AN AMERICAN SOJOURN IN CHINA

Family Memories

by

LUCY CHAPLIN LEE
NOTE OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It has taken two years to bring this account to completion. In doing it, I have had the help of my children and friends. I am particularly indebted to my two sons whose own memories include the events of the later years described in my story. Duncan, as my general editor, has worked into the account various changes, corrections and additions from his own recollections. Armistead, after reading the first edited draft, has written a number of most valuable supplementary notes from which I have quoted at appropriate places throughout the book.

Priscilla, of course, was too young to remember much of those times, but she has helped me greatly in many ways.

I am most grateful to Eleanor Lee Templeman for her help on various items of the Lee family genealogy and in particular to Armistead’s wife, Eleanore Lee, for her careful reading of the draft and for her many valuable suggestions for improving its grammar and style.

The Hermitage
Alexandria, Va.

January 22, 1968

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Richard Henry Lee
The portrait by Charles Wilson Peale
FOREWORD

This is my eighty-second birthday and I am celebrating by beginning my memoirs. I have thought of writing them for several years, and now that I am the proud possessor of a beautiful tape-recorder and a small fund for such secretarial help as I may need, my last excuse for procrastination is gone.

I am living a life of secure leisure. Though confined to a wheel-chair, I am in reasonably good health and my days are full and interesting. My mind is active, if sometimes a little absent, and memories keep crowding in on me. I am not attempting to produce a work of any literary merit, but will write simply and solely for my grandchildren. My husband used to accuse me of having a "creative" memory. If I am drawing on that now, which I hope I am not, it may serve to make these notes more interesting.

My life has been long and unusually eventful, lived against a variety of backgrounds geographical, political and social. The present and future are of overwhelming concern to me, and I am humbly aware of the privilege of being allowed to live in so great a period of history. All my life I have had to learn to think in terms of change, so I do not find the rapid changes of today as difficult to accept as do many of my contemporaries. The rich memories of the past assert themselves, and I believe have meaning and significance for the present and future and should not be entirely lost to the generation that is coming on. Perhaps, for just one family, these scattered memories may serve as a bridge of understanding between the past and the future.

The Hermitage
Alexandria, Va.

January 22, 1968

DEDICATION
To my ten Grandchildren
CHAPTER I
YOUR GRANDFATHER'S FAMILY

Your grandfather and I came from quite different backgrounds. He was a Southerner, descended from an eminent Virginia family, the Lees of Stratford Hall, who played an important part in the early history of our country and about whom much has been written. I was from the North. My forebears were mostly New Englanders, solid and worthwhile people, whose names rarely appear in the history books but who made a quiet but effective contribution to our nation's development. Until he and I met in China our lives had been dissimilar in many ways, yet there was much we had in common. We faced life with the same sense of values. Above all, we shared the deep Christian convictions rooted in both our families for many generations.

My husband's great-great grandmother Sarah was the daughter of Richard Henry Lee, the most eminent son of Thomas and Hannah Lee who built that beautiful home of Stratford Hall on the Potomac in which to rear their large and remarkable family.

Thomas, born in 1690, was the grandson of Richard Lee The Emigrant who came from England to Jamestown in 1639. Although General Robert E. Lee was born in Stratford Hall and the house has been made a Foundation memorial to him, he is not a direct descendant of Thomas who built it, but of Thomas' brother Henry. You may be puzzled as to exactly what relation your grandfather was to General Lee. I think that it can be stated most simply that his grandfather and General Lee were first cousins and that his progenitor was a nephew, not a son, of Thomas Lee, who built Stratford.

Thomas was a man of wealth who had received large land grants in Westmoreland, Fauquier, Arlington, Fairfax and Loudoun Counties. He was married in 1722 to Hannah Ludwell and in 1725 began construction of Stratford Hall which was finally completed in 1729.

The following is a quotation from "Arlington Heritage" by Eleanor Lee Templeman which gives the family history both briefly and clearly:

"Thomas Lee rose in public affairs, negotiated the Treaty of Lancaster with the Iroquois Indians which opened up the Ohio basin for settlement, and became president of the Ohio Company organized in 1748 for colonization. He later became President of the Council and Acting Governor of the colony until his death in 1750. Thomas Lee produced a fine crop of young rebels; five of his six sons were leaders in the rebellion against England.

"Richard Henry Lee in 1756 drafted the Westmoreland Resolves, pledging life and fortune to the cause of liberty. In 1759 he introduced legislation which, if passed, would have abolished the slave trade. He introduced the resolution for independence. He and his brother, Francis Lightfoot Lee, were the only brothers to sign the resulting Declaration of Independence. Another brother, Thomas Ludwell Lee, took an active part in the Virginia Convention, served on the Committee of Safety, and became a judge of the General Court of Virginia.

"The two youngest brothers, William and Arthur Lee, both served in important diplomatic posts for America, which caused each to lose a personal fortune. Charles C. Tansill, Professor of History of Georgetown University, states that we would have lost the Revolution had it not been for Arthur Lee's diplomatic achievements in France (where) he obtained the first promise of French aid."

The beautiful portrait of Richard Henry Lee, painted by Charles Wilson Peale, now hanging in my living room, belongs to Duncan; and the two portraits of his parents, Thomas Lee and Hannah Ludwell Lee belong to Armistead.

Your grandfather's great-grandfather, the first Edmund Jennings Lee, was a prominent lawyer who from 1814 to 1818 was mayor of Alexandria, Virginia. His Alexandria house still stands at 428 North Washington Street. It has been privately renovated and is marked by a tablet given by the local chapter of the DAR. His son, Edmund Jennings Lee II, moved to Shepherdstown, West Virginia, in order to have a country home and law practice. He built as his home there the original Leeland, later destroyed by fire. The present Leeland, which some of you have visited, was built after the Civil War with the bricks from the original house. Your grandfather's father, "Mr. Edmund" as he was affectionately known by the community in Shepherdstown, was born in the original Leeland,
Edmund Jennings Lee II

Henrietta Bedinger Lee, "Grandmother" Lee, wife of Edmund Jennings Lee II

Leeland, Shepherdstown, W. Va.
and your grandfather, my husband, Edmund Jennings Lee IV, was born in the little room above the parlor in the present building. This was his childhood home and was, I think, the dearest spot on earth to him.

Many of you, who have been to Shepherdstown, are more or less familiar with your grandfather's childhood surroundings. The last eight years of his life were spent there, where we were able to create a charming little home (the only one that really belonged to us in our entire lives, except for our bungalow in Kuling), and in which we were able to establish a focal point for the family and for our many friends. It seems fitting that, after a life of much wandering on this earth, your grandfather should have returned to Shepherdstown for his last years and should be buried there with his ancestors in the old cemetery next to Leeland.

His Northern ancestry came from his mother, Rebecca Rust, daughter of Colonel Rust. Her mother was a Lawrence of Flushing, Long Island. The Lawrences were among the first great merchant families of New York. John W. Lawrence, from whom you are descended, served both in the State Legislature and in Congress. He was the president of two banks and the head of a large import business. Your father used to say he had been president of the New York Stock Exchange, but I do not find this recorded.

Rebecca Rust was the granddaughter of John Lawrence. Your great-grandfather, "Mr. Edmund," met her through his sister, Aunt Ida Lee, who was Colonel Rust's second wife and Rebecca's stepmother, thus making an extremely involved relationship between the Lees and the twelve Rust children. Rebecca is said to have been a beautiful and lovely woman. She died at the age of 27 leaving three little sons. Your grandfather's memories of her were very faint, but those of his father were deep and affectionate. Also, his grandmother, "Grandma Lee," who played a large part in his childhood, was an unusual woman—charming, witty, warm and loving to her family, and deeply religious. Helen Goldsborough has some of her delightful letters.

I wish you and I could have had the privilege of knowing your Edmund's father, "Mr. Edmund." He must have been a wonderful man. He was a most beloved and respected member of the Shepherdstown community. As a young man he had served in the Confederate Army during the Civil War. After his wife's death he filled the place of both mother and father to his three sons who adored him. I think he was the greatest influence in your grandfather's life, and this influence was the source of his son's deeply religious dedication from early boyhood.

Grandma Lee was descended from Henry Bedinger who came from Salisbury, England. She was born in 1810 at the Bedinger's lovely home, "Bedford," on the other side of the Potomac from Shepherdstown, and died in Leeland at the age of 88. Her grandfather served as U.S. ambassador to Norway. The pillars on the front porch of Bedford were made from old masts of the frigate "Constitution."

Bedford was burned by General Hunter during the war and the scathing letter which your great-great-grandmother wrote to him at that time is one of the family treasures.

Mr. Edmund had a small business and a farm. His means were limited, but he was very ambitious for the education of his three sons, who in order of age were Lawrence, your grandfather, and Armistead. He was not satisfied with the meager educational facilities which Shepherdstown offered. During his early years, your grandfather attended a little school run by an elderly maiden lady. All I know of that period is that he was sent home from school one day with a note accusing him of impertinence because he asked his teacher if she remembered the Battle of Bunker Hill.

As his three boys grew older, Mr. Edmund arranged with his friend Captain Walker, who had a lovely home near Orange, Virginia, called "Woodberry Forest," to send Lawrence and Edmund and later Armistead to join the Walkers' five sons and a few other boys in sharing a good tutor at the Walker home. This was the beginning of the now famous preparatory school, Woodberry Forest, which is one of the best in the country. Many years later my Duncan graduated from Woodberry. Your grandfather loved the school and took full advantage of the excellent teaching which he received there. Upon his graduation, he was able to enter the sophomore class at the University of Virginia where he graduated at nineteen after only three years with both the B.A. and M.A. degrees. I am told that this is the only time in the history of the University of Virginia that that has been done. He never lost his affection and close touch with Woodberry Forest and was for many years a much valued trustee of the school.

After graduating from the University of Virginia in the autumn of 1897, he entered the junior class of the Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria. I do not know how early his decision to enter the ministry was made, but I think it had been his purpose for some years. I do know that by this time he definitely felt a sense of call to the foreign mission field and that he went to the Seminary with that purpose in mind. At the time of his entering there was little interest in world missions among the students; but his enthusiasm was so contagious and he had so much influence among his fellow students that at the end of the second year twelve of the forty members of the student body were student volunteers and most of them later went out as missionaries.

At that time, the Student Volunteer Movement was sweeping the colleges and theological seminaries of England and the United States, challenging the heroism and devotion of their finest men and women. It began with the conviction, borne in upon a small group of students at Williams College, that with the rapid development of communications and with the close inter-relation of all the countries of the world, the present slow spread of the Christian message was inadequate to meet the demands of the day. They took as their amazing slogan "The Evangelization of the World in this Generation." Literally
thousands of well-trained young doctors, nurses, ministers, and teachers poured into the mission fields of all the Protestant churches as the result of this movement, and with them came the supporting interest and funds from their home churches. Many well-equipped schools, universities and hospitals sprang up all over the world. It was to one of the larger mission stations in China that your grandfather went in 1902 and where I joined him nine years later in 1911.

It was while your grandfather was at the Seminary that his father, after many years as a widower, was married again. His new wife was Bessie Nielson, the daughter of Dr. Nielson, who for many years was the Rector of Trinity Church, Shepherdstown. The marriage was a very happy one, not only for Mr. Edmund and his young wife, but for the three grown sons who were devoted to her. She was a fine pianist, widely read and travelled, and she brought a great deal of happiness to the Leeland family.

Their happiness was unfortunately tragically shortened by the death of Mr. Edmund during an operation for Hodgkin’s Disease in July of 1896. He left his young wife to the special care of his son Edmund. Since she was only eleven years his senior, they had much in common and he was devoted to her.

In 1900 Mr. Edmund’s third son, Armistead, lost his life in New Mexico as a very young man while trying to save a friend from drowning. After Armistead’s death it became evident that neither Edmund nor Lawrence would ever live at Leeland. It was sold to their first cousin Edmund Lee Goldsborough and is now owned by his daughter, Helen.

Bessie Lee was visiting her stepson in China at the time that I met him. She and I became fast friends and travelled home together in January of 1911.

Unfortunately, Bessie never fully recovered from the shock of her husband’s death, and, as the years went on, became more and more subject to periods of depression. Her later years were sad ones and brought considerable anxiety and burden to my husband, who was in charge of her affairs. He wrote her weekly. I have just destroyed a large carton of their correspondence which I felt belonged to them alone and a rather sad past.

After your grandfather left the Seminary in 1900, he spent a year as Travelling Secretary for the Student Volunteer Movement. It would be difficult to estimate how many men and women who found their way into the foreign mission field were influenced by him in making their decision.

On February 7, 1902 he sailed for China and on the third of April began a twenty-five year ministry in the city of Anking, capital of the Province of Anhwei.

He had never had any doubt that this was the right way for him to spend his life. He once explained to me simply: “Anything I may do at home will be done by someone else if I do not do it; but anything of value which I may be able to do in China will probably not be done unless I do it.”

Edmund Jennings Lee III

Rebecca Rust Lee

Lawrence, Armistead and Edmund IV in 1901
CHAPTER II
MY FAMILY

In contrast to the Southern heritage which has come to you through your grandfather, your inheritance from me is entirely Northern, mainly English, though there are traces of French, German, and Irish in my blood. My immediate ancestors came from Maine, Massachusetts, Connecticut and New York.

My father’s family can be traced two generations before the emigration of the first Hugh Chaplin to the United States in 1638. They lived in Yorkshire, England. The first Hugh Chaplin is buried in Bowley, Maine, which was the family home until the eighth generation in the new land. We know little about them during this period, but find a descendent of that Hugh Chaplin, the Reverend Jeremiah Chaplin, D.D., a graduate of Brown University and a Baptist minister. He married a Maria O’Brien of Newburyport, Massachusetts, daughter of a shipbuilder and sea captain. They evidently had means as well as education, and several pieces of valuable furniture have come down from them. The little card table standing between the windows in my apartment is an O’Brien piece.

Maria O’Brien’s father and uncle, Jeremiah and John O’Brien, with their small sloop attacked and defeated the armed British frigate, “Margaretta,” in Machias Bay at the opening of the Revolutionary War. This was the first naval engagement and victory for the American forces.

Another matter from which we may derive some pride is that my father’s grandfather was the founder and first president of what is now Colby College in Waterville, Maine. Their son, my father’s father, another Reverend Jeremiah Chaplin, also a Baptist minister, married Christine Dunbar whom I remember as a little old lady with white puffs of hair on either side of her head and a lace cap. She was the daughter of Duncan Dunbar, an eminent Scottish divine, who had come to this country as a missionary in a sailing ship with his wife and children. He later became one of the most famous preachers in the city of New York, and the Judson Memorial Church on the south end of Washington Square occupies the site of the church where he served his ministry.

This second Jeremiah Chaplin lived and ministered in the town of Dedham, Massachusetts. His wife, Christine, was an intelligent woman and well educated for her day.

She wrote for several magazines and also was the author of a few pious tracts, of which I have copies in my files. She was a practical and deeply dedicated wife and mother. Her husband, an intellectual and mystic, far ahead of his day in theology and ecumenical outlook, was greatly beloved in the community, but completely impractical as a provider for his family. There is one story of his dashing in when a meal had been just placed on the table and carrying it off to a family he had found to be in need, saying that his own family could do without a meal better than they.

I have only one memory of him—a tall, handsome, gaunt old gentleman with, of all things, a gouty foot propped high on a cushion.

His salary was small and it was only by his wife’s determination and thrift that the children received the education they felt to be so important. There were three sons: Heman, Duncan Dunbar who was my father, and Stewart, and a gifted daughter, Christine, an artist and writer. She married a Baptist minister, Reverend Alfred Brush, who served a church on Long Island, had two children, published two popular best-selling novels, “The Colonel’s Opera Cloak” and “Inside Our Gates,” and died in her young womanhood.

My father was not interested in study and felt that his remaining in school was a needless sacrifice to the family, when he could be earning money for his own self-support and to help his two more scholarly brothers obtain their education. At thirteen he left school and took a position as porter in a large woolen warehouse in Boston. I think his salary was $2.00 a week when he began, but he was promoted rapidly and contributed through the years to the education of his brothers. Heman went through Harvard University and the Harvard Law School, and was one of the great criminal trial lawyers of Boston. Stewart, after graduating from Brown and the Harvard Law School, became a professor at the New York Law School.

In spite of his limited schooling, my father was an unusually well-informed man. His use of English was meticulous, and he claimed that the conversation at the
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family dinner table was the equivalent of a college education. He was an intelligent reader of newspapers and possessed a surprising fund of general information.

His boyhood and what schooling he had were in Dedham, Massachusetts. After his early employment in Boston, he went to New York with another woollen firm, Pomroy and Plummer, where he became a New York salesman for a chain of New England woolen mills. His life in New York was largely centered in his work and his church, the Calvary Baptist Church on 57th Street, where he formed his warmest friendships. He was deeply religious and taught a Bible class at a mission school in the Bowery. It was there that he met and fell in love with my mother, the beautiful Fanny Myers, who was also a teacher there.

There is one particular childhood memory I have of my father. During the presidential campaign of Harrison and Cleveland, my father, who was a Republican but also believed in a low tariff, felt strongly that Cleveland was the better candidate. This was an opinion generally unpopular among manufacturers, especially manufacturers of textiles. Shortly before the election Mr. Plummer called him into his office and told him that he expected him to vote for Harrison. My father promptly resigned and walked out of the office. Though I must have been very young, I remember his return that evening to the little house in Morristown where we were spending the summer. There were three of us children at that time and father had no way of supporting us other than by his salary. He came home rather stunned and I remember him and mother having a long and solemn talk, some of which I evidently overheard and understood. However, before midnight, the Hockanum Association, a much larger and more important woolen concern, hearing of his release from Pomroy and Plummer, sent him a wire offering him a position as head of their New York sales office at nearly double his previous salary. So the next morning he went as usual to work, but to a new office, and with associations which continued until his retirement in his seventy-second year.

I remember as a little girl going with him to the Merchant's Club for lunch and that a prominent man stopped at our table, put a hand on my shoulder and said: "Little girl, do you realize that your father is one of the most respected men in New York City?" I do know that when the great American Woollen Company was organized years later he was offered the presidency at a very large salary. This he refused because of his loyalty to the Hockanum Association whose rival he would become, and his unwillingness to undertake new responsibilities at his then advancing age.

I think there are three words with which I would describe my father. They are tenderness, integrity, and generosity. The first of these may be a surprise to his great-grandchildren who remember him as a rather exacting and critical old man. He never understood young people, even his own children. His life was dedicated to his family, his business, his church and his many philanthropic interests. He loved us deeply even though he did not know how to talk with us or to give us his companionship. He was deeply religious, but I do not ever remember his speaking of religion to me.

For many years he was receiving a very large salary. We were rated as wealthy people, and he was very generous. But he was not particularly wise in his investments and during the 1929 Depression lost nearly all the money with which he had thought to provide liberally for his children's futures. He was able, however, to give us every advantage during the years of plenty and later to help us greatly with the education of our own children.

We had a beautiful home in New York for many years, and later spent the entire year in our lovely summer home in Ridgewood, New Jersey. We had a wonderful garden and an exceptional woman, who later became a member of the faculty at Mt. Holyoke College. She was with us for three years and when she left my father sent us to the best schools he could find - 1 to Dobbs Ferry on the Hudson, and the boys to the Hill School at Pottstown, Pennsylvania, and later through Princeton. My education was broken by three trips to Europe, since I had no ambition to go to college; so I have neither a high school nor a college diploma. I am grateful, however, for the breadth of my education, for the New York Young People's Philharmonic Concerts which I attended for years, for the season seats at the Opera, which was my annual Christmas present, and for the familiarity with great art both in the New York galleries and in those of Europe. These interests are enriching my later years.

Now to go back to my mother's background. It is she whom my children will remember as a very gracious and lovely old lady who lived ninety-six serene, wonderful years, greatly beloved by all of us.

She was born and spent her girlhood in Brooklyn Heights in New York. Her father, Michael Myers, was in the coal business and apparently exported coal to the Caribbean. He was not a great success financially, but the family always had a comfortable home and delightful friends.

Michael Myers was descended from a German-American family who had migrated to Herkimer County in New York State. Several of his ancestors had held prominent positions in both politics and as judges. I know nothing of his immediate family and early life. He was a man of great gentleness and kindness. My mother adored him and was certainly much like him - gentle, sensitive and strong.

There are two other names among your ancestors on my mother's side with which you should be familiar. One is the name Mitchell. Michael Myers' wife was Lucy Mitchell. Her father Francois Michel came of French parentage. His father, the original Francois, was banished from the French Court because of political involvements. One rumor has it that he was from a collateral branch of the Bourbon family. He came to America and settled at Stonington, Connecticut, where he lived for two years. He moved from there to the island of Martinique, and there he brought up his two little boys. Francois and John. He and his wife died there of plague but the two
boys survived and, after the death of their parents, returned to the American continent. John married a French woman, going to New Orleans and settling on the Mississippi River about sixteen miles from the city. Young Francois Michel, however, returned to Stonington where he anglicized his name and, in due course, married Mary Leeds, a Protestant of a severely puritanical bent, that event which quite changed the creed of his descendants. Francois himself, of course, was a Catholic. It is through Mary Leeds that we are descended from Priscilla Alden. The line of descent is given in one of my files. Your parents are the tenth generation and you, therefore, are the eleventh.

Lucy Mitchell Myers' mother was an Avery. The Averys, I find, were also a proud family. They have their own society, as do the Lees, which meets at regular intervals. I know they were ship owners and property owners in Groton, Connecticut, and some of the land now used by the submarine base there once belonged to them.

I remember my grandmother, Lucy Mitchell Myers, as a beautiful woman, but rather austere. I have a daguerreotype of the Michael Myers together on their honeymoon and they were a very handsome couple. My grandmother had a quick, witty and rather sharp tongue, but was greatly admired and loved by her friends. My own memories of her are not as warm as I wish they could have been. I see her as a tall woman in an Indian shawl, her hair parted in the middle and drawn over her ears with a knot of braids in the back. She seemed to me very old, but after that memory several years elapsed before she had a stroke, after which she lived at least two years and died at seventy-five. She must only have been in her sixties when I remember her, but I am sure she considered herself old at the time. She was always very black. She was evidently a woman of great resolution. Once when riding in a New York City horse car, she felt the hand of a man sitting beside her slip into her muff and feel for her purse. Without a word or any sign of alarm, she reached up, pulled out one of her long hand hats and drove it through the muff, skewering the man's hand. He ran out of the car screaming with pain and without the purse.

Lucy Myers was extremely capable and ambitious for her children. Charlie, her eldest son, went into the marine insurance business and was so successful that he retired a rich man in middle life. He was, incidentally, the first single scull champion of the United States. Lucy also had two daughters: my mother Fanny, and Jeanette, the "Aunt Nettie" of my childhood.

Mother was a well-known beauty and had a great deal of attention. Aunt Nettie, however, was a greater belle, gay and popular. She never married, and it was with her that I made my first two trips to Europe. I know my grandmother skimped and saved to enable her daughters to take the social position which she wanted for them.

Mother had happy memories of her girlhood in Brooklyn during her father's lifetime. Her last school years were spent, due to my grandmother's insistence, at an exclusive girls' school in Gramercy Park where she made many lifelong friends. She took serious interest in her church and taught a Bible class in a slum mission on the Bowery, and it was there that she and my father met.

I know little of the early years of their married life. I know only that I was born in a modest apartment house known as the "Onteora Flats." How long we lived there I do not know. I remember summers spent in Morristown, New Jersey, Cape Cod and other resorts. Later, two winters were spent in the famous old Brevoort House on lower Fifth Avenue where my sister Priscilla was born. As my father's business career progressed, he bought a handsome brownstone home on West End Avenue between 85th and 86th Streets. At that time it was believed that this would become the fashionable residential section of the city.

I attended a nearby private school and those years were happy ones.

At this time our family was complete . . . Hugh, Maxwell, my only sister Priscilla, who died at the age of six, and Duncan, ten years my junior. My parents now felt the need of a permanent summer house near enough to the city for my father to commute to his office in New York. At that time Ridgewood, New Jersey, was a charming small suburban town. He built a beautiful large house there and later we sold the New York house and made Ridgewood our year-round home. The happiest memories I have of my girlhood are associated with house-parties and dances as well as our warm family life in that house.

I even made a New York debut, which in those days was not the racket it is today. It was held in the Ridgewood house and I know that father had a private passenger car attached to an Erie R.R. train that brought our guests from New York to Ridgewood and back. There was a large reception in the afternoon. The young people stayed over, housed by our friends and neighbors, and we had a dance in the evening.

I spent a great deal of time in New York City, always being welcome in the homes of two friends of my mother, and went out a good deal. In spite of this very gay life, I was active in settlement work at Christadora House and later had a Bible class for the undergraduate nurses at the Presbyterian Hospital, which took a great deal of my time and interest. This class was later absorbed by the YWCA and was the nucleus from which the present large Nurses Club has grown.

My mother was in later years somewhat of an invalid, but she lived to be ninety-six. She was a wonderful wife to my father and a natural homemaker, and, although she would have preferred smaller houses and a simpler way of life, she made the two large homes in New York City and Ridgewood the centers for our lives as we grew up.

I remember that we had five servants in the big Ridgewood house and about the same number in the house in New York. When we were little children there was one time when we had two nursemaidens. This retinue imposed a responsibility and burden on my mother which she did not enjoy. Neither did she like formal society,
though she and father were popular and went out a great deal and entertained at dinners.

I remember our Christmas and Thanksgiving family dinners when father brought in all the lonely bachelors he knew to share our festivities. I also remember that after we moved to Ridgewood, our big house was a center for all our friends. Our spacious living room was used for parties and plays and the entire house for many house parties.

I never remember feeling estranged from my mother during adolescence, or of having any sense that she did not understand my interests and problems. She was not only wonderful in making a home for us, but in letting go of us as we grew older and outside interests and demands called us away from home.

After father's retirement, my parents sold the Ridgewood house and had apartments in New York. They also travelled a great deal and made a trip to China in 1913 to visit us after the death of our first baby, Edmund.

After the Depression forced a change in their way of living, they gave up their New York apartment and moved to Washington to live in what was then a pleasant residential hotel, the Grace Dodge House. They had two attractive rooms and, while it was a great change from the New York apartment, they were happy there. When father died in 1941, mother moved down to Chatham to live with us in the Rectory. She became a beloved member of our Chatham Hall community including the entire faculty and staff of the school. Your grandfather was, as always, a devoted and generous son to her.

I remember asking her once when she was quite old whether or not she was afraid of death, and she replied that she looked forward to it with much excitement and anticipation. When your grandfather and I retired in 1947, she and her companion Mrs. Bader, or Milly as some of you knew her, came to Washington with us. They had an apartment just a block away from ours, at the Brighton Hotel. Mother lived several months after moving to Washington and died quietly in her ninety-sixth year. She was alert, interested in others and in all that was going on around her in the world, and held her rare charm until she fell asleep for the last time.

The Chaplin home in Ridgewood
CHAPTER III
MY TRIP TO CHINA

It was while I was living this full and happy life that the suggestion came in 1910 that I join a friend on a trip around the world. She was Miss Caroline Palmer, about ten years older than I, a delightful companion, and a well-known Bible teacher. She was to be one of a party of eight Bible teachers who were to hold conferences in various resorts in both China and Japan where missionaries were gathering for their summer vacations.

The idea of my going with her was extremely appealing. Characteristically, my father fell in with the idea, realizing what a great opportunity it would be for me, and immediately offered to make it financially possible.

One reason why going was so tempting to me was that I had had for years a standing invitation from distant cousins, Dr. and Mrs. Sam Cochran, of the Presbyterian Mission at Hwaiyuan in Anhwei Province in China. They had asked me to come out and make them an indefinite visit, but it had always seemed an impossible dream. When they heard of my proposed trip, they renewed the invitation at once. Also, Dr. and Mrs. Sherwood Eddy, prominent missionaries in India, wrote asking me to spend the winter with them.

The plan was for me to go with Miss Palmer and her party as far as Kuling, a sanatorium in the mountains near the Yangtze River, where I would join Margaret and Sam Cochran. I would spend the rest of the summer with them and after that accompany them to Hwaiyuan for the fall. Then in the early winter I would go on to India where I would be with the Eddys until my return to America in the spring.

There is one thing that I want to say at this point. Perhaps it is aging vanity, but I would like my grandchildren to know that I did not make this trip as a despairing spinster. During my early twenties I had had a number of opportunities to marry, and at this time there was a young New York lawyer whom I had known in settlement work who fully believed that I would marry him on my return, and a very fine Army Captain, who had graduated at the head of his class at West Point, who was equally convinced that I would marry him. I probably would have married the Captain had I not met your grandfather, but while I would have liked and greatly respected him, I am sure that I would never have known the fifty-two years of wonderful love and companionship which I shared with my husband.

So it was with a free fancy that I started on my journey, and in June of 1910 Caroline and I sailed for Germany. We left a week or two ahead of the rest of the party so as to have time for some independent sightseeing in Germany, joining the others in Berlin at the appointed time.

We all went together to St. Petersburg where we spent three days. This was in the early summer of 1910, seven years before the Bolshevik Revolution broke out, but it was close enough to that time for us to feel the tense and frustrated atmosphere that prevailed in Russia, especially among the younger generation and students.

The June days in St. Petersburg are long, and as I remember, there were only a couple of hours of dusk after midnight. Apparently life went on there just as actively at night as it did during the day.

We were especially fortunate in having as our guides in St. Petersburg two young American YMCA secretaries, who not only showed us those places which as sightseers we should see, but gave us an insight into what the Russian people were thinking, and into the sense of impending catastrophe that hung over almost everything. They told us of the unbelievable number of suicides among the students. In St. Petersburg alone during the dark months of the previous winter suicides had averaged twenty or more a day.

The students in turn were feared by the government, and only twenty-five were allowed to meet in any one place without the police being present. We ourselves felt the hand of the police, for our passports were collected and held by them each time we checked into a hotel and were only returned to us on the station platform as we boarded a train to leave each city.

St. Petersburg as I remember it was a vast city of broad avenues lined with bare and ugly palaces and office buildings. There were many magnificent cathedrals, and "The Hermitage," one of the three greatest art galleries in the world, with the most complete collection of Russian art, depicting so much of Russia's history. This collection made a lasting and terrible impression on me. So many of
the paintings depicted battles and slaughter of all kinds that I felt as though I must have blood on my hands when I left the gallery.

We were in St. Petersburg on Whitsunday and attended services in at least four of the great cathedrals. The attendance was large and the dimly lighted bodies of these churches were packed with standing people. I got the impression that the Russians were a deeply religious people. Old men and women as well as young stood there packed together. However, the services seemed to be shows presented to the people, at which they were just onlookers, rather than participants in a shared experience.

The choir was closed off by great portals which were opened at the beginning of the service. The choir and clergy marched out to the darkened church in a blaze of light and splendor, in most beautiful vestments, carrying banners, candles and icons studded with jewels. No organ is used in the Eastern Orthodox church, or any other accompanying instrument, only the wonderful deep bass voices of the male choir. When the music was over, all the brilliance and splendor marched back again into the rear of the choir, the doors were closed, and the crowded congregation was left standing footloose and weary in the cold and gloom of the dimly lighted nave. It seemed to me at the time that the Eastern Orthodox Church was failing to give the people any personal religious experience that would fill their obvious need at that moment. The services were glamorous spectacles which simply added emphasis to the already obvious and deeply resented concentration of wealth in the nobility and the church.

Our last evening we were given what I imagine was a rather expurgated glimpse of the nightlife of St. Petersburg. We ended at the opera and ballet, then returned to the hotel for our bags, and boarded the night train for Moscow.

Our party filled the whole second class half of a sleeping car in the Moscow train. Our only fellow passengers on this car were in the first class section. They were a handsomely dressed Russian lady and an equally handsome young Army officer.

We lingered in the aisle clapping and watching the passing landscape in the prolonged daylight until after 2 A.M., when we repaired to our respective compartments. We were all convinced that we spent the hours sleepless until dawn. When dawn came, however, we discovered that we had either slept or been drugged, for our compartments had been broken into and most of our party had been thoroughly robbed. Miss Palmer and I lost nothing, but everyone else had lost passports, tickets, letters of credit, travelers checks and so forth and, of course, all of their money. Our fellow passengers in the first class section were most solicitous, somewhat too much so, and we have always felt a little suspicious of them.

The train officials scurried about, sending wires ahead to the police to meet us in Moscow and were most profuse in their apologies. Being met by the police rather dampened our arrival in Moscow, and the first hours of the day were spent in a constant repetition of our story in all of our collective languages. I don't remember how the matter was settled, but I do know that somehow our trip was not interrupted and we took the Trans-Siberian train two days later as we had planned.

It was an unpleasant experience and we began to feel in Moscow that it was we who were under suspicion and not the unknown thief. We also became convinced that in some way we were being spied upon and every word we said was recorded.

We had time in the remaining day and a half to see that extremely interesting city. I am fascinated by the pictures I see of the Kremlin of today, which still looks familiar, though there are many new buildings.

We were reluctant to leave but we were obliged to honor our reservations and boarded our train for Manchuria as we had planned.

Siberia, in that spring of 1910, was very different from the Siberia of song and story. Because of the long snowy winters, the short summers were a glory of fertility and bloom.

We passed through all kinds of countryside: miles of Russian steppes, through many small towns with their unimproved streets, their log houses and churches with typical onion-shaped domes. Again, through fields of yellow flowers (we thought buttercups), then acres of red poppies. The forests were beautiful — great pines and spruce and white birch.

The scenery around Lake Baikal was the finest that I have ever seen, and it seemed to me that in some future day of better brotherhood than we know now, it must surely become one of the great vacation centers, not only of Russia, but of the whole of Europe.

We were depressed by the fact that the children did not wave back to us as we passed. They seemed to laugh so very little and the only form of play we saw them engage in was to swing.

Our only personal contact with the peasants was at the stations, where we left the train for exercise and to purchase food; cheese, bread and fruits to supplement the rather heavy dining car fare.

The train was smaller than the standard European ones because all the Russian railways were narrow gauge to prevent possible invasion of the country by railroad from some other part of Europe. Therefore, our staterooms and passageways were narrow and a little cramped for a journey of thirteen days.

The train burned white birch in the engine, which made such clean smoke that it was possible for us to sit out on the platform floors with our feet on the steps. Also, we only traveled about twenty-five miles an hour, which was why the journey was so long, but yet it gave us an opportunity to see more and to enjoy more completely the country we passed.

I am sure that the Trans-Siberian trip today in modern trains, although much faster, cannot have the charm our trip had back in 1910.
Our fellow passengers came from every country in Europe. A high percentage were men. Because our own party was so large and self-sufficient, we only met our travelling companions in the passageways, generally in bathrobes carrying towels and soap while on route to or from the baggage car where the only shower bath on the train was located.

Harbin, the capital of Manchuria, our Eastern destination, I remember largely because of the fact that we ladies found our first bathtub in many days in the hotel there. Otherwise it was a typical frontier town in every way. I recall that the unpaved streets were a foot deep in mud.

From Harbin we took a train south, stopping for several days at a Chinese seaside resort for foreigners called Peitahi. It was a beautiful place on the Pacific coast of North China. My friends participated in a conference which was being held there for a large missionary gathering. I listened and observed and met many interesting people.

From there we went on south. I have no memory whatever of Peking or Tientsin at that time though I have visited both cities since, but I do remember going through the Great Wall of China. The next thing that comes into my mind is arriving in the central city of Hankow. Hankow and Wuchang were twin cities across the Yangtze River from each other, together forming the modern city of Wuhan of which we hear in today's news. They are situated in the center of China, and are a kind of hub from which, at that time, trains and boats, and now I understand large highways and railroad lines, go out through the country in every direction like spokes of a wheel. They were "open" ports, with many foreigners in residence, and large centers of education. Our own Mission had a college, Central China University, in Wuchang, where we had many friends and had our first taste of "China" hospitality.

We took a boat from Wuchang down the river to a city called Kiukiang on the south side of the Yangtze. Behind the city, the wonderful mountain range of Lu Shan rises precipitously above the plain. A number of years before some missionaries had explored this range and found at the top a beautiful watered valley suitable in every way for a summer resort. The colony of Kuling was founded there and had since grown into an annual gathering place for some 2000 or more vacationing foreigners who lived and worked in the Yangtze Valley. It was there that I met your grandfather, and there that Priscilla was born, and there that we spent many happy summers in our bungalow.

On our arrival I was met at the steamer in Kiukiang by my friend Dr. Cochran and had my first experience of being carried up the mountain over a precipitous flight of stone steps in an open sedan chair slung from long poles on the shoulders of coolies. It was to me a terrifying ride. I was more afraid of the coolies than of the sheer drop, but eventually we reached the hospitable bungalow and Margaret Cochran's wonderful welcome. She and Sam were two marvelous people and their friendship is among the great blessings that have come to me in life.

Margaret was gay and loved entertaining, and they had planned a wonderful time for me. The first afternoon, we went to a tea at a mission bungalow, where I met a young Virginia clergyman. He was the Reverend Edmund J. Lee, and I was told that he was from the "aristocratic Lee family of Virginia." This did not impress me and I didn't like him. When I came home for dinner, Sam asked me if I had met him and what I had thought of him, and I replied that "he is exactly the type of Episcopal clergyman I can't stand." Edmund Lee was, however, a persistent man as well as very charming, and six weeks from that very day we became engaged!

Edmund Lee's calling card
CHAPTER IV
CHINA MISSIONARIES

I will resume our personal story in Chapter VI, but meanwhile I want to make a few observations about the background of our life together in China.

I have always been interested in the expression which I have seen so often on the faces of men and women born of missionary parents and in the mission field when forced before a group of strangers to acknowledge that fact. It is an expression of embarrassment mixed with loyalty and nostalgia. They often seem quite sure that those to whom they speak their background is something too to be particularly proud of. However, in a copy of “Who’s Who” issued years ago while we were still in China, there were more names proportionately of men and women born of missionary parents and in mission fields than of any other comparable group in the entire book.

I would like to say a word here about missionaries as I found them when I arrived in China in 1910. I had a few preconceived notions regarding them as a body. At home I had been interested in missionaries whom I had heard in our churches and admired them and the work they were doing, but I had always felt that they were probably a rather fanatical and extreme lot of men and women.

They also had a certain romance about them and opened a new world geographically to my youthful and imaginative inexperienced. They represented a kind of adventure and degree of idealism and heroism that was especially challenging in our workaday world.

In addition to these impressions of missionaries formed in my home church, I received rather conflicting ones from businessmen and fellow travelers on my way to Anking. In those years very few business people knew much about missionaries and what they were doing, and there were certain general assumptions which were repeated from mouth to mouth and port to port as well. I found very little in such talk which I later thought worthy of consideration. People who don’t lead lives of dedication sometimes tend to disparage those who do.

So it was with rather mixed expectations that I dropped down into the midst of this colony of missionaries in Kuling on my first visit to China, and later, when I was to find my own place in the still closer group of missionaries in our Anking station.

I had by then known many different kinds of people, but I do not hesitate to say that I found this missionary group in China to be among the finest, most interesting and best educated men and women I had ever met. In many ways I found them to be more human than I had expected, and in other ways I found them of higher average intelligence, education and dedication to their work than I had imagined possible.

They were interested in all phases of Chinese life. The first Chinese-English dictionary was the work of missionaries, and they translated not only the Bible into Chinese, but also the textbooks in all the subjects used in our modern mission schools. I know that our American nurses as they went along were translating their textbooks for the Chinese nurses they were training.

Missionaries were among the earliest students of Chinese history, and one of the best modern histories of China was written by Dr. Pott, the president of St. John’s University in Shanghai.

They were students of Chinese art, philosophy and religion and every phase of the country’s culture. At one time, if one had been writing a paper on almost any phase of Chinese culture, and had looked into a library for material, the only books available would have been from the pens of missionary writers.

I have heard many critics speak of missionaries as though they always approached the existing religions to be found in China with ignorance and scorn. In fact, it was among the missionary scholars that the greatest authorities on these religions were to be found.

Your grandfather was a superior master of the Chinese language, and attracted scholars of all varieties of religion and philosophy as personal friends. There was a group that met each Sunday evening in his study and discussed religion, as such, for two or three hours. They included Confucianists, Buddhists, followers of Tagore and representatives of other philosophies. Many of these men later became Christians.

I think it pertinent at this point to quote from Armistead’s supplementary notes on these memoirs:
"I can recall no sense of rebellion or rejection against the vocation of my father and the missionary community in which he worked. If I criticized him at all it was for not being more fervent and ruthless in his struggle against the dark forces of idolatry. I can recall once, as we passed a village temple on the way back from a pheasant hunt, asking Father why we did not go in and pull down the heathen idols from their pedestals. The idea that such a gesture might be resisted by the priests hardly occurred to me. But Father quietly explained that this would not have achieved any purpose anyway. It was only by persuasion and conviction that converts could be won. He did not share the attitude of hostility towards Buddhism and Taoism displayed by some of the more fundamentalist missionaries. He looked rather for the common truths on which he could build in convincing the Chinese that our message was not a complete rejection but a refinement and fulfillment of those partial revelations bequeathed by Buddha, Lao Tze, and Confucius. Judging from the great numbers of Chinese he brought to Christianity, this must have been an effective approach."

I cannot speak for all missionaries, but those with whom I am familiar were close to the Chinese people and were informed, sympathetic and humble.

Not only did missionaries bring an understanding of the West and Christianity to the East, but they played a large part in helping the West understand the East and its great history and background.

When I arrived in Anking as a bride in the fall of 1911, there were several thousand missionaries in China, representing every kind of Christian body that one could find in this country, and varying greatly in their approach and in the method of their work with the Chinese people. For this reason it is impossible to generalize about them. Probably nearly every criticism one heard was justified in some particular case but was in no way fair or true as a generalization about the missionary body as a whole.

During our summer vacations in Kuling and at various conferences we attended through the years, we grew to know missionaries representing a great many diverse denominations and found that the denominational lines did not separate us as individuals. Certainly those of our own church and those of other large denominations had been hand-picked to do precisely the job they were sent out to do.

There were splendid doctors and nurses, who not only tended the sick, but organized hospitals, ran training schools, and taught technicians in X-ray, drug room and operating room techniques. Harry Taylor, our doctor in Anking, was a fine and experienced surgeon who was highly respected by his professional associates. He told me one day that he had begun in the morning with a Caesarean and ended in the afternoon with a brain tumor operation.

The teachers were all men and women not only well prepared but experienced, holding one or more degrees from American colleges. Our St. Paul High School prepared boys for all universities in China and sent a number of students to universities in America to study when they had finished their course of studies in China. At one time the school had at least three American-trained teachers and a well-qualified Chinese faculty.

As time went on, a larger number of Chinese teachers became qualified and the Americans stepped down from the administrative positions, giving these posts to the younger Chinese men who would have to carry on eventually.

The same process of preparing Chinese for the top administrative jobs went on in the hospital also. Before we left, Dr. Taylor was no longer superintendent of the hospital, but was an assistant and consultant to a young Chinese doctor whom he had trained.

One of the criticisms often heard of missionaries in China was that they lived there in luxury by comparison with the standard of living of most of the Chinese to whom they ministered. It was also pointed out that at home in America they would have had to live in a very plain manner and do much manual work of which they were relieved in China by having servants. The fact is that the foreign missionaries had more to do in each twenty-four hours than they could possibly accomplish and, since cooks, coolies and table boys could be employed at such low cost, it would have been a complete waste of the church's time and contributions for us to have been doing our own domestic work.

The answer to the other criticism is again a very practical one. We were all troubled by the fact that we lived better than most of the Chinese around us, but experience had shown conclusively that American missionaries had to maintain a basic American standard of living both to be fair to their families and also to work most effectively.

When I first went out to China I had quite a struggle accepting the compromises which later I realized were inevitable if we were to live and work there. I remember one young couple who came out with high ideals and attempted to live in the Chinese fashion in a Chinese house. The wife broke down, both nervously and physically, within the year, and they were forced to return to America. Also, one of our single women workers, a most dedicated and lovely friend, attempted to live in a house with a number of Chinese across the street and met with the same experience. Her sojourn with us was cut very short. How we ourselves met this problem of compromise I will tell you in a later chapter.

At the time we served in China, a missionary received $2,000 a year. (Your grandfather never received more than this amount, though he was out for twenty-five years.) They were allowed a month's vacation every summer at their own expense in which to recuperate from the heat and the year's work and to renew contact with other foreign friends, who gathered in Kuling or some similar resort. Also, a six month long furlough to the United States, with travel paid, was allowed every four years.
View from Kuling of the Yangtze

Kuling, with community church
When a new missionary arrived, he spent his first two years largely in language study and in conditioning to the new environment, getting some understanding of the people as well as of the work that was to be done.

I have tested missionary friendship under all conditions. During the birth of children and the death of our eldest son, during periods of great anxiety and danger while revolutions were in progress, and I know that one could not be blessed with anything greater than the friendships one found in the mission field.

Of course, along with the schools and hospitals, there was always that activity spoken of as “evangelistic work.” The word “evangel” is a Greek word meaning merely “good news.” The basic reason for our being in Anking was that the good news had reached us through our ancestors through many hundreds of years of journey, sacrifice, teaching, and service, and all that was best in European civilization had come to it through the acceptance of this news. We believed that it had a world-wide application and was essential in this modern age to the full development of those nations in the world that up to that time were unfamiliar with it. We were very aware that we were taking this message to the Chinese people in our own familiar Western form and that there would be great adjustments made before it became a completely indigenous belief and power in the national life.

We also looked upon the “missionary phase” of the Christian church in China as a transitory one, working toward the coming of China’s own indigenous church.
I have been wondering just what the name “Anking” means to my ten grandchildren. You all vaguely know that it is the name of a city somewhere in China, that Duncan and Armistead were born there, and that they and Priscilla spent their early childhood there. I doubt, however, if your parents, with all the pressures of their present lives, have told you very much about their memories of their early home and childhood. Also, in view of the entirely western surroundings in which you were brought up, it would be difficult for them to give you a meaningful picture of that time and place.

Anking was our home for sixteen years through great happiness, deep sorrow, and nights and days of anxiety and actual danger. But it is mainly the happiness of our home life there that I remember as I look back.

Your parents probably remember mainly our nursery, the school rooms and the play yard, and the group of “Aunts” and “Uncles” who were our fellow missionaries and dear friends, and their children. Also, of course, they retain some vivid childhood memories of the atmosphere of the place. Armistead has written in his notes—

“I shall never forget that medley of sounds which came to us on our sleeping porch at Anking from the teeming city outside the compound walls. The wall of the street vendors, the scolding shouts of mothers and above all the great lovely booming of the temple gongs blended into a sort of nightly lullaby which delighted me as I waited for sleep. I remember wondering what lucky chance it was that the stork, or the Holy Ghost, had decided to deposit me in this particular home, with enlightened and affectionate parents and with every comfort I could imagine, instead of some crowded hovel outside the walls. The good fortune seemed all the more remarkable when I reflected that my surname was perhaps the commonest in all of China.”

I want you to know much more than that about the city and those who were with us there.

Remember that I am writing of the years between 1911, when I went out as a bride, and 1927 when we left for the last time. This must be understood, because, since then there have been greater changes in China than in all the thousands of years of her long previous history. So I can only take you back to the days through which I lived and the memories which are mine. To refresh and correct my memory, I have drawn on letters written week after week during those years to my mother.

If you were traveling in those days to Anking from the United States, you would land in China at the great cosmopolitan port city of Shanghai. After some days of sightseeing, visiting, shopping and discovering the charm of that great Eurasian city, you would board one of the comfortable river steamers for the trip up the river to Anking. There were two British lines and one Chinese line, the China Merchants Steamship Company.

The trip on the Yangtze River was always delightful to me. We went so slowly, especially when going upstream, and so close to the shore that we were able to see the life of the little villages and the people going about their work, their thatched mud-walled houses surrounded by small patches of farms. Fishermen with their picturesque big nets greeted you as you went by them. The banks were lined with tall reeds which supplied the fuel for the primitive kitchen stoves in the homes of the people.

Before reaching Anking, the steamer stopped at several large cities—Changchow, Nanking (at various times in its history the capital of China), and later Wuhu.

There were no docks on the Yangtze because the rising and falling of the river at different seasons of the year was so great. At all cities old steamer hulks were anchored out in the stream, with pontoon bridges connecting them with the land. These were known as the “Hulks” and at Closed Ports like Anking were only used by the China Merchants river boats. It was there that freight was loaded and unloaded and passengers waited for those steamers that stopped at Anking. Because we were a “Closed Port,” the British steamship lines had no hulks, and their ships only slowed up in midstream to drop their passengers over the side into enormous sampans which came out from shore with much shouting and excitement to receive them and their baggage and row them to the city’s river gate. This process was reversed for passengers boarding the British ships at Anking. The sampans from shore would rendezvous with the steamers in midstream. Despite the hazards
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Anking, showing the pagoda

Sampan, with passengers meeting the river boat

“The Hulk”

Mission compound from the wall

20
involved, we often traveled on the British ships which were generally superior.

Travelers were fascinated to watch from the decks the feverish loading and unloading of cargo and passengers at the hulks, and the bargers in their sampans coming alongside with baskets at the end of long poles, asking for alms.

You would have enjoyed the luxurious broad decks of the steamers, with comfortable wicker chairs and the cheerful service of the deck and cabin boys. You would have enjoyed the excellent meals and table conversation among the international group of fellow passengers. In fact, a trip up or down river was a coveted delight to us!

On the third day, 600 miles upriver from Shanghai, you would reach Anking. If you were traveling on a Chinese steamer, you would anchor and tie up at the Hulse, and you and all your baggage would be hurried into its dark, dirty interior. As fast as possible you would go through and up the pontoon bridge on the other side to the shore of the river outside the city gate. We were apt to arrive in the late afternoon and sometimes during the night, which gave a certain eeriness to the experience, until it became a familiar one.

If you approached by daylight, you would see just one more tile-roofed, grey city, such as others you had passed, surrounded by a high wall. The skyline was broken by the higher watch-towers over each of its six gates and by the towers on official offices and residences. At the east end, like the mast of a ship, and dominating the view of the city, the dramatically beautiful Anking Pagoda rose out of a Buddhist temple. As our children grew older, one of our favorite outings was to visit this temple and to climb the narrow steps of the Pagoda to the top, from which a beautiful view of the river and surrounding country could be seen.

Anking was the capital of Anwei province and as such the headquarters for the provincial officials and bureaucracy. At that time, it was a city of between forty and fifty thousand people. The main city was entirely surrounded by the city wall, but there were two large suburbs outside the wall, one at the east and one at the west, on the bank of the river. There were four main gates manned by garrisons of soldiers at all times and closed at night and during times of unrest. As I remember it, there was so much unrest during the years we were there, that the gates were often closed, and when we went in and out it was by means of an official pass.

We know that the city wall was at least six hundred years old. We found bricks bearing marks of that period. Parts of it were unquestionably older, for the city had been there for a great many centuries. I have no way of knowing how high the wall was on the outside, but it rose high above the surrounding country and the city within, and as one approached Anking from the land it was impossible to see even the roofs of the temples and yamens (official offices and residences). The outside height was increased by an additional crenelated wall at the top. One of our favorite walks was along the embankment which rose on the city side to the base of this topmost wall, and through the openings in its battlements we had glimpses of the countryside below.

The outside wall fell precipitously into a deep moat and then went down a further incline to the level of the surrounding country.

The wall and its inner embankment was very broad at the top; I think two automobiles could have driven side by side along it. On the inside the wall sloped down to the level of the city streets and houses were built close against it, as though clinging to it for protection.

I will admit that during times of such unrest as we knew, especially during the years when the "War Lords" terrified the country, it was comforting to feel the embrace of such a wall around us and to know that there was a garrison of soldiers at each of its gates.

At its base, the wall was very broad, probably several hundred feet through, so that there were great iron gates, both on the outside toward the river and country, and on the inside, opening into the city. When the gates were closed, one presented one's pass through a crack opened in the outer gate, and after considerable deliberation, the officer in charge admitted your party to the space inside, which was occupied by the garrison troops on duty. It seemed like a dream of another life from another world as we passed by the sleeping soldiers and followed those who escorted us with fixed bayonets to the inner entrance, opening the gates to let us into the quiet sleeping city.

There were four main gates and, I think, two smaller ones, and when they were opened, the traffic through them was very heavy. Of course there were no automobiles, wagons or horses, and very few bicycles. The vehicles to be seen were a fewrickshaws and many Chinese wheel-harrows, an awkward, single-wheeled contraption, but well adapted for use on the narrow paths between the rice paddies. Occasionally one saw two-humped Asiatic camels from a northern caravan.

Most of the cargo for the city was brought in on the shoulders of coolies, in loads suspended from either end of a carrying pole. In this way the water of the river was brought in for the city's needs, beyond what could be had from the wells within the wall, and the produce from the country for the markets. So too did the village people carry home their purchases in the city, and even babies rode in style suspended from the shoulders of their fathers.

Inside the northeast corner of the city wall stood our mission compound, a piece of land of approximately sixteen acres, surrounded by walls. Inside this compound was a large and busy hospital with a nurses' training school, a large boys' high school (St. Paul's), a smaller middle school for girls (St. Agnes'), and the residences of the foreign staff.

St. Paul's had fine big buildings and a beautiful chapel which was a memorial to your grandfather's brother, Armstead. There were also large playing fields where soccer and other games were played, which were well attended by enthusiastic spectators.

The mission also owned several pieces of property outside the compound. One was in the heart of the city where
we had a large church and a splendid middle school for boys and girls. There were also small schools attached to four or five mission chapels dotted through the city and its outskirts.

During our years there, there were some twelve hundred students in our various schools throughout the city and its environs, from infants in kindergarten to advanced medical students. All the schools were staffed largely by Chinese teachers, the products of some twenty-three years of missionary education.

At that time there were about twenty-five adult members of our mission and three families with children. Our houses were comfortable and made of brick; most of them of the rather ugly architecture which had become customary for foreign buildings in the Far East.

At the time we were married, the mission had no available quarters for us to occupy, and my father, immediately reconciling himself to the fact that he was losing me, turned his attention to making my new life as comfortable and productive as possible and offered to build us a house. It, of course, would be mission property, not ours, but we had the right to live in it so long as we were in Anking.

It was a pretty house because we gave great thought to it and had an excellent Chinese contractor who carried out any ideas we might think up. It was not, however, any more expensive than other houses. There was no plumbing, no heating, no wiring at the start (we had no electricity in Anking until several years later) and, while there were eight large rooms with porches and the usual small connecting outbuildings, its total cost was less than US $4,000. Your great-uncle Lawrence, your grandfather’s brother, bought and gave the mission the land on which our house was to be built. In the turmoil and real danger of our years out there, the building and beautifying of that house and making it a home for our family was our greatest recreation and interest outside of our work.

There were six or seven other residences for members of the foreign staff. Our community consisted of Bishop Huntington and his family; Dr. Taylor, the head of the hospital, and his family; and one or two other American doctors working with him at different times. There were also three or four American nurses, secretaries, technicians, heads of the boys’ and girls’ schools and evangelical workers who worked with the Chinese clergymen in the churches of the city and ran the little day schools for the children of each parish. They were a wonderful and outstanding group of men and women and our children knew each of them as either “Aunt” or “Uncle.” We grew very close to one another in our isolated lives so far from our own families.

Although it was the provincial capital and a city of importance in China, Anking was not an “Open” or “Treaty” port. During the 19th and early 20th centuries, treaties had been forced upon the Chinese by the European powers for one excuse or another, by which certain cities, most of them large port cities, were to be open for foreign trade and residence. Extensive areas in those cities were set apart for the use of foreigners, often the most desirable part of the waterfront or “Bund,” which were practically closed to the Chinese, except when they entered for purposes of service or trade. These were known as “foreign concessions.” In most of them there were consulates representing the various nations concerned. The embassies, of course, were in Peking, the national capital. Foreigners living in these concessions were allowed to carry on business and build godowns (warehouses) and offices, as well as residences. Some of these concessions had a large population of foreigners. They had their own social life, clubs, tennis courts and, in a few large cities, even a race track. The foreign businessmen lived their own lives, relatively independent and usually contemptuous of the Chinese people whose guests they really were.

With few exceptions these foreigners did not, and had no wish to, understand the rich Chinese heritage of culture and civilization, many centuries older than their own. An extreme example of what I am describing was the sign in a park in the British concession in Shanghai which read “No Dogs or Chinese Admitted.” Even the British missionaries of the China Inland Mission in Anking, although completely dedicated and living in greater austerity than we Americans, were still sufficiently “colonial” in outlook that they insisted that their Chinese deacons and catechists call at the back door. Such attitudes caused the bitterest resentment among the proud and sensitive Chinese.

I have always felt that we had a great advantage in being situated in a city like Anking, which was not an “Open Port,” and where there were no foreigners except our missionary group, and no burden of prejudice or segregated social life in a large Western concession to confuse the message we were trying to carry, and to be a barrier between us and our Chinese neighbors. A large foreign concession always led to misunderstandings, suspicion, and criticism on the part of the Chinese. I think that in Anking we were relatively free from that.

I do not know just how long before we arrived that it had been that China was forced by some treaty to admit missionaries to all parts of the country. They were not allowed to own land individually, take part in any remunerative enterprise which might come from their residence in China, but the missions themselves were allowed to own property and to carry on their work unmolested.

There were a few other foreigners in Anking, but we saw little of them. The great British China Inland Mission had a school there to which their newly arrived recruits came for a year of intensive language study. They, as well as we, were extremely busy, and, since they lived at the other end of the city, our contact with them was only occasional, although pleasant. There were two French Jesuit priests in Anking who were our friends and with whom, during the Revolution of 1911, we took refuge. There was a Postal Commissioner for the province; at one time a Dane but more often British. Under another treaty, the Postal Service was under the jurisdiction of a group of foreign nations, so that the Commissioners of each province were always foreigners. We were fortunate in

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I wish we had known how to avoid some of the mistakes which we made, but in so complex an undertaking as the attempted meeting of two civilizations, it is almost unavoidable that there should be some mistakes. I believe that our mistakes were largely offset by the sincerity, mutual respect and affection of our personal relationships.

Not only was Anking in many ways an ideal place in which to live, but those years of 1910 to 1927 were probably the best years in China's long history of contact with the West for an American family to be living in central China. The Boxer Rebellion had cleared away much ignorance and misunderstanding of the foreigner. China had learned from the surprising and crushing defeat of the Boxers in Peking in 1901 that it was not the strong and invincible center of the world and that superstition could not protect Chinese soldiers from the more effective arms and discipline of the Westerners. Not only were the Chinese convinced of the superior power of Western might, but they were impressed with the power which Western education had given these foreigners and realized that they must make this knowledge and technique their own if they were ever to establish their place in the world picture.

They saw the miracles wrought by the Western doctors and the evident value of sanitation, and, because of the collapse of so much which they had held to be true, they were even interested in the philosophy and religious beliefs of these foreigners, which motivated the civilization which they in turn, for the first time, were eager to explore.

The United States was at that time the best-lived of the Western powers, largely, I think, because of her treatment of China in the matter of indemnity payments after the Boxer uprising. These were paid to the different powers by the Chinese Government to compensate for the destruction of property and the loss of lives during the Boxer Rebellion. The United States put its share of the indemnity into a fund for scholarships which brought hundreds of Chinese students to America for advanced education in our universities.

Although we in the United States probably did not take full advantage of the opportunity of accepting the indemnity students into our lives and homes during their time in our country, there is no doubt that the official gesture made was greatly appreciated by the Chinese Government and most of the Chinese people. A large group of men who were later to become the leaders of the New China were influenced and impressed by their sojourn and study in America, which, in turn, led to a friendlier attitude toward the United States.

Furthermore, the Americans in China were better liked because they did not have the tradition of colonialism which affected the French, German and British residents there. Americans, including our business people, were personally less arrogant and contemptuous toward the people of China as they met on the streets and in the parks and shops. During our first years there, we were conscious that we were generally more accepted and better liked than any other group of foreigners. However, our favored position did not last. The nationalist revolution led by Chiang Kai Shek was heavily influenced by the Russian Communists in the early 1920's. It taught hostility towards all foreigners, including Americans. By 1927, when we left China, we were very conscious that the anti-foreign feeling of the general public included us.

Armistead in his notes has expressed his own memories of these attitudes as follows:

"Another memory which I retain from this period is that of the shock I experienced in Shanghai one day when I saw a European strike a rickshaw coolie. It was not merely that I was sensitive to any display of anger or arrogance towards the Chinese, although this was certainly the case. The shock came from the fact that in our missionary community one never saw any such incident. To emerge into the less sheltered life of a treaty port, or even of a river steamer with its commercial passengers, was to be introduced to an entirely different world where Chinese were sometimes treated with contempt and where foreigners, despite years spent in the country, had not bothered to learn the language but had to resort to a degrading "pidgin" for communication.

"Now, forty years later, when the United States is depicted to a new generation of Chinese as the embodiment of arrogant imperialism, it is interesting to recollect that it was the British, and not the Americans, who were caricatured on the anti-imperialist propaganda posters pasted by the students on the Anking walls. It was the British who predominated in the international commerce in Shanghai and whose troops and Sikh police kept order. Despite our small Yangtze patrol flotilla, we were still regarded as defenders of Chinese sovereignty, and the typical American in China, whose voice and influence was heard in Washington, was the missionary, not the businessman. It is a memory which the present rulers in Peking have almost succeeded in suppressing."

I look back on those years which we shared in the heart of China, when the civilization and tradition of centuries was breaking up around us, and politics and military life were turbulent and uncertain, and I marvel at the relative peace and serenity in which we were able to live our family life and carry on our work.

They were not entirely easy years for your grandfather and me. It was difficult to maintain a normal family life for our children and to participate actively and wisely in the life of the Chinese church and city, and the movements of the times. There were times of real danger as I will tell later. We came face to face with violence. I have seen headless bodies in the street and two public executions.
We passed through two major and one local revolution and shared all the suspense and unknown possibilities which these presented.

We had serious illness and sorrows in our own family. Our first baby, Edmund Jennings Lee V, born in Shanghai in May of 1912, brought us great joy but also the great sorrow which came to us with his death from spinal meningitis at eleven months of age. Armistead was frequently ailing as a child, and we nearly lost him several times from pneumonia, which in those days before the modern miracle drugs was a very serious illness. Your grandfather was never very robust, and I began my struggle with arthritis in the dampness of the Yangtze climate.

Nevertheless, the years for the most part were happy ones for us and for our children, rich beyond words. I know of no greater privilege than to live closely and intimately as a neighbor with people of another race and civilization and to learn to find the great common bond of brotherhood and humanity which binds us all so closely together.

Houses by the river, outside the walls

View of Anking from outside the walls

Street in Anking
CHAPTER VI

AN AMERICAN BRIDE IN REVOLUTIONARY CHINA

It is time to pick up my narrative which I broke off with my return to the United States in the fall of 1910. I had a wonderful winter at home, and, of course, your grandfather’s arrival in early June, 1911, was the cause of much interest and delight to all my family and friends. We had a beautiful wedding in the Ridgewood house followed by a reception under the trees on the lawn. The wedding took place on June 29, 1911. We then had our honeymoon in the mountains at Lake Minnewaska, followed by a pilgrimage to Virginia, visiting all branches of the Lee family, and I received a warm welcome into the fold. We then returned to Ridgewood for a final visit with my family and left for China sometime in early August, reaching Shanghai about September 11.

In those days the trip between New York and Anking took approximately one month, including three weeks at sea after the slow crossing of the American continent by rail.

The whole trip was delightful because your grandfather was such a rich and rewarding companion. I remember that during our three weeks on shipboard, while walking the deck, he was reciting poetry by the hour, hardly ever repeating himself.

We found a warm welcome in Shanghai, and I realized how much easier the start of my life as a missionary was made by your grandfather’s popularity and by the many friends I had made during my previous visit. We were also met by rather alarming rumors of conditions in the interior—terrible floods in the Yangtze valley and the probability of a resulting famine, political unrest and the almost certain expectation of a revolution. Nevertheless, we spent our few days in Shanghai shopping for our new house, using wedding present money for the furniture, material for draperies, and so forth, which later made it so charming. We also put in a six-month order for groceries to be put on the steamer when we went up the river.

I learned at the beginning of my life in China that one must go on as if life were to be completely normal, even with the certainty of disruptions just ahead of you. We finally started up the Yangtze in late September.

I have always loved the trip up the river and this one, which seemed but a continuation of the trip out, marked the final days when my husband and I could be together without the alarms and responsibilities which were waiting for us in Anking.

Our actual arrival in Anking was on a lovely autumn afternoon, and the entire station came down to the river to meet our steamer. We were given the temporary use of a pleasant house at the end of a three-house block of mission residences to live in until our own house could be built. Work on that was begun as soon as we arrived.

We unpacked only those possessions necessary to make our temporary home attractive and homelike. Our one concession to the alarms around us was to leave many of our boxes of wedding presents in Shanghai, where I was glad to have them when I returned there seven weeks later so spend the winter.

Your grandfather plunged at once into a mass of accumulated work and I began my study of Chinese and attempted to keep house with servants who spoke no English. Of course, I had to learn to speak Chinese: I was, as always, obliged to talk and very few of the Chinese people around me understood English. Your grandfather was a Chinese scholar and his grasp of the language was greatly admired by the intellectual Chinese who knew him.

My Chinese lessons consisted of spending two hours each morning with an elderly Chinese gentleman who firmly shared the common belief that all foreigners smell bad and held an orange to his nose during the entire lesson. I did, however, get a glimmering of the pronunciation and meaning of some of the most necessary phrases.

Chinese is a very difficult language to learn to read, but I think the spoken language, largely made up of idioms, is really easier than English. Through the years, I became fluent in the local patois, a variant of Mandarin. My accent was undoubtedly awful, but the Chinese are always polite about such matters and I was understood; so I acquired a valuable means of communication.

During my sixteen years in China, I even began to think in Chinese, and your grandfather and I found that our English conversations together were often punctuated with Chinese idioms and phrases, often so much more expressive than anything we could find in our own language.
I find my letters of this period very detailed and they are of special interest because the impressions were so fresh. I wrote of our confidence in our Governor and the popularity of all Americans because of the famine relief that they had given to China the previous year.

There was always a famine in our province during the sixteen years I lived there, and your grandfather worked many hours each week with the officials as a member of the Famine Relief Committee.

The official corruption was so widely known that the wealthy Chinese would refuse to give to the relief fund unless some foreigner were on the Board.

The following is from a letter written to my family at this time:

"The other evening, I was lying on a steamer chair on the porch looking up at the stars and the moonlight, the cosmos surrounding our lawn, everything looked as though it might be in Ridgewood, and then I stopped and counted the sounds. The hollow knocking of the watchman's bamboo, the tinkling of the street peddler's bell, the voices of almost constant quarreling which you can always hear, and the wailing of a widow at our corner. (You simply cannot imagine the Chinese wailing until you hear it.) The thing that surprises me is that it all seems so natural to me, I find myself keeping house with Chinese servants, living a busy, contented life. I do think that the adaptability of human nature is remarkable, even my own!"
CHAPTER VII
THE REVOLUTION OF 1911

Before telling you of what happened in our personal lives during the Revolution of 1911, beginning only a few weeks after my arrival in Anking, I want to give you a brief note of historical background.

Over 300 years ago, in 1644, China, not for the first time in her history, was conquered by an alien people, the Manchus from the North. The Manchus founded their own dynasty or royal family in China and monopolized the important offices of government.

While the Manchus and Chinese were related races, the Chinese always considered them outside conquerors, and at time went on, resented increasingly the way the Manchu minority lived in opulence and splendor at the expense of the heavily exploited Chinese people. By the beginning of the 20th century this opposition was increased by the Manchus' blind resistance to the forces of change, which after China's exposure to Western ideas and techniques, were becoming irresistible.

Most Westerners know the Manchus largely through the person of that remarkable old lady, the Empress Dowager Tzu Tsi, who was, to a great extent, responsible for the Boxer Rebellion. Following her death, the Dynasty survived only two reigns. The eventual overthrow of the Dynasty in 1911 was the first step that led in time to the present situation in which the Communists control the vast majority of Chinese people on the mainland, while a small number under the leadership of Chiang Kai Shek have built a new national life on the island of Formosa.

The Republic of China was established that same year in 1911 by Dr. Sun Yat Sen. I remember the very day quite clearly because I happened to be in Shanghai and in the Palace Hotel where the meetings of the China Assembly were being held.

Coming down in the elevator, we stopped at the second floor, and Dr. Sun, who just five minutes before had been elected president of the First Republic of China, stepped into the car. He was a very insignificant looking little man to carry such a burden as he had undertaken, and we know now that the Republic did not prove to be of permanent stability.

During the years that followed, the country was in great turbulence due to the fact that one general after another rose with his private army, often little better than armed bandits, and contended for the complete control of the country. This was a time of chaos and terror and the people suffered severely. It is remembered as the time of the "War Lords."

In 1928 China was unified under Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek but, in 1931, the progress of this consolidation was threatened by the fact that Japan seized the Northeast Provinces and set up a puppet state. From 1937 to 1945, China was at war with Japan and was victorious, largely due to the armed strength of the United States and China's other Western Allies. After her defeat in 1945, Japan returned all the seized territories including Formosa. The years between 1946 and 1949 were marked by civil war between the Nationalists and the Communists, with the Communists finally winning control of the mainland.

In 1927, when we left China, the tension between the Communists and the Chiang Nationalist Government was already proving itself a menace to China's future. Had the Nationalist Government been stronger and less corrupt and had it met the needs, hopes and expectations of the people, there are many who believe that the Communists could not have gained control of all of mainland China as they did.

Coming back now to Anking, the quiet and contentment described in the last chapter was short-lived. The tensions were building up in the city. In one letter I wrote that every night we went to bed not knowing what the night would bring forth, and in the morning we got up feeling: "Well, all right so far."

There was a mutiny of the garrison troops, but the Governor's strong action apparently got things under control. One night, when there was much firing, we slept on the floor with mattresses against the windows.

Here is a quotation from another letter:

"There is a terrible panic in the city, many are fleeing to the country. The hospital is prepared and supplied for any demand for Red Cross work that may be made upon it. The prominent and wealthy are calling on to ask whether in case of trouble they may come into the compound. Of course, we take
care of the Christians first, and outsiders must depend upon the amount of space we have. One application came from our milkman, who wanted to bring in twelve cows.

"No one is quite clear what it is that they are afraid of, but there is panic such as I have never dreamed of."

In another letter written that week, I said that I now understood that fear itself was worse than anything that could come. On looking back, I wonder if this is entirely true.

Several encouraging things then occurred. There was the election of a Provincial Assembly which apparently put the best element in control.

Finally, on November 13, we awoke to find white flags waving from every house at a sign that the city had gone over to the Revolution. This was done so peacefully and quietly that we rejoiced that the matter had been settled for Anking and that we could settle down to our normal life and work. Then the Provincial Assembly held an election confirming the position and making us feel even more secure when, on November 15, things really exploded.

I am including here a letter I wrote on November 17 from the city of Wuhu, where we had sought refuge when the crisis did come, telling of the troubles in Anking and of our leaving the city:

"Dear Family,

Where shall I begin and can I ever straighten out of my poor confused brain all that we have lived through in the past 48 hours. First, I am well and safe in Wuhu with Miss Hopwood and her girls' school, and Dr. and Mrs. Woodward. Edmund and I hope and trust will come by tonight's boat and be safely with us tomorrow. But before this has even reached Japan you will know by a cable.

I think I told you about the election of the Provincial Assembly after we finally revolted so peacefully, when our fine old governor refused the new governorship, and the two days when the power lay in weak hands, and the people had a little taste of what anarchy might mean and assembled at the old governor's Yamen and on their knees implored him to accept. He came out and knelt among them and with tears in his eyes accepted. It was very dramatic and impressive. Two of the gentlemen of the C.I.M. were in the crowd and said it was a remarkable sight, also that they were given good places and treated courteously by everyone.

We did not hear a sound but word came to us almost immediately. Then came four quiet days when there was a little shooting each evening. Escaping prisoners were shot and came to the hospital, one was left in the gutter to die but Dr. Taylor went out and brought him in. Our hospital flew the Red Cross flag, but order was apparently being established and we began planning to send for our boxes. Edmund and Ned both felt that as long as the governor was in authority and foreign powers kept their hands off it would be safe to stay. Oh it was dear in our compound, the flowers and our pretty home. I made pickles with Frances' help, and a pair of flannel pajamas for Edmund with the little tailor's help. Saturday the ALKANA came back from Nanking but only to stop enroute for Hankow. Everything seemed so quiet that even Capt. Houston relented a little about our staying tho' he still wished we would go.

"Well, Wednesday morning was quiet and beautiful, there were no alarming rumors and we studied as usual.

"About a quarter to twelve I came down to get Edmund to go over to noonday prayers at the hospital with me and to my amazement found him gone. As I started for the hospital I noticed that everything was unusually quiet and that the American flag was up over the Red Cross on the hospital tower. Then I met Edmund coming out of Ned's study with a peculiar smile I have learned to know these last few weeks. Danger exhilarates him.

"A few minutes before, the governor, unattended except by two men, had almost fallen into Ned's study, unnerved and terrified, our heroic governor! Two days before some Kukiang troops had come to 'protect the city' and now, wanting to go home, had surrounded the governor's Yamen demanding three months' wages and shooting into the air and becoming menacing. The governor gave them more than half that amount to get them away, but that exhausted his resources, and his bodyguard became frightened and deserted, and he escaped out of the back gate of his Yamen, jumped into a rickshaw and fled to us. Everyone seemed to know at once where he had gone and we locked both compound gates. The governor had been in the hospital as a patient and was an old friend of Dr. Woodward's, so it is not surprising that he came to us.

"The next hour was exciting. Edmund and Mr. McCarthy went out to see what the condition of the city was. Soldiers came to the gates claiming to be the governor's bodyguard and demanding admission, but they only let in a half dozen or so of his most trusted men. Miss Lowe and I took coolies and cleaned and prepared a room for the governor in the hospital. Then I just had to walk up and down and wait for Edmund's return. He came about one-thirty and bolted a little lunch. The afternoon was spent in conference with Father Lamore and the C.I.M. people and the governor and his secretary, in attempts to get in touch with the Provincial Assembly. Things did not seem to improve and at dusk it seemed best to take the school girls and hospital nurses to the Catholic compound and all ladies who could not be of use. We really did not fear any violence to ourselves, as foreigners and foreign property were considered sacred by the revolutionaries, but heard that they were determined to capture the governor, and we did not know what might happen if an excited crowd got inside our walls.

"It rained all afternoon, and at six we started, Edmund and I with a party of eight Chinese girls
and a matron. The mud was terrible, and they stumbled along in the dark, losing shoes and getting soaked with rain. Edmund had to carry the littlest one part of the way, but they were as good as gold. We went around by narrow alleys and hardly met anyone, but the shooting on all sides of us was almost continuous. Ned and Frances brought the second party, and Edmund and Miss Hopwood the third. The girls were given a room in the orphanage, and when they had settled down like little kittens in their quilts, we went over to the monastery, where Father Lamore and another little French Father made us as comfortable as they could.

"The Catholic buildings are all well built, and have thick walls, and our two rooms were on an inner court, so we felt quite safe, both from fire and from stray shot. I suppose we were the first foreign women who had ever been inside these rooms, and a glimpse inside a Jesuit monastery was very interesting. Father Lamore is a handsome, courtly French gentleman, a man who could shine in diplomatic circles, and an experienced educator. He will never go home and see any of his family again and lives the barest, most comfortless kind of life you can imagine. I know the room we had was just like the one he was occupying, for I nearly went into his once by mistake. It had a hard Chinese bed, a desk and a few straight chairs, and a kneeling bench.

"It was cold and we were a little wet. I was warmly dressed and did not really suffer, but Sally was chilled through. Ned and Frances had a room down the hall, and Sally and I sat up warmed by steamer rugs until eleven, when a note came over from Edmund saying that some wounded men had been brought into the hospital, and he must stay and help. I was really glad that he did not attempt to come, for it was raining terribly, and there was constant shooting all around us. We slept off and on but did not attempt to undress. There were tremendous fires during the night that the priests called us to see. One wiped out the main shopping district and the other, which occurred at dawn, seemed to be at our compound. Father Lamore and Ned went out on the street, and everyone said it was the hospital, but it afterwards proved to be some distance away. We did not go to bed after that, but opened the windows and watched the dawn come. About seven, in came Dr. Taylor, very much excited, and he told us to be ready to leave on a Japanese gunboat at eight. He had a busy night. He and Miss Lowe and Edmund had operated until about three. The governor had gone to the McCarthy's house near the city wall earlier in the evening, where he and Mr. McCarthy sat and talked until four, then Dr. Taylor came over and he and the governor were let down over the city wall in swings and crept around in the rain to the river, where they took a sampan out to the Japanese gunboat. While there, Dr. Taylor got permission to bring the foreign ladies and school girls out — not knowing what the situation actually was, he did not want to let the gunboat go with the governor and not get us out of the city. Edmund came a few minutes later and took me back to the compound. It was still drizzling and there were still occasional shots. We threw a few things into a suitcase and almost ran through the streets to the East Gate, for fear we would be late. The servants were so pitiful. Old Jan Si Fu, the coolie whom I have rather despised, came panting after us with my rugs and my bag. He really had tears in his eyes when I got into the boat. Few people were in the streets, but the few tired faces that we saw looked so hopeless when they saw we were leaving. Edmund kept saying that he was coming back and that seemed to reassure them. The girls and the Woodwards and Miss Hopwood were already in the sampans when we got there, so I did not have any time for hysterics but had to climb in and leave Edmund and Dr. Taylor standing on the shore. We sailed out to the gunboat, where we were met with much formality by the little Japanese officers. As we came up the gangway, we each had to wipe our feet off on a disinfected mat. Then we were ushered down into the petty officer's cabin, where we stayed all seven-hour run to Wuhu. Four attendants of the governor were on board and with us. They were all high class officials, but you would not have guessed it from their clothing that morning. The little girls were as good as gold, sat quietly all day, and even choked down the unappetizing Japanese food without a murmur.

"SUNDAY AM the 19th. Edmund is here safe and sound. I want to tell you that before I go on with my story. Now to go back to the gunboat. They treated us very nicely and we were as comfortable as possible. They refused to take any money or allow the servants to accept fees. The doctor, who could read and speak a little English, was with Dr. Woodward most of the day. Dr. Woodward made a long call on the governor who was in a cabin by himself, and the governor came in for a moment and spoke to the girls. I was glad to meet him and see him so closely. He is a sick, shaken man now, and Ned says he has changed pitifully in the last month. He went on down to Shanghai in the gunboat, but we and his retainers got off here about five o'clock. We took sampans to the American torpedo destroyer that was here and we ladies went on board with Ned for tea while the captain went to find out when the next down-river boat was due, as there was none that night. Ned decided to take all of us up to our mission here, so three boatloads of us started down the river to the Bund. There were Frances, Miss Hopwood and I, Jack McCarthy, twenty-eight Chinese girls, nurses, teachers, and four Chinese gentlemen who were afraid of arousing suspicion by going to an inn without baggage or bedding. One was a Tao Tai (a high official), another was the leader of the governor's bodyguard, the third was someone of importance, and the fourth was a servant. They were very appreciative of Ned's kindness and acted their part as our servants very realistically when it came to
carrying our luggage. I doubt if my bag is ever carried by so great a personage again.

“We foreigners found a warm welcome here from Mr. and Mrs. Goddard, and the girls were made comfortable in one of the finished rooms of the new school building. Yesterday morning at 7 A.M. Edmund came with seven trunks. We were all terribly tired, and while I think the strain and constant firing were beginning to tell on us, we were really non the worse for it. Edmund said that everything grew quiet after we left. The trouble was caused by the rough element in the city breaking loose after the city was without a head. The soldiers turned to and tried to control things, but lots of damage was done before the military authorities got control. Scores of merchants are ruined and those who were not burned out were looted. We got out without seeing any horrors or having any sense of personal danger. On the contrary, people were piteously and obviously sorry to have us go. Edmund says, however, that the main streets of Anking were terribly burned and there are empty shops everywhere, and decapitated bodies of looters are in the streets. Mr. and Mrs. McCarthy are planning to remain with Dr. Taylor and Miss Lowe, though the boys' school has closed. Ned took back a party of school girls to be sent to their homes on yesterday's boat and will probably return on Tuesday. Edmund plans to remain here until we are able to dispose of the remaining girls, then take me to Shanghai to stay with Margaret. She has taken a house there and has a room for me.

"He hopes to go back and forth, spending most of the time in Anking, and I am trying to be really willing. There is nothing I can really do myself to help and by not keeping him I can really help many people, for his return will give definite protection and help to a large number of distressed and helpless people. He is well, and in spite of all that he has gone through, full of enthusiasm over the wonderful opportunity that this time affords. Then we have the remarks of fact that amidst all the bloodshed and rioting that is going on all over this great empire, only one foreigner has been hurt, and that was by a spent bullet in Hankow during a battle. I find I have married a very brave man, but that is so common a commodity here that we take it for granted. Dr. Taylor is one of the luckiest men I have ever seen and Mrs. McCarthy and Miss Lowe are trumps. None of us has been afraid."

I think it may add to the interest of this incident to include in the narrative a letter from Mr. McCarthy, the head of our boys' school, to our bishop. The letter was really written as his defense for having taken the responsibility of letting the governor take refuge with us. This interference in Chinese politics was opposed to all Mission policy, but the circumstances seemed peculiarly urgent in this case. His letter now follows:

St. Paul's School, Anking
Saturday, November 18, 1911

"My Dear Bishop:

"I tried to get a letter off yesterday to you telling you of the recent very serious developments here. I will now write fully as the letter of yesterday was little more than a list.

"You probably know that after a great deal of argument and repeated refusals, the Governor Chu Chia Pao consented to act as 'Tu Tu' to the new government. He had however as rival, the nominee of the studentry, Wang by name, young (25), inexperienced in affairs but noisy and self-assertive. There were then two parties in the city. (The Anhui troops supported Chu Chia Pao.) On Sunday or Monday last a large body of Kiang Si troops arrived to assist in the capture of the city, if such an action were needed, but finding Anking already under the white flag, they encamped in some of the large schools, etc., now vacant. They numbered eight hundred, and were apparently steady decent men. The two parties were contesting the headship, however, and to render the situation still more acute, the Kiang Si troops had arrived short of pay, and almost immediately demanded the settlement of their arrears. This amounted to all of $7,000. The governor declared the emptiness of the treasury and referred them to the Tsu Yi Chu, the members of which assembly turned them back with the explanation that they had no funds to handle at all.

"The dispute culminated in a noisy attack on the governor's Yamen in the forenoon of Tuesday last. Firing right and left (though in the air) the riotous soldiers broke into the place looking for the governor. But hearing the shots Chu Chia Pao with a small band of servants and a small squad of faithful soldiers broke through the back wall of the Yamen and part of the way on foot and part in a rickshaw made his way to our compound, in the last state of fatigue and agitation. The situation was indeed a serious one; and while some of us thought it was most unwise to harbour such an important fugitive, others of us were emphatic on the point of keeping him until night and then by some means getting him out of the city. Recognizing the seriousness of the case and being fully aware of the dangerous possibilities, I want to say to you, Bishop, that I was one who strongly declared that we had to keep him from harm, if by any possible means we could do so. When we meet I will be glad to answer any inquiries you as Bishop will ask; for I know the action involved the mission very gravely. I only know that a man hunted for his life came to our door; and I would ask, who could turn him away in broad daylight in a city full of possible enemies?

"To resume, he remained in the hospital until dark. In the meantime, recognizing that an attempt might be made to capture him, every preparation was made to meet this contingency. A 'boat-swan' chair was brought over to our house by which we were to lower him over the wall. (Our house is quite at the back of the compound near the city wall.) Dr. and Mrs. Woodward, Mrs. Lee, Miss Hopwood, all the girls' school and the four nurses from the hospital and Jack were accommodated in the Roman Catholic Nunnery by Father Lemour, who all through supported us by his advice and help. The
boys' school was disbanded for the night, boys whose homes were outside the city going off with those who lived inside.

"After dark I took His Excellency over to the house and we got him to take some food and rest. That night was an awful one in the city! The glackguardism of the place broke loose. First the soldiers, then the robbers, then the ordinarily decent people commenced to rob and pillage. There were fires in all directions, except fortunately over in our corner. The Szu P'ai Low was nearly looted clean, also every other big street. The furniture inside the shops was smashed to pieces in many cases; neighbors robbed neighbors. About one A.M. a body of Hu Pe'h troops arrived and immediately began the work of restoring order. Thieves caught were summarily decapitated and between the post office and our Erh Lou Hing compound I saw next morning five headless corpses. Order was at last restored by six or seven o'clock.

"In the meantime, Taylor and I, at four A.M., the night being dark and cloudy, took His Excellency and two servants to an enclosure just at the back of our house and lowered him over. I remained behind with Mrs. McCarthy while Taylor took C.C.P. to the Japanese gunboat that was leaving that morning, where he was received very kindly. While there, Taylor thought it expedient to make arrangements (if possible) for all the people at the Roman Catholic Mission to go on board also. The suggestion was courteously met and the captain agreed to take the people down to Wuhu while the governor they would take to Shanghai.

"That is how it now stands. Mr. Lee and Dr. Yoh went down yesterday, taking clothes, etc., for those who had left, as they had had to go with hardly anything. Lee expects to be back soon. He will not even go to Shanghai if he can make the transfer in Wuhu. The compound is nearly deserted. The two schools closed. The hospital with wounded trickling in; they have eight or nine now; and if the anticipations of the populace are realized we have not really begun the trouble yet. The Kiang Si troops are still in a very unrestful state owing to the lack of money and consequent stoppage of pay.

"In the meantime we are holding on; Miss Lowe doing the hospital work and Mrs. McCarthy assisting. I am just going around looking after things generally.

"May I ask one or two things please. First that no hasty judgment be made on our action in harbouring the governor till we are in a position to lay the matter before you, and secondly, that the manner of his escape may be kept from the Chinese. It will, of course, leak out in time, but other stories are current as to the facts, and they may be accepted. Thirdly, I would be much obliged if you could get this typed; and have either this or the copy returned to me.

"Trusting you in Hankow are all well.

Yours sincerely,

(signed) Wm. McCarthy

These letters show some of our personal experience during the Revolution of 1911 which marked the overthrow of the Manchu Dynasty.

To resume the story — my husband arrived in Wuhu, as you know from the letter, and took me immediately to Shanghai, where I spent the rest of the winter with my friends the Cochranes.

A number of refugee missionary families had rented a row of houses on the outskirts of the city, later dubbed "All Saints Row." We were a homesick lot of women with our husbands in the interior and in more or less danger, but they were a rare group and we were able to work out a life by ourselves and to enjoy, as far as possible in the circumstances, the unique charm of Shanghai.

Here I am including a letter from your grandfather to my family telling his side of the story of that winter. It was a hard one for both of us, but our friends were wonderful and I had every care, and Edmund was with me when the baby was born on May ninth, 1912.

Anking
Dec. 14th, 1911

"Dear Father:

"I left Lucy in Shanghai on the first of Dec. some six months or a year ago. She was comfortably and attractively fixed with the Cochranes and Murdoches, others of our good friends being close at hand. The boxes were all conveniently in Shanghai and furnished everything that was needed — not to mention some twenty packing cases of things that were not needed.

"Lucy may have referred to my notably strategic move in taking her down to see the Costorns officials and so getting all the wedding presents in duty free. The Dubois Morisses had to pay on theirs. I found on inquiry that Mrs. Morris had not taken part in the manner indicated above, and took occasion to point out to Mr. Morris the cause of his failure.

"As for us in Anking, we are doing very well, taking it all in all. Dr. Taylor and I are 'mealng' with Mr. McCarthy. He has a good cook, and we have plenty of the creature comforts. Dr. Taylor as a bachelor may be entirely satisfied, but McCarthy and I know it is but a miserable existence. However, we live in hope. I told you about the election of 12/15. Well, McCarthy's hope has been realized. Mrs. McCarthy came back this morning. She succeeded in persuading the Wuhu British Consul so that he finally consented to her return. It will make Christmas an entirely different thing in Anking in the matter of Christmas cheer.

"It is a matter of great regret to me that I cannot be with Lucy Christmas Day. I hope to leave the next day, however, and get to her on Wednesday for a week's stay. We hope that conditions will soon be stable enough to admit of the ladies all returning. You can count, however, on my not letting your daughter take any needless risks.

"As a matter of fact our Anking trouble was what is called in college a 'fumble.' A visit of a regiment or more of Kiukiang soldiers was the thing..."
Where I lived in Shanghai as a refugee, and where Edmund V was born

Little Edmund, back in Anking

Trinity Chapel, St. Paul's School, Anking, and memorial to Armistead, your grandfather's brother. Little Edmund was buried to the rear of the chapel.
that upset the equilibrium here. They started the row that resulted in the flight of the governor and the looting of the business streets. But for this accidental element from outside we might have weathered the storm without any serious local trouble, and not have found it necessary to break up our schools and our homes.

"Since the leaving of the Kukiang troops some two weeks ago the city has been quiet and public confidence is being slowly restored. We have no governor and the politics of the city is rather chaotic. Good order is, however, maintained; and we do not anticipate any other serious disturbance."

"As to the general situation, at present it looks rather hopeful, it seems to me. Personally I am for the Yuan Shih Kai programme, and am hoping that he may be able to win the leaders of the revolution to a like view. The future here, however, is about as indeterminate as it could well be. One man's guess is as good as another's.

"In the meantime the Lee house is going up steadily next door. There has been much delay and it will probably not be completed much before the summer. We shall hope to be able to enter immediately on peaceful possession, and to welcome our Ridgewood family there shortly thereafter.

"With much love to Mother, Aunt Nettie and the boys,

Yours affectionately,

(signed) Edmund J. Lee

P.S. I am a novice on the typewriter"

Shortly after the baby's birth in Shanghai in May of 1912, your grandfather took us to Kuling in early June, to spend the summer in a charming little bungalow that he had rented from a friend and in which he got a much needed rest and vacation. We were also having the fun of planning our own new bungalow to be built on a lot which your grandfather had owned for several years. This was ready for us when we returned the following summer.

The summer of 1912 was entirely centered in our perfectly beautiful baby, and I doubt if any life so short brought more joy than his eleven months did to us.

In the fall we returned to Anking and to our brand new home, and our normal life, which continued for sixteen years, resumed. Of course, it was again and again broken by many things, but I look back upon it as one of the most constructive, busy and worthwhile periods in the life I have been privileged to live.

When I returned with the baby to Anking in the September of 1912, I was beginning my second year in China, and my first business was to unpack our furniture, wedding presents and other belongings and make our newly built house into a home.

I was also forced to begin housekeeping with servants, none of whom spoke any English, and most of whom had no previous experience in a Western home.

I had the splendid help of an experienced amah in the care of the baby, but I preferred to take on most of his care myself and look back upon it with joy and thanksgiving.

I also resumed my daily Chinese lessons, but it was more through constant contact and conversation with servants and callers that my Chinese vocabulary gradually increased. I have no gift for languages, but I have always loved to talk and learned through using constantly the little language which I had.

Now began the process of learning to live in a Mission Station. When I had first arrived in Anking, I had no idea what part I would be able to play in the life of the Station there. I had none of the preparatory training which every other member of the station had had before even applying to the Board of Missions to be sent out, and I was uncertain as to my ability to adjust to the life or learn the language. My one desire was to be a good wife and homemaker to your grandfather, and a mother to the baby.
CHAPTER VIII
AN AMERICAN HOME IN CENTRAL CHINA

Establishing an American home in the interior of China presents problems. It is not fair to missionary children to make them pay too high a price for their parents' dedication to a cause. They should be adequately prepared for their eventual return to their own country, to American schools and colleges and to the life of their own generation. On the other hand, their standard of life should not so remove them from their Chinese friends as to create a barrier to the accomplishment of the purpose of our being there. As I have mentioned earlier, it was a difficult problem and one which many generations of missionaries tried in different ways to solve.

I think the Chinese with whom we lived most closely accepted us for what we were, foreigners with different customs and standards, living temporarily in their country, with no purpose other than good will and friendliness. I know we had many warm friends among all classes of Chinese, and in my sixteen years in the city of Anking, I never felt any fear nor was aware of any hostility until the last few weeks before we left, when the communist-inspired anti-foreign movement began to affect the students on the street.

I think we were successful in living very close to the Chinese with whom we associated and at the same time in maintaining a very normal life in our own family, sharing both our recreation and our interests with our children and our Chinese friends. I am sure that it was because most missionary parents in China realized the danger to their children in those alien surroundings that they strove so hard to compensate for the disadvantages of the situation and that their family life in the mission field was usually very close.

We read aloud a great deal as a family. We loved to picnic. When in Anking we picnicked outside the city wall near the small temples in pine groves, and when in Kuling in the summers, on the many wonderful mountain tops and beside the shaded pools. We were always accompanied by a cookie who carried our food in baskets on the carrying-bar over his shoulder. When she was little, Priscilla, like her brothers before her, occupied one of the baskets and the supper the other and sat beaming as she jogged up and down the rocky paths.

The children had no fear of any Chinese so far as I knew. They received nothing but kindness from them. The Chinese love children, including foreign children. The Amahs seemed to transfer all their maternal love to the foreign children they cared for, and many of them died protecting their charges in the siege of Peking during the Boxer Rebellion.

We had what seemed to me an elaborate menage. The head servant was the cook, Da Si Fu, or great servant, who did all the marketing, cooking and baking, and handled all the money spent locally for food. By common consent, cooks kept ten percent of all the money they handled. This was their "squeeze." They worked hard and long and the wages were low. Those whom I had had all been trained by former foreign employers and most of them were excellent cooks.

Our food was Western, since neither our finances nor our digestions permitted us to live on Chinese food, much as we learned to love it. The good Chinese cuisine cooks commanded considerably higher wages than our Western trained cooks, and when we were obliged to give a feast for some official, we could always call in a caterer who supplied everything and gave us an excellent Chinese meal.

In addition to the cook we had to have a cookie. He washed the floors with disinfectant every day, attended to our stoves and open fires, and carried into the house and up the stairs to the bathrooms all the water that we used for bathing. He saw to the heating of the bath water on a special stove in the rear kitchen. There was no plumbing and all the water used for drinking and for washing and so forth, I personally saw boiled. When I was ill, one of my trained nurse friends came in and superintended this operation. The well and river water was all contaminated and unless sterilized by boiling could easily produce dysentery, typhoid or even cholera. Boiling the drinking water was the one thing we could not leave to the servants.

The cookie was also our errand boy and "chit" carrier between the houses, since we had no telephones. He took
as she jogged

I am so far as I know from them.

Their children. The only child of them died during the plague. The servant, who handled the non-consent, they handled. And long and long had all been lost of them.

finances nor food, much less the new English cook (our Western cooks give a feast caterer who Chinese meal.

coolie. He attended to the house and that we used hot water on a no plumbing flushing toilets...

I was ill, one of my intended relations ended up in the drinking fountain to the "chit" carrier box. He took
The compound collectively ran an excellent laundry to which we sent our clothes, and collectively we paid two gatekeepers to be on duty at the two gates.

We entertained or went out nearly every night. We had Chinese and foreign guests and often attended feasts at the homes of provincial and city officials.

I want to say more about our Chinese friends. They were very varied. Some of them were the simplest men and women in the neighborhood who were loyal and devoted friends and church members, and some were high officials, even the governor of the province himself.

The governor in office during little Edmund's illness and death was an extremely fine man. He was devoted to your grandfather and utterly devoted to the baby, the first American child he had ever known. Hearing of his illness, he came back to Anking from a trip he was on and was with us constantly during little Edmund's last days, coming in to stand by the foot of the bed in the nursery, watching the sick baby with tears in his eyes. After little Edmund's death, there was nothing he could think of that he did not do for us, giving us a beautiful piece of white brocade to cover the little casket and some gold Chinese baby bracelets to put on little Edmund's wrist. He sat with us during the funeral ceremony and was our close friend as long as he remained in Anking.

During little Edmund's illness and after his death, the kindness we received from our Chinese neighbors and even strangers on the street was unbelievable. The experience of losing a baby was the most common experience of motherhood in China, and I had the sympathy of a city full of other mothers. Not only was he the first American baby to be born in the city, but the first foreigner to die there, and in many ways it seemed to bring me very close to them. One of my American fellow workers said to me one time: "You know, your limited language and your lack of training was more than made up for by the death of little Edmund, which has brought you closer to these women than we can any of us ever come."
CHAPTER IX
“SIMP” AND HER SCHOOL

I am sorry for my grandchildren, who never knew Simp. She played a very great part in the lives of your parents and in the lives of all of us who were in Anking and was a blessing to me and your grandfather for four wonderful years.

I feel that no story of our life in Anking is complete without including her, and I would like you to know how she happened to be with us, and of the school in which your parents began their education.

As the boys grew older, I realized how ill-prepared I was to teach them. Besides, I was becoming more and more involved in an industrial venture among the very poor women of Anking, about which I will tell you later. In this dilemma the problem of the boys’ education became an acute one. It looked as though I would have to give up my Chinese work, which I was only beginning to feel qualified for, and devote my time to teaching, which I was in no way prepared to do, either by training or temperament.

My mother and father had been in China when I began my industrial work and were enthusiastic about it and its possibilities. They saw the problem, and again, characteristically, my father offered to send a teacher or helper to me to live in our home and take over the education of the children until such time as they could go to the Kuling American School. He offered to pay her passage out, send her a monthly salary, and in the end after her four years with us let her complete her trip around the world.

We were at home in the United States at the time this matter came under discussion and my father made his offer, and we spent much time and thought in trying to find some qualified woman who would be willing to come out to Anking for a period of at least two years. We did not dream that we would be lucky enough to find such a person as Mrs. Simpson proved to be.

After one or two disappointments, I received a letter from a lady in South Carolina, telling me that she had just passed through a very deep sorrow, was anxious to get away, was deeply interested in China and in travel, loved children and, while she had had no technical preparation in teaching, was confident that she could teach little children. She asked if we would let her come up to New York at her own expense to meet us and talk it over. We agreed and both your grandfather and I fell in love with her on the spot. I remember saying to him after we separated from her at the hotel: “That is someone who is going to play a large part in our lives” – and she did.

I remembered this just the other day, when a letter came to me from her, from Charleston, South Carolina, where as a widow at eighty-five she is courageously and successfully using her big waterfront home to entertain tourists during the winter months. She is as interested in each one of you as she was the day she left us, and the friendship between her and your grandfather and me has always been very close. She remarried after her return from China and is now widowed. She is Mrs. James Wilkinson, living at 51 South Battery, Charleston, South Carolina. I wish you could all know her.

The first year she was with us, we were detained in the United States because of various illnesses and spent the winter of 1919–1920 at the Ridgewood house. The house was so large that we only used half of it and one of its two furnaces. It was in many ways a dreary winter because Armistead had his fourth attack of pneumonia there and nearly died. Simp nursed him through that and did everything possible to help me. Some of the time we could find no other help. When we returned to China in the fall, she went with us and made the trip delightful for all of us.

Armistead as a baby called her “Simp” and that became her name for the entire Anking compound, where she was one of its most beloved members. She was capable, gay and lovable, and all children adored her. We looked upon her as a sister. She was a Presbyterian when she came to us, but soon asked to be confirmed in the Episcopal Church and became an enthusiastic helper in the mission station. Anything she could do with her limited Chinese and time, she stood ready to do. It was surprising how well she communicated with Chinese nurses and doctors and teachers who had only a little English. She seemed able to get her gaiety and love across despite the language barrier. Of course, a great many of those with whom she came in contact did speak English and became her fast friends.
“Simp” (at the right) and her school; Duncan next to her, and Armistead at extreme left

The nursery turned into a school room.
We turned the nursery into a schoolroom during the day, fitting it with little desks, blackboards and maps (Simp was extremely partial to maps), and all the American children in Anking, from the first grade up, attended the little school which she conducted.

We also had one Chinese student, Andrew Loh, the son of an official who had himself attended Oxford University and was anxious that his son should follow him. I wonder where he is now. Simp used to say that he was the only real gentleman in the school. Sedate in his long blue coat and with polished manners, he made our boisterous little tribe of American children seem uncouth and crude.

There were, in addition to our two boys, Helen Taylor, the oldest daughter of our beloved doctor, Uncle Harry; Bishop Huntington’s two older daughters; three children of the Wheelers, a YMCA family based in Anking; and the two children of the Rev. and Mrs. Larry Sinclair of our station.

While Simp had had no previous training in teaching, she was a born teacher and had an instinctive understanding of little children. One day I asked her about something which she had done and where she had gotten the idea, and she said, “I don’t know. I simply know how children feel and it seemed to me that would be the best way of making them understand.” She was a great believer in memorizing, and I am sure this has stood by all her pupils in their later education.

She loved maps and was a world-minded person herself. As a result the children learned the map of the world thoroughly. All its countries and big cities and great rivers and bays and oceans and mountains were familiar objects in their minds. I think this was one of the reasons why all of them have been particularly interested in other countries as they grew up.

They put on little plays. I remember particularly a clever rendering of “Hansel and Gretel” which was done on the lawn one spring at the close of school.

Simp had the ability of mixing plenty of fun with a great deal of really hard work. When the children went to other schools, they found they were exceptionally well prepared. I have always felt that we owe a great deal to her for the academic success of our two boys. I don’t mean by that last statement to slight Priscilla, who also achieved very well academically, but she was too young to give Simp any of the credit.
CHAPTER X

THE BEHEADING SWORD

As I look back on my years in China, perhaps the most bizarre and unbelievable experience I had came through our acquaintance with the Chinese general who was stationed in Anking in charge of the river police. Your grandfather had come to know him through serving with him on the Provincial Famine Relief Committee.

There were always famines in Anwhei province during our sixteen years there. The river overflowed its banks each year, causing floods, famine, destruction and wandering refugees, and the problem was never really solved during our stay in China. Your grandfather spent many weary hours on committee work in an attempt to relieve the suffering. Due to lack of resources, red tape and corruption, the accomplishments of the Relief Committee were never impressive, but one personal reward for your grandfather was his acquaintance with a great number of officials who came to respect and like him, and whom he, in turn, grew to know and like.

This particular general, whose name I have forgotten, was one of these. The Yangtze River was infested with pirates. They harried the boat population who lived along the river banks, the little fishing villages, the passenger launches that traveled up and down, and the freight and passenger barges. There were many pirates and the tales of their cruelty were beyond belief. Our general friend took his duties seriously. He firmly believed that extreme measures were the only way to deal with such men, and he carried out his convictions with ardor.

My personal contact with his family was through one of his concubines who had shown an interest in Christianity and an avid desire to learn whatever we could teach her. I visited her frequently and had become very fond of her. She was slowly dying of tuberculosis. Like so many other girls in her situation, our general had found her in a house of prostitution in Shanghai, and, as was often the case, she was not there through any choice of her own. She had been sold to the house in childhood and brought up to that life. She was an extremely sweet, sensitive and intelligent girl and was also the general's favorite.

His first wife, the Da Tai Tai, the “great lady,” was head of his household, a woman I learned to know and admire. There were a number of secondary wives and concubines, and her relation to them was rather that of a mother-in-law. She was kind and wise and they, as well as the general, showed great respect for her.

My little friend, because of her ill health and because she was his favorite, did not live in the big Yamen with the rest of the family. He had a house for her across the street and it was there that I would go and see her. Every time I went, after our visit she would take me over to the big Yamen to have tea with the Da Tai Tai. The Yamen was not only the residence of the general and his large family but his office as well, and the front courts were always filled with soldiers and guards. In the rear of the offices were the family quarters, and it was there that the Da Tai Tai and the other wives lived. She was always most cordial to me and usually the general dropped in to join us and often invited us for more tea in his own room.

I want to say a word about him since he was a rather interesting man. In his childhood he had visited the United States on a Chinese gunboat on a “good will” mission, had learned a little English and had a vague memory of the city of New York. This made him anxious to cultivate us. He wanted the chance to use his little English and to learn more. I’m afraid this was one of the secrets of our friendship. I am sure it is why he sought me out so often when I went over to call on his ladies.

At the rear of the Yamen was a stockade where the most recently arrested pirates were kept awaiting execution. It was always a public beheading, after which the heads were exhibited on pikes over the city gates. Our friend firmly believed that this procedure was a deterrent to crime and the only way that the criminal element could be impressed by the law, though it did not seem in any way to be lessening the piracy that was going on.

On every visit he urged me to go with him around to the back and look at the prisoners. This to his surprise I always refused to do. He was always a little puzzled that my interest was so limited.

His own quarters consisted of one bedroom, with a hard wooden Chinese bed, over which on the wall was draped a piece of red silk. I had been told that under this silk hung the beheading sword used for executions, so I found the visits to the room a little grim.
One morning I was told by our servants and a number of other people who came in that there had been a public beheading the day before which had shocked even the hardened onlookers. The beheading sword had apparently become very dull from much use, and it had taken a great many strokes to fulfill its purposes. In one case it took fifteen whacks to sever a head. This was a sickening situation, and I realized that it would continue to go on unless something were done about it. I also heard that the matter had gotten into the Shanghai papers and would probably be repeated in the American press. I felt that such publicity would not give a just impression of Chinese law.

I can't remember the circumstances in which I did it—whether your grandfather knew, or whether I took off on the impulse of the moment, because I was extremely indignant and angry, but I went at once over to the Yamen and asked for an interview with the general.

This he graciously granted, rather pleased with the outcome of his previous day's work and eager to discuss it.

Our conversation was the unbelievable part of the story. I told him that I had heard what had happened and was utterly and completely horrified, that the story was in the Shanghai papers and would get into the foreign press, and that, because of my love for China, apart from any other reason, I was humiliated and grieved. I told him that such an execution was not a matter of justice but was an atrocity which should not be allowed to go on. I said that he must do something about that sword before any further executions took place. He replied that there was nothing that he could do, that no sword sharpener in the city of Anking would touch this sword because of a superstition against sharpening a sword of execution. Then I suggested that he get a new one. He said that there was no place he could get one this side of Shanghai and that he couldn't take the time to send down and get one. I suggested that he telegraph for one and postpone the next execution until it arrived. This he felt was impossible since there were more prisoners on the way and the stockade was filled and he must get it emptied the next day.

I left with a heavy heart, feeling that I had utterly failed and that this terrible thing must continue. Also, my opinion of the general was considerably damaged. I could think of nothing else during the night and the next morning, but later that day I learned that the execution had been postponed and that the general had telegraphed to Shanghai and ordered a new sword, with further executions being held off until its arrival.

It seemed a small victory on my part, and probably none of the poor brutes who died by that new sword knew that their deaths were made perhaps a little more merciful because of the anger of one American woman. It was an experience I will never forget. My friendship with the general and his ladies continued until we left Anking.
CHAPTER XI
THE UNEXPECTED LIFE I FOUND IN ANKING

When I arrived in Anking as a bride I did not expect to play an active part in the life of the mission. I was entirely unprepared for missionary work, and my one hope was that I could be a good wife and mother and add something to the life of the station through our home.

Your grandfather had come back to America at his own expense to marry me in 1911, so he had a furlough due after that trip in less than the usual four years. Those first years in China were the most closely packed of my entire life. A revolution, of which I have written earlier, forced me to leave Anking and my husband and spend that long first winter as a refugee with friends in Shanghai. The birth of little Edmund in Shanghai in May and his death the following April in Anking, a constant struggle to gain at least a rudimentary command of the Chinese language, as well as what was for me a sudden and difficult adjustment to life in an interior mission station, made these hard years indeed. Then, in the following summer of 1913, my father and mother came out for a visit, and in December of that year Duncan was born. We left the following May for home. You can see from this account that those years, packed with personal experience, did not leave much time to find my real place in the Mission. It was not until the years following our return from furlough that I began to see that there was something that I might be able to do.

The fact that struck me most forcibly when I first came to China was the terrible poverty of the masses of its people — not only the famine refugees who were massed in huts around the outside of the city wall, but the people who lived around us in the city, the people on our street whom we knew and met constantly, and the patient hard-working people in the little villages. All the people were patient and hard-working, and I felt there must be some way in which I, with all my blessings and free time, could help to ease their terrible poverty to at least a small degree.

One day a neighbor and church member, who was sewing for one of our American ladies, collapsed and the doctors found that she was dying of slow starvation. I had known her well in church. She had never complained or asked for help — one of the many who disproved the discredited stereotype of the “rice Christian.” On her recovery I decided to keep her employed, if possible. She did beautiful needlework, and I paid her top wages. Everything I had was eventually monogrammed, even my dish towels were hemstitched. Then other women came, friends of hers, for whom there was no work to be found.

With that little woman and her friends, I began an attempt to provide regular work and wages to a small group of neighbors. I had no mission funds to draw on and that first year spent $200 of my own in wages and materials. This was the only financing that our little industry ever had to have.

I was not the only person attempting to meet this situation. In a number of mission stations throughout China small industries had been started and their output sold during the summer at Kuling, that lovely mountain-top retreat where the foreign women and children from mission stations throughout central China made a long summer stay and the men took their month’s vacation. They brought up the needle work done by their women and held bungalow sales at which there was always a demand.

One of the old needle crafts of China was cross-stitch on grass linen. Originally the work had all been done in blue thread on white linen. Many of the traditional designs went back hundreds of years and had distinct cultural interest and artistic value. However, this blue thread work was already being produced by so many industries that if I had started a similar one, it would have just meant that I would be competing in a limited market with my friends in other missions.

I began to explore the possibility of using some of the colored designs put out by embroidery companies in America, hoping to appeal to a wider market. From the first this project was a great success, but the incongruity of using French and American designs on Chinese linen, worked by Chinese women, made me anxious to find something which was more relevant to the country and the people. I first employed a Chinese art teacher from one of the government schools to make designs for me — both originals and copies from various other types of Chinese embroidery — adapting them to cross-stitch while retaining their beautiful coloring and composition. Later,
as we prospered, I turned to the United States and had an artist in New York do a design which became one of the most popular of any, a Chinese street scene of camels and city gates and coolies carrying burdens. There are a few pieces of this among the specimens which I still have, but it has been copied commercially so often that there is no longer anything of significance in it. Some of the other designs which I have show more originality — those of lotus ponds, of the dragon boats on the river at the time of the Dragon Festival. My favorite one, which was completed just before we had to close down years later, was a design taken from a beautiful old Chinese plate in the Metropolitan Museum in New York made for me by an American artist. I paid a great deal to have this done and it was never really on the market. The New York Customs people assured me that it was one of the most beautiful pieces ever to come into this country, and they charged duty accordingly for the little that was imported. There are several adaptations of this design among my linens.

My original colored designs proved to be a great success and, after a year of experimenting with a small group of women, my sale in Kuling in July of that year proved that we would have no difficulty in finding a market should we enlarge. Everything I had was sold in an hour, and in another hour we had taken enough orders to keep twenty women busy until the new year. Other markets opened. The Naval officers, always on the prowl for gifts to send home, discovered our work, and frequently the gunboats that cruised up and down the Yangtze would anchor off Anking and a group of officers would appear at our workroom, often leaving several hundred dollars behind when they left. A friend in New York undertook to be our distributor for the United States on a commission basis and distributed several thousand dollars' worth of work a year to gift shops throughout the country. "The Anking Colored Cross Stitch" became a well-known trade name and had the reputation not only of the most perfect needlework, but of having the most original and artistic designs imported from China.

Then I received a letter from a woman in Europe asking if she might act as distributor of our work among the gift shops along the Riviera, and both she and an agent in England further increased our market. We soon had over a hundred women workers and apparently could have had a larger market than we could supply.

I learned much about buying materials. We ordered our thread direct from Alsace-Lorraine, and I made trips to Nanchang, the center for the grass linen market, buying as much as $3,000 worth on a single trip.

I will never forget the first trip which I made alone to Nanchang, which involved going overnight on the riverboat to Kiukiang, where I spent a day and a night with friends. They put me on a train for the long overland trip to Nanchang. It proved to be an even longer trip than we expected, for the engine broke down halfway there and we had to wait for hours for a replacement. Finally I arrived alone, the only foreigner on a crowded train, on a cold, rainy night, at a railroad terminal across the river from the city. There was an awful moment when I stood on the platform amid the crowds descending from the slowly unloading train and looked out over a sea of strange excited Chinese faces. All of them had either come to meet friends or board the train for the return trip. I saw not one familiar face. Finally I heard my name called by a voice I knew and then the beaming face of Kimber Den, an old student of ours, at that time a clergyman in charge of the church in Nanchang, emerged from the crowd. He later became a Bishop and after the Communists took control spent two years in a Communist prison. He has now been released, but we have had little news of him or of his family in years. I stayed with him and his wife, Fung Yuiin, during my visit in Nanchang.

Fung Yuiin was one of the finest graduate nurses from our hospital and had spent the first summer of Armistead's life with us in Kuling. Armistead was a very sick baby that summer and owed his life that first year to the fact that my brother Hugh was visiting us with his wonderful experience and skill as a pediatrician, and to Fung Yuiin, who had carried out with such precision his orders. During the many weeks that your grandfather was down in Anking that summer, she and I grew very close, and it was a joy for me to have an excuse to visit her in her home.

Kimber and I spent hours in the big wholesale linen houses where I soon became recognized as a large and important customer and was taken into the inner court to transact my business with the head Lao Ban.

Chinese grass linen was made on hand looms by women in their homes in the villages. It varied greatly in quality and all kinds were rolled together into big bales. We had to go over every piece, discarding those which were too coarse and imperfect as well as those which were too fine for use in cross stitch. We went through 40 to 50 bales a day and it was arduous and exacting work. I came to be considered a professional, or "Lea Han," a member of the Guild. (In other words, I knew what I was doing.) I was treated with both courtesy and respect by the shopkeepers. As I remember, it took two days to buy the amount needed for our year's supply, several thousand dollars worth.

That journey was a real adventure — the long trip by rail where I was the only foreigner on a crowded train, the visit with those dear Chinese friends in their home, and the unusual experience in the Chinese business world.

When time for our next furlough came, I found that I had on my hands a successful business. The women were earning top wages, there was about US $10,000 in the bank in the Anking Cross Stitch account, and we had many more thousands of dollars worth of work out on consignment in Europe and in the United States. For several years after that our gross income was more than US $10,000 a year.

This money did not belong to the Mission. Not one cent of Mission funds had gone into making it, nor a single hour of a salaried Mission worker's time. It certainly was not mine, even though I had made the initial investment and given a great deal of time to the venture. Not only
Dr. Taylor – "Uncle Harry"

On a picnic with Priscilla in the basket

Duncan and his father

Priscilla

Armistead
were missionaries forbidden by Treaty to receive any financial gain as a result of our privileged residence in the interior of China, but my small contribution was far outweighed by my joy in seeing the work grow and by getting to know closely some hundred or more Chinese women. I felt that I was more than rewarded.

Bishop Huntington, Dr. Taylor, your grandfather and I had a long conference on the problem of what we should do with the increasingly large earnings. We all felt that they should be used in some way for the benefit of the women themselves and that some form of a cooperative was probably the answer. Since I was returning to America in a few weeks, they advised that I secure the best advice I could from a qualified expert on cooperatives and see how that system could be applied to our particular situation. While in New York, we were most fortunate in securing the interest of an expert who was teaching at the Rand School of Social Work. He not only gave me many hours of his time while I was home, but corresponded with me for over a year after my return to Anking, so that practically everything we did was done on his advice. I am amazed that I have forgotten his name, for I admired him and owed him a great deal. I remember hearing some time ago that he had died.

At the end of our furlough we returned to Anking to receive an eager welcome from the workers, but I was uncomfortably aware that the new ideas about which I was so enthusiastic might not be popular among them. I knew that what I was going to propose would run counter to established custom, as I will explain to you. Up to that time we had been using a little Chinese building on the edge of the compound which opened onto the street as an office. There was where the materials were prepared and given out for work at home and the finished work returned. I had a splendid young assistant, Florence Yin, and several women helpers who were trained to prepare the work, cutting the linen for each piece and wrapping in it the exact number of threads for each color that would be needed for its particular design. It was of necessity piece work, but we paid the highest wages we could, consistent with the wage scale of the city.

Before leaving for America I had been grieved to hear through the grapevine that a number of our women were not doing the work themselves but were letting it out at extremely low wages to their friends, making a profit on the transaction. This, of course, was the first problem to be faced when we opened again.

A few days after our return, I called all the women together for a tea party. This was a jubilant occasion and my few remarks were eagerly awaited. As far as I know, all the women were there. Then, with great patience and with all the Chinese at my command, I broke to them the sad news that the work in future would not be done in their homes as before, and explained the changes that I felt were essential if the industry was to continue at all.

I began by telling them that they would not like the changes at first but that I was convinced that it would ultimately be to their benefit and they would end by being glad that they were made. I told them that I knew about the subcontracting of the work, and a great many of them looked extremely shame-faced at this. Then I explained that this was one reason why from now on the work would not be done in the homes but must be done in our own workrooms. This seemed a shattering blow, since most of them were tied to their families and homes.

I then explained that as it stood, the business belonged to me and that I had the power to either close it or continue it. If I continued it I must do it in a way I felt was right and most beneficial for all the women. There was a long silence when I stopped there, but I think it was at that moment that that group of women, who had come to me as a crowd of self-centered individualists, found that they were members of a group and that their ability to think together as such began. They realized that their common interest was threatened and that they were facing a common loss. They had a strong desire to hold fast to the good things that they had found in the cross stitch work and its familiar form and were prepared to do anything to avoid its loss.

The following day I received an invitation from the workers to attend a tea party which they were giving for me. I had expected this to happen and had held much of my ammunition to fire at that time. They greeted me with elaborate politeness and served me with tea and cake and then explained most politely that because I was a foreigner I could not possibly understand the ways of Chinese women — that their lives had to be lived in their homes caring for their babies and training their daughters-in-law and cooking for the family. I was, of course, entirely familiar with the conditions of their lives, but I knew that if they really wanted to work, the problem could be solved in a way that would be definitely better for each of them. I then brought out our plan.

First, they must organize as a society (the Chinese word was "whei") and no longer think of this problem as an individual one. The name of the Whei would be the "Anking Colored Cross Stitch Society," all new words in their vocabulary except "Anking." Then I said (unbelievably) that I would actually give the business to them, under certain conditions, and that all the profits would be used for the benefit of the members of the Whei. The management would remain in the hands of a board of trustees who were pledged to derive no financial benefit in any way from the work of the women, but who would manage it in their best interests.

This board was appointed by the Bishop and myself. It consisted of Bishop Huntington, Dr. Taylor, the Postal Commissioner for the province, an able and fine Roman Catholic Eurasian gentleman, and four prominent Chinese Christian citizens of the city. The trustees became enthusiastically interested in the enterprise and made a real contribution. I was a member of the board of trustees, but it was thought best not to have more than one Lee on it, and your grandfather remained off the board but served as its most valuable advisor and interested friend.
St. Agnes School for Girls

The "Cross Stitch" buildings, from my bedroom window

The new "Cross Stitch" building under construction

"Cross Stitch" staff
Second, we would buy land and put up a suitable building for workrooms and office. I told them that we planned to have a particularly large and sunny room where the women with tuberculosis could work without the danger of infecting the others, and that they would have a broad porch on which they could work on sunny days.

Third, that we would have a day nursery under the care of one of the graduate nurses from the hospital, where the babies and younger children would be cared for and fed during the hours when their mothers were at work.

Fourth, that the older children could all be sent to the nearby Mission primary and middle school, where their fees would be paid in full from the earnings of the industry.

Fifth, that we would provide for the little daughters-in-law who had been adopted by their future families, a separate building with workrooms and classrooms, part of their time being given to study and the rest to needlework, thus enabling them to add to the family income.

Sixth, that all hospital expenses that might become necessary for the women and their children would be paid from the earnings of the Society. There was considerable doubt as to what allowance should be made for husbands, and it was finally agreed that their expenses would be paid only if they entered the hospital in order to be cured of the opium habit.

There were further benefits such as maternity care and a continuation of their average earnings for one month after the baby arrived. Later the Society bore all the expense of apprenticing those boys who showed insufficient academic promise to go further in school.

These proposals all sounded delightful but impractical to the women and I could see that they were leaving with heavy hearts. However, a majority of them agreed to continue on my terms. We stretched our little building to hold workrooms until a new and better building could be built.

I immediately undertook to buy property near the Mission and was able to acquire nearly a block of old buildings almost adjacent to our own compound. On this we erected a beautiful two-story workroom building, a smaller building for the school and workrooms for the daughters-in-law, and across the street we renovated an old Chinese building for the day nursery and a lunchroom. Later we built a tenement, housing sixteen families. I never felt that the tenement was a success. We attempted to put too many families in too small a space, but the apartments were, nevertheless, in great demand.

Other women came to fill the places of the ones that dropped out and in a year we were able to move into and fill our beautiful new quarters. I think that from the beginning the women recognized that the change had been to their advantage.

The lunchroom was never a success and we ended by supplying hot rice and tea, and the women brought their own vegetables and meat from home. The day nursery and lunchroom were under the management of our very capable nurse, Miss Kung, and I feel that a great deal of the success of the social aspects of the industry was due to this really remarkable Chinese girl.

There were great advantages in having the women come in to do their work in workrooms besides the fact that it put an end to subcontracting. In the first place, my personal contact with them was much closer, and I grew to know them as individuals and they grew to know and trust me. Also there were more opportunities for educational and religious influence, which was offered to them if they so desired.

While no pressure was put upon the women to become Christians, there were meetings to which they could go at nearby Grace Chapel which I often attended, and most of them did in time become Christians. I also believe that the daily contacts with each other and with those of us on the staff, as much as the preaching, showed them a way of life they wanted to share.

The standard of the work became higher, and the health of the women showed immediate improvement. What interested me most was the gradual growth of a sense of solidarity which they could not have had when each woman worked in her own home.

I made every effort to impress upon them that, at least in part, I understood the difficulties which this change was creating. I suggested to the women that they meet and elect a committee from among their own number which they could trust to represent them and through which they could express their wishes to the trustees. Also the committee could advise the trustees as to how the women wished the profits to be used. They knew that they were paid the highest wages in the city and that the balance of earnings would go to them in benefits. This committee from time to time suggested further uses for the funds, and many of these suggestions were put into effect. This program proved most successful and continued until the industry had to be closed when we left Anking in 1927.

Many of our original defecting members returned eventually and we soon had a waiting list.

We developed quite an educational program which was, of course, a voluntary matter. There was a Chinese phonetic system then being tested, especially to help adult illiterates, and many of our women learned to read a simplified phonetic translation of the Bible and other books which were available.

I had long talks with them about their Society and explained the principles that underlay it. I told them about the sources of our materials — where the thread came from and of my visits to Nanchang to buy the grass linen. This gave them a sense of kinship with the women who wove the cloth in their homes and added interest to the group.

Also, on the big map of the world which I always had on my office wall, they were made familiar with the location of the little town in Alsace-Lorraine where all our embroidery cotton was spun and dyed and why we sent so far away for it — because it had become recognized as having the greatest variety and fastest colors in the world. I even dared to talk finances. Though they were
Day nursery at lunchtime, with Miss Kung

The nursery

“Cross Stitch” women at lunch
Kimber Den, Chinese clergyman at whose home I stayed in Nanchang

Dr. Grenfell visits the Cross Stitch
unaccustomed to thinking in any terms other than a few copper "cash," they came to know how much it cost to mail a bundle of work to market.

For some years I had an associate whose expenses were paid by the alumnae of The Masters School at Dobbs Ferry, the wonderful school I attended as a girl. They offered to pay my salary, but as I could receive none, paid for someone to assist me. I was blessed in the two fine and delightful women I had to work with and they contributed immeasurably to the success of the work.

A year or two before we were forced to close, the YMCA sent one of their Industrial Secretaries to China to meet with labor groups. To my surprise they asked if he might come and meet with our cooperative. He was with us for two days and had free access to both the Chinese staff and workers. At the end of that time he told us that he considered that they were the best informed group that he had met in China.

Perhaps my proudest moment was when the famed Dr. Grenfell of Labrador and Mrs. Grenfell traveled out of their way to meet us and to study the industry and its organization.

In 1926 the Nationalist armies under Chiang Kai Shek drove north to Hankow and then down the Yangtze river. They reached Anking on the cold, rainy day of March 21, 1927. We had been set for a sort of Cromwellian army, free from opium, prostitutes, and all of the usual evils accompanying an army, but when that army finally slouched in we saw a weary, disillusioned, opium-soaked group of men, most of them former troops of the old regime and different War Lords that had been defeated by the Nationalists on their way north. The city changed sides peacefully, with scarcely a shot fired, a tribute to the effective work of the Nationalists' advance propaganda agents who had been busy preparing the people and the garrison for months before the troops arrived.

They were well supplied with Russian advisors, both military and political, and overrun the entire city. Their own Chinese agitators seemed to our workers to be not too well prepared, using slogans rather than arguments as they went through the city. They apparently met their match with our women.

It was thought best for me to stay at home during their stay but Florence Yin kept me posted as to their success in our workrooms. They would approach a woman who was working, asking how much she was being paid for the work she was doing and what she thought the product would sell for in the United States or Europe. They guessed twice as much as she was earning in wages. Then she would answer, oh no, more than that, and she would enumerate the various expenses necessary to take the work to its final market. Then the woman would go on to describe the fringe benefits they received, all of which rather confused the agitators.

The army only remained for a few days before marching on and, while our industry felt no serious immediate repercussions, the city did.

Both the Nationalists and the Communists, who were then working closely together, had a strong anti-foreign line, and for the first time we felt the uncomfortable experience of becoming a disliked minority group in the city which had been our home for so many years and where we had only known respect, gratitude and affection. It soon became evident that the foreign women and children might be forced to leave at any time, and when the time did come, it came suddenly, and the men had to go as well. This meant the closing of much of our work.

We had anticipated such a situation and had been preparing for it for some weeks. The Bishop, wisely I think, decided that the Cross Stitch Industry must be one of the activities to close. It was not necessary to the continued life of the church in Anking, was dependent upon foreign contacts for its success, and was conspicuous and vulnerable because of its social implications.

The trustees met to face the fact that there was the unbelievable amount of over US $10,000 which, if we were true to our trust, must be distributed to our women before we left. (This sum may not seem so impressive to you today but it was enormous in terms of the purchasing power of the US dollar in Anking in 1927 and in terms of the annual income of the Chinese families concerned.) The distribution was made partly on the basis of the length of each woman's membership and partly on her average weekly earnings, and was a matter of bookkeeping alone. None of them questioned the fairness of our formula or calculations.

That final meeting with the women of the cooperative was a difficult one to prepare for, but it went off well, and I think the women were thrilled at the possession of more money than they had ever dreamed of in their lives. We had tried to keep the purpose of the meeting a surprise, but there are no secrets in China, and not only the women attended, but outside on the street waited their ne'er-do-well husbands and creditors. There was nothing we could do about that, but we were known in the city after that to have kept our faith and promises, and that fact made a deep impression.

This is the end of the story of the Anking Colored Cross Stitch Cooperative Society. However, a few years after communications with China were closed, I did receive a batch of letters through some circuitous route from some of the women, showing that they still remembered and loved me, but I have grieved over them and what the loss of the Industry must have meant to their lives.

I still have specimens of the work and I would like you all to see what lovely things our women made in Anking.
CHAPTER XII
LEAVING CHINA

One evening in March, 1927, after the workrooms of the Anking Cross Stitch had closed and the Society had been liquidated, we were all ordered to leave Anking on a U.S. gunboat which was being sent for us the following afternoon. The whole of the Yangtze Valley was being evacuated of Americans because of the troubles expected in connection with the so-called "Nanking Incident" which had just occurred.

Nanking, downriver from us, had been the scene of a shooting attack on foreign mission property in which an American missionary, the Rev. Mr. Williams, was killed. The rumor was that the affair had been staged by Communist elements in an effort to embarrass the young government of Chiang Kai Shek which had pledged itself to respect foreign lives and property. In any case, foreign gunboats lying off Nanking had intervened and shelled parts of the city, with the loss of Chinese lives. It was feared that in consequence reprisals might be taken elsewhere against Americans and other foreigners.

When the word came late one evening that we must leave, your grandfather, Dr. Taylor and the Bishop were up all night making what financial provisions they could for the institutions and the staffs that we must leave behind, so that they could keep going as long as possible. The tragedy of that last day in parting from our homes, our work, our cherished fellow workers and close friends, I will never forget. I wonder how much our sons remember. Priscilla has told me of waking in the night to see us packing and dismantling our home.

We made our way without interference to the riverbank, though from the crowds on the streets there were occasional calls of "kill the foreigners." This was sad evidence of how successfully Communist propaganda had in a few months sold the idea to many of the Chinese in our friendly city that the foreigners should be the scapegoats for the many wrongs and problems besetting China.

At this point I will quote an excerpt from Armistead's notes.

"I can remember vividly those few days, which for a young boy were filled with joyful excitement. One could sense the distress of parting from Chinese friends, gathered tearfully on our front lawn and urging us soon to return. There was even some distress for Duncan and me at having to decide which of our treasures we should take with us and what to leave behind. I remember picking out one volume from the leather-bound set of Dickens. We managed to save our coin collection.

"But there could not be the same sense of loss and separation which the adults felt. I don't suppose we children really sensed that we were leaving for good. And besides, all other emotions were overshadowed by the sheer excitement. The spice of danger was added, I remember, as we marched down through the narrow streets to the river, and our waiting destroyer, behind an escort of Chinese soldiers, when I heard someone in the market place mutter 'Shah wai kwei ren!' (Kill the foreigner!)"

"Then there was the tense half hour of waiting on board for the Taylors to appear. The destroyer commander still hoped that Dr. Harry Taylor would see the folly of remaining in the town. But Uncle Harry had been assured by the local general that he would answer for the safety of all foreigners and that there was no reason to leave. Of course, all factions wanted the best doctor in the province to remain at Anking. But he probably did not know, when he decided to trust the general and stay on, that American guns had fired on the Chinese at Nanking. We had been given twenty-four hours notice to evacuate by our consulate at Nanking, but the Chinese masses in our crowded city did not yet know that some of their compatriots had been the victims of American artillery used to rescue the besieged American colony in Nanking.

"Finally, we received word from Dr. Taylor that he was determined to stay on, but that if the situation deteriorated so that he and his family had to get out, we should look out, on our return trip down the river, for a waving red lantern.

"It was a short overnight journey to Kiukiang upstream, far shorter on a swift destroyer than on the usual passenger ships which took us there, en route to Kuling, each summer. While the ladies rested in quarters gallantly evacuated by the officers, we boys and our fathers slept on deck. The following night was spent barricaded in the Socony rest-house in Kiukiang, while the men took turns standing guard."
Our gunboat proved to be a small U.S. destroyer and we had a large party to board her. We were on board over-night, being taken not down the river to Shanghai, but up the river to Kiukiang. We spent one night in Kiukiang in the residence of the recently evacuated Standard Oil Company and were picked up the next day by a convoy of ships filled with American refugees from up-river. The ships were so crowded that we were quartered below decks in one of the river steamers we had so often enjoyed as first-class passengers, vaguely aware that there was a crowded dirty steerage below us. This steerage had been hurriedly cleaned and hoisted out with some horrible disinfectant and made ready for the use of the refugee foreigners. Shades of the days of luxurious travel! We had a small amount of hand luggage and our bedding rolls which we deposited in our quarters, but when we discovered that large gray rats were running in and out of our bedding, we decided to sleep on the deck.

I will never forget those nights on deck. There were packing cases piled against the rail of the decks to protect us from any snipers that might fire from other ships or from the shore, and the deck was completely covered by bedrolls and quilts, where most of the passengers were sleeping.

I will continue now with Armistead’s account of the down-river trip:

"Mother has well described the trip downriver, with the entire family sleeping out on deck, but she omitted the tense few minutes as we passed by Anking, in the evening, with all eyes concentrated on the shoreline looking for a swinging red lantern which would be the signal to pick up Dr. Taylor and his family. There was no such signal, and we coasted by; but we all worried — until we learned that the Taylors had been picked up by an earlier ship — whether we might not have missed the signal, for we knew by then that the mood of the town was such as to make it unsafe for an American family to remain.

"The rest of the voyage was relatively uneventful and almost gay. Mr. Alan Lee (no relation), of St. Paul’s School, who was the unofficial poet of the Anking community, composed a lyric in commemoration of our adventure, to the music of a current popular song and honoring the name of our ship: ‘I want to go on the Tung Wo, you know and the Tung Wo to go to Shanghai!’"

"At Nanking we were joined by a British destroyer to escort us past some forts which had fired on earlier vessels bringing foreign refugees down river. The forts had nothing more formidable than machine guns, and the heavy steel plates lashed against the railings on the covered forward deck were quite sufficient to stop any spent bullets which might have reached us in the middle of the river. Some of my schoolmates, from Hankow or Wuchang, had experienced the thrill of being fired on as they passed the forts, and I was praying that we would have the same adventure, which I already dreamed of recounting to admiring circles of contemporary schoolboys in America. So I crouched in excitement with my eyes to a gap between two plates — having ignored Mother’s counsel to stay inside the dining salon — and watched as our escort swung her guns towards the fort, perched on the side of the mountain. The men in the fort must have seen the same guns and evidently decided that this was not the occasion to make a gesture of defiance at the ‘foreign devil,’ for we coasted by without a shot being fired on either side."

I don’t think any of us fully realized that we were leaving China for the last time and that our close contact with our life and work there was at an end, but we did have with us a sense of acute nostalgia and a love for all we were leaving behind.

After we reached Shanghai, we had to wait several months before proceeding on. We refugeed at St. John’s University in the British Concession, guarded by barbed wire and British troops. Because of the troubled times there was a long waiting list for passages across the Pacific. Armistead’s notes describe this period from the boys’ point of view as follows:

"The many weeks’ wait in Shanghai, as refugees in a St. John’s University dormitory, was not without its share of excitement for the children. There was some rather ineffective effort to organize classes, or individual tutoring, for us so that we would not lose too much in schooling, for we had not been to a regular school since December, since conditions had become too dangerous to reopen the Kuling American School after Christmas vacation. I am sure we learned very little from books during that month in Shanhai, waiting for passage home, but we saw a great deal of life, of a sort unknown in sheltered Anking. The foreign concession area was well patrolled by Western troops, particularly British, and Duncan and I befriended (or were befriended by) many a ‘Tommy’ on guard bearing sandbags at the street intersections. They were generous in giving us belt buckles and regimental insignia as well as the picture cards — of movie stars, airplanes and sportsmen — to be found in cigarette packages at that time. The distant sounds of firing were not strange to us, for we had heard this in Anking, but the imminence of war came home one day when we found a man’s body floating past us on Soochow Creek. I remember that he had been shot in the back of the neck (evidently an executed prisoner) and that he was quite naked, having been relieved of his clothes, we assume, by some practical-minded and unsheenash boatmen as he drifted by.”

In late May the three children and I finally got passage on the ‘President Grant.’ The crossing was a nightmare. Duncan and Armistead nearly died before we reached Seattle from dysentery which they contracted from drinking contaminated milk taken on board at Kobe and served as “buttermilk” because of its odd smell!

Your grandfather was seriously ill at the time with amoebic dysentery and could not take the trip with us. He rejoined us in Washington many months later in early 1928."
When we left China, Duncan was 13, Armistead 11, and Priscilla a little girl of 5. We did not really accept the fact that we were leaving for good, and the wrench of leaving was so hard at the time that the final realization of the great change in our lives did not come to us until much later. It was literally the end of a life and forced your grandfather and me in middle life to find new work for ourselves and a new home and environment in which to bring up our family and to solve the problems of educating and giving every advantage we could to our three very intelligent children.

 Providentially, and I am one who believes in the workings of God’s providence, within a year of our return to America, as soon as your grandfather had recovered his health, he was called to a second career of brilliant service as rector and headmaster of Chatham Hall in Virginia.
CHAPTER XIII

THE REST OF THE STORY

During twenty-one wonderfully happy years at Chatham Hall, your grandfather brought the school up from an unknown local school of poor standing to a nationally known school of the highest standing. In the end we were able to accept only one out of every ten applicants, though our tuition was necessarily higher each year, and the girls we prepared were accepted at all the best colleges in the country.

We retired in 1947 and moved to Washington where we had a spacious apartment in the “Wyoming” which at one time had been occupied by General and Mrs. Eisenhower.

Soon after we were settled there, we learned that your grandfather had leukemia and that no one could foresee how long he had to live. We determined to make the time we had as happy, unshadowed and fruitful as possible, not only for our own sakes, but also for our family and friends, and we actually did have thirteen additional wonderful years together. During this time your grandfather, of course, had definite physical limitations, and I was fighting arthritis, including two major operations, but in looking back those are not the things that I remember.

At that time, all our children and grandchildren were in Washington. Your grandfather was president of the Society of Lees of Virginia, which took a great deal of his time. We were in touch with a great many of our alumni and his activities on behalf of the young stranded Chinese students, of whom there were a great many in Washington, was perhaps the most interesting part of our life. We had open house every Saturday and Sunday afternoon to which from twenty-five to thirty-five of these young men and women, some of them students, some of them young secretaries at the embassy, would come. I believe that these personal contacts, and the more than ten graduate scholarships which your grandfather was able to secure for some of these young people, made a real contribution to their understanding and liking of this country in which they found themselves captive guests.

As time went on, the family began to scatter. Armistead, as a career diplomat, was sent overseas and Duncan moved to Bermuda. Also, the driving in the city and the parking problems became more difficult for me with my increased lameness. It became obvious that we must either give up our car or move to some country place from which we could still come into the city but lead a more relaxed life. It seemed clear that Shepherdstown, West Virginia, only seventy miles away from Washington, was where we should go. It was your grandfather’s birthplace, full of fond childhood memories for him and with friends and relatives still living there.

Our main interest in Shepherdstown became the little old house which we bought, a rather dilapidated house, said to be the oldest in a town which was itself the oldest in West Virginia. We were able to trace the record back 235 years, and we know that the house was old even at that time.

The house was on a very modest, run-down street, but we gradually enlarged and improved it and adapted it to our particular aging needs, with an elevator and more windows to let in the sunshine. It became a delightful and charming home with a beautiful little garden. To our great surprise, we were asked by the Garden Clubs of Virginia to allow it to be on their Spring Tour one year. We ourselves delighted in the garden, the open fire, the welcoming guest room, and the many friends who were able to share it with us. Not only could we get into town easily, but our Washington friends often found their way cut to us and we did a great deal of entertaining.

A year before your grandfather’s death, we realized that we were becoming less able to take care of ourselves, and we arranged to come here to The Hermitage together. As it was, he died on May 25 of 1962, and I moved here alone the following September.

Before his death we had arranged to sell the house in Shepherdstown to friends for an amount which covered not only its cost, but all that we had put into it.

We had eight happy, peaceful years in Shepherdstown and it somehow seemed right that your grandfather’s life should quietly end in a town which he had so loved and where his ancestors had been before him.

As for me, I am living this last chapter of my life in this delightful retirement home, with every comfort and care, and I am content. Having Priscilla and Armistead and their families so near me gives a sense of still being part of an active family life and Duncan’s occasional visits and those of his family are also a great joy.
A FINAL WORD

This is a funny kind of book. It is written to ten young people to let them know something about their parents' unique childhood in China. It begins with a genealogical sketch of our American family and ends with the coming of the Communists in Central China.

There is so much more I would like to write about. Very much more about your grandfather, a very special person whom you did not begin to know.

There are so many things I could still tell about China, especially the drastic social and political changes that were taking place around us, the significance of which we only partially understood. But I must stop now simply because I am tired, and the effort of writing more is too great.

May I add a final grandmotherly wish—

I do not know whether my "genealogy" and the story that followed it succeeded in conveying to you any sense of the dedication to service and the high ideals that have marked your inheritance. My hope and prayer for my grandchildren is that your lives, too, may be dedicated ones, serving your own generation in the highest way you can and that because you have, your children and their children and their children may have a better world to live in.