

**THE STANLEY-WILDER SAGA
1862 - 1962**

**Letters and Papers from China
By Charles Alfred Stanley
and
George D. and Gertrude S. Wilder**

PART FIVE: 1939 - 1962

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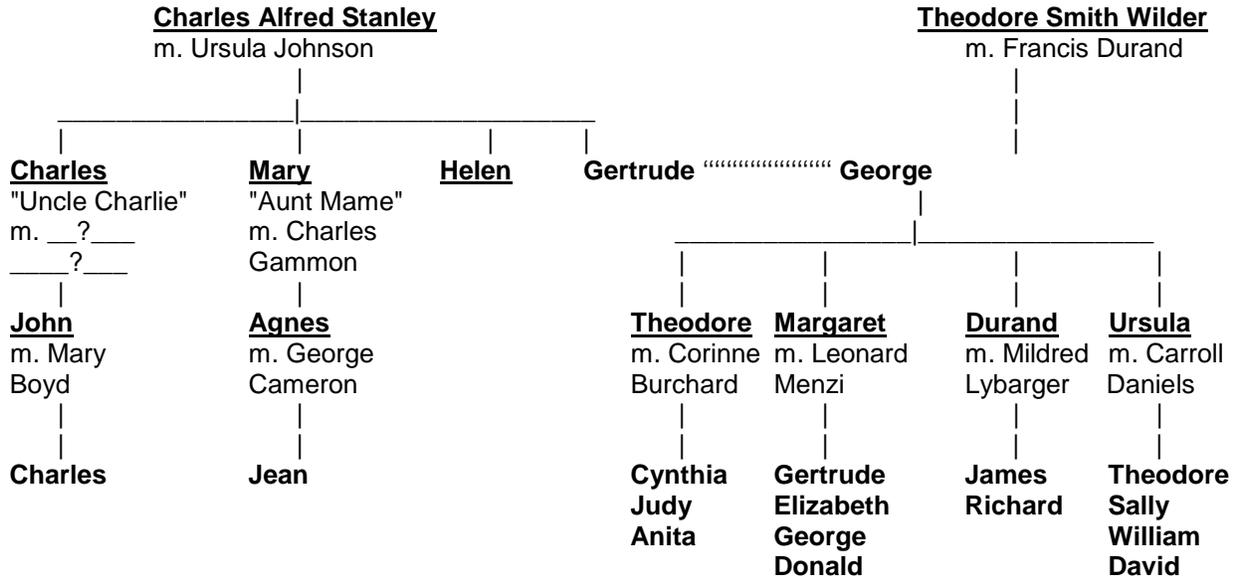
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THE STANLEY AND WILDER FAMILIES — FOUR GENERATIONS



INTRODUCTION

In the early 1860s, two passionately idealistic young men, both of them born and raised on farms in Ohio, began journeys that took them in totally different directions. Theodore Smith Wilder went as a soldier, by rail and on foot, to a war that was to cut his life short in 1870, when he died from the delayed effects of an un-removed musket ball. Charles Alfred Stanley traveled by sailing ship with his bride, Ursula, as one of the first American missionary families to reach North China, where he lived until his retirement in 1904. The two men's destinies were joined in 1894 when Theodore Wilder's only son George was married to Charles' oldest daughter, Gertrude.

The Stanley-Wilder Saga is the story of these two men, Theodore and Charles, and of their children, George and Gertrude, told largely in their own words, in letters, diaries, and journals, over the century from 1861 to 1962.

Theodore Wilder was an idealistic Oberlin College student in June, 1861, when Abraham Lincoln issued a call for volunteers to take up arms to defend and preserve the Union. From then until he was severely wounded in the Battle of Cedar Mountain in August, 1862, he kept a detailed diary, and later wrote the official "History of Company C of the Seventh Regiment, Ohio Volunteer Infantry." **Volume I** of the Stanley-Wilder Saga combines these two works under the title "The Praying Company", the nickname given to Company C because of its practice of holding regular devotional services twice weekly when it was not actively engaged in battle.

Charles Stanley, having recently graduated from Lane Seminary in Cincinnati, sailed in 1862 to Tientsin, China, where he struggled for the next 45 years with only modest success, in an often hostile environment, to establish and maintain Christian churches in that city and in a far-flung network of villages. His frequent letters back to his sponsoring organization, the Congregational Church's American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, constitute **Volume II** of the series.

Volume III tells the story of the combined Stanley-Wilder family, beginning in 1894 when Theodore Wilder's son George married Charles Stanley's daughter, Gertrude in Tientsin, not long after George had arrived there to begin his career as a Congregational Church missionary. After the great anti-foreign upheaval of the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, George spent the greater part of his professional career training native Chinese pastors and teaching the Chinese language to new arrivals in the North China Union Language School. During this time the Wilders experienced disastrous

floods, famine, revolution, civil war, and foreign invasions, all of which are described in fascinating detail in their weekly letters to family members in the U.S.

Volume IV shifts perspective temporarily to that of the Wilders' daughter Margaret and her husband Leonard Menzi, whom she met at Oberlin College and married in 1922, when Leonard began a five year stint as Principal of the North China American School in Tungchou.¹

Volume V covers George and Gertrude Wilder's post-retirement years, beginning in 1939 when they returned from a final one-year furlough to the U.S.

Neither George nor Gertrude Wilder fit the common stereotype of the missionary as someone primarily interested in "saving heathen souls." George Wilder was an athlete, a scholar and a scientist, as well as a teacher. He was an avid outdoorsman who loved nature, hiking, camping, and hunting. In college he was pitcher and captain of the baseball team, and both he and Gertrude were still playing a vigorous game of tennis at the age of 70.

Very much a scientist at heart, he studied zoology, botany, geology and mineralogy in college. He had taken an interest in birds from his youth growing up on the South Dakota prairie frontier where, as a volunteer reporter of bird migrations for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Biological Survey, he began a life-long practice of recording every species of bird that he observed each day. Later in life he was recognized internationally by scholars in the field of ornithology, three species of birds having been named "*wilderi*" in honor of his having been the first to identify them. With his friend, Hugh Hubbard, he wrote *Birds of Northeastern China*, a 700-page volume published in 1938 by the Peking Natural History Society, of which he was a founding member and its first President.

He also wrote, with James Ingram, *Analysis of Chinese Characters*, still considered to be "far and away the most useful analysis of Chinese characters for the beginner or intermediate student."² He was the editor of the Fifth Edition of Fenn's Chinese-English Pocket Dictionary, published in 1942 by Harvard University Press. On

¹ Margaret's sister, Ursula, has written her own memoir of growing up in China, under the title, *The Willow Wand: A Childhood in China at the End of the Empire.*"

² From the end-note to the 1974 Dover edition.

one of his year-long furloughs to the U.S. he took the time to learn apiculture and trained many Chinese in modern methods of bee-keeping, which they, in turn, spread widely throughout North China.

Gertrude Wilder, a teacher in her own right as well as a companion and help-mate to her husband, was also an accomplished amateur artist, responsible for many of the illustrations in the Wilder-Hubbard « bird book » and numerous watercolor sketches of life in China.

The China to which the Wilders returned in 1939 had been suffering for several years under Japanese military occupation. Japan had begun its colonial expansion into the continent of Asia as far back as the 1890s with its victory in the Russo-Japanese War, eventually gaining control of Korea and Manchuria to the north of China proper. More recently the Japanese army had encroached on China's northern provinces in the early 1930s, and begun a full-scale conquest of the rest of the country in August 1937, shortly after the Wilders had left China on their last year-long furlough prior to reaching the American Board's mandatory retirement age of 70.

By 1939, the leaders of the Nationalist government of Chiang Kai Shek had retreated westward from their capital in Nanking, to Chungking, in remote and relatively inaccessible Szechuan province. As the Japanese front had advanced toward the south and west, the Nationalist troops had fallen back, while Mao Tse-dung's Eighth Route Army infiltrated behind Japanese lines to organize resistance and harass Japanese troops throughout the countryside, provoking severe reprisals and collective punishment against villages thought to be cooperating with the anti-Japanese forces. While the U.S. was officially neutral in this conflict and Americans were not being mistreated by the Japanese military authorities, it was a turbulent and uncertain world into which the Wilders were prepared to reenter in the Spring of 1939.

An Overview of Volume V

At the beginning of **Chapter One** (Return to a War-torn China) we find the Wilders 900 miles out to sea on their way back to China aboard the Merchant Ship “Ivaran.” We get our first hints of what they are to find when they arrive in the coded warning contained in a letter received from friends in Japanese-occupied China that they should be prepared to find « lorspemb » (problems) there.

Chapter Two (At Home in Occupied Peking) describes life in Peking during 1940 when the US was still officially neutral in Japan’s war against China. During this time the Wilders experience a form of dual reality, in which they themselves are treated with courtesy and respect by Japanese officials and friends, while all around them they observe the brutality and terror with which the Japanese army is attempting to control the population in the surrounding countryside.

Chapter Three (Forebodings of a World at War) contains increasingly ominous forebodings of the coming of a second World War, ending with a letter to a Japanese friend and fellow ornithologist, Baron Kafruda, which is interrupted by news of the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

Chapter Four (“Under the Protection of the Imperial Japanese Army”) begins with a description of events immediately following Pearl Harbor. For the next 15 months the Wilders’ life becomes progressively more difficult, as their work is curtailed, food becomes increasingly scarce and prohibitively expensive, and Chinese are forbidden to have contact with foreign “enemies”. There are rumors of repatriation, but diplomatic talks eventually break down and the rumors change to speculation about possible internment, which turns out to be accurate as they are transported to a “Civilian Assembly Center” in Weih sien, Shantung province.

In **Chapter Five** (Weih sien, the Test) describes life in the “Courtyard of the Happy Way,” a former Presbyterian mission compound converted by the addition of barbed wire and guard towers into a concentration camp for 1,500 Western nationals.

Chapter Six (Repatriation Voyage) describes the Wilders’ voyage to the U.S. on the prisoner exchange ship Gripsholm, in the form of a narrative that focuses especially on the various species of birds observed from its deck during the two-month trip from Shanghai to New York City.

Chapters Seven (Like the Sun at his Setting) and **Eight** (When There is Righteousness in the Heart) deal with the Wilders' last years. George Wilder died in 1946, not long after a nostalgic visit to Huron and Yangton on the South Dakota prairie, where he had lived as a teenage boy in the 1880s. Gertrude lived on with her daughter Margaret's family for another 16 years, toward the end of which she dictated "Random Jottings," an engaging memoir of her family's life in China from 1862 onward.

Throughout the document we hear echoes of events in the wider world, marking the progress of the ground war in Europe and naval battles in the Pacific. We can also follow such domestic threads as the courtship of Gertrude's cousin, John Stanley and Mary Boyd, their marriage, and the birth of their first child, another Charles Alfred Stanley.

While nearly all of the material contained in this and earlier volumes is in the form of personal letters, diaries and other documents written by (or to) members of the Wilder family, we have supplemented these texts with excerpts from contemporary newspaper reports and from other published accounts that expand on events mentioned only briefly in their own writings. We have also added brief synopses listing the major items that appear in each letter and in each month of diary entries.

We have been fortunate in being able to create a web site (www.weihsien.menzi.org) containing copies of Gertrude Wilder's watercolors of wild flowers painted during this period and of scenes in the Weihsien camp (both of which were smuggled out in the bottom of her sewing basket), as well as of the ports at which the Gripsholm called on its way back to the US (www.gripsholm.menzi.org). The added dimension that these drawings bring to the text of the narrative makes it all the more tragic that her earlier depictions of their life in China did not, like these, make it past the Weihsien concentration camp guards' final inspection.

An Epilogue, consisting of letters and first-hand reports from friends, and news bulletins received by Gertrude Wilder from 1946 to the early 1950s, chronicles the fall of Nationalist China and the beginnings of life in the "new China," told from the viewpoint of the small band of American missionaries who stayed on in hope of continuing their work, albeit under difficult conditions. Their hopes for the future, after receiving some encouragement from the new central government, are brought to an abrupt end in 1951 with the beginning of the Korean War and the expulsion of the remaining U.S. citizens,

bringing to an end the saga that began with Charles and Ursula Stanley's 1862 arrival in Tientsin.

ATTENTION!

The Japanese Army is coming soon to protect Japanese civilians living in China. The Japanese Army is an army of strict discipline, protecting good citizens. Civil servants must seek to maintain peace and order. Members of the community must live together peacefully and happily. With the return of Japanese businessmen to China, businesses will prosper once more. Every house must fly a Japanese flag to welcome the Japanese.

Japanese Army Headquarters

Translation of a leaflet dropped by Japanese warplanes in February, 1938. Cited in Norman Cliff, *Courtyard of the Happy Way*, p. 140.

Location of future home: The College of Chinese Studies, Peking.
Be careful what you write. Don't use the term "Japs."
May be war in Europe by the time we arrive.
Franco enters Madrid.
How can a good God tolerate evil? To make it a moral universe.
We must keep doing our part, even if we don't seem to be winning.
See Bosworth's "Summary of Christian Belief."
Hope to visit Japanese friends - bird men - in Tokyo.



m/s Ivaran 4955 GT
S. Holter-Sørensen, Oslo

George D. Wilder

Over 900 miles west of San Pedro
Third day out on the MS "Ivaran"
March 25th, 1939

Dear Margaret and Ypsi folks,

We got your letter in Alameda, Mar, and I answered it in Beverly Hills, sending the copy of the "Gang's" statement. Or was that while still in Alameda? On the steamer we were surprised to find about 30 steamer letters after we supposed that everything had gone to the agent in the city. The Captain had them as soon as he arrived Tuesday night and told us it was the biggest mail he ever saw. But your two last letters were in it and now we are trying to answer one or two a day as we go along. So here goes for yours, to at least answer its questions.

Our address hereafter is "College of Chinese Studies, Peking, China." You know that it is a fine big lot of Anfu Club buildings down east on the first street north of the East Four Pailous³ near Lung Fu Ssu. But probably that does not mean anything to you. You go north from the Hatamen, past Tengshih K'ou, where the American Board is, a third of a mile to the four archways, and then turn right a half mile or less.

³* Pailou: Chinese *pai* (tablet) + *lou* (tower). In Chinese architecture, a decorative or monumental gateway constructed of beams and lintels, usually with three openings, the central one higher than the others. Here it has four arches.

We got your statement of the interest on that fixed deposit, and were interested to see if there was any more. As we had said we could make the amount \$500, add the \$6.00 from Van Tyne and then there is about \$80.00 more to make it up. We will be interested to know how you use this, but it isn't necessary for you to say. If you have a really good use for it, such as to prevent paying interest or to pay the doctor you know, why we may as well send a check for that \$80.

Of course you will be careful when you write hereafter not to say too much, or anything about the Japanese, and do not call them "Japs" or say anything disrespectful of their army or their emperor. We are their friends, and even if we disapprove of what they do, we do not tell it or show our feelings.

We neither of us have had any cold symptoms since the first three or four days after leaving you. I attribute most of the cure to simple salt water douches two or three times a day. They must not be too strong, just taste pleasantly salty, you know.

Yesterday we had some sun and today it is sunny all the time with blue sea and some swell, but our good ship is so heavily laden that we swing up and down the swells very deliberately. It is not at all sea-sickening, especially if we lie in our very comfortable bunks and read.

Our stateroom is the biggest we ever had, even counting the "President Grant" when we came to the U.S. There are twin beds seven feet apart with a sofa and writing table between them, a double wardrobe about five feet wide at the foot of one bed, a good heater at the foot of the other bed and a washbowl of the modern home type on the other wall beside the door. I will have to make a diagram. The room actually measures 11 feet each way. Without turning on the heat we are about 70 degrees all the time. It was too hot with the heat on the first day.

Glad you conquered your cold, Mar, but you would do it better if you would relax every day and get more sleep at night. The same to Len.

In Frisco I went into the Chinatown papers' office building and bought a daily paper in Chinese. A big headline said that "England Loans Money to Support China Currency" and under it, "Japan Sets the Day to Prohibit Use of China's Currency." Well it is a pity that all the nations are so at cross purposes and that there may be war in Europe everywhere when we get to Japan. Our only news so far is that Franco is to

enter Madrid tomorrow. The big question is, Will the Italians get out of Spain and will England give up Gibraltar to Franco?

We must go to tea to be friendly with the other seven passengers. We are a nice friendly family.

* * * * *

(Later)

Have had tea with pilot Capt. Fleming, Mr. Murphy and your Mother, and finished up her mile of walking up and down the 50 yards of deck.

You ask "God is just and powerful so why can such conditions prevail?" - the everlasting question. The best help I get is from considering the very nature of our moral universe. A world with moral, free agents, is evidently far better than just a machine world with no love or moral sense. That is the kind of world we have, and if God were to step in and put it to rights whenever we men made mistakes and produced such conditions it would cease to be a moral world and God would not be just and honest.

Prof. Bosworth's statement of our objective and methods is very helpful to me in confirming what we ought to go on and do about it. Let me see if I can remember it. I have quoted it a few times of late.

"In order to believe in Jesus it is necessary first of all to see what his ideals are and how he proposes to realize them. They stand out in the Gospels;

- God is a powerful heavenly father, near at hand. All men should pray to him and work with him for an honest and friendly world.
- Men should work together with invincible good will for human brotherhood.
- Men may count with growing conviction on an opportunity after death to continue their work for the common good."

There we have the objective stated in three forms and the method of accomplishing it. If one sets out on that program it is easy to feel secure. Whether we can see the plan winning out or not we have to go on with "invincible good will" - on our part anyway.

Thanks for the China Journal. Sowerby writes that it is always confiscated in the Peking post office. I lost two before they arrived and two after, while in the U.S. I am taking them back to China, as I have a complete set from the beginning. If you should run across one or two let me know and save them for me.

I hope that we shall have time so that I can call on one or two of my Japanese friends in Tokyo - the bird men.

That investment does not deprive us of anything now and probably never will, unless we get down to our last \$500.

We did not get the letters from Len and the children, but they might beat us to Kobe if you thought to send them there to the care of Mr. Hackett, the Treasurer of the Japan Mission.

Just started cod liver oil and yeast again.

* * * * *

(To be continued)

Wish you cousins could get to know each other better.
Touring Beverly Hills. Visit to Authors' Club.
Against gambling, even in the ship's pool.

George D. Wilder

MS "Ivaran" 1,200 miles along the 3 deg. North latitude. to
143 deg. West longitude. Fourth day out from San Pedro, the
port of the enormous city of Los Angeles.

March 26th, 1939, Sunday Eve.

(To each one of the four groups of grandchildren in Ypsilanti, Penn Yan, Harrisburg and Philadelphia)

Dear Teddy, Gertrude, Betty Ann, Jimmie and Dick, Nita, Billy,
Sally, David, George; and if they can get anything out of it also Cindy,
Judy and Donald.

Just look that fine list over and see if you can put the right last names on to every one on the spur of the moment and without a mistake. I am afraid that you can't all do it and I wish you could get that well acquainted with each other.

We had a lot of letters on board the ship from Penn Yan, and hear that there are some coming from Ypsi to meet us in Japan or China, as they missed San Pedro, the place from which we sailed. It is pretty hard to answer each one separately and as there are things we want to write to every one I am making this a general letter and sending a copy to each group.

We have had a daily plan to read Chinese a half hour, study Japanese about the same length of time, then write one or two answers to our over 30 steamer letters, and then read and rest as we please, with some exercise and recreation thrown in here and there. Today we got a deck tennis net up and played that until tired and have not written any letter at all. I am starting this late so as not to spoil our regular program today.

We shall have to write a regular account of our whole trip to the whole family later but there are a few things we have seen that are of special interest to you youngsters.

You know Beverly Hills is a beautiful place close to Hollywood, where the screen stars own great estates and have their favorite residences. Well, the day after we got to Los Angeles our cousin Eloise drove us all around to see these homes of the famous stars we have seen in the pictures or heard over the radio. They were our neighbors, for the Kingsleys, where we stayed, live right in Beverly Hills. They have bought a house there.

The first place she called our attention to was the home of Tom Mix. The Penn Yan folks I know like him and his "straight shooters," and probably the rest of you know him, too. Eloise said he was just the sort of man he sounds like in the radio. He is rather rough looking, but honest and modest. She has heard him speak and says that he can just quote the Bible in great long passages if not chapters, and that he makes real good sensible talks. His home was one of the more modest, plain, neat places. Not far from that was "Pick-Fair" which seemed deserted, though there must have been caretakers, as the lawns were in good order. I suppose after Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks were divorced the beautiful home had little attraction for either of them.

She showed us a few others whose names I have forgotten and then took us — or me, rather — to the Hollywood Athletic Club house, which looks like an elegant hotel. I was to attend a weekly luncheon there of the Authors' Club at the invitation of Mr. Beaman. An amateur radio message that I had gotten from the College of Chinese Studies had told me to let him know when I was in Los Angeles and he would be of assistance, etc. Well, he was very hospitable and cordial. The visit to this Author's Club was the first thing he suggested. He had me sit at the speakers' table and told me who a lot of the celebrities were. There were faces that I had seen in movie pictures and you have too, like Lionel Barrymore and columnists and scenario writers and cartoonists, and makers of some of the funnies that you see every day, and authors of famous books. The President was Rupert Hughes. One of the four speakers referred to Hughes' last novel and Mr. Beaman sent me a copy for us to read on the steamer. Your Grandma is reading it now. It is called "Stately Timber." They introduced me — Mr. Hughes did — and told some things I had done in China and then asked if I had anything to say in my own defense. As they had a full program I just pleaded guilty and said I had nothing to say. The secretary sent me an honorary membership for a month, inviting me to attend the luncheon each week. Though our ship was four days late in sailing it did not give me a chance to attend another luncheon, sailing the very hour they held it last week.

One of the speakers was the lawyer from New York City who helped Clarence Darrow defend evolution in the Skopes case in Tennessee against Bryan some years ago. (And by the way, Teddy asks if I believe in Evolution. Let me say that I certainly do, and do not think that it disagrees with the Bible at all when we think of the Bible as a historical development and mostly the record of history. That needs more explanation than I can give right now.) Another speaker was Irving Cobb. He tries, in vain, to take the place of Will Rogers as a column writer and is the homeliest man you ever saw. Mr. Beaman brought him to our car to introduce him to Eloise, your Grandma and me, so we had a good chance to see. His mouth and lips stuck out just like a big monkey's, and his face was red and rough like some monkey's. But he seemed a very kindly friendly man in spite of his looks. You probably do not read his column anyway, and so are not interested.

We have been going about 300 to 315 miles a day and some of the eight passengers want to bet on the run, as they so often do on board ship to pass the time. The Shanghai pilot, Capt. Flemming, asked me if I would not like to go in on the "scoop." Each one puts in something — a dollar or less — and then each guesses how far the ship will go in 24 hours, announced every day at noon. The one who guesses nearest gets all the money. Yesterday we ran 306 miles and Capt. Flemming guessed 310 but I did not hear whether anyone else guessed nearer. I guess they had not gotten up the pot yet anyway. As I never gamble I thanked him and said "I never do." Of course it is a small affair just for fun and every one can afford to lose what they put in. Still it is the same in principle as betting on the dog races or the horses, or gambling on the stock exchange, or buying lottery tickets. These are often so bad and such an injury to a community that laws have to be made against them. From the simplest little bet on to the biggest gamble, there seems to be no place to draw the line and the best way to show that you are against the big evil is to make it a rule not to bet at all and never stake your own money in the hope of getting something for nothing from the other fellow. Working for a prize hardly comes under that rule, but buying tickets for a prize or betting certainly does. The easiest and simplest way of keeping out of the big gambling is to just keep out of it entirely in the small. The "banknote" prizes, so far as I know, are just as much gambling as any of those forms that are against the law.

Grandfather

A small ship but a big cabin.
Only 8 passengers. Deck tennis, games, Norwegian cuisine.
Translating Feng Yu Hsiang's poems.

Gertrude S. Wilder

Pacific Ocean
April 7, 1939

Dearest Margaret and the whole family,

It's getting on towards bed time but I am going to make a beginning on a letter to you before donning my pink nighty and climbing into my berth

We were supposed to sail from L.A. at 11:00 but didn't leave until 2 o'clock, so after spending nearly an hour on board the folks left and we began to arrange our things and open up our mail, of which we had a huge pile. It certainly was lovely to find all those letters waiting for us, and we enjoyed every one of them. It took us most of the afternoon to read them. The captain was very much interested and asked us more than once how long it took to read them. He said he had never seen such a pile of letters. In addition to the letters were books and flowers, and Eloise and Beulah brought us oranges, grapefruit, figs, dates, a book and a pile of magazines. We felt that we had been thought of and cared for much more than we deserved.

At this point we each ate an orange and went to bed — sleeping peacefully.

I must tell you about the boat. It looked so small — a midget when compared with one of the Presidents' Line ships. Our cabin is larger than any we have ever had. It is just about 12x12, has three port holes, two in front and one over my berth, two berths, two closets, a sofa, a loose chair, a wash stand and a nice table. There are two drawers under each berth and two in the wardrobe, so we have lots of room for ourselves and our things. There are only eight passengers and one of them is a dear little seven-months old baby — Phyllis Ann Barnes. She is a model baby -- sleeps all night and is as happy as a lark all day. She is pretty, too, with curly brown hair and blue eyes. Her mother is also pretty and very nice. She is a young wife and is going to the Philippines to join her husband, who is an orderly or something in the Navy hospital there. Then there is a Mr. and Mrs. Murphy. She is of German extraction and a good deal younger than he. He is an ex-service man, dating back to the Spanish War, and now in business in Manila. Mr. Parides, a nice young Filipino, is another passenger. His father is a leader in government affairs and he has been his father's private secretary, but he is a mining engineer and hopes to go into that. And last comes Captain Flemming -- an American connected with the shipping business in Shanghai. It's a varied crowd, but we get along beautifully together. Everyone likes to play deck tennis and usually everyone gets in some sets every day.

In the evening we repair to a small lounging room on the upper deck and play games. My Lexicon game and the Chinese Checkers that Olive gave me have done good service. The captain likes to play the latter. We have books and magazines to keep us busy and time has not been heavy on our hands. Father and I read Chinese for an hour every morning and lately have been adding to that time, translating free-verse poems written by Feng Yu Hsiang. I have been

trying to write letters, too, and shall have quite a bunch to mail when we reach Yokohama four days from now.

The captain is the only one of the crew who eats with us. We eat at one table and are very informal. Our meals are very good — Norwegian cooking — though breakfast is not the meal that you and I like to linger over, Margaret. Poor coffee, condensed milk and toast. I drink my coffee without cream and eat bread and marmalade. Sometimes we have cakes, but they are not like Len's (pan)cakes! We have a good dinner at noon with plenty of vegetables. Our suppers are unique. Everything is put on the table and we help ourselves. There are always four kinds of salad, four cold meats, two or three kinds of tinned fish such as sardines, etc. and two kinds of cheese and bread, of course. After we have filled up on that, a hot dish of some sort is passed around — curry or a fancy omelette — and then desert, which is usually canned fruit. The captain is a good eater and sits at the head of the table urging us to eat and looking after our wants. Everything is really very nice and we are taken good care of.

We have had fine weather most of the time. Today is foggy, however, and the fog horn is tooting about once a minute. I don't like it but that doesn't seem to help matters.

The steward, who is cheery, and his assistant are the only ones whom we have anything to do with, except casually. We have a smiling acquaintance with most of the crew. They are all Norwegians, and most of them can't speak English. They all have smiles for the baby, and sometimes one or another stops shyly and talks to her a minute or two.

We know practically nothing about what has been going on in the world since we left. We have been getting news reports from London but very little news. None at all about China. I'm afraid we shall not be able to learn much in the ^Avisiting team's « domain.

I don't need to tell you that I think of you all a lot every day. Our last visit was a precious one, but all too short. You mustn't feel anxious about us. I'm sure you don't need to. We are both feeling fine. The deck tennis gives us exercise and fun, we get all the sleep we need and are both eating yeast, cod liver oil and thyroid, so we should be well-fortified for whatever lies ahead. I hope you are having a woman in once a week to do the cleaning and ironing, and that Gertrude, Betty and George are helping as much as they can. "Here a little, there a little" helps out a lot and every little counts. I hope, too, that the violin, cello and piano are going strong. Some day George can play accompaniments and there will be a Menzi Trio. Donald will have to come into the picture, too, and turn it into a quartet in time.

* * * * *

April 10.

We sighted land early this morning, have already passed the outer forts and will be in the Yokohama harbor before very long. The longest single stretch of our journey is over, and it has not seemed long. Time has not hung on our hands at all. Captain Fleming just said to me that the trip had seemed like only a few days to him. We have been quite a congenial group in that we have enjoyed doing the same things together and I think we have all tried to be sociable and make our contribution toward the happiness of all. It has been a restful journey and part of the restfulness has been the informality.

* * * * *

. . . . We are inside the first break-water and will soon be sticking out our tongues at the medical inspector. It takes some red tape before we are finally in dock and ready to go ashore.

Not much of a letter, this, so far as content is concerned but it carries a world of love to you all. I hope the girls will write sometimes — they can practice English composition on us — and we shall love to hear from them.

Will write again soon,

Lovingly — Mother and Grandma

Staying on the Ivaran to Shanghai.

A letter from China tells of « lorspemb » (problems) there.

We receive radio broadcasts from « Treasure Island, » San Francisco.

Ford and GM plants making war supplies: the MS Ivaran unloaded truck parts from US and took on assembled trucks for war against China.

Gertrude S. Wilder

Kobe Harbor

April 14, 1939

Dearest Margaret,

We have just let down our anchor in Kobe harbor (time, 7:15 p.m.) And the doctor has come on board. We are here for the night and for a few hours tomorrow morning. Because the Ivaran was late, we were not able to take the boat on which Mr. Hacket had engaged passage to Tientsin and since everything was full for the next two weeks we decided to stay on the Ivaran to Shanghai and then take a boat to Tientsin. Cook's agency has already written telling their man at Shanghai to get things fixed up for us. It delays us quite a bit, but it seemed the only think to do — or the best thing to do under the circumstances.

Coming from Yokohama it was pretty rough from the time we got out of the Yokohama bay and all night long, but today has been nice again. We had some deck tennis this afternoon and since then have watched our progress past the pretty shore, in amongst the fishing boats and through the rather narrow passage into the Kobe harbor. Everything is brilliantly lighted up. This is the first time I have entered this port after dark.

I didn't leave the boat at Yokohama, partly because I had a badly inflamed eye and thought I had better devote myself to treating it. It's just about O.K. now. I have no special desire to buy

anything here so perhaps it's just as well not to get off and be tempted. Father had to go on shore to see about our passage to Shanghai and he took all of one day to go to Tokyo, hoping to see Mr. Kuruda, Kagawa, and one or two others. He wasn't able to locate even one of them — some were away — so he felt as if he had made a good deal of effort for nothing.

* * * * *

I have just heard that we are to be here for a day and a half instead of the six hours that the captain had said, so we shall probably go out to Kobe College for a call.

The steward just brought us letters from Uncle Charlie and Aunt Louise and from Harry and Rose Martin in China. In Rose's letter she said that we would find "lorस्पemb here." I unscrambled the word and got "problems." I've no doubt there will be plenty of them. That was the only reference to things as they are in any of the letters. « Things are going on about as usual » seems to be a stock phrase. Aunt Louise's letter said that Billy had sung his third solo in church — he has been taking vocal lessons. Good for Billy. I wish Gertrude could take vocal lessons. She has such a sweet voice and a real appreciation and understanding of music, it seems to me.

* * * * *

— Morning! Father has gone on shore to call up Kobe College and arrange about our going out there this afternoon. It's a good distance from town so we don't want to go by taxi if we can do it by street car. He'll be back at 11:00 and then we'll go on shore again on the 1 o'clock launch. Evidently freighters don't have the privilege

of going up to the piers but do all of their unloading out in the harbor into huge barges. We have to depend on the launches. For « auld lang syne » we must walk up and then down Moto Machi at least once. Both at Yokohama and here, sellers of all sorts of things swarmed on board as soon as inspection was over. But their wares look « tai chien » instead of « tai kwei »⁴ and none of them appeal to me. Beginning with the first of May, passengers passing through Japan must pay ten yen for the privilege of going on shore at the ports, and those who are to reside in Japan pay a landing fee of 20 yen. It seems to me that a measure of that sort will keep a lot of people from landing and will do something to the tourist trade, which they are so anxious to get.

The past few nights we have been getting « Treasure Island » over the radio. They broadcast at 4:00 a.m. especially for the Orient. The announcer (or whatever he is called) is not very good, so we had to listen hard for the news, but the music came over very well, and last night the news came in well. The poor announcer and performers have to do their work at 4:00 in the morning so we should forgive them if they are not letter perfect.

* * * * *

⁴ ???

We are not to get to Shanghai until the forenoon of the 19th because there was more unloading than the captain realized. Last night we got into what we ladies call pretty bad weather. I couldn't sleep because the boat rolled so, and because of the clatter. Suddenly there was a tremendous swell and things went flying. Our loose chair came plump against my berth, our tin box of figs etc. banged onto the floor — a dish of apples slid off the table but didn't break. I had been listening to the clatter of dishes in the pantry and nearly jumped out of my skin when there was a great crash. It woke Father out of a sound sleep, and there was some excitement. I rushed to the pantry and found the steward already there in not much else but short white silk trunks, picking up the pieces. Then I went to Mrs. Barnes' room and found her mopping up her floor between swells. A tray with dishes had skated off the table right into the baby's bed. Fortunately the heavy curtain protected the baby. The captain had the effrontery to tell us that the ship didn't roll at all. "That was nothing. It must be at an angle of 50 degrees before it is a real roll." It calmed down this afternoon but we are beginning to roll somewhat again. Of course we are lighter by several thousand tons of freight and the ship doesn't ride so steadily. Nearly all of the freight was for purposes that you know all about. Father can tell you more about that as he looked it over more carefully than I did.

This brings us up to date and I'll mail this in Shanghai, where I hope we shall not stay for long.

Tuesday the 18th.

We are approaching Shanghai, but as it is pitch dark we can't see a thing. The captain thinks that the doctors etc. will be on board before breakfast. We have been re-packing and trying to make out our customs declarations and are about ready to add the finishing

touches and go to bed, so I'll stop my letter at this point, add a bit to Ursula's and call it a day.

With untellable love to you all, and especially to you, my dear daughter.

Your loving mother.

P.S. Our ship discharged about 1,000 tons of Ford truck parts in cases — over 7,000 of them — 121,000 cu. ft. Then we took on 20 all-assembled Ford trucks, ready to run, with spare tires, tools, etc. all on. There is both a Ford plant and a General Motors plant in Yokohama and perhaps Kobe. They also discharged 600 tons of copper plates.

Father

Hitler reject's Roosevelt's request not to invade — « sent to the wrong address. »
Japanese customs people are polite to us.
US has set a bad example of treaty-breaking, but not military aggression.
Japanese grateful for U.S. friendly gesture returning body of diplomat.

George D. Wilder

Still M/S "Ivaran" at the
Mouth of the Yangtse River
April 19th, 1939

(Continued from March 25)

The date at the head of this, March 25th, looks rather old but the letter has never been continued until now, when we are poking along in a fog after having been anchored much of the night. The pilot has come aboard but we are just barely moving and see only here and there the outlines of other ships in a like predicament and whistling away. The fog bell was ringing most of the night, too, so that I fear Grandma had little sleep.

You may be surprised to see that we are still on this ship. It was a day late at Kobe, missing the Tikuzen that Mr. Hackett had booked us on, and as we would have had to live in a hotel for two or three weeks if we had gotten off, waiting for another possible booking, we are lucky to get the privilege of staying on the Ivaran for only \$10.00 apiece from Kobe, three days to Shanghai.

Capt. Flemming, the pilot for the port of Shanghai, and we are the only ones to get off here at Shanghai, but they had a fine turkey dinner yesterday in farewell.

We have had a perfect voyage until this fog came to delay our landing a bit. The whole roster of passengers except the baby went into the deck tennis⁵ tournament and we were pretty well matched, but the young Mrs. Barnes and a Filipino athlete and an engineer - also young - ran off with the singles, but were not all in the doubles finals, I think. Your Mother and I were in most of the finals, however. We got our finger nails pretty badly broken up at it, as some of the men threw pretty fiercely and when the ring was wet it was rather hard.

⁵ Deck tennis: a variety of tennis played usually on the deck of a ship, in which a ring, generally of rubber or manilla rope, is thrown and caught, using only one hand, between opponents standing on opposite sides of a net.

We got American radio announcements and music even after leaving Kobe, nearly 5,000 miles away. The "Treasure Island" at Frisco was the clearest on the whole as they have a wave directed to the Orient, and it is good. The last two or three days a woman announcer in Shanghai - English - and a Chinese woman have been pretty clear, and told us of Roosevelt's attempt to get the dictators to swear off from invasion for 20 or 25 years, and of Hitler's rejection and remark that they had sent the proposal to the wrong address. Rather flippant for a proposition of such grave import for all the world.

We are reading John Gunther's "Inside Europe," which was revised to include the Munich affair of last September, a new chapter VII-A being thrown in, and pages 103.a, 103.b, etc. to 103p. It's good.

Breakfast bell is sounding and I may not get a chance to say more on account of customs, etc. and our interest in running up the river, after all the fighting that has occurred since we came down, July 20, 1937.

* * * * *

It will take us until noon to get to the Customs wharf and we are just through a hearty breakfast, so just a word more. The first page of this letter was to answer your letter, Margaret. Your letters are in my baggage so I have to drop that part. I remember that a letter from Theodore spoke of one from you showing your anxiety for us. I hope that you are getting over that as time goes on. It may help you to know that the Japanese were as polite and accommodating as could be to us at both ports. The customs officers passed our passports without any trouble beyond finding out that we were just passing through. Mr. Hackett said that for the past few months the relations with them had been most congenial. The sending back of the body of Ambassador Saito by the cruiser "Astoria" has produced a most profound impression of friendliness and gratitude to Pres. Roosevelt. If our country had paid more attention to treating the Japanese as we would like to be treated ourselves, there would not be so much war talk today. I think that the Japanese would have adopted the policy of extending their culture by peaceful propaganda rather than by military violence if we had done so, and we could not complain of that at all. We have given them good reason to doubt our sincerity in talking about keeping treaties and loving peace. We have given them the example of treaty-breaking, but I can not quite see how we have done much in the line of military aggression, of which they complain.

Did you say that Mr. Plummer had sent back that picture? That is too bad. I enclose a card recommending a place in Detroit. If you could place it there on sale on commission it might go sometime. The proceeds were to go to China Relief which is an easy way to dispose of the money. You still have the address of the Treasurer, I suppose, James M. Speers, 105 E. 22nd St., New York, as I remember it.

We have already seen land birds - a white-rumped swift, though still out of sight of land! And a sparrow came on board.

I enclose a couple of pods of the mesquite that grows in the American desert. Suppose you try to make some of the seed grow. I got it at Los Angeles. I suppose it wants dryness.

With love to you all,

Father and Grandfather

P.S. Elim Hotel, Shanghai 3 pm. Here we are safely taking our ease in our inn. There are steamers galore for Tientsin, but we're not yet sure whether we can get one tomorrow or a few days later. We had use for Theodore's Certificate of Vaccination at once, and it may save us 2 or 3 days delay here.

Shanghai to Peking

Freighter is a great way to travel.
Treated with courtesy in Japan, thanks to return of ambassador's body.
US should have been more friendly toward Japan instead of shaking its naval fist at them.
Chinese want to resist. Students, merchants try to demonstrate, put down by French police.
Shanghai's streets crowded - Chinese sector's housing destroyed.
Japanese-owned Chinese papers accuse missionaries of stirring up trouble.
Chinese have laws against selling to Japanese.
Shell Oil, Ford and GM war supplies were on board our ship.
Japanese Christians are unaware of what is happening.
A Japanese says Chinese Christians are being "purified" by fire while Japan is losing its soul.
Going by American mail means this can be written freely.

CHURCH COMMITTEE FOR CHINA RELIEF

105 East 22nd Street, New York, N.Y.

Constituted By:

The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America

The Foreign Missions Conference of North America

China Famine Relief U.S.A. Incorporated

Rev. George D. Wilder
417 Crescent St., N.E.
Grand Rapids, Mich.
Phone, 8649

Shanghai,
April 21, 1939

Mr. Robert E. Chandler
14 Beacon Street
Boston, Mass. U.S.A.

Dear Chandler,

Happening on this sheet of much letterhead, I use it on you, as you will understand that the addresses mean nothing now, and that we are writing from the Elim Hotel, 382 Joffre Ave., Shanghai, a good place for a missionary to stop.⁶

My immediate occasion for writing is the discovery among my letters that I was discarding into the sea, a copy letter that was not to be entrusted to ordinary mails and

⁶ In Hebrew, which GDW would have studied in seminary, *elim* is the plural of *el*, meaning "god."

that ought to have been sent back to the Rooms⁷ some time ago. It had chased us up from one place to another as I remember, and we were the last on the list. I have a chance to get it into the American office here, and to use some of my U.S. postage.

We are leaving today by a small coastal steamer that stops at all ports for Tientsin, the "Hoihow," (B&S Steamer). We arrived here day before yesterday at noon after all but three days of a month on board the "Ivaran." But say, if you have time, that is the way to travel. It was almost like living at home with only eight in the family. I have written to E. Smith, from Japan about all I knew about the ship. So you can go to him if you want to find out.

Being just one day late for the "Tikuzen" that Hackett had booked, we stayed on the "Ivaran" to here, rather than wait in Kobe two or three weeks for their crowded ships. We have had no trouble in getting a sailing from here, as there are one or two nearly every day in the week.

You are interested in the Customs service. Well, they came on board the "Ivaran," which did not go to the Customs dock, and examined our suitcases before we had locked them up in our cabin. Then they took our keys and opened all our trunks but were evidently not interested in charging any duties, as what we had declared of our own as new (like typewriter and table cutlery, just bought) was not taxed, and even what we had brought for five or six other people they did not examine, and did not charge anything, unless they are going to do it by mail later. It looked almost like they avoided taking anything. They locked up and roped the big trunks again carefully. These were all Chinese, of course.

In Japan we were treated with the utmost courtesy, as Hackett says they have been doing for some months. The arrival of the "Astoria" with Ambassador Saito's body has touched the heart of the nation, too, as we could see. Why could not this country of ours have been doing more of that sort of thing instead of shaking our naval fist in Japan's face?

⁷ The headquarters of the American Board in Boston was always referred to informally as "the Rooms," perhaps short for "Board Rooms."

We find the will to resist strong among the Chinese, but there are "hard boiled" pessimists like Mr. E.G. Tewksbury who think that China has no chance for getting her independence again. One old missionary here said at once, however, that China is coming on of late and has much hope.

A patriotic organization of youth tried to get up a demonstration for the new spiritual movement by hanging out the Republican flags at their shops in this French concession. The police made them take them down (French Police), arrested about a hundred agitators and put up very common-sense proclamations in Chinese urging people to remain quiet and to help them drive out agitators ("*tao luan fen tzu*").⁸ There were armored police cars in evidence and groups on the streets, which are packed with humanity in this most crowded city in the world. Probably there are 3,000,000 here still, and all these square miles of Chinese sector residences destroyed. Many shops were closed, some said "in protest against the police taking down their flags," some thought, "to be safer in case of disturbance." Last night's papers were full of it.

Yesterday's North China Daily News had two columns of quotations from Japanese-owned Chinese papers with most severe attacks on Britain and also on both British and American missionaries, accusing them of all sorts of things long since out of date. I tried to buy the "Hsin Shen Pao" that had the original, but failed. The Chinese clerk at the newspaper office remarked as he was trying to find the right issue, "*Na ko! Mei Jen² Hsin⁴ na² ko.*" There is a strong demand in the Japanese papers and by their military that the foreign-owned Chinese papers like the old Shen Pao, I Shih Pao, etc. be suppressed.

There is a Chinese law against all sorts of "*t'ung' t'f*" crimes, i.e. selling to the enemy, etc. Peter Ch'uan last night replied to our question as to what he thought of America's selling so much to Japan. "Why not? It's all in the line of business. We have no hard feelings." "Would you sell?" we asked him. "No. I do not sell my oil goods to them, and besides it is now against the law. It is *t'ung' t'f*."

The Ivaran was smothered in barrels of all sorts of volatile, poison, and inflammable aviation materials. Also 1,000 tons of Ford military truck parts in boxes, 121,000 cu. ft. of them. And at Yokohama, after discharging them, we took on either ten or twenty finished trucks ready to run from the Ford assembly plant in Yokohama.

⁸ ???

General Motors also has such a plant there. The oils were mostly Shell, etc., from Los Angeles.

You will be interested in this. "A young Chinese Oxford girl went to Japan to see the Christians there, having access to the Christian wife of the second ranking official below the Emperor. Before going she saw a Japanese friend, a pastor here, who was giving her a letter of introduction to help her get past the police, etc. He said she would be asked all sorts of severe questions like "Are you loyal to the new government?" "Why," she exclaimed at once, "No self-respecting Chinese can say that they respect that government." He threw up his hands in amazement that she should say so, but continued his good efforts. She was received very coldly until the letter to the high-up Christians in Tokyo took effect and they came down to Yokohama to greet her, and then she was very cordially received, allowed to land, etc. The high-up lady listened to all her account of what has gone on in China and was deeply moved. She was told about Madame and Gen. Chiang and was astounded. She said that no one in Japan knew they were that kind of people and the only hope was for the Christians of both countries to keep together and tell each other the facts unflinchingly.

Then there was the case of two Japanese pastors coming here. They had had no idea that they could meet the Christians so freely as they did. When they came in and saw or felt the atmosphere, one exclaimed, "I can see that Japan is beaten already. Japan is fast losing her own soul. China is gaining hers through suffering." Gardner told of these things through personal knowledge.

Shao Wu, who told us other things, said that he thanked the Japanese for what they are doing to China. He said that professed Christians under Kung had been most corrupt, but the present situation is burning them out and compelling a change. He has an oil business at Peng Pu, and is continuing some here, but will not trade with nor cooperate with the Japanese as they have invited him to do, and have also threatened him. His wealthy partner in Peng Pu also avoids them, though they have taken the plant and have squeezed him out of some money. He did not say "tortured him," though.

The chance to get through the American mail has loosened my tongue, or my fingers. Give my regards, which is too cold a term by far, to Helen, and they are from both Gertrude and me.

Sincerely yours, *Geo. D. Wilder*

Chinese still same good-natured people.
Shops more full of goods than in Japan, where only war goods are imported.
Chinese sector of Shanghai destroyed, people crowded into foreign concessions.
Universities, high schools in upper floors of commercial buildings.
Gardner Tewksbury — childhood friend of Durand and Margaret — is in Shanghai.

George D. Wilder

Elim House, Shanghai,
April 23rd, 1939

Dear Grandchildren,

You had better count this as another letter and read it some other day than that long one or I am afraid you will never read all through. I did not even sign it or mail it when we had a chance in Japan. But I must tell you how we got here.

Everyone is afraid of the Customs officers who examine your baggage and make you pay duty on anything they think is new and liable to be sold. But here they came on board before we had closed our suitcases, etc., and examined them, then opened all our trunks and closed them and roped them up again for us, and would not charge us any duty even for the things we had for other folks and had "declared" on the blanks as "dutiable." So that was that.

This great city looked just as it always did, only the people are three times as thick everywhere. They say there are three million here and all crowded into the foreign concessions, and business is going on not only as usual but even more rushing than usual. And they were the same good natured jolly Chinese. As soon as we got to the hotel and settled in our rooms your Grandma and I went out on the streets just to be among the Chinese again, and we bought fruit, etc., here and there just for the fun of bargaining with them. In the evening we went out again, remarking that anyway there would not be so many children on the streets, but we were mistaken. There were a-plenty, playing everywhere, even among the throngs of jikshas, bicycles and even motor cars.

On one beveled corner where there was about twenty feet of clear concrete pavement there were half a dozen lively boys of Billy's size turning cart wheels, hand-springs, etc., and having lots of fun. They would roll right out into the traffic as "cartwheels."

And yesterday afternoon on another little empty space that was like a back eddy in the stream of passers-by there was a sort of kindergarten circle holding hands and having one blindfolded in the center groping around for some one of the others to feel them all over and say who it was. They were as merry and full of fun as though there was no war.

At another enormous seven-story building we went in to see the acres of Chinese-made goods on display and for sale on the second floor, nice big shops on the lower floor fronting on three streets, the building was so big. And in the four top stories there were 5,000 students in their recitation rooms belonging to three Universities and two High Schools that are working together to keep their schools going with all the students that are left to them. When they let out classes at noon and the students went to get lunch at restaurants, many of them carrying their books back to their boarding places, the streets were sure jammed, and it was right in the busiest part of the city. It is said that near there is the busiest street corner in the world. Your Grandma and I strolled through it, constantly blocking the traffic as we stopped to window shop or watch some interesting thing we saw in the shops or eating-places right on the street. It looked like far more wholesome, sound business than what we saw in Japan, where shops were largely empty and nothing but war business going on.

Then Gardner Tewksbury drove us in his little Austin for miles among the ruins of the Chinese city around. Nothing but broken down walls was left all the way to Woosung, 13 miles away and we could see why the foreign settlements were so crowded with the people whose homes were destroyed. How they can seem so smiling and well dressed and busy is beyond me. There were some miserable and sad looking ones but we saw only a few beggars. We were asked for money only five or six times only in two days, and gave it, too, in spite of our principles against it and where beggars are really thick, the danger of being swamped by them if we start giving at all.

But this letter must stop, and I haven't said how much I love you all, and Grandma, too, sends love. We sail for the north - a four-days trip - this noon.

Lovingly,

Grandpa

Unloading paper for funeral "money" at the dock in Tsingtao, where cousin Llewellyn Davies is.
Now at Chefoo, where Ted, Durand, and Thornton Wilder went to school long ago.
Three port cities look fine, except for devastated Chinese sectors of Shanghai.
Went shopping for the fun of it. Saw Pygmalion, the movie.
Shanghai department stores bombed by accident.
Watched children playing, despite war.
Universities and schools carrying on.
A visit to Salvation Army refugee camps.
Enjoy watching coolies loading ship.

George D. Wilder

SS "Haihow" At anchor in Chefoo Outer Harbor
April 27, 1939

Dear Grandchildren,

From Shanghai I sent you several sheets of a copy letter that I fear was pretty dry, as dry as the Mesquite seed pods that I enclosed to each group, hoping that you might plant them somewhere and see what the bush is like.

Perhaps some of you remember the superstition-money that is scattered at funerals for the use of the dead. Well, yesterday we had proof that that superstition has not died out, when they were unloading our ship with their big steam winches at Tsingtao, in Shantung, where cousin Llewellyn Davies lives. They had in the hold great stacks of oblong-packages about two feet long and a foot or more square and they lifted out in a rope net - sort of huge basket - dozens of them at a time. I could not make out what these packages covered with bamboo strips for protection could contain. Finally one of the packages rolled out of the net when it was dangling high up in the air and dropped so hard that it burst open and a lot of little bundles, each with a few hundred each such sheets of silver and gold paper fell out. Some of these bundles broke, and the wind blew them from the dock where they fell clear back on to the boat where we stood. I gathered up a few samples for you, and one of our seven Hong Kong Police who are on board with their rifles to protect us from bandits, or pirates rather, showed me what they were for. He folded several into the shape of silver shoes, which they do before selling them. I will enclose one each, but they will be pressed flat; they have to be swelled out to look like a shoe of silver or gold. They use two sheets to make one and perhaps you can study out how they fold them. Several sailors standing around did it quite fast. There were tens of tons of them unloaded at that one port. It will be some work to fold them all.

We are now lying at anchor in sight of Chefoo, the place where Theodore and Durand and Thornton Wilder went to school long years ago. We got in too late for the doctor to come out and see if we have any infectious disease on board, so we lie here all night. A half dozen nuns and as many school children who got on at Weihaiwei to come back to school after their Easter vacation, expecting to get off here tonight, have to stay on board. All of us who are passing through are not allowed to go ashore by the Japanese, either here or at Tsingtao. There we stayed two days and a night, having to wait for a German ship to get unloaded before there was room at the wharf for us and another vessel that came in at the same time we did. All that time we had to stay aboard, reading and writing and playing Chinese checkers. Two of the fifteen French soldiers just out from France, who share our second class deck with us, joined in. Though they speak only French and we speak none, they caught on to the game by watching us and one of them won the very first game he played with us. Then a Russian who is in charge of our Hongkong police took my place in the game. This PM he invited me to a game of chess. It was my first game in years but I managed to make a draw of it after he had twice gallantly let me take moves back. He was very nice and of course I conceded him the game, playing it out to the end as an interesting experiment with the interesting positions we had.

For all we can see of things in these three port cities one would not think there ever had been any war, except when we went out for a ride through the miles of devastated Chinese residences, where now no one lives and there are only a few ruined walls still standing. If we had stayed away from that we would have simply thought that the cities were more busy and crowded than ever. We had great fun going out to walk through the crowded streets, stopping to bargain with the peddlers for sesame candy and apples and oranges. Prices seemed awfully high as compared with olden days but the money we use now is worth only half as much in U.S. coins as when we went away. Small oranges were 12 cents apiece and apples a little more. The peddlers also had California oranges and apples from America at higher prices. But we bought for the fun of talking with these splendid Chinese once more. We remarked that where there are so many people there are bound to be food shops and children playing. And there certainly were. When we went again at night we thought there would be no children, but they were still thick, and I wish you could have seen them in a slightly clearer place of less dirty concrete pavement. A dozen very lively and athletic boys were practicing standing on their heads, turning hand-springs and cart wheels, often rolling right out among bicycles and autos passing on the street. They were full of fun and we stopped to watch them.

In the P.M. we went to a good movie - "Pygmalion" by G. B. Shaw. The movie theater was just such as we would find in America, and full of well-dressed people. On the streets there were lots of the same, and in walking six or seven blocks to get to that theater we passed two others. There are plenty of them.

We knew that the big department stores where we shopped the last day before we left China nearly two years ago - "Sincere's" and "Wingon" - had been hit by bombs and many killed. A bomb in one store killed a lot of people in an elevator in the other store that was clear across the street. But now they are running, and I guess from the crowds that business is heavier than ever. Those bombs were an accident and they did not get any more. In another new one, the Sun Store, said to sell still more modern and foreign goods, they were having on the 4th floor a charity exhibition of about 350 old Chinese paintings and writings. We were glad to go and pay our dollar admission, knowing that it went to China Relief. There we met an old friend who lives in Peking, Dr. Ferguson. He, like us, was on his way back to China from America. He is a real art student and told us many things about the pictures. On the way there, in an eddy in the traffic, we saw another group of children who had made a ring taking hold of hands. One inside the ring had his eyes blinded with a dirty old handkerchief and they were playing blindman's bluff just like any kindergarten school. They were as jolly and rosy as could be. We just had to stop and watch them. It was so surprising to see them in war times playing.

Then in the busiest part of the city on Nanking Road we went into the 3rd to 6th stories of a building covering a block. There were 5,000 students from three universities and two high schools having their recitations and offices. At noon they just jammed the busy streets when they came out to lunch.

Sunday morning, as the ship was supposed to sail at noon, we could not go to church but went out to the outskirts to see the Salvation Army camp for refugees. We found them just going to their church in the middle of the camp, and boys and girls also out playing ball. Once in a while the ball would go into the open sewers that ran along all the streets of huts. It was as clean as could be, though, outside the sewer ditches. They said there were 7,000 there and 50,000 in all the twenty odd refuges around the city. Whatever you contributed to China Relief went into this sort of work and it was well worth while. The refugees looked well fed and happy (with some exceptions) and they are doing everything they can to keep any disease from spreading among them. The workers among them were as happy as could be, for they knew they were doing a lot of good. I presume this Salvation Army Refuge was one of the best.

I wish you could have seen the coolies loading the ship with tons of sacks of flour. I never get tired of watching them. There were barges stacked high with 50 lb. bags of flour ground in Shanghai loading our ship and two others nearby, for two days. The coolies took two bags each and went up a gang plank and had to take a high step and throw them down on to a board that slid them down into the bowels of the ship. We were already past the hour for sailing and they hustled. One stocky fellow always carried four bags stacked up on his back but did not get anything extra so far as I could see, as they worked by the gang. One gang put in 26 bags a minute, two trips per man. When the last bag went in the man who carried it laughed and shouted in glee and waved his hands to us as if to say, "Well now you can go, all owing to our hustling." When I waved to him as the barge was moving away he shouted again and took off his hat and waved it to me.

April 30th, Sunday

We have been a day and a half along with 25 other steamers waiting for a doctor to give us a clean bill of health and a pilot to take us over the bar five miles to Taku and the river, 20 miles from Tientsin. The Chinese doctor came yesterday and looked at all our vaccination certificates. We had those that Theodore gave us and they have saved us much time at Shanghai and here, for we could not buy our steamer ticket without them. They are so afraid that small pox will get started in these throngs of people.

Yesterday a Chinese passenger had a poor little brambling, very pretty, tied with a string, and it was almost drowned from falling into water. He untied the string and put it in the sun to warm up. In its wet condition I thought it was a new species and asked him for it. He said he was going to let it fly if it recovered. So I measured it and took its description and warmed it up in my hand until it could fly around the room. But it would not eat. This morning I opened the porthole and let it out but it was too weak. It flew lower and lower until a wave wet it and it went down still in sight from the ship. We felt bad about it for if we had put it out on deck it would have ridden in to land and been saved.

Grandma is packing up and I must help her. We have been on this ship eight days and I guess this is the last, if we don't draw too much water for the depth of the river.

Grandfather

Shanghai shops were full, compared to Yokohama and Kobe; Japan importing only war goods. German Jews in Shanghai were put into the ruins of the Chinese city. Chinese are taking care of them, not Japanese. 5,000 students in makeshift classrooms learning English, trades, etc. Japanese are obstructing British boats. Cousin Llewellyn Davies resisted Japanese takeover of "Y" buildings in Tsingtao. Japanese are taking over control of mines, factories. In Tientsin, saw shiploads of Japanese soldiers unloading, and of Chinese being sent to Manchuria for forced labor. In Peking, a visit to the Forbidden City. Father's work will include editing Dr. Fenn's Dictionary - fifth edition. Frightful things happening. Japanese terrorize by brutality, while the U.S. helps them with war supplies. Story of Chinese guards beating Japanese posing as Chinese smuggling guns. Police arrest a Bridgman school student for something said in a letter; torture those they arrest. This is going by Embassy mail, so can be more open.

Gertrude S. Wilder

College of Chinese Studies, Peking

May 5, 1939

Dear Children and Grandchildren,

And here we are! I am starting out on this big paper, but shall probably not do anything very big, simply bring you up to date. However, I am going to say first what I must say as this will be sent in the Legation mail bag.

As we wrote last week, we stayed on our nice freighter all the way to Shanghai where we had to wait four days for a steamer to Tientsin. We spent a good deal of time on the street mingling with the people and trying, sometimes successfully, to use our northern dialect. Shanghai was a revelation to us. The streets were crowded with people of all grades of society, the shops were apparently doing good business and the atmosphere wasn't depressing. Such a contrast to Yokohama and Kobe, where the shops were empty and business seemed at a stand still. They are importing nothing but war

materials, and the foreigners in Japan are beginning to feel the pinch of not being able to get groceries (butter, etc.) from abroad. Our ship was packed entirely (I think) with war materials. I don't suppose we could have found an East-bound ship that wasn't. Between three and four million people are in the International settlement (in Shanghai) safe for the time being.

Mr. Lewisburg and Gardner took George out to see Ch'a Pei - what's left of it, that is. It is nothing but a vast expanse of ruins - no Chinese living there at all. There are a few partially wrecked buildings left, which are being fixed up for German Jews - a dreadful place to put them, but there is no room in the concessions. I talked with one young Jew who said that there were one hundred of them sleeping in one room. I forgot how many thousands of them there are now in Shanghai, an added problem. It's the foreign concessions and not the Japanese who are taking care of them. I hear it is the Chinese who are taking this responsibility! They are having classes in English language, in trades, foreign customs, etc.

We went to one of the refuges run by the Salvation Army and were impressed by the order and cleanliness of the place. There were 7,000 refugees in this one and they were gradually reducing the number - but very gradually. The Chinese are helping in this work. Over the doorways of two of the sheds (I don't know what else to call them) there were characters saying that these two were taken care of by the Chinese employees of one of the British shipping firms in Shanghai. They each have a hundred or more people. Another shed was the care of a certain church.

We also went to a large building occupying most of a block and fronting on three streets. The first floor was taken up by shops of all kinds of goods, the second floor was one huge exhibition for the sale

of Chinese-made goods of all kinds - very interesting - and the four upper stories were occupied by three universities working together and two middle schools, 5,000 students in all! The place was teeming with students. While we were there Chiang Kai Shek broadcast that he had heard that students were leaving school to enter the army. He urged them not to, but to stick to their studies and prepare themselves for future service. The movies were drawing large crowds and we fell in line and saw *Pygmalion* - enjoyed it too. We (or I) couldn't resist the sesame candy - and wasn't it good! We bought fruit and candies, often more for the chance to talk Chinese and haggle than to get it.

After four days in Shanghai we took the "Hai Kow" (Sea Mouth) for Teintsin, going second class. We could have eaten in the first class dining room if we had wanted to as there were no restrictions and the food was exactly the same, but our cabin was next door to the dining saloon and very convenient, so we stayed below with two other passengers and fifteen French soldiers, bound for Teintsin and Peking. There were delays everywhere and it took nine days to get from Shanghai to Teintsin. The Hai Kow is an English boat and just now the Japanese are obstructing the English whenever and wherever they can. We had to wait for the doctor, then the customs officials, or the pilot would take his time to get out, or there would be no docking space. All the functionaries are Japs now. We stopped at T'sing Tao where Llewellyn Davies is holding the fort in the Y.M.C.A. We couldn't land - not even the captain and officers were allowed to - but Llewellyn managed to come on board. He stayed for lunch and a nap and we had a nice, long visit. It was interesting to hear him tell about the way he had held the Chinese Y.M.C.A. after having been asked by the committee in charge to do so. The Japanese wanted the buildings for their soldiers and tried over and over again to get

Llewellyn to leave and let them have it. He pointed out to them that there were plenty of vacant buildings that would suit their purpose as well or better, that he had been put in charge by the Y.M.C.A., had a unique function to fulfill and that he would never consent to turning it over. He also told them that he would not think of resisting if they wanted to carry him out, but that they could never get his consent. It has been months since then and they have not troubled him again. In fact, one at least of the customs officials is now living at the Y and is apparently nothing but friendly. He (Llewellyn) was absolutely fearless, perfectly polite, and absolutely firm. I think his attitude awed them. At any rate, they gave him up as a bad job.

At T'sing Tao we saw how the Japanese line the Chinese up and search them for Chinese money and other things. They have to unbutton all their clothes and submit to being pawed over. The Japanese are trying to force their Federal Reserve Bank notes on the people and it is a capital crime if even a dollar of old Chinese money is found on your person. They don't search foreigners. The day we were in the Chefoo harbor the Chinese compeodore of one of the British ships went on shore with \$100.00 in the old bank notes. It was discovered, the money taken from him, and they said he was to be shot. The Jap money is going down in value all the time, but they are trying desperately to enforce its use. It is causing all sorts of money trouble. The Japanese merchants themselves are afraid of it and don't want it, but have to take it. The foreign banks won't look at it thus far, yet are ordered to pay out nothing else.

We sat on the bar for two days for some of the reasons enumerated above. Fortunately the master was fine. On the way up the river to Tientsin more and more evidence of Japanese aggression

appeared. They have taken over two huge, modern salt works, big chemical works, coal companies etc., etc., and they are spending all sorts of money putting up new factories, building up the river bank with iron plates and reinforced concrete and just digging in as fast as they can.

Mr. Pettus had written ahead to the American Express Co. to meet us and when we sailed up to the wharf at Tientsin a nice young Chinese with the American Express cap on called to us. He took charge of everything - getting our tickets, having our trunks checked, etc., - and the next morning came to the boat to get us. We stayed on board all night as it was by far the most comfortable way to manage, but went to see Mr. Grimes after we had had dinner - 7 o'clock. He also came to meet us but was a little later than the American Express man. Tientsin made us feel despondent, for the Japanese are so very evidently in control of everything except the foreign concessions. It made me feel sicker and sicker. The things one doesn't see are still worse. Ship loads of fresh Japanese soldiers were unloading at Tangku, and other ship loads of Chinese raw recruits going out to serve Japan in Manchuria.

The railroad journey to Peking was comfortable and quick. Mr. Pettus met us with an auto and brought us right up to the little apartment that we are to occupy for about six weeks, and free board goes with the suite. We washed and then went down to lunch with Mr. and Mrs. Pettus. Our temporary quarters are very nice - the "Faculty Suite," consisting of a good-sized bedroom, a sitting room, large closet and bath. Mrs. Ray Moyer and her three girls are occupying the apartment we are to have. We found flowers galore in our rooms, sent by different people, mostly potted plants in beautiful bloom - also a big plate of chocolates and another one of fruit. We

shall eat in the hostel while we are here - at the school's expense, Mr. Pettus said. We told him that was making guests of us for too long, and I hope he won't insist.

During lunch Mr. Pettus asked if we would like to join a party to go to a part of the Forbidden City that is rarely opened to visitors. It was too good a chance to pass by so we went. The others were Lucius Porter (Lillian couldn't come) Will Ament and his wife, (visiting prof. to Yenching from Pomona) and Prof. and Mrs. McNair, a visiting Prof. to Yenching from Chicago University. It was a most interesting trip. The part we went to was a large section that Chien Lung retired to after his reign of sixty years. It is in the northeastern part of the Forbidden City and it was through its back gate that the Empress Dowager and her entourage made their get-away in 1900. In a tiny courtyard just after entering the gate, is the well into which the Empress Dowager forced the Pearl Concubine, Kuang Hsu's favorite. There is a big stone drum over the mouth of the well, padlocked in place, and on the wall directly over it is a wooden placard telling the tragic story. At one side there is a shrine to the Pearl Concubine - a little temple erected by her sister - and over the doorway hangs a tablet written by Kuang Hsu - four eulogistic characters. The big red seal is the sister's but the writing is by Kuang Hsu. The enclosure is crowded with buildings of various kinds - living rooms, temples, pavilions and very intricate rock work (rockeries) with underground passages. The gardens are grown up to weeds but must have been lovely when kept up, and the trees are beautiful. The doors were all locked but we could see through the windows any amount of carved furniture, cushions on throne chairs, paintings, bundles of hangings and some bric-a-brac. There are many very beautiful pieces of furniture - all catalogued, or at least tagged, but all thickly covered with what looked like years of dust.

In the gardens there are handsome bronze vases and huge bronze bowls for lotus plants. And there are a number of very large jade carvings and other stone carvings. The floors of the verandas and passages are all white marble with black markings and the balustrades are white marble. I'm so glad we had the opportunity to see it.

After that we went to see Mrs. Ingram and had a long visit with her and Miriam. The Japanese are trying to persuade her to sell them her house and she is doing her best to put them off. They pester her once or twice a week. She is really in two minds about it, not wanting to sell and yet wondering if it would not be better to do so and buy herself a small place rather than having to endure this worry all the time. One trouble is that they want to pay her in the new Jap money the bottom of which may drop out any day.

John Finley, who is teaching in the Peking American School, and making splendidly good, came to see us that first evening. He is to be librarian here next year, giving us half time and studying half time. We should see a good deal of him. The P.A.S. hates to lose him.

Yesterday afternoon we met the Language School students at tea, this noon had lunch with the Gaileys and Hayes at the Pettus home, and tomorrow meet some people at lunch at the Gailey's apartment - Father Mack and Dr. Braisted. We have already had a number of calls from Chinese friends in Peking, and day after tomorrow we are going to Tungchow for the day. We have not done anything but get settled so far, but Father is to begin to help revise Dr. Fenn's dictionary, which seems to be supplanting Dr. Goodrich's.

This compound is lovely and once inside these walls one would never know that there was anything but peace in the world. But

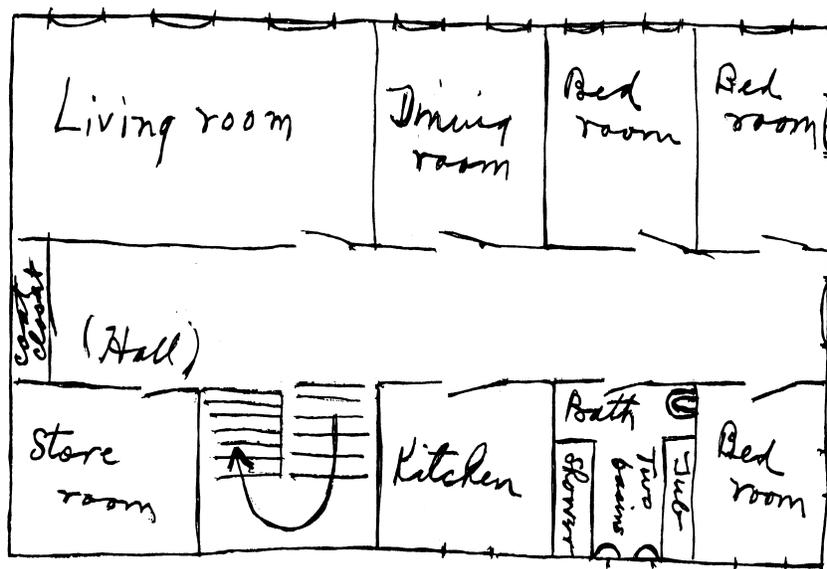
there are frightful things going on in Peking and more frightful things going on in the country wherever there are Japanese. Their aim is to terrorize the people by deeds of brutality and they are thinking up and using more brutal methods all the time. And we in the U.S. keep right on serenely helping them with all the things that make this inexcusable war possible! What has happened to the conscience of America and what has happened to the business sense of big business? Can't Ford and the rest see that after they have taught the Japanese all there is to know about autos and air planes they will lose the trade of both Japan and China after Japan wins the war, with their help, and can tap all the natural resources of China. She may have to still import oil but she will be able to manufacture the rest.

We saw something like 35,000 new Japanese recruits disembarking between Tangku and Tientsin. There may not have been that number tho' that is the number they are adding to the North China garrison. They just swarmed!

Uncle Charlie arrived today to attend the council meeting. I must find out and arrange a meeting. We have a lot of things that Alfred sent out by us. We have enjoyed the things that were given us, flowers, steamer rug, life savers, gum, dried fruits, writing case, books and magazines.

I had no idea 'till I first turned back to number my pages, how much I have written. Excuse me this time. I promise never again. I will however, go on to another page to draw a rough plan of our future apartment which we think will meet our needs perfectly. Father will have a study in the main building so we don't have to use a special room for that purpose. The rooms face south so get all the

winter sun and in the summer they put up a peng (awning). The bedrooms are rather small but we can have one apiece if we please and still have a guest room. So far as living is concerned I don't see how we could be more comfortably or conveniently fixed. Each bedroom has a good closet. I have seen the apartment only once so haven't added those details, but they are there. This is just to give you an idea. We shall be on the second floor.



The hall is somewhat narrower than this makes it out to be — also the stairway — but not much narrower.

* * * * *

I have just come back from tea at Mrs. Pettus' home to meet the seven women teachers in the school. In fact, I was sent for to see Mrs. Galt, who had come in from Yenching. She was overjoyed at the direct word - and good word - that we brought from Lawrence and his wife. She hadn't heard from them for months and was worried.

Mr. Galt is taking Leighton Stuart's place at Yenching while he is making a trip to the new capital, Chung King, via Hong Kong, Indo China, etc. Reuter's news said that Chung King was badly bombed yesterday.

Here's a little incident that happened a few days ago. The Japanese began to suspect the Chinese guard at one of the Peiping gates of allowing guns to be smuggled in. The Chinese would stick the guns down their trouser legs and up under their arms and the guards would give them the once over ("massage" them as the Yenching students say) and let them by. So a number of Japanese dressed as Chinese came to the gate to test the matter - all carrying guns concealed in that way. The Chinese guard somehow got wind of it and after discovering the guns they took the Japanese outside the gate and beat them up until the Japanese began to squeal that they were Japanese and beg for mercy. So far as I know the Chinese guards were not punished for their misplaced diligence.

Three or four days ago the police entered Bridgman Academy and took away a girl because of something that was said in a letter that came to her. They have not heard from her since but her father, who knows some one in the "New Government," hopes that he can find out where she is and get her released. They torture the people they arrest so terribly.

* * * * *

Dearest Margaret and All,

Father has made type-written copies of this too, too long letter to send to the others and an extra one to send perhaps to Mrs.

Gibbons. So I am sending you the one written by hand. We have been so busy since coming that we have had little time to do much besides getting this one letter written. I'll try to get it off tomorrow through the Embassy. Mr. Pettus sends quite often.

Council meeting is going on at Teng Shih Kou so we are seeing some of the mission people from everywhere. But I must leave everything else to tell you next time.

You are in our thoughts and hearts constantly, in spite of all the other distractions. I mustn't do anything more now, just send our deepest love, for I want to get these letters into Mr. Pettus' hands to send off as soon as possible. With loads of love.

Mother & Grandma

Mail is opened so can't tell all.
Mission work still carried on.
Visit the Crosses, Martins and Hunters in Tungchow.
German Jewish doctors in Tungchow and Tehchow.
9,000 Jews in Shanghai, and 2,000 arriving every month
Yenching campus is beautiful.
American Association luncheon speaker says Philippines don't want independence now.
Reckless Japanese army trucks kill many civilians.

Gertrude S. Wilder
(Re-typed by GDW)

College of Chinese Studies
Peking,
May 19, 1939

Dear Families, *In this case the Menzi's,*

It has been some days since I wrote the long epistle to you all and this will be another general letter to bring you up to date and to enclose the plan of our apartment which I omitted in all but Margaret's letter. This will go by ordinary mail, so you will not get anything but our own daily doings. The opening of letters and the banning of certain publications is the order of the day.

I'll tell you first about some of our social affairs, the first of which was a noon meal at a Chinese restaurant given by the Yu Ying faculty members to the people gathered in annual meeting, both Chinese and foreign. There must have been seven or eight tables with ten at each table - a very jolly crowd. The food was delicious and the meeting with people from all our stations was most pleasant. Everyone was very much heartened by the spirit of this mission meeting. Every branch of mission work has been carried on throughout the year with courage and determination and great patience. There has been a great deal of real facing of danger, too. But everyone was cheerful and hopeful, facing the new year in the same spirit, and with high hopes. There didn't seem to be any thought of letting down.

Our next party was a dinner in one of the hostel (private) dining rooms given by two Chinese friends, all the guests except ourselves being Chinese. They were mostly friends that dated way back, like John Sung of the Y.M.C.A. and his wife. The hostel cooks outdid themselves and gave us a first class dinner such as the students without doubt would like to see every day. It was a foreign meal, of course. After dinner we adjourned to one of the smaller reception rooms and just talked until we dispersed.

I think it was the very next evening that Li Ju Sung, head of the Yu Ying School, asked us to go to that same nice restaurant for dinner. There were ten of us, Mrs. Frame and the Shaws being the other foreign guests. That time the group was smaller and we had an especially nice time. I was able to eat without any qualms and the food was so good. I have never tasted better. Two of the delicacies were orange and walnut - what? - soup, I guess, for want of a better name. In Chinese one was "keng" and one was "lou." I must send you the recipes for them when I can get them. They would be good substitutes for fruit cocktail at the beginning of a meal and would be something different.

All of us foreigners assembled at mission meeting, had an outdoor supper one evening and a good time afterward. We spent a weekend in Tungchou, partly with the Crosses and partly with the Martins. The place looked lovely and life was going on about as usual. To be sure, we couldn't use the "hole in the wall" as that had been closed up with brick and mortar by order of the authorities, but had to go the long way around by the south gate. That was no great hardship, however. Father preached in the morning, a large choir led by Ch'en Ch'ang You sang well, and after church a good number of folks gathered in the Sunday School room to greet us and to drink tea. We were pleased to see how well our last home had been kept up by the Crosses. They were getting good returns from fruit trees and berries and even from our English walnut tree. I was especially glad to find the wild

things that I had brought from Kuan Tso Ling⁹ flourishing splendidly.

⁹ A location in the Western Hills where friends of the Wilders owned a cottage which they sometimes visited during Summer "health breaks."

In both Tungchow and Techow they have secured the services of refugee German Jewish doctors, a man and wife in Tungchow and a single man in Techow. Both men are from Vienna, both are well up in their profession and all three so grateful for a place where they can live without fear. One of the men had been under arrest and had been very badly treated. Just think - Shanghai, the most crowded city in the world has nine thousand Jewish refugees now, and they are coming in at the rate of two thousand a month, all available steamers being booked until December. It is a really terrifying problem. The people in Shanghai are afraid of food riots. Each refugee is allowed only ten marks when he leaves his native land!

Last week we had a perfect weekend with the Galts. They had the Porters and the Aments in for lunch and we spent a good chunk of the afternoon playing Lexicon. Yenching is, I am sure, one of the most beautiful university campuses in the world, and with its wealth of trees and shrubs, grass and flowers, it grows more beautiful all the time. The buildings are all in the same style so there is harmony throughout. Father had a chance at some good tennis while Mrs. Galt and I looked on. We have since invested in racquets and have played twice. At the present rate of exchange they cost about a dollar gold and they are pretty good. The Aments are returning to the U.S. soon. He left China when he was only nine years old and this trip has been a great experience for him.

One day last week Mr. and Mrs. Pettus tried to take us to a movie but the program had been changed so we went to the park part of the Forbidden City, where we enjoyed the flowers and birds, among them an albino peacock, pure white, who strutted around displaying his beautiful tail as if he were on parade. Before leaving we sat at a wicker table and had tea and delicious pastry stuffed with rose leaves. Something new.

In the meantime, Father has commenced teaching and lecturing and I have attended one committee meeting, talked to a group of Union Church women and spent one afternoon calling on Chinese

ladies. When the visiting is over and the newness of our arrival has worn off our days will become more regulated.

This noon, May 20, we went to a luncheon at the Wagon Lits given by the American Association in honor of Gov. (is it?) McNutt who is on his way to the U.S. from the Phillipines. All Americans were invited whether members or not at \$7.00 Japanese money a plate. There must have been nearly three hundred people there. After things were cleared away we listened to a very good talk about the Philippines, past, present and future. He bore out what our Philippine traveling companion said, that the great majority of the people do not want independence now, and told us a number of reasons why. It was good, though he made the eagle screech a little more than was necessary. Mr. Galt called it a good Fourth of July speech. He is a fine looking man with a good speaking voice.

Father has gone to Tungchou to speak to a group of students, so I am alone tonight. He comes back tomorrow morning and has to go straight to the Teng Shih Kou church where he is to preach.

* * * * *

...which he did - I walking to church from here, joining him after the service was over. Walking on the streets is no fun. There are as many rickshaws and bikes as ever and many times as many autos and trucks, mostly belonging to the visiting team, which whiz all over the place with no regard for anyone nor anything. Two days ago one of the students here saw a girl killed by an army truck at the entrance of our alley. It happens often. We'll be careful.

We are going to Union Church in a little while and then home with Mrs. Ingram for dinner to meet Miss Mullikan and some others, and I think this is a good place to stop.

My head and my heart are full of more things to say but I mustn't make this any longer. There will be another letter soon.

Another one from you, Margaret, came a few days ago. Such a joy to get it. You certainly must be careful how you experiment on allergic little Donnie. I'm glad you got a substitute for the play. Your chances will come when Don is a little older and your time can be counted upon.

Love to each of you - and loads of it.

Mother

Living is cheap here with gold-backed US dollars.
China Relief is falling short of fund-raising goal, but is doing much good work, e.g., in Shanghai.
Guerilla warfare all along 4,000-mile battle line, but quiet here in Peking.
Teaching six groups of 4 or 5 students each; also revising Fenn's Dictionary.
Japanese friends staying here.

George D. Wilder

Peking,
May 23, 1939

Dear Mar and Len,

I guess there is room in this letter for another sheet and I have a few minutes. There have been things I thought I would say for a long time, and interesting events, but they have gotten far ahead of any possibility of writing. Just rest your minds for us. We are as comfortable as possible except for having nothing but hard water and I am told we can get softening fluid for \$1.00 a kerosene tin - only 12 cents gold you know. Really for us who get gold salaries living is too dirt cheap, and there are all sorts of funny things. Lyman Cady asked me to get him a History of Philosophy by a Chinese, translated by Derk Bodde. The U.S. price is \$6.00, the China dollar price \$18.00. I buy FRB dollars and get the book at the China price for only about \$2.40 (U.S.).

Has Mr. Van Tyne sent you the \$6.00 for the two volumes of the Birds of Hopei that I sold him? Well, the price in U.S. money now is doubled, but if I use it to buy FRB notes, which are being forced into circulation now, the book costs me \$3.00 U.S. or only half what it was before the price was raised to meet exchange! - the dollar price being raised only to \$24.00 (from \$20.00 that I paid), or to about \$3.00 U.S.

Also, I wonder if that picture is in your hands or in the hands of any other dealer. It need not worry you as Miss Murphy has long since given up any expectation of getting anything out of it and only hoped that it would bring something for China Relief.

China Relief will now be falling off from the \$10,000 a week that it maintained through the winter, less than half what they aimed at and yet doing a tremendous lot of good, as we saw in Shanghai. I hope you will not give up giving or soliciting as opportunity offers.

You do not see much in the papers, but the guerilla warfare goes on all along the line, as some say the longest line of battle in history, over 4,000 miles. But we along the coast are all peaceful and see nothing of it. It is astonishing how orderly and quiet we are.

We have several Japanese friends staying here at our hostel off and on for a few days at a time and the pastor here, Mr. Shimidzu, brings Christian friends often. We have known him for several tens of years. A Japanese missionary in Jehol, acquainted with friends of mine up there was here when we arrived and we talked easily in Chinese only. With him was a Methodist minister who spoke good English, so we got along pretty well as far as language went.

I have six groups of four or five each in the third term to help with English, each once a week a half hour at a time. I fill in the rest of my time revising Fenn's dictionary and correcting proof. It is just the kind of work I need to refresh my Chinese, and is good fun. I have his former teacher, Mr. Chin, who helped him make it from the first. He is fine and we get along together first rate. I could not have more congenial work. The old church friends are after me and my Sundays are pretty well taken up. We close school for two weeks on June 9 and then we shall go to Tehsien and see what remnants of our things are left there.

Love to you all,

Father

Tungchou compound's small gate in the city wall blocked up, preventing villagers from getting good water.

Cook tells how Japanese terrorize nearby villages — collective punishment.

Chinese punished for contact with foreigners.

Villages caught between guerillas and Japanese army.

Japanese use Chinese soldiers to attack own people's villages.

8,000 reportedly died in bombing of Chungking.

New un-backed paper currency is being forced on people.

George D. Wilder

College of Chinese Studies, Peking

May 29, 1939

Dear Folks,

Before I forget all about it let me tell you about yesterday and the day before.

Saturday was devoted to a meeting of the standing committee of the North Church, which is three or four blocks north of us. Both of us are elected on it but Gertrude was away in the Forbidden City for luncheon and could not go, so I had to stand it alone for over two hours. It was interesting enough, only slow. I had my reward by getting into a pretty good set of tennis, or two sets, and helping a good partner to win them both. We had a terribly hard server and hitter and fast man against us, handicapped by another very tall English partner.

In the evening we had dinner at Miriam Ingram's with her mother and the Steve Pyles as guests. He was interested to hear about all of our family. We had to leave at 8:30 to go to the formerly London Mission, now Independent Church of Christ in China not far south of the Y building, for a rehearsal of a very complicated program in which I was to have a lot of Bible reading, etc., mingled with a lot of choir work. We did not get home - til after eleven and in a much needed rain - or no, the rain was last night, after the real thing on Day of Pentecost Sunday.

Sunday morning I woke up too late to get the train, so had breakfast and went to the Tung Ssu P'ai lou, near us here to wait for a bus that they said goes to Tungchou about every hour, provided they have a load. I waited 3/4 of an hour holding down my seat and gossiping with folks who knew me all around. When I went in to buy a ticket quite a lot of folks sitting there waiting for the bus talked in surprise that I could speak Chinese. Some were Japanese. One spoke up "Oh, he must be a missionary. All who can speak that way are." Then he said, "Why, that is Wan Mushih. Everyone young and old in Tungchow knows him. They all want him to come back." Then he said to me, "If you had only been there you would have kept them from blocking up the little gate through the wall." Of course I told him that I could not have done any more than any one else with the new conditions. He said that the people all over the west part of the city missed terribly the chance to get our water.

I went down to talk on "Nature" at the church. The boys and girls of the school had charge and there were over 400 there with birds and flowers galore. It was very well gotten up. When I got back about 5:00 P.M. I had to study the seven pages of the script that I had to read at the "Grain Market Church." It was grassily written and it took me a straight two hours to study it out and correct it so that I could read it with some smoothness. I did have a time of it when the time came, but got through better than I expected to after all. It was a beautiful, carefully prepared, but not much practiced, service in a church that had been redecorated most beautifully with the altar in the center. That was not a day of rest, and I took Monday off. In the evening, though, we had a treat. Dr. Loucks, head of surgery or something at PUMC, an old hunting companion, had us and the Pettuses, Mrs. Ingram, and Dr. Houghton's Secretary down to dinner and then to hear Brahms' Requiem and other pieces of instrumental and vocal music at the Hotel de Pekin.

* * * * *

I have let a whole week go by and have forgotten what all I was going to write. I guess it was to tell you what news I heard down at Tungchow, but we have been getting more news every day that makes one sick. Guess I will send this by Legation mail and just cut loose.

Our cook was up to find out when we would be ready for him a few days ago and told us a lot about his village and the surrounding country. Our boy that we had several years at Techow and then fired three months before we went to America, taking the cook's wife in his place, lived near the cook out 70 li east of Tungchow. He went to the Japs as a spy and was telling on his neighbors but it was not long before the neighbors went over one night and killed him.

In that vicinity 16 of the best citizens have been put to death just for no reason but to terrify the populace. He said his village was faring worse than others because when they first sent their two leading men, they were promptly executed and so since then no one has dared to represent the village and the Japanese suspect them all the more and have been harder on them than on those who sent representatives to take orders. They have a system of making each village responsible for all outrages they suffer from the guerillas. When they lose one or more Japanese soldiers the nearest village is exterminated or its leading men put to death by slow torture. There have been two such affairs right near the compound at Tungchou, in one case six men were taken from the nearest village to where they found two headless Japanese soldiers who had gone into the village for some deviltry, and been "done to death." In the other, seven families were burnt out of house and home - I do not know how many if any were killed. Those were near the city wall east of us, and the former just south of the railroad.

For several days we heard bombs or artillery about 20 miles southeast of Peking and southwest of Tungchow. We kept getting word about it. First that the four counties of the region had agreed to fight and not give up their arms when demanded. So

when a small force of Chinese mercenaries and a few Japanese went out to take up arms they were almost annihilated, a few Japanese getting away. Then the artillery went out and first it was three villages and finally 17 reported as destroyed and the people killed so far as possible but some escaped to the city and told the Shaws' servants about it. We have just learned, too, that the guerillas had ordered the people not to give up their arms on pain of attack by them.

In many places the more the people have to do with foreigners the more they are punished. One missionary reports that at a church meeting the soldiers came in and took all who had no badge of church membership and took them outside and shot them. When the missionary asked what was the charge they told him simply, "The guerillas must be put down."

One of our social workers at the hospital tells of a man coming to take his convalescent wife away. He broke into tears to say that he could not bear to tell her but their whole village had been destroyed since she was sick and he had no place to take her. They had been taxed 4.00 per mou, a huge tax, and could not raise it so they were cleaned out and he had accidently been able to escape.

Another countryman who did not know that the sound old Chinese currency must be replaced by the pure paper money with no promise on it to pay anything came in to the city with \$4.00 in the Chinese money. The Chinese guard searched him and as he had made no effort to conceal them they were confiscated, he was led over to a tea shop and a kettle of boiling water poured over his head to run down his person. He was brought in for treatment. This was done by Chinese guards at the gate, but they say if they refuse to do it it will be done to them, or worse. When I went to Tungchou all the Chinese passengers in the bus were searched three times on the way and the same coming back. There were school girls dressed as police searching the women and they were much less polite than the men, who were pretty decent. The

Yenching boys call the search "taking massage." But proud Chinese certainly feel the insult bitterly.

The way they are enrolling Chinese soldiers to terrorize their own people, or at least to go in front ranks attacking their own people's villages is simply terrible.

Well, this is enough of this kind of story. We do not actually see anything of the cruelty and things seem quite quiet and orderly, except for the dashing trucks. A lady came in the other day and said she had seen a girl killed by one at the mouth of our alley and it quite upset her, but that is the only one I have heard of so close. Some say that they occur every day. I have not gotten used enough to turning left to feel safe on a bike as yet and have not bought one.

We have been having some good tennis lately. "Laddie" Scott, the brother of the Betty Stam who was killed by the communists a few years ago, is the best player here. Hubbard said Scott beat him, but I doubt if he would consistently when Hub is in form. He is good, though. Do you remember Ted Romig? He and Moyer, who is also in Hubbard's class, played Scott and me three sets the other day. We got them all but by only a margin of two each time. Saturday they got one from us by the same margin. They are all hard hitters, and like to play. Your Mother and I have played the Romigs, too. Mrs. R. and your mother beat a couple of big husky English girls the other day, too. When I saw the girls slamming the ball I did not think they could do it, but their slams were too inaccurate.

All the Phi Beta Kappa folks have been elected into the Phi Tau Phi at Yenching and went out last Thursday to be initiated. I was to have gone to help initiate, as I was taken in last year but had to attend a Missionary Association Committee representing the American Board at exactly the same hour. The rest went out to Yenching to Pres. Stuart's house for it. Pres. Stuart has just come back from West China. He was in Chungking during two of the five bombings, the worst of the war, with over 8,000

civilians killed. He says it was worse than any of the accounts of it. He came in to our Tuesday prayer meeting last week to tell us about the trip out and back. He tried to be objective and avoid wishful thinking, but was tremendously impressed with the morale there. There were false reports that they were planning to move the capital again. He said it was not mentioned and all plans were to stay. The day after the bombing the officials were in their office as usual and taking the bombings as all in the day's work. They simply expressed regret that his visit had happened to come at so inconvenient a time. He thinks the Japanese will leave South and Central China in a year or two but that North China will be held, unless something big happens in Japan. A Russian this afternoon at the celebration of Bishop Norris' 50 years in China said that he expected them to leave in a year as there are deep underground movements going on. So it goes.

We could not be in a more congenial situation. Several welcomed us back this P.M. About 40 Chinese friends are getting up a celebration of my 70th birthday on the 26th of this month and Pettus says they are doing the same thing here at the College for noon of the same day. The welcome here among the faculty and students, about 60 of the former and 117 of the latter could not be more kindly and cordial.

So far I have had little teaching to do. The third term class of 27 is divided into six sections for me to give them a half hour personal aid each week. They all come on Wednesday and Thursday mornings. Tuesday, Thursday and Friday I work with Mr. Chin correcting proof, etc., on Fenn's Dictionary, which we want to get out for next fall. We have about 48 pages of the 650 set up but have not gotten the format fixed so as to begin real printing yet. Pettus has invested \$1,400 in paper for it and has made some stipulations about the form of the page, which delays us another week and will require re-reading those 48 pages. And it's an awful job to get any proof free of errors in this country. Correct five or six times and then you will find that they have disarranged places that you had correct in second or third reading.

June 6.

You know this currency trouble is because the pure paper notes without backing are being forced on the people against their will and they have to give up all their sound old paper Bank of China notes. They were supposed to be exchanged at par, good money for worthless, but now they just confiscate wherever found, and punish folks for having them. Still I am buying tennis balls at \$5.00 (instead of \$9.00, now reduced to \$7.50 in the new money) because I can draw checks on Tientsin H&S Bank in the old currency, which the shop keeper can use in paying his bills to the foreign firms. I get them for the others in the College. We use British balls and they figure out about 28 cents apiece our money. It remains to be seen if bayonets can force this money on the people generally. It is in common use in the city and I suppose wherever the Japanese soldiers are.

Today's paper, Japanese-controlled as all are now, tells of the death yesterday of Hsu Shih Ch'ang, the ex-President whom Ursula once went to call on and wrote up when she was in school. They tried in vain to get him to head up the new government recently. I will enclose to Ursula the clipping and his picture, all in Chinese. She always remembers him.

We sent a radio message to Durand and told him we were going to Techow, and Tsinan, soon. It will be the morning of the 8th. Miss Disney is up for a visit and we shall go back together, fortunately, as she knows the ropes.

We went over the Moyer apartment this morning to show Mr. Yuan the repairs we want. The school certainly tries to treat us right. Yesterday Mr. Pettus heard that we had paid our way out. He had supposed that the Board did it. He said that if we were at all pressed to do it the school would do it still. We can keep that in mind for a return sometime. We are just preparing

an invitation to Dr. and Mrs. Fenn to come out and live here on the same basis that Gailey and I do. The school will do well to have them here. As further evidence of good will, we have not been able to pay any board or wash bills so that our living is very cheap. We hardly spend anything except for rikshas and clothes. The riksha fares are way up in figures but dirt cheap when reduced to U.S. money. Our men at the gate have regular rates and we pay by fare or by time, according as to which is highest. We never have any fuss and they always seem pleased. It is very pleasant for all concerned, and as it should be.

*With love,
Father*

REPUBLIC OF CHINA
HEADQUARTERS OF THE GENERALISSIMO¹⁰

Chungking, Szechwan
China
May 3, 1939

Mr. O. G. Starrett
Detroit Michigan
United States of America

Dear Mr. Starrett,

I have just received your letter of March 21 in which you sent a bank draft for US\$100.00 for relief work. I am sending the receipt herewith.;

I wish to thank you and Mrs. Starrett for the active sympathy you show in our cause. I also wish you to convey the appreciation of the Generalissimo and myself to the Chinese in your community for their patriotism and helpfulness. The Overseas Chinese have made valuable contributions to relief and other causes connected with the war.

When you get this letter we will be in the 23rd month of our resistance. The people of our country who have suffered so much are splendid in their endurance and in their determination to keep on resisting despite their losses. The soldiers are fighting as Chinese soldiers never fought before.

The Japanese, by virtue of their superior artillery and air force, have been able to burst their way into the interior of our country, but they have not occupied the regions they have traversed. Most of them are still under our control. Warfare is being conducted from the seaboard inwards. There are no front or back lines for the Japanese. Wherever there

¹⁰ Copied from the original by Margaret Menzi.

are Japanese there is fighting. This will go on until they are cleared from our country.

Just now our troops are fighting valiantly everywhere, causing the Japanese great losses and obstructing their advance on Changsha and Sian despite their superiority of equipment.

However, the Generalissimo states that this is not the Chinese offensive. He knows that concentrations of artillery, mechanized units, and bombing planes can burst a way through Chinese lines. So the big offensive will not take place until the Japanese have shot their bolt. In the meantime, they will be harried wherever possible, and it is hoped that they will not be able even to carry out their intentions at the moment.

Spiritual mobilization is now under way throughout the country and everywhere there is energetic work.

You would not know Chungking. Industries are springing up everywhere, and so are houses. The same thing is happening in Kunming and in other places. Sikong has been established as a province, and throughout all this western region there is the liveliness that has the appearance of boom days in the settlement of the American West. Here, no doubt, are being laid the foundations of quite a new China.

Japanese bombing planes range this way, but the clouds of Szechwan do much to protect the province from constant raiding. Every effort is being made to protect the people of Chungking. They hate to evacuate the city, but the authorities are doing their utmost to compel evacuation in order to reduce loss of life in case of raids. Dugouts are being blasted into the solid rock but that is a slow job. We are hoping that the Japanese will not be able to get through, but now that fine weather is coming, the danger is great.

Will you please convey this to the members of your Chinese Church School, and tell them that their countrymen here are laying down their lives and are prepared to make all sacrifices to safeguard the heritage which our ancestors have handed down

to us? We are sure that victory will come to us sometime. If this generation cannot defeat the Japanese, then the next generation will.

In the meantime, we are praying that the great countries who are supposed to be sympathetic with us will not continue to help Japan to desolate our land and slaughter our helpless people. Rivers of blood have run in China, and much of it has been made with munitions made from American scrap-iron and other materials. It is a terrible and tragic thing to have to realize that such a situation is possible in this year of grace 1939.

I would like to make it known to all Chinese communities in America how deeply the Generalissimo and I appreciate their quiet boycotting by Chinese and our American friends of ships loading scrap-iron for our destruction.

Yours sincerely,

Mayling Soong Chiang

Mayling Soong Chiang

(Madame Chiang Kai Shek)

P.S. Since dictating this letter this morning, twenty seven planes raided Chungking. I have just returned from an inspection of the ruins wrought by the enemy. Sections of the city are still in flames, for incendiary bombs were used. My staff escaped unharmed C this time anyway C but the buildings adjoining our office were gutted. Maimed bodies, charred limbs, bleeding human wrecks and corpses were strewn over many of the streets, while emergency corps worked heroically to save all they could. Many hundreds are grieving over the death and suffering of their beloved ones. What have these people ; ever done to the Japanese to deserve such treatment from them?

MSC

Theodore H. White's description of the May 3, 1939 bombings of Chungking, alluded to in Madame Chiang's letter and in GDW's letter of May 29..

The Bombing of Chungking¹¹

Chungking was bombed on May 3 and again on May 4 of 1939. Those bombings are now forgotten milestones in the history of aerial terror, but at the time they marked the largest mass slaughter of defenseless human beings from the air in the rising history of violence. And the Japanese began it.

The Japanese hit once, in early afternoon of May 3, but our office dugout was far from the trail of their bombs. They came again the next evening; they outwitted the Chinese air defenses by circling the city for almost an hour until the Chinese pursuit planes had run out of gas and landed for refueling. Then they came, and performed massacre.

I was with my group of information ministry friends that day and we had left our dugout, which had become stuffy with the long wait inside, and descended to the banks of the Chialing River to watch the sunset until the all-clear would sound. Then, droning through the cloudless sky, came a formation of twenty-seven Japanese bombers, a serene and unbroken line of dots in the sky. The Chinese anti-aircraft reached up through the gathering dark, and the tracer bullets, like pink and orange puffballs, made fireworks as they pointed to the Japanese formation. The shells burst in instant flashes—short, however, visibly short, impotently short of the line above. Then we heard the thudding from behind the ridge inside the old city, and the Japanese were gone, untouched.

¹¹ Theodore H. White, *In Search of History*, p. 80.

I made my way back to the office, then began the four-mile walk to the Friends Mission, deep inside the walled city, where I was then lodging. By this time **it** was full dark, and what I was seeing was the reaction of a medieval city to the first savage touch of the modern worldCwhich was total panic. Behind the slope, as I climbed up, was the red of spreading fire; and from the red bowl beyond the rim, people were fleeing. They were trudging on foot, fleeing in rickshaws, riding on sedan chairs, pushing wheelbarrows; and as they streamed out, an occasional limousine or army truck would honk or blast its way through the procession, which would part, then close, then continue its flight to the countryside. They carried mattresses, bedrolls, pots and pans, food, bits of furniture. They carried babies in their arms; grandmothers rode piggyback on men's shoulders; but they did not talk: in the silence one could even hear the padding shuffle of their feet.

At the crest, where one began the descent into the old city, I could get a larger view. The electric power lines had been bombed out; so, too, had the trunk of Chungking's water system, which ran down the main street. There was no light but that of the fires, no water to fight the fires, and the fires were spreading up and down the alleys of old Chungking. One could hear the bamboo joints popping as the fire ate the bamboo timbers; now there was noise, women keened, men yelled, babies cried. Some sat rocking back and forth on the ground, chanting. I could hear screaming in the back alleys; several times I saw people dart out of the slope alleyways into the main street, their clothes on fire, then roll over and over again to put out the fires.

I reached the room I had occupied in the Friends Mission those first few weeks, and knew at once I could stay there no longer. The mission had been shattered by a close hit, and in my room I saw a dead body. It had been thrown in by a bomb blast, and concussion had blasted off its face, crushed its rib cage; I could tell the body was a woman's only by the skin-stripped flesh of her breasts. I would not sleep there that night, or ever again, and continued walking, and finding by some chance the companionship of Martin of the UP, went on walking until four in the morning.

There was all through that night, as I walked with Martin, the bewildering contrast of the old and the new. Along the main street, with which I thought I had become familiar in a few weeks, the slopes had until now been hidden by bamboo-and-

mud buildings. As I came to a blazing slope where all the buildings had already been burned off, I saw a Buddha. It was cut into the side of a cliff wall, and its temple had burned away so that the huge bronze cross-legged figure glowed with the reflection of the flames; and I could see its benign countenance softly smiling on a city that wept and wailed.

Chungking had reacted after the first day's bombing with what must have been the old community's normal response to danger. That first night between the two bombings, the town crier, clanging his bell, had paced the streets, warning all who could hear his chant not to pick up cigarettes. The Japanese bombers, he called out, had dropped poisoned cigarettes over the city and to smoke them was to die. That same first night had been the night of an eclipse of the moon, and while the smoke was still rising from the afternoon's bombing, the priests had been exorcizing the eclipse. Chinese folklore held that when the moon is eclipsed it is because the Dog of Heaven is trying to swallow it. That first night, the priests had beaten their bronze gongs, as was their duty, and sung the incantations to frighten off the Dog of Heaven. But now, the second night, after the terror bombing, there were no priests about, and nothing to defend the people of the old city from the killings of the new age.

Statistics often mislead. This time they did not. The official figures reported that between three and four thousand people were burned to death that night by Japanese incendiary bombs; how many more or less may have been killed is almost irrelevant in retrospect. More people were killed that night than ever before by bombardiers. But what was important about the killings was their purpose of terror. Nanking and Shanghai had already been bombed; those, however, were military bombings. There was no military target within the old walls of Chungking. Yet the Japanese had chosen, deliberately, to burn it to the ground, and all the people within it, to break some spirit they could not understand, to break the resistance of the government that had taken refuge somewhere in Chungking's suburbs. I never thereafter felt any guilt when we came to bomb the Japanese; when we bombed, we bombed purposefully, to erase Japan's industry and warmaking power; no American planes swooped low to machine-gun people in the streets, as had the Japanese.

I had not yet learned, as I was to learn later in Vietnam, that senseless terror is worse than useless; senseless terror denies even the craven, the submissive, the potentially cooperative, the incentive or compulsion to yield. The senseless terror bombings of Chungking had a result that was immediate and primordial in my thinking on politics.

What I learned was that people accept government only if the government accepts its first duty — which is to protect them. This is an iron rule, running from bombed-out Chungking to the feudal communities of the Middle Ages to the dark streets of New York or Rome where the helpless are so often prey. Whether in a feudal, modern, imperial or municipal society, people choose government over nongovernment chiefly to protect themselves from dangers they cannot cope with as individuals or families.

Thus, then, within days of the bombings of May, with no political protest from anyone, the "guest" government, the "national" government, abolished the old municipal government and proclaimed Chungking a "Special" municipality, a ward of the central government. They chose as the appointed mayor one of the Americanists — K. .Wu, a one-time Princetonian, an aspiring novelist and short-story writer (in English). K. C. Wu did not depend on votes, as do mayors of American cities, so he performed arbitrarily and superbly. He cleared fire lanes, organized fire-fighting systems, repaired the water mains, and did all those things Americans do most efficiently. He was the very model of a modern American mayor, but he could not speak the dialect of old Chungking.

For the next two years, his town echoed to the muffled booming of excavations, as old-fashioned Chinese black powder was used to hollow dugouts. The government, which had brought the new world to Chungking and tempted the Japanese to pursue it by bombing, was responsible for protection. So, slowly, the people of Chungking and their government grew together, and the two years thereafter, as I observed both groups, were among the happiest of my life. There were no more panics; people old and new learned to live together.

Alarming situation of British legation at Tientsin blockaded by Japanese.

**AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS**

June 14, 1939

Mr. George D. Wilder
College of Chinese Studies
Peiping, China

Dear Wilder,

Thank you for writing us from Shanghai.¹² Ellen and I were, of course, terribly interested in all the details you gave of the trip. We totally agree with you as to the joyful comfort of traveling that way on a freight boat. You see, our last trip over to New York from Kobe was all the way on the Grete Maersk of the same line. I understand the Danes are now hiring more steamers from the Dutch. I am writing to Harold Hackett today. If we cannot easily get a prompt sailing from Kobe, we should like very much to do as you did, and go on to Shanghai.

We note what you said about various examinations.¹³ I suppose you cannot tell which will be difficult, and which may be superficial. Your comment coming from the present oil merchant was very interesting. We like, too, your other stories about international visits.

The news these several days from Tientsin is rather alarming. It must be pretty tense in the concessions there. Perhaps there is some special advantage to living in the Chinese city just now. We hate to think of the inconveniences for not only concession people, but those who must go through the port and travel and do business there. There will, of

¹² See GDW letter dated April 21, 1939.

¹³ The writer is disguising his meaning here to get past the censors.

course, be a way out somehow. We do not forget our splendid friend who was the principal of the British school.

How will you occupy yourself this summer, I wonder. Will there be any chance for birding or other hunting? Helen and I expect to have a grand time ranging across the country. Possibly we'll stop in once more at Yankton. Glacier Park is a high point which we want to reach. We shall leave here on June 30, take a two months' holiday in Marco Polo, and sail September 8 from San Francisco. So some time in the Fall we shall see you.

Yours until then,

Robert Chandler

Robert E. Chandler

American businessmen visiting Japan to study opportunities to invest in development of China.
Attending church at North Chapel — had bought site for them in 1902.
70th birthday feasts; received traditional porcelain figure of old man.
Fighting in Shansi province. Japanese failure to progress is causing new roughness.
Comfortable in our compound. Daily tennis.

George D. Wilder

College of Chinese Studies
Peking, China
June 25th, 1939

Dear Folks,

Two weeks ago I sent you all a four-page letter and a week before that another of the same size. A week ago I cut loose in the same way to Clark Firestone, of the Cincinnati Times Star. I was stimulated to write him because I saw in the Oberlin Alumni Magazine for May that he had been on a trip to Japan with business men studying the opportunities for investments in the development of China. I wish he could have come on over here. It is the second time that he has come almost to China. The other time it was from the East through Russia. But my unconscionably long letters ought to warn me against trying it again so soon instead of encouraging me to do it again so soon.

For two Sundays I have not had to preach, as we had expected to be in Techow, Lintsing, and Tsinan, Shantung and preach there, but I think I have written that owing to a flu bug that kept Gertrude in bed a few days we did not go and have put off going to gather up the remnants of our things until we return from Paitaiho early in September. This morning I had the service at the North Chapel, where we are attending and helping out now days, it being the nearest church. I spent much time buying their property in 1902, and trying to get the occupant out. It was a good buy even when Dr. Ament - after I gave it up - paid a second \$2,000 to liquidate certain just claims that I had known nothing of, but which served to keep the occupant, who had paid no rent for years, in possession. It is a good plant and was full this morning. There is a six-year primary school there, at whose Commencement I am to speak next Wednesday.

The Board of managers of this school, which numbers nearly 260 scholars, had a feast at a nearby restaurant last night for us two in honor of my 70th birthday, which comes tomorrow. They called it a "Double Joy" meeting, being a welcome back and also a birthday congratulation. There were about eight present at the feast, most of them being my former students, orphans or acquaintances, and it was a very pleasant informal affair. They gave us a little porcelain old man in colors with a white beard, big smile and regular balloon of a white bald head, under a glass about a foot high.

My old age mementos have been coming in, two from Tungchou, two from Paotingfu and this from Peking. This was celebrated early because the lunch hour tomorrow is to be occupied with a celebration here at the school to which foreign friends are invited, and the evening is devoted to Chinese celebration at Tengshihkou, where 40 or 50 are to get together they say. They have an old folks society, to which we become eligible tomorrow, and Meng Mushih is getting up some sort of an initiation into that. If you think that these feasts are poor affairs on account of the war you have another think coming. All those we have had so far have been unusually tasty, abundant, clean and wholesome in every way. Last night they gave their brains a rest by just leaving it to the restaurateur to get up his ideal of a good feast, and it was very successful. The heartiness of the welcome in these affairs is certainly justification for our coming back to the country where our friends are numerous and loyal.

Monday, July 3rd

Since I started this the birthday celebration has come off and I see that Mother has written you all about it. I have been taking most of my spare time to answer the letters and telegrams of congratulation. Two of the latter were handed to us as we got home from the Chinese celebration at Tengshihkou a week ago tonight. They were from the Language School students we had gotten acquainted with lately who have gone to Peitaiho for the summer term.

We suppose that you get more reliable news than do we about the blockade of the foreign concessions at Tientsin ever since June 14th. You may be doubtful as to who tells the truth when one party tells of indignities against British, stripping in the presence of a crowd - even, once, of a woman - and the other party denies it, saying it is impossible as there were orders to treat all alike with courtesy. The army refuses to investigate because their orders make it impossible. There are plenty of statements by Americans and others as to what they have seen and it seems to be certain that the indignities were much as described. Two of our friends tell us what they saw, not the worst, but bearing out the worst that has been described by British sufferers.

The statement was made that they did not prevent foodstuffs passing the barriers, but the electric charged wire and the patrols of boats on the river and the shooting by the Japanese sentry in the distance of a couple of farmers who were trying to sell vegetables over the wire have discouraged the bringing of food into the concession just as much as if it had been done at the barriers, where the Japanese admit that the work of examining for contraband slows up the entrance of foodstuffs.

We have a number of missionaries staying here, some of whom have been forced out of their stations and their hospitals, etc., seized in such a way as to make it look as though they are beginning to eliminate British missionaries from the country fields at least. It just started about the middle of June, previous to which date some of these same missionaries report that they had been well treated by the Japanese garrisons. A lady from south Shansi who came to have dentist work done tells of making cake for the Japanese captain and being helped on her way after having been insulted and roughly refused any pass not long before, and that too just after they had been promised full freedom to go where and when they wished.

This lady this evening has been telling us of the constant fighting in southern Shansi, where she says the Japanese have made no advance for almost a year and are constantly losing men, so that every train brings in wounded in numbers, and they have been absolutely unable to get into the mountains at all. She thinks that a lot of their new roughness is due to the constant attrition getting on their nerves and they have to find a scape-goat and someone on whom to vent their spleen. They lay all the unrest and disorder of China on the British now. The paper I take just today started out, "Ever since the British broke down the peace and order of East China, compelling the Japanese army to set up the blockade of the Tientsin concessions and the southern ports in order to bring back peace and prosperity to the 200,000,000 Chinese people, etc." Then they claim that all those Chinese are rising-up in indignation against the British and demanding the return of the concessions. They have mass meetings against the British in all the big cities, made up of compulsory attendants from the schools, and do not seem to perceive that the more they agitate and attack the British the more the Chinese take the side of the British privately.

All this tension of feeling does not much affect our daily lives here in these beautiful grounds and I wish you could see how comfortable we are. Ever since the very hot weather came on about the middle of June, Pettus has had his air conditioning ice boxes operating so that the dining rooms and parlour where the newspapers, etc., are kept for readers never goes above 74 degrees. Now that we have moved into our flat we do not have it quite so cool but he orders ice cubes sent to us every meal.* I told you that they did not charge us for board and washing while we were at the hostel. We sit out on the lawn in the coolness of evenings, surrounded by trees, bamboos and shrubbery. The walls of the buildings are mostly covered with ivy so that we get very little heat reflection and storing through the day. The roofs and doorways are heavily screened from the sun by mat sheds. From our garden we have sweet corn, lettuce, etc.

A young fellow came in yesterday to call to tell me that I baptized him over twenty years ago at the North Church, that he and his wife and four children now live near the Presbyterian Church and have joined there, and that for 18 years he has been librarian of the Medical College. Just came to let me know that he had not back-slid.

We have a few new students, or rather old students of many years ago returned to brush up in the summer term. Fortunately several of them are good and enthusiastic tennis players so that we have daily tennis with about eight to play besides the few ladies. Gertrude has made up a four with the men a few times and has picked up and played in her old state.

As you can see, our life in Peking you see is far from the distressing things we hear about, and not having any newspaper that we can believe we are left free to believe what we wish to. We do get UP and AP dispatches mimeographed before they are edited or printed anywhere, which is pretty good and reliable news after all.

It is bed time and having had a rain we look for a cool and refreshing night's sleep, which we hardly had last night.

With love to you all as always,

Father

** The school has electric refrigerators. We have to keep our own ice chest full of course. Mother*

July 6. Just a line of "Howdy" to all of you in Penn Yan and Ypsi. Thank Sally for her two interesting letters of May 19 and June 5 in one envelope -- and the nice

photo of the school play. It must have been fine. I can't believe that my little swimming companion has almost forgotten how to swim as she says she has. She is getting to be a speaker.

Theodore H. White's description of the war in southern Shansi Province in the Fall of 1939.
- Japanese army mired in mud, cut off in small pockets of troops.
- Looting, rape and ravaging villages.

The War Front in Shansi¹⁴

...I had come to cover the war, and I had chosen Shansi because it was the only active front in China. Had the Japanese broken all the way through in the Summer and Fall of 1939, they would have held the dominant heights of the Yellow River, could have closed easily on Sian and, quite possibly, have cut China in two, cutting Nationalists from Communists for good. The Japanese victory would have been styled an epic one and achieved a grandeur in the retelling. The fact that the Chinese held, however, wiped out the narrative value of the Southeast Shansi campaign for any history of war. Tens of thousands of men died to hold the lines exactly where they had been before the summer of 1939 and where they would remain until 1944. In the eyes of history they died uselessly, unworthy of record. For myself, it was the first real battlefield I had seen, and a giant step in education.

The scene of action was the Chungtiao mountain range of Southeast Shansi province, the province that snuggles into the elbow of the Yellow River. In the summer the Japanese Army had mounted a three-divisional offensive to clear the mountain range and reach, then cross, the river. But the fall rains had come early, mired their trucks and artillery, and given the Chinese foot soldiers time to gather and to cut off the Japanese in garrison pockets. Isolated thus in villages and towns, trying to extricate themselves, the Japanese went absolutely berserk before they were driven out.

¹⁴ Theodore H. White, *In Search of History*, p. 89.

The action I saw in the Fall of 1939 was in the Ch'in River valley, where imperial road markers dating back to the Manchu dynasty still flagged the stone-paved carters' trace. I was following the Chinese soldiers forward, and they moved on foot, fifteen to twenty miles a day, crawling up and over and through mountain gaps, their officers ahead on horseback. Whatever they needed they carried — each soldier toting his bedding, his sausage roll of rice, his ammunition and grenades, some doubling up to carry telephone wire, machine gun parts, cartridge boxes, medical supplies. Mules brayed under dismantled pieces of artillery. Sick soldiers straggled back from the front, hobbling with staves, on the five- or ten-day hike to the nearest aid station; beggars clustered pleading as the columns trudged through villages; sometimes one could see peasants impressed to carry those too sick or wounded to walk; flies buzzed over the stretchers where men in coma, or groaning, were carried on with undressed wounds. And then I caught up with the path of Japanese retreat through the villages they had savaged. I have since so often exaggerated in retelling what the Japanese did that perhaps it is best to restrain memory to the text of my original dispatch.

Village after village was completely destroyed — houses shattered and burned, walls fouled, bridges torn up. Houses were burned by the Japanese soldiers both out of boredom and devilry and because they were cold and needed fire and warmth.

The Japanese looted indiscriminately and efficiently. Everything of value was stripped and taken away. Telephones, wires, clocks, soap, bedding, collected for transfer to their own supply department. On their own, the soldiers went in for simpler forms of looting. Clothes and food were what they wanted, and they were not very discriminate in their tastes; women's silk garments, peasant cotton trousers, shoes, underwear, were all stripped off the backs of their possessors whenever Chinese were unfortunate enough to fall into the hands of Japanese detachments.

The Japanese soldiers were caked in mud, chest high; their beards were bristling with two weeks' growth; and they were ravenously hungry. The peasants, in fleeing before the approach of the Japanese, had taken their pigs, cows, grain and other food with them into the hills where the Japanese could not follow. All through the valley, tiny Japanese garrisons were mired in mud, unable to communicate with one another and slowly starving.

. . . The names of the villages (Liushe, Wangchiachuang, etc.) are meaningless 100 miles away, but in some, every single woman without exception was raped by the soldiers in occupation. In villages whose occupants had not fled quickly enough, the first action of the Japanese was to rout out the women and have at them: women who fled to grain fields for hiding were forced out by cavalry who rode their horses through the fields to trample them and frighten them into appearance.

Male villagers were stripped naked, lashed to carts and driven forward by the Imperial Army as beasts of burden. Japanese horses and mules were beaten to death in the mud; and on any road and all the hills of the valley, one can see the carcasses of their animals rotting and the bones of their horses whitening in the sun. The Chinese peasants who were impressed to take their places were driven forward with the same pitiless fury until they collapsed, died, or were driven mad.

This mail not censored. It must be dreadful to live being watched all the time.
AP and UP reports are very different from Japanese-controlled local press.
Japanese spies everywhere. Also Chiang's spies within puppet government.
Japanese blame British for all trouble in China.
Hear sounds of artillery now.
Father's 70th birthday celebration.

Gertrude S. Wilder

*College of Chinese Studies
Peking
July 3, 1939*

Dear Families,

There will be mail going again this week which will not be tampered with so I can write as I please without having the feeling all the time that I must be careful what I say. How dreadful it must be to realize that you are being watched all the time. The Chinese are learning to be very careful when they are not sure of the crowd they are in, for there are many spies about. It works both ways, too. Mr. Pettus says that there is not an important department of the new government in which there are not one or more loyal Chiang K'ai Shek men. He knows a good many of them and because of that we get the United Press and Associated Press news as it comes in every day, before it has been expurgated, and don't depend on the controlled papers for our news. There is a great difference between that and the Domei reports. In some way someone is paid for getting the daily news sheet to us.

To go back, Father's seventieth birthday was very much celebrated. It came on Monday the 26th but the Board of Managers of the North Chapel School had us out for a restaurant meal the Saturday evening before. After we had eaten there was some speechifying and they presented father with a "Shou Hsing", the old

man with a huge bald head that appears so much in embroideries and paintings used as birthday gifts. This one, 10 inches high, is porcelain.

On Monday, the real day, things began to come in before breakfast. They were mostly scrolls and flowers, two beautiful pots of gardenias, full of blossoms. Mr. and Mrs. Pettus (President of the College of Language Studies) engineered a wonderful luncheon for us. Forty two of us sat down together. We had supposed that the guests were to be just the friends in our own mission. They were all invited but there were others, too. Among them were Mr. Ferguson and his daughter, Mrs. Johnson, our U.S. Ambassador's wife (and she is charming) and some others whom you wouldn't know. Mrs. Pettus arranged the table, which was in the shape of an "H", the cross piece being the longest. At each place there was a red "Shou"¹⁵ character and the rest of the decorations were in line with the Chinese traditions, pretty artificial peaches, graceful figures of the "eight worthies,"¹⁶ and flowers. Isabel and her husband, "Bill" Mayer were also there and they brought a beautiful basket of gladiolas. We had a delightful time. I sat between Mr. Ferguson and Leighton Stuart and enjoyed talking to them in turn. Their views on the questions of greatest interest here are just opposite, Dr. Ferguson's being all wrong according to my ideas. The Japanese are said to consider him a good friend. So am I, of the Japanese people but not of their military bunch. After we had reached candy and coffee there were the usual gracious after-dinner speeches to which Father replied gracefully and soon after that the party broke up. It was a very lovely occasion and everyone seemed to enjoy it.

¹⁵ __?__

¹⁶ __?__

The same evening at seven thirty came the big doings at Teng Shih K'ou. There was quite an elaborate program, during which we had to sit on the platform with the chief speakers, and after the program came the presentation of gifts from various groups — the Teng Shih K'ou church, the Tungchou church, the officers of the mission — and among the gifts was a very beautiful banner, a handsome, deeply carved red lacquer tray and a pretty, thin porcelain vase fourteen inches high. So, our accumulation of things has commenced again in spite of ourselves. You would have been as happy as I was to hear the many expressions of love and appreciation of Father's life and work.

We moved over to this apartment four days ago and are as settled as we can be until we go to T'ungchou and then to Techou for a few things. We hope to do the former in a few days but shall not go to Techou until we return from Peitaitho, the end of August. What may happen before then no one knows. The situation in Tientsin stays about the same, with the Japanese military so incensed against Tokyo for taking the discussion there that they are muttering a lot about what may happen. You probably know about as much as we do. The Japanese claim that Great Britain is to blame for all the trouble in China, because she has not cooperated with her, Japan, in bringing in the new order, which means peace, prosperity and everlasting joy to the people of China who are longing for the Japanese to take full control. They can't see that every time they strip and insult a Britisher he goes way up and they keep on going down in the estimation of most Chinese.

July 6

I am sending a copy of mine to Ur, which she will forward to Ypsi. Just want to ask again if Van Tyne has sent his \$6.00 for the books. You are to keep it, you know. The author has given me a copy of the bird book free.

We hear light artillery this morning, the first time in weeks. It is either practice or punishment of some village, we suppose. No signs of anything inside the City.

Love, G.D.W.

Frequent bombing of the Western Hills, which are still AFree China."
Need garters.
Currency exchange now 13 to 1.
Perpetual frog in throat.
The Wilder family and tennis.
Entertained by acrobats and jugglers.

George D. Wilder

College of Chinese Studies, Peking
July 23, 1939

Dear Margaret,

This fairly cool, cloudy Sunday morning, while we wait for the 8:00 a.m. breakfast hour, I am going to try to give a personal answer to your delightful, pencil-written letter of June 22nd, which came yesterday to break a drought of home mail. Our letters have been coming in about a month just as yours from us did, excepting the two-months one you mentioned, April 4 - June 4.

We have been sending you pretty long copy letters through Legation mail of late, and this one will probably go through general mail. I think we have kept you informed of the latest developments, which have been going on steadily but without any added inconveniences or dangers of any kind for us in this favored spot of Peking. We see nothing of war except the many kakhi-colored trucks, sometimes with soldiers in the streets, and the planes that go over every day, we know not where to or on what mission bent. For two days last week they were going over every quarter of an hour, and sometimes 11 together in formation, straight for our Western Hills, which are free China still, and the scene of frequent fighting we are told.

Your account of your trip to Oberlin at Commencement (or rather Baccalaureate) Sunday time was most interesting. I ought to be writing to some of those friends like Dr. Richards. That book, "Union Now," that he recommended so highly we have seen described in similar terms already and would like to read it. It will probably get out here before long. Our College Library

gets everything that concerns China but I do not know as that book does. If you can buy it at discount as we can at Boston you might get it, read it yourself if you have time, and send it on to us, instead of sending that \$6.00 that Vantyne sent you for the Bird book. And that reminds me, I was going to ask Len or you to use a little of it to get me a good pair of Boston Garters, wide ones and keep the rest, as we never made up the full \$500 we were going to loan you, you remember. We are still ready to make up the full amount when you need it. But the garters, I would like by return mail as mine are on their last legs and by the time a Gum Ward¹⁷ order gets to us the season will be over for me and I will be wearing balbrigans¹⁸ without garters. I got some Shanghai made ones the other day that are unusable, too tight, and the metal bends all out of shape and digs into my flesh. I ought not to complain, however, as they were only \$.35 in this depleted currency, now at 13 to one. What could you expect for less than three cents?

I had forgotten what baggage problem Emma Bates solved but will never forget how, by telephoning to her former pupils now in the railway business, she stopped one of those tremendous through expresses on the Pennsy railroad for us two with our suitcases to get aboard. The first division of the train thundered by us, a most impressive demonstration of the momentum of one of those trains, and then the next one five minutes afterward stopped for us. I think we have written to her since we set out from San Pedro.

I have forgotten what the long letter was all about that you loaned for the class dinner. Your letter has gotten Mother stirred up to write one to Alice Jones, answering one from her.

¹⁷ i.e., Montgomery Ward, a mail-order catalogue retailer.

¹⁸ Plain, knit cotton hosiery or underwear, named after Balbriggan, Ireland, where they were first made.

We would like to have seen the High School Pageant. It is good for the young folks to find out the difference between the measure of freedom we enjoy and that of the fascist states. Fine that your Gertrude is getting so well into the choir work. It will always be a satisfaction, the chorus singing, and she can enjoy it to old age, unless she gets a sort of perpetual frog in her throat, as I have. Sometimes I can't sing at all and then again I can a little, but the memory of the Oberlin choir and Musical Union and some later choruses in Peking is and will be a joy for ever. She may not realize it now, but let me tell her to take every opportunity she has to get into good chorus singing. It is worth while. Quartet singing has its fun too.

And so with Betty Ann's orchestra work. It may seem drudgery now but the playing with many others later is splendid.

As for the picture in Mr. Plummer's hands, there is no hurry about it if he has any chance to sell. You might ask him if there is any hope of it. The money goes to China Relief, you know, and the new drive for that might find someone who would put it up at auction in the cause. There is no need of seeing the Detroit Institute of Arts about it so long as there is a chance through Plummer or some relief committee.

Your letter was the first that we had heard of Bob McCann being searched. It is probably so but he ought to be in the good graces of the searchers as he sells countless trucks to them. They have treated all Americans finely so far. We never have to answer questions or show passports except on the train, where a polite young Russian asks to see it and makes a note of its number in his book. When I went down to Paoting for a weekend with Hubbard a while ago, I was the only one on the train that he had to ask for passport, not a very big day's work for one man.

Day before yesterday Steve Pyle came up at last for some tennis and we had two sets, good and interesting and we broke

just even, 4-6 and 10-8 as I remember. Yesterday I had three sets again, close and interesting the same way. John and I generally win. He has a hard serve but is somewhat erratic and drives out a good deal. I find it is better for me to stop with two good sets and not get quite so tired as to make me feel a bit stiff the next day, but it is hard to stop with only two. Twenty-five years ago Steve Pyle was tennis coach at Oberlin and I played one set with him against the first team, Amos Wilder and Brick Bissell. That was a 10-8 game I remember. After it he told the Talcott Hall girls that the Wilders in town could get up a winning team against all the rest of Oberlin, and I guess he said right. Remember when the Wilder family made up a team to play Tsing Hua College, disappointed because our International Club could not send out its team that day? I think we broke even with them that time, mixed doubles that would have decided it not being played out, as we had to run for the train, Theodore and his mother being the pair for us.

A week from tomorrow we shall probably be on our way to Peitaiho for a month. Hubbard wants me to take my gun that he gave me and do some bird collecting, but I think that a tennis racket and a bathing suit will be all that I want for sport.

We had a splendid team of six acrobats here the other night. A fine exhibition was enlivened by clown work and jokes by the performers, a splendid human exhibition of humor and goodwill. Then a night or two later we had a fine old juggler and his children and apprentices. I sat at the side where I could see the bowls of water come out from his in-drawn abdomen. They played out on our cool, green lawn under our electric lights. There were 60 or 80 foreigners out to see them. We often sit out there for the coolness, visiting with the summer guests from all over China, Manchukuo, Korea, and Japan. It is a great chance to check up on the news.

Well, I'll mail this on the way to North Chapel Church. Rowland Cross preaches at Teng Shih Kou, and comes to us for lunch.

With love to all,

Father

Peitaiho, 1939

Floods worst in 45 years. New gov't did nothing to help, until Japanese told them it was ok. Bandits attack village next to Tungchou compound, kidnap people for ransom, but let women go. Most of Japanese army has left. Manchukuo soldiers used as police, etc. encourage banditry. Japanese are taking over Chinese businesses by force, torture, and excessive taxes.

George D. Wilder

Peitaiho, China,
August 4th, 1939

Dear Folks,

Here we are at the seaside among the cool breezes after several days of 96% humidity and about 95 degrees F temperature. We had planned to come on Tuesday, Aug. 1st but Sunday morning at church we had news through Miss Kao Mu I, a school teacher there, that made me so concerned about the safety of the people around Tungchou that I decided to go down and see for myself whether there was an immediate need for help. She said that dykes above Tungchou had broken, or been opened purposely in the night, bringing a wall of water down from the north on Tungchou, entering the East gate for the first time since I came to China, 45 years ago, flooding over a hundred villages, drowning over a thousand people and rendering homeless many more thousands. That happened the preceding Wednesday night and she had not yet heard what had become of her own parents who lived outside the East gate where the water was eight feet deep and the force of the current at its fiercest.

I phoned to my old friend of 40 years, the principal of Jefferson Academy, and over a poor phone was told that the facts were as stated, that the school and church members were not affected, but that I might well go down and investigate whether relief measures conducted by the four or five organizations were adequate. As it was a stifling hot afternoon I decided to consult Cross who was coming in from Yenching University to go down to Tungchou the next day, and who was the natural one to take up any relief that the church people might be called upon to do. When I reported the news to him on arrival in the City he asked me to go down with him and stay over a day, at least

long enough to organize relief if needed. The church still has about \$2,000 available for this very thing.

So we went down and found Hunter back from escorting Bobbie to Tangku to board his ship for America, and ready to relieve Cross for his Summer vacation at the seaside. We three went out the East Gate, through very inquisitive Japanese sentries and found about one house in ten standing where the water had passed. The rest were piles of soggy bricks and roof timbers with owners digging them over for what grain and bedding they could salvage. Miss Kao's mother, who had escaped to the church, was one of the salvage workers and she told me that no one in the family was hurt. In fact, only three or four in the East suburb and nearest village were hurt, but many more had been drowned or buried in the ruins of their homes. The rest had been rescued by the numerous boats in the suburb. The estimate of those drowned in the villages beyond runs as high as 2,000. The largest flood in 45 years and coming unannounced at 11:00 p.m., even these people who are used to this sort of calamity were caught napping and unable to save themselves.

We went to one of the two main refuges, the Ch'eng Huang Miao, City Temple, where we found nearly three thousand refugees that had been brought in by boats and were being given cholera inoculations, two meals a day, and shelter. Some were from villages I know 13 miles away and the flooded area extends three or four times as far and is still extending, so that the area of ruined crops in this province is becoming most appalling, though the crops on high lands are fine.

It was said that under the new regime at first nothing was initiated until the Japanese authorities came to the Board of Trade and to the "New Peoples' Society" saying, "Those are Chinese that are suffering and you are Chinese, get busy and save them." In some places the military had refused permission to use any boats at all for fear of their getting into the hands of guerillas, and the Chinese organizations were afraid to start anything here until reassured by the Japanese governing authorities. The Red Swastika Society, the "Japanese Heaven Doctrine Sect," were also cooperating with the Board of Trade and the "New Peoples' Society," so that there seemed to be

nothing needed from the church at present. All its resources for aid will be greatly needed as time goes on and it is found that the crops are a total loss, not even fuel being securable, as they were just planted and had not grown stalks to stand above the flood.

If this emergency relief work were not being done we would not think of leaving for the seashore, but we left word that Mr. Hunter would remain in Tungchow and be ready to assist whenever the need came. Several with whom I had worked in relief years ago sent me word they would like to have me stay and help, but there appeared to be no necessity for it.

So Cross packed up and we three came up here on Wednesday, only a day later than we had planned. On our way down, all the way from Lofa to Yangtsun, this same flood water was gathering as it always does, only this time the villages were invaded by the water and houses on the edges were falling as I had never seen before. In ordinary floods, though the water extends over the fields to the horizon on both sides of the track, yet the villages are higher and usually the adobe houses do not get soaked so as to slump down, even though the village is surrounded and boats have to be used for travel, often for weeks at a time. Today, North China Star says that the Yangtsun dykes have now broken 20 miles above Tientsin, and Tientsin is in danger. All this connected with the earlier floods in almost every river coming down from the mountains across these plains, which have broken the railway south from Peking to Hankow in many places means that there will be need for famine relief in most parts of this province of 28 million people.

Tell every one you know who can do anything that the Church Committee for China Relief has done well to keep the organization and plan for continued help. You will need to keep on contributing if you want to show friendship for China.

The night I spent at Tungchow with Cross, I heard a shot in the night not long after I got to sleep but dismissed it with

the thought that the night watchman had been allowed a gun again as in old. But no. In the morning a messenger came to say that for the first time in its history bandits had dared attack our Fu Hsing Chuang, the village adjoining our compound. Their guns had all been taken from them as everywhere and the bandits - somewhere from 40 to 60 in number, all armed - had come in and taken samples from nearly all the wealthy families in the village, without firing a shot or waking up the rest of the people. When I left at 9:00 a.m. they had checked up and found 17 missing, but were not yet through. The shot I heard was fired by the Jefferson Academy police and the robbers kept away from that end of the village, where several rich families live. They may pay their respects to them later if they succeed in getting good ransom for these. When they got the captives out two miles and allowed them to talk, one of our men took them to task for taking two girls from a family from which they had already gotten one person. He asked, "Are you after money, or revenge, or women? If the former you have no business to take any women." "That is so," said the chief, "Let them go back." And they came back safe.

The people had phoned in the night to four or five police stations in the city and they had promised to send help at once, but none had come when I left at 9:00 a.m.

One of my hunter friends who is familiar with the new regime said that all but six or seven of the real Japanese had left, leaving only Manchukuo soldiers as police, etc. Those dare not go outside the city without about 40 Chinese soldiers as guard, for fear of meeting larger bodies of guerillas. He and most people, think that the Japanese policy is to encourage banditry, hoping that the bandits will make it so hot for good people that they will gladly accept Japanese rule. They enforce the rule also that no one shall redeem anyone captured by bandits, on pain of death. Those who redeem their friends will be treated the same as bandits, is the rule. The Fu Hsing Chuang people expected to hear from these bandits before night

as to their demands and then try to find some way to evade the Japanese regulations.

The Japanese are really not numerous enough to control all the Chinese, and we certainly hope that they will give it up as a bad job soon. Of course that is not probable, for their face and almost the existence of their army in the support of their people is involved. Every organization they have set up has in its makeup spies of China's Central Government, and some of them are double-crossing their Japanese masters all the time. Some indeed are known to the head of the puppet government but he dares not touch them, if indeed he wants to do so. It cannot be said definitely who is a traitor and who is a spy. One friend of mine remarks on hearing various stories, "Well, the Japanese were not born soon enough to get ahead of the Chinese."

But they are succeeding in getting the monopoly of various kinds of business away from the Chinese, by force, and they are getting their property by hook and crook, and torture. The school teacher I told of tells us things she gets from the families of the children in the North Chapel School. A distressed mother of two or three scholars had her in her home several times and revealed this story. Her husband was taken on some charge and she was allowed to go and see how well he was being treated by looking through a window at him but was not allowed to talk with him except briefly in the presence of the guard. Later she noticed his face swollen and found out that he was subjected to a water cure every night at 11:00 P.M. He had to struggle all night to keep from drowning in a trough in which he was bound, and repeatedly allowed to become unconscious - drowned, so far as his sensations went. Finally he died but the authorities did not report it. They sent word to the wife that her husband would be released on payment of a fine of \$500. She borrowed and scraped it together, paid it in and was given his corpse. When she protested that she would not have paid if she had known he was dead they told her she was lucky to get his corpse.

We are here where all is peace and beauty, with swimming and good tennis and lectures, etc. But from the looks, as soon as the Japanese government is organized better, it may become impossible to live here. The military refuse access to sand and many other building and repair materials, and they put a high tax on all industry, \$1.00 for every chair a cabinet maker makes, \$5.99 for a jiksha man's license, \$2.00 for the barber, etc.

Geo. D. Wilder

Worst flood in anyone's memory.
Japanese withdraw barricades from British area of Tientsin.

George D. Wilder

Peitaiho, East Cliff
Aug. 15th, 1939

Dear Ypsilanti Folks,

We had letters from Mar and Theodore by the last mail and I started to answer Theodore's privately. After the first page I found that I had so much of common interest that I put in a couple of carbons so as to send to you. All the pages but this are copies of what went to him. When I said "Mar" above I should have said Betty and George, for theirs were the real letters and only the envelope was written by Margaret. In the case of George's letter even the envelope was in his handwriting. We shall have to answer them personally later but this is a general letter of huge dimensions. We were pleased to hear of Betty's tennis victory. I guess the copy letter has said more than enough about our tennis out here. John and Miss Logan are still in the ring, as their lady opponent had a sun headache and could not play. John and Ted Johnson were put out by the two Taylors from Manchuria, whom they should have beaten, but were off their game.

Yesterday was American Board Day for meetings, baseball, swimming, picnics, etc. Hubbard and I had arranged to take the 20 odd folks out again for birds on the sand flats "if it did not rain." Well, it poured by the bucket-full most of the night but it had almost stopped at 6:30 and did stop before seven so I went over and found eight ready to go. We got back to breakfast and a good morning session in the Cross-Gilbert cottage across the road from our back door. DeVargas led a fine discussion that took all the morning after the devotional exercises.

The evening before we had had a good meeting. It rained some before we retired and then it poured, as I said. Uncle Charlie had started for Tsinan on Friday, but a washout just beyond Tientsin turned him back and he blew in just before the fun began here Sunday night. The next trains were stopped at

Lanchow but are through now. It is the biggest flood since I came to China, and more widely extended. Eight inches more will flood Tientsin and they have already drowned out innumerable farmers by cutting dykes to save the city. The starving refugees are drifting into town. The city folks had better turn to and feed them now that they have drowned them out.

John Hayes last night in from Peking says that the flood in Tientsin has ruined all but one bridge - the International, where the principal anti-British barricade is. As all have to use that, or boats, the Japanese have withdrawn the barricade there without loss of face.

We called off the baseball owing to wet grounds, but had the swimming, which I did not attend. The picnic was to have been on our lawn but fear of wet made us go into the church, which is on top of the hill and open all around on three sides. The benches really made better seats than rocks and ground for our supper. There was a most glorious sunset while we were eating, too, visible all around, lighting up the brilliant red roofs and the ships and the pure white gun boat at Ch'ing Wang Tao most wonderfully. After eating we had a funny stunt put on by some of the oldsters who had a committee meeting to get up a funny stunt and then turned it over to the youngsters, all on the stage of the church. Then they had a good show showing us how to "get back to work." Rosamond Frame was the leader in it and John helped a lot. We had to be through by eight so that the church could be fixed for a Chinese evangelistic meeting at 8:30. Most of us went over to a lawn fete reception to a Mr. Caughey (pronounced ACoy") on Leynsy's fine lawn. That is the way that things go here in Peitaiho, only yesterday was a most exceptional day. I will have to get busy on the Dictionary now and enclose the copy letter instead of answering Betty's good one in this.

Description of views from Chandler's cottage.
A tennis tournament.
A staged anti-British demonstration called off after being exposed.
The army is expelling foreigners, yet Japan needs US and others for war materiel.
Foreign concessions are now a benefit to the Chinese.
Chinese people reject the puppet government.

COPY LETTER - to all of you.

My last copy letter told you about coming up here and the first few days in East Cliff. You know this is all built up here clear up to Eagle Rock, the old Korean watch tower, at the north end and another settlement at Lighthouse Point and another at the British Legation place between Rocky Point, where we lived, and the lighthouse point. We in the Chandler house have a fine view across the bay to the northeast, eight miles to Ch'ing Wang Tao, with its fine line of electric lights along the docks and main street. To the north is the fine mountain horizon line along which I have tramped, with North Heaven peak beyond the Great Wall, East and West Heaven and Buddha's Tooth coming down toward the west with Pei Niu Ting, with its ladders to reach the temple on its rounded and notched summit. About as long a line that I have explored further west from Poiniu Ting(?) to Dragon Pool is just hidden by Eagle Rock and houses. Nestling west of Eagle Rock among other houses is Hubbard's, which you remember, looking off to this whole mountain line across the sand flats and sand dunes. The streams across the flats are not so deep as they used to be and I have tramped them barefoot twice, leading bird students for an introduction to the waders. We got along with trousers just above the knees. Had about 20 boys and girls and men and women the first time. We will go again next Monday for a short tramp before the 9:00 A.M. American Board meeting (informal) to hear Philip DeVargas, a Swiss Professor of History at Yenching, talk on Athe Church and Ecumenical Christianity - should we, the Kung Li Hui,¹⁹ emphasize the Church more or less than we do?" He remarked when the subject was given him that if we could not have a fine discussion on that subject it would simply be because of his poor leadership. He is fine, and gives an annual New Years resume of the year at the PUMC that has become a Peking feature.

¹⁹ Chinese name for Congregational Church. Literally ___?__

Did I tell you that two persons had asked me to join them to enter the tennis tournament? Pyle was the first one, and it was tentative because of the chance of Hubbard's wanting him, as they had already mentioned the possibility. In the meantime, Blackstone had asked Hubbard by mail and Hayes had asked me. We fixed it up that Hub and Blackstone, Pyle and I and Hayes and Dr. Young double up. Pyle and I drew Hayes and Young for the first round. I had seen big John Hayes play far better than I can, but he was off his game when we met and Dr. Young has one stiff knee that hampers him a bit so we took it easily, 6-1 and 6-2. That was Wednesday and yesterday, Saturday, we had our second round and for us the last, as we lost by the skin of our teeth. It was against "Laddie" Scott, brother of Betty Scott Stam, who studied at Tungchow along with others of her family, you may remember, and Paul Abbott, also a long-ago student there. Scott is fine. He beat Hubbard in singles, and Hubbard is better than ever. Paul Abbott, however, is a rather lackadaisical player and after a service break or two he plays as though he did not care at all. Well, we lost the first set before a big crowd of rooters yesterday, 6-4, and then surprised them by taking the next, 6-1. Then the third set we lost by the same score. Pyle felt the heat and the pace rather more than I did, and when we started a new set I served in his place. But Scott had a new plan of campaign and put Abbott close up to the post when he served and played the whole court for himself. Almost every game was long but they won out, as I said, 6-1. It was a very good sport, for in getting a set and scaring them a bit we did all we expected to do. Pyle says he has not had enough, and suggests that the men over 50 challenge the rest. That means Hubbard, Cross, and perhaps one or two more. Young Scott and Stuckey are both about Hubbard's equal, so we could hardly win out. That's more than enough for tennis.

American Board Day is now a thing of the past. As Miss DeFrost, president of Kobe College is here for a few days and goes to Peking with her sister Mrs. Pettus, I may as well entrust this to her to take to Peking for the Legation mail bag, and cut loose a bit.

Saturday afternoon there was to have been a great anti-British demonstration in Peitaiho. The principal point of these demonstrations is that they are supposed to be spontaneous uprisings of the Chinese people against the British, who alone are supposed to be the enemies of peace in China. The Japanese army is supposed to be the sole means of keeping the

demonstrations within bounds and preventing riots against the British. That army is simply giving the British a few days of grace in which to escape the rising wrath of the Chinese. Of course it is perfectly evident to us that the demonstrations are all instigated by the said army and the demonstrators are often paid by them.

After this Saturday demonstration was announced, the officers on the American gunboat here sent around a request that we Americans should keep off the street and stay in our cottages or on the more secluded beaches, just in case there might be trouble. You know the atmosphere on the gunboats, where it is apparently thought that their presence is all that prevents the Chinese from destroying us. Some of them have learned differently, however. Still, just to be obliging we called off an American tea for that afternoon when we were going to meet the three ladies from Kobe College, two of them delegated by their mission to give us a friendly visit. We were going to hear what they had to say to us at that time, as the whole American Board body meeting there would in itself be something of a demonstration, but it was given up.

It proved however to be a needless precaution, as the anti-British demonstration was also called off by the Japanese authorities themselves! It came about in this way. The consul for the British at Mukden was here on purpose, or for a rest, but anyway he was wide awake and went around to the storekeepers and leading Chinese here to find out why they were so down on the British, and this is what he found. Some of them explained that they would not have taken part in the first demonstration two or three weeks ago had they known what it was for, but the Japanese had informed them that it was a procession to pray for rain and after they got together they found it to be against the British, and were ashamed of themselves, and many indeed backed out and left the parade to children and hired folks. They said they had no idea of going to this one, knowing its real purpose, but they could not prevent folks being hired to march.

They had been asked to add \$5.00 to every item in their bills against British subjects, or not to sell at all to Britons, and had refused. When asked why they put up the posters against British in their stores they explained under their breath, *Chiu shih chiao wa wa hsi huan* (AJust to please the babies.") One case was reported of a hand written notice "Britons, respect your personalities and get out. Do not come

to my store to trade." On inquiry the storekeeper had no idea of the meaning and indignantly denied any such purpose on his part. It was in English, which he could not read.

Well, after getting first-hand information as to the real attitude of the Chinese, the Consul went to the powers-that-be and told them what he had discovered, and said that if they put the demonstration across he would radio the information of the facts to all the world. It is a pity that there is not more real publicity that can't be branded as pure propaganda manufactured for the purposes of the manufacturers.

You are interested in knowing how we are affected by the army's evident intention of getting all foreigners out. It is reported that here and there Americans are included with the British and occasionally the French are just mentioned. All British in Taiyuan, Shansi Province, have at last left and the only foreigner is an American woman. They are trying to drive her servants away from her, which is a first move in many cases. Then they prevent sales of food, etc. Still what the government most fears is getting America and England on their hands both at once. They and France, and one or two smaller democracies, supply 86% of all their war materials and over 90% of the essential ones. Stoppage of trade with them would be disastrous to Japan. But apparently the military do not appreciate this, and our big business people also will do their best to prevent stoppage of the lucrative wartime trade. So there is the danger that they may expel us later.

For a year or two the British Bible Society man, Toop, formerly of Tientsin, has been running the American Bible Society house in Peking, as it is now a Union scheme. It is a fine, big building south of the YMCA on Hatamen St., and the J's want it. His servants were warned to leave him, and the Bible Society staff, too. He at once moved into our College hostel, and old Mr. and Mrs. Cunningham, of Paotingfu, retired like us in Peking, moved into the Bible Society building. As they are Americans, the Bible Society staff were allowed to stay and go on with the business. The Bible Society's business has increased since the war, we are told, but I have not the figures. Pettus writes that the two hostels are full and many more British refugees will likely apply for admission. Fortunately many stay only temporarily.

We are quite willing to suffer with the British if it can help bring the Japanese army to its senses in the matter. Of course we have long advocated giving up extraterritoriality and the concessions. Although we believe in the principle, it is fortunate for the Chinese that they had not all been given up. We would have them given up to the Chinese, however, and not to the Japanese. The latter, of course, camouflage it by saying that they too give up theirs to the Chinese. But the puppet government is really Japanese, not Chinese. The efforts to form a real Chinese puppet government break down repeatedly. Wang Ching Wei, advocating peace and cooperation with Japan, has lost the Chinese following on which Japanese depended for getting a real government of Chinese started.

Well, this is enough for the present. Spread this sort of news where it may do good to the American business man, etc., who think the Japanese can run China better than the Chinese and wants to help them do it. I have made enough copies of the last three pages to send to Ypsi and Penn Yan, as I found I was getting to things of more common interest to all the family. Love to all who are with you. We are taking care of ourselves and are unusually well, and liable to be kept here a week or two into September by the washed-out bridges. We had a fearful downpour Sunday night here. Uncle Charlie had to return from Tientsin, as the line to Tsinan was broken, and he got through back here just in time to avoid a brief break at Lenchow, now repaired.

Love to all,

Father

Floods, downed bridges prevent Uncle Charlie (Stanley) from leaving for Tsinan.
Swarms of children here. A party for Gladys Hubbard.

Gertrude S. Wilder

East Cliff, Peitaiho

August 15, 1939

Dearest Margaret,

Father has written a long copy letter with most of the news and I want to send a word along with it, though there is not much left to tell about.

Uncle Charlie left on Friday for Tsinan, stopping off for a couple of days at Tientsin. Imagine our surprise when he arrived in the rain late Sunday night. When he went to buy his ticket for Tsinan he found that bridges were down and that he couldn't go for several days (the travel bureau said two weeks), so he beat it for Peitaiho. There have been hard rains, numerous breaks in rivers, some of them made on purpose, and bridges out of commission here and there. There was plenty of water this side of Tientsin when we came nearly two weeks ago. Some little hamlets, surrounded by water, were completely abandoned. Other larger villages had people in them but many of the houses were submerged or collapsed with the water encroaching and washing more walls away all the time. It seemed to have fallen a few inches, but with more rain and rivers rising I'm afraid conditions are worse rather than better. Crops are drowned out, of course, and we are going to have famine conditions in parts of Hopei and Shantung. No rain until it is too late for any but the latest crops, and then broken dikes and floods. For so many of the people it means the loss of everything.

You should see the swarms of children and young people here. How I would love to have all of our grandchildren here, swarming with the rest. There are crowds of children of every age. Mrs. Hubbard had 50+ of High School age at a party for her daughter, Gladys. It makes me think back to the time when you were young and we used to have such good times even with the few. The young people certainly have the best of times here – all dressed so comfortably in shorts for most of their parties and picnics, though they do have a more formal one once in a while. John finds a nice big crowd of young people his age. Rosamond Frame has just come back to teach in the North China American School and one of the Whittier boys is to teach in the Peking American School. Fine young people.

We are planning to go to Tchow from here for a few days to gather up what is left of our things. From what the others say there isn't much, but we must go to attend to it.

Our American Board day was a grand success. It really began Sunday evening and lasted all day Monday. Because of the weather we couldn't have the usual baseball game, and we had to have our picnic supper and stunts in the meeting house instead of on our lawn, as planned. There was the most beautiful sunset, wonderful cloud effects and brilliant colors.

Tell Betty Ann and George that we were very glad to get their letters and that they will hear from us before long.

With love to all you dears—

Your loving mother.

Effects of the flood.

Now having worst typhoon in 70 years.

Foreigners (except Japanese) are helping refugees.

Japanese are taking men for slave labor in Manchuria — kill them when they are done with them.

Dangerous to travel on high seas now.

Gertrude S. Wilder

East Cliff, Peitaiho

Sept. 1, 1939

Dearest Margaret,

This is the day that we were planning to be on our way to Peking, but for two weeks now the going has been bad and we may be delayed for several days more.

I wrote to Ted and Ursula about the dreadful Tientsin flood and you have probably read about it in your papers—the worst flood that anyone can remember. The native city and the settlements are under water for the most part, the water being over 12 feet deep in places. One-story shops and houses are submerged and in the settlements people have had to move up to their top floors. You can imagine the conditions that exist. Refugees everywhere, local ones and thousands flocking in from the drowned-out villages, sewage going the wrong way, smells, no electricity and for a while no running water. They have water now but the food problem is an acute one. Our Hopei place has not been flooded yet, as it seems to be on higher ground than the rest of the places. The railroad is badly cut on both sides of Tientsin and there is a host of people impatiently waiting to get home. If we had gone last week we could have made it, but we are now in the midst of a regular typhoon — the worst that the natives here have seen in 70 years and we fear

that the gale and the heavy rain have worked havoc with the road between here and Tientsin that they have been trying to repair.

Uncle Charlie and Harold Robinson left for Tsinan over a week ago. They had no idea how they were going to get beyond Tientsin but there was no break at that time between here and Tientsin. They went to our compound at Hopei and for several days were busy trying to get passage on one of the small launches that the Japanese were running from Tientsin to the first place where they could take a train. They finally got tickets and a telegram announces the fact that they reached Tsinan, so we are waiting for a letter telling us how. Some people have managed to get to Tientsin going part way by boat and we were hoping to go today, not knowing that this typhoon was coming to complicate matters. It's a hard trip.

The foreign communities in Tientsin (all but the Japanese) have tackled the refugee question in spite of their own terrible fix, and are giving out food to the hundreds and hundreds that are gathered at various spots. School buildings, godowns,²⁰ etc., are full of them. Churches are not, because they are full of water! The pretty Anglican church is submerged up to its eaves. The Japanese concession is badly hit and the authorities are sending their people to Peiping in great numbers. Many of them are returning to Japan. But the Japanese, who are in control and are the ones who should be doing something, don't seem to be doing a thing towards helping the Chinese refugees. They sent nearly 500 to our Hopei school compound, then at two a.m. ordered them all to be ready to leave in half an hour. They were herded onto open freight cars headed for

²⁰ A Godown." A warehouse or other storage place.

Manchuria, and we are told that the women and children were dumped off along the way and the men taken on for forced labor in Manchuria. That tallies with the stories told us by Manchurian missionaries. When they are through with the men a firing squad puts on the finishing touch. I suppose such stories should not be passed on, but should not people know these things?

This flood has been or will be the greatest set-back that Japan has had yet. Acres of supplies are deep under water and there must be thousands of trucks, lorries, etc. mired. There have been two explosions of munitions stores in Tientsin, though I don't see how they do it in water.

Sept. 2.

This is the third day of the typhoon, with no sign of a let-up. The wind is not quite as furious as it has been, but it drives the rain through every crack and cranny. We are fortunate in the house we are in.

No one came to sell vegetables or meat yesterday and I doubt whether anyone ventures out today, and we are down to nothing in some things, but can get along. We cannot get coffee or margarine (we don't use butter any more) but have some Postum and are making peanut butter. When we think of the poor Tientsin people and of what this typhoon may be doing to them we are thankful for everything we have. If we are marooned here much longer, clothes will be a problem — also bedding, as we brought very little of either.

Father's back is troubling him where he strained it shoveling snow at Penn Yan, and he is stretched out in a long chair, wrapped in a blanket with a hot iron at his back, trying to work on a sermon.

There were no trains yesterday and no mail. Probably there will be none today.

** * * * **

Peking, Sept. 7

P.S. I'm sending a letter to Ted this a.m. telling about our return trip. He is to forward it to you, and you to Ursula.

So sorry that I didn't get a letter off on your birthday. We thought of you and remembered the day, but failed to put it down in black and white. I bought a little turquoise jewelry for you and some other kind "very cheaper" for the girls, which Jessie Payne will take and send to you. She may possibly drop in and see you. She is to sail from Shanghai on Sept 18. This is not a good time for travel on the high seas. When will people like Hitler and his kind learn that war is the world's worst way?

Lovingly – Mother.

Back in Peking

Moved to new quarters.
Sending Yenching luncheon set (napkins). Moon gate pattern.
Japanese are taking over all available housing in Peking. Chinese can't even rent single rooms.
Railroads torn up in Shansi Province.
British here are confident they can hold out and win the war.
Whatever happens in Europe will determine the outcome here.

Gertrude S. Wilder

*College of Chinese Studies
Peking Sept. 8, 1939*

Dear Margaret,

We have been back in Peking for several days now and the worst of our moving is over. We have slept in our new home for two nights but are still in a good deal of a mess as some wall-making had to be done and our things are not all in their right places. But our living room and dining room are in order and look very well and our bedroom will be done tomorrow. In the meantime we are sleeping in two small adjoining rooms. We have been eating at one of the hostels until this morning, when we had waffles "under our own vine and fig tree," so to speak.

Before I forget it I must mention the parcel we sent you from Tientsin. It is the Yenching lunch set I bought at Peitaiho and had mailed from Mr. Grimes' office in Tientsin, as it is such a nuisance to get parcels mailed in Peking. We found that the Yenching people are having such difficulty in getting materials, and prices have gone up so high that they are soon going to raise their prices 50 percent, so Aunt Louise and I loaded in something for Christmas gifts for our various "hai tzus." ²¹

²¹ ___?___

You may consider it a family Christmas gift, though I probably won't be able to resist sending some oddments later on. If the Yenching industries can't get materials they may have to stop work, which will be tragic, as their work helps so many people. Your lunch set is the gayest one. I love that moon gate pattern and I hope you will enjoyed using it. I thought it would appeal to Gertrude's artistic taste, not to mention the rest of yours'.

We are going to enjoy our new house and grounds. It seems so nice to be able to step right out onto your own lawn. We may have to share our blessings later on, as there is a man who may come out for a few months to lecture in the College. He has a wife and a small son (6 or 7) who will come too, and we shall give them two rooms (one pretty small) on the second floor and perhaps one on the third-floor for the small boy's bedroom and playroom. Our guest room will then have to be on the third-floor. The rooms are nicely finished but must be hot in the summer -- too hot to use I should think. These people (Mr. and Mrs. Fahs) may not come at all, but if they do I'm sure that we can make them comfortable. They would take their meals at one of the hostels.

Of course we had to take along some plants when we left Peitaiho and I'm sorry we did not bring more. I was miserable the day before we left and it rained all day besides, so it put a damper on the digging. But I managed to get roots of three kinds of wild flowers and we bought 70 strawberry plants and some lovely iris roots. I am watching over them tenderly, hoping they will all flourish. Peitaiho was at the height of its glory when we left. We really should have stayed on another week to enjoy the wonderful Fall weather. The wild flowers were gorgeous, too, so many of them, and so many that I had never seen before and I added about 20 to

my collection of 84 and could have kept on indefinitely. We had a very pleasant month, but I don't think I rested up very successfully. Our family was congenial and easy to provide for, but just a little too large. The cook did well and I worried as little as possible, I guess, but meals etc. were on my mind a good deal of the time. We couldn't have had a nicer family.

Sept. 9.

It is now Monday morning and the calciminers have not yet arrived. They will finish their work today and we can then put the finishing touches on ours.

After thinking about it for a long time I finally told Mrs. Studley that I could not teach in the Bible school this year. Giving it up makes me feel like more or less like a shirker but I honestly do not feel equal to the task. I have promised to do a little more supervising of the cook and I still have time and strength for some of the things that I wanted to do and couldn't last year.

Sleeping in one of the little back rooms last night I discovered that our nearest neighbors are not Chinese. From a small, high window I could look down into ever so many courtyards just full of people wearing kimonos. Of course that thing repeated thousands of times explains how almost impossible it is for the Chinese to rent houses, or even single rooms. And you should see the huge school buildings that have gone and are going up, and the hordes of school children of all ages. It certainly looks as if they had all come to stay.

There is much confusion in Shansi. The Hemingways, Mary McClure, and others are here waiting for torn -up railroads to be repaired. It may take some time.

I wonder how to you are all going to vote. With conditions as they are it's the pretty serious question. I don't know enough about what is going on to express an opinion. Plenty of mistakes have been made, but that is nothing new. People don't say much about the election in letters. I'm glad that peace time conscription did not go through. The British out here have no doubt whatever about Britain's ability to hold out and finally win out. What happens in Europe is going to make all the difference in the world with what happens here.

My last winter's clothes are all pretty shabby, so much so that I am almost afraid to get them out for inspection. But I mustn't put it off too long.

We enjoyed Betty's letter so much. She didn't mention her cello but I suppose she is still working away at it. It was too bad that she had to miss the tennis match because of mumps.

Gertrude is third year high school isn't she? And where is Betty? It is hard for me to keep track of where the 12 school-going grandchildren are as to grades. Donald will be starting before we know it.

You have done a lot of sewing. How do you manage it all? Len's gardens must be fine and must help a lot.

I must stop now. With love to each one of you --

Lovingly, Grandma.

Proofreading Fenn's Dictionary
Heavy work schedule.
How to catch a swarm of bees.
Identifying 3 types of swallows.
Uncle Charlie (Stanley), his son John (librarian) and John's girl friend Mary Boyd.

George D. Wilder

College of Chinese Studies,
Peking
Oct. 8th, 1939

Dear Betty Ann,

I can't finish this letter before we go to church at 11:00 a.m., but if I do not get it started at least today, it will go all the week and no one knows how much longer. It seems as though I must have replied to your letter of two pages of typewriting, July 7th, but have no record of it, and find your letter now among a lot of unanswered ones that I brought back from Peitaiho. I had in mind what to say about the bees and all for so long that it seems as though I must have written. It will not hurt, even if I have, to write again.

This is a very busy week for me. In addition to the proofreading of the Fenn's Dictionary that we hope to have out before Xmas, which has to be done every day, tomorrow afternoon I have an executive committee meeting of the Peking Missionary Fellowship that I am president of this year. Tuesday 10:00 A.M. I have a sort of opening lecture for the students of Chinese character writing here - really the whole school. Sometime in the day, not yet decided, I have to take charge of a question hour in which the Bible School girls ask whatever questions they like; in the late afternoon a weekly lecture of about two hours' length by Grabau that I want to attend and the weekly American Board prayer meeting in the evening. Thursday afternoon beginning a volunteer class of about 15 church members who are helping preach at the street chapel. Friday P.M. my regular class in Public Speech and then the opening lecture for the years' series of the Peking Society of Natural History, and

Sunday I preach at Tungchou. Well, it is enough to prepare for all at once, and I am going to say "no" more often in the future. But you see that I will not be taking very much time for letters, and so this effort today to write what should have been written long ago.

To answer your letter -- you said you hoped we were as well as could be expected, and we are. As a woman doctor said when asked if she were well, "Of course. That is my business to be well, and I am." But really it seems to me that I feel more like work, and am able better to play several sets of tennis than I have in years, and the same with your Grandmother. You were tired from the Fourth of July, but we had none whatever. We had some very fine Chinese acrobats give us an evening exhibition on our own lawn, lighted by good electric lights about that time, however. Your Grandmother drew some for Billy's delectation. I wish you might have seen the pictures, if not the real thing.

As for those "gobs of bees" that swarmed off from somewhere and entered your chimney, if it is the chimney that has fire under it they will be destroyed, I suppose, when the furnace is fired up. That is too bad. The only way I know to get them out is to get a hive, with three or four frames of wax comb foundation in it. The hive must be put up so that its entrance is within a foot or two of the hole where the bees go into the chimney. If there is more than one hole you have to plaster them all up but one. That one you plaster up small enough if it is not already, so that you can put a little tin bee-escape over it. They can come out through the escape but cannot get back. You will have at once within a day all of the old bees on the outside unable to get back and they will go into the hive. If you can get a queen cell or a queen to put in, it will hasten things, but you leave the hive there until only the queen and a few of her attendants are left in the chimney. It may take two or three weeks, as the young bees that are hatching out after three weeks from the time they got started laying eggs in the chimney will continue to hatch that length of time and the young

bees will not come out for a week or two after they hatch at the earliest. After a month you can move them anywhere. You must keep them shut in for a few days or they will go back to the chimney and die there.

Of course if the chimney was one that you could tear open a bee man could open it and take out the combs and the bees and put them into a hive. When this letter gets there it will be pretty late in the fall for handling them. If it is a cold chimney let them be over winter.

Did I not guess that the animal you told me about might be an opossum? I am glad you know now.

I do not know of a scientific dictionary but the Century Dictionary, if of recent date, is fine for scientific terms. It was up to date 30 years ago and I presume there are recent revisions. You probably can't afford that. Any good unabridged, like Webster's, is good enough and the great Oxford Dictionary is fine. You can find them in the libraries. Make a note of the words you want to look up and take the list to the libe.

I would like to know what that sparrow was that you found nesting so far south of its known range. You ought to have noted the fact in the margin of your book, if the sparrow is described there. Ask your Biology teacher Mr. Golczinski what it was.

You ought to know at least the three common swallows by sight, that is the Bank Swallow, duller black all over the upper parts; the Barn (or House) Swallow is more shiny steel blue black all over the back, and has long outer tail feathers in spring and summer; the Eave Swallow, with a yellow rump that shows off when flying so that you can see the back. They all are the most graceful of flyers.

Well it has been Aafter church" for a long time and I am going for a nap. Uncle Charlie Stanley came last night and kept us up late so we need it. John, his son, who rooms in the East hostel across the lawn and pretty shrubbery from this the West hostel, is sick with some sort of infection in his neck glands. We go to see him often. He is librarian here. His girl has just gone and that will give John time for more rest and sleep. She was at Peitaiho all summer, here all last year. She is one of two pretty blonde Boyd sisters - Mary Boyd.

I have letters from George and from David to answer. Tell George that I will do it later, and give him my love for now. Have you heard how your Uncle Durand won the tri-county championship in tennis? Ursula sent us a clipping with his picture in the paper and a long account of it. Said he was an old veteran who learned in China and had been off the tournament courts for 20 years.

With love to you all,

Grandpa

Airplanes fly over to bomb "Free China" in the mountains.
Armored cars made from Ford trucks.
Less bombing since the floods.

George D. Wilder

Peking
October 8th, 1939

Dear George,

I have just answered Betty Ann's letter of July 7th, and on looking at your letter to me I see that it was written the day before hers was. That was July 6th, two days after the Fourth. You said that you thought the Fourth of July was very nice but did not tell me much or even anything about it. Probably you have forgotten by this time what did happen on the Fourth. But I was very glad to hear from you and to get a letter that was addressed by you yourself. I suppose someone told you how to do it, but it was nice to see that you had written the address on the outside. I wonder if you bought the stamp yourself. Of course it was easier to get one from Dad or your Mother.

You said that you were having a nice time in summer school and I wonder what you studied.

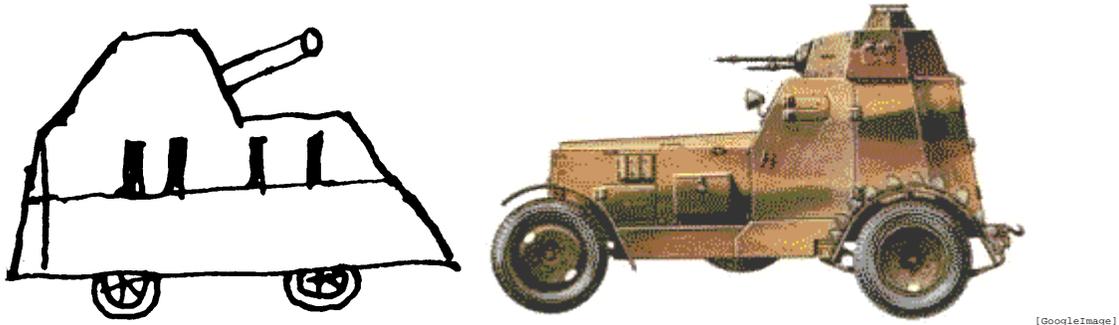
Yesterday or the day before we saw a lot of big aeroplanes going over us. I counted four groups of planes each, flying in three groups of four each. But I noticed that there were only three in one formation, all the rest of the formations being

just alike and of four flying so:

Can you figure up how many planes there were in all? Your Grandma was not quite sure and thought there were 48 but when I went out in a riksha I asked the man who had been out on the street all the morning how many he saw. He said at once 47. They were flying off to the west toward the Western Hills. Sometimes they come back after a while but we have not seen

these. There is a big airfield at the foot of the hills about five or six miles from the city but I do not think they landed there. I am afraid they went to Free China, which is in sight, to bomb cities and armies out there in the mountains.

This morning we saw on the street a regular armed car made out of a Ford or some such truck like this:



It had a sort of square cupola on top with a machine gun pointing out of it. Could not see a man on it. The other day I also saw about ten tanks on big caterpillars, on the paved street, tanking up with gasoline or air or something. We have not heard any guns or bombs for a long time, though, as we did the first part of our stay here, before we went to Peitaiho by the sea. I think the big floods have destroyed a lot of their miserable trucks, planes, etc., and ammunition, and the roads they run on, so they have not been fighting so much since the floods came. As the land dries off down around Tientsin though, I am afraid they will go at it again. It is terribly hard on the poor farmers. We in the cities do not fear anything, however.

Well, I hope that you will have something more to tell us and write again.

With love, and thanks for your letter.

Grandpa Wilder

Gift of painting of "The Three Blessings of Old Age."
Trains running again on repaired trestles
Margaret's letter-writing campaign.

George D. Wilder

Peking, China

October 8th, 1939

Dear Margaret,

I am devoting today to getting some of my old letters answered and have just written to George and to Betty. It has seemed as though there were special things that I wanted to write to you for a long time.

You spoke of mailing the garters with the last letter but they have not yet shown up. Being merchandise, I suppose they take longer than your letter. It was a letter of July 16th, that I have unanswered, wishing me a happy birthday. I suppose you have the letter telling about it and the days before and after, during which the friendly Chinese celebrations continued. I think I failed to mention one of the gatherings by the Chinese in my letters and I know I did not mention a nice picture that the ornithologist Tseng Huang Shaw gave me. He is the author of the big work on the Birds of Hopei that I reviewed for the *Auk*, and he gave me a copy later, the same I sold to Van Tyne, for which I hope that you got the \$6.00. The picture was painted for the occasion, showing three blessings of old age for a 70th birthday present. It is an old man, surrounded by grandchildren (No. 1) carrying a peach symbol of old age (No. 2) and a couple of bats symbolic of wealth and official employment or happiness, I forget which (No. 3), and the picture is labeled the *san to*, or "three muchnesses."

By the way, the garters will be in time, for the old ones are still good. I had thought they would give out before the summer was over, but I had them washed and they are still good.

You were waiting to hear of the safe return from Tehsien, and now I presume you know that your Mother took sick the night we were to leave and after we had bought our tickets, second class, with a three day limit. They only fined us 20 cents when we took them back the next day. Then we were going on a return ticket from Peitaiho and the flood made it too much of a good thing to go by boat, seeing we did not have to go. Now at last the railroad is put through the floods on trestles. Uncle Charlie is here, having just come over it, and he says he hands it to the Japanese for a good job at seeing that difficult job through. Aunt Louise keeps talking of our being there in Tsinan at Thanksgiving time, and I need my things from Techow, if they are in existence all this time, but we have no vacation then and now we may wait until the holidays.

We were glad to get the class letter with yours, and wonder why you thought necessary to cut it. You were just going to see Thornton Wilder's play on the screen. I wonder if it was good. We are hoping to see Boys Town today and may do so, though Uncle Charlie's train is just a half hour too early for us to take him as we planned. I now remember that I have a committee meeting at 4:00 which prevents me from going and Uncle Charlie says he will stay over a train and take Mother, or she take him, to the afternoon show.

I am glad to hear of all your activity in the letter writing line. Can make no comments just now however. Glad of Gertrude's outing and Bette Ann's visit to the Johnsons. Fine for George and Len to get together so much in the wilds, etc. I regret that we did not do more of it in the earlier years. Ursula got more later.

With love hurriedly,

G. Wilder

Oberlin-in-Shansi moves further into the interior to escape bombing attacks on Sian.
Two students in Peking, yearn to be at scene of the struggle.

MRS. L.L. DAVIS, EXECUTIVE SEC.

W.F. BOHN, CHAIRMAN

H.B. THURSTON, TREAS.

The Oberlin-Shansi Memorial Association

MIDWINTER BULLETIN, 1939

DEAR FRIENDS:

Ming Hsien (Oberlin-in-China) has moved again, for the fourth time. A two-weeks' trek on foot over the mountains into southwestern Shensi. They "took it in stride — no great excitement — more or less of an old story — a prolonged picnic!" Such is the spirit of the 190 men and 15 girls, with their teachers, who made this trying journey.

Of the 205 students, about 125 were of the original group that left Taiku (the home of our school) a year earlier. The others paid each a hundred dollars and found guarantors for further expenses, in order to share the hardships — and opportunities — of our wandering school.

The first six weeks of the first term had been completed — with examinations — before official orders came to leave Sian. Bombings in the vicinity "Agave point" to their decision to go, but they had not been attacked.

Their present location is Mien Hsien, near the city of Hanchung. It is a retired, sheltered spot, where they hope to complete the next six weeks' work before moving on into Kansu. **Herb VanMeter** writes December 23:

"I've just plowed through the last of 45 Senior II compositions on — 'The Differences between North - and South Shensi.' It's surprising to note the number of things they've pointed out — good proof that traveling about the country is an educational experience, which may be some compensation for interruption and inconvenience. The contrast between this place and Sian is great. The people here are frightfully poor and backward. They don't seem to know about the war. The city was burned by Communists four years ago. It is interesting to note the not-yet-faded words exhorting the Reds to give up their arms and join the National armies, overset by newer ones saying that United China will give her last drop of blood to drive out the invaders. No question, China has come a long way in the past few years."

The letter ends with a cheerful account of Christmas preparations — including Santa Claus and a dinner at the English Mission school "if Cliff (Domke) can get a couple more ducks!"

Herbert Van Meter is the only one of our three representatives now in China, who has reached the interior. **Charlotte Tinker**, in Peking since August 1937, counts herself "lucky to be taken in by the American Board and given a position in their girls' school (Bridgman Academy) — one of the finest in North China." This year she has a full schedule with four classes and some advisory work. She says:

"Peking life continues all too smoothly and mundanely for those of us who yearn to be on the scene of struggle, in the interior. So much of our energy goes into vicarious suffering for those whom we are helpless to aid. News is limited, of course, but we get enough to convince us of the tremendous need. I have been hoping to serve my final year with those I came out for, and whom I have never ceased yearning to join. Although things have worked out far differently from what I had planned, I am profoundly grateful for every experience which has come. Even in war-time, it's a great privilege to live and work and learn in this part of the world for two years. The Orient has a way of getting under one's skin. If I felt I should never return, I doubt if I could leave. But . . . now that I've discovered how near China is, I'm sure I'll find my way back again."

Mel Kennedy, also in Peking, studying Chinese language and history in Yenching University and making a bibliography of Western sources and authorities on the history of Chinese cultural relations with the West, is increasingly enthusiastic about his work, but is ready to drop it and go into the interior to join our school if it seems best. He tells of practicing "The Messiah" in the Yenching chorus, which compares favorably with Oberlin choruses. The bass soloist, a private pupil of Mel's in English, did superbly — "Pinza himself couldn't have improved on it!"

In **Taiku**, the original home of the school, *Pei Lu* primary school, once connected with Ming Hsien, now has 250 students — some of them Ming Hsien students left behind — with two additional grades, fifth and sixth, and a few middle (high) school students, and double its former teaching staff. Ray Moyer urges opening a primary school on the Ming Hsien campus, so as to retain occupancy of the buildings. The agricultural work has been kept up, and a most gratifying report of last year has come from Ray.

Here in Oberlin, the Student Shansi Committee again took the initiative in voting for sending another representative this year, in which the trustees supported them. Application blanks have been given out and Shansi Day is set for February 24.

Our Part

Can we do less than furnish financial support to those who are giving their lives?

Our fiscal year began September 1st. Our aim for the year is \$3,000.00. Nearly half of the year is gone. We have received less than five hundred dollars, only one-sixth of our aim.

We know you will not fail them.

How soon may we expect your gift — if you have not sent already?

W. F. BOHN, *Chairman*