

Lung Chuen-i, August 15, 1945

Dear Lillian,

This will be a brief report of my activities since I wrote you after coming up to the hills. We are still waiting to hear whether the Pacific war is over, and find ourselves very much out of the world at such an exciting time as this. The other morning George Djang sent over a note from the Lodge telling us that the Japanese had surrendered. It came as a complete shock to us, and our first reaction was, "Can it be true?" Now the general feeling is that the two parties will come to some agreement but so far we've had no word that this is so.

We had an almost continuous ten days' rain recently; for two days it rained so hard that it broke records for the last six years. Children were even drowned in the streets of Chengtu, people were marooned in their houses, and eggs jumped from \$50. each to \$70. -likely because the farmers had not been able to bring in supplies. The land before the Pharmacy Building was a complete lake; the road broke through near Vandeman, so that no traffic could use that road; and we think that the cholera increased in violence. Up here the laundry refused to dry, and floors kept wet and everything dripped. I celebrated by going to bed with an intestinal upset; when salts, soft diet and rest did not bring any results Margaret gave me a course of sulphadiazine, and in a day or two I was up and around again. This week's laundry is mostly dry and ironed now -Wednesday morning.

Sunday afternoon when we were having tea at Mrs. Fisher's, Ruth appeared looking white and exhausted from her long twenty-li climb up steep hills. At Lung Chuen-i there wasn't any hwa gan available, so she started off with a carrier. She had hoped to ride, so hadn't eaten an especially heavy meal, and before long felt hungry and thirsty. She drank quarts of water, and after a night's sleep seemed as usual. Monday evening Alf came up, and will go down this afternoon; therefore I'm writing you a brief letter. Yesterday morning at breakfast I announced that I must do something more serious in the mornings, but since Alf was here and that made a "special" day we played bridge! We alternate and have tea at Fishers and here "high" tea, in spite of conditions. Yesterday at Mrs. Fishers we had egg or tomato sandwiches, tea, freshly-made fried cakes and chocolate pudding used as cake! It was a perfect afternoon, with blue sky and white clouds floating around, the trees beautiful to see hanging over the temple roofs, and the smell of the "kwei hwa" (you remember we went to Shintu to see the laurel, apparently a kind that blooms much later). We sat and played bridge out in the open court, and were only interrupted once by the chief monk, and once by his inferior who asked if there was anyone down at our house- he had a basket of new potatoes he was bringing down as a gift!

A cable from Dr. Wu saying it is impossible for her to return mid-September. That means that Ruth will be here for some time. Wu Mou-i has arrived in Chengtu and looks well; she lost in the baggage-room fire in the train in India her books, shoes -these she especially minded. Her notes were with her. Margaret Turner got typhoid at Omei and is still nothome; Jim Endicott had a siege of dysentery too. A James Hogg, a young English man working for CIC in Lanchow area has died with tetanus- Rewi Alley was there at the time, but the medical student at hand did not think there was anything serious developing, and serum was not gotten in time. Dr. Best has been ill-- but some say she is more ill than he.

Certainly she has her very queer spells; she seems to be obsessed by ideas of thrift and saving. A couple times I went over to advise her about what she ought to take home with her in the matter of clothes. She frequently asks me what kind of hats they are wearing now, and I have to say that I'm no longer able to give last-minute news about styles. The day or so before I left Chengtu she was over to the house and said, "I don't understand how it is that all the other doctors of internal medicine can take holidays but my husband can't." She was investigating that day about what her son would be doing "on manoeuvres" near Hudson Bay Junction, I think it was, and was interviewing some army officers, thinking they could give her information, since the latitude of that place and here were identical! It sounded pretty complicated to me. Stella Djen is in China, but is going back to Hwa Ing school, and therefore much-overworked Pearl Fosnot has no help in sight. Mr. Sullivan is to do full-time English work for Ginling, almost doing what Mary Lamberton did, so we should be all right, especially if Miss Walmsley arrives.

Of course with the news of possible peace, we are wondering about the return to Nanking. Likely the earliest possible time would be next summer. How the Japanese leave buildings will be an important factor. Some romantically think they will be back in Nanking in a month or two. Alf overheard a spirited discussion the other morning among some G.I.'s as to whether it would take six weeks or three months for them to be cleared out of this area! I guess it is anybody's guess. Even with the talk of peace, cotton cloth has dropped to half! Recently one could get \$3400 for one dollar American money - the actual bill - but this has dropped to about \$1700. So anything may happen in prices now. Ruth thinks it may be difficult to hold faculty and students together now that peace is in sight - many wanting to return home to see families, or find them. If peace is here, it will not be an easy year ahead, but ought to be most interesting. Ruth had hoped to be back for the transition period, and here she is not yet gone on furlough.

1/2 price  
144 =  
Chinese  
\$3400-  
now  
\$1700-

The cicadas are making a real chorus. Dorothy loves them, and likes to catch them. This morning at breakfast we had a time watching a group of ants towing a long live worm to their house. There's an aeroplane overhead which makes us think we're in the midst of things.

Dr. Meuser is having all his teeth out. He wanted to be back for reconstruction time, and it may be here now. I wouldn't wonder if the Meusers and Day's and I would be at #14 for some months yet. A letter from India says that those having priorities #6 or less will likely get away by October, but those below that not till the end of the year... that is to England. So Marjorie's hopes aren't good. Dr. Meuser may be able to get a priority than #6, but missionaries generally are 7 and 8.

My woollen gloves have reached the finger stage, but I'm not making very fast progress.

Much love to you, and I hope you're feeling really very much better. What about trying some of the sulpha drugs? I've written all the family this vacation.

Affectionately,

*Lawrence*  
  
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