

CHINA DIARY

(This was my first permitted announcement that the First Marine Division was going to North China, a matter which had been in process since "V-J Day". Somehow we were to ease the transition of that part of China from the former Japanese puppet regime to reunion with the Republic of China. One definite task was the repatriation of over 400,000 Japanese soldiers, civil servants and civilians who were scattered throughout North China and many of whom had been living there for many years before our war. Neither the momentous political imbalance, the enormous size of the area or the unromantic nature of the task bothered us; there could be no doubt we were headed for adventure, opportunity and a holiday all rolled into one.

(Here follow my letter reports, mostly to my parents, in sequence. I plan to omit some portions which do not relate to the experience of the Marine in China and his thoughts of home. Now that we are normalizing relations with another, or the same, China, the writer of these notes seems to me to have been rather unsophisticated, credulous and optimistic. I was 24.) (THESE PARS. ABOVE WRITTEN 1972)

H&S-4-11  
29 Sept 1945

Dear Mother & Dad,

This is coming to you from the comparative luxury of a ship's wardroom, and we are headed for North China. It is very pleasant - the first morning at breakfast the steward asked what we would like and then apologized that fresh eggs were the only thing that could be fixed. The troops are as pleased with the chow they get as the officers. I want to hear Sam on Navy chow because this is the same kind of a ship he is on.

For Marines it's a good vacation to go aboardship, where you have no duties, just eat, read, sleep, see a movie every other night (on deck now, with blackout lifted) etc. Yesterday there were Navy vs Marine boxing matches with about even split on wins and losses. This was followed up by a pie eating contest which was won by a Marine who wolfed down an entire butterscotch and meringue pie - no hands - in less than half a minute while the Navy's champion was just getting started. I think this is highly significant, though I can't think just why.

We are all well heeled with bulletins and pocket guides on how to bargain for rickshas, etc. Also included is a list of commonly needed words and phrases with phonetic pronunciations. It is suggested that some of these could be learned so as to have them on the tip of the tongue but I don't feel this is necessary. I already have a Chinese phrase ready.

When Cliff Domke had the Northfield Laundry concession he used to go through the dorms sing-singing "don-shee-la--ee-foo" which was said to mean "laundry going out". Anyway, it sounds very glib and easy, and I expect to get a lot of attention as I go along the streets greeting our allies in their native tongue.

You've asked about Xmas presents and I have no suggestions or desires on the subject. Better surprise me with a couple of "pocket-books" or something.

With love,

Chick

H&S-4-11  
5 October 1945

Dear Mother & Dad,

Since lettering you last, I have barged to Tanku, trained to Tientsin and trucked to the French Arsenal to be barracked. And here the noun letter caught up with me. (Chapin Letters p. 100)

This part of China is so flat that we couldn't see land until we were within a few miles of the coast. We docked about 3 miles up the Hai Ho (ho is river). Marines had been coming in on barges for 4 days but people lined the banks waving flags and cheering each boatload. Every junk and even the smallest sampan had flags flying. The waterfront at Tanku was filled with Chinese peddlers who find sailors an easy mark for their operations. They sold everything from homemade whisky with counterfeit labels to Chinese currency.

The railroad station in Tanku is somewhat larger than ours at home, for though Tanku is small, its port and sail facilities serve most of North China. Talk about gaping tourists! No one in the Division had seen a brick building - or civilians in European dress since leaving the states. Of course, there are mud huts and coolies in rags, but the business section is modern.

The train we boarded was freshly swept. Seats were wooden but comfortable, and the windows could be opened. The ride was smooth and silent - perhaps because of the slow speed. We made the 30-odd miles to Tientsin in about an hour and a quarter.

While waiting for trucks in the Tientsin station I ran into Bill Oliver - he had come up on the same train. He returned from Pearl Harbor the day before our convoy left Okinawa.

The trucks were charcoal burning Dodges, right hand, and Chinese driven. We caught a kalaidoscopic view of rickshas, government buildings, fruitstands, etc. on the way to the French Arsenal which is about 8 miles out of town. I expect to get into Tientsin tomorrow and get more first hand information. It has a population of over a million - a very cosmopolitan lot, including Japs, Russians, Germans, Dutch, Italians, Spaniards, Poles, Austrians and of course Chinese. They say that steaks, ice cream, and vodka are surprisingly plentiful. Plentiful for the Marine who takes his dollar and changes it into 1800 Chinese dollars. This is puppet currency here, lawful Chunking currency, which exchanges at 800 for 1 is not available here. This puppet stuff is inflated because everyone who had a printing press made his own.

This "French Arsenal" is actually a fort large enough for a brigade or two. All the buildings are brick, gray outside, whitewashed inside. Walls 2 feet thick, high ceilings, and barred windows are characteristic. Though the Japs used the place for several years, the original French signs are on all the doors and buildings. "Circle de Sous-Officiers" was easier to translate than most of the others.

With love,

Chick

H&S-4-11  
13 October 1945

Dear Mother & Dad,

A storm down the line held up air mail for a few days, but today I received letters from Sam, John, Mrs. Wood, and you. Sam's was the old troopship story of the boy who gets to the showers after the fresh water is cut off.

John has been thumbing through army manuals and ran across a regulation horse trailer. He figures Surplus Commodities would be delighted to get rid of some of these in order to further Chapin brothers enterprises.

I went in town with Mitchell yesterday on a shopping tour - he was shopping for silks and I was tagging along for entertainment. I left a trail of burning rayon and wool behind us, but found no pure silk material. Mitch finally bought some stuff he considered pretty for about \$1500 a yard. Prices are usually quoted in "FRB" or puppet currency but when they mean American money they say so many dollars "gold".

After this shopping tour, we were buzzing down Victoria Rd. in rickshas and met Ken Foyle and Frank Norton who were also ready for chow. We went into one of the hotels of the British section and were waited on by Chinese while three Russians played "Irish Eyes are Smiling." What a place! We had steak and eggs, fresh tomato salad, and finished off with French pastry.

I'm sure I've seen the most efficient method of weeding a lawn now. The grounds were quite unkempt when we arrived, but each morning we get several hundred Japanese soldiers to clean up the place, and a detail of 35 or so can weed a small lawn in 15 or 20 minutes.

None of these Japs were even in battle. They're willing workers and well disciplined, though they look stupid for the most part. I'm still amazed at the sight of them running around loose. They're under guard when they're working around the Arsenal here, and they are confined to their barracks when not on duty, but in town you see shiny-booted officers pedaling bicycles down the street and Jap-manned trucks going here or there. As I say, it's amazing. We're only now learning to identify their rank and branch insignia - we never had any necessity to know it before.

Tomorrow afternoon the Mayor of Tientsin is having a reception at the Astor House. I think that I'll be among the officers representing the BN. Well, I'll find out tomorrow. Now it's time for bed.

With love,

Chick

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H&S-4-11  
17 October 1945

Dear Mother & Dad,

A letter has just arrived from Sam - written somewhere in the Phillippines. Mail seems to be reaching him alright whenever he's in port.

I attended the Mayor's reception last Sunday. All the leading Chinese merchants and professional men were present - many with their wives - to meet and entertain the several hundred officers of the 3rd Corps and 1st Div. who attended.

Waiters scurried everywhere with trays of appetizers of all sorts and drinks while Tientsin's Herbert George, with a retinue of robed assistants, was everywhere flashing lights in peoples' faces.

The Chinese were about equally divided between those in European dress and those in traditional full length kimono. Some of the older gentlemen with long but wispy beards under their chins made quite a picture.

When the time came for speeches, Gen. Worton, who once refereed our polo matches, translated his own speech.

3rd Corps has taken over the Tientsin Country Club for use as an officers' club. It is just outside of town at the far end of Race Course Road. In fact, it's right next to the race course. It is as beautiful a place as I've seen - everything is panelled and carved inside. The entrance hall is decorated by plaques presented by all the military organizations formerly stationed in North China. It has bowling alleys, tennis courts, swimming pool, squash courts, reading rooms, dining halls and a bar, all operative in season. Oh yes, a skating rink too, which will perhaps be the next on the sports roster. The big attraction at the moment though is that the club is the only place we can get hot showers!

I have gotten some German made Agfa film and will take some pictures soon. I was with Mitchell the other day when he got a portrait shot of a Chinese street vender eating his own fried grasshoppers. A look of pure delight on his face as he crunched them down! Food is cooked and sold everywhere along the streets - a record of the smells would be every bit as interesting as a record of the sights.

Chiang Kai-shek, or the "G-mo" as we old China hands are wont to say, is reported to have announced that the Marines would be out of China soon. Someone comments that a thousand years is a short time to China, but we all make our guesses and you can too. I think we may leave here any time between December and March. Whether the 1st Div. will return to home base at New River after this trip is another question.

With love,

Chick

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H&S-4-11  
10 October 1945

Dear Mother & Dad,

As staff duty officer tonight, I'm one of the few not in town. This is the first place since Australia, two years ago, when the division has had any liberty, and  $\frac{1}{4}$  the command has liberty daily at 1400 and running until 2200. And all officers not on duty can take liberty.

We go to town along the Route Militaire Francaise, turn under the Tientsin-Tanku railway into Tomsk St., follow down it to Nicolai, follow the Hai Ho to the International Bridge which leads into the Rue de France. This becomes Victoria St. in the British Concession and we stop at the Astor House.

On my first visit, 4 of us hired rickshas of the tricycle variety and set off in search of chow. A tricycle ricksha is a very modern contraption - the coolie has a bicycle frame instead of shafts and has two gear ratios. He pedals backwards in low and frontwards in high. Like all local cycles, the rig is equipped with hand brakes and a bell. Whole herds of these things go streaming down the streets and no one pays any attention to pedestrians, side traffic, trucks, or policemen - just ring the bell





WOODEN MATCH BOOK COVER CIRCULATED IN  
NORTH CHINA DURING JAPANESE OCCUPATION  
(ACQUIRED BY A US MARINE, OCT. 1945)  
(MAILED TO PARENTS DEC 16 1945)

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and keep going. Ricksha boys ask and take any amount, but \$100 for 10 blocks is a rule of thumb we use. We followed Victoria this evening until it became Woodrow Wilson (German Concession) and stopped at Kiessling and Badin restaurant. This spot was packed with Marines, but we squeezed into a table and had a steak dinner with salad and delicious pastry. A Russian string ensemble played during the dinner hour, and the violinist played Caprice Viennoise for Goff for \$500. My bill was \$1400, or about 65 cents.

Again we hired rickshas - each time this is an experience. As soon as you indicate by a glance at the street that you want on, you have a dozen boys grabbing your arm trying to get you into his buggy - and all the time you're looking for an expression of recognition as you pronounce the name of your destination. If you are unsuccessful, a passing Frenchman, Russian, German, high class Chinese, or Englishman helps you out with a few instructions in Chinese.

Our destination was the jai Alai game - Tientsin's main sporting and gambling event. This is played nightly at the Winter Garden - admission is free. The coliseum is very modern and clean with a grandstand and 2 tiers of boxes. Uniformed ushers rush about serving drinks and buying and cashing tickets (just like racetrack betting) for the customers. A handful of Spanish professionals play the gam and it is quite interesting and occasionally exciting. Sort of a high speed squash game.

The top floor of the Winter Garden has a nightclub which wouldn't be out of place in New York. Gen. Worton was having an official dinner there when we looked in.

As you might guess, it is quite cold here at night, and I have been wearing a wool shirt regularly and sometimes a wool undershirt. Also for town wear, I've broken out my green trousers and shoes that shine - and a necktie. With a windproof coat-length jacket I can be very warm.

In the Chinese sections, every night looks like Saturday night. Everywhere street vendors are cooking or selling something. Most of the things they eat defy analysis by sight, but I did recognize breadsticks and fried grasshoppers. The smells are terrific.

Of course, most of us are rushing around buying things and getting stung. Personally there's very little of Chinese junk I care for. I'm going to get some trinkets for the Marples kids - possibly cufflinks! I'm warned that there's no pure silk for sale anywhere. If the merchants have it, they may break it out later when their rayons, etc. are gone. The same is probably true of furs, jade, and rugs. If there is something you want that might be advantageously bought here, I'll try to get some expert advice and get it.

There is no servant problem here. We are beseiged by boys who used to work for the French. Many of them speak a little French. I'm in a house with about 10 officers, and we have a No. 1 boy who sweeps out and makes the beds, shines shoes, etc. 3 other boys come twice a week to wash clothes.

Fleet Marines Force forwarded my letter of resignation recommending no action until my tour of overseas duty is complete, which is about what I expected, but doesn't mean that is the action which will be taken. Nobody knows, for that matter, what a tour consists of now.

In 24 Sept Time, our visit here was predicted - and they said 3 months. That's the only "official source" I have so that will have to do until I hear something more definite.

With love,

Chick



H&S-4-11  
20 October 1945

Dear Mother & Dad,

You should find Fred Goff's picture in the rear of that Bn group picture I sent you. He was surprised that his wife didn't understand the color transparency - he and she are both chemists I believe, and of scientific turn of mind.

Wednesday evening Fred, Joe Goff and myself dined at a place called, or run by, Tung Tieng Chuan at 24 Rue G. de Veria (French Concession). Chinese custom in a restaurant seems to be to order as many dishes as suits your fancy and they are brought in serving portions and placed in the center of the table. Rice is the only food brought in individual dishes; and each person gets a saucer sized plate for rice as intermediate station between common bowl and mouth.

First knife, fork, spoon and chop sticks were brought with boiling water so we could personally sterilize them. The dishes we were served were: fried shrimp and heart of bamboo, "sweet-sour pork" - bits fried in deep sugary fat, "onion-beef" - both elements shredded and fried, bits of boiled chicken served with red and green peppers, "succulent duck" - this was the piece de resistance and the only thing served whole, it literally fell apart when touched, chicken soup and rice. The soup can be eaten with chopsticks by pouring it on the rice; the remaining broth can be drunk from the rice bowl.

I ate perhaps two thirds of the meal with the chopsticks before my patience wore out, my hand became tired, and my fingers became too greasy to hold the durn things. One of our waiters had a great time writing out the characters for each dish and teaching us the pronunciation. I was a particularly inept pupil as the only thing I remember now is the way to order hot Tsing tao wine, of which I did not partake.

In the Chinese restaurant, each party eats in a walled-in booth with curtained doorway. Marines do not crowd into such places as they do the European style establishments, so a great to-do was made over us. Every waiter in the place must have peeked in the curtain at least twice.

A British woman of about 65 years accosted us that afternoon to thank us for coming to China, for sending food and clothing by air, etc. She has spent 20 years in China and 3 in a concentration camp where the Japs had sold her one egg per week to add to her rations. One of her sons was captured at Hong Kong and has not been heard from, another was an RAF man shot down over Germany, the 3rd is a Major in the "Royal Signals". She was on her way to sell a 3 oz. block of gold bought years ago for just such an emergency. The only question left in my mind is who owed thanks to whom?

One of the fellows had a letter from Van Campen who is now stationed at Great Lakes. He had completely forgotten about my film but says he is having it developed now.

I'm glad for Tom that he got out in time to make this semester at school. My present hope, of course, is that his head start on me will be just one year.

With love,

Chick

Tientsin, China  
24 Oct 1945

Dear Mother & Dad,

The typhoon delayed mail is caught up now; I have your letters up to October 10th. Your unwillingness to believe that I go along when the First Marine Division goes anywhere is amusing. A few people do stay behind, of course, each time the division moves. They maintain or tear down the camp, as the case may be. You may be sure I won't offer myself as a candidate for the rear echelon.

If I ran an auction booth at Hot Springs, I could really lay in a big stock of brass filigree and enamelware vases and carved laquerware cigarette cases. When I see a shop with row on row of this stuff I say to myself there's no use looking here, our house is full of it. Shopping, with or without buying, is a first rate pastime here. Show an interest in a particular article and characters appear from nowhere to lead you to another shop to see better goods. When bargaining starts a crowd gathers and everyone tries to take part in the sale. Whenever a seller makes a killing, all the participants and frequently all the onlookers demand "kumshaw" or a cut of the profits. This is a Chinese business tradition and it's practically mandatory to pay off.

You know now that Lt. Souther's address was mailed to me the day I arrived off the China Coast. I think I could have found his unit had I known sooner.

I have sent Sam instructions on how to reach me should he anchor off Taku Bar. Had he come to Okinawa he would have been in Buckner Bay and about 50 miles of hitch-hiking from 1st Marine Div. He could have dropped me a note and I could have come to see him much more easily.

The enclosed bag is from one of the thousands of bags of tea I will have drunk before leaving China.

With love,

Chick

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Tientsin, China  
27 Oct 1945

Dear Mother & Dad,

I have told you that every ricksha ride is an adventure, and a little jaunt I had yesterday was no exception. This driver did not understand our destination, so I essayed to go the right way by tapping his shoulder, and pointing. That part of it worked out all right. First off, he kept looking at his pedals while a truck (Chinese driven) bore down on us, and looked up to reverse just in time. Then he crossed to the right (wrong) side of the street for some undetermined reason and proceeded against traffic for 2 blocks before cutting back to the side along which Ken Foye's more conservative boy was following us. There are no rules about intersections. Whereas they ring their bells at pedestrians in the street, the ricksha boys seek to intimidate their collision bound colleagues by shouting, and pedal gayly on, hoping the other vehicle involved will stop or turn. Often this works. But my boy tried it on a mule, which was pulling (as is the custom for Chinese mules, which stand 12½ to 14 hands) a load we would assign to Hilliers. By rapid estimate of speeds and direction I could picture the driver beating the mule and the mule beating me, but by dint of mutually beneficial neck bending on the part of the mule and myself, the tragedy was averted. At this point





I saw that my man was about to pull around a street car, though another was coming our way on the adjacent track. A few well calculated shouts and gesticulations made him wait. Around the next corner was our destination, and there he received \$100 for his efforts in my behalf, the rate of exchange then being 3200 to 1.

Your period of mailless days should have been about one week; I take no responsibility for the second week and any additional days attached thereto. Sam is doing very well with his letter writing.

With love,

Chick

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Tientsin, China  
30 Oct 1945

Dear Mother & Dad,

Today I began what I hope will be an interesting assignment, as I know it will be a bothersome one. The regiment is sort of lending two Capts. to fill out the ranks of the Division Repatriation Section which is administering the return of Jap civilian and military personnel to Japan. It is directed by a senior Naval lieutenant who is specially trained and an old China hand. He is surrounded by an entourage of specialists and interpreters, as he has to deal with the Chinese government, army, and police and the Jap army and civilians.

The chief liaison officer with the Chinese is a spry Marine Capt. with moustache and goatee, aged over 60. He was, and intends to be again, chief architect and engineer for Methodist missions in China. I was not surprised that he knew Carleton-in-China, Minnesota's Dr. Judd, and the Carletonians whose parents were missionaries.

I have no specific duties in this business as yet - just playing the observer for a few days.

The horse sale report is due any day now. I looked for it today - but no. A new issue of the Marine Corps Gazette was the only thing that came.

I have found a place out by the race course which advertises:

THE HORSE OF HIRING HERE

They have some Manchurian ponies and some taller and leaner specimens whose ancestors were imported, but are hardly thoroughbreds. Anyway I'm determined to ride at an early opportunity, though I don't know how the new work is going to consume my hours previously used at liberty.

I have some snapshots of representative street scenes - they were not taken by me, nor do I appear in them, but I was present when they were taken and will put notes on the backs and enclose in another letter.

Though I go to Div. Headquarters (in town) to the Rehabilitation office, I'm going to stay in the same quarters, etc.

With love,

Chick

Tientsin, China  
28 Oct 1945

Dear Anno, Uncle Ed, George & Jean,

This heading answers the question of my whereabouts - or perhaps it was already answered by newspaper accounts of the 1st Marine Division's presence in China - Mother and Dad refused to believe this had any significance for me.

Bill returned from Pearl Harbor in time to board ship the day before we left Okinawa. I found he was back when I got off the train in Tientsin station and saw he'd just dismounted from another coach. We're now living half a block apart in a row of quarters formerly occupied (and still owned, I presume) by the French.

Bill is now eligible for discharge, but this is not immediately possible due to our geographical position, and the number of people on the roster ahead of him. For my own part I expect to stay with the Division until it returns stateside - which is as uncertain a date as I can imagine.

Tom was very fortunate to get out of the service in time to enter school this semester. I hope to follow his example one year hence, but at Michigan.

If there's anything I can get for you in China, let me know - a sack of rice, a dragon, or what-have-you. I spend a good deal of time wandering around looking in shops anyway.

With love,

Chick

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Tientsin, China  
4 Nov 1945

Dear Mother & Dad,

Today the sheets and stationary which you mailed so long ago arrived in good condition for all the long voyage. It was really good timing; I didn't need them in Okinawa because sheets could be washed and dried in one afternoon. But we send the laundry out here and get four day service, so I can use the extras. The laundry, by the way, takes two bundles a week, any size, for \$2 (US) a month.

I have dispatched a couple of packages "first class" which may make a quicker trip than the aforesaid sheets. If they make it by Xmas, well and good. You'd just as well hold the package addressed to John and Betty until they arrive to move into 652.

If you enjoy bearing good tidings you might call Chuck Aldrich's wife to tell her that he actually has gone aboard ship and the ship has actually sailed. I believe he told her he was on the list, but he was afraid to predict that he was really on his way. Next time she hears from him it will be by phone. He received the Distinguished Flying Cross (for Okinawa) just a few days before he left.

This morning Garry and I stopped in at "The Horse of Hiring Here" place to go riding. All their horses were out, so we went down the road to another group of barns (this is near the race course, and I haven't seen so many barns since the last Illinois State Fair) where they had Mongolian ponies only. We rode them and found them very spirited, just like a Welch pony in size and gait. It was an experience, but hardly an exciting one, as most other people were riding thoroughbreds and Arabians

which are the remnants of Tientsin's foreign owned racing stock. There are some really excellent horses among them; and though the price is only \$500 (15 or 20 cents) an hour, they rent them out only once a day and will not let them out within two hours after watering.

To better our luck next time, we made the acquaintance of a Mr. W. ('they call me Willie') Wang who professes to be a gentleman jockey in the purest British tradition and to oversee the care of 40 thoroughbreds. No mistaking Mr. Wang is a horseman; he wears jodphurs, tweed coat and velvet hunting cap.

After riding Garry and I walked the rest of the way out to the Club for a shower and tiffin. Tiffin consisted of chicken soup, bread, spaghetti, steak and eggs, french fries, creamed cabbage, ice cream and coffee.

Sign in the market place "Just Come Bread" - you always get something like that when Chinese idiom is put into English.

With love,

Chick

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Tientsin, China  
7 Nov 1945

Dear Mother & Dad,

I have now some definite information on resignation, and I am encouraged by it. On Oct 5 the Secretary of the Navy denied my request to resign on the grounds that my point score was not high enough to permit release under existing policy. The critical score was then about 70 and it is now 50 which is 7 points less than my total. Therefore I am sending another tender of resignation which I presume will be accepted, though I could be wrong. From this theater the round trip of correspondence through channels (endorsements at 5 headquarters each way) takes a little over two months, so I shall look for a reply in January.

Officers in the 50-60 point category out here will have to wait that long for relief so I don't believe my release will be particularly delayed because of my status. At any rate, I can hope to be out in the Spring. Should I get another unfavorable reply, there is time to put in four more requests before the next school year starts.

Your letters written on receipt of the first China letter have arrived with all the questions about this and that. I believe that I've answered all these insofar as I know the answers. I'm reminded of statements by Gen. Jones in Peking and Gen. Wedemeyer San Francisco to newsmen's questions. Both said in effect "In a soldier following orders, we just implement policy."

The No. 1 boy in the towel department at the club, who learned English at a mission conducted middle school in Peking and gets \$14 US a month for his high function (14 x 4200 makes a fat payroll even in \$500 bills), tells me he has faith that the G-mo (Johng-k-sh) and Mao (Mao-t-zung) will eventually reach an agreement without real fighting. He bases this on the Chinese philosophy the first to strike a blow in an argument automatically admits he is wrong and defeated. (I've noticed that coolies are the unwritten exceptions to this unwritten protections for arguers.) This boy is pretty smart and he gives me a little history of China each time I go out there for a hot shower.

To correct a slight misconception, part of the 11st Marine is quartered in the Arsenal, most of the Div. is billeted all over Tientsin proper, and part of Corps troops live in the former Marine Barracks which originally belonged to the 15th Infantry, USA.

With love,

Chick

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Tientsin, China  
10 Nov 1945

Dear Mother & Dad,

This is the date that we think more fitting to celebrate than tomorrow - so the repatriation office is closed and I can spend the morning in the cheery charcoal and kerosene engendered heat of my quarters at the French Arsenal. There's a big parade in town but I've escaped that. Enclosed a Peiping article - the situation is similar in Tientsin.

The beribboned US forces have another ridiculous ribbon regulation. The American area ribbon formerly authorized for 30 days service in the area, but outside the US, has been authorized for 1 year's honorable service within the US. This is the one that Uncle Amos referred to as the "Canadian Club". I suspect that the extension was made because no campaign developed in the area - but it de-values the ribbon for some Navy men who really earned it. Anyway I have now two ribbons and one campaign, and I have men who spent most of the past 3 years overseas and have one ribbon and 3 campaigns. In Quantico we used to joke about the Quantico Ribbon and now it's out; the only thing lacking is a star for the Battle of Chopawamsic Creek.

I have a note from Jr. written while he was still in Manila. He had attempted to fly to Okinawa but was grounded at the time of the big storm. Do the Woods know if he is permanently (a relative term) moved to Hong Kong or Shanghai, or if he is just following his boss on an inspection tour? Put in other words, is his address still the same?

Back mail drifts in - one from Sam written before the first load of troops were disembarked came yesterday. Haumie wrote from Camp Crowder and hopes he will be able to drop in on you sometime - preferably on his way to buy a zoot suit.

Yesterday afternoon I dropped by the stables to engage 2 horses for Garry and me on Sunday morning. Our colorful friend, Mr. Wang, was not around but there were Chinese boys exercising ponies and horses and numerous Chinese hostlers currying feeding, etc. so I made the rounds sounding them out for one who understands English. No luck but I found the No. 1 boy, so I whipped out Wang's business card and wrote on it my request. The No. 1 boy took it and filed it with some others between the pages of a small notebook. This looked like an intelligent procedure and likely to get results. A few moments later a horse was saddled and ready and I knew the plan had failed and I'd better make the most of it and go for a short ride. As I was preparing to mount, a Chinese came along and greeted me in English, so I asked him to explain my request to the No. 1 boy. Before he could answer, one of the pitchfork handlers stepped forward saying, "Two horses Sunday? What time please?" You never know.

So I rode anyway. After leaving the stableyard I discovered that I was being followed by a Chinese boy of about 14 on a Mongolian pony. My Sancho Panza, apparently sent to watch over me or the horse and bring back the pieces. He spoke no English but came and rode alongside when I motioned, but dropped back to about 25 yards before we ended the ride. As a matter of fact he spoke nothing.

With love,  
Chick

Tientsin, China  
14 Nov 1945

Dear Mother & Dad,

Yesterday's mail brought 11 letters, more than half of them being from you. I'll have to devote some space to answering questions.....I want to see Peiping but I doubt that I'll have the opportunity now that I'm embroiled in this repatriation deal.

Did see the Gould picture - pointed it out to everyone. The New Yorker comes regularly, and I have to fight people off to read it first. Like Time and Newsweek, it's distributed free by 2nd class mail - but I'm a couple of months ahead! The latest has a profile of the 'New York,' my favorite battleship (only one I've been aboard). I showed it to a naval gunfire spotter - he said yes, he'd fired her guns - poor shooting. Can't tell who to believe.

The temperature is cold but not freezing yet. As to uniforms, we're perhaps the most motley force in the Far East, wearing dungarees, khakis, and greens. I expect soon that green's will be well enough distributed that they will be the designated uniform for liberty. We have coat length windproof combat jackets, pile lined vests, windproof trousers and rubber footed boots ready for the really cold weather.


I was going to take some pictures, in fact I had half a roll exposed, but my camera has been lost, strayed or stolen for a week or so now, and that's that.

It is easy to see the attractions of China for a foreigner. A small British or U.S. income puts you in the luxury class here, and while the foreign populace undoubtedly has its racy element, the majority must have been educators, missionaries, and sound businessmen. And all these people, of course, had many ties of friendship with the well to do Chinese.

Now I must hasten to explain why no jade will be found in the packages already wending their way.

The reason isn't that they haven't brought any jade out from a vague place referred to as the "interior", though they say this is true. There would be lots of jade around if they didn't bring any out for 20 years. I have familiarized myself with the subject but I haven't bought any yet.

I don't know the chemical composition of jade but I would describe it physically as a quartz-like substance which cannot be scratched with a knife blade and which varies in color from clear to milky white to light and dark green. It also varies from opaque to translucent (like colored water).

White jade must be quite common because it comes in big pieces in the form of carved figures and is relatively cheap (i. e. \$10 US for a 4-inch statue). Green jade is another matter. I haven't seen any green jade figures. Green jade scales up in value from mottled opaque to homogenous opaque to watery clear. Opaque pieces are usually carved up in lattice work designs, seldom bigger than overcoat button, and are sometimes used as settings in heavy-linked bracelets. The best jade I've seen is set in rather cheap rings, earrings and the like, and the asking prices are tremendous! With no value scale of my own, I haven't been in a position to bargain as yet. I'll have to find out what a Chinese can buy jade for. Garry bought a second grade stone, pretty shade of green but opaque, unmounted and assymetrical for a dollar and a quarter US. It was about this size: .





WOODEN MATCH BOOK COVER CIRCULATED IN  
 NORTH CHINA DURING JAPANESE OCCUPATION  
 (ACQUIRED BY A US MAGAZINE, OCT, 1945)  
 (MAILED TO PARENTS DEC 16 1945)

必勝  
 ニポシチカラ・アミアレカ  
 イロイロナシツルルツアノマゼウ  
 (204)



47IME  
 ENLARGED  
 ←

Bill & Gert,  
HJG

It was wonderful to see you and Nancy and Bill at Glen Lake. Keep in touch!

Thanks for sending along this curious piece of war memorabilia.

matchbook covers that people were encouraged to collect.

The number "204" at the end suggests that it is one of a whole series of different propaganda

Let's Collect All the [Matchbox] Labels"  
(Troto na retteru o atsumemasho ヲロイロナレツテルツツマツテカ)

Strength of Japan, Light of Asia  
(Nippon no chikara, Ajia no hikari ニッポンノチカラ・アジアノヒカリ)

(Hissho 必勝)

INEVITABLE VICTORY

Thanks for sending along the copy of the Japanese wartime matchbox cover. I'm afraid that the text is less interesting than the cartoons of Churchill and FDR; it reads:

Dear Chick,

Charles A. Chapin  
Windridge Farm  
6820 Wagon Ford Road  
Chatham, IL 62629

HENRY D. SMITH II  
624 FORT HILL ROAD  
SCARSDALE, NEW YORK 10583  
TEL (914) 723-8743  
FAX (914) 723-7495

While I don't understand how they can carve jade, the ivory carving is most amazing to me for its intricacy. An example of pure carving technique is the ivory ball about the size of a tennis ball carved in such a way that there are 14 lace-delicate ivory balls each one within the larger. The merchants say that the art is just not practiced to this extent anymore, and never will be again.

Must get to bed now so I can get up early and start some Nips to Nippon.

With love,

Chick

---

Tientsin, China  
16 Nov 1945

Dear Pop,

First we will take up the annals of the stop-watch, and then other comments on Chapin Letter notes. Our bn. had 3 watches, 2 issue and mine (Alva Wilson's). One of the issue watches was a double handed one and very delicate. I kept this in the Fire-direction-center at all times for receiving time checks by phone and for coordinating "time on target" fires. The other was in the hands of the "flash-base" (target triangulation) team for measuring flash to bang time interval of Jap guns (can be solved for distance). Mine I reserved as a spare. During most of our time in support of the Army (7th Div) the Jap artillery was active nightly and in great numbers. The flash base reported data for gun plots every few minutes beginning at dusk and running until 9 or 10. At great distances this business is accurate for deflection but less so for range, and closely grouped plots only warranted counter battery fire. A single time plot could verify a single inter-section plot, as it's accuracy is not proportional to distance - so --

The FDC was alongside a nice hillcrest from which we could see most of the flashes; an instrument was set up there, oriented on Mag. N. and manned by FDC men not on "watch" but carrying my watch (careful now). With this set-up we obtained a lot of verifying data to speed up our counter-battery work. If the time interval was less than about 30 seconds, we could reach it with our guns. If it was more we had to call on some big stuff. In fact Gen. Stuart thought we were doing too much of the shooting ourselves.

This was the situation the night two guns threw us 70 some shells. We could see the two flashes, we waited 27 seconds for the bang, then we dove for a ditch while they whistled in. We just had time to guess whether they would land in front of the hill or behind it before they did. Watches were very important that night.

My two handed watch went bad later, and I used mine for "T. O. T. 's". I think I explained this one. Two or more battalions (12 guns each) load and lay on a target. I subtract the times of flight of our three batteries from 60 and make a mark of that figure on the face of the watch crystal, using wax pencil. Then when Bill Oliver called to say "Time on target, 60 seconds from mark, MARK", I checked the watch, alerted the 3 computers (telephones to gun batteries) and signaled each to say "fire" as the second hand swept past the tick mark for his particular battery. All shells hit at once. TOT's utilizing less than 6 Bns. were rare, 12 were common. 33 Bn's were fired once as a TOT but at several different targets. 11th Marines 22 Bn. TOT on Mahabe town is believed to have been the largest mass of fire in the Pacific war. 264 guns, half 105's, 1/3 155's and the rest 75's and 8 inc. Shells varied from 15 lbs to 200. No one fired simultaneously but the shells all lit together. This sort of dish could be cooked up and served in 7 or 8 minutes, which is a marvel of communications, technique, inter-service coordinations and whatnot.



You may thank Alva Wilson for the watch.

I remember meeting a flyer friend of Unk's once who was ferrying W. C. Bullitt to the coast for his first trip to France. That was the present Gen. White, was it not? Anyway, I back his thesis. I'm definitely for a consolidation of the War and Navy Departments though there may be pitfalls in a hastily devised arrangement. I'm for a separate Air Force, too. Different uniforms, training and policy are necessary, but the overall planning and supply - well, this line could fill several more pages.

Has Sammy ever cleared up your misconception of the port-side slop chutes? The term used for the Quantico cafeteria was derived from the garbage slides port and starboard of a ship's galley. A messcook (navy) equals KP, (Army) equals messman (marine). It's punishment in the army, I'm told - Marine pvt's and pfc's do one month's mess duty each year. I presume the Navy has a similar scheme.

1st Marine Division will be flattered by the plug in Life, though I can guarantee we're not quite the happy family our sailor depicts. There are plenty of gripes, but our situation is better than most. Mud and coral tend to obliterate rank differences.

.....

With love,

Chick

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Tientsin, China  
21 Nov, 1945

Dear Mother & Dad,

Tomorrow is my morning for a stint at the inspection center for Jap repatriates - prisoners of war, to be exact. I get up at 5, and believe me, the pile-lined storm coat and parka are mighty comfortable at that hour. It hasn't been freezing yet, but this morning's wind was enough to buffet a jeep around. We have things systematized now so that we can inspect and entrain 3000 POWs in 3 hours. Another 3 hours and they're aboard ship.

I've been looking at some jade, and I'm convinced I must know what you want before I buy. I saw a small carved piece about so big - could have been used for I don't know what, but very beautiful and \$50. Comparable sized pieces uncut and smooth set in rings, earrings, etc. run from \$15 to out of sight. Odd shaped carved pieces suitable for pins run 10 or 20. This same price will purchase a 6 inch figurine in white jade. I haven't seen any green jade figures, but some white ones have green veins in them. The whole situation is complicated by Peking glass which is a helluva good imitation of green jade.

This evening Ken, Garry and I were in town and we met Jerry Ryan who is going to be picked up for inciting a riot, or something, one of these days. Jerry is a clown at heart and brings out the clown in others - especially the good natured Chinese - they laugh at anything. He has a ready store of Chinese phrases and, for example, in a crowded street or store he'll pick out a Chinese with a fresh haircut (head shaved), point to his smooth head and shout "Mao toe-fa, Mao toe-fa" (No hair, no hair). All within

hearing take up the cry and point, laughing almost as much as the man who has thus become the center of attention. I don't know if they enjoy hearing an American speak Chinese, or what, but it disrupts regular business.

This evening however, we were standing on the Astor corner waiting for the jeep, and Jerry had engaged the traffic cop in the center of the intersection in conversation. First thing we knew he'd persuaded the cop (by example) to do a soft shoe dance. There was the cop, with considerable talent, jiggling away in the middle of the street paying no attention to cars and rickshas whizzing past from 4 directions, while we shouted "Ding hao" (very good) from the corner!

No turkeys have come yet, so Col. Brown says we'll have a Republican Thanksgiving.

With love,

Chick

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Tientsin, China  
18 Nov 1945

Dear Mother & Dad,

Everyone is getting letters these days saying "you may not get this before leaving China" etc. based on an announcement of Gen. Wedenmeyer and information from "unofficial Tientsin sources". Gen W. has reversed his field since then, and lack of censorship is no excuse for printing scuttlebutt which the average Marine makes up for his own amusement in passing it off on gullible mates.

The repatriation of Japanese is on a fairly regular basis, and since I've been supervising some of the Marine guards and inspectors, I feel I'm accomplishing a little again. What I've experienced in working with the Japs has confirmed all I heard of their organizations, efficiency, and regimentation. Soldiers are blindly obedient, most of the officers are smart and responsible, all are cussedly polite with continuous saluting, bowing, scraping, and hissing (it's an H) - literally. Docile and submissive. This forms a tremendous Army, well equipped, which was never opposed and never fired a shot in real anger. It could be plain oriental philosophical acceptance, it could be playing the game smart, I'm sure I don't know. But I can see how easy it might be for these people to persuade an occupying force how nice they are, how tractable and how ready for self-government. The Prussian-like "born to lead" and "born to follow" ideas can't be stamped out by demobilization of armys and industries. And if the common men are going to govern soon, the princes and politicians becoming commoners by decree will be all too handy.

Sidestepping politics, another observation is that there are plenty of them who conform in appearance to the buck-toothed and bespectacled Jap of the cartoons and movies. This I find at once amusing and sobering.

"Ho" does mean river, but the numbers of the vessels in the Hai Ho mean nothing unless accompanied by the type designation (i. e. APA, AP, DE, LSM, LST, LCT, LCI, ad infinitum). Very likely, they were the same as the one I came up the Hai Ho on.

Yesterday afternoon I journeyed out to race barn #50 again and had another of those amazing interchanges of ideas with absolutely no mutual understanding of the words used. I was shortly mounted on a 7 yr. old jumper and was accompanied by the No. 1 boy's small son (est. 5 yrs) mounted on a Mongolian pony (a smooth mouth). I had no whip or spur, and my suspicious jumper would shy back at various objects on the path. The boy played



judas goat at such times, trotting ahead so my big thoroughbred would walk decilely past the object of his fears. A novel experience!

With love,

Chick

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Tientsin, China  
25 Nov 1945

Dear Mother & Dad,

.....Yesterday I mailed two packages for your care and approval. One is an embroidered tablecloth set I thought might be appropriate as a wedding present to Rosemary and Jr. Or must it be silver? Anyway I leave the decision to you - and the work; for if it is ok, it needs to be cleaned and ironed, and packaged more appropriately than my scraps of cardboard and fire-control "grid sheets". I'll write a note if the decision is favorable.

The other is a large lace (cotton, I think) tablecloth like the one we use on state occasions to let gravy get directly to the tabletop without leaving ugly stains. When buying this I thought "Betty would like one" and "you can't so wrong for \$8." Can you? Or should I have gotten a dozen - or the one they had at a dozen times the price. Wish you were here. One shop had lots of nested tables in teak and walnut. Much of their furniture is extravagantly inlaid with mother-of-pearl, and sometimes useless ivory, jade and agate. Much of my shopping is in the spirit of a museum tour.

The three letters which arrived today were Ann<sup>o</sup>'s of the 11th, Dad 's of the 13th, and John's of the 7th. I haven't checked on the map but I can see no correlation between time elapsed and either distance traveled or length of "great circle" routes which would have made them arrive in the same sack - but they did - Even with the delays we've been having, the mail service has been wonderful. Better some places than it ever was before or will be again. I'll bet future Lever Bros. representatives on Pavuvu and Banika will get mail by packet boat for years to come.

Right now I'm listening to a program on XBOR "The voice of the 1st Marine Division, Tientsin." This is a recording of a Philharmonic program. We used to pick up Armed Forces Radio in Japan or Manila or the BBC in Australia by short wave, but since this station opened up a few days ago, we get news and music on standard broadcast without interference. Regular stateside programs are recorded, by the way, without ads.

Sam is pursuing John's policy of changing the numbers in his address as often as possible. Another stripe on his cuff, too. I suppose you knew he was a "first class" fireman all along!

The treatise on the Fair is a classic - has it been presented to Gov. Green for advertising purposes?

With love,

Chick

Tientsin, China  
29 Nov 1945

Dear Mother & Dad,

Today was our turkey day, proclamation or no. We had all the trimmings with one exception of cranberries. This was excusable because the meal featured such things as butter which are not necessarily thought of as part of Thanksgiving meals, but no less scarce than pumpkin and mince pie, dressing, etc. Cranberry color, moreover, was supplied by the proper tint of jello.

Butter, by the way, is almost non-existent in China. Some restaurants serve a tasteless margarine, but most have neither butter nor substitutes. In Marine mess halls the staple spread for bread is "preserved Butter", a Kraft product, faintly cheese-like in texture and taste. It is appetizing, but must be taken for what it is, as the Postum ads say "not a substitute - a product in its own right". This stuff has only been out about a year, and may have a small Post-war market, unlike poor Geo. Hormel's Spam, which have been killed by service distaste for a product similar to it in appearance.

A few more officers in the 70-85 point bracket are going home shortly. Bill Oliver will be among them, and he anticipates seeing Anno and Ed, since he is going to visit Cal Tech before going East. His two "12 pointers" at home place him well ahead of me in spite of our similar service. Though people here with 50-60 points are eligible for discharge, it does them no good until they are relieved and transported - my estimate is a couple of months for the process. Long before the people in my point bracket go home, I will know whether I go with them or stay here a while longer to allow my exchequer to continue to swell at a rate which will be difficult of approach during a considerable period of my legal career.

I have just finished reading the "Autobiography of Ephram Tutt" which I found as amusing as the Saturday Evening Post stories, but more interesting and instructive because Train seized the opportunity to point up the distinction between practice and law and to grind several personal axes on the subjects of graft, corporate interests, rules of evidence and the like.

Wedemeyer's statement about a 6-8 months job for Marines in China is nearer to the truth, as I see it, than any other announcements. As for the picture of "strife-torn" China the news would paint, it may be, but I haven't seen any of it and don't expect to.

With love,

Chick

---

Tientsin, China  
27 Nov 1945

Dear Anno, Ed, George and Jean:

Here is good news - Bill is almost certain to visit you, perhaps he has written you already. He has had a high home-going priority - thanks among other things due to his two 12 pointers at home, and is now standing by to leave in the next several days. Before he proceeds from West coast to East, he must obtain his uniform which he sent home, and he wants to see about some personal business <sup>at</sup> Cal Tech and he would like very much to see all of you again. Knowing how you feel, I've urged him to have his

uniform sent to 1306 Sonoma and to call there as soon as he is at liberty.

While Bill may have a better guess, I would put his time of arrival at Seattle, San Francisco, Los Angeles, or San Diego somewhere between the 15th and the 30th of December, allowing for anything from a non-stop trip to a packet boat circuit of all intermediate islands.

If this plan works out, Bill can tell you what we have seen of China. When I was talking to him this afternoon, one Russian and two Chinese gentlemen came in, each to ask him to a farewell dinner!

Time and weather conspired against the Presidential Thanksgiving date in China - turkeys had arrived but were not yet unloaded last Thursday. The day after tomorrow we will have a "Republican" Thanksgiving! Very convenient to have an alternate holiday date!

With love,

Chick

---

Tientsin, China  
2 Dec 1945

Dear Mother & Dad:

The past two days have brought six of your letters dated from the 10th to the 21st. These have brought me almost up to date on your changing hopes and fears with each day's newspaper accounts and promises. For the best analysis of the China situation, look at William Gray's article in the 19 Nov Time.

If Sam has become a salty sailor, he'll resent your calling his ship a "boat". Careful!

My thanks to Dr. Deuel for what may be money-saving advice, though I can certainly afford to get you some green jade earrings or something of that nature if you'd like it in that form. On the other hand, it will be quite easy to obtain a carved figure in white or pink as you suggest.

In my next letter to Betty I'm going to tell her that my Ma is practicing up on apple pies and that she'd better hustle now that the competition is getting keen.

J. Wood is suffering the pains and penalties of being an aide. I'll stay here a while longer if by doing so I'll know that when I go home I'll stay there a while.

This batch of letters has been a regular mine of enclosures - Grandmother's house, the horsey-room cartoon, the Chicago show clippings, and the gay champagne party at a place which Navy abbreviations would call SOFOFAR. Aunt Mary's "short title" would be COMSOFOFAR. How did I get into this! I've severed relations with the office and administrative end of repatriation, where I occasionally read Navy dispatches concerning the shipping involved. Perhaps I shouldn't have mentioned it; Dad could write a whole letter on the supposition that businessmen would abbreviate their correspondence by shortening all long winded names and titles to a block of syllables (one from each word).

Dad's dissertation on keeping one's mouth shut put me into a mood for mirth so that I misread one word toward the end and went into gales of silent laughter over a sly, dead pan crack. Luckily before quoting this example of parental joshing, I re-read the

passage to savour it more completely, and discovered a "dis" which changed the whole into a sober statement of fact. The quotation "I discussed these ideas with Mother and she (dis)agreed with me on practically every point, so I am already half convinced (I'm wrong)". And while I'm on the passages of the church discussion, I'm wondering if the new organist plays at double-time or at a soberer quick-time!

My current connection with repatriation matters consists of being in charge of Marine inspectors on alternate days. While on this detail yesterday another officer and I had a distinctly social conversation with a Chinese interpreter and through the interpreter with a Chinese Major. The major was apparently desirous of flattering both of us, so he quoted just a Chinese proverb that a tall man is a sincere man, and then directed at my shorter colleague that proverb that the short man is a man with a brain. Jokingly I tried to get the interpreter to admit the inference that a tall man is an idiot and a short one is unscrupulous, but to no avail. Apparently Chinese proverbs were intended to be served up singly - expressly designed as newspaper fill-ins.

If all goes well, Garry and I will attend a Chinese movie this afternoon in company with his friend Mr. Yen. This is to be a genuine "Made in China" product from Shanghai, which is China's Hollywood, as well as its New York.

With love,

Chick

---

Tientsin, China  
5 December 1945

Dear Mother & Dad:

We were a little late in getting to the movie last Sunday. The audience had already stood while Sun-Yatsen's and the G-mos' pictures were splashed on the screen, and the picture was starting. Mr. Yen, or "Dennis" as he prefers to be called, met us under the marquee and escorted us to the balcony, which contains the preferred seats in a Chinese theatre. This was the "China Theatre", a structure about the size of the Orpheum, but not nearly as plush. For all I could tell it was unheated. The backs of all the seats were fitted with brackets for tea glasses - which could be procured from roving waiters on the mezzanine lobby.

The film as it turned out was made in Chunking by a Chinese equivalent of our OWI, designed to rally the people behind the government's war effort. Dennis sat between Garry and myself and explained many of the longer spoken parts, but we had little difficulty in following the drift of things - thanks to the wealth of facial expressions, gesticulation and two-fisted actions. Thinking back on the several hundred movies I've seen in the past few years, I hesitate to criticize this one for theatrical bravado and caricature of the enemy. The outline of the picture was a narration of 3 separate stories of how war's disasters came to 3 young men in different stations in life and a fourth story of the subsequent guerrilla activities against the enemy.

Dennis is a native of Peking and a graduate of the university there. He's about 29, married, and is a Christian. He's been a merchant, but he and his wife want to go to the States to take graduate work at some university. He speaks English rather well and he's as curious about America as we are about China. When we parted Sunday we had to promise to visit his home on Tuesday for dinner. We welcomed this opportunity of course, Garry had been there many times, for that matter.

and is Chinese

Mrs. Yen, who speaks no English/in dress and manner, in contrast to Dennis, who

affects European clothes exclusively. During most of our visit she was busy in the kitchen and entered the dining room only to keep hot tea in front of us, and later on to bring dish after dish of Chinese delicacies. Toward the end of the meal she sat down and ate with us, and inquired through Dennis which of the dishes we had particularly liked. Apparently she had treated Garry at one time or another to nearly everything she knew how to cook so they will find out what he likes best.

To begin at the start, we commenced drinking tea and shelling and eating peanuts at about 3. At about 4:30 we were served a small bowl of gruel made of brown wheat flour mixed to a paste with butter and water and flavored with caraway seeds. This we ate with small silver spoons; with a little salt it would have tasted like Farina. About 5 o'clock we moved to the dining table which was set with a china serving spoon (only for transferring soup or rice from tureen to bowl), chopsticks, and saucer at each place. The first two plates on the table contained very crisp salted peanuts and some kind of crisp roasted beans. (Everything except rice and soup is mixed from the community plate with chopsticks and popped directly into the mouth - especially greasy bits may be allowed to drip into the saucer.)

Shortly the shrimp were served. There was small shrimp which had been mixed in a flour and egg paste, gobs of which were then dropped in pot fat resulting in oyster sized fritter. I ate a good half dozen of these. Before these were gone, however, the beef arrived, succulent bite sized bits of lean and fat floating in a bowl of juice and oil. I forgot; there was a plate of cold sliced pork served with the nuts and beans. Now the rice came in individual bowls with a big bowlful for resupply. And almost simultaneously a large fish, covered with a slick brown sauce. The fish stuff was alright, but I didn't particularly care for the sauce. It was served by the way, complete head to tail. Next a plateful of ground meat croquettes wrapped in a thin omelet-like egg covering. Last the soup which was creamed cabbage and very good. This is ladled into the rice bowl and slurped up as noisily as possible as though from a cup. Pieces of cabbage were picked out with chopsticks. So it went from nuts to soup. We finished about 6:30.

It is an unusual Chinese who does not take wine or brandy with his meal, but Dennis says he must be careful of his stomach, so Mrs. Yen and Garry were the only ones to have wine glasses and to say "gambei!", which is Chinese for "bottoms up".

Though the variety of fare may have been due to company's presence, the meal is a good sample of middle class Chinese daily food, though rice is served less often than noodles in North China. The exotic Chinese foods exemplified by bird's nest soup, 1000 year old eggs, and shark's fins are reserved for state occasions, and I'm not at all eager to sample some.

And I didn't drop a bit of food on the table.

With love,

Chick

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Tientsin, China  
9 December 1945

Dear Mother & Dad:

Many mail bags brought in the first installment of holiday packages. The departure of a number of officers in the past few months, all donating their 2nd class receipts to the common good, made a fair haul for those still present. One package was addressed to myself, and I debated whether to open or save. My decision was to peek to see if it looked Christmasy". Turned out to be a half a dozen writing tablets and a



Harpers. I have enough stock in hand to compete with Hammermill Bond for the Far Eastern market. Many other packages contained items of interest - mosquito ointment, for one. It snowed that night.

Three inches of good white precipitation! We'd had a quarter inch sample a couple of weeks before. The irrigation canals have been icing up all the time, but are still not thick enough for skating. This snow, like all the snows in the past, will be gone in a few days, but the ice will continue to thicken until it meets the requirements of the 40-50 day skating season.

All this has put me into the spirit of the thing anyway. I bought some Xmas cards and pooled my stamps and addresses. I greeted people until I ran out of stamps, and I may get some more stamps tomorrow and greet a few people more until the cards run out, and that will be the end of it. A white Christmas is a definite possibility and we're keeping an eye out for a tree.

Oh yes, we'd ordered diving masks from two sources while on Okinawa - just to be sure; and our second set arrived in this week's package delivery. Maybe Unk can use one to aid propellor-seaweed disentanglement.

Enclosed a clipping from a recent paper - figures a little old on the byline date so I've added the latest. I well remember that 4000 plus shipment - it took us from 0700 to 1300 to inspect them and their baggage and another hour to get the last of them aboard the train. Embarking them at Tangku is someone else's worry. My stint comes every other morning, alternating with Maj. Haynes who joined us several weeks ago.

It is rather cold and dusty at the inspection center with people milling around and Jap soldiers carrying baggage around. And practically bedlam with shouts in 3 languages, children crying, etc. There are lighter moments, however, as when I tried out a newly learned Chinese phrase on one of the police officers and he shook his head signifying he did not speak English! I had to get an interpreter to explain what I'd been trying to say.

A Chinese (or at least Tientsin) police officer dresses like a compromise between a British Admiral and German SS officer with high collared coat, gold trimmed shoulder boards, Sam Browne belt with short sword attached, breeches, boots and spurs. He has a gold V and stars on his cuff and embroidered cap emblem. Some wear capes with fur collars. The policemen, on the other hand, are only slightly more numerous and are distinctly ungaudy, most of them being shod with tennis shoes and wrap leggings.

Jr's escapades are amazing, but his informants in Peking are poor. Had he landed at Tientsin airport, the guards there from B Battery, 1st Ba, 11th could have given him a phone direct to the Arsenal, and I could have been there in ten minutes.

With love,

Chick

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Americans.

72000

# 48,000 Japanese Sent To Japan Via Tientsin, Tangku

Tientsin, Dec. 6. — (USIS) — A total of 48,000 Japanese in North China have been repatriated through Tientsin and Tangku, Marine Corps First Division repatriation officers said here. The figure of nearly 50,000 includes those sent to the Japanese homeland up to the end of November.

The total moved from the processing center at the former Japanese North China Field Warehouse to Tangku by railway and from Tangku in U. S. Navy LST's and Japanese cargo transports includes 38,000 Japanese soldiers and 10,000 civilians.

A further shipment of about 4,000 Japanese civilians was made over the weekend. The civilians sailed from Tangku aboard the Eiho Maru.

Japanese remaining in the Tientsin area of the First Marine Division total approximately 384,000, according to best available figures. These include about 181,000 Japanese soldiers and about 253,000 civilians.

## Tidal Wave Sweeps To Death 4,000 At Karachi

Bombay, Dec. 5. — (USIS) — 4,000 persons were killed and 40,000 made homeless by a tidal wave which swept 100 miles of the sea coast west of Karachi, and press dispatches reported today.

J. G. S. r. e. R. t. sc. se. je. C. te. S. w. G. of. tre. tw. wa. Au. Br. B. An. a. bi. toke. char. Iraq. King. Indi. and. Leg.

Tientsin, China  
11 Dec 1945

Dear Mother & Dad:

Your letters up through the 28th of last month are here now; this is as closely caught up as we've been since coming to China. The next letter I anticipate will be full of news of Carleton, Blackburn and Carlinville.

Was pleased to note that the platter was used on Thanksgiving in compliance with "tradition." At least we know that this is the last time the bow to tradition will be merely perfunctory.

Anticipating a thickening of the ice, Garry and I strolled through the little village just opposite the Arsenal Gate. The residents there speak Chinese and French. Only a few speak English; so our queries for ice skates in the various shops was accompanied by considerable gesticulation and simulated gliding across the floor. We put the idea across but the results were negative until we ran into a tailor who spoke English and informed us that the shoemaker had them. He took us to the shop, interpreted for us; and the shoemaker brought out some rusty tubular jobs without shoes. He said he could get our size next day for \$2.50 US. We closed the deal and left - then thinking of the tailor's *connaissance*, we asked him if he knew of a prospective No. 1 boy, as ours had just quit and we were looking for another. He said he would try to find one and send him for a trial.

Next morning one Liu Wan Pin, aged about 18, introduced himself. He speaks 3 Chinese dialects, and Japanese (he says he had to keep from starving) fluently, and a little English and French, had been a houseboy before. We agreed to hire him - \$1.25 per week. Before Garry and I could go to the village to get skates, Liu delivered them - bright shiny new ones with screws for attachment - and collected the \$5. If I knew how much Liu paid the shoemaker for the skates and how much he paid the tailor for the job, and how much the shoemaker paid the tailor for making the sale, I could start a book on Chinese Economics.

And still the ice is thin.

With love,

Chick

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Tientsin, China  
16 Dec 1945

Dear Mother & Dad:

My skates are now ready, screwed to a pair of regulation shoes; but the ice is not. Last weeks snow is gone, not so much from melting as evaporation. The weather will have to be more punctual if we are to have this Christmas white. I would like to skate on China's canals this year as an antithesis to last year's plunge off the black sand beach of Guadalcanal.

Gene McDonald and I have been waiting to hear from Chuck Aldrich and are glad to know that he has the situation in hand. Chuck can give you much more recent news of our activities than Dick did. "Mac" himself is leaving in a few days with a couple of others. After that, Walt Hochuli and myself will be strictly the "salt" of the battalion. Both of us were in the "10th Draft" but he insists that the fact that his ship left San Diego 3 days prior to mine that he is immeasurably more salty than I!

With Mac's departure I'll take over the job of adjutant and get in the whirl of

administrative details which I have been thankful to leave for others up until now.

The entire Marples family behaved just like Dad in the receiving of presents prior to Christmas. They couldn't wait. And after opening they composed four masterful letters en masse and thanked me in a way that has underscored for me the old adage about which end of the gift is the more blessed.

The fact that they received their package indicates that you should receive yours soon if you have not already. My anxiety as to their safe arrival is caused mainly by the fragility of a couple of items. This is particularly true of the china I sent to Mrs. Wood. Thinking of it now, I realize that if the stuff breaks in the mail she'll feel as badly about it that I'll wish I hadn't sent it, whereas I mailed it with the thought that it'd be small loss if broken, and all to the good if it didn't break.

The Chapin letter's editorial views on the China situation seem to be swayed by personal interest. A recent (for us) Reader's Digest carried a speech of Dr. Judd (Carleton's friend) in Congress, and from the little I've seen and heard and what I've read, I agree with his sentiments. No doubt this State Department needs to clear up in its own mind what its trying to do, and then explain to the public. I, too, am glad to see George C. Marshall on the way out here, but I don't anticipate that his presence will change the length of the Marine's mission here, and I'm almost certain it has no bearing on how long my personal stay will be.

Enclosed a propaganda match cover. George Marples wrote down the characters on a carving I sent and sent them back for translation. I do not know what the caption on this cover says!

With love,

Chick

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Tientsin, China  
19 Dec 1945

Dear Mother & Dad:

You should be proud of me, my behavior this far has been more responsible than that of my relatives elsewhere, - 3 packages received and not opened. Two are from home and one from Betty. Last year I opened them as they came because things spoiled and rotted quickly in the Pavuvu climate; but things will be more "Christmasy" here and its worth waiting. Garry has moved into the room with me to take the place left vacant by Tom Moran several weeks ago, and we'll be on the lookout for a tree to set up in our "sitting room" (our two join by a French doorway, the doors of which are missing).

Gene McDonald, Ken Foye, and Ed Taylor leave Friday. Mac is from Pittsburgh, plans to meet his wife in Chicago, and hopes to spend a few days with the Aldrichs either there or in Springfield. I've told him that, in the latter case, a visit to 1241 is imperative!

We were glad to hear that Chuch Aldrich was finally home. I'm particularly glad you will have (have had) a chance to visit with him, as I know he can alleviate whatever fears you may have had about our presence here, and he can, of course, give you a first hand account of how we're living.

Delighted doubly to know that Betty's vases arrived safely and that you approve. The vases are not nearly so light, thin, and translucent as many, but of course the design caught my eye. The Emperor Cheng Chung, supposedly represented, was the last of the Manchu Dynasty. He ended it by the expedient of hanging himself on the

Summit of "Coal Hill", a high artificial hill on the palace grounds reported to contain a supply of coal sufficient to carry the Imperial City through a long seige. If we keep the coal trains running, no one will be forced to explore the bowels of Coal Hill.

I did mean for you to open the package - my warning to hold them there was made in the interest of keeping them whole.

We've had a drop in temperature and kids were skating this morning, but Gary examined the ice and pronounced it unsafe as yet. Perhaps tomorrow.

With love,

Chick

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Tientsin, China  
23 December 1945

Dear Mother & Dad:

Christmas efforts are evidenced everywhere here, efforts put forth with great enthusiasm, considering that most of the people involved last August envisaged themselves spending this holiday season at home. Special Services provide trees and decorations for mess hall displays, but lots of men and officers have procured trees and decorations for their own quarters. Most of these are slim potted firs about 4 feet high. Dennis Yen obtained one of this type for Garry and me, and it looks as though it came from the foyer of some hotel. We are now negotiating for a string of lights, which can be bought at peculiarly un-Christian prices.

Last night we were asked over to the adjacent house to view the completed tree there. As we walked in we saw Commissioned Warrant Officer Jim Peel, whose expansive bulk would not be ill-appearing in a bar apron, tearing surgical cotton into tiny bits which he allowed to drop one by one into the branches of the tree, attempting thus a natural snowed-on effect. I was reminded at once of Dad's famed tinsel technique.

All presents I have given this year have been Chinese made. Friday evening when we were visiting at the Yen's, Dennis showed us what his father, who is a pharmacist in Peking, had sent to be given to Mrs. Yen for Christmas. The present - a burnished brass "Pompeian" powder box, made in Cleveland, Ohio, naturally. I believe Wilkie called it one world.

This was the morning for test of ice and skates and long forgotten muscles. The ice proved very strong, the skates serviceable but needing further sharpening, and the muscles prudently concluded the test after about half an hour. To be continued at the earliest opportunity, likely tomorrow.

I visited some officers quartered in town in a home built by some Britishers of moderate means. Much of the original furniture is still there. Delicate looking carved teak chairs are as heavy as old fashioned iron lawn furniture. An interesting feature was the dining room floor of cement liberally surfaced with mother-of-pearl.

With love,

Chick

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Tientsin, China  
25 December 1945

Dear Mother & Dad:

Garry and I received assistance from the other occupants of our house - the doctor and four new 2nd Lts. - and then we realized that they hadn't been overseas long enough to have Christmas packages catching up with them. So we went to the post office and signed for a couple of insured packages addressed to a former roommate, Tom Moran. We haven't figured yet if the packages were intended for Xmas as about half the contents proved to be mosquito lotions and such. Whatever the intent, the remainder, consisting of shaving lotions, powders, and soap, was admirably adapted for re-wrapping as presents.

After the boys were notified to attend the distribution ceremonies, they rushed into the village and returned arms laden with wrapped trinkets. By this morning, the pile of gifts was bigger than our little tree. To cap it all, our houseboy arrived this morning with two potted plants and a large chocolate cake.

Just before we commenced the distribution, three of the men dropped in to wish us well, they work as carpenters in garrison but one is in my operations section and two were in Garry's communication section in an operation. Garry had asked one of them to drop in for a drink during the day. Garry armed each with a drink and we asked them to join the party, estimating that we still had enough packages for 2 gifts apiece or better.

Doc Dotter held things up while he took a time exposure of our tree; then we went to work, strewing wrapping paper about faster than No. 1 Boy Liu Wan Pin could pick it up. Most of the edibles were sampled as opened, and the cake was demolished. It was all over in an hour, and the crowd dispersed with faith in Santa renewed.

An hour later we sat down to a turkey dinner - and it had cranberries this time!

One package I had suspected to be a fruitcake from home turned out to be a delicious can of fudge from Aunt Mary. The label was battered and all that remained of the return address was "From M. A.". The kodachromes so long overdue made this appearance at the unwrappings. Betty's box included fruitcake, nuts, pecan rolls, a Santa candle and two red paper bells, mates of the ones displayed in Belgium this date.

In terms of time zones, our little celebration scooped the world - by half a day.

With love,

Chick

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Tientsin, China  
2 Jan. 1946

Dear Mother & Dad:

Enclosed a sensational picture revealing the stage setting for a Christmas party in the French Arsenal. You can see we had real lights on the tree. We covered the window behind the tree with cardboard so the picture could be taken... by Dr. Dotter. Note the wallpaper design - finger smears in the grey calcimime wash. Thus the French decorated it. Aunt Mary's fudge appears midway between Gary's noggin and mine. The



big box from Betty appears on the extreme left. The candle didn't fall over. The empty supply box decoratively topped with a hammer was the combat repository for drafting equipment, paper, stop watches - and a few D-rations. The heavy woolen tablecloth is furnished by courtesy of the Japanese Imperial Army. The Doc has promised us some reprints, but you are getting the original because I had the presence of mind to say "heads" at the right time.

Today we found some sure enough hockey sticks, and five of us who have bought skates went over to the canal for a game. We had goals about 100 ft. apart and played two against two with the fifth man as relief for either team. Even with the short time required to score, we found 15 minutes of vigorous play enough. I'm sure it was enough now that the muscles have had a chance to complain.

Ate breakfast this morning listening to the broadcast of the Rose Bowl football game. I suppose a lot of the boys rushed to their radios at 6 o'clock to hear it all. Anyway, we can tell about hearing the New Year's Day game on the 2nd.

Yesterday, all China changed to right hand driving - I haven't been in town since the change, but I hear it all went smoothly. This is a tremendous change when you consider rickshas and people walking in the streets, as well as motor vehicles. And I was getting well accustomed to keeping left!

With love,

Chick

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Tientsin, China  
30 December 1945

Dear Mother & Dad:

With letters from you both of 8, 10, 11 and 17 Dec., I have a lot of material for answer and comment. John's masterpiece as the Royal Stables has come and I must re-read it a few time before sending it on to Sam.

Chuck Aldrich predicted his wife's desire to possess all the gifts! Most of my purchases will have been given out before I get home, and considerable indecision as to who gets what avoided.

First I heard of the Wood's hiding their package and then of you hiding yours. Then it came out of hiding. Now how about the Woods! I nearly choked laughing at Dad's account of the opening of Betty's package, and then yours -.

I wrote to Michigan also, and have just received the application blank. I gather that Dad has already sent one in, so I will hold this one pending further word or perhaps a change in possible entrance date.

It's amazing how one stays on that social list - trust that you sent our regrets by phone or card.

Though avoiding the somewhat alcoholic whirl of holiday social occasions in Tientsin, I attended the regular Wed. night dance at the Country Club this past week. Gary and I took Mr. and Mrs. Yen there for dinner and the dance as slight repayment for their several kindnesses to us. Mrs. Yen is an accomplished and enthusiastic dancer though hardly the best partner for me, being only about 5 ft. tall. For connoisseurs of dance floors, the one at the club is interesting, being sprung or crowned for leg and foot ease. It's about the size of a gymnasium floor or a little larger.

Marshall Field's shopping service couldn't have done it quicker - Unk's package will be in the mail tomorrow. I'll send it parcel post so it may not arrive as quickly as those Xmas packages. Gary went with me yesterday and we toured the bazaar and many of the shops on Victoria Road. We had a great time choosing things and haggling over prices. There's nothing very valuable or expensive in the box, but there's \$50 invested in fairly unusual (or rather typically Chinese) junk. I enclosed a list of prices I paid, not as a scale of comparative value (the merchants' susceptibility to my hoss-trading techniques varies from shop to shop) but as a guide in case there are any items Unk doesn't care for. If there're any items he doesn't like, I'll take them and he can pay Dad the balance. I won't say what's in it, so he can have the pleasure of anticipation at least.

Recalling the radio news of the West Coast join up, I don't expect to hear of Sam's having had a really enjoyable furlough unless he missed Xmas day itself.

I can echo John's statement about studiously avoiding the collection of souvenirs - and I have also recently acquired one. Confiscated rifles, carbines, swords, pistols, and miscellaneous arms were distributed to about 2/3 of the Marines here. Why turn down the opportunity - so I passed up swords, et al, and picked up a 16 double barrel shotgun, German made, hand engraved, and having flintlock hammers. It's a beautiful piece and should be a wonderful sporting weapon. If I tell Dad to open the gun box when it comes to make sure the gun is still in good condition, I hope it doesn't spoil his fun.

With love,

Chick

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Tientsin, China  
6 January 1946

Dear Mother & Dad:

Yesterday's mail brought your letters of 15, 20, 22, 25 and 26 Dec. and 2 from Sam. Christmas accounts from John and from Betty haven't come in yet.

I am relieved that all the porcelainware arrived unbroken, I'm delighted that you like the yellow vases, and I don't care when they were opened! The dealer estimated these vases to be perhaps 80 years old and without historical significance. They by no means represent the finest workmanship, but I thought the coloring and design most pleasing. For Mrs. Wood's two cups, I have no story, but they are as delicate a pair as I've seen anywhere.

I suspect the ancients displayed vases like these in their boxes; I know the dealers do now; and I'll inquire as to present custom. My personal feeling is that Chinese who display vases in boxes are like Americans who have the cellophane wrapping on lampshades. Chinese boxes are interesting though - anything worth more than a dollar rates a fitted box, it seems.

I knew the cap was too small for Unk - but this was the only size I found. I'll look for a bigger one - maybe I can find an ancient mandarin cap with tassel.

Anno hit the jackpot on visitors. Sam says he moved out just in time to turn the bed over to Bill. The latter, by the way, is already an ardent California convert. Wouldn't be at all surprised to see the Olivers moving to So. Cal. within the year. Did I tell you Bill was (is) looking for a math instructorship?

In reference to dinner with the Yens, one tries to eat slowly so he'll have room for the final dish (soup when it comes) but each item is served in large enough quantity

to constitute a meal in itself. Mrs. Yen is her own cook, and Dennis jokes that he married her because she is such a good cook. I know his statement is half true.

We have another 4 man hockey game scheduled this afternoon. This is a better winter sport than tramping down the kunai grass of Guadalcanal.

With love,

Chick

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Tientsin, China

9 Jan 1946

Dear Mother & Dad:

Grandmother's package of butter cookies came yesterday in good shape. Two packages from you today had less luck, having been in the bottom of a bag in the bottom of a stack on the bottom of a hold in the bottom of a ship. Soaked in diesel oil. None had penetrated any of the cans - not even the tea box full of caramels. The handkerchief and sock can be washed. Big sufferers were the magazines and the book. I've laid the latter out in an unused room hoping the stuff will evaporate so I can peruse it, at least. The fumes are too strong now. Besides that, I had to tear off all the beautiful wrappings without stopping to admire them. Are these Peases or Davee's nuts? They're the best and crispest we have ever received out here. I must admit I pried open the fruitcake with some trepidation - I suspected the contents by shaking and had visions of serving it as a flaming pudding, had the diesel gotten inside. The cake is slated for an early demise.

Our larder is well stocked at present. Everyone who has gone home has received stuff which goes into the common fund. Mrs. Aldrich was a big donator. I recall that Chuck was fairly sure of going home early, but was afraid to raise her hopes, so asked for presents. About five big packages of chow this way! I'm going to have to write them a letter of thanks for the whole gang.

I just finished two phonecalls which will result in the descent of the wolves upon our cake, cookies, cheese, candy and whatnot stocked larder. I will render an opinion upon the cake after the examination.

With love & thanks,

Chick

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Tientsin, China

13 Jan 1946

Dear Mother & Dad:

The Chinese will throw a teaparty, cocktail party, or reception at considerably less than the drop of a hat - so five of us rushed off on half an hour's notice to represent the 4th Bn at a tea given by Maj. Gen Snow Pine Liu of the Chinese National Army. The descriptive portion of Gen. Liu's name, while we're at it, is a literal translation of his given name which, in Chinese, normally follows the family name. Translation of names is unusual; most Chinese who deal with foreigners either select an arbitrary Bob or Tom or let their names stand in English as in Chinese.

The fumbled hat in this case was to honor Capt. Wiant on his departure. Gen. Liu was partly informed - the Capt. was merely going on a 15-day leave to Shanghai to attend some church conferences. The General's other purpose was to record for posterity and his scrap book the faces of those who had actually implemented the policy of removing Japs from North China. Lt. Commander Felt and his repatriation office staff represented division headquarters, Gen. Peck was in Peking. Major Gomez and Haynes, myself, and Lts. Bell and Cabanis represented 4-11, and turned out in our best uniforms too. Gen Liu's staff rounded out the party.

After the picture taking (we were promised copies) we returned to the General's quarters which is a plush former Japanese residence the doorways of which were not built in anticipation of my passage.

We went first to the parlor, where pieces of the wall kept disappearing to admit a blue costumed houseboy with a plate of British made-in-China-cigarettes and matches. The General presented his wife's regrets; she is in a maternity hospital. The baby's English name will be Victor, if a boy, and Victoria, if a girl. The Chinese name? -- undecided.

After a suitably short time, we moved to the dining room and stood around a well laden table. Contents: European type pastry and cookies which are so popular in Tientsin, also Chinese delicacies such as candied haws, a "brittle" made with something like caraway seeds, tiny candied potatoes skewered on a stick, the everpresent peanuts, and crisp doughnut sticks about the size of pretzel sticks.

A servant kept the teacups full and hot, the General made a short speech, two Chinese Colonels forced more food upon the guests and pulled a couple of ancient party tricks for the general amusement. Teas the world over very much alike.

A couple of weeks ago, the General gave a big all afternoon and evening party for the enlisted Marines who are in repatriation work. The LST crews are the only ones who haven't been entertained, though, for all I know, they may be wined and dined when they put in at Tanku. So much for this week's social report.

With love,

Chick

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Tientsin, China  
14 Jan 1946

Dear Anno, Ed, George, Jean, Thumper and Sacha, Jr.:

Many, many thanks to all of you. My indebtedness is multiple - for the big variety package you sent (I just finished "Adam and his Chillun" - it was wonderful; the nuts and dates were gone long ago) and for the overwhelming response you gave for the little bit of China that I sent. It was so much fun shopping for that stuff that I really reaped double pleasure in reading your letters.

Your guest room had a quick initiation, from all I hear. Sam wrote a long letter all about his visit and how he just missed Bill. Just this afternoon, by the way, I had word from Mother that Bill called her from Chicago. I wish, of course, that he could have spared time to stop over for a visit, perhaps he'll be able to do that on the way back to California with his family. (You have thoroughly convinced him, you know, that California is the only place to live.)

I happen to have my uniform with me but I'll need no ulterior motives to make a visit whenever my opportunity comes. When - I don't know. I should have a definite "yes" or "no" within a few weeks.

With love,  
Chick

Tientsin, China  
16 Jan 1946

Dear Mother & Dad:

Bill had promised to call you so I was not at all surprised to hear that he did. I am disappointed that he didn't get in on one of those Chapins -on-two-phones affairs! You mentioned considering sending another package - please don't.

I have received your first letter with views on the tablecloths. I was in doubt about the set, as I told you; and while I figured that it was worth about what I paid, I figured that it would be suitable for the present only if it was worth considerably more. I'll wait for your final judgment - in fact I'll best wait until I get home so we can pick something out together.

I wish you'd been able to entertain Dr. Pettingill. He was my lab instructor for my year in zoology. Perhaps the one course I most regretted missing was his in Ornithology - the best I could do was to attend his annual college lecture. Now that you've heard him speak (did he show a film,) you know what I mean.

Last Sunday, Gary and I took our skates to town, met Dennis, and went skating on the campus of the business college (French Catholic). The rink is rigged up on the playing ground and is enclosed in a curious structure of poles, ropes and straw mats. No rails, bolts, canvas, boards or bricks, yet it is warm, windproof, and roomy enough for 300-400 skaters plus checkrooms, changing rooms, lunch counter, skate repair shop, etc. This place is patronized by Chinese, English, Russians, French, and Marines. It cost \$300 FRB with the rate at 6000 to \$1 US.

Well, I'll tell you right now that kids on skates are the same the world over. There are still the flashy boys on long racing skates with hands clasped behind their backs, the roughnecks playing "I got it", the toddling beginners and so on. We were among the first in after the doors were opened and as we were tugging at skate laces I noticed a very handsome English boy. He was wearing a knitted Army cap (you remember John's) which may have been parachuted to him in the WeiShien concentration camp last fall, and he said eagerly to his companion "Look, some of them are already on the ice!" Snatches of conversation I heard in Chinese were unintelligible, but I knew what it was all about, too.

This is something to think about when I'm looking at some of the many problems impeding China's evolution into a democratic and industrialized nation. There are times, anyway, when the differences between us are so small as to be practically non-existent.

After the skating, Mrs. Yen treated us to a large meal featuring noodles - which are more common to North China than rice as a staple diet. We started with four serving bowls of foods and one bowl of soup all to be mixed with the noodles. Two serving bowls of noodles were produced, and I thought for a moment we were going to share them - two and two, but she soon brought the others two from the kitchen. I'll give you a couple of samples - one bowl had bits of scrambled egg, turnip greens and a few other things mixed. Another had bean sprouts, chopped beef, etc. fried. The soup had a bit of everything in it and tasted like sick oyster stew (Chinese soup is frequently tasteless, but not Mrs. Yen's.) The other bowls, I didn't recognize, didn't ask, and don't remember what I thought it was; but generous portions of all were mixed with my trusty chopsticks into the noodles.

These noodles, by the way, are as long and lean as macaroni and running in a fork to cut it is illegal. The noisier you work the politer you are, so we went at it with a will.

This consideration of the meaning of noise works both ways - we had soup at the club the night the Yen's were our guests, and soup never slid down in greater silence.

I have mailed a package to myself at home. I obtained the contents mainly to

show them and describe their use to Jonathan. You all open it, of course, so you can amuse yourselves trying to figure out just what they are for. I'm sure that I'm the only one of 53,000 Marines who has any - and none of 4 or 5 who knows what they are. They are distinctive in North China and can be obtained at present only in Peking.

With love,

Chick

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Tientsin, China  
20 Jan. 1946

Dear Mother & Dad:

The letter I received since writing last verifies my guess on Dr. Pettingill's lecture. I'm amazed that you left the gardenias so long.

Mail in the past two weeks has brought me half a dozen issues of the Carletonian, and I got to thinking that I should at least know my relative geographic location to Carleton-in-China. I recalled Dr. Vestling speaking of the location as "Fun Go" (phonetic) in Shansa province, so I looked at a couple of maps, but in vain. So I had an opportunity this past week to enlist Dennis Yen's aid. He said he did not recognize the name as I said it, but would help me look on the map for a city large enough to have such a school, and having a name similar to the one I was trying to pronounce. He looked at the map a while and then pointed to Fenyang (pronounced Fun yong) and explained that this must be it, as it could be called also Fenyang Chow (jo) the "chow" being a suffix meaning small city. Then we looked at another map and found the same city labelled "Fenchow" - a tribute to Dr. Vestling's pronunciation and my memory.

This points up a difficulty to map-makers of China whose maps must bear Romanized names. Though written Chinese is the same for all China, the spoken words for the written language are different in the various provinces and also differ between communities. Then there are two widely used systems of romanizing Chinese sounds. The Central Gov't has partly solved the language choice by making Mandarin the official dialect. A couple of other notes on language - Tientsinese and Pekinese are distinct brands of Mandarin. My friend Capt. Wiant told me it was not at all unusual for him to act as interpreter between two Chinese who may have lived all their lives no more than 50 miles apart.

Anyway, Carleton-in-China, when operating, makes its home about 500 miles Southwest of here.

With love,

Chick

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Tientsin, China  
23 Jan 1946

Dear Mother & Dad:

Anno has sent me two clippings (final two pages) of the Post article you mentioned - it's the most nearly true picture given in a story of the 1st. Whoever authored it was very familiar with the camp and supply situation, made just a few mistakes in technical details - of course his statements made in enthusiasm were well blown up. Definitely save it, if you haven't sent it already. I'm wondering who wrote it.



The operation at John's house sound terrific. I should bring Liu Wan Pin home to tend the furnace. Our house here has 4 coal stoves, as many kerosene heaters, and a coal running water heater - all of which he tends from 0700 to 1800, usually getting the water so hot it forms steam and backs up the water in the pipes until hot comes out of both faucets. He seems to have been a factory boiler tender and intimates that this is just child's play. One of his secrets: kerosene liberally sprinkled on the coal when he builds the fire. The other secret is to be around to stoke at the right times.

Sam's letter, if there is to be one, describing his San Francisco visit, hadn't arrived. If I have the opportunity to call on the Millers I'll have less trouble than he, knowing the address in advance.

Thank you for handling my college business. I had Drs. Gould and Stewart in mind as being Mich. grads but you've done well. "Robbie" will put out the same extravagant line he used in class - and he was Dept. head in my major, which won't hurt any.

Like you, I hope that these Army demonstrations, since they have happened have some good effect - I have in mind pressure to extend and step up the draft to replace all occupational troops who were overseas before the war ended. I think all these people should get to go home, but I know that the occupation job (not meaning China and isolated instances of useless commands notwithstanding) must be done. And right now is an H of a time for the US to lose face, as they say in the Orient, but as will happen all over the world.

To make a generalization, which I detest, the strikes at home and the demonstrations overseas spring from the same sources - dreamy swallowing of the sugar coated promises about the post war world. I personally saw our 12 "light" artillery pieces bang out shells that cost the American people well over a million dollars - this in a period of 80 days. And I visited 6 cemeteries created in that 80 days averaging a thousand crosses each. These are microscopic figures in a 4 year war. If it was worth doing at all, its certainly worth the follow through, which after all isn't costing us a particle of the price of the landing and invasions of Japan which I'm very thankful isn't taking place next month as planned.

The cure, I'm sure I don't know, but I'm certain a little realistic thinking would help. My motto - send some new men over to get the old ones home.

With love,

Chick

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Tientsin, China  
27 Jan 1946

Dear Mother & Dad:

Letters from you both and from Unk this past week. Maybe you can persuade Unk to make you a present of something in that box; after all - that's what he's getting the stuff for. The law school business seems to be going along all right with the least possible effort on my part. All I'll have to do apparently is to notify them whether I can make it in September or in June.

I was glad to have Dad's endorsement on my choice of the shot gun. I believe he'll be even more enthusiastic when he breaks open the box.

The description of Betty's rose coral room reminds me of an officer's mess in the 5th Marine on Pavuvu which was labelled "The Coral Room." Here the natural mud was covered with crushed coral which was ordinarily found a few inches beneath said mud.

This room, like all others there, was framed of coconut logs, walled with once white target cloth and roofed with a tarpolin. The only paint involved was the orange lettering of the sign. All of this proves nothing but brings up the question "what's in a name?" I'm sure the rose coral is lovely - I know you picked it by color, and not by name.

A new C.O. joined us this week. Lt. Col. Van Ryzin, who spent three years here in China long before the war. He's been regaling us with stories of the Peking detachment - he has fully as many to tell as George Nowak, the riding instructor in Quantico. He established a reputation with me for knowing the Chinese by predicting a wave of suicide prior to Feb 2nd. I heard of one two days after that. The 2nd of Feb. is Chinese new years - one must start the new year out of debt - so anyone who can't pay his debts take the traditionally honorable way out - suicide. The thing that amazes me is that they don't have a creditor's protective league to go about restraining those about to make the attempt. What a country!

With love,

Chick

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Tientsin, China  
30 Jan. 1946

Dear Mother and Dad:

John sent me the race card from the trotting events at Enghien. Even knowing generally what words to expect I found it a little hard to translate. He sounded quite optimistic about his early "repatriation." I noted that promotion, too, which I hadn't heard about otherwise. Recognition comes slowly but surely, though it's too bad it couldn't have come earlier, then more to help the 652 budget.

I trust that by the time I get home this church supper for veterans business will have simmered down. I can see myself telling about the time Gary and I attended "protestant" services only to find out too late that it was an Episcopal Communion. The last time I went down, my knees were cracking and I wasn't sure I would ever be able to struggle to my feet!

I had a very interesting letter from Bette Lieber who is working in a Red C. Clubmobile in FlossenberglBavaria, which I gather was once a great SS stronghold and concentration camp. They have a two mile down hill ski run to go to work. I gather that getting home in the evening is the real problem.

Miss Wilson sent homemade candy again this year, but not just plain caramels. There were also some special caramels which had been dipped in bittersweet chocolate and set with pecans - what a combination! I have advised her to put them on the market.

We had about a week of warm weather and our ice softened a bit, but it's been cold a few days and we've skated twice more. This Chinese steel in the skates is not hard, and it's time to sharpen them again - the 4th time as a matter of fact. I can't remember ever having a pair sharpened more than once in a season. Col. Van Ryzin says that the Peking detachment hockey team used to change to freshly sharpened skates at half time!

With love,

Chick

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Tientsin, China  
3 Feb 1946

Dear Mother & Dad:

Yesterday I read the second of the three books Anno sent me for Xmas. The first was "Ol' Man Adam and his Chillun", a charming series of bible stories in negro idiom and dress - in short, what one would expect Anno to read for Xmas. This other, "Appontment in Samar<sup>a</sup>" she must have picked by the sound of the title or the appearance of the cover, which gave the impression that it was a mystery story. Well, Forever Amber may be racier, but this one takes the prize for crudity and sordidness. I intend to needle her about this but I think it best done orally with collaboration from Uncle Ed. Tell her how shocked I was, how Gary raised his eye-brows over my aunt's having sent it, etc.

On the subject of books, "O'Mally" is still undergoing treatment. I'm soaking out the oil with Jap toilet paper between the pages. When I've reduced the diesel content to the point that the fumes no longer give me a headache I'll read it.

I had riding plans this past week but it turned bitter cold and we postponed it. At the same time a slight dust storm coated the ice with part of the Gobi desert, so skating is out until a few sunny days enable the dust particles to work down into the ice.

The acceptance at Michigan is good news, and now I await only an acceptance at Washington.

Go ahead with mailing the linen to Rosemary Wood - I'll write her direct next week to explain my tardiness and the postmark on the package.

Christmas cards from "Miss Boyce" and from Bill Reynolds arrived after passage through your re-addressing plant.

With love,

Chick

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Tientsin, China  
5 Feb. 1946

Dear Pop:

Two bulletins from Michigan arrived contemporaneously with the news that I was acceptable to the Law School and that you and Mother are negotiating for a second floor unit in the Club for me. So I have been contemplating my future for the 2 years immediately following my release from the Marine Corps. That future had better start soon or I'll find myself practicing before leaving if the chain of events commenced last August continues.

First, after officially expressing the intentions to study law, came the late in the case defense council position I told you about at the time. You'll recall that two men were similarly charged but unequally implicated, and all I had to do was to refuse to let my man take the stand for the benefit of the other (he couldn't do it without spoiling his own case). He was convicted of one less charge than the other man, and got one year imprisonment to the other man's two.

When we came to China, a Summary Court Martial was convened in the battalion with myself as senior member. Before any cases were brought before the court, the other two members went home, and a new Major headed up the new court.

At the time I took over the job of adjutant I found myself appointed Judge Advocate of a newly constituted General Court Martial. I asked for release from one job or the other and they appointed another JA.

Last week they made me senior member of a board of investigation on a local shooting incident. This time the board actually met, carried out the prescribed procedure, taking testimony under oath, and in certain cases, through interpreters.

To top it all off, a guy in another outfit called me up to get my opinion on a technical point in making up a court martial record. Of course the conduct of court martial is all precisely prescribed in a single volume entitled "Naval Courts and Boards" and any officer in the service is considered competent to try and/or judge cases - but this thing has gone far enough, I'm ready to go to school!

I'm mighty proud to hear about Mother's "Our Navy" speech, but am astonished that with all the technical study plus "what only a Navy Mother would know" she has affiliated me with the War Dept in a recent letter. If she will look at that most gaudy of my sheepskins, she'll see James V. Forrestal's signature on it -- and I await his reply. (No need to let this get around among the Anti-Rusters).

Dad you tell Betty the advantage of an ivory fireplace - that you can tell so much more quickly that the damper was closed again! Bring those pine branches in here and I'll show you what I mean...

Much love,

Chick

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Tientsin, China  
6 Feb 1946

Dear Mother & Dad:

It's still going on, but the important part is over - Chinese New Years. The First of the year for them is the 2nd of Feb (although politically and economically China operates on our calendar). All our houseboys took the 31st, 1st and 2nd off to shoot off firecrackers and drink rice wine. During this period, our difficulties with the heating stoves and the water heater bordered on Dad's with John's furnace.

Then on the 2nd all Chinese businesses shut down until the 8th. The streets are all boarded up as though the plague were about. If housewives haven't done a week's worth of shopping, it's too bad. This period is spent in feasting, shooting firecrackers, drinking rice wine, and playing social calls on all relatives and friends. All these calls must be repaid with further feasting, shooting firecrackers, and drinking rice wine.

Due to the exigencies of commerce, everyone goes back to work on the 8th, but the New Year season lasts until the 15th and you have all that time to complete calls and return calls.

This may seem like a long time to celebrate but it is the biggest of the 3 major celebrations in the year - and most Chinese work seven days a week, even many Christian Chinese cannot afford to observe the Sabbath.

I won't complain about any room I get, but tell me what you requested so I can look it up in my bulletin.

The humidity here runs 70-90% and the frost this morning was so heavy on the ground and trees that it looked like snow - flakes of frost fell from the trees after the sun had been out a while.

With love,  
Chick

Tientsin, China  
10 Feb 1946

Dear Mother & Dad:

I have just finished writing to Rosemary Wood that you are sending her my belated wedding gift - this is sort of an alternate notice if you haven't yet received my last letter saying to go ahead.

I'll keep your tea suggestion in mind, though it's my personal opinion that the tea we get here has nothing on Lipton's and Tenderleaf. There is a difference in fragrance and color, but the biggest difference is in the temperature, it being just short of boiling when served. I don't know the reason but I can guess several. Room temperatures are cool and tea at a drinkable temperature is soon cold, then, too, the heat of the tea slows up the drinking and prolongs the all important social aspects of "tea". The stuff has to be made hot for the thousands of businessmen and workmen who fill their thermos bottles early in the morning and carry them to work so that hot tea can be produced at every conceivable occasion. Of course it's an ill equipped office or store that doesn't have its own tea making facilities. Tea direct from China would make a big hit at Reading Club, wouldn't it?

Diet or no, Dad must agree to have butter and potatoes on the table if I am to come home! Sounds like starvation.

I have seen a copy of the picture taken at Gen. Liu's, but he hasn't obtained one for myself yet. With remarkable ability I managed to flick both eyes shut as the camera lens opened - thus appearing more casual and bored than anyone else in the group. You'll be proud of me in this one.

Has John been promoted or not? I'm sure it was two weeks ago I received a letter with T/3 on the return address, yet Dad's letter of the 28th refers to T/4 Chapin. I'm wondering if John made a "clerical error" in my letter, or if you're overlooking the matter.

With love,

Chick

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Tientsin, China  
13 Feb 1946

Dear Mother & Dad:

Your long wait for word from Sam must be over. I have a letter from him written off Saipan. It seems mail was waiting there for him. He writes a very cryptic letters; he must have been on his last sheet of paper, as he wound up the page as follows:

"No More Parchment

Sam"

---

The current rage in Tientsin is the wearing of a leather name plate, inscribed with one's name in English and in Chinese, on the left side of the field jacket. I succumbed today. The tag has been tested in the approved manner and found satisfactory you accost several Chinese in the street and ask them to read the characters inscribed. If what they say sounds like your name, it's ok. The "chai peen" consistently given me seems close enough. It looks like this and I think it is read from right to left. That I can find out from the houseboy tomorrow.

I was in town a couple of days ago shopping with the doctor. The Chinese are very proud of their ability to recognize US rank insignia, so they look at the doc's medical corps gold oak leaf and say "Major". This is old stuff with the doc and he has a regular routine -- he points to the bar on the other collar and says "Mao major" (not major) and then he points to the leaf and says "tai fu!" (doctor). Invariably the answer is "Oh yes, doctor!"

Mrs. Wood wrote thanking me for the cups and telling about the struggle to avoid opening the box before Xmas!

With love,

Chick

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Tientsin, China  
17 Feb 1946

Dear Mother & Dad:

The characters stamped on my name tag as described in the last letter are placed in occidental rather than oriental sequence, as I was quick to perceive upon getting a couple of "Pin Chai" translations. Obviously made that way because it is directly below the English printing.

That Fortune subscription was sent by myself in a moment of carefree spending which I have no reason to regret. Hope Dad enjoys reading the ads, too.

The news from Michigan is all good. It remains for "Sec Nav" to match it. I buoy my optimism up partly by logic and partly by wishful thinking. It took nine weeks to get a NO, it took 15 weeks for Bill Southworth to get his YES in the form of order home. Therefore the NO is a month overdue - and therefore eliminated, and a YES is due in a week or two; or the letter was lost and I must start all over.

Bob Tinsley wrote from Evanston where he has his family and is working for American Can Co. as an employment manager.

I've seen plenty of cloths in the shops that could be silk, part silk or not silk for all I know. I do know that a Russian dealer refused to make a sale when he found his customer was a fellow Jew, and confided in him that there was no good cloth to be had now. Most of the patterns and colors I've seen are atrocious; prices run \$115 a yard and up. What is shantung? Do you want me to look? I could get Dennis to help me, - but as for my drapes, I think oat sacks would be more appropriate!

With love,

Chick

---

Tientsin, China  
20 Feb 1946

Dear Mother & Dad:

I just tore up my insurance chits for Unk's package and for the shotgun. I'm hoping that Unk was not disappointed in his box - he'll have a hard time returning anything for future gifts with that party for the unwrapping ceremonies. I believe

I explained before that the accounting slip I enclosed doesn't represent relative value - not even by Chinese appraisal.

This afternoon we were in town and passing "Dalconte's", one of the better restaurants in the Ex-British Concession and decided to pick up some cakes to eat this evening. They have delicious Russian pastries. Selection is difficult; we had to buy two doz to get a bit of each kind that looked good.

Figuring the price was more difficult. Pastry is high, and like everything else quoted in CNC (National currency). Two dozen totaled something like \$4300. The rate of exchange however is quoted in FRB (puppet) pegged at 1/5th the CNC. Current rate



\$9400 to \$1 US. I estimated approximately \$2.25 as a check against whatever exact calculations might be made. A Chinese clerk would have done it quite simply, seizing an abacus, checking the beads with flying fingers for a few seconds, and announcing the answer. The two Russian girls at this pastry counter had quite a time multiplying and dividing by long hand - perhaps they converted everything to rubles, - but they finally came up with \$2.30. When we paid, they'd worked it down to the point where we got \$400 FRB in change. One of the guys suggested taking it in trade, but neither candy or pastry counters had a thing for less than a nickel!

I saw a beautiful canvas and leather shot gun case downtown but decided I'd better get one at home and be sure it fits the gun. Dad'd better get his Parker oiled up.

With love,

Chick

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Tientsin, China  
24 Feb 1946

Dear Mother & Dad:

Your order received yesterday - and I see no reason why I can't fill it in a few days. But remember, I want to be able to bring something home in my trunk so I can pull it out and say "look what I brang you, Maw!" While I may go up to Peking the end of next week, I can't be sure orders won't come and interfere (to my delight) so I won't post-pone shopping for that. If I do get up there I may wish I'd waited, but I'll still be able to pick up anything I should find that I want badly.

I'm glad that Unk is satisfied, and I hope you don't have to take any of the stuff away from him. I investigated the mandarin hat market but could find nothing in large size, so I got him another skull cap which I believe to be his size. This I'll send or bring with me when the time comes, depending on packing space. It shouldn't be difficult to get more of those bowls for him if he wants them, as they are newly made.

I have sufficient funds, so don't worry about that.

The enclosed set of pictures give the impression that the Arsenal, and the streets of Tientsin are deserted, but I assure you it's just the way Dr. Dotter caught the places - usually humming with activity. Save the pictures, of course.

With love,

Chick

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Tientsin, China  
27 Feb 1946

Dear Mother & Dad:

First let me tell you what I have sent you for my birthday. On top some things sent merely to unburden my trunk - a Headquarters Bulletin with the 1st Mar Div history, an Okinawahackamore, two travelers chopsticks sets (one my own and the other intended for Sam), a not-typically Chinese needlepoint pattern for you, an antique wooden plate with filigree inlay which I would like you to send on to Grandmother (note accompanies), and Unk's cap. You will also find a pair of cigarette boxes I've been looking at for once a month, and in them, the brass Buddas. I also bought another bell to get a better price on the Buddhas just as one buys a new car to get a cigarette lighter that works. The bell is yours, but if you want Unk to have it, don't take less than two bucks. Also two pairs of

porcelain things not like the vase you liked, but nice, I think. By the time you are doing the interior of "Chick's house" you will have decided which pair you don't want.

No cloisonne. I'll not buy any more here unless I miss the Pei'ping trip. Then there is a whole street devoted to cloisonne makers and sellers, just as there are entire streets devoted to jade, lacquer, ivory, etc. Certainly better selection and possibly better prices.

Last year on this date the USS New Kent was anchored in Sunlight Channel between Pavuvu and Banika, and by happy circumstance both ice cream and cake were on the menu. By far happier circumstance this year, I can look forward to going home and to school; and taking time for pleasant contemplation of this fact is adequate celebration today.

I have the "Snow-piu Liu" picture but it is too large for an envelope. So I will file it in the trunk.

With love,

Chick

---

Tientsin, China  
3 March 1946

Dear Mother & Dad:

I have some promising news today. I have a positive indication that my resignation will be accepted in that a dispatch came from the Commandant on Friday requesting the pay master's certification that I am not in debt to the government to be air-mailed to Washington. It went yesterday. My revised estimate on the length of China tour is one more month - which is very close to what I thought last Fall. Right or wrong, I'll surely make Ann Arbor on the 23rd of June.

As though to make this extension of China duty worth while and agreeable, I'm being transferred to the 2nd BN, 11th tomorrow, it being stationed in Pei ping. I've wanted to see it very badly and this will be much better than a 3 or 4 day liberty there.

I dislike leaving the 4th BN, of course, where I know everyone, but most are new friends rather than old, for example, only one other officer here is entitled to wear the participation star on the Navy Unit Commendation ribbon awarded the 11th at Okinawa (we just heard about it). And among the people I know in the 2nd BN is Mims Brantley, a fellow Quantico instructor and polo enthusiast.

Some time ago, I sent home my manuals and text books in a very heavy package, so I hope you don't get excited when that comes. Also in the book line, I ordered several Marine books among which is Col. Thomason's collection of short stories, about half of which are set in Peiping.

No use to sit on pins and needles now wondering if Ill get out in time. But wait a while, after all I have some cloisonne to buy!

With love,

Chick

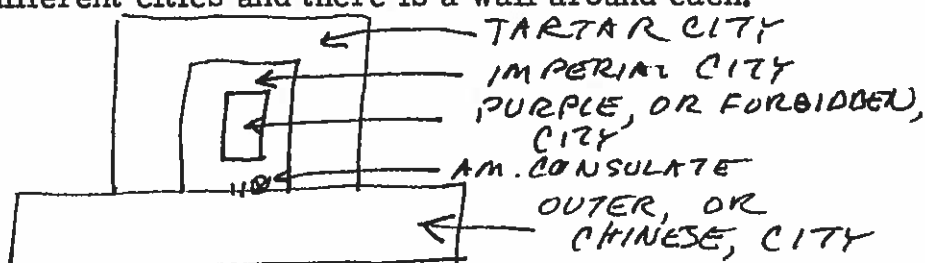
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Peiping, China  
5 March 1946

Dear Mother & Dad:

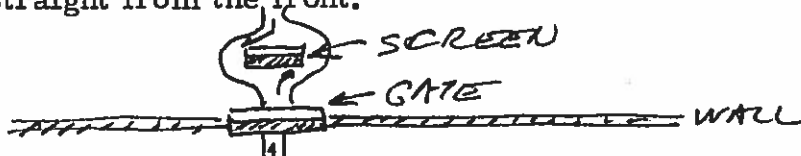
My travel was delayed from yesterday to today - arrived at noon after a 3-hour jeep trip on the one lane concrete highway connecting China's 2nd largest city to China's cultural center. Bandits, irregulars and armies have been tearing up that road, blocking it, and re-paving it for years - makes quite a trip.

This battalion is quartered in the old legation guard barracks adjoining the American Consulate. Spent the day getting familiar with our compound. One of the easiest ways to do this was to mount the Tartar wall - a high fortification running along behind our back fence. Tientsin had walls - around every house and apartment building, but Peking is 4 different cities and there is a wall around each.



There are only 7 gates in the wall encircling the "Tartar City" - one of the most picturesque being Chien Men, just a few hundred yards from our barracks. Apertures in the other walls are as scarce.

Outside each gate is a buttress of similar size and design as the gate. This is a devil screen. Traffic can flow around the screen, but a devil can't come in a doorway unless he can come straight from the front.



We had one of these in the French Arsenal - it protected the gate to the quarters occupied by the colonial troops (Indo-Chinese).

With love,

Chick

Peip'ing, China  
9 March 1945

Dear Mother & Dad:

We are told that mail had to be jettisoned in a near plane accident recently; hence I'm missing a few letters from you. I did get Unk's letter and one from Grand-mother.

I would have gone shopping or sightseeing today but have the staff duty today. It being a clear day, though, I mounted the 40 foot Tartar Wall through the internal ramp which opens on "Wall Street" right behind our compound. From there I could survey the prospects for an all day trip tomorrow - and other tomorrows.

The green roofed gate tower of Chien Men looms up just to the west. Below the parapet on the South is the main railroad terminal, Chien Men Station; on the North, the drab grey brick and green trimmed buildings of our barracks. A mile or two East along the wall is Hata Men gate tower. Southwest across the rooftop of the Chinese city (a good chance of it being European style commercial building) appears the 3 tiered blue roof (color of this ink) of the circular walled Temple of Heaven.

Hazily outlined in the West beyond the city is a tower pagoda which need only lean a bit to commend itself to Gallileo. Dwarfing its height are the snow sprinkled Western Hills twenty five miles away. The words of a dog eared tourists' guide "rising majestically", are the only ones suitable for a chain of rugged mountains which commences abruptly after 100 miles of ironing board flat coastal plains.

In ordered rows, the gold roofs (glazed tile) of the Forbidden City stretch to the North from Chien Men. By walking East along the wall to a point opposite the Netherlands Embassy (adjoins the US Consulate), through a skyline gap between the two beautiful Georgian (?) buildings of the Netherlands compound there is a vista of the roofs of the principal building of the Forbidden City surmounted by the Imperial recreation pagoda atop Coal Hill marking the far end of the Forbidden City. Beyond and a little to the left appears the Tibetan style White Dagoba or "Bottle Tower."

Though it has been very cold, and it snowed all day yesterday (Unk told me it was just as well I was in "warm China") the trees of the city show a tendency to bud and I can see that a Summertime vista of the city would be a pattern of gold or green. This vista has existed in some form for many centuries, in its present form for more than five hundred years, but has only been viewed by common people or foreigners for the past fifty. Previously no one was allowed to mount the walls or to build more than one story buildings.

Now I must do some research on the story of the part Betty's vases played in the downfall of the "Ming's."

With love,

Chick

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Peip'ing, China  
17 March 1946

Dear Mother & Dad:

Yesterday I sent the cable to stem the tide of mail. Here is my estimate of the situation. The next ship is expected at Tangku on the 22nd. The earliest it could load and sail would be the 25th. Let's say it will pull anchor by the 30th. If the trip is direct (and we have enough people here to load it full) it can reach the West Coast by Apr. 18th or 20th. A less direct route - the 30th at the latest. Whether I land at Portland, San Francisco, or San Diego, I'll be two or three days getting orders to Great Lakes which will provide 4 days travel time plus 14 days. If we land in California, I'll go to Anno's for perhaps three days, as the Marples visit will find me busy at Michigan. This schedule will get me home between the 25th of the Apr. and the 7th of May with ten days to go before the three day ritual at G. L. At the latest, there'll be a full month to spend before going to Ann Arbor.

I'll write just before embarkation so you can fix the estimated schedule a little better. Received your letter Friday saying John was on his way. He isn't beating me by much. Those same letters, by the way, were full of condolence to me for having to stay in until Jan. '47, etc. Thanks anyway.

This business is playing hob with my plan for leisurely perusal of Peiping. I put in a busy day of tramping today - and will get in a few hours each afternoon that I stay here. I'll not see the Great Wall, Summer Palace, Ming Tombs, or the temples of the Western Hills - but I'll satisfy myself with a travel guide. If I don't get all the impressions down on paper, maybe you two can spare one evening for a lecture by your very own fireside.

With love,

Chick

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Pei-Ping, China  
13 March 1946

Dear Mother & Dad:

First, thanks for the present of "Time" - I now have it coming for four years. This is sad commentary on the loyalty and faith of your son who pitted the efficiency of Henry Luce's boys against his mother's thoroughness and thoughtfulness. On the third "end of subs" letter, I believed it and sent for 3 more years just two days ago. Today Chi Time says Honolulu Time will come. Forgiveness, please!

Other old Jan. and Feb. mail came today from both of you and John. Dad's Chinese pistol poker story obviously had its origin in the pastime known as Russian Roulette and played by bored soldiers of the Czar. I don't doubt that the Chinese tried it. Concerning your conjecture on the relative merits of Jap and Chinese soldiers, a great deal could be said, but not now. Happily the mail brought the "fantail" and retraction letters together. I note that Dad is already acquainted with Marine Barracks PeiPing courtesy Col. Thomason - Is Sidney Romberg a brother of Sigmund?

The statements of Maj. Foster have nothing to do with the case - though he meant to support your hopes, he seems to have dampened them. I can thank him for trying after I get settled at Ann Arbor.

One of my former students, Lt. Bremier, and myself commenced a systematic "doing" of Peiping on Sunday. We rented a car (39 Pontiac) with driver for the day for \$3.00 (US) and invited Fred's language teacher, a Mr. Hoffman, who is an ornithologist with sidelines of Chinology and harpsichordistry, to go along as advisor and guide. Fred carried his newly acquired Leica, I my newly acquired Zeiss Ikonta, and Mr. Hoffman his 10 power Zeiss bird observation glasses.

Our first stop was the Lama Temple, actually a Lamaist monastery in the Northeast corner of the Tartar City. Though fine architecturally and currently operating this is the most run-down temple in the city, as the monks are for the most part little better than beggars. Impressive, for all the dust and otherwise, are the several temples especially the one with a standing Buddha, 2 stories high. I have a picture of a Lama with the Greek-like headdress shown in one of Thomason's pictures. I supported Lamaism to the extent of \$200 CNC for this (10 cents) and will deduct from my next income tax.

The Confucius Temple is adjacent and was next on our list. It is a quiet, restful, and beautiful spot which could not be justly rendered in technicolor with the London Symphony playing "In a Chinese Temple Garden" for background music. I cursed my black and white Jap film each time I snapped the shutter. (My pictures have turned out beautifully).

The common color scheme for a temple is as follows: roofs of golden (if belonging to or patronized by the Emperor), glazed tile, pillars (smoothly plastered wood) and walls a rich rose red with the eaves, rafter ends (intricately carved and fitted) and lintels richly patterned with blues and greens with golden dragons as insets. Sounds flamboyant but it isn't. Set the whole on a marble terrace, reached by marble balustraded steps, fill the courtyard with knarled and shaggy pines, surround all with a high wall to shut out distracting noises and sights and you have the general impression, several details missing. On right and left as you enter each temple yard are always a drum and bell house or tower and sometimes a pair of the characteristic Pekinese lions. There's a high archway just inside the entrance at this place set with delicately wrought and colored tile dragon designs in bas-relief etc. I am going to avoid writing a book and tell all when I get home.

Hall of Classics adjoining the Confucius Temple has his works engraved on several hundred 6 ft. slabs. The emperor used to visit there once a year to exhort the scholars. From there drove past the Bell Tower and Drum Tower of the Tartar city - whence drum beats sounded the hours for a million people. Proceeded to the North end

of the Winter Palace grounds - saw the exterior of the Temple of Ten Thousand Buddhas - walls being in green tile, each tile having an image of Buddha. Nearby was the Nine Dragon Wall - about 12 ft. high by 35 ft. long with sportive dragons in bas-relief, all in brilliant tiling. Skirted the Pei Hai (North lake) where Mr. Hoffman pointed at the varieties of wild duck and teal in the lake and gave us the exact count, which he makes each morning (runs to several hundred). Climbed the hill on the "Emerald Island" to the foot of the White Dagoba (or Bottle Tower) built in honor of the visit of the Dalai Lama in 1652. Then to Coal Hill and Temple of Heaven - letters in themselves - then Peiping duck dinner all later.

With love,

Chick

Tientsin, China  
19 March 1946

Dear Mother & Dad:

Going aboard ship tomorrow. Call you in 2 or 3 weeks.

With love,

Chick

Tangku, China  
22 March 1946

Dear Mother & Dad:

Embarkation delayed until 25th. Probable sailing date is 26 or 27. The ship involved is the USS Caswell (AKA 72). I have it on "high authority" and coordinated by an "unimpeachable source" that the Caswell will squeeze through the canal and will sight land in the vicinity of Norfolk. On the other hand, certain "usually reliable sources" "believe" that it may stop at San Diego on the way. I may know for sure before sailing and write, or I may not know. In the one case, I figure the trip will take about 32 days and in the other 19, both figures being as changeable as the weather.

The first case is perhaps the most likely, so I am rationalizing that it is the chance of a lifetime to see the canal, that the 11 extra days is not too grievous (after all, I'm getting home), that one day on the Pennsy is only a little worse than two days on the Super-Chief, that it will be impressive to arrive home with a tropical tan, that it was only 18 months ago I saw the Marples whereas the rest of you who will see them in July haven't seen them in half a dozen years, and that should I someday write my memoirs, the chapter on my overseas experience can be labelled "California to Virginia, the long way 'round."

One other thing is not quite as I'd expected. My orders are "proceed" to Great Lakes, and unless 10 days delay can be endorsed on them on the coast on which I land, I'll have just 4 days in addition to travel time before reporting to G. L. Should I land on East C. I'll have the 4 at home; should it be West C. the four days will be consumed in the Altadena visit followed immediately by travel time and separation time at GL before reporting at 1241. Let us figure. Sail 27. East Coast Ar. Apr. 26. Home 30th to May 3. Sep. and return May 7 (?). West Coast Arr. Apr 15, Altadena 16 to 19, Tr. 20 and 21, Sep Apr. 22-25, Home 26 (?). This is just a lot of guessing but it's fun to put it down on paper. More information when I get it.

With love,

Chick



HEADQUARTERS, SECOND BATTALION  
ELEVENTH MARINES  
FIRST MARINE DIVISION, FLEET MARINE FORCE, PACIFIC  
C/o FLEET POST OFFICE, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.

Pei p'ing, China  
Day of postmark 1946

From: Captain Charles A. CHAPIN(015132), U. S. Marine Corps  
To: Mr. and Mrs. Roger E. Chapin

Via: Air Mail

Subject: Duty status and address, change of

Reference:(a) My ltr to SecNav, ser 202-45, dtd 7Nov45.  
(b) Cmdt MarCorpsDis, just rec'd.

Enclosure:(A) On 2nd thought, I'll go under separate cover.

1. The provisions of reference(b) constitute a satisfactory reply to reference (a).

2. This letter is advance notice of the assignment of this officer to an inactive duty status, said assignment to take place in the near future.

3. For the purposes of private correspondence, the provisions of this paragraph are effective upon receipt. Address correspondence directly to:

Mr. Charles A. Chapin  
1241 West Vine Street  
Springfield, Illinois

  
Charles A. Chapin

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Copies to: You, Others, F-L-L-E.  
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Half a day out of  
Balboa, Canal Zone

Tangku, China  
24 March 1946

Dear Mother & Dad:

From the sound of the sailing rosters being rustled around here today, I'd say we were due for the LCT ride out past the bar tomorrow morning - and then aboard the Caswell. I've heard of no change in her sailing orders, so I anticipate the months cruise to Norfolk as I outlined in last letter.

With love,

Chick

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U.S.S. Caswell, docked  
Tsing tao, China  
1 April 1946

Dear Mother & Dad:

Though I'm a day and a half travel nearer home, I'm still in China. There are a few ounces of cargo yet to be disgorged here. It could be completed today, but more likely not until tomorrow. Based on a speed of 13 knots, our expected date of arrival at Panama is 30 April. Making proper delay allowances, but guess for Norfolk is 10 May. It could be done quicker but current and perhaps laudable economy regulations call for speed of optimum efficiency instead of near maximum speeds once in vogue.

This (Taing tao) is without reservation, the most beautiful harbor I've seen. It is ringed by small but rugged mountains, the city of Tsing tao being spread casually across the lower slopes of three peaks on the North of the harbor entrance. This city is not the international hodge podge that is Tientsin, nor a native Chinese city like Peiping; it was once entirely a German concession and has what I assume to be a typical German atmosphere - solidly built and clean looking. No foreigners on the street here, though; it's 100% overflowing with Chinese. The city has been theirs for 25 years - a century from now it will still have its teutonic appearance (and Tientsin will still be a conglomerate). It's their reverence for precedent and the inertia of habit. For example, in Tientsin's ex foreign concessions, the streets are swept daily and pavements are repaired for it was always so; in the "Chinese" sections the streets are never cleaned or paved for it was always so - though the entire city is under one government.

At the next pier to us 3 thousand Japs crowd aboard 3 beat up and stripped down LSTs (Jap manned) daily. The pattern of operation we set up in Tientsin in October and turned over to the Chinese in January continues. Major Haynes asked one of the Chinese officers last month how the repatriation was proceeding, and the reply was "Excellent, we're doing it just exactly as you did." They'll get rid of all the Japs, though there may be a bit of confusion on the day there are no more Japs to be sent!

We have plenty of paper backed books aboard so I'll get enough fiction read in the next month to last me for two years.

Call you sometime in May.

With love,

Chick

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Half a day out of  
Balboa, Canal Zone  
24 April 1946

Dear Mother & Dad:

If this reaches you before I call, then you'll be interested to know that we expect to go through the ditch on the 26th and reach Norfolk on the 2nd or 3rd. If this is no news to you, at least it's a letter sent.

With love,

Chick