

Hwei Wen School, Hankow,
Sept. 5, 1946.

Dear Ruth & Clara:

Although according to the Chinese calendar, it is no autumn we have been having the hottest weather we have had all summer. The Chinese call it the autumn tiger. Judy's face has all broken out with prickly heat until she looks as if she had the measles. When this spell is over, then the hot summer is past. We have hot weather but not too bad after this.

I am enclosing a letter to be sent to the donors of the clothes. I wrote it in church last Sunday and until Thursday did not have time to copy it off. Perhaps Clara will have time to go over it and revise it, and perhaps add to it things from my previous letters about the things which she considers worth repeating in any.

There have been a very busy two weeks. Last week we had a Field Committee meeting and this week we had another all day committee on salaries and budget. That means work preparing for them and work afterwards on reports, etc.

The day school supervisor arrived yesterday and I turned the school and kindergarten over to her today, so now I can concentrate a little on my own work. This summer has been very hot and busy and I feel tired and perhaps I will start by taking a couple of weeks vacation.

However in general I am feeling quite well. This hot weather seems to be good for my arthritis. I loved the California but I had to admit I have felt better in Hankow which has a horrible climate, cold in winter, hot in summer.

By the way, did you ever send the red curtains? I think when you send a something, you should be sure to let me know definitely so that I can be on the lookout for it. I hope they are not lost for we have been counting on them to fix up the parlor.

I got one box of baby clothes from the parlor. The man at customs asked me if they were old and I said yes, and so he rescued it and pulled out a little shirt wrapped in cellophane. So what could I say? However he very thoughtfully did not look any further and said since most of the things were used he would not charge any duty. When I got home and unpacked the box, I found most of the things were new. So the next new baby that arrives is going to have some nice American clothes.

We have been trying to get the young girl of Hwei Wen to come back and take over. She got as far as Hongkong and wrote me a letter about how her health was not very good, and she was afraid there would be financial difficulties and anyhow the trouble with the communist made her hesitate. I got it one terribly hot day in August and it didn't cool me off any so I decided to write her a "blood, sweat and tears" letter. Painted the picture of pigs here as black as I could and advised her to stay in Hongkong. I got the sweetest letter in reply saying she was coming on the next boat! Such is the generosity of human nature.

I am enclosing a check for \$10 for which I wish you would enter a subscription to the American Journal of Surgery, Gynecology and Obstetrics for Dr. Chow Shu Liang, Better Chinese Hospital, Shanghai, China. Let me know how much more will be needed for it. She said me this money when she was in Shanghai but this is the first time I happened to think of it when I was writing to you.

Well I guess this is all for tonight. This is a poor excuse of a letter but it is the best I can do during the days of the autumn tiger. Hoping you are the same, lovingly, Jessie. The Captain gave us a radio, so now we can listen to the same stuff the I.A.S. do.

Could you re-arrange the letter now?

Just mark the money to Dr. P. O. ...
Katherine ...

Hwei Wen School, Nanking, Sept. 5, 1946

Dear Friends:

It has been said that it is bad psychology to begin a letter with apologies, so I shall avoid that pitfall by calling my remarks "explanation." If there is ever a prize offered for pinch-hitters, expect that on the basis of this year's work, I could qualify for a high place, for sometimes it seems to me that all I have done or tried to do was to somehow keep things going until the regular bearer of that responsibility could arrive. Until you have tried such a job, you won't realize that it is harder than taking over the job permanently. One has to avoid committing the project to any line of action of which the ultimate supervisor will not approve.

Right now, my particular bugbear is a primary school & kindergarten. I've run these before and could again after a fashion if necessary, but we expect momentarily the arrival of the Chinese woman who in pre-war days ran this school very successfully. She has been on the way since June, but because of the difficulties of securing transportation, she is still in Chungking, hoping for either an airplane or steamer ticket. She has sent word several times that she was arriving on such and such a day. I say she is the one person in all the world that I want most to see right now. So instead of working on my long overdue letters, I have been conferring with a group of Chinese girls about giving examinations and the other details of opening school.

The parcels sent arrived surprisingly promptly in something over a month, first twelve and then 9 more. There was no duty charged just a small handling charge of about seventy-five cents a package. When I wrote that letter, I had no idea that I would receive such a generous response. Not that I regard the Spirit Lake people as other than generous, but I supposed that the UNNRA had gotten in ahead of me and already taken advantage of your good nature. I was therefore a little perplexed as to how to proceed in distributing so many things to the best advantage, but finally I invited a Chinese friend to help me one afternoon. She is one of our evangelistic workers who is leaving us this fall to marry an Episcopal minister. As a prospective bride, I told her to first pick out whatever she could use. So you see, you helped outfit a Chinese bride. First we made a list of the women workers and considered what each would like and made up a bundle for her. Then we took on the families of the pastors (there are five appointed to various types of work in the city) and considered what was suitable for them. Each received a large box full. We considered as far as possible giving things to persons who could use them without alteration. Families with boys got boys' clothes, those with small girls got little gresses, and the one family where a baby is expected got all the baby clothes.

Formerly Chinese girls very rarely wore western style clothes but now they are very common, especially a skirt & blouse costume. So the adaptation of these things was not as difficult as it would formerly have been. One mother told me that her big girl, just entering senior high school had been teasing her for a skirt & blouse but they could not afford to buy her one, so the girl was very happy when there were two old ones in the clothes they received.

One dress went to a particularly needy case--a poor missionary. As she had spent her furlough in San Francisco and Seattle where the weather never gets very hot, it was very difficult to buy clothes suitable to ~~them~~ the hot humid summers we have here where one's dress gets wet with perspiration in a short time. She had a lot of nice rayon dresses which because they dry slowly are sticky and uncomfortable. Two dresses just fit her and were most gratefully received and have helped to splice out her scanty supply of cotton dresses. She was caught between two extremes in America, cotton dresses were difficult to find, in China they are so expensive that she could not afford them. I fared better than her since I did my shopping in the middle west.

I am hoping that some of the other places I wrote to will do as well as my S. L. friends to supply the folks I missed! Or overlooked. I can't tell you how much everything was appreciated by everyone. One of them said, "These things may not seem like so much to you but they look wonderful to us." You can be sure that a ~~lot~~ ^{little} of little Chinese preachers' kids are going to be better dressed because of your gifts. In the name of all of them, I say "Thank you every one."

Sincerely yours,

Jessie L. Wolcott

Right now, my particular purpose is a primary school. I've run these before and could again after a season if necessary, but I expect momentarily the arrival of the Chinese women in the next few days will run this school very successfully. She has been on the way since June, but because of the difficulties of securing transportation, she is still in Chungking, hoping for either an airplane or steamer ticket. She has sent word several times that she was arriving on such and such a day. I say she is the one person in all the world that I want most to see right now. So instead of working on my long overdue letters, I have been conferring with a group of Chinese girls about giving examinations and the other details of operating a school.

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