bryant Drake 客員教授 Marjolie S. Kinsey 先生が、御夫君 Douglas Kinsey 先生の御先祖になる Julia E. Dudley 女史について、6月23日の講演とは別に、特に『学院史料』第6号のため、御帰国前の多用の時間を割いて書きおろして下さったものである。(離日は8月12日。本誌口絵の御夫妻の写真は、当日、大阪空港にて撮影したもの。)

本稿の寄稿に関しても、前述の講演会と同様、故 David D. Larson 教授・院長顧問の御示唆、お力添えに与っている。

なお、Dudley 女史と Douglas Kinsey 先生との縁故の次第を下に記す。この図は6月23日の講演会のため Kinsey 先生から提供された資料に基づいている。



d: 逝去, b: 誕生, m: 結婚