

**CORRESPONDENCE OF  
BERNETTE CHASE KEMP AND ANNA DURKEE SMITH KEMP**

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Early Years of the E.C. Kemp Family

Carl and Bernette's marriage

1904-1918

Janet Kemp Doell's mother, Anna Smith Kemp, and her friendship with Bernette Chase in Melrose, Mass.

Bernette married Carl Kemp who entered the US Consular Service. They corresponded with Anna from postings abroad prior to WWI.

After Bernette's death, Carl married Anna, his affection evident in his letters

Comments by Janet, daughter of Carl and Anna, interspersed with letters.

Anna's privileged childhood after her mother's death.

Anna declined college but traveled to Europe.

In 1904 Anna met Nettie's suitor, Carl Kemp, who became an FSO

Correspondence from Nettie and Carl in Tunis reveal Carl's affection for Anna.

Daughter Marjorie born. They entice Anna to come and visit them.

Nettie's life filled with her child, garden, pets, servants, the American colony, tea parties and hot weather.

American colony making surgical supplies for the American Red Cross.

Daughter, age 1 1/2, speaks in English, French, Arabic.

Anna had a nervous breakdown in 1937.

Carl supposes war will be declared on Germany, and feels it unpatriotic to go home while war is on.

Anna's letters from New England mean much to Carl and Bernette.

Carl's Silver star decoration must be turned in to State Department

Carl's notes of affection to Anna are more frequent.

Carl cannot recommend foreign travel either for comfort or safety.

Anna elects not to visit them abroad.  
She responds with difficulty in writing to Carl.

Nettie growing tired of keeping house, servants problems and homesickness.

Life in foreign lands would be unbearable without children.

Nettie, Carl and Marjorie leave Tunis for the States.

Weak and pregnant, Nettie victim of flu epidemic of 1918.

She died a few days after landing in New York.

Marjorie left with relatives in Florida

Carl went alone to Bucharest; sent for Anna to join him in fall of 1919.

### Carl and Anna's marriage

1918-1925

Young consular officers unable to return to US for years have difficulty finding

Carl sends travel instructions to Anna for trip to Europe.

During 3-week voyage and storm, many crises among passengers.

Carl meets Anna at Marseilles. They are married in Paris Nov. 1919.

After diplomatic lunch, Anna waits to practice before smoking cigarette.

Feeling starved for outside news, request newspapers from home.

Attend the Grand Ball in Bucharest; "once is enough for Rumanian night life."

Wish for a way to have Carl's daughter come and join them.

Layette for Anna's expected baby came from Boston Red Cross. Anna feels those having children in far off land deserve most anything.

To rent house they wanted, they had to buy all furnishings.

Four servants cost them only \$16 a month.

Disastrous year of illness for Anna's sisters at home.

Wearing her corset while pregnant very uncomfortable.

Wants a cow more than anything to have good milk for baby.

Excitement among servants with shooting, chasing with knives, fires, etc.

Carl transferred to Budapest.

Trip together to Vienna

Back at home, 1920. Carl's daughter meets new mother; adjustments for both.

Varied enjoyable activities include opera, entertaining, trip to mountains.

Buying furniture takes all their savings and then some.

Wants to educate children at home. Anna taught by Calvert system.

### A Eulogy by C. Ernest Kemp

1978

Anna's family center of her existence, and providing a home.

Terrible conditions in Rumania difficult for Anna.

In Budapest she regained strength and enjoyed its cultural advantages.

Son remembers living in places where friends succumbed to fatal diseases.

Family always close-knit. Mother's role to run the family and provide support to father's position, which she filled with understanding and dedication.

Family separated during children's college years, but remained close

Mother stayed in Bremen with husband during war, others evacuated

Move to Melrose, Mass., after 1947 retirement; Anna again became "part of her original family"

Carl died in 1971

Looking back, Anna felt she had had a wonderful life