Lee Parker

Made Face

With 'Wives'

Lee Parker, at 80, still drives

every day to his office in the

Raleigh Insurance Building, He

worked in China for the British

and American Tobacco Compa-

ny from 1916 to 1921. A bache-

lor, young and eager to see the

world, he traveled from the far

reaches of Manchuria to the

Fifty years later he and Mrs.

Parker went to see the changes

wrought in the middle half of

the century in Asia. His view-

home on Glenwood Avenue is

guarded by ceramic elephants

and opens on vistas of Chinese

rugs, lamps, and tables of inlaid

ivory. Lee's wife, Janie, and the

poodle seem to share his zest

for people - especially those

PARKER SAYS that China,

seen from a port, is no more

Chinese than chop suey. "In

China you must yield to kewi-

chew (local mores) for it will

never yield to you. This I

"Well, my interpreter coughs

politely and tells me that even

the poorest coolie boasts of at

least one wife. Thereafter I

claimed anywhere from four to

eight. Here we call it status, but

face is the better word." The

round face flushed with laughter

to the thinning harvest of white

hair. "The missionaries tried to

warn me against the evils in the

ports, but me - I had to see for

Janie, serving tea, urged me

One lady, the wife of a British

army officer serving on the

World War II western front, had

undertaken to guide three young

bachelors about the port. Two

managed to get lost when the

"motherly" madame - all of 30

years old - directed the rick-

shas to a leading geisha house,

(See Parker: E-2, Col. 1)

to ask what happened in Kobe.

It proved an interesting story.

I wanted an example.

learned early."

myself."

who have roots in the East.

The entrance to the Parker

humid ports of the south.

point is thus un que.

Iar Heels In China

Stories By Susan Herring Jefferies Special To The Daily News

North Carolina has probably sent more missionaries, statesmen, scholars and traders to China than any other southern state.

From the first opening of the ports in 1843, contrary to Kipling's old saw, East and this corner of the West met again and again. Sometimes with a bang. But the good earth survived.

About seven of these impacts is a strong odor of tar. Whether successful or not probably depends on point of view, which has a way of changing over the decades from one hemisphere to the other.



Lee Parker At Wedding Party In China About 1918 He Stands Below Grinning Dog, Next To Woman On Right

Stout Fighter For The Lord

North Carolina's pieneer missionaries, Matthew T. and Eliza Yates, arrived in Shanghai aboard the clipped ship Thomas W. Sears in 1847. Beset by storms off the Cape of Good Hope and becalmed in the South Pacific, the journey took four months.

To build a Baptist outpost between the mosquito-infested moat of the native city and the foreign concession took Yates four years. What with slim pickings during the War Between the States, it took Southern Baptists four decades to hoist him to a saintly pedestal.

Today there can be little doubt of his courage in facing staggering odds, but what happened was like having a rug pulled out from under him but not by the Chinese, be it noted. And it was no beautiful Oriental prayer rug, either.

One sultry night in September of 1853, Taiping rebels boiled up from the south where they had been making righteous noises. Under their leader who called himself "Taiping Wong," or "Great Peace King," they were undertaking to free the land from 200 years of Manchu oppression.

Not too well known was the fact that he had failed twice to pass imperial exams for civil service, and bitterly resented China's defeat by the British in two opium wars.

HE HAD FOUND a kindred spirit in the Rev. Isacchar Jacox Roberts, a Baptist from Kentucky, and together they denounced the use of opium, destroyed idols and enforced the Ten Commandments by means of the sword when necessary.

Yates thought the movement "far surpassed the Reformation of Luther," and hoped to "teach the way of the Lord more perfectly," once the takeover was complete. All very pious and supposedly democratic but upsetting to the regime in Peking to which the West owed a toehold in the Middle Kingdom.

Richard McKenna

Wells Herring, one of North Carolina's first foreign mis-

came to the United States at the age of 16 to attend college at Meredith. She later taught at Meredith and at Southern Seminary in Buena Vista, Va. Presently, she is a statistical analyst in genetics at N.C. State University in Raleigh and has maintained a keen interest in China all her life. She is the author of Papa Wore No Halo," published in 1963, the story of the life of her late father as a Southern Baptist missionary in China. She is currently working on a novel called "Pagoda

Passage," a story laid in the Yellow River area where she grew up and where, in 1937-38, Chiang Kai-shek was battling the Japanese.

At the sudden appearance of the rebels, one official refused to turn over the seal of office, was slashed to bits and left at the gate of Yamen as a warning. Others escaped to the

Foreign Concession. Yates went to investigate. Six-foot guns and naked swords bristled in the darkness, but guards waved him past as a "hao pung-yeo," or good friend because he could speak the language. He was promised that foreign life and property was to be respected, but to be on the safe side, sent his wife and daughter to the Foreign Conces-

DETERMINED to hold fort against counterattack by the Imperialists, Yates barricaded himself with mattresses at doors and windows in his grey, brick mansion. "Here I stay until the roof is shot from over my head," he wrote home to Ameri-

In the immediate area, at least, Christianity became the "in" thing. Sabbaths previously unheard of were rigorously en-

Susan Herring Jefferies is the daughter of the late David sionaries. She was born in China, and

The accompanying article is the result of her research into the role North Carolinians have played in China and is told in episodes involving seven persons.

> forced, and attendance doubled and redoubled. "Even the sound of the church bell seems to comfort the people," Yates re-

> One Sunday, Wong Ah-sou, a nephew of this Chinese Cromwell, came to the chapel to apply for membership. Once, he said, he had bathed his heart region in the accepted "Taiping" manner but now he wished to go under the water and be a "true disciple." Yates was elat-

> The killing of the natives continued, however, and both sides began to demand entry to the compound, situated as it was between the old and the new. Yates had one answer to both. "I am your friend. You say your enemies are thieves. Do you think I would harbor hood-

> During one long day of firing, Yates heard a cannon ball hit the roof, roll along a rafter, and caught it as it dropped through the ceiling, having, as he put it, "wasted its energy."

Came finally the "Battle of Muddy Flat," when a group of

westerners decided to support the rebels and routed the Emperor's forces decisively.

REJOICING IN THE victory, Yates moved his family back to the compound, but his joy was short-lived. Much besides the terrain remains muddy. Whether, as one historian claimed, the French acted out of Catholic bias against the Protestant nature of the Taipings or out of dismay at the loss of trade, they joined with the British to back law and order, Manchu-style.

Yates was told by a new American consul to leave the mission compound to its fate and allow the city to be set afire by the Emperor's forces, if they

Whereupon Ah-sou took the axe with which he had been hacking away at idols, and stormed into the British Consulate. Yates and Roberts plead for and gained the boy's release from being chained up as violently insane, but the young man died soon after of causes unde-

Thus ended puritanism in Shanghai. Peking saved face by payment to the Baptists to rebuild. What with funds from home non-existent, Yates invested in real estate. Soon he was able to donate sizable profits to Wake Forest College and other worthwhile institutions at home. Perhaps he was too much of a Tar Heel to feel at home for

long on any Cloud Nine. Only the Chinese came out losers. Dark-skinned Sikhs were imported from India to police the concessions, doubly effective because the Chinese were afraid of them. Although Japanese were allowed to come and go at will, Chinese and dogs were excluded. This in their own

Under layers and layers of so-called inscrutability, their hatred of foreign devils smoldered until the turn of the century when even the Imperialists turned against the white man.



MR. AND MRS. HERRING in their Chengchow, China home in 1921. It was bombed to rubble by the Japanese.

David Wells Herring: Too Stubborn To Yield

David Wells Herring of Pender County sailed for China in 1885. Also aboard ship was the onetime stowaway, Charlie Soong, who had been sponsored by General Julian S. Carr and numerous missionary societies across the state, and educated at Trinity College (now Duke Universi-

Later to father the famed "Soong Dynasty"-son, T.V. and the daughters who married Sun Yat-sen, Chiang Kai-shek, and H. H. Kung — the bright-faced lad was thought to be the best

hope of Christianizing China. Herring thought otherwise. Dating a letter, "Dec. 23, 1885, latitude 32.16, longitude 167.11," he wrote his opinion to a cousin. "That Chinaman is the most

conceited thing I ever saw. He is going to bust something wide open. He and Bryan (another Tar Heel) had an argument today at dinner, Arminianism and Calvinism. Whew! All other conversations were hushed. I don't think Bryan will suffer himself to take issue with that 'smarty' any more."

Herring had been groomed at Wake Forest to inherit the prophet's mantle from the aging Yates. He found nothing like he had expected of a mission field. He made a long journey inland and was convinced that he wanted nothing to do with "flowery beds of ease" or the exploitation

in the ports. Herring found that, long before Galileo, the sons of Han had conceived the earth as a sphere without upsetting any religious applecart. He saw Chinese working together to build dikes along the Yellow River, already flowing with its load of silt some twenty feet

above the plain. He saw children in schools, backing up to the teacher and shouting their lessons in chorus. At least they were facing in the same direction, and Herring saw no need to change their ways. (Mrs. Jefferies has told Herring's story more fully in the book, PAPA WORE NO HALO, published by Blair of Winston-

ON HIS FIRST furlough, Herring tried to convince the brethren to let him dress and live simply like the Chinese, propagating Christianity in the quiet manner of its founder. The method may have smacked too much of Confucius. At any rate, long black queues and flowing

(See David: E-7, Col. 1) over -cols.7-8

Lee Parker

China: A Lesson And A Hope

Richard McKenna reversed the usual order. After years of service with the United States Navy in the Orient, he became a Tar Heel. He came to Chapel Hill because he was told the University was the place for a man with a purpose.

McKenna graduated Phi Beta Kappa in 1956. In 1963, he wrote the highly successful "Sand Pebbles" which won the "Sir Walter Raleigh" award for the best fiction of the year published by a North Carolinian.

The "Washington Post" quotes McKenna as puzzled that he did not realize earlier how galling the "Unequal Treaties" had been to the Chinese. Set up to protect

foreign interests, even 75 years later, they allowed a meager 5 per cent tariff on imports, mostly channeled through foreign bondholders without so much as passing through Chinese hands.

"We (sailors) know it was all right to curse and kick coolies in China, but you had better not do anything like that in Japan or the Philippines." About all the and his fellows realized was that whiskey was a lot cheaper in China than in the land of the free and the home of the brave.

A quote from John Ciardi seems in order, for he might have been speaking of Mc-Kenna. "The drunkard hopes to lose him self in his bottle," Chiardi wrote in the "Saturday Review," "whereas the writer hopes to find himself on his page . . . (but there is no mercy in it! no page cares what it has cost the writer.")

* * * AFTER THE STORY was published, McKenna revealed the disciplines he had put himself through - rigors that may indeed have shortened his life. Anyway, he was dead when the movie was made and the part played by the warlord of the twenties carefully disguised in view of the current image. Even so, this was no gaudy western with good and bad guys romantically fashioned. Even the missionaries came in for scrutiny, some right and some left of the cutting edge of reality.

In a world of militant protest and confusion, it is comforting to think that McKenna's compassion may have flowered in the sunshine of North Carolina.

He wrote: Well, those were the good old days and they are gone forever and I am glad. I find moret discomfort than pleasure now in these memories. They make me wonder what I may be taking casually for granted right this moment, which could seem equally incredible to me thirty years from now, if it is granted me to live that much longer.