

PRO TANTO QUID RETRIBUAMUS
- in return for so much, what shall we give.

The above is the motto of the City of Belfast; it was on all the trams when I was a child.

Autumn 1990.

Dear David:

You have suggested that I write an introduction to the letters I wrote from China to my mother, your Grandmother Crawford, during 1945 - 1949. You ask why I wanted to go to China and how I got there. We have agreed that the truth of what happened in the past is hard to relate accurately, but I shall try.

The Second World War had reached China in 1931, when Manchuria was taken over by the Japanese. They later spread over much of the rest of China, leaving only a small area in the extreme west as "Free China". There had been about 12 Christian medical colleges in China. Some were destroyed in the war and the remnants travelled west to find refuge in the large and hospitable campus of the West China Christian University in Chengtu. One of these was Cheeloo Medical College from Tsinan. In what is now called Shenyang, the Moukden Medical College, Manchuria stayed where it was, almost starved of food, fuel, books, equipment, hospital equipment and staff. Founded by a Scot, Dugald Christie, almost all missionary staff at MMC were Scottish and Irish doctors, working in close cooperation with other Manchurian Christian hospitals. After the stunning attack at Pearl Harbour, those not on furlough were interned for the duration of the war. Foreign financial support was also cut off.

While this was going on I was a medical student in Queen's University, Belfast. Our "year" had 100 men and 20 women, approximately. We heard of the fall of France on the day in June 1940 when we sat our medical and surgical papers.

That autumn, Tom Milliken and I were directed to work in the Pathology Department under Professor John Henry Biggart and his lecturer Dr. John Edgar Morison. In addition to excellent training in pathology and bacteriology, we were involved in urgent work to develop the "Emergency Blood Transfusion Service." My training in pathology and bacteriology came to a close in the summer of 1944. Now what?

I had, meanwhile, worked my way from an uneasy atheism to a rather shaky Christian faith, but it was hard to look ahead. Some of my parents' love of China had rubbed off on me. News from China was scanty, especially from Manchuria. Then one day I saw in a news sheet concerned with the Christian universities in China, an urgent appeal for staff to help some of the universities-in-exile in "Free China". One vacancy was for a pathologist to work with Cheeloo University, that remnant of it which had escaped from its home in Tsinan and was now on the West China Christian University campus in Chengtu. The request was "urgent". The journey there, while impossible by sea, might be permitted by road or air from India - after all, China was "on our side". Was this what I should do and, hopefully, go on later to the Moukden Medical College when that became possible?

My mother was sounded first. She was astonished - and astonished me by saying "This is what I have prayed for since you were born!" Later came nerve-wracking interviews with the Women's

Missionary Association of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (who would be responsible for my salary) and with the Rev. Dr. R.H. Boyd, on the men's side. I was accepted and, for a mixture of reasons, the usual year of missionary training in Edinburgh was waived. (They must have remembered that I was my parents' daughter!) Letters to the source of the advertisement (I think it was Rev. Ronald Rees) accepted me from that end.

According to custom, a service of dedication was held in my own church, Windsor, on the Lisburn Road. Since, being a woman, I was not ordained, I was not required to sign the Westminster Confession of Faith - which I could not have done. I had been asked if I would like to choose what would be sung and I chose Psalm 43, verses 3 - 5, to the old Scottish tune "Invocation".

*Why art thou cast down my soul,
What should discourage thee?
And why with vexing thoughts are thou
Disquieted in me?
Still trust in God, for him to praise
Good cause thou yet shall have.*

Preparations and waiting for a permit took months, but there was plenty to do. A "one way" ticket to India was permitted and there would be only two days notice in which to get from Belfast to a ship in Liverpool. Packing involved planning for a possible air journey from Calcutta with only 33 lbs. of luggage. Mother and I concocted a garment of strong thin cloth with many large pockets. (My "smuggler's jacket".) Fortunately, I myself only registered seven and a half stone (120 lbs.), so could carry a lot on me when weighed for getting on a plane to cross the "Hump" from India to China. (Actually when the time came I was allowed about 100 lbs. of baggage.)

Inoculations included a special Typhoid-Paratyphoid-Cholera one for which I was sent to a Naval ship in the Belfast docks. It was so powerful that I had to scramble off a tram on the way home, to be sick behind a tree. And the smallpox vaccination made me faint one night and I "woke" to find Mother trying to pull me, by my feet, back to bed.

Many documents were needed, for example every detail of contents of luggage had to be listed, in triplicate; and I was advised to carry about 30 copies of my photograph, which seemed ridiculous but did not last long enough to get me home! There were about 12 documents to keep in one's handbag at the ready when going on board.

During this weary time Bert Russell, chief technician in the Pathology lab, accepted me as a trainee and taught me how to deal with biopsy and autopsy specimens, sectioning and staining slides and much more which was of immense value when I worked in Moukden Medical College.

Then one morning, in January 1945 I think, a letter arrived. "All permits for civilians to travel to China were cancelled owing to the situation" - or some such phrase. I rushed down to Church House, where the kind and wise Secretary of our W.M.A. took it calmly. "Why not just go ahead? You have a ticket to India. You will find plenty of work there, and you will be on the spot when the way to China opens up." I dried my tears!

The voyage to India was peculiar. We set off from Liverpool on February 11, 1945 and headed north! I was sure that it was the Antrim coast on our left that evening! During the night there were

bumps and bangs, and when morning came we were in the Clyde. We learned that we would stay there for ten days and I was allowed off and went to Edinburgh to stay in St. Colm's College where Beth Davy (later Beth Brown) was Principal. There I met Dr. Jean McMinn. Later to be a dear friend in Manchuria. She was a member of the Commission sent to Manchuria by the Scottish and Irish missions in the spring of 1946.

When we left the Clyde we went in convoy south down the Irish Sea to Milford Haven, where we waited for 12 days. There were about twenty passengers on the ship, which was full to the brim with "things" closely wrapped and piled on the decks; said to be intended for an invasion of Malaya, which did not happen. Some of the passengers abandoned the ship at Milford Haven as being "unlucky". Their places were taken by others, joyful to be starting their journey. They asked us "how long have you been on board?" Their faces fell when we answered "about four weeks!"

The voyage was, for me, almost pure pleasure from start to finish. I had never before travelled except twice to London and Cambridge for a weekend. I met good friends and found I was happy in a rough sea. After Gibraltar, we did not land there; we were not in convoy but travelled alone across the Mediterranean and stopped at Port Said. Nor did we land at Aden. Much later we saw land once more, on April 4th. But where were we? The ship was aiming straight at a wide line of palm trees, not a house in sight. Then quite suddenly we were entering a beautiful channel and someone said, "I know where we are! This is Cochin." The week we spent in Cochin was pure bliss. Then we moved on, and reached Bombay on 12th. April 1945. As we waited in a queue we heard someone say that Roosevelt had died.

One of the soldiers who checked us in at Cochin had a Belfast accent and we greeted each other like old friends. Next Sunday he came to the ship for me and we spent the day together. My missionary friends on the boat were a little surprised - "Do you know this young man?" "I've never seen him before, but he's from Lisburn." That seemed, to me, sufficient. His name was Jimmy Hill and we had a marvellous day, including lunch with a very nice married couple and we all four went to church!

The next two months were spent in Gujarat visiting friends there, and then in the glory of Kashmir, a wonderful holiday of a few friends led by Alice Brown's brother Oliver. It was only flawed by the arrival of letters and telegrams, some from Calcutta, assuming that I was proceeding at once to China, and urgent letters from the Christian Medical College in Vellore, South India. I had just written to Vellore to say I would come to them for at least three months when the first letters about China reached me, referring to a telegram, which never arrived. Oh dear! However, the months spent in Vellore were extremely busy as well as enjoyable. Eventually, the Burma Road having once again been judged impassable, I left India by air from Dum Dum airport, Calcutta on November 14, 1945.

We left Dum Dum about 2 a.m., I think, and stopped for repairs for some hours on a small airport at Dinjan in Assam. There was a group of British airmen there, headed by a Capt. (?) Denis Hasler, whose father had been a missionary in India for 40 years and who had been at school with Denis and Terrence Montgomery! Then we flew on to Kunming, in China, and later to Chungking, the capital of "Free China". It had taken me almost twelve months to get from Belfast to China.

I stepped out of the plane in Chungking in darkness, with no knowledge of the language, only a few small coins (to take money in was illegal), and Ronald Rees, who had been requested by telegram

to meet me, was in Shanghai. But a kind Chinese gentleman off our plane appeared out of the darkness, paid off the circle of shouting coolies who were all trying to carry my suitcase, and told me in clumsy English that he had a little business to do but would soon come back and if I was still waiting he would escort me into the city to find English people who would look after me. I owe that man a great deal for giving me such a heart-warming start to life in China. I never saw him again for a boy soon turned up, whose speech had one intelligible word "N.C.C.". (*National Christian Council*) I handed him my luggage and climbed after him up the steep stairs up the cliff to the city and the house of the Chinese Methodist Bishop.

How lucky I was to arrive in China alone and needing help, rather than by sea to a hybrid city to be cosseted by folk of my own race!! I soon found friends who came from Ireland, Scotland, England, Wales, Canada, America, France, Denmark, Hungary and Russia. But none of them came between me and the making of friendships with Chinese people.

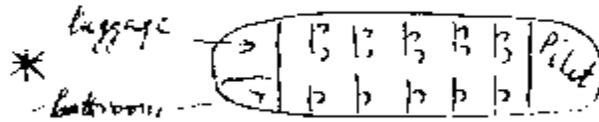
Letters 1-73 deal with her trip to India and have not been reproduced.
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Letter No. 73. 15 November 1945 c/o Bishop Chen, N.C.C., 10, Dai Chia Hang, Chungking.

Dear Mother,

China at last, and everything sorting itself out nicely. I'll tell you about the journey first. One has to report at the Great Eastern Hotel, Calcutta at 2 a.m. (after a dress rehearsal of weighing in the afternoon before. (See **Note 1.**) The Molgaards, who were really terribly kind to me, and most helpful, decided that we would all go to the pictures, and then to the room of a friend of theirs (a journalist, I think, called Smith) who lived in the G.E. Hotel. This we did (including a sleepy-eyed Johnny) and talked, and had coffee and toast etc. till about 1 a.m. Then I was left to dress up in all my finery, and, that done they left me in the lounge or hall where the passengers were to meet. I eyed my fellow-passengers with considerable interest. There were about 12 Chinese in uniform who turned out to be airmen who had had a training course at Lahore, and a Chinese major (medical), a business man called Mr. Sen and two fellow-British (or anyway white) men. The latter ignored me completely the whole way and were very haughty and standoffish, so you will hear no more of them. We had passport and customs formalities and then, about 4 a.m. were loaded into a bus and driven out 10 miles to Dum Dum airport.

You can imagine how hot I was! "Val" had been horrified at my coat with its pockets, and said the customs would be nasty (although I had got an export permit for everything in the least suspicious.) So I was inclined not to peel outer layers until really off. The plane was extremely comfortable, like the inside of a bus. The seats were deeply upholstered, and there was a convenient little window to look out by, a rack overhead with a large red blanket and paper-bags!



We set off in about 15 min., after much roaring of engines, and (it being pitch-dark) I really did not know when we were airborne until I saw the lights of Calcutta far below. The motion was very smooth. The whole way there were only a few "bumps", and that not as bumpy as a bus on a rough road and only lasting a few seconds. The buzz of the engines was too loud for comfortable conversation but not annoying, and my ears did not bother me - you just have to swallow occasionally after taking off or before landing. Certainly for speed and comfort, this is the way to travel. As it was dark I dozed for an hour and then watched a scarlet sunrise. Down below was flat country covered with jungle and traversed by silvery rivers winding about. Later there was a layer of fluffy clouds below us, lit up by the rising sun. When the clouds dispersed we were still over wooded country, which became dryer and more park-like, with tea plantations and villages. About 8 o'clock we landed at Dinjan airport in Assam (you won't find it on the map). The Japs had come to within about 20 miles of this point and it was of course bombed. The supplies dropped to Wingate were flown from here. It is a huge expanse, paved by perforated metal sheets, and with some huts round the edge and rather uninteresting flat country around. We were supposed to be only 15 min., so everyone dashed for the canteen, but as we had already had coffee, sandwiches, biscuits and fruit on the plane I wasn't able to cope with 2 fried eggs, porridge, etc., and just had coffee. Then we piled in once more and the plane taxied around, but alas, came back to the starting point and we were all told to get out as the sparking-plugs had to be fixed. So we were at Dinjan about 3 hours altogether.

As the sun grew hot I spread my rug in the shade of the plane's wing and made myself comfortable with a book. Mr. Sen (who by now had taken me under his wing) sat down too, and as soon as any of the Chinese airmen wandered hopefully by he was invited to sit down, and in the end we were all there except the independent white men, squatting huddled together on the only soft spot on the airfield, and must have looked like shipwrecked mariners on a raft. At intervals we trailed over to the canteen for some tea or coffee. After a while a Scotch sergeant (or whatever 3 stripes mean in the air-force) came over and said his C.O. invited me to their rooms to wait. I was quite happy where I was but he said mysteriously " the C.O. seems to think you and he have a lot in common", so I went, and found a Capt. Denis Hasler whose father was a missionary in India for 40 years, and who was a school with Denis Beatty and Monty's brothers Denis and Terence. He seemed a very nice fellow and was very friendly, showed me maps of the country we were to fly over and wanted to hear about Vellore. So if Jack sees Denis Beatty, please tell him that Denis Hasler sends his greetings.

Then we took-off once more for the real Hump. I should explain that it was a perfect day with only a faint breeze, and a few tiny clouds along the horizon. I was not in the least cold - only had on two vests, one jumper, smuggler's jacket and green coat and skirt and nothing on my head I think the plane may have been heated. From Dinjan on the scenery became more and more magnificent. To the north there was a wall of high snow mountains but where we crossed there was no sign of snow. (See **Note 2.**) The height of the mountains does not look impressive from the air, but their

extent simply staggered me. We went on and on over range after range after range. At first they were fairly rugged and covered with thick jungle. This was Burma, I suppose. As they got higher there were many trees with brilliant yellow and orange foliage. Between the biggest mountain ranges were ravines with great jade-green rivers flecked with white winding along. Most of it was unhabited (sic), but always when you felt sure this was hundreds of miles from the nearest man you would see a cluster of dots and a few tiny fields. As time went on the mountains became smoother the trees became scattered and there was a lot of bare brown moor. The height made one feel a little queer - slightly sickish and light-headed - but I was enjoying myself too much to care. Fancy Jack Weir sleeping most of the way!!!

Then the hills began to flatten out, the ground became covered with incredibly neat brown fields, and the villages were of square houses with central courtyards. We crossed a big lake and came lower over the fields so that I saw blue-gowned people walking along the footpaths, and hump-backed bridges over canals. Then all at once we found ourselves skimming down on to Kunming airfield. We stayed only two hours and I spent it in the canteen with Mr. Sen and Major Kung, drinking Chinese tea out of real handle-less cups and eating very good egg sandwiches. Then off on the last hop of about three hours. The countryside was rather bare - rocky hills, brick-red earth, lots of little lakes and occasional villages with neat red fields. The clouds gathered below us and it began to get dark so I dozed until someone poked me and said, "Get ready, we'll be there in fifteen minutes". I looked down and could see a wide river faintly shown by the moonlight. There were clusters of lights on the banks, some quite big clusters, and I kept thinking I saw Chungking on its hill, but we went on and on. Then suddenly there were nearer bigger lights, and a few bumps, and we had landed. What an anticlimax! But when I got out I just gasped. We were on a flat expanse of shingle, and nearby there was a moderate-sized river and beyond, stretching into the night to right and left of us and soaring up into the stars, was a wall of lights. This must surely be the most extraordinary city in the world. From the airport it looked like a city set on edge.

I should explain that I was extremely vague about the next step. Wires from Calcutta are often badly delayed, so Mr. Ament of the Intermission office promised to send a message with someone going to Chungking to tell Ronald Rees to expect me. He forgot so I sent a wire on Monday, but without much hope of its arriving in time. Then I heard that Mr. Rees had left for Shanghai! I had got the C.I.M. (*China Inland Mission*) address in English and Chinese, but there is no transport from the airport, and I had only an infinitesimal number of Chinese dollars the Molgaards had raked up. (See **Note 3.**) However I confided in Mr. Sen and he promised that if no one turned up from the N.C.C. he would himself escort me to the C.I.M. or until he found some missionary to put me up. He was an exceedingly nice little man, but his English was shocking. I lost track of him at the Customs, and got involved with coolies who wanted to be paid, but after a lot of talking and argument the coolies appeared suddenly pacified and an unknown Chinese touched me on the arm and said, "It is all right, I have paid". I could only say thank you. (See **Note 4.**) Then a European man approached, asked if I was Miss Crawford, and said "someone has been looking for you since 3 o'clock" - and vanished. Finally after getting passport and customs settled and about to go off with Mr. Sen. a youth accosted me who had definitely got a corrupt version of my name and uttered the magic letters "N.C.C.", so I bade Mr. Sen a grateful farewell and a coolie picked up my bags and off we went, straight for the wall of houses, over a little wooden footbridge.

We climbed and climbed and climbed up hundreds of steep stone steps, and at the top I subsided on to my suitcase and left the youth to organize the next step. After much difficulty he got two rickshaws and for at least half-an-hour we went up and down and round corners. (See **Note 5.**)

There does not seem to be a real main road anywhere, just winding lanes and narrow roads crowded with people. After Bombay and Madras and Calcutta it was strange to see not a soul who was not a Chinese. Of course I was just gaping with surprise. It was all so queerly familiar - the open shops, with the scarlet scrolls with gold characters on them, the crowds of men in blue gowns in the eating-houses, with bowls and chopsticks, piles of tangerine oranges for sale on the roadside lit by little rush lights. After a long time we stopped at the foot of a narrow winding lane which climbed up the hill and my escort gave the rickshaw men each a large bunch of bank-notes (\$140, it turns out) and told me to wait. So I sat on my suitcase and watched the passers-by while they watched me. Oh, it is so different from India! Not a soul was just hanging around, or lying on the pavement, although it was quite warm enough to do so. Everyone was walking briskly, or eating, or gambling or buying briskly, and there was loud cheerful talk and more laughter than I had heard in India in five months.

The boy soon came back with two men who carried my bags, and we climbed up the lane and in at a door, across a court, up a lot more stairs and into a room where I sat down thankfully on the nearest chair. A Miss Liu appeared and apologized that they only had an attic for me, but it turned out to be a perfectly good attic with a comfortable bed. I asked her, "Is this the N.C.C. hostel?" and she said, "No, this is Bishop Ch'en's house." (See **Note 6.**) So I had a good wash and some bread and peanut butter and very nice sponge pudding and went to bed and slept solidly for ten hours.

I met Bishop Ch'en at breakfast and he is being most helpful. His office has got me in touch with Mr. Gould of the C.I.M. and has got forms for a plane passage to Chengtu etc.. I rang up Mr. Gould and he sent me an old man to guide me to the C.I.M. house. He is a very nice man, and lively, with a sense of humour. He gave me 50,000 dollars to go on with and will debit it to the L.M.S. in Chengtu who handle Jack Weir's salary and hence, I hope, mine. There are 35 people staying at the C.I.M., mostly waifs and strays like me. Almost the first I met said, "Did you meet my cousin, Ted Gault?" Another knew Mrs. McCammon but I didn't catch her name. One stranded person trying to get on to Canton hailed me as something useful to do and took me to the Foreign Office where I got a visa to go to Chengtu (the passport photos I brought are coming in handy, I used four today!) I got that on the spot then I met a (?) Dr. Outerbridge who told me a Dr. Best and someone else of West China U.U. (*Union University*) were bringing a truck in next week to collect some stuff, and he will try to see if I can go back with them. This would solve the baggage problem as plane or ordinary bus or post bus will all turn up their noses at my 100 lb. odd, and of course it would be cheaper. In case this does not come off I am (or rather the N.C.C. office is) applying for a seat on the CNAC plane on 23/11/45, as it is necessary to book ahead and there's nothing to lose in applying. I am still a bit lost in this household. Bishop Ch'en has been to Britain and America and to the International Conference in Madras. Miss Liu is his niece and acts as housekeeper. Then there are several Chinese office staff and four or five waifs and strays - one man and his wife, the rest men. I haven't got their nationalities yet but I don't think any are British.

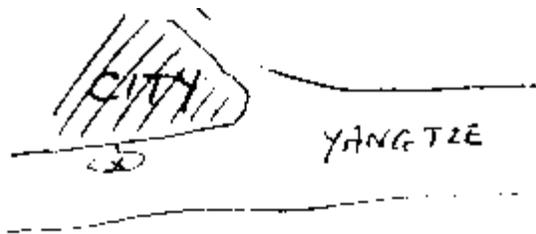
The C.I.M. people have invited me for supper and my willing escort is coming to collect me at 5.30. Even rickshaws are useless in getting to them as most of the way seems to be up and down stairs. You know, I am very glad to have been dropped down in real China like this instead of in a cosmopolitan port like Hong Kong or Shanghai. Comparatively few people wear western clothes. Everything is shabby and a little grubby, but the people have a contented cheerful well-fed look. The children shout "Hello", and simply roar at my funny face! Indian children usually gave only a solemn un-winking stare. I bought a bit of coarse thin rope this morning, helped by Miss Reid, for \$150, and tried to buy a coarse yellow oilcloth (to make up a bundle of the excess belongings I

wore and carried) but they asked \$5000, and I was told that was too much so one of the office staff says he will get one of the servants to bargain for one for me.

So far I don't see much wrong with the food except that there is no butter, one uses peanut butter instead. At breakfast we had oranges, porridge and milk (and sugar if you want), poached egg, toast, tea. At lunch, soup, bread and peanut butter, very good meaty stew with potatoes, bean sprouts, and something like spinach (huge helpings), and a nice sponge pudding, with sauce. The house, like the city, is shabby and a little bare, but there is a huge boiler of hot water to dip from and a chain that sometimes pulls!

Water is not, of course, piped to the top of this crag and this morning I saw dozens of men plodding up the steep stairs, each with two huge wooden casks of water slung on a carrying-pole on their shoulder. . The shops are full of goods - cloth, shoes, everything under the sun, but I know the prices are nearly impossible. Shoes are \$35,000 etc.

What next? The weather? It is mild with a grey sky, and misty, especially in the morning - the famous Chungking mist that made it so relatively hard to bomb. One of the windows in my attic looks out towards one of the rivers and it is strange to hear the whistles and horns from steamers here in the heart of a continent. I have gathered now that the airport is on a sandbank in the Yangtze, something like this:



When the river floods come down each year the bank is covered and all the wooden huts are swept off down to the Yellow Sea. Then when the floods subside you build a new airport on the fresh shingle.

Section not copied by A.R.C.

Did I tell you in the last instalment that I got about 100 lbs. weight of luggage - One "tin" suitcase, canvas zip bag, cardboard Woolworth box, and the wooden box of books. The latter arrived with its lid hanging loose (customs?) but nothing lost. I carried the zip shopping bag and handbag, umbrella, fur lining, waterproof, and big rug. Not bad since I had been warned to plan for 33 lbs.!

Rest of letter not copied.

Notes and addenda, from memory (noted in 1974):

Letter #73 was very long and was sent in two envelopes. It was later referred to as two letters

1. I flew to Chungking in the early morning of 14 November 1945. The stupefying heat of going, the previous afternoon, for dress rehearsal weigh-in, in all my travelling clothes including the "smuggler's jacket" - a sleeveless jacket with many large pockets, which Mother and I had made in Easthope (her house in Belfast). This contained all my small clothes etc. etc. This was because I was thin and so my personal weight could be made up by a large amount on my body.

2. Someone told me that from this line of flight one can see Mount Everest. If so, I must have seen it, but did not know which it was.

3. One was not able to take Chinese currency into China; it was unobtainable in banks in Calcutta. The few dollars I had were collected on the day of departure from various friends of the Molgaards whom we toured for this purpose.

4. The curious sensation of being suspended, completely helpless, (no transport, no language, no money), between two worlds, but feeling quite tranquil about it because there was absolutely nothing I could do but sit on my case and wait.

5. Rushing downhill in the rickshaw - the rickshaw man gave a loud whoop and sailed along with his feet off the ground, the weight in the seat balancing his on the shafts. A glimpse in passing of a shopkeeper killing a cock and bowing before it. No time to see more than realise it was a sacrifice, the pedestrians crowding past him un-noticing.

6. Bishop Ch'en was a Methodist Bishop. American Methodist, I was told. On Sunday morning in Chungking, wandering along the road, hearing a Christian hymn from a big building and going timidly in. Crowded church. Sat on - I later realised - men's side at the back. Collection taken up in sacks. The strangeness of encountering Christianity, alive and active, cut off by language.

7. The crowded quarters in the C.I.M. house. The shock of finding that Mr. Gould had no salary waiting for me, had indeed never heard of me. The relief of being trusted with a loan.

The young missionary who escorted me back to Bishop Ch'en's house through the dark streets and who was so friendly and confiding, even about the iniquities of the S.C.M. (Student Christian Movement.) His shock when I expressed my indebtedness to S.C.M. and his comment "The Lord uses strange instruments!" (Ambiguous!!)

8. Senior C.I.M. missionary (? Mrs. Haughton), who drew me aside after prayer meeting for a private talk. When the door was safely shut she said briskly, "Now, dear, I just want to say two things which will help you. First, never marry a Chinese. And the second is to teach you how to ask for the toilet in Chinese. Now dear, say after me 'Mao fang tsai narh.'"

9. A memory of filling up a form in Calcutta detailing articles which one was not allowed to import into China and including such obvious things as drugs, guns, ammunition, etc. etc. But it finished

up with a miscellaneous selection including swordsticks, agricultural pests, "obscene literature and other luxuries."

Letter No. 74. c/o Bishop Ch'en, Chungking, 20/11/45

Dear Mother

I've posted two letters from here all about the journey. I wonder if you have got them. I have been here nearly a week and I gather this is by no means unusual. I'm hoping to go on by CNAC plane on Friday 22nd. but you aren't sure if you will get a seat until you go for your ticket the day before. But I have all my permits, and am getting an impressive letter from Dr. Outerbridge of the International China Relief to support my application. (You've no idea how cheeky I am becoming about asking for help! It's the only way to get anywhere. The truck I thought I might get a lift on has only just arrived and may stay here ten days. Dr. O. is asking the Dr. Best who drove it in to take my excess baggage, as this plane will only accept the 33 lb. Well, I suppose you wonder what I do all day. This, to be frank, is rather a dull household and no one is very chatty. There is really no sitting room so I spend my time indoors in my room, which is really an attic. It has a large window at each end with no glass left in either of them and although it is really very mild by home standards, I sometimes retreat to be under my rug and read very comfortably that way. Yesterday, having removed my top layer and got under the rug to snooze, I was surprised by a man who tapped and walked in carrying hammers, nails and panes of glass. That was all right for a while, but I was due at the C.I.M. for tea and soon wanted to get up. I said, "Ch'ing" very politely and pointed at the door. He looked puzzled and obviously thought me mad. We continued a conversation in dumb-show in which he said, "look, you silly woman, don't you want me to put glass in this, and this and this. At last he shook his head, gathered up his tools and glass and departed. However, when I came in in the evening, the job had been finished. Really the sooner I learn some Chinese the better. The children in the streets shout, "Ting hao" or "Hao po hao" and shriek with laughter when I say it back. The food in this household is all foreign style and really very good. Everything is a bit higger-mugger and shabby - sometimes teaspoons for your soup and everyone reaching wildly for the things they want. Dr. Oldt and Dr. Cressey - elderly, probably both American and with complicated positions in the N.C.C. and numerous committees - are the semi-permanents. They are a little pathetic and need their wives (*presumably not in China*) to tidy them up.

They come to meals with precious little private supplies of butter, and mixed-up tinned milk (ours is rather watery.) Bishop Ch'en is kind and friendly but busy, his niece who housekeeps looks rather overburdened. The other guests change almost daily and are mostly Chinese. There were a Polish doctor and his wife and a Rumanian, all in some relief organisation. They talk to each other in Spanish! The two men have left temporarily but the Polish girl is still here. She has talked to me quite a lot about her experiences, especially on the Yunan front last year. Very illuminating and depressing. She herself (obviously a nice type of person with high ideals of service) is utterly disillusioned and discouraged and lonely and wants to go to Poland to look for her family, of whom she had heard nothing for years. I wonder if she will not find that even more depressing.

The C.I.M. people have been very kind to me and I found myself dropping in so often that I boldly asked if they would take me as a semi-boarder and let me come for afternoon tea each day. There

is a Miss Reid, a nurse (New Zealand) trying to get back to Canton, who like me has nothing much to do so we go for walks together. The Goulds have also been very nice. I gather there has been some muddle over my salary as he says all monies for missionaries should still come through him and he had never heard of me, but he said cheerfully that I looked honest and advanced me \$50,000 and charged it to the L.M.S. since that was how Jack Weir got his. I have not tried to find the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank here, as I gather money could not have been sent to it direct. Perhaps there will be a letter waiting for me in Chengtu, which will clear up the matter. Did I tell you Mrs. Gould is Ted Gault's cousin? She is nice - about my age or younger. She took Miss Reid and me over to the Canadian Mission Hospital on Sunday - a fine big hospital - and then we went to a little eating-house and had "mien" and "djowzes" (dumplings - my own Romanisation!) and bamboo shoots, etc. etc. - just delicious. After that we went to an English service at the Lutheran Service Centre (started for Allied troops to go to for coffee or to read or talk.) While there I spotted a nice-looking girl with F.A.U. (*Friends Ambulance Unit*) on her shoulder and asked her if she knew Terry Darling. She did, very well, and I found she was called Elaine Conley (or Conyer) I think and was engaged to the son of the Mr. March who was controller of Cheeloo during the hiatus between Presidents. She asked me to dinner and I went last night.

They have quite a pleasant house and about a dozen workers British, Chinese, American, etc. mostly men. They have two types of work 1) Transporting medical supplies dumped in Kunming over the country to the various hospitals requiring them, 2) Mobile surgical teams which operate where they think the need is greatest. They were extremely cheerful and full of enthusiasm (by contrast with the Polish girl). I think working in a team of like-minded people must be a big factor in this difference. We had a very good dinner and then their weekly service, which they hold for themselves. Sometimes it is run as a Friend's meeting but as only 40% are now Quakers it is often more like what we would have. It happened to be Elaine Conyer's turn to take it and she did it very well, I thought. Then we had Beethoven's 5th. Symphony and some Mozart on the gramophone. Terry Darling, I may say, is now in Calcutta and hoping to go home for a while soon. (*Sick leave, T.B. He was unable to return to China, we were in the same year at Queen's; he won a first class degree. He was a conscientious objector and applied to the Friends Ambulance Unit (Quakers) in the war in China.*)

Some of my earlier remarks are not quite accurate. There is a piped water supply but it is erratic and, in any case, it probably does not go to all the innumerable poor houses. Hence all the water-carriers up and down the stairs. You can get shoes - shoddy ones - for about \$9000. I got my rupees changed at \$330 to the rupee, which comes to \$4290 to the Pound. This is the authorised rate for missionaries i.e. a sort of official black market between the "official" rate which is absurd and impossible and the real black market which is what you can get. But I gather that everything is extremely fluid. I was told you needed a Lewis Carroll mind - a combination of abstruse mathematics and an Alice in Wonderland mentality. There is simply nothing you can't buy here - lovely woollen goods and furs, beautiful shoes, tinned goods of all kinds (butter, honey, fruit). All the best toilet preparations, Coty, Three Flowers etc. Elastic in abundance, everything. For a price! Of course most people, except those on fixed salaries and university students, etc. are rolling in dollars. Cars with chauffeur and prosperous looking gent in the back toot arrogantly along the crowded roads.

I went to church on Sunday. There is a Methodist church just opposite so I went in and found it packed. I had to go up to a tiny wooden seat in the gallery. It was queer to be the only foreigner in the church after India with its phalanx of missionaries, mostly in the front seats. The singing was

good. (Not a bit like your celebrated imitation!) and there was a choir with white (whitish!) robes on, and a young man in a black gown preached a very impassioned sermon. The queerest bit was the collection, when large canvas bags are passed round and everyone throws in bunches of bank notes. I find it very hard to orientate myself to think in terms of thousands of dollars, especially when I have no idea how much money I have to spend. My board here comes to \$2000 a day.

How I wish you were here too. You will simply love it I'm sure, and we would wander round these streets and look at all the queer things for sale and watch the people eating and washing and being shaved and having their ears cleaned, all in public. I have seen quite a number of women with bound feet, old grannies of course. It is queer to see the contents of our curio cabinet come to life as it were - the cloth shoes and straw sandals, the big iron scissors are all here. Some of the well-to-do babies have lovely little scarlet coats with high collars, embroidered with gold and lined with white rabbit fur.

Well I hope my next letter will be from Chengtu and that I'll have some from you to acknowledge then.

Much love to you and the Roywood folk from Agatha. (*Roywood was the house lived in by her brother Jack, his wife Marjorie and their two, adopted, children, David and Christine*)

Letter No. 75. 25 November 1945. C.I.M. Ling Shih Hang, Chungking.

Dear Mother,

I have come here for the weekend, as it will simplify the very early morning departure by bus tomorrow. I did not get a seat on Friday's plane, and as one may be put off like this week after week I am going by the "express" bus, taking two days, travelling under the wing of a Mr. Arnold Lea and with two other newcomers - Miss May Pol-something (Polhill) a nurse and Rev. Gordon Harman - a very B.U.ish (*Bible Union, i.e. fundamentalist*) but lively and teasable Church of England man. Yesterday a Mr. Hayes arrived from Calcutta and brought me a feast of letters - 4 from you! Nov. 3, 4, 5 and 7 !!! and one from Mrs. Boyd. It was grand because of course I did not expect any till I got to Chengtu. I hope the Irish calendar and photos may reach me in the same way when someone for Chengtu comes in. By the way, before I forget, could you possibly find my graduation diploma, preferably the M.D. one, and get it photographed and send me three copies - as small as is consistent with easy legibility, say about half the size of this page or a little less. I will have to register as a medical practitioner here. At present it is not essential but may be made so at any time so it is better to get on with the formalities, which may take months, while the going is good. The diplomas, etc. were, I think, packed away with other precious papers in one of the drawers in the study. I have just been writing a long screed to Jean (*Stockman, of W.M.A.*) about my penniless state. It's a mercy the C.I.M. people are so decent and trusting. It certainly would be a bad plan to send anyone else out without arranging this end of things beforehand. I rashly assumed it had been done, since they told me in September to come here, and I had written in July to ask them to send a quarter's salary here instead of India. Please ask Jack and Marjorie not to send me any paper till I get settled down and find out what reading matter there is and what I feel I need. I think I would prefer something general like the Times Literary Supplement rather than a local paper, as I can get cuttings etc. from you, but I shall see how things work out. Later: I find I

can give Mr. Gould a cheque for the money he lent me and some more to go on with, leaving Rs 500 odd in India for emergencies.

28/11 at 51 Hwa Hsi Pa, Chengtu.

Really here!! And so far I like it and feel I shall be happy here; the journey was great fun. I'm so glad now I did not go by plane. We had front seats and a good view and although squashed and the road bumpy, it was not really too uncomfortable. We did about 100 miles on each day (26th. and 27th.) and stayed the night in a hotel (I think it was a "Traveller's Rest-house") in a town. It was more or less foreign style and very clean, so I don't really know what an inn is like yet. They were full, but arranged boards across chairs in the dining room and we had our own rugs etc. Although hard it did not prevent any of us from sleeping well. The country we drove through is really beautiful. Very intensively cultivated and the fields incredibly tidy, every square foot of ground planted with something - rice, sugar-cane, wheat and plots of carrots, cabbages, etc. The soil is a brilliant red and very fertile, so the bright green crops looked very decorative.

Szechwan (*Sichuan*) is very thickly populated. It is said that it is impossible to get out of sight of human habitation. The roads were crowded with people in all possible shades of blue (which I suppose depends largely on the age of the garment), mostly trotting along with huge loads on a carrying pole. Some were being carried in carrying chairs of bamboo and as we got near Chengtu there were lots of wheelbarrows in use. The rice fields were being ploughed, the men thigh deep in the water, and the big black water buffaloes sinking in till the water was well up their sides. Then there were orchards of orange trees full of fruit, and groves of towering bamboo. Most of the country was undulating but near Chungking, and again near Chengtu, there were high hills, indeed mountains, and the road zigzagged in a way that reminded me of Kashmir. Each midday we stopped in a small town and had a delicious meal. Chinese food is nice. I just want to go on and on and chopsticks aren't any handicap if you really get down to it.

Well, I must get on with the story; we arrived in Chengtu just after nightfall. It is on a flat plain about 8 miles from the mountains and I couldn't see much of it. Mr. Lea put me and my stuff on a rickshaw and told the man where to go, and he took his convoy off in another direction. My man hadn't gone a hundred yards when he downed shafts in the middle of the road and started to bargain! Mamie's half-forgotten instructions were hauled to the surface and went surprisingly well. He started at \$2000 and I at \$500. When I mentioned a figure he would burst into loud incredulous laughter so when he mentioned one I laughed heartily. A little boy translated when my numerals gave out. In the end when I reached \$1000 he picked up the shafts and off we went and the crowd dispersed! After fully 30-40 minutes we arrived at this door and I recited the address inquiringly at the gateman who seemed to agree. Miss Priest came to the door and was most welcoming and friendly. People had warned me of her "reserve" and coldness, but I see nothing of that sort and feel quite at home with her. She is New England and not gushing, that's all. The others are Margaret Turner, - sister of the Jane Turner I met in India, Miss Beagle - fairly elderly, a nurse, and Margaret Lawrence. All seem nice. I was introduced to the cook, who has been there umpteen years. I always think it's a good sign if the servants are accepted as members of the household like that. I also found, quite by accident, that the hot water bottle in my bed was Miss Priest's as they had no extra ones - of course I hastily unpacked mine - but this shows an unobtrusive kindness.

29/11. I've been too busy to finish this! I spent much of yesterday and this morning with Dr. Hou who is a delightful man, obviously absolutely genuine and humble. It will be easy to work for him, I

can see that. He was quite candid about which of his staff were easy to get on with and which I must be careful to stroke the right way, "just like a cat". I am to do about 6 hours teaching a week (bacteriology) and spend any free time in his Path lab, but spend the great bulk of my time at language. Dr. Struthers (Dean of Medicine, Canadian, just back, wrote to me once) is very keen on concentrating on language if not full-time for at least two years. I haven't yet got a teacher, but a Mrs. Liao who teaches the C.M.S. people northern Mandarin is to try to think of someone for me. This will of course be a big expense but I suppose the W.M.A. want me to do language study. I'll write to Jean when I find out what my expenses including language, will be. I haven't yet been able to contact Miss Hickson who, I gather, is the one likely to have any letters, which have arrived for me, but I've met Miss Hotchkiss (of Moukden) and indeed have more or less been presented with her as a patient by Dr. Struthers as she is anaemic!! Then yesterday afternoon I had a formal afternoon call from Mr. Wu (?), the present President of Cheeloo, and the Dean of Studies and they made a lot of graceful remarks and invited me to a Reception this afternoon for a Dr. Williamson - just back from furlough - with someone else and me tacked on as extra guests. (He has written "China among the nations" and I think other books.) Yesterday evening I went to Mr. Sargent's house (C.M.S. Secretary) for a bible study group of new missionaries - C.M.S. and Canadian - and an uproarious supper-party afterwards. This is the group doing language study with various teachers. There is no organised language school, as people have turned up at so many times and with need for various brands of Chinese. By the way, the food in this house seems to me excellent - breakfast: oranges, porridge and milk, egg, toast, jam, coffee. Other meals to match. Afternoon tea out of thermoses, the only lack is butter. Miss Beagle gives us vitamin pills daily!! The weather is cold and dry, sometimes misty. I like the cold, on the whole. There's lots of hot water for washing and hot water bottles and lots of blankets. They "haven't started fires yet", which sounds as though they will later. One advantage is that there is practically never any wind. I doubt if I shall be as much concerned with the cold this winter as you will, and it certainly makes me feel well - like a 20-mile walk. Suits me much better than India, although I didn't really mind it. This letter has been written in so many bits that I hope it will be intelligible.

Much love to you all, Agatha.

Notes and addenda, from memory 1974.

1. A memory of the bus journey from Chungking to Chengtu. We had stopped for a midday meal at an inn in a village. While we were sitting eating at a small table, a couple of young men dashed through the front of the room and out the back. Apparently the Army press gang was combing the village for recruits. I remember dimly, but I think truly, seeing later in the village street a few soldiers in uniform with a small party of young men with their hands tied in a line - they did not look unduly distressed, had presumably become resigned to making the best of it.

I also remember vividly the toilet, a vast wide deep pit full of ordure of unspeakable stench, spanned by a stout plank on which one squatted. Having paid my visit and gone out to the bus, I waited for a few minutes for Mr. Lea to join me. He, although a serious gentleman, was so convulsed with mirth that he had to tell me why. Our young male companion had dropped his New Testament beside or almost into the pit - presumably it squeezed out of his pocket as he squatted - and, being a lad of character, he was engaged in washing it cleanish instead of abandoning it to its dreadful fate. When he joined us on the bus there was no comment. He was a very serious young man!

2. *I described in my letter to mother the bargaining with the rickshaw man on arrival in Chengtu, but not what happened after that. It was a pitch-dark night, the streets lit only by few and inadequate lights from houses and probably the acetylene flares at street stalls. The road was at first wide and well metalled, obviously a likely route to a university campus. Then he turned off this road on to a small dark and bumpy side-road. A short-cut, I told myself, but with some inward trepidation. Then he turned off this into what may have been a track of sorts but was so dark that I only know he hauled the rickshaw in and out of such deep ruts and potholes that it could not have been a reasonable way to anywhere except? Could it really be that I was about to be robbed, abandoned here in the dark, perhaps raped, perhaps murdered?? No one in the world knew where I was except he. My family at home would not fuss for weeks, Mr. Lea would assume I arrived safely, and Miss Priest had only the roughest idea of what date to expect me!! I decided that my life was more important than any possessions, and that the pitch-darkness could be a help to me as well as to him. If he stopped and put down the shafts I would stand up, jump into the night and run. Then hide somewhere till daylight. He stopped, and put down the shafts. I stood up in the rickshaw. Then my wobbling knees made me sit down again. He had vanished. There I was, sitting on the tilted seat; faint strange noises and stronger strange smells assailed me. After an eternity (? one or two minutes), a tiny light appeared and grew larger as it approached. It was my rickshaw man, bearing a lantern. He said something, hooked the lantern below a shaft, hauled the rickshaw round, and retraced our path to the main road, and we bowled along without incident to Hwa Hsi Pa. He was a nice man. When I left my umbrella in the rickshaw after unloading all bags and paying him off, he came running in with it after me, and handed it over with a smile.*

3. *As I say in the letter, Miss Priest greeted me kindly and I was soon sitting down to a late supper. Through the door walked a tabby cat. I said, "You've got a cat!" Miss Priest said, rather nervously I felt, "Yes, do you like cats?" and I replied with deep feeling "Yes, very much" and Tigger walked to my outstretched hand, sniffed, and then licked it acceptingly. I think Miss Priest warmed to the strange new waif in her household.*

Letter No. 76. 51, Hwa Hsi Pa, Chengtu, 7/12/45

Dear Mother,

I received your letter of 19/11 on the 4th (!) and the seven page one of 10/11 on the following day! I did not have to pay anything, and so I don't know whether it took longer because it was overweight. One from M(arjorie) and J(ack) also arrived on the 4th. Very many thanks. By the way, don't send parcels. They are accepted, oh yes, but none have ever arrived here. Any ordinary mail is so very slow and doubtful that I gather I might very well be home on furlough when it arrived. You don't write too small. Do I? Wasn't your letter of the 19th. quick - 15 days! Please tell Jack this is Hwa Hsi Pa not Park. Is Dor home? Please give her my love. Very Interesting news of Maurice, Will and Anne. (See **Note 1.**) It's grand that you like Miss Ormsby. We have lots of toilet paper - old forms etc., in beautiful soft rice paper. I'm bothered about your neuritis, in eye, etc. Are you sure the trouble isn't in your eye? You said something about Miss Deeds being a footer. Miss Priest's verdict is that she fusses terribly and left here more or less a nervous wreck, never took a rest or an evening off. You can't say that about Miss Priest! I was warned not to be put off by her reserve, but I find her most restful and friendly. She is one of the busiest and most important people on the campus - Treasurer of 4 universities, and think of what that means now. Yet in the evening she

often just sits doing nothing, with her kitten in her lap, and then goes placidly to bed at 9 p.m. and is the last to appear for breakfast. Oh, I got a cable from Jean S. yesterday saying Mr. Gould had £50 for me. (See **Note 2.**) She shouldn't have bothered cabling. That I will assume to be my salary for January - March 1946. I wrote to her from Chungking and will later when I can budget for a month. Don't count on more than one epistle per week for a bit, the main problem seems to be time. You'll be glad to hear that I am well launched on language study. Three teachers, all young men, two are students, one in a press office, all from N. China. (See **Note 3.**) I have two (separate) hours each day and try to spend 2-3 hours more on "home-work". Then I demonstrate in Bacteriology 1-3 p.m. Monday and 2-4 p.m. Thursday, have a "background" lecture with other language students once a week on Wednesday evening - Chinese history or art, etc. by various people. And the rest of the time gets filled up in various ways; a lab meeting weekly and Bible study with the other language students.

Dr. Hou has set me down to making out a complete equipment requisition for Tsinan for the Bact & Clin. Path labs!! . He's doing the Path lab of course. This I find a big job, and I spend hours brooding over catalogues and wonder which types of centrifuge, incubator, etc. to order. Dr. Hou insists on my sharing his room in the lab, and we sit facing each other on opposite sides of the table. The disadvantage is the temptation to gossip. We get on so well together that we tend to chat for ages. He really is an exceedingly nice man and full of good ideas. E.g. When I made some polite comment on the splendid buildings, he looked a little disappointed and said, "I don't like them. They make people think a university is made of buildings, and it isn't. It is made of students and teachers." All the Tsinan equipment, museum specimens and records were destroyed and he has to start to build the department again from scratch, after spending years on it. He was rather pathetic and said, "If only you could stay and help me for a while, because I am not a young man, and we Chinese do not live long", but he quite understands the possibility of Moukden later. Did I tell you anything about Dr. Struthers? He's in the medical Dept. of Cheeloo and Dean, and has only been back from Canada a few weeks. (*According to Saving China he was interned by the Japanese at Weih sien.*) He is a very nice little man, reminds me a bit of Bobby John (*McConnell, of RVH*) but uglier. He has enquired in some detail about my woollies and bedding, and has insisted on lending me three elegant pink and white check flannelette sheets, which are very warm and cosy. Then there are a Dr. and Mrs. Laube (American, and he is in Surgery) who have only been in China a short time and who have been very kind and taken a lot of trouble over finding me the language teachers and lending me books. Miss Hickson, one of Miss Deens' pals has been Secretary of Cheeloo for centuries, and retires very soon. She is rather a comic and wears velveteen and funny hats but is quite a sport - takes the part of an elderly maid at a Dramatic Society shows and so on. This household consists of: 1. Miss Priest, 2. Miss Caroline Beagle, American nurse now doing office work because not strong, 3. Margaret Turner, Scotch, very lively and energetic, belongs to lots of societies and is keen on student activities and bright pink politically, 4. Margaret Lawrence, American, teaches English in Nanking University and belongs to the Campbellite sect ("Church of Christ", "Disciples".) I've met hundreds more people. I don't know what the folk at home would think of the average foreigner here as a missionary. One goes to church on Sunday and that's that. It's a very different atmosphere from the C.I.M., which abounded in prayer meetings and audible amens. Probably some of the people here deserve "Mac's" stricture that there was "very little real religion on the campus", but I think there is no doubt that many of the foreigners and including those in this household are providing very necessary and useful ballast in these universities, which are no longer Christian except in name. I see no shadow of reason to regret that I came on to China. Quite the contrary. The situation is so complicated that it's a case of the sooner the better. I feel that for ages I will be able to do nothing but learn Chinese,

keep my eyes and ears open and be generally friendly in all directions. The student situation is volcanic in the extreme. The war for freedom is not over. I am simply staggered by some of the things I have seen and heard. At home we heard nothing of what was really happening here. I'll wait till I know more of what is the truth of the situation to tell you what I can. Of course it does not affect the foreigners. The knowledgeable and trusted ones act as ballast. But it is all extremely interesting, and it is wonderful to learn something about modern China in a place like this where you have 3000 odd students who represent all sides of opinion and are as articulate as they dare. (See **Note 4**)

Did I tell you about the campus at all? It is huge. You could put Queen's into one corner. It must be fully four times the area of Queen's and it takes me 15 minutes of fast walking to get to the lab. The buildings are rather beautiful, grey brick with tiled Chinese-style roofs, and are scattered with wide expanses of playing fields and some vegetable gardens and one or two ponds with geese and ducks. In our corner there are lots of trees, fine old ones, and it is really beautiful. These last few days have been quite unusual, warm and sunny, and I have had lessons sitting out on the veranda enjoying the sunshine. Some of the trees (gingko) have bright yellow leaves and the place is alive with birds. It is rather surprising to see palms and banana plants. The bananas don't ripen however. The food here in this house is excellent, so you have no need to visualise me getting thin and wan. The stove is lit every evening by the first people home, and we sit round the dining-room table with our candles. Even when the electric light is theoretically "on" it is so poor that it is only a convenience for moving about the house, and not nearly good enough to read by. Other parts of the campus are much better off. There is a useful library here with lots of interesting books, especially about China. Dr. Struthers took me round, saying, "Now you must read this right away" (pointing to 3-volume works!) Dr. Struthers has taken my future welfare and usefulness most seriously. It's nice to feel someone feels responsible for guiding me, as that is better than any amount of vague social friendliness.

I forgot to tell you about one incident on our bus journey from Chungking. We were eating our mid-day meal when soldiers began coming in by back and front doors, with groups of men with their arms firmly tied up. When I asked what they had done, the answer was "nothing - they are just being conscripted!" The village was being combed for able-bodied young men. No appeal, except buying off for a large sum. If the troops can get more than their quota from an area they auction the surplus to other less fortunate troops!

Last night I was at the theatre - 5 hours! Not the traditional theatre but a modern company and a modern play (one of the methods of commenting on the situation.) Excellent acting. It was fun to spot words I knew.

Much love, Agatha.

Notes and addenda from memory, 1974.

1. Will Crawford, Maurice Crawford and Ann Crawford (who married Bill Gilmore) is cousins. Miss Deens was a missionary who wrote advice to me before I left home. She advised me what to bring: she included a wedding ring "if I was likely to need one"!

2. *Jean S. is Jean Stockman, the Secretary of our WMA (Woman Missionary Association). The difficulty about my salary went on for months, during which time I lived on tick. I sent several appeals for money before it was discovered that the amounts sent (to the Intermission office?) were credited to Jack Weir who was the only Irish Presbyterian member of our (men's) Foreign Mission then in China.*

3. *This plethora of (untrained) language teachers was, of course, a hopeless arrangement. I struggled with a large textbook, whose author I forget, but who must have been a very gloomy character. I remember counting the relative numbers of cheerful, neutral, and miserable sentences given for practice, and about 90% were definitely sad. Later I acquired a "teacher", a girl from Peking who was a librarian. She did not know how to teach either but was a nice person. One afternoon I read out one of the model sentences, of which the English translation was, "How many years will it be before I see my home again?" My pronunciation did not please her, so I had to read it again. Still not right, so I tried a third time, and burst into a flood of tears. She was at first stunned with astonishment, then hugged me with a wail of "Are you homesick too?" As a result we became friends. I also learnt that it was as likely for a Peking Chinese to be homesick in Chengtu as if I, for example, had moved from Ireland to Italy. Later, when out for a walk one day, in single file on the tiny track between rice-fields, she asked me about my family. I told her my father and mother had lived in China for years. She asked if I had been born in China, and I said rather sadly "No, I was born a little while after my mother arrived back in Ireland". She stared at me a moment, then laughed and hugged me with a cry of "But, that means you are Chinese" and I realised that for a Chinese life begins at the moment of conception, not when the baby appears in the outside world.*

4. *I don't remember now, and did not really understand then, the political tensions that rent the student body and staff into parties. I do remember one evening when Margaret Turner was very excited because some students had threatened to tar and feather Jim Endicott. (A rather pink Canadian.) They did not in the end attack him, and I remember rather cynically deciding that there was a scent of disappointment in the air of martyrdom denied and anti-climax instead of crisis!*

Difficulties in putting stamps on letters were not confined to the fact that they were bought in sheets, having neither gum nor perforations. Inflation was such that, although they were overprinted to increase their value (a \$1 stamp, for example, overprinted to \$1000 and so on), it was difficult to put enough stamp-value on the letter without increasing its weight too much, and so on ad infinitum!!

I learned that the best way was to take the letter to the post office with no stamps on it and get them to weigh it then buy the stamps and put the stamps on for THAT weight.

Letter No. 77. Hwa Hsi Pa, Chengtu 16/12/1945.

Dear Mother,

I got your letter of 23/11 about three days ago and also David's "letter" (*David, ARC's nephew, was just two at the time!*), which was forwarded by Mr. Ament without any extra postage on it (does this mean that the 6d. air letter cards are all right to send here? By the way, I feel sure you could write on both sides of that paper you use. I don't mind if it's hard to read, so long as it is possible. Be sure to tell me if I squash too much on to these sheets. It's grand to hear about Dor. How funny you walked in to the office just when the Molgaard's cable had arrived! I did it that way because cables

from China are so very slow and uncertain (and of course fantastically dear.) Yes, we heard all sorts of rumours about ships being sunk about the time we left home - seven sunk in the Bristol Channel in the week before we left Milford Haven, and we saw one come in when we were there with a huge hole in her side. I've had letters from Uncle George, (bless his heart), from Dr. M.D. Graham in Vellore (the Vice-Chancellor visited and said they might assume that the future was secure and the M.B. classes start in January) and from Ronald Rees. The latter says "and surely the Commission won't go to Manchuria until the spring."

What a lot of questions you ask! Here goes! Clothes - I wear two wool vests, two wool knickers, jumper and (Newtownards) skirt, cardigan, and short tweed coat. When cold I put on my brown tweed long coat on top. Dr. Struthers' flannelette sheets are so warm and cosy. Why don't you get some if or when you can. I don't need bed-socks with them. We have the stove lit in the dining and sitting room each afternoon about 5, and from then on it is quite warm. During the day it is really warmer outside than in. The last two weeks, however, have been quite exceptional - dry and sunny and windless. I sat out most of the morning shedding layer after layer and sunning my arms. The suitcase I left in Chungking for Dr. Best to bring has not yet appeared, so I have just enough to keep me warm and fairly clean. He has had an awful time and I thank my stars that I came with Mr. Lea instead of with Dr. Best a few days later. Mrs. Best was with him and I hear she is queer mentally and frightfully jealous of anything female near her husband. The truck (lorry) got stuck and they have been nine days in a small town on the way. A new C.M.S. man, whom I met in Calcutta, was with them. They have just arrived by post-bus, but the truck and load (including presumably my suitcase) are still somewhere between here and Chungking! However, there's no good worrying. I haven't heard exactly what is going to happen to the stuff or who is looking after it. I haven't needed the fur lining I bought in Kashmir yet, but yesterday I bought some nice brown silk to cover it - \$4500. I went shopping with Philippa Kelly (one of the new missionaries) and we had great fun. I also bought an entrancing pottery tortoise with legs and head that waggle in a sinister way, for \$100, as a Christmas present for Miss Priest. Also a little enamel brooch of a dragon in green, blue and orange for Margaret Turner for \$200. (Remember about \$5000 = £1 now.) (*Later I gave her a pair of my stockings instead as she had none - all badly worn out.*) I also bought a silver filigree bracelet just to keep as a sample. It is very pretty and Chengtu is famed for its silver filigree. I felt ashamed to leave India without having bought anything much there, because I rashly left it to the end, and then had no time, so I don't want to do the same here. The bracelet was \$1200. So I had a really extravagant afternoon.

This is a much more Chinese city than Chungking, it was exciting because of its site, but the actual buildings were dingy and characterless, many built hastily since the bombing. It is strange how many details are different in the shops. Here, there is very little sugar cane and no elastic. Chungking had dozens of peddlers who seemed to sell nothing but broad, gaudy, garter elastic. Chungking had lots of foreign goods, very rare here. Here there are lots of wheelbarrows, none in Chungking etc. The food shops make your mouth water, full of chickens and ducks and all kinds of things. There are embroidery shops with little boys sitting all day embroidering in front of the shop.

I'd better tell you the names of the new missionaries, the language study group, as I see quite a lot of them and will refer to them often. Phillipa Kelly and Una Nash (C.M.S.), staying with the Sargents (C.M.S. Secretary) on the campus. Mary Urquhart, Eleanor Burwell (in the city, not sure what mission), Arnold Lea (not the C.I.M. Arnold Lea!) C.M.S., Arthur Dayfoot (Canadian Mission). They are a very nice crowd and I enjoy our Wednesday evening gatherings. The talk reminds

me a little of Sunday night at Jean's house. (*The Music Society sang madrigals one night. A leader was Dr. Stephen Chang, who later left Communist China by swimming to Hong Kong!*)

Was there anything in the home papers about Kunming disturbances? Students of S.W. University held a mass meeting on the campus to protest against the continuance of the civil war. Shots were fired over their heads and at a later incident a hand grenade was thrown and four students killed. Last Sunday the students here held a mass meeting to show sympathy with the Kunming students but university authorities went to the police first and besought them to ignore it, so it went off peacefully. The whole situation is very complex here. The powers that be are extremely autocratic, to put it mildly. "Dangerous thoughts" are investigated by the disciplinary department of the universities (these Christian universities!!!). Even the S.C.M. group in one university was recently required to give an account of what it discussed at its meetings. Gestapo still exists. The attitude of foreigners varies. Some like to back up the status quo (i.e. Central Government) and think the students do more harm than good by criticising and rather fall in with the Kuomintang idea that anyone who criticises is therefore a Communist. Others applaud the students (or at least one section of them, for of course there are many students who are frightened or apathetic and few real communists, perhaps) who are concerned over the state of China and have enough guts to kick up a fuss and demand freedom of speech, press, and assembly, at the risk of future trouble for themselves. I don't think I shall write like this much, and you had better not comment in your letters to me. The student class are extremely important in China and take life more seriously and responsibly than ours at home. They represent quite an important part of the literate part of China, and the largest group of them (at least I suppose so, about 5000) live on this very campus. So one is at the heart of China here, more so than in Chungking, in a sense. The Government has just started to move back to Nanking. Some message came from Tsinan asking someone to go there soon and take over the Cheeloo University buildings as the Japs vacate them. The Cheeloo people, staff and students, are just aching to get back. They still feel exiles and I think rather despise the Szechwan folk and there is quite a little friction over small things. Although classes are held jointly, the dormitories are separate and there is a Cheeloo Medical Students Association, which I addressed at last week's meeting! The best subject I could think of was "The Development of a Blood Transfusion Service" and interspersed it with as many lively anecdotes as I could think of, from those four years in the lab I don't know how much they took in, but Dr. Hou said afterwards that they would find me very easy to understand as I had "almost an American accent"!! There is a lot of talk about when Cheeloo can flit as a whole. It seems likely I think, that next June or July, if not earlier, will see me floating down the Yangtze. More adventures! Well, well.

Your last letter did not tell me about your neuritis. Please give me a health bulletin in each letter. I'm so glad about the new McCaughey baby. The more the merrier! How worrying this Fisherwick business must be for them.

Much love to you and the Roywood three. Kindest regards to Margaret and Winnie. Agatha

Letter 78. December 22, 1945. (Snippet)

...Miss Lewis is coming for supper. She is visiting Chentu to inspect child welfare work in connection with UNRRA. She has been referred to by folks here as a 'negress' – American, really coffee-coloured. She said that no one knew what difficult travel was

unless they had travelled "in Crow fashion" in America... refused entrance to hotels, restaurants etc.. If she arrived in a small town in the course of her work in America, she used to have to ask the name of the local minister from the ticket-collector and then telephone him for help! She said a coloured person was absolutely isolated and helpless in a way she had never felt even as a new-comer in China. Isn't it awful in a country like the USA which is 'democratic'.

Notes, 1974 and 1998:

Colonel George Oldham of the C.M.S. in Calcutta, an adopted "uncle" to many young missionaries.

"Jean" in this letter is Jean McCaughey.

"Margaret" Alcorn was mother's housekeeper.

"Winnie" was Marjorie and Jack's maid at Roywood.

I don't remember why Fisherwick (Presbyterian Church) should have been worrying the McCaugheys.

Dr. Hou pao chang. (Snippets)

1. There was some forcible slum clearance to tidy up the city for Chiang k'ai shek's visit. I was very annoyed that no provision had been made for the evicted poor and told Dr. Hou I did not think anyone could be a Christian and support the Kuo Min Tang (Nationalist party). He stopped dead in the road, glared at me in indignation and said, "I am."

2. When Dr. Hou left in the spring of 1946 to go to America, he took an ancient Chinese scroll picture with him and told me "Whenever I begin to feel American, I shall shut myself away and take it out and look at it until I feel Chinese again." He showed it to me one day as a special treat and honour. First the children were shooed out of their living room; then the one table was cleared of books and other belongings, and the scroll was taken out from some safe place. It was exquisite. A long, horizontal, scroll, which wherever it was opened showed what was a satisfying composition.

3. Dr. Hou was worried by my barbarian ignorance of art. Aspiring young artists used to send him pictures for criticism. To me they were all "lovely" which sometimes made him shudder. One day he lent me four pictures, and asked me which I liked best. I told him. No comment! Then he gave them to me and told me to put them up in my bedroom and look at them for five minutes each morning for a month. When the month was up, I took them back and he asked me again which one I liked best. I told him that I had changed my mind and pointed to a different one from the previous choice. His face lit up. Evidently there was hope for me!

4. When leaving Chengtu, I was asked by Dr. Hou to tell him what I wanted as a goodbye present from him. This was very embarrassing, as I knew his poverty. After some thought I told him that I wanted to ask him for something precious which I could never hope to obtain for myself. "What?" "Some of your time, to take me to buy a Chinese picture, one that I can live with and learn from." I

explained that the money would come from me, that was easy, only he could help me to spend it. He agreed and took me one Saturday afternoon to visit a friend of his, an artist living in a terrible little room and obviously very poor. We talked and looked at his pictures for a long time and I came "home" with one of them. It was a river and towering cliffs and pine trees (in the classical style). On a rock at the river's edge was the tiny figure of a man fishing, a dot of vermilion which caught the eye and spoke of patience and serenity. Alas this picture was at the bottom of the suitcase that travelled after me, not with me, from Chengtu and finished up at the bottom of a river. (See letter 160.)

5. Dr. Hou was not the easiest boss to work for! One of his assistants explained to me that one had to watch out for what he was wearing when he came to work in the lab. If he was wearing a Chinese gown and skull-cap, then I must be careful. He would be in the mood to study pictures, not pathology, and would spend time on a barbarian like me only if I wanted to watch him practice calligraphy. His hand was so steady that he could perform half a brush-stroke and then pause to talk, his unsupported hand holding the vertical brush. Then, in silence, complete the perfect stroke; no flaw could be detected in the smooth curves.

6. Dr. Hou, his wife and, I think, seven children lived in a small house in poverty because he disapproved of taking on paid work over and above his full-time salary, and he was contemptuous of those who did. But he coveted beautiful objects. Several times he took me on "shopping" expeditions on Saturday afternoons. We would walk through the city to an antique shop where he was an honoured guest and we drank tea with the proprietor. After a time Dr. Hou's eye would stray to some antique and later to another. The vulgar subject of money would be hinted at and withdrawn. After a while it would become clear, even to me, what it was he really wanted to buy. An actual sum was mentioned, tossed aside with polite scorn, more tea drunk, another figure toyed with, the object brought out and caressed, then with regret returned. The negotiations would be pursued as we retreated down the lane, and we would then walk home empty-handed. Dr. Hou torn between longing regret and a proud virtuous feeling that he could still look Mrs. Hou in the eye. Repeated visits took place over one particular vase. I wonder if he ever actually bought it.

It was a great shock to learn, in the spring of 1946, that Dr. Hou was to go the U.S.A. for "a year". It was assumed that I would take over the Pathology Department when it reappeared from the ashes of war in the restored Cheeloo University in Tsinan (Shantung Province) and I was appalled by the responsibility. I remember speaking about it to Miss Priest and the others in our household, and bursting into tears; we were at a meal and our servant (Lao Pai?) was present. This made me miserably ashamed. I did not blame Dr. Hou - had I not come to China to help? After he left, or I left, Chengtu - I forget which happened first - I did not see him until October 1949. He was then Professor of Pathology in the University of Hong Kong, and I found him in his Department there. We embraced each other with great mutual affection, and he was soon scolding me for my awful Manchurian accent. When we were at Chengtu together he refused to speak in Chinese to me in case I should pick up his Shantung accent. Now, instead of retaining the pure Mandarin spoken in Peking, I spoke with horrible dialect phrases from Tung Pei (North East - Manchuria). I used some extra earthy ones just to tease him!

Years later I was standing in a queue at a Pathology conference somewhere in Britain to collect some hand-outs or lunch tickets and heard a young Chinese pathologist in front of me give his name as "Hou". I tapped him on the shoulder and asked him if by chance he was related to Hou

pao chang. "My father!" He must have been one of the children who were shoed out of the little living room in Chengtu when his father prepared to show me his precious scroll!

Other Chengtu snippets

When out for a walk in the fields with Rev. Arnold Lea (of C.I.M.) we saw in front of us, lying across the narrow track between rice fields, a dark mass. It was a man's body in a pool of blood. I gingerly made certain that he was dead. In the field near the path an elderly farmer was working. Arnold Lea called to him, "Do you know anything about this? Who killed him?" The answer came, with a broad smile. "He was a brigand. I killed him. With a knife." Arnold Lea sighed, stepped over the body and was about to walk on. I said in horror, "can't we do something? We can't just leave him lying there". His answer was "There is nothing we can do - probably after dark some of his gang will come and remove the body." We continued our walk.

Our group of new missionaries and the Sargants had a wonderful weekend holiday to Kuan Hsien. Sleeping in a Taoist monastery to the sound of deep gongs, and graciously treated by the monks. Next day, three of us girls (Mrs. Imogen Sargant, Una Nash and I) took a roundabout route through forested hills. There were great bamboo thickets and I felt that a giant panda could appear at any moment. Very hot, we found a waterfall falling into a deep pool and bathed there naked. (One of the few times that I have bathed nude; why is it so much more enjoyable than in even the least restrictive bathing suit?).

On another day we visited the great dam and suspension bridge, built entirely of bamboo and large smooth stones from the riverbed, with a few tree-trunks. This controls the irrigation of the fabulously fertile Szechwan plain. (See photographs.)

When the exodus from Chengtu of the exiled universities eastwards to their former homes took place in the spring of 1946 there were several plans for me. To go by air with the Laubes - they left without me, and it would have been very dull; to go by boat down the Yangtze, its gorges which would have been wonderful but it fell through for me, or by lorry northwards to Paochi, Sian etc, finishing the journey by train, which is what I did. See letters 108 -, "It's windy on deck".

Letters 78-107 were not retyped. "It was a very confused time and hard to explain to mother; these letters are best forgotten."

Letters 108-281 were originally 'published' in "It's windy on deck; letters from China 1946 - 1949.

In 1993 ARC wrote, "Letters 78 to 107 (Christmas 1945 to mid-May 1946) have not been copied and are lost. It was a very confused time.

I was shaken to hear that Dr Hou was going to America. He had urged me to work at his original university in Cheeloo and had not taken seriously my talk about being promised to Moukden.

A rush to plan to return "home" started in the spring. The trip down the Yangtze, which I had looked forward to initially, had to be cancelled, I forget why. Then I was offered a seat in a plane going to Cheeloo; it was offered by a family I knew well but at the last minute it turned out there

was no room for me. Later Margaret Turner asked if I would like to join her in one of the trucks, which planned to go via the mountains. (Northwards and Eastwards). I gratefully jumped at this chance and we left in May 1946."

Letter No. 108, 22/5/46 from Tze-t'ung, N. Szechwan province.

Dear Mother,

We really got off yesterday, so I'll start a letter about our journey. The one thing I don't like about this way of traveling is the awful hour at which one starts. We were up yesterday at 4.30 to finish packing. My luggage boiled down to the "tin" suitcase, Jack's zip bag, and my blankets and sheets in an oilcloth. We waited about, looking like a crowd of refugees, on the playing-field in front of the Education Building, until about 10.30 a.m., when at last two trucks rolled up and we packed ourselves on. The technique is to build up a wall of heavy cases at the back of the lorry, and make a layer of soft or small bundles on the rest of the floor, and then the passengers, twenty-five of us, settle in on top. It is very intricate and at times the problem of where to put your left foot or right elbow becomes insoluble. We have only three children with us: one, a small solemn Ti--ti of three has his own umbrella, and if a few drops of rain fall he puts it up with extreme suddenness to the great danger of his neighbours' eyes.

The two trucks try to keep together. Ours is doing splendidly, but the other in spite of being "an absolutely new truck, just repaired" has stopped about a dozen times, and is at the moment standing, disembowelled, in the street while we potter comfortably in a teahouse. We did not get very far yesterday, only to a town called Mien-yang where we spent the night in a Middle School there. We were able to spread out bedding on the floor and rig mosquito nets. Just as I settled down with weary groans, a clock above me struck nine with deafening noise, and we groaned anew to think we would be wakened at least hourly; but that was all I knew of clocks or anything else until after four when we got up. I am glad to find that the dreadful custom of starting at dawn without any breakfast, and driving till mid-day at least, can be very comfortably circumvented by buying hard-boiled eggs and bread, and we have a tin of dried milk which, with the help of hot water put the night before into my thermos, makes a very good imitation of breakfast.

Well, we lurched out of Mien-yang about 7 and almost at once came to a wide river. The trucks were ferried across, one at a time, by heavy wooden rafts worked with poles. The current was so strong that they pole upstream for some way in the quiet water near the bank, before launching out into mid-stream. Since then the country has become wilder, and hilly. There are rather bare hills of red earth and rock, with a little bushy vegetation, and some very tall ragged cypress trees with thick rough trunks. The fields are almost all rice. (Yesterday we saw a lot of tobacco and maize too).

24th. We did not start until about 20 to 6 p.m. and nightfall found us on a twisty mountain road. The rains descended and the floods came and, to crown all, we got into a dense fog.

No. 21 truck, ahead of us, had only one light so the idea was put forward that the mechanic should walk ahead with a torch. This plan was defeated by the fact that he was the husband of the driver's sister. Do you follow this? Well, we crawled along, huddled in a solid mass of humanity and knobbly luggage, under a rather inadequate tarpaulin, and got to a village called

Lin-ko about 11 p.m. We slept that night in what I think had once been a temple but was used now for offices and billeting soldiers, etc. etc. The women had the room at the top and the rain came through the roof, while swallows and sparrows contributed their quota. There were no lice or bugs, and only the odd mosquito and flea, and everybody slept well. It poured hard all night, and in the morning it was decided to wait for the road to dry. No. 21's insides were taken out and inspected, and it appeared that the mechanic had put water (and mud) in the tank, and the radiator leaked. We ate breakfast, at frequent intervals scrambled hopefully into the truck and drifted out of it several times, but really left about noon.

We had a more or less non-stop run to this town of Kuan Yuan, arriving about six p.m. It was a lovely day - my nose is bright scarlet as witness and causes much mirth. The road climbed and twisted through lovely rugged red hills, laboriously terraced. Along most of the road there is a scattering of very old evergreen trees, which must once have formed a fine avenue. They were referred to as the Imperial Cedars but looked to me like a kind of cypress, and were planted long ago when this military highway was built. The climax of this part of the journey is a pass through the mountains where it is said one man with a sword could hold Szechwan. The road winds along beside a mountain torrent and then through a deep gully and emerges on a new landscape of range upon range of lilac mountains with exciting shapes, a wide countryside of terraced rice fields, and wide shallow shining rivers. Looking back at the range of mountains we had crossed was most spectacular. The mountains were crowned by a wall of red conglomerate which must have been several hundred feet high and stretched far to right and left. There were a few dimples along the top and it was hard to believe that a cleft low enough for a road was hidden below one of them. On and on and on. "Only twenty miles!" I thought we would soon be in Kuan Yuan but it then appeared that there were two wide rivers to cross. The first, the Pai Ho (white river), was easy as there was a motor-driven ferry - and no trucks in front of us. One coming the other way told us that there were sixty queued up at the ferry ahead, and that we would be delayed about a week! We arrived at dusk at a wide river with an enchanting silhouette of the city beyond - the city wall and a pagoda and behind it more ranges of grey and lilac mountains. The view did include a line of trucks - not sixty but enough to make it clear that we would not get our truck over that night. We were besieged by a howling jostling mob of men with wheelbarrows, wanting to take our baggage over on the passenger ferry. A weary half hour of bargaining followed, but at last the tumult changed its note, and luggage poured over the side of the truck, and we set off down the road past the line of waiting trucks. Our barrow boy was pitifully young and thin, and I think inexperienced in steering a barrow loaded to the skies. I was sure it would all topple over into the river but, luckily, on the two occasions when it did fall over with a crash it was only into the mud of the road. Then it all had to be unloaded, and we skipped across some wobbly stepping-stones and set off, heavily loaded and complete with barrows and barrow-men, on a flat wooden boat. The river was powerful, but the men extremely skilful and we soon charged an apparently impenetrable line of moored boats and reached the shore. More haggle in the deepening dusk. The barrows staggered up deep sand to a road, which leads to the city gate. On over a fairly wide and dry street to the China Inland Mission gate. We found that the two truckloads that left on Sunday (19th) were still here, so it was a bit of a squash. It is a rabbit warren of rooms and courtyards and quite a nice big church. Some of the boys were on the cement floor last night, others slept out in the courtyards. We were in luxury as Miss Spicer and Miss Kirk of Ginling College took us and a few others into their room and we were very comfortable. Of course there are never any beds at any of these places, and I personally find that the floor is much more comfortable than a few uneven boards across two stools. "He that is down need fear no fall". This morning Miss Kirk introduced us to someone who knew someone

who was a social worker in a big cotton factory here. This was no formal introduction but resulted in two hot baths, in a big wooden tub - the first time I have sat down in a bath since I came to China. After that she served us with tea and then we washed all our dirty clothes and they are now hanging on her line. They have unlimited hot water all the time from the factory. She was a very nice woman, a Miss Liu, and had worked many years in different parts of China, usually in the Methodist (institutions?) or YWCA. She runs the factory hostels here - for fifty women and about one hundred small boys. This factory used to be run by the Government but now by a private company. They evidently are an enlightened crowd as they have a factory hospital with two doctors, two nurses and two assistants in charge. There are about 1800 workers in all. The machinery was brought piece by piece from the east, and is now installed in underground chambers. They were bombed twice so it was just as well. They have decided to stay here and not move back east as they can get both the raw material (the cotton) and coal here. The factory has its own private coal mine.

Oh dear, this letter is almost done and I haven't begun to tell you about the people on our truck. I'll keep that for next time. I forgot to tell you about the men we saw along the roads, carrying baskets filled with yellow-white silk cocoons; or the wooden carts loaded to the skies with bales of raw cotton and drawn by mules. They have one mule in the shafts and two or four more on traces in front on the hills. A log of wood hangs on two ropes behind a back wheel and bumps along on the ground; if the cart has to stop on a hill this acts as an automatic brake.

On the higher ground we passed through yesterday there was rice of course, and also what looked like barley (or bearded wheat), and many mulberry trees ruthlessly pruned. We have seen no orange trees since leaving the Chengtu plain, but lots of loquat trees with leaves the shape of Spanish chestnut leaves and little round yellow fruits mostly skin and stone.

At most stopping-places we buy hard-boiled eggs - I've never eaten so many eggs in my life - and sometimes kuo-kwei (flat flour cakes), very good when newly baked. We spent so long today sleeping late and then bathing, that we did not go out for breakfast till twelve o'clock! We have found a very good cheap restaurant, and gorge on sweet-sour pork, spinach soup, omelette; bamboo shoots and lots more delicacies. I'll tell you who "we" are when I next write. We will probably not leave until the day after tomorrow. It is a good place to stop and rest and such a beautiful place that I wouldn't mind staying longer. Three trucks may turn up tonight however, which will reduce us to slum conditions once more.

Can you read this scrawl?

Much love, Agatha.

Letter No. 109, 25/5/46 from Kuan Yuan, Szechwan

Dear Mother,

I'm out in the courtyard, waiting for the others to go out for breakfast. We heard last night that our bus had got over the river, so if the repairs do not take long we may even leave later today. I'll tell you who the members of our party are, and that will give you a picture of what a university

on trek looks like. First, there are five of us who stick together for meals and struggling with baggage - Margaret Turner, and I, a Mr. Ko (University of Nanjing student), a Miss Wang, and a Mr. Wang (no relation). Miss Wang's home is Sumatra. Her people were tea planters; she has had no news for five years. Mr. Ko and she are very friendly - he undoes her bedding at night and almost tucks her in, and then turns up, sometimes embarrassingly early, to tie it up for her. They are both doing English as main subject so we teach each other. He is from Shantung. Mr. Wang does physics. He is from Peking, and very jolly. Then Miss Fang, rather elderly and not so tough as the rest, Registrar's Office. Another Wang, a clerk, in a Kuomintang cap and badge, sour-faced, never speaks to anyone. Mr. Wen, Cheeloo student, has worked as interpreter with American troops so spends much of his time standing up in the truck singing "You are my sweetheart" etc. A quiet pal occasionally contributes a very tuneful second part. Then there are two servants' families. One includes "Ti-ti" aged three. He eats most of the time, munching steadily through kuo-kweis or long fried-bread corkscrews. The rest are students with no outstanding characteristics.

Kuan Yuan 29/5.

Well I promised you a saga of the journey and we're having it! But, rather unexpectedly. It might have been much more disastrous than it has been, and I can now see the end of our troubles. We set off on the morning of the 26th. on a truly marvellous road winding up a valley in the mountains beside a swift yellow river. In some places the road was blasted out of the face of the cliff so that it had a roof of rock as wide as the road itself. Eventually it went over a pass, and in the valley, which opened out there, was another wide river flowing towards us! It disappeared in a huge cavern in the face of the mountain and I was told it came out on the other side. A few miles on we stopped and waited for No. 21, which had lagged behind. After a long wait one of its party came running and staggering up the road, shouting that their truck had turned over. We tumbled out and pelted back along the road. It seemed endless but must have been about 1½ miles before we saw the crowd and a truck lying on its side. While another was caught on some trees and rocks about thirty feet below. The first had been empty and stationary and ours had gone into it and rolled over the edge. It was a scene of truly awful confusion, with crowds of local people collecting to stare and add to the mess. Someone had done good work before I had got there and all the wounded had been hauled up on to the road and wrapped up in bedding. When we got the situation sorted out I found there were ten people seriously injured, none killed. The rest were cut and bruised but able to walk.

There were no severe haemorrhages, so the first thing I did was to dole out two grains of luminal to all the serious cases, I still had the bottle in my handbag that I left home with, so you see I didn't use much since then. The next step was to get boiled water and give them all drinks while I bandaged up heads with handkerchiefs and torn-up shirts and one or two bandages I had with me. It eventually became clear that we had on our hands a severe compound fracture of tibia and fibula, a fractured base of skull whom I thought was dying but whom I am watching at this moment, and several severe concussions, lacerated wounds, and what turns out to be a ruptured kidney. Of the ten children only two were hurt - a fractured tibia, and a vague abdominal injury associated with a paralyzed arm; they are both doing very well now. Well, there was a lot of fuss and confusion, from everyone but the patients who lay quietly on the road waiting for attention. There is quite a lot of traffic and the road is narrow so every few minute there were frantic wavings to a bus or truck to slow down and crawl past us. Eventually our truck (No.22) was brought back, the floor was covered with bedding and the worst cases piled in rows. You

can imagine what a job, when the floor of the truck is shoulder high. I got in on top and more or less lay across the one I hoped was the least severe case - dislocated shoulder - and off we jolted and bumped back to Kuan Yuan. *(Added by ARC, 1991) When I tried to give a drink to the boy with the severe damage to his leg he refused and turned away his head. I knew he must be desperately thirsty and I urged hi to drink it but he shut his lips. I said "Why will you not take this water from me? Is it because I'm a foreigner?" He said, "There won't be enough for the others." I promised him that I would see that there was enough for all and he grasped the mug and the water vanished.)*

I should have told you that the ones who had only been slightly hurt had already got a lift back to Kuan Yuan. The other members of truck 22 and their baggage were left on the roadside. Margaret got a lift on a bus and brought her and my baggage, so I have had her help the last few days. Truck 22 left the following day to pick up the others of our group, and they have continued their journey.

Well, we had a pretty awful drive of two hours or more over the bumpy road back to the C.I.M. compound where we had previously stayed. There are no foreigners in Kuan Yuan and no real hospital. The so-called "hospital" - really a doctor's private house - was "full" so we unloaded, amid a babble of confusion and a mob of most of Kuan Yuan's inhabitants, at the C.I.M. door. Those preceding us had got ahold of a local doctor who was quite helpful, producing a proper splint for the broken legs, and later in the evening some sulphathiozole, and one precious ampoule of morphia. But can you imagine the mess - blood and mud and vomit, and everyone's clothes mixed up and torn, children howling and grown-ups moaning. The ambulatory patients were simply marvellous and worked feverishly so that when night came all the worst were on plank beds, and all had had lots to drink and more luminal, and we even had a few mosquito nets rigged. Of course we had not enough of anything - only one or two cups, and one spoon - so hygiene went by the board. I found my Chinese much too refined to be much use, but did manage to say to a dignified old gentleman who was the senior staff member in the party, "Please help the man who is sleeping in my bedroom, he wants to pass water", which struck me later as a peculiar sentence in any language.

A real bedpan appeared like a direct dispensation from heaven; it is still the brightest spot in our outfit. Urinals for the men were soon procured - a glass tumbler and a small wooden tub answer perfectly. We are extremely lucky to be in a place as civilized as this. There are wooden floors, no bugs or lice, although there are fleas, rats and mosquitoes in plenty. That first night was bedlam, and Margaret and I each had only about one hour rest owing to the fractured skull case who had long spells of wild delirium when she tries to walk about, and calls out and moans. The people who live in this compound are quite kind and helpful, but were aloof at first. I think they were a little frightened by this irruption.

All that was only two days ago but, although the matron of any hospital at home would die of shock to see us, yet the change is miraculous. The students who were fit organized a committee - one is the treasurer, one in charge of laundry, one girl does all the cooking, etc. etc. Two local doctors come each day (I think they are partners) do dressings and dole out the drugs we think necessary. All the patients have improved and are now washed and have clean clothes and bedding and temperature charts. Even the ruptured kidney has produced some normal urine and asks for food, while the compound fracture sits up in bed and reads the newspaper. The only really awkward case to cope with is the fractured skull and she, poor girl, is a full-time job for at

least one competent person (and we have very few who can cope with her wild moods). Dr. Liu, the senior staff member, is of course a great standby and is in charge of all non-medical decisions. He sent a wire to Chengtu for help on the first day and this evening we heard that three people may come tomorrow; we hope a doctor and two nurses. The most likely outcome is that all those well enough proceed in a few days, while these Chengtu reinforcements take charge of the others until well or the reverse.

The problems that arise are both complex and funny. There was the Chinese "doctor" who came in while I was eating one day and removed all splints (at least he was in process of unsplinting the compound fracture when I descended on him like a bolt from the blue), and plastering wrinkly black plasters on all the backs most likely to develop bed sores. There is the coolie whom I lead around at frequent intervals, pointing and frowning and saying "Tsang-ti hen" (very dirty) with great emphasis. The children of course use the front doorstep as a toilet and the flies go back and forth merrily between it and the table where the cups and bowls stand. The local church has very noisy prayer meetings about us (much too close) and then invade the ward in a body (about 10 p.m.). However I can't say a word against them for it's pure friendliness I know, and they have lent us lots of necessary things including our beautiful, miraculous, bedpan. No more room. I wonder when I shall get letters from you again!

Much love to you all. Agatha.

Letter No. 110 29/5/46 Kuan Yuan, Szechwan

Dear Mother,

I've just finished a letter, but as there is still lots to say I may as well begin another. I have just had a battle with a kitten. It is probably full of fleas, and insists on leaping on top of Miss Yeh, who is the girl with the fractured skull. At the moment she is sleeping peacefully, long may it last! The kitten has just spilt my precious little bottle of good ink, drat it. Next door Ti-ti chirrups in his sleep. He is the little boy with the fractured leg. His mother was also badly hurt, so Ti-ti is being looked after by one of the students much beloved by him. So long as "Uncle" holds him he does not cry, but the moment he lays him down trouble is liable to begin. His poor "uncle" was badly bruised and scratched, but for the sake of peace he simply had to sit all the evening and night after the accident, holding Ti-ti and his splint in his arms, and murmuring endearments into his hair. (Now this idiotic kitten is whirling round and round on the floor after its tail!)

You may want to know our routine here, now that we have actually achieved a routine. The nursing is shared by the students in turn. They are all men except the girl who does the cooking. In addition we have help from a few of the women about the compound, one of whom is a trained nurse, and Miss Liu (who runs the factory hostel and gives us an occasional bath) comes in the afternoon. Margaret and I share the nights (with boys to help), I from 7 p.m. till 1 a.m., she from 1 a.m. till 7 a.m. We go out a little in the morning and rest a while in the afternoon. Everybody in the group is working very well (except the kitten, bother you, get down). There are still four patients, whose recovery is doubtful, but the rest are very chirpy today, and a great contrast to two days ago. For meals we share the patients brew of "hsi-fan" for breakfast, but for

midday and evening those off-duty go out, and food is sent in from a restaurant for those who can't. This works well.

2/6/46 Kuan Yuan.

Still here. The great news is that we got a telegram tonight from Chengtu to say that a plane may come tomorrow. If it does we will send all the bad cases back and the rest of us will go on in a few days. The transport company is going to supply us with a beautiful bus. How posh! This is such a funny existence that I think I'd better describe a day. I wake about 6 in our hard plank bed in the pastor's guest room. His study opens off this room so we are sometimes disturbed by his abrupt entrance - eyes front, skirts flying, hat shoved down, in a valiant attempt not to see us. He is a very nice man and he, indeed all the church folk here, have been increasingly kind and friendly to us now that they have recovered from the shock and understand our problems. I get up and pull on shirt and slacks and sally forth through the rabbit warren of courtyards for a little water to wash in. A selection of Mei-meis and Ti-tis attach themselves to me on the way back, with derisive shouts of "Tu I-shang" (doctor) and "wei-kuo-jen" (foreigner).

Then I go and do a "round", pausing to tell the fracture for the 100th time that his leg is quite straight and has not come unstuck in the night, and generally exuding bedside manner. One of our helpers who is a nurse has taken temps. and pulses, so I frown solemnly over the charts just as though there was something I could do about them. Margaret has been sitting with the head injury since 1 a.m. so I relieve her for a while. This patient is better and has not been uncontrollably delirious for three days. She often insists on sitting up in bed, leaning confidently against you and indicating with her hand the spots on your head that correspond with her bumps. So a night of it leaves one tousled. Of course I know head injuries should not sit up in bed, but to tie her down would send her wild. Then breakfast, a bowl of "hsi fan" eaten sitting on the doorstep. The girl student who cooks is a nice child, always after me to know what I would like and putting an extra egg in my rice, etc. She just can't quite believe I really flourish on Chinese food. Then some distribution of medicines, soothing chat, rubbing of backs or bruises, and then Margaret and I consider ourselves "off". We sometimes wander along the street and sit in a teashop for a while, rejoicing in the unlimited supply of drinkable fluid. Then we lie in bed till 12, get up to see that the nursing and feeding is going smoothly, and have our own meal. Then we try to sleep until four. This is not always easy as our little courtyard is the home of several very chatty families with small children, a dog, two cats, hens and pigeons. I'm beginning to realize that what sounds like an awful row is just ordinary conversation. About four a shout comes to the door that the doctor has arrived. I try to be punctilious in the professional courtesy of going round with him, as it is my only chance to see the wounds and to worm drugs out of him. He does the dressings very well and is quite a capable fellow, but our scanty mutual language makes it difficult, and he is a bit inclined to treat me as an unnecessary piece of furniture.

A second doctor, a Christian, sometimes assists him, and seems very decent, but knows very little English so is even harder to discuss things with. Every tiny decision takes hours of talk while I strain to follow the drift. It is disconcerting to give a plain order on some purely medical point to a student and find out next day that after talking to his pals he decided to do the exact opposite. After this I may have time to go back and swear about it all to Margaret, or may be busy with odds and ends until supper is brought from a restaurant. The food is good and I enjoy it. Then I am "on" from seven till one a.m. At first this was a constant struggle with the head injury (helped by her very sensible sister) until I had to give in to the idea of morphia again, and after the bedlam caused by the injection, relax gradually as she fell asleep. Now she is much more peaceful and tonight she is sleeping well with

only a few restless intervals. The other woman patient is Mrs. Li, a very nice person, a nurse with three little children. She and I have good talks and giggles together. She told me tonight something which while horrid is so funny that I must pass it on. On the first hectic day we used a glass tumbler as a urinal for the men and in the confusion she was handed it as a nice glass of tea!

I don't think I told you about the flying visit from the Chengtu doctor. In reply to our wire an American-Chinese called Capt. Yang drove a jeep here in one day (200 miles of those roads!) to bring a young Hwa Ta (West China University Hospital) doctor and one of University of Nanking's staff and some drugs. They all left again early the next morning. The wire sent by the senior man of our party had told them two were injured and our man had also decided it would be nice to leave out the crucial words "and nurse" and sign his name in full instead! Really! The doctor who came was the only one who agreed, and was permitted, to come. He managed it because he had been ill and was given three days to convalesce. He very nobly decided to spend it this way but was almost too tired to stand when he arrived about ten p.m. that night. Of course Hwa Ta is very short-staffed just now, but we feel a little sore that they were not more willing to help. If only this plane will come.

I went to church this morning, more as a gesture than anything else, as I did not understand a word. Dr. Liu (or Lin?) - not a medical doctor - our senior staff man preached and as always I was amazed at the capacity for eloquence and drama, for half-an-hour without pause. Floods of words! I was tickled to see that the pastor slept through most of it. There was a crowd of about 100, mostly women. They also have evening meetings on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, rather louder and longer and nearer the patients than I would like.

We got a disturbing bit of news the other day by wire - that one of the boys we travelled with at first had been arrested at Paochi. Margaret and I were distressed to think of all that is likely to happen to him. The cause? Dangerous thoughts, shall we say? The present group are unsympathetic so the incident is not discussed with them. We have been having trouble with these boys who are rather selfish and very restless. They told me (via a middle man) that they had decided to leave tomorrow or next day by the bus supplied by the company and leave me in charge of the patients. I object strenuously to this, as this would be most unfair as there will be no more University of Nanking trucks, and how would I get on? Dr. Liu says he will stick by me but I don't think that is good enough. The students are not needed in Nanking, and the world would not suffer if they stayed here all summer. The ones who really have some reason to push on are Dr. Liu, Margaret and I. We shall see! I don't think they will really do so now, but it was mean of them to plan it, don't you think? Some are decent enough; one or two troublemakers are to blame.

No more room. Much love, Agatha

Letter No. 111. 5 June 1946. From C.I.M. Kuan Yuan, Szechuan.

Dear Mother,

Last time I wrote we were longing for a plane to come. The wire said "2nd or 3rd." and arrived late on the 2nd. so all the next day we strained our ears. It was not until about 3.30 that we really heard a drone and Colonel Kaeppl's plane (American Army) roared across our sky. I never saw a lovelier sight. We all felt like shipwrecked mariners who see a vessel change course to rescue them.

Everyone who could rushed out into the courtyard and shouted " Fei-chi lai la" The patients struggled up on their elbows and were in a perfect frenzy of excitement. Miss Yeh wept on my neck and everyone talked at the tops of their voices. ("Unemotional Chinese.") Then we settled down to the job of preparation. There is no road to the landing ground which is only a patch of meadow in a valley about two miles from Kuan Yuan, so we had to carry the patients in "Hua-kans" - a sort of semi-hammock made of split bamboo, carried by two men. It was awkward for the compound fracture, but they had morphia all round and I just hoped for the best. We sent six, the rest being well enough to go on with us. I walked out beside the girl with the fractured skull as she is delirious, but quieter when she had hold of someone's hand. It was a glorious evening with level sunlight making the colours brilliant. The distant mountains were blue as the hills of Donegal, the nearer ones green and patterned with deep red where the rock is bare. The valley floor is in rice fields, and there is a jade-green river with shingle banks, and little boys with lovely naked bodies swimming in it. You can imagine how happy I felt, all the worry and responsibility over, and the comforting feeling that they all would have at least a chance of recovery.

It was queer to come in sight of the plane, standing there on the grass with country folk and soldiers standing round to stare. It was all very swift and efficient from that point on. Stretchers and bedding spread on the empty floor for them to lie on, two doctors on board to look after them. In five minutes they were off - Chengtu in time for tea! Well, well, and we took five days by road! The walk back was lovely. The walls of Kuan Yuan stood out against the wall of mountains and sunset sky. It is a little city, two roads at right angles, which lead to the four gates, and the rest a maze of lanes. You could walk across it in about five minutes.

Well, that was over, and we ate supper in a sort of stupor and went to bed. Margaret and I had never gone to bed at the same time but cramped quarters did not matter much. Alas, I woke with a queasy tummy and temperature (up to 100° F) and did not feel at all like truck travel on the following day. Luckily everyone was most agreeable and we have had two days rest. I was very sorry about this as a few days ago they were all so restless as to be on the point of mutiny, but it really did no one (and especially Margaret) any harm to have a good rest. Today I am fine, hungry and normal temperature. The motor company has given us a very superior truck, a 1941 Dodge, so we should make good time to Paochi. No more news now, so I shall probably post this there.

7 June 1946. Pao-cheng, Shensi.

We left yesterday and had a good run, reaching this place about 5 p.m. This morning it is raining and we don't know yet whether we can leave, so I will write a little. Yesterday the scenery was very spectacular, almost continuous snaking up and down mountainsides. A few Li beyond Kuan Yuan we passed alongside a rock cliff carved into multitudes of Buddhas, large and small. It is called the "Thousand Buddhas". We passed it before, the day of the accident, but I forgot to mention it. A little after midday we passed the boundary into Shensi. In the late afternoon we came down the mountains again to a dead flat plain, very beautiful with a background of purple mountains in all directions. It looked quite different from the Szechuan countryside; yellow soil, no flooded fields or irrigation ditches, just fields of ploughed earth, stubble, or a very pale yellow grain which may have been barley. An argument arose about going to Hanchung which is ten kilometres from here and out of our way. The driver and some of the bright sparks were very keen to go, but we managed to persuade them to stop here and let most of us stay. You see, we still have the boy with the lacerated thigh, and the one with the dislocated shoulder with us, not to mention eight children and their harassed mothers. So most of us stayed here - Pao-cheng - in a deserted alcohol factory in the

police station (or is it the other way round?) while the truck went on to Hanchung and was to collect us this morning.

8 June, Paochi

The truck turned up at last and after much voluble discussion as to the possible state of the road, we finally started off about seven a.m. The rain soon stopped and the road was dry before we got to the worst bits of the road, so we had a good run. At first we followed a river valley, the road winding along beside a thick muddy flood for at least ten miles. There was a steep mountainside on each side, covered with scrubby vegetation where it was not sheer cliff. The road actually went through tunnels in the rock in two places. What amazing country this is. If you had it in America it would be a world-famed beauty resort. All day we travelled across ranges of mountains. The hairpin bends were innumerable; you could often look down and see five or six stretches of road below you like a ladder. About midday we stopped for half-an-hour at a Taoist temple in a charmingly wooded valley. It was a lovely spot, with a garden full of aged twisted evergreens and little pools where water gushed continually from the mouths of stone lions. The temple buildings were more elaborate and ornate than I had seen in Chengtu, with painted decorations under the eaves and frescos of languishing beauties and bewhiskered warriors, still gleaming with gold paint. I bought two photographs here which I will send you some day which will give you a rough idea of the kind of scenery we passed through, although there were many more spectacular parts. Then we started off once more, bouncing and bumping interminably. The driver and manager of the truck company, who sat in state in front, were determined to get us to Paochi in one day, a distance of about 130 miles, and the last part was a race with the dark. Arrival at Paochi is something of a climax. You climb, climb, climb up to a pass (where snow fell three days ago), and see a truly breath-taking view of mountains towering up on each side of a widening valley. We went grinding down more hairpin bends and reached level road just as it became really dark. Even then we nearly came to grief. There was some break in the road - a broken bridge probably - and we went lurching off on a temporary track on one side. Hold tight! Bump! Bang! Crash! At one point the truck rose on two wheels, paused a moment in doubt, (at which point the driver and manager jumped for it), and then, having had its little joke, settled back on four wheels. Of course it was level ground, more or less, or even if it had tipped over there would probably have been no one seriously hurt. But what a jumble inside! This very superior truck had a roof, windows (too small for any but the slim and active to get out by) and the back door was bolted on the outside. Everyone was so tired and sleepy by this time that no one even commented on the incident, or appeared to notice. Soon we reached the lights of Paochi, jolted over a level crossing - railway lines! - and after the usual business of losing one's way, being misdirected, redirected, etc. etc. we ended up here.

These are the premises of the Youth Corps, the Kuo Min Tang youth organization. They gave us two rooms, so we are in one with five other women and six small children. There was a play in progress in the big hall when we arrived, and as the courtyard in front was the only available place for washing, I soon found myself causing an obstruction by brushing my teeth in the middle of the audience, which had poured out. They found me much more diverting than the play had been. Today we rest, and leave tomorrow by train for Sian. This morning we all went for a bath at the local bathhouse. I'm sure all old-time missionaries would hold up their hands in horror and prophesy frightful diseases. But what do you do if you are so dirty that you smell, and it's the only place you can wash below the neckline? It was an agreeable surprise. Nice little cubicles, whitewashed not so very long ago, a real long white bath like ours, a tap which when turned on produced hot water. So hot in fact that I felt no bugs could survive, so had a lovely time washing myself and my clothes. We

have done a lot of eating too, and drinking. Chinese people don't seem to drink nearly as much as we do. Margaret and I are always buying k'ai swei (boiling water) and making little brews with coffee powder, or drifting into teashops.

No more news. Much love to you all Agatha

Letter No. 112 8 June 1946, from Paochi.

Dear Mother

I forgot last time to tell you about the cave houses. I remember reading about cliffs of loess with houses cut out of them. During the last few hours before reaching Paochi we passed lots. They looked quite snug, with doors and sometimes windows. Other houses were built of bricks or mud of the same pale yellow-grey earth, and looked much the same.



Sian, 11 June 1946. We were up bright and early on the 9th and with a wheelbarrow for our luggage and a few rickshaws got ourselves to the station and on to the train about two hours before it started. So everyone got seats and we were reasonably comfortable. This was the 3rd. class, but the carriages were reasonably good and clean (with wooden seats narrow, with vertical backs), luggage rack, etc. It was an 8-hour run and we passed the time mostly by eating the inevitable boiled eggs, and apricots, and buns we had bought in Paochi. The train was besieged at every station by people selling fruit, virulent-looking sweets, scarlet naked chickens, long curly fried breads, and other delicacies. It's not a long distance, but we stopped at every tiny station, often for 20 minutes or so. The views were lovely. We followed the flat river valley eastwards; with the mountain range we had crossed in the truck always in view to the south. The highest mountains were covered with snow. The fields were mostly in wheat, which was being harvested. For the first time I saw the type of cart of which we have a model at home with the blue hood, instead of water buffaloes as at Chengtu.



The farm animals were a mixture of donkeys, mules, ponies and oxen. A few of the fields had a very tall leafy grain, which must have been millet. We reached Sian about 8 p.m. The train runs for some distance just outside the city wall that looks quite impressive, high and massive, with well-kept surface of pale brown brick and crenulations along the top. As usual, when we arrived one person went off to contact the "advance guard" who is supposed to stay at each place and look after the trucks as they go through. He was gone about an hour while we tried to keep track of the eight small children, in the midst of a curious crowd. At last Mr. Chao came back, to say that the "advance guard" had apparently got bored and gone on to Nanking, and that there were no arrangements for anywhere to stay! (We are not the last truck so our delay at Kuan Yuan has nothing to do with it, and there is really no excuse.) He went off to try again while we moved to a restaurant and got some mien inside us.

Just as we finished, Mr. Chao returned to say the C.M.S. compound could give us a room, so we all piled on rickshaws and rushed off through streets, which made us gape like country yokels bright lights, bicycles, even a car or two.

Once arrived, Bishop Yang very nobly agreed to give the women and children his study, so we have two rooms and are quite comfortable. We can buy K'ai swei at an exorbitant price (\$100 for my little thermos-full) at a shop across the street and there are lots of convenient food shops. My bed is on a table and the room is clean, which makes me feel lapped in luxury. This is our second day here. With so many small children and people who have recently been hurt we cannot rush on, as some groups have been able to do. Yesterday we slept late, went out for a meal and then Margaret and I took rickshaws to the English Baptist hospital. I wanted some sulpha guanidine as these children have the most hair-raising habits of dropping fruit on the ground and then licking it clean, and it is a miracle that we have had no dysentery yet. (I had bought some in Chengtu, but the nurse who helped us in Kuan Yuan used it instead of sulphathiazole as it looked the same!) We also needed something to clean the children's heads. One of the patients (Mrs. Li) who went back to Chengtu with her youngest child who had a broken leg, has two other children who are going with us. One of the students is a relation (called "uncle") and does most of the nurse-maiding but we are in charge too and feel responsibility for cleanliness. So most of yesterday was spent in bathing these kids, persuading them into a peculiar selection of clean clothes, and doing Mei-mei's hair. It is still full of nits, which I am trying to persuade myself are dead. I have also been to the bank to cash a money-draft, and we hope soon to go for a bath.

The rickshaw ride over to the hospital was quite fun as it took us right across the city and gave us a good idea of what Sian is like. It is a great contrast to Chengtu. Even the weather was different - blazing sun and a cloudless blue sky - but the air was dry and one had only to step into the shade to feel a pleasant freshness. The streets are very wide; the biggest ones have trees planted in a strip of grass down the centre. The small lanes are very bumpy and must be a morass of mud in wet weather. The prevailing colour is pale mud-grey. The roads, walls, houses are all the same. Here and there trees and shrubs break the monotony, the most beautiful being the pomegranates with scarlet flowers.

It is very interesting to notice all the differences from Chengtu. You see many people eating mien instead of rice, and all the food shops sell big flat wheaten cakes up to two feet across. I like rice, but I find I can get round much more mien. We have had some queer food in the last few days - turtle (very tasty but rather pathetic with all its little feet and claws), pigs' intestines and stomach, shrimps ("golden hooks" is a nice name, isn't it?), and what I was introduced to as "leather", which was really pig's skin made to taste deliciously juicy and crunchy. The only fruit just now is apricots, but they are large and very good.

Loyang, Hunan 14 June. We spent all the 10th. and 11th. resting at the Sheng Kung Huei in Sian. In the afternoon, Margaret and I went for another bath in the public bathhouse. It was very luxurious, nice white clean baths and hot and cold water on tap. Our cubicle had two baths and two beds to rest on so it was very matey, especially when the attendant popped in with a pot of tea to amuse us while we soaked. All the others peeped through the door to see what we looked like.

Next day we started off about five, in rickshaws, and started off again in the train. Second-class this time, there being no third, so we had more room for legs, and a little table for each four seats. It was a long day but the country interesting. Flat plain at first with a spiky mass of mountains (Hua Shan) to the south. Then we began climbing again and went through several long tunnels. This was the T'ung Kuan pass and we emerged in Hunan. After that we went on and on through~ rather dry and rugged country and arrived at a small station called Shanchow about nine or ten p.m. There was nowhere to go, as the town, such as it is, is some li off and anyway we had no contacts there. Luckily it was a mild starry evening, so everyone settled down on their bedding on the platform. At first, Margaret and I and the mothers were allowed to sleep in the first class sleepers of a carriage standing by, but we were soon routed by an army of bed bugs, and went outside again and lay down beside the others. It was after midnight when we got settled down and we got up again at dawn, about four a.m., to see if we could buy tickets for the morning train. After indescribable confusion over the baggage we all got into a third-class carriage while the baggage vanished into (I hope) the baggage compartment. There was an hour's delay, mostly over a party of soldiers who insisted on travelling but had not bought tickets. Great confusion and shouting, but at last, about seven a.m., we started off. This was a long slow joggly journey through dry dusty country with pale loess hills and wide -fields of stubble. About midday we came to a stretch of railway, which was still "pu hsing" (impassable). A big bridge was destroyed during the war (by Chinese), and it is still only represented by some complicated piers of scaffolding. We all piled out of the train in a narrow dusty gully and bore down the hill to where a line of trucks waited. Each person's ticket had a number on it corresponding to a truck, so we scrambled on without delay, and crashed and banged along a frightful road in clouds of dust for about four miles. The trucks were simply crammed, and as always it struck me as a miracle that everyone including eight small kids and Mr. Ho on his crutches arrived intact at the far end. Then we sat for an hour or so by an empty railway truck in hot sun and clouds of dust. A far-off hoot, and everyone beat it down the line to secure a seat. More wild confusion and at last everyone on board just in time. Then for eight more hours we joggled along at a snail's pace. This part of the line has only been open six days, and they are closing it again for repairs. We were on the last train to go through.

We got here (Loyang) about midnight, sat about the station for a while, then four of the men, the two Li children, and we two got a room in an inn; the rest in other inns. Margaret and I, not trusting the beds, slept on the rug on the floor, and slept well. We have not yet seen our baggage, but some of the boys have just gone to try to locate it in the station. We have also got a room or rooms in one of the Mission compounds (R.C.) I think, and will rest today and tomorrow and then will get on the train tomorrow

evening to hold our seats. It starts in the morning and should reach Chenchow in the evening. After that, two days travel should get us to Nanking. The most complicated bit of the journey is over now.

Much love. Agatha

Letter No. 113 Sheng I'un Huei, Chengchow, Hunan 17 June 1946

Dear Mother,

My last letter was written from an inn in Loyang. We sat around there for a long time, while arrangements were being made for somewhere to stay. Eventually we all collected at the Fu Yin T'ung, which is "American Christian Mission" - some kind of Lutheran I think. Here we (the women and children) had a fine large empty room. It was nice to be able to walk without stepping on someone's baby. We soon fixed up our bed on the floor with Margaret's big mosquito net all over. Then we set off to the local bathhouse to get clean. This was quite interesting, as it had obviously been built while the Japanese were here. It was rather charming, with latticework sliding walls and tubs of pink oleanders in the courtyard. After the bath we got a good meal there very peacefully all by ourselves in a large cool dining room. When we got back about two p.m. we went to bed and I did not wake till about six to find Margaret gone, and all her underwear hanging rebukingly on the line. So I paddled off down the road with our basin to buy some hot water, and set to work on my own underwear. We usually give our heavy clothes (slacks, shirts etc.) to an amah and do our own underwear as it is now in an advanced state of disintegration. Then Margaret turned up. She had been talking to one of the three foreigners on this compound. All three left early next morning to go to a conference, so actually I did not see any of them. Then we went with Mr. Chao, Mr. Li and the Li children to have supper. As always we had a good meal. I'm trying to learn the names of some dishes and feel now that I could at least get a meal for myself in a restaurant. Then back to bed again. One of the kids was sick and had diarrhoea in the night, which was the first episode of this kind we have had. It is rather a miracle considering the amount of dirty food and unripe fruit they eat. She's all right again now.

Next morning we went for breakfast. It's easy to get a very cheap breakfast in these parts - millet hsi-fan with sugar and/or eggs in it, and shao ping (big flat wheaten cakes) all for about \$250. After that we pottered and wrote letters and had another long sleep. Then we went for a walk in the city and bought some food for the train. The city is not large, and rather grey and dusty but with enough green trees to refresh the eyes. The shops had lots of foreign goods at preposterous prices. A small 2 oz. slab of chocolate \$2000 and so on. It's interesting to watch prices as one travels. Sugar, for example, is not very dear in Szechuan where they grow sugar cane but has got progressively dearer as we followed the direction of its export. Loyang is the peak, the watershed as it were, as further east they get it from the coast. We had another supper with a crowd of the students and a good night's rest and left at dawn for the station.

That was yesterday. It was a long day. First, we had only travelled about 20 minutes when we stopped at a small station for over an hour as an army colonel had missed the train and had telephoned for it to wait for him to come on by car. Apparently the army's word is law. Off once more, joggling slowly across a dry flat landscape with hills on the horizon. The fields were either wheat stubble, combed of every last straw or young cotton plants. Irrigation was being done either by hand-wound pulleys over deep wells, or by mules or donkeys, blindfold, walking endlessly round and round a water wheel. Each

mule had its own little patch of trees to give it shade, and was quite alone and unattended, and as the fields were thickly dotted with these wells it looked rather odd. The peasant women here wear a white piece of cloth thrown loosely over their heads. The small children are nude, burnt dark brown or else wear nothing but a wide straw hat, which looks a very sensible costume. At about 11 we stopped again, and rumours indicated some trouble on the line ahead - a truck overturned, or derailed, we never discovered what. We sat there, in grilling heat for six and a half hours, the one redeeming feature being an unlimited supply of k'ai swei (Water, boiling). After a long time Margaret and I, deterred by the overpowering smell of the train toilet, went down to the street of a little village and patronised the back regions of a tea-shop. At the most critical point-the train gave an urgent toot and we rushed out helter-skelter. The long wait was almost worth my memory of Margaret sprinting up the village street clutching at her pants with both hands, and with her trouser legs rolled up to the knee! Of course we didn't really leave for ages after that. I forgot one funny thing in Loyang: when you give the waiter a tip, and start to walk out of a restaurant, the man shouts the amount of the tip, and then all the cooks and waiters roar "Hsieh" (Thanks). This extreme publicity must be very stimulating to the would-be stingy.)

Well, we did start at last, and proceeded at a snail's pace. This line has been badly battered, and the bridges are hair-raising affairs built of rough timbers bolted together, which creaked ominously as we crept over. We also went through 11 tunnels. We got to Chengchow in the late evening, lay on the platform for while, and then got up about four to get on to the early morning train, which was due to leave at six. At ten to six we still had not been able to buy tickets, so thought it was wise to get our complicated collection of babies and baggage off again. Just as the whistles blew someone rushed up with the tickets, but it was too late. So we had to put in another 24 hours there. The inns were very full so eventually most people went to one or other of three small dirty rooms. Margaret and I dislike bed bugs too much to find this very inviting, and eventually, with Mr. Ciao's help we got a rest in a small office in the compound of the ever-helpful Sheng-Kung-Hwei. They have a big school there, and the racket was terrific, but we spread out my rug on the table and went to sleep for several hours. The heat was sweltering, so we stayed there till about six, and then went for a meal and back to the station to occupy seats on the train. It did not appear till about 11 p.m., so meanwhile we drank innumerable cups of tea with some of the students and later went to sleep on a pile of sacks full of Soya beans on the platform.

When the train did come in we were hastily awakened and spread ourselves over as many seats as possible. They were both narrow and short, so we did not succeed in sleeping. The night was enlivened by successive rows between people trying to chuck other people off, as we should not have been on the train at all at that hour. The railways are not really very efficiently run, and to get anywhere seems to involve a lot of this wangling and pushing for your own. People without "documents" and impressive visiting cards come off badly.

The train left soon after six. At first we were still in Hunan. It was flat dull country, some very sandy and barren, with patches of peanuts the only sign of cultivation. We went over one very wide river (a tributary of the Huang Ho which was just to the north of us) on a rickety wooden bridge, reinforced with wire; the whole long train was on it at one time and it creaked mournfully under the strain. Towards evening, we saw hills again, near Suchow. The hills all round are crowned with trenches and fortifications. Chengchow in particular was very battle-scarred, and much of the station a wilderness of rubbish. Bombed mud walls do make a mess.

To return to Suchow, the hills all round are crowned with fortifications and there seemed to be a lot of planes about, both bombers and fighters. We made the usual forlorn group on the platform while someone went to enquire whether we could buy tickets for this morning (Wed. 19th.). We were lucky and got them.

First we went by turns for a meal in a nearby restaurant and then lay down in a sort of entrance hall for the night. This was the third night we had not been able to get at the baggage, but I keep my rug always with me and find it invaluable for sleeping on at night, and for padding hard wooden seats by day. It seems quite normal now to flop down in one's place in a line of snoring coolies, and we slept well. First, though, Margaret and I had a terrible hunt for a lavatory. This large station has none (!) and none of the inns and restaurants we went to were cooperative but eventually a bunch of rickshaw coolies took pity on us and showed us a public toilet. This was a noisesome place, needless to say, but the arrangement struck me as unique - you walked across the swamp dotted with men in order to reach the hovel in the corner for women! We got this important job done not long before 12 midnight, when martial law reigns.

20th. June. Next morning we got up about 5 a.m. and caught the train that left at 8 a.m. and had a cool comfortable day's run. We reached P'u-k'o about 6 p.m., crossed the river in a ferry boat and then waited about an hour for the baggage. It then took about one and a half hours to get here by ancient cab and then rickshaw - Nanking is huge. "Here" is 403 Chung Hwa Road, where Margaret Lawrence lives. So this letter is posted on 20/6 from Nanking. Am about to begin another.

Much love, Agatha.

Letter No. 114, 403 Chung Hwa Road, Nanking. 20 June 1946

Dear Mother,

Since arriving here yesterday I have made the awful discovery that postage has gone up again in the last month, so some of the letters I posted by the way have gone by the slower route. I sent a cable today "Comfortably settled, Beagle, University Hospital, Nanking". The word "settled" was meant to reassure you in case you thought I was dashing off north immediately, and the address c/o Miss Beagle is a hint to send letters there. I expect your letters are piling up in Tsinan! I have just written to Dr. Struthers, partly to ask him to send them on here. As you see I am at the moment with Margaret in Chung Hwa Road but if - as seems possible - I may be held up in Nanking, I will probably help in the lab of the University Hospital, in which case Carrie Beagle's address is better. The political situation seems even more of a mess than usual. At the moment there is a truce, due to expire tomorrow, but in spite of this there has been fighting in and around Tsing-tao (poor Laubes!) and elsewhere in Shantung and nearer. Rumours are legion and it's almost impossible to know the true state of affairs. Yesterday we travelled peacefully over the line from Suchow to Nanking, and found on arrival that it had been reported cut by the communists! Ignorance is bliss! The railway police on the train were armed to the teeth as usual but had a machine gun as well. The line still shows the precautions taken by the Japanese against guerrilla interference - a strip about 15 yards wide on each side is stripped of all bushes or buildings that might give cover.

21st, June. I spent yesterday very happily getting clean. It is lovely after a month in the wilds to potter over details like grubby toenails and a handbag apparently half full of Hunan dust. Now I am clean and rested. I am not going to do anything until I get a reply from Dr. Struthers. It is surprising that I am not more tired, but I feel a lazy time will do no harm, and can count as a sort of summer holiday. Margaret Lawrence lives in the top (fifth) floor of a building on a big street, sharing it with a Mrs. Gish (a widow) also of their mission. The rest of the building is a mission school and other premises. There is a marvellous view of Nanking from the roof. It is rather an attractive city with a wall about twenty miles around, still complete, and hills beyond. Sun Yat Sen's grave gleams white on the slopes of one hill.

If you have not been getting my recent letters perhaps a summary of the journey will help you to make some sense of those you do receive soon: -

21/5/46. Left Chengtu by truck. Spent night in a Middle School at Mien-yang.

22/5. Crossed river by ferry. Arrived late at Liuko. Slept in municipal offices (old temple building I think).

23/5 Rain. Did not leave till noon. Arrived Kuan Yuan. Slept in C.I.M. compound. Rested two days while waiting for truck to get over the river and be repaired. Left Kuan Yuan on 26/5.

26/5 When about two hours north of Kuan Yuan truck No. 21 (travelling in company with ours) fell over edge of the road (faulty brakes). Almost all the thirty people injured, ten seriously. The relatively unhurt got a lift back to Kuan Yuan. The ten serious cases and I went back in our truck, Margaret following later by public bus with some of our baggage. Our truck left Kuan Yuan next day to pick up the rest of our party who proceeded on their journey. Margaret and I and the members of truck 21 remained at K(uan) Y(uan) nine days, nursing the injured, who all improved. A wire to Chengtu produced a brief visit from a Hwa Ta doctor who brought drugs. Two local doctors and the local Christians were a great help. Then on 3/6 an American plane (Army) came from Chengtu and took back all those still seriously ill (five patients). Great rejoicing! Two days rest.

6/6 Set off by truck once more. Reached Pao-cheng in Shensi. Slept in a deserted alcohol factory.

On 7/6 to Paochi. During these two days the scenery and zigzag road simply staggering. Stayed in Youth Corps premises - a Kuomintang organization - in Paochi.

8/6 Rested.

9/6 Left by train and arrived in Sian. Stayed in Fu Yin Tang (C.M.S. cooperating with C.I.M., I think), and slept on bishop's table. This was our most distinguished resting place. Rested two days.

Left on 12th., train to Shanchow. Slept on platform.

On 13th. by train with long delays to Loyang. Went to an inn. Next day to compound of American Christian Mission. There were three foreigners here, but I did not see them as they left next day to go to a conference. On 14th. and 15th. rested. Left Loyang on June 16th. Arrived Chengchow midnight. Slept on platform, and later rested at C.M.S. compound. "Slept" next night on the train, to occupy seats. Left Chengchow early on 18th. Passed through K'aifeng, and arrived in Suchow late in evening. Rumours of Shantung very bad, martial law at night in Suchow etc. so made no attempt to go north to Tsinan. Slept on platform.

Early on 19th. reached P'u-k'o about 6 p.m. Crossed Yangtze on ferry. Long ride through city, got here about 9 p.m.

A thirty-day journey!

It has been an education, but not in the ways I expected. I haven't learned much Chinese, as our best friends in the group spoke Cantonese, a frightful brand of Shanghai-ese, and Fukien-ese. It was an interesting cross-section of university students. Some, the most conspicuous and vocal, were

obnoxious puppies, with an arrogant bullying attitude and a casualness about the interests of patients and mothers with children. I found it hard to put up with. Others were quiet, helpful and timidly friendly. In the first truckload were a few good friends of Margaret Turner's who struck me as very pleasant. We heard that one had been arrested at Paochi, presumably for his record of anti-Kuo-min-tang activities. This entire question is very confused. My companion is violently anti-KMT and pro the other side. I am more and more convinced that both sides are open to much criticism, and while one is undoubtedly corrupt, the other is fundamentally anti-Christian, and while it may attract the more idealistic and courageous agin-the-government types, (especially when they have not met it at close quarters), it is not the solution for China, and would be a block to the progress of Christianity. By the way, I don't think any of these students were Christians. One elderly staff member, Dr. Liu (?Lin) is, and at the time of the accident was conspicuous for his untiring work and willingness to do the dirtiest, most disagreeable job. Another interesting thing was our contacts with "mission" compounds in the various towns, i.e. with the local Chinese church. I was impressed, but by just those qualities which did not impress the more arrogant type of student - a quiet peacefulness, and friendliness, ignorance too but a real good-heartedness and desire to serve. These people did give me the feeling of refuge from the noisy rapacity of the man on the street. Margaret and I were very much identified with our group, and shared conditions with them on terms of complete equality. During the whole time we were never beholden to any foreigner, unless you count five minutes conversation in Sian with a woman doctor I had met in Chungking when I went to her hospital to buy some drugs. So it was Chinese food and ways all the time.

Our special job was to help with the children. One mother had three little girls, the eldest six. Her husband had had a bad wound on his leg but came on with us on crutches, and I dressed it when possible. Another woman without her husband had a girl of eighteen months and a boy of about six months. Then there was a girl of six and a boy of three whose mother, Mrs. Li, and younger brother had been injured and went back to Chengtu. One of the students was a cousin and agreed to take these other two to relatives in Shanghai, with our help. I feel now I would make quite a good amah. These families were all nice and I enjoyed getting to know the kids. I wish I could draw and illustrate this trip. One picture would be entitled "Getting close to the Chinese". The scene is a room in the C.I.M. in Kuan Yuan, the hour midnight. I am clambering, over Mr. Li's bed to get to Ti-ti who is making ominous whimperings in his sleep. Quick or he'll wet himself! The tin can is placed in situ and I whistle expertly (did Manchurian mothers whistle when they held their babies out?). Ah, success! My foot slips, I sit heavily on Mr. Li's chest, Mr. Li grunts, opens one eye, sees it is only me and closes it again.

I've just had a letter from Una Nash to say all the patients sent back to Chengtu are doing well except the head injury who still hangs fire. Also a letter from Dr. Boyd, one from Dr. Struthers (of 25/5) asking where to re-address letters to (hurrah!). One from Susan of 2/5. The Communists are, I hear, in Shantung.

Much love as ever, Agatha

Letter No. 115 403 Chung Hwa Road, Nanking 26 June 1946

Dear Mother

Here I am still, enjoying a leisurely existence.....

On Sunday Margaret Lawrence and I went over to the University Hospital for the day. The household that Carrie Beagle lives in includes Dr. and Mrs. Daniels, a nice American couple; a pair of new missionaries, Dr. and Mrs. Gaulke - she is a nurse - and now Margaret Turner. If I go over there to work they will squeeze me in too, or else do some rearranging and at least eat together. We had breakfast - waffles of course, being Sunday - and then Carrie showed me over the hospital. Did I mention the state she found it in when she came a few months ago - tables thick with old blood and smells everywhere? Now it has almost all been repainted, the patients are in hospital clothes instead of their own rags and it all looks most cheerful and attractive. Then I had a long talk to Dr. Daniels about what I could do here if held up for a while. This was rather left in the air meanwhile, partly because there is no bed for me at the moment, and this place is about one hour's journey away, which is too far for a daily trek in the heat of the summer. Then we had lunch and a snooze, but as the supposed snooze was in the same room as Carrie and Margaret Turner you will readily believe that we talked more than we slept!

I heard that the student belonging to our original party, who was arrested in Paochi, had been released and was coming on with the last truckload, which is due in any day. I'm very glad, because although I don't subscribe to his views I certainly do disapprove of imprisonment without trial, and possible torture, for anyone. After that Carrie and I went to church - English church in the University chapel. It was a very good service taken by an American Army chaplain with a Chinese preacher. I was astonished to see Dr. Lair come in, and afterwards found he had come by air two days before. Of course I wanted to know the news of Cheeloo and the chances of getting on to Tsinan. He had spent the previous day making a nuisance of himself in the American Embassy. They cannot commit themselves until the expiry of the "truce" which has been prolonged another eight days - until the end of June. On the whole they were discouraging and he was told that the British and French official attitudes were similar. He is going (has gone, I suppose) to a meeting in Shanghai, and when he comes back will open negotiations again. His main hope is a lift on an American Army plane to Peking, and somehow get on from there. He thinks that if there is any teaching going on in Peking Language School I should try to go with him. So I wrote forthwith to the Principal, to enquire, and hope I may have an answer before Dr. Lair comes back. I think language should take precedence over work in the hospital lab here, which would be just a useful way of filling in time. Actually though, I am extremely doubtful if I could get on a plane for Peking, but Dr. Lair says he will try if it seems worthwhile for me to go there. It is much more likely that I shall settle here for the summer and go on to Tsinan or Peking in the autumn according to the way things turn out.

It is not really a clear-cut choice between peace and war. The big snag seems to be that neither side trusts the other. What kind of a truce is it when the Chinese Government "Navy" takes the opportunity to bombard Chefoo and Wei-hai-Wei, and the Communists are reported to have captured certain towns? Poor Marshall!

To go back to Sunday. We had heard a rumour that Elsie (Priest) might arrive, and when we got back to the house, there she was! She had had bad laryngitis and had no voice at all! It is grand to see her again. Of all the people I've met in China she and Dr. Hou are quite the most outstanding. She had had an awful struggle to get here owing to new regulations ("no women" by American Army plane, etc.) and had a long wait in Chungking. She leaves in a few days to catch a boat in Shanghai and so home for a long-overdue furlough. I wonder if she will come back as she has theories about women retiring after fifty (gosh, I'd better hurry, hadn't I?), but I imagine the University of Nanking won't give her peace till she does.

She croaked some news of our patients in Chengtu. I seem to have made a major blunder in diagnosis with several! The "compound fracture", for example, he'd only broken his fibula. Well, well!!! At least I did try to convince him that his leg was in perfect position and not shortened. Mrs. Li has five broken ribs!! No wonder her chest was sore. Ti-ti is fine, out of plaster. The ruptured kidney was about to be discharged, quite well. The girl with fractured skull was not doing well, and they think she may be permanently abnormal mentally. This is an awful tragedy. The family lives somewhere near Singapore, so what on earth does her poor sister (who has been with her through it all) do with her? I got a letter the other day from her sister; she says "Seven out of the six patients you sent to Chengtu send you their thanks". She herself of course is the seventh! Another shock was little Li Mei-mei who had recovered rapidly from a partly paralysed (flaccid paralysis) arm (due I thought to tremendous local bruising) who came on with us to Nanking. While on the journey she one day pointed out to me a soft spot on her head, and behold, she had the neatest little depressed fracture of the skull you can imagine. Well, well, the sooner I get back to Path the better, don't you think? I gave all the patients who travelled with us letters to present at hospital here and was glad to find they had all actually done so, and been checked and X-rayed, etc. I met the wounded thigh striding along the road on Sunday, crutches discarded.

We had only time to say "Hello" to Elsie, and hurry back here. Transport in the city is quite a problem. Rickshaws are too expensive and the buses irregular and of course crammed to suffocation point. The best method is to go by cab. These vehicles are of extreme age and decrepitude and are drawn by a very depressed-looking pony. You get into the first of a long line, and other passengers pile in until you have seven or eight plus the driver. You joggle off and are deposited at the Circle, a big crossroads about a mile from the University. It only costs 200 dollars for about 3-4 miles ride. You come back the same way.

Yesterday I went out for a walk. We are quite near the South Gate. It is really two gates at a little distance, one in- and one out-going traffic. Outside there is a sort of moat with lots of boats on it, and a little way further on one is suddenly in the country. What a pity I can't make myself invisible! I would so like to loiter and stare, to hang over the bridge and watch the people who live on the houseboats, to sit on a little hill of gravel-mounds among the fields and enjoy the view of the city wall and the purple hills round the horizon. But he who hesitates is lost! - in a crowd of curious starers. I don't particularly mind being stared at, but it does cramp one's style and prevent a walk from being any real relaxation. It was not nearly so bad on the trip - our clothes were similar to the others', we were all disguised with dirt, and frequently draped with Chinese children, scolding and wiping noses busily, all of which acted as a disguise. I have sat on a minute bench with a coolie touching me on one side and a soldier on the other, all three of us sucking in Hsi-fan at top speed, and have known that neither suspected I was a foreigner - but that was at night, which helps.

Much love, A.

Letter no. 116. 403 Chung Hwa Road. Nanking, 30 June 1946

Dear Mother

...letter from Dr. Struthers from Tsinan, copy sent to Kuan Yuan in answer to one sent by me from there!

His general tone is placid and hopeful and he advised me to come on from Suchow to Tsinan! The communists are perfectly willing for Cheeloo staff and students to travel through territory held by them. He has arranged for the Chinese Air Force to fly in Cheeloo doctors from Nanking or Suchow, and suggests I contact them so maybe I shall get to Tsinan sooner than I thought. Dr. Lair should be back from Shanghai in a day or two, so I'll ask him about it.

Meanwhile my leisurely existence continues. When I get bored I go over to the University Hospital and do a little work. Dr. Daniels, rather apologetically, showed me the lab storeroom which was in a ghastly state of confusion and dust, and I have been sorting and cleaning it, assisted by one of the lab servants and two coolies. Lack of language as usual is a great trial but even after two days the room is unrecognisable. The first day we used rabbit technique, burrowing in with fore paws and using our hind legs to push unwanted stuff out of the door. Luckily I heard someone complaining bitterly that it was now impossible to get to the laundry room, so we hastily cleared the passage. It is queer being so close on the heels of the Japanese - for of course most of this junk was left behind by them. Japanese labels, pretty pictures of Fujiyama and so on. Some of the equipment is very Japanese - dazzling incubators and sterilisers in which some key part is broken, and so imbedded in the structure of the thing that you can't repair it without taking the whole thing to bits, and so on. Then why, oh why, did they bring dozens and dozens of cute little 10cc volumetric flasks, and boxes and boxes of amazing squiggly glassware of no apparent use? On the other hand, there are precisely one dozen plain glass slides (in a neat little box of their own). The glassware, on the whole, is a very good heavy quality, some of it Pyrex. I hoped to do a little biopsy work on some interesting cases they are puzzled about, but although there are two microtomes there are no knives, no imbedding bath, no paraffin, and so on.

Mrs. Gish has been in Shanghai this week, so Margaret and I have been on our own. Dr. Lewis Smyth (who lived in our house in Chengtu) took us to the pictures on Thursday. It was a good film and quite funny. Afterwards he came back to the flat with us and ate "pie" (I hope you know what "pie" is in American). Finally we pushed him out after midnight into a downpour of rain, he murmuring plaintively "I suppose people would be shocked if I stayed the night". Then yesterday Mrs. Gish came back, with a Dr. Corpron (medical, this time) belonging to their mission - the Disciples Mission. He was in China before, and had to clear out in 1927. He has been in China since then. During the war he has had a flourishing and highly profitable practice in the States. He has been about two months in Shanghai, battling feverishly with transport difficulties. In true American style he tried to bring the entire equipment for a hospital with him two light plants, sterilisers, etc. etc. A kind friend in America, a seed merchant, hearing that China needed seeds, sent him about twelve tons of seeds!

This of course involved vast expense in Shanghai, and the poor man was on the verge of a breakdown when UNRRA at last consented to take over the seeds and all expenses. The transport position is really chaotic. You can't move without licences of this or that kind, which take weeks to obtain. The amount of stealing is simply appalling. Once some coolies began to break some of Dr. Corpron's boxes right in front of him, and when he protested, threatened to kill him. The police carefully ignored the situation and he could do nothing but stand and watch. I think Americans, with their emphasis on speed and efficiency take this kind of thing more to heart than we more happy-go-lucky British. The expense is the most alarming side. To get stuff from Shanghai to here (a few hours by train) costs four to five times what the goods cost in America. Dear as things are here, it is better to buy here unless it is something essential and unobtainable in China. I have been wondering for a long time now what I

should do about the tin trunk and suitcase left in Calcutta. I have heard nothing from the Molgaards except the postcard with an address scribbled on it in his writing. I am strongly tempted to write to Colonel Oldham and say, "Please collect these two boxes, open them, and use the contents as you think fit, I don't want to see them again." Really, belongings are more of a nuisance than anything else in China now, especially when you drift around as I do. It simplifies life to be able to get yourself and stuff on one rickshaw. That's all you can take by plane or bus anyway, and on a train excess is expensive and runs the risk of being lost or pilfered. What do you think? As for the trunk with the Rogers (which has newer, better things) I wonder if I should just leave it there and maybe eventually send it home again.....

One of the sights we continually see from these windows is the funerals. This must be a lucky street, I think, for there are several every morning. In front there are usually several Buddhist priests in tomato and black robes, the two in front beating cymbals. Then there may be a line of mourners with white scarves on their hats. Sometimes the chief mourner is in sackcloth. There may be one or two model pagodas, white or red, borne on poles. Then the coffin, carried hanging from poles by anything up to 12 to 16 men. They sometimes throw their outer robes and hats on top of the coffin, out of the way, which looks so sloppy and incongruous. Then there are usually one or two rickshaws or horse cabs with women and children in white or with white scarves as headdresses. The coffin is often draped in scarlet, which puzzles me, as I expected them to use white. Sometimes there is a small brass band in the procession, blaring away. It is a tawdry spectacle.

The other day I went out to see if I could buy some very cheap cotton material for underwear or even a cotton frock. \$9000 a foot (and narrow of course, 24" I think). So that's that. Living expenses work out almost treble those in Chengtu.

3 July 1946. Last night I came home late after an abortive effort to "contact the Chinese Air Force". Not knowing how to do this, I had simply button-holed the man in the most impressive looking uniform whom I saw in "English" church on Sunday, and asked him to help me. He turned out to be a Major Ku and was very pleasant, said he would enquire and I was to call at his address yesterday evening. When I went he was out, so I had laboured conversation with his mother, surrounded by mobs of children, until he turned up. He had not had much success - it boiled down to "Go to Suchow and enquire there", which was not very helpful. However we had a long chat, and he was extremely friendly - wouldn't I like to go up to his room and listen to him playing the mandolin? When would I go out to dinner? If I would only stay in Nanking he could get me a teaching job and we could have parties! A friend of his had a gramophone and what with that and his mandolin! Well, we could paint Nanking red! At which point I decided it was getting a little late. He was perfectly nice, but so funny. When I did get home there was a letter from Dr. Struthers, eleven from you, and lots of others!! I haven't digested then all yet but will reply to them soon. How lovely to have a family who will write so often and interestingly. You write just as you talk, I can just hear you.

Dr. Struthers is very optimistic about the situation in Tsinan, hopes to see me soon, etc.. If CNAC hopeless, he may arrange for a military plane from Tsinan to pick me up, and several other Cheeloo staff whose names and Nanking addresses he gives me so that I can contact them. This sounds much more satisfactory than for me to plan it from this end. I've written to the three names he gives, asking them to meet me here on the 5th. to discuss plans. No sign of Dr. Lair yet. Funny bird! I'll not count on him.

Meanwhile the spring-cleaning of the storeroom goes apace. Nearly done and looks marvellous. Rain, rain, rain, and a blanket at night - think of that- in Nanking, in July!

Much love, Agatha

Letter No. 117 3 July 1946 c/o Miss Beagle, University Hospital, Nanking.

Dear Mother,

I have had a regular gorge on your eleven letters, and this will be mostly snippets in reply.

I heard the Moukden people appointed me to Moukden Medical College. Think of it! Cheers!

You ask what I have now in the Bank. About \$1,200,000 plus a little in cash. A million still goes a long way. At present I spend about, \$5000 to \$6000 a day.....

7/7/46 I spent a busy day on Friday trying to find out if CNAC was really impossible. I started off by bus, as always crammed. My big problem is always when to start my way off. This was an hour's ride, first to the British Embassy. By dint of enquiring of all the people in my corner of the bus (which provoked a babble of "She says...", "No she doesn't, she's trying to say" "No, no, she wants so-and-so" etc..) I was eventually pushed off at the right place by a nice girl who was a nurse. Having reached the pavement I waved to her, and half the bus waved back. Anti-foreign feeling indeed! The British Embassy was quite amenable: "If you really want to go, we have no objection", and gave me a letter and certificate to that effect. The man I spoke to was called Coates, a cousin of the Montgomerys of Hong Kong. Then I went to Waichiabu for a visa. A very friendly Mr. Wang was dubious. I had been told that the official KMT attitude was obstructive. In the end he agreed to contact the Tsinan office for the latest information, so I rushed off and sent an Express Air Mail letter to Dr. Struthers to apply pressure at that end. In the afternoon I met a Cheeloo doctor who is trying to get to Tsinan, and today I hope to meet another, a Dr. Wang fu-i, who is to be head of the Public Health Department, to find out what plans he has. On the whole I think the official channels leading to CNAC are likely to be, at the best, slow, and if Dr. S. can arrange a lift in an army plane we are much more likely to get there soon.

Meanwhile I have been helping a bit in the lab I can't do much about language as no one from the University would want to come over here to teach, and there is no obvious place to have lessons over there.

I enclose two snaps taken by Mr. Li. I may be able to get a few more later, but some he took at the scene of the accident were spoiled because he was shaking so much! I know all the names are of little interest to you, but I put them on the back for my own interest later.....

Much love to all the family,

Agatha.

Letter No. 118, 11 July 1946 Still at 403 Chung Hwa Road Nanking.

Dear Mother...

I still wait for news of my visa, or of army transport, which does not require one. There are four former Cheeloo foreigners now in Shanghai; (Dr. Lair, Dr. Annie Scott, paediatrician, Miss Bell, nurse, and Miss Russell, dietician,), all old stagers..... A letter from Mr. Rees the other day says that Dr. Liu and Dr. Gao of Moukden have just arrived and are going to visit the universities, hope to be in Nanking soon! He says they are "outstanding men" so I expect it really is the Dr. Liu T'un Lun and the Dr. Gao we've heard of.

Even if Dr. Liu is ill it's not unlikely that he should come to be X-rayed etc, as I expect the MMC X-ray may be out of commission. Anyway I wrote to Dr. Liu c/o Mr. Rees, hoping that if he came to Nanking I might meet him, and mentioning you and Dad.

Well, I had a more hectic birthday here than I ever remember. cake with "Happy Birthday" on it, candles - about sixteen (!) and a pile of presents both in India and here I've lived all the time in predominantly American households and it amazes me to look back and count up the number of really outstandingly nice fine people from the States that I have got to know: Carol Janison, Ruth Myers, the Scudders in Vellore, Elsie and Carrie here and lots more. There is a kind open friendliness about them that warms your heart (this is not purely the effect of a surfeit of birthday cake, I've often felt it before!)

Your letter of 23/6 came today (12/7).

Bombshells! All this about leaving out the Tsinan episode and going direct from here to Peking! Why, oh why could the office not have sent me official instructions about this? I don't quite like to sever my connection with Cheeloo on the strength of what I hear from you - not that I don't know that it is accurate, but it should come from the Committee in a business-like way. I may get a chance to go to Tsinan next week by military plane, a now-or-never chance more or less. If I go it may be very difficult to get out of Tsinan! Hence my cable to Jean Stockman "Mother's letter received, cable instructions immediately Tsinan or Peking". Now I'm hoping for a reply to come before the plane for Tsinan really materialises. In my heart of hearts I thoroughly agree with the Moukden decisions. Of course I want to go to Moukden as soon as I can, of course I know that I'll be little use without workable Chinese. But the decision to leave Cheeloo must come from home. It makes me rather sick to think of leaving them in the lurch so abruptly but in a sense it is their fault if they have not asked for me to stay with Cheeloo for a definite period. But Cheeloo is such a mess, and everyone on the staff so overwhelmed with his own problems that I can understand how nothing was done. I did urge Dr. Hou to write and make it clear that while I thought it likely that I would be left to Cheeloo for next winter that was only my guess, and that I was not in a position to promise anything. Of course, it is still not certain if Cheeloo will be able to start classes in the autumn. That's not their fault; but their bad luck to be situated in such a turbulent bit of China. I have written also to Dr. Struthers telling him the whole tale, and saying I have cabled home for instructions. If the reply to the cable has not come before the Tsinan plane materialises I don't quite know what I should do. Your letter is so perfectly clear and emphatic that I think probably I should stay here until I do hear, although Cheeloo in that case may be annoyed at my missing the chance. I hope you did not mind my mentioning your letter in the cable. I thought Jean would ring you up and say "what letter?" and you could then refer her to Dr. Boyd and Dr. McW... ..and they could sort it out between them. It seemed to be the only way of making it clear that I had heard of these Manchurian decisions.

.... the news we get is servants' gossip and the stale newspapers, which say little. I haven't been to any of the famous places - Sun Yat Sen's tomb, Spirit Valley, Lotus Lake - because it's so expensive to get there. I have not even seen the University because no one has time to take me round as yet. So as your Chinese correspondent I'm a sad washout!.....

Much love, A.

Letter No. 119 from 403 Chung Hwa Road, Nanking.

Dear Mother.....

You ask how I get from here to Peking if I do go there. Shanghai, and then by sea will avoid chaotic railways. My belongings? I have a tin-suitcase, Jack's canvas bag and a bundle of bedding in an oilcloth. One suitcase (an old one Carrie gave me) was left with Cheeloo freight. My wooden box with Path slides was, when I last heard of it, working **up** the Yangtze and had got to Ichang. The rest in India. I have with me two blankets, two little rugs, big travelling rug, tweed coat and skirt, heavy coat, wool slacks, jumper, two wool vests, two wool pants; but this is a bit sketchy for a Peking or Tsinan winter. What do you think of a missionary being appointed ambassador from USA? Everyone speaks very highly of Prof Leighton Stewart. ... I was at a grand tea at the American Embassy on July 4th. It was really very dull However I saw General Marshall, who looks decent and solid and unexciting, and ate some very nice food, and studied exotic hairstyles on glamorous American dames.

One thing that is gradually dawning on me is that so far as modern China is concerned there is only one kind of foreigner. I am always referred to as an American, and when I take the trouble to murmur that I am not a "Mei-kuo-jen" but a "Ying-kuo-jen", the response as often as not a puzzled stare. The uniforms of the soldiers are obviously copied from American types, traffic keeps to the right, and of course every young Chinese worth his salt is longing to go abroad, and "abroad" means America. I think this is a pity, because I think we have something to teach them too and that our tempo, outlook and relative values are really more in harmony with China. Still, I have met enough decent Americans to keep me from being too depressed at the one-sided outlook.

I went to see Dr. Wang again yesterday. He told me his hoped-for plane transport had fallen through, that he was back where he had started, but still trying. I'm not altogether sorry as it means there will be more time to get my future sorted out and hear where I am really to go. We had an interesting talk. He was in Moukden in March this year. He had also heard Dr. Gao and Dr. Liu were already in Nanking. Their main business is to see about the registration of Moukden Medical College. He did not know where they are staying but is to try to find out. He also told me Dr. Lair had reached Tsinan from Shanghai - "some time ago"! What a funny man, don't you think? He did promise to help me when I asked him to during our brief meeting at church here, but I have not even had a note from him since. A good thing I did not count on him to do everything. How different from Ronald Rees. I must have had 6-8 letters from him since I came to China, none of them necessary. e.g. "I heard some news today of the Commission in Manchuria and thought you'd be interested" and then a big typewritten page and he is hectically busy. But how much I appreciate it and what a help it is to feel there is someone so friendly near at hand. Just yesterday a note - "Don't worry about your Calcutta cases. If they do turn up I'll look after them and store them somewhere". He is a sort of second "Uncle George". I had a letter

from the real Uncle G. to his " dear child" . . . full of humour and philosophising. Also a Christmas card from Ted Gault and . . . photo of all us lab folk.

20/7/46. Well, a cable came today from Margaret. Right you are, Peking it is! I am not really disappointed, in fact I'm ashamed to find how thrilled and delighted I am. Cheeloo is such a depressing mess. So long as I belonged to it I wanted to do my very best to help, but now the decision is out of my hands I can admit privately to you that I was not looking forward to it. A letter from Dr. Struthers is most understanding; he always felt language should come first, and also quite understands about Moukden wanting me soon. I am afraid Dr. Liu will be very upset and disappointed because he was so sure I would be left with Cheeloo at least till he came home and probably permanently, and just did not take it in that he must ask before he received. I remember telling him, and Dr. Laube did too, that in America he must look for a bacteriologist and a pathologist. He just twinkled and said, "Why a pathologist, there are two of us now." Oh dear, he is such a nice man and I hate that he should have more to worry over, but I really don't feel it is my fault. What will happen to the Path Dept. though? Dr. Sun and Mr. Ma! Thunder and lightning! I don't even know where Dr. Sun is.....

Well, I must not babble on when I haven't told you the most exciting item of news. Yesterday as I was busily fussing in the lab, very grubby and sweaty, someone to see me was announced. This was Dr. Liu and Dr. Gao of Moukden! Wasn't that fun? Dr. Wang of Cheeloo had put them on my trail. We had a grand talk and they said they really wanted me in Moukden as soon as possible. They even suggested that I go back with them. However I think this is a bad plan. "Picking up" Chinese in one's "spare time" does not work, and I said so and made it clear I hope that I was overjoyed at the prospect of Moukden and only wanted to make myself of use there by going to Peking first. They think I might go with them on their boat as far as Tientsin early next month, but they will confer with Dr. McMinn and Dr. Rees when they return to Shanghai as to how best to get me to Peking. (I suppose we ought to try to remember it is Peiping now.) They came here to make arrangements for the registration of Moukden Medical College with the government, and as this is almost completed they expect to go back to Shanghai, probably the day after tomorrow. By the way, I can't believe Dr. Liu has carcinoma of the stomach - he looks very fit and although not fat is definitely not thin. They were both very cheerful and in good form and positively fatherly towards me.

Yesterday we had a picnic on the Lotus Lake. It is a big lake just outside the wall at the foot of the hills to the north of Nanking. Much of it is simply solid with lotus, which are in bloom now.... We went out in a boat, very luxurious with cane chairs under the awnings. There was quite a crowd, mostly members of the young peoples' club of this church.

No letters for about a week.

Much love, Agatha.

Letter No. 120, 26 July 1946. As from University Hospital Nanking.

Dear Mother

.... Both you and she (Margaret Rankin) talk about Dr. Boyd having let me know about going to Peking. I have had no communication with him since a letter dated 10 May in which he said the Language

School might open in the autumn and if so he thought Jack Weir and I ought to go for a while. It simply never occurred to me that these were official instructions to go to Peking. I have **still** not got any official letter from the WMA, which handicaps me in trying to go, as CNAC priorities are awarded according to "pull". I, without an organisation behind me, or senior missionaries, and no letter or document to support my statements, am accounted "a very little thing." I have not given up hope of going by sea, but Mr. Rees says passages are very hard to get.

You mention Jack's bewilderment over my diet of hard-boiled eggs! That was on the train. If you leave at 6 a.m. and get in at 11 p.m. it means that you are more or less dependent on peddlers who come to the carriage windows at small stations. They usually offered fruit (covered with flies), bread (ditto) and hard-boiled eggs. So, especially in a cholera region, one ate hard-boiled eggs!

... Someone said all sorts of alarming reports were going out over the overseas wireless, communists "closing in" on Nanking, only twenty miles away. They have been twenty miles away for weeks, and there happens to be the river Yangtze in between. The general consensus is that it is extremely unlikely that they attack Nanking, and it would be a hopeless idea from the military point of view. There is no sign or hint of war here, at least in the bit of Nanking I traverse daily, but I believe the Chinese Navy (!) is in the Yangtze near here. This navy is a few ships given by America and is manned by USA-trained Chinese. The sailors are occasionally seen sauntering in the streets in complete Jack Tar dress and look very smart and debonair. Yesterday we went on a giddy burst and hired a carriage to take us out to see some of the sights on the slopes of Purple Mountain. There are five in this household at the moment (Margaret Lawrence, Mrs. Gish, Pauline Starn, Miss Tremayne (on a visit from Wuhu) and me. Pauline is a new missionary and arrived about a week ago. She is very nice and we giggle amicably together over little things, which is refreshing.

Well, we set off about four p.m., bucketing about over the cobbles and rattling along in more stately fashion over the tarmac. We went out of one of the big city gates, and a few miles further through lush green country, and up a long avenue to the tomb of the first Ming Emperor. Every fifty yards or so along the avenue were a pair of massive stone statues, facing each other - lions sitting, lions standing, camels ditto, elephants, then lovely stiff warriors looking rather like the Red Queen in "Alice in Wonderland", a pair of priests, and so on. The tomb itself is rather tumbledown, with trees growing out between the stones, and weedy courts. The steps were once of brown glazed tiles like this



but are badly crumbled and the carved spirit pathways in the centre only show faint ghosts of dragons and clouds. There is one flight of stairs, which is arched over by masonry so that it forms a long high cool echoing tunnel. The plaster covering the ancient brickwork is a lovely dark red, which contrasts with the rich green of the grass and trees. At the back of the buildings, higher on the hill, is the actual tumulus in which the Emperor is buried. The other Ming Emperors are all buried in Peiping.

Then we went on about half a mile to Sun Yat-Sen's tomb. This is carefully and deliberately placed higher than the Ming tomb. It is beautiful and dignified with buildings, balustrades, and walls of pale whitish stones, roofs with rich blue tiles, and well-kept grass, while all around are evergreen trees, which form a lovely background. As it was after five p.m. we found the gate of the main building

locked, so we only got a distant view of the higher building beyond. Behind it is a small domed vault, I was told, and you can go in and see Dr. Sun's embalmed body. How queer that he and Lenin should have their **bodies** permanently preserved in their peoples' eyes, when their ideas are blurred and lost to an increasing extent!

Next we went to Ling K'u Sze - Spirit Valley Temple. There is a very old temple there, which is famous for its great hall with arched roof; it is called the "beamless temple" because of the size of this unsupported span. This temple has been restored, and incorporated in a monument to the "Heroes of the Revolution". There is a little cemetery behind it with rows of granite gravestones, only numbered. Beyond, with the most perfect setting of hillside and encircling trees, is a lovely pagoda, of pale stone with gloriously blue tiled roofs. It was designed by an American architect! After all this wandering about in a pleasant aimless way, we were footsore and hungry, and ate our supper which we had brought with us and drank tea. By then it was nearly dark, and we drove home, arriving about ten. I'm glad to have seen all these famous places, as who knows when I shall have the chance again.

At present my work in hospital is the bacteriology part of the clinical lab. The girl who normally does it is very pleasant and keen, but quite inadequately trained, and they have no decent books to help. Unfortunately my precious Mackie and McCartney is either in Chengtu or Tsinan or somewhere in between. They have been having a lot of cholera cases, all reported negative by the lab, so I've been looking into that, my mental equipment consisting only of a vague recollection that cholera organisms like alkali. Yesterday we got two really convincing positive results and today another, so I feel cheered. The lab here is rather a mess, mostly due to their being swamped with work and no one in it knows enough to cope with the unexpected. A Miss Bauer (American) used to be in charge but is in America now. A German doctor who helps in the hospital has a wife who is a lab technician, and she does the work for his patients. But she is an extraordinary person, with a violent temper, shouts, and fumes if any little thing goes wrong. The rest of us are rather scared of her, and exchange furtive grins when the volcano erupts. I am sorry for her, who wouldn't be sorry for any German refugee anywhere in the world, and I think a lot of her bluster is to keep her end up.

...Yesterday I posted to you ... a copy of the Cartwright Report on missions and the situation of the church in China. I hope it won't be too long on the way, because I found it very interesting and important. I was cheered that he found the atmosphere of the Christian Universities dead and un-Christian, because that was what I felt, and he found so much that was encouraging in other aspects of the church that it is comforting.

.... nametapes... I'd also like very much a good fountain pen if anyone could bring it with them, medium nib, if ever they are available, as all I have now is this one which won't fill and so I need to carry a little bottle of ink around in my handbag.

A dull letter... Letters still go west over the Hump; so will be slower from here than from Chengtu.

Much love, Agatha

Letter No. 121 30 July 1946 from 403 Chung Hwa Road . Nanking

(To Mother) Just a snippet:

Well, things are sorting out for me at last. A long tale boils down to the fact that Mr. Griffiths of the L.M.S. in Shanghai has three people on his hands who are trying to get to Peking; a new couple called Collins and a Gwen Moss. He is trying to arrange for them to go on the plane owned by the Lutheran mission and invites me to join the group. He can put me up until the plane is arranged - one or two weeks. This sounds grand, I join a group, and go by plane, and his letter sounds very nice and friendly.

This household closes up altogether, for a week or so, on Saturday 3rd., so I'll leave that day for Shanghai. No use you writing there. I wonder would it be rash to tell you to write to me c/o College of China Studies, Peiping. That's all the address I have, Dr. Boyd or Dr. McW. may tell you more. Perhaps one more to Nanking in case I get held up, they will forward to Shanghai or Peiping. I do hate long gaps in home letters! I have not heard from you that you have got any letters since Paochi!

Letter No. 122 3 August 1946, Lester Hospital, Shanghai.

Dear Mother

Well, as you see the first hop is accomplished, and the next letter should be from Peking. ... your letter of 15 July.... glad you had got Nanking letters at last.... I at last got a reply from the Language School. The official opening has been postponed until February 1947, but they are going to hold informal classes taken by their two head teachers, and will arrange individual tuition as well, and give supervision to one's work.

.....

The journey was very easy. Mrs. Gish's man-servant took me to the train, by rickshaw and a share of a taxi, stowed me and my baggage on the train, and then embarrassed me by absolutely refusing a tip, throwing it on the seat and running away grinning and waving. I shall have to send him and his wife something

.....

I got a seat, only just, and had over an hour to wait before we started. It's not very interesting country, a few little hills at first, and then flat with rich green rice fields. Sometimes the sail of a junk sticks up among the fields, showing where there is a canal. It was perfectly peaceful all the way, not a sign of fighting or unrest. I had been told the train got in about six and had written to tell Mr. Griffiths, but at quarter to four a city appeared with quite sizeable skyscrapers, and everyone began to prepare to get out. A soldier who had done his best to sleep on my shoulder all the way suddenly woke up, told me this was really Shanghai and started to pop my baggage out through the window. He then stood guard over it while I struggled out of the long corridor carriage by the door, called a porter and told me how much to pay him. The porter and I padded out of the station in a terrific downpour of rain, and with his help, I got a pedicab. Do you know what that is? It is like a rickshaw but has three wheels and the man peddles it in front like a bicycle. Luckily I knew the address in Chinese, and it did not take long to reach there. The hospital is right in the heart of the city and Mr. Griffiths lives in a flat on the top floor. He was in the midst of tea and was then going to take a car and meet the train at six. So he was saved that

bother. The others in the household at the moment are the two Collins (Baptists, English, also going to Peking Language School and seem very nice), a Miss Gwen Moss, 45-ish with a lovely Scotch voice, Mr. Cocker-Brown whom I'd heard of before, and a Miss Marion whom I haven't yet placed. The arrangements for the plane are completed, and we (the Collins, Miss Moss and I) probably go on Wednesday or Thursday! We take all our baggage and the rest of the weight will be made up with UNRRA goods. It will be much cheaper than CNAC whose charges went up 150% on August 1st., and has all the advantages of no baggage limitations. It's so nice to be going with people, and the Collins will be fun to know. It was such a queer change to hear English and Scotch voices all round me again. You will be relieved to hear however that I can't have been seriously contaminated during the past year, as a Welsh RAF boy who was here for tea, and who had been stationed at Aldergrove and Sydenham for two years, recognised my Belfast accent!

Mr. Griffiths tells me that Dr. Liu and Dr. Gao have left here and are in Peking on their way to Manchuria. Also Dr. McMinn. Mr. Rees is also in Peking and there is some talk of him going to Manchuria also. Dr. Pederson is in Shanghai and so I will try to meet him. It is evidently very difficult to get passages home at present. Did I tell you that all foreign shipping had been taken off the coastal traffic - something to do with the UNRRA-CNRRRA mix-up, and there are far too few Chinese ships to cope with the traffic, - so the only way to have got to Peking by sea would have been to fly to Hong Kong first and wait there! Though addicted to travelling in circles I think travelling from Chengtu to Peking via Sian and Hong Kong would have created a record. I'm extremely lucky to have got the chance to join this party.

.....

... Morning service at Union Church, mostly servicemen. a very English church, stained glass, Gothic architecture, and odour of sanctity complete....

Agatha.

Letter No. 123 9 August 1946, Lester Hospital, Shanghai.

Dear Mother

..... the Lutheran plane had to have something done to it and went to Tsingtao today. We hope to go tomorrow. Were you ever in Shanghai? I would not like to live here. It is much more crowded and citified than Nanking, with some quite high skyscrapers. The traffic in the streets is terrific, a dense mob of cars, rickshaws, and pedicabs who pay very little attention to traffic lights or pointsmen. We are not far from the Bund and it's fun to wander there in the cool of the evening and watch the ships. There are piles of packing cases on the wharfs so it's easy to see how stuff can be stolen on a large scale. The buildings are a bit shabby, but I haven't seen any real damage. The big Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank has two bronze lions outside and these disappeared during the Japanese occupation. When they were found again and reinstalled there was rejoicing, because it brings good luck to stroke their paws - the paws are all quite shiny again, and look so odd on the greenish-black lions. I have been able to buy a few Penguins in a most delectable bookshop, they had a very large stock at \$1500 each, and as I have not had a single book (except Bible and Chinese textbook) recently, I treated myself to several. It would be too awful to have to exist in Peking without anything to read.

Oh, I saw Dr. and Mrs. Pedersen. He has been quite ill, according to rumour a heart attack followed by broncho-pneumonia. He is in the C.I.M. nursing home, on the top floor of one of the huge buildings in their compound. When I saw him his temperature was normal, and he was very willing to talk, and did not appear tired, but this was early in the morning. They hope to go to Australia, where their son is, as soon as he is better. Mrs. Pedersen is a nice - and such bright blue eye. I'm going back again today to see them for a little while and to have supper with the Arnold Leas who were in Chengtu. It's quite a long way off and the only reasonable way to travel is by tram, which involves quite an exhilarating tussle, and I usually end up with my hat over my nose.

The weather at the moment is really hot, the temperature hovering between 90 and 100 (Fahr) and damp. I couldn't believe I could produce so much perspiration. Luckily we don't have to use mosquito nets as we are so high up, and it's almost as warm by night as by day, but the last few nights we have taken mattresses out on the roof and that is much cooler and pleasanter. I'm interested to see how many Chinese adults are covered with prickly heat, as I would have expected their skins to stand up to it better. The babies on the streets are a miserable sight with septic scratches on top of the prickly heat.....

ARC

Letter No. 124 11 August 1946. College of Chinese Studies, Peking.

Dear Mother,

Here I am, after the simplest and pleasantest journey imaginable.... Jack Weir turned up last Friday (when I sent my last letter), and Mr. Griffiths brought him home to lunch. He looks very well, brown and wiry but very thin so that at the first glance I hardly knew him. He had had to escort some university baggage to Sian and had done the whole journey alone. The part between Sian and K'aifung was much more difficult than when we were there - no passenger trains at one point, another big bridge down, etc. He had expected to see Mr. Rees (not "Bishop") but he is at the moment here in Peking, and had left no instructions for Jack who was jumping mad as a result. That boy certainly has a great fund of righteous indignation. He wants badly to go on to Moukden and gather up the threads of the work where he dropped them in Santai, and do some advanced language study later. By the way, who is going to Manchuria this autumn? Every letter from home says something different! E.g. Margaret says Harry Johnstone, McCreery, Tom Blakely, Agnes Gardiner and Mamie. Dor says at most Mac. and Blakely. You mention Barkers, and so on. It seems an awful muddle. Needless to say I am consumed with curiosity and interest. Did I tell you I had a letter from Dr. Liu and Dr. Gao? They say five Scotch are to go - Dr. Garven, McNair, Miss Flemming, Mr. Findlay, Miss McClean - and Dr. McMinn is already there. I've also heard that Dr. Liu and Dr. Gao have arrived back in Moukden.

I saw Dr. Pedersen again on Friday for a few minutes and then had a long chat with Mrs. Pedersen. Dr. P. is propped up in bed and even then talking makes him breathless. The diagnosis is "fibrosis of the lung" according to Mrs. P., not heart trouble as I heard. (*The Pedersens had been interned by the Japanese, he was Danish, she from Scotland.*) The two of them set off for Australia in about a week's time, in a freighter (Norwegian), with no doctor on board, and he is a very bad sailor just to make it worse. It seems quite mad to me, and I'm surprised that the ship will agree to take him. I gather that he

had several ups and downs like this in the last year or two, and that when "up" he can walk about fairly well.

Well we left Shanghai yesterday, about noon, getting to the airfield in a taxi and piling on to the "St. Paul" - the plane owned by the Lutheran Mission. There were ten passengers various missionaries, Chinese going to mission hospital jobs etc. and a pile of baggage and packages of vitamin tablets for relief work. It was a lovely clear sunny day and we had lovely views first of Shanghai, then the two great branches of the Yangtze delta and then crossed the sea to Tsingtao. Tsingtao is certainly beautifully placed with a wide bay dotted with ships and junks, encircling hills and a neat city of red-roofed foreign style houses. But I must admit I was disappointed (after hearing it greatly extolled), and thought the city itself looked very dull.

We came down there for petrol, and to take on passengers, then on across the Shandong plain. This was very interesting, a patchwork of fields in narrow green stripes, with a network of pale fawn lines (the roads) and a thick scattering of small walled cities. You could see the details of grey roofs and dusty courtyards and lanes quite distinctly. What a commentary on the state of the country in recent centuries those villages are! Scarcely a single house strays outside the guarding wall. What miles the farmers must walk each day to get to and from their work. After that we flew, mostly among clouds, over the flat mud slob-lands of the Yellow River estuary, then more sea with only a dim coastline in the distance. Here we ran into a little storm there were some flashes of lightning, blinding rain on the windows and the plane bumped about a bit. When the sun came out again we were approaching Tientsin. What a dull dreary city it looks! Monotonous rows of houses, the brown narrow streets with scarcely a speck of green, and the surrounding country dead flat farmland. The villages here sprawled more, and there were small groups of houses without any surrounding wall. The houses themselves looked different, with brown roofs instead of grey - mud presumably, like the walls. I forgot to say that near Shanghai the pattern of the fields was geometrically tidy, and each strip of land had its farmhouse in the middle. In each courtyard were piles of something brilliantly yellow - I think it must have been maize. The best thrill was the last. The pilot took us low over Peking and flew round over all the famous places - the Summer Palace with Yenching nearby, the Temple of Heaven and the rest. The beauty of it simply took my breath away. From the air one gets such an impression of the design and symmetry and spaciousness of these places, and we were low enough to see the lotus blooming in the lakes, the white marble balustrades and glistening colours of the tiled roofs. When we landed (about 7 p.m.) the baggage was piled on a truck, and we got into a bus and drove 7 or 8 miles into Peking.

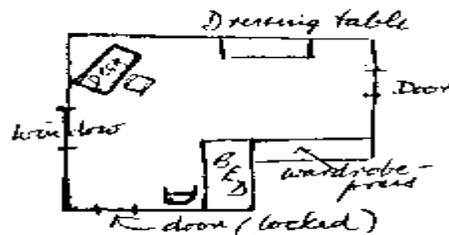
The Western Hills were deep purple against a blazing sunset. The massive walls and gates are still there and we also drove past the moat that lies at the foot of the great wall around The Forbidden City. It was pure magic and even these glimpses made me understand how people call this the most wonderful city in the world.

At the Language School we were greeted by a Mr. Christensen who is in charge at the moment. He is Scandinavian of some kind and speaks very correct courtly English, which somehow reminds me of Oliver. He has a very charming wife. There are about 35-40 people staying here, but we are the first students to turn up (except some Standard Oil men who used to live here, but had to be turned out!).

I saw Dor's friend Miss Tania Simonoff for a minute. She looks pretty well to me, perhaps a little worn and tired, but as I have nothing to compare with it's hard to give Dor very much information. She was asking about Dor, of course, and very disappointed to find I had not seen her since her internment, as she wanted to know how she really was.

By the way, "we" above is Margaret Collins and Ted, and I in case you get muddled, Miss Moss goes on to Tientsin (Welsh, by the way, not Scotch as I told you). The Collins are Baptists, at least she was brought up as a Methodist. I like them both. He is very quiet, but a very handy man, washing and ironing and looking after everyone very unobtrusively. It's just as well that he is that type, because poor Margaret, who has had a "cold" these last few days, woke with a temperature and pain in her chest - pleurisy! I'm so thankful she's here and not still in Shanghai, for it's blessedly cool, and she looks out on a lovely garden and has an airy room. Ted has a separate, communicating room, which is handy, and we have borrowed a bedpan and generally got the decks cleared for action. She will have to be some weeks in bed but I think we can keep her here which would be much nicer than going to an overcrowded understaffed hospital and she doesn't really need skilled nursing. When she is a bit better she can do a little language study and feel she isn't wasting time. But isn't it rotten luck? And it's so hard to know what the ultimate results will be.

My room has a dull view of out-houses, but it is on the east side which is cool now and will get the morning sun when I need it most in the winter. The room is this shape:



The bed is not as narrow as that, I forgot it! They provide towels etc. so I am saving mine. There's a blanket (of sorts, as heavy as lead) on the bed so with mine I'll not be cold. Anyway, there are radiators, which look as though they worked. I had heard a rumour that one didn't get enough to eat, although the quality was all right, but there has been more than I could eat at every meal so far, and very tasty too. I've just come back from the Sunday afternoon service at Union Church. Ronald Ress was preaching, and I talked to him afterwards. He's not going to Manchuria (as was rumoured). Well, it will be nice to get letters soon. No details of language study yet, but it sounds very promising.

Letter No. 125 13 August 1946 College of Chinese Studies, Peking.

Dear Mother

... Nothing much has happened since I last wrote. On Monday morning I wandered about the city, buying stamps and a street map and such-like odds and ends. What a lovely city this is! The streets are wide, spacious, and not too crowded, and it is cool enough to make it a pleasure to walk briskly. From almost any point you have a glimpse of something interesting - a city-gate tower at the end of a wide road, or a p'ai lou across the street or the golden roofs of the buildings in the Forbidden City. The language school itself is housed in massive dignified buildings behind a high wall, with lovely gardens,

tennis court and so on. From the roof we see the city as a forest of trees, with roofs peeping out here and there, and the wall and gate-towers in the distance.

On Monday afternoon Ted and Margaret Collins and I went by rickshaw to the American Presbyterian Hospital where a Dr. Henke gave her a very thorough examination, including X-ray, and found nothing abnormal. Her temp(erature) has not been over 98.6 today and her pain and cough have almost gone so we feel greatly cheered. I think there is no doubt it was a mild pleurisy so we are keeping her in bed and feeding her on vitamins, extra milk, etc.. They are a nice pair, and our friendship has ripened rapidly with things like bedpans and the ironing of Ted's shirts to help it on. This afternoon he and I were inspected by the teachers. Having mislaid Mr. Christensen we explored the college buildings ourselves, and found Mr. Chang and Mr. Kuan, only to be involved in a conversation in Chinese. We got mental paralysis - complicated in my case by giggles - so the two teachers enjoyed themselves more than we did. Mr. C. turned up to rescue us and it is arranged that we three (if Margaret is better) and a Margaret Garvie, start together as a class of four next Monday. The present class of Standard Oil men finish on Friday, so after that we have the undivided attention of these two who are evidently splendid teachers. They have been here many years. Dor may remember them by their nicknames "Dearest" and "Tiger". We are to work from 8.30 - 11.30, and 2.30 - 3.30, five days a week. Margaret Garvie is an ex-SCM secretary and knows Honor, Jean McCaughy, Beth Davey, Jim Boyd and so on. She is living in the YWCA as she is to do part-time work there. She came on the plane with us.

15 August. ... I've just had a long chat with Miss Tania Simonoff, Dor's friend. She's very nice but I am sorry for her as her health is bad...

Much love....Agatha.

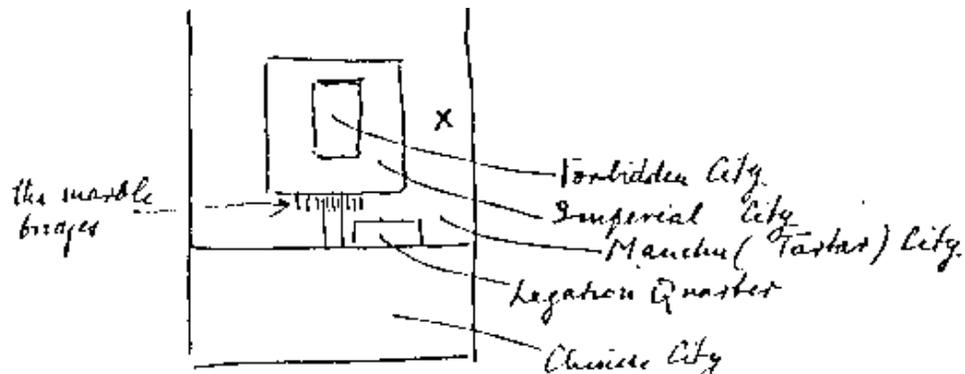
Letter No. 126 18 August 1946. College of Chinese Studies, Peking.

Dear Mother,

This has been a very lazy week... The weather is perfect, clear blue sky, sunshine and a cool breeze. ... (meals, laundry.. my room with blue-green Peking rug on the floor.... desk comfortably littered with books... hot or warm water... coming out of taps think of it!). Do you remember the old blue thermos with the green cap, which I brought with me? It has been everywhere with me and is in almost constant use ... has had several miraculous escapes.

Margaret Collins is ever so much better ... she taught me chess. Yesterday I went again to the British Consulate and to the Police Station to get my Resident's Permit. I have been nine months in China without one which is doubtless very naughty, but I grudged the three photos they require at each place where you "reside". After getting that done I wandered about the approaches to the Forbidden City... all the gates and walls of the Forbidden City (where the Emperors lived) and the Imperial City outside it (where the officials of the court lived) are roofed with glazed tiles in the Imperial yellow. There are several great gateways leading in to the Forbidden City and outside the main one is a canal (a sort of moat I suppose), crossed by several parallel bridges of white marble, beautifully carved. The reflections make the archways into a perfect circle. On each side there are trees, and the water of the canal is green and cool. Several old men were fishing with little bamboo rods. They looked as though they had caught nothing for two hundred years or so, but were in no hurry. The cicadas in the trees

above drowned the noise of the traffic, which was only a few yards away. If you cross this busy road you can walk down the wide paved road with yellow-crowned walls on each side to the outer gate in the wall of the Tartar (Manchu) city. It is massive in the extreme, a regular fortress. The way up is barred and overgrown. In fact the only part of the city wall one is allowed up on now is that next the Legation Quarter, and I didn't even get up on that yesterday as a sentry stopped me, and said there was a police inspection going on. The other morning Ted Collins and I walked to the gate nearest here, but again were stopped by soldiers when we tried, with innocent smiles, to wander up the ramp. These soldiers were busy digging earth at the foot of the wall and filling "sandbags" made of bright yellow straw. They were carted away on lorries in the direction of the centre of the city and I've seen similar ones piled up round the entrances to soldiers' barracks. In case you get muddled in walls and cities here is a map. We are at "X".



We plan to spend our Saturdays exploring these places. They are putting on a through train to Moukden. Booked, numbered berths. You get on at Peking one afternoon and get off next afternoon at Moukden! It just sounds too easy!

19 August, 1946. Your letter of 28 July came on from Nanking also one from Mrs. Molgaard. How aggravating to think my Calcutta cases may have been knocking about the CNAC all the time I was in Shanghai . . . (am writing to Mr. Griffiths to ask him, or Jack Weir, to . . . send them on by Lutheran plane. . .)

We started language study today. I thoroughly enjoyed it. The teachers (who take alternate hours) are both very jolly and don't seem at all bored. They are both very diverting actors. No English spoken, of course.... I seem to be at least as far on as the Collins who did six months in London, but more inclined to be inaccurate in getting across something they don't attempt. What a peaceful existence this will be - language study, with the chinks filled in with reading. I have no medical books at all to read, and shudder to think how much I must be forgetting, but it can't be helped. At meals I am at the same table with Miss Simonoff and the Christensens, which is very nice. He knows a lot of our people in Manchuria - talks of Fred O'Neill and his hobby of shocking the more conservative Danish missionaries! He (Mr. Christensen) plans to take a trip to Manchuria in the autumn, as he is worried about two of their missionaries, both over eighty, who are marooned in Antung. It is about three hundred miles from Moukden, and in mountainous country. He will have to walk most of the way, and

there are not even inns. Mrs. Christensen says, "You can always find kind people to put you up, and anyway it is a job that has to be done." They are both most interesting talkers and have had lots of adventures - he was once kidnapped by bandits, and so on.

Much love, Agatha.

Letter No. 127 22 August 1946 College of Chinese Studies.

Dear Mother.....

... if any of our people coming out soon to Peking en route for Manchuria would bring me one or two woollies? A jumper takes first priority as I have only one, a pair of warm pants (knickers) next, as I have two. The blanket will not be immediately useful, as we seem likely to have heating, so don't worry about it. Here is a new request... Mrs. Christensen, after an awful winter in Dairen, came out on a few hours notice by air. She has only two pairs silk stockings, and no warm ones and can't get them here ... could you possibly send two pairs warm stockings, size nine and a half, preferably grey? ... I have only three pairs so at best can only give her one....

By the way, from the papers you will realise that the outbreak of full-scale civil war is more likely than before. One of the first things that may go in this area is postal communications so if letters suddenly stop do not worry! It does not mean anything has happened to me, and you can continue to imagine me feeding on the fat of the land and laughing myself sore over diverting antics of the language teachers. I don't know what to say about... posting books...oh, how I'd like to see some. They are likely to take four months. It is awful to think of you using your coupons, so look through that trunk first and see if there is anything there that will do... Be sure you use my money. Don't send more than I ask or I shall be very annoyed.

23 August: I must tell you something about our classes. We have them in the College building, which is between the hostel and the road. It is quite impressive, with a big assembly hall, wide stairways and echoing corridors, and smells musty after the empty years, The gateman's son watches for our arrival (with great tact), and then blows the whistle, which is the signal to begin. It sounds just like the guard's whistle on a railway platform. We're off! Mr. Chang or Mr. Kuang (they alternate) comes in and we struggle self-consciously to our feet, and bow. Somehow it is much more difficult to maintain a serious, studious expression when the class only consists of four, all in the front row. We never know what we are going to do next. Sometimes the teacher talks slowly and with much repetition, and the most uncannily accurate memory of what words and idioms we are supposed to know. Now he will poke fun at Ted, sympathising with him over the ways of wives, then he will tell us yarns about the good old days, or the bad days just past, and so on. Later he will write idioms on the board and we have to make up sentences to illustrate their use. Or he reads out of a textbook and we chant after him. They do not use Romanisation at all, but character all the time, although the characters we learn one day are those of the words we have heard and used several days. It is first-class teaching, and the Collins think it much better than London. For one thing they had only one hour a week with a Chinese! How glad I am I did not stay at home and try to learn Chinese there. I must say I enjoy every minute of these classes, and am quite sorry when the quavering whistle blows at the end.

.....

25 August: Yesterday afternoon the Christensens, Miss Simonoff, the Collins and I went for a picnic to the Pei Hai (North "Sea"). We went by bus, which took us right across the city to the entrance gate. This is one of the lakes, just outside the Forbidden City, which were a favourite haunt of the old Empress Dowager, and is surrounded by all kinds of old buildings and temples half-buried in trees and luxuriant weeds! First we climbed un a little hill (artificial) to the White Dagoba, which is a temple built in Tibetan style with a white bulb-shaped top. The view from the top is simply past description. I marvelled anew at the number of trees in Peking, you really seem to be looking down on a forest rather than on a city. Then we wandered down through little courtyards and twisting flights of steps to a white marble landing stage where we took the ferryboat to the other side of the lake. Here there was a great stretch of park-like ground, rather wild, with temples here and there. One was in good repair, with nicely weeded courtyard, and priests chanting and bell-ringing. The others were empty, tumbledown, choked with vegetation. But all of them were exquisitely beautiful with gorgeous shining tiled roof in the most brilliant colours, and painted woodwork under the eaves. Inside there was little left after successive looting but empty niches from which the images had been stolen. We sat in one of these tumbledown courtyards to have our tea, quite peaceful and deserted except for two little boys in a far corner who had their heads together over something mysterious, probably a lizard in a cranny.... It is sad to see some of these old buildings going to rack and ruin. Mr. Christensen says that Chinese architecture needs very careful and constant upkeep as it is made of relatively perishable materials, not like everlasting hewn stone and marble. The pillars, for example, were coming to bits in this temple, and we could see that instead of being one massive beam they were made of smaller wooden beams bound round with iron bands, and covered with a layer of plaster and lacquer. The tiles stand it better, so the roofs are gorgeous with only a few scars here and there. One building, which was faced as well as roofed with porcelain tiles, was almost perfect, and simply dazzling with brilliant yellow, green and blue. After our wanderings brought us to the Dragon Screen, which was once the spirit wall in front of a temple, now completely disappeared. It is a huge wall faced on both sides with tiles, and each side bears nine dragons in bold relief. Each dragon is different and they are all writhing and twisting among curly waves, with open jaws to snatch at the sun.

There were quite a lot of people wandering about or drinking tea in the pavilions along the lakeside, but never enough to spoil the wild spaciousness. Even the weeds were decorative and did not look desolate as the beds of rank nettles and bishop-weed which we would have at home in a similarly neglected place.

The Japanese did not apparently do any damage to the Forbidden City or other historic place, nor did they take away any of the valuables there. They must have been sure it would be theirs for ever, anyway. On the other hand the PUMC (Peking Union Medical College) is completely stripped of all equipment, books, etc., which makes its future rather uncertain as even Americans balk at the vast expense which would be involved in bringing it back to what it was before.

We continue to hear yarns from the Christensens about their experiences in Manchuria. When the Russians entered Dairen last year they were greeted as deliverers, but instead there was a reign of terror for two or three months, easing off later. Looting and raping was quite uncontrolled, and for months Mr. C. and a neighbour herded their families together each night, barricaded the house, and took it in turns to walk up and down outside. When we asked them what they, unarmed, could have done if attacked, the answer was that they might have delayed matters long enough for the others to escape by the back! Think of that, for months. For food etc. they depended on what their Chinese friends could buy and bring into the house.

I'm writing on the roof, in the sun. I wish you could see it.

Much love, Agatha

Letter No. 128 1st September 1946. College of Chinese Studies.

Dear Mother,

A whole week since I wrote! (I had heard that Jack Weir had left Shanghai for Moukden a week ago.)

The through train to Moukden got through last week but took three days, and now the line is broken again - fighting about Shankai-kuan I think. Jack (Weir) had a scheme to go via Dairen, but it didn't sound very feasible. The Christensens describe Dairen as "besieged from within", a most extraordinary position. For example the American Consul is completely cut off and quite powerless. No postal service, etc. The Christensens occasionally get very indirect news of their people who are still cut off there. Letters do come through from the other parts of Manchuria, of course, not in the Russian zone. Such a peculiar "peace"! Miss Simonoff was telling me of a letter from her nephew who lives in Moukden. He sounds very depressed - no Russian or English newspapers, no wireless, no water, and no electricity - no future seems to sum it up. She said that Dr. Liu thought the coming winter would be appreciably easier than the last, however; but by all accounts it must have been truly terrible. She was telling me this morning of the Japanese "smoke-screens" - great pits that they filled with soot and dynamite, which they exploded underneath when American planes approached to bomb. The clouds of black soot rose into the sky and hid the sun, and then fell in black snow for hours. Imagine the filth, and with so little water to wash in!

...Language study... new students, Robinson pair and a Miss Stewart ... Mr. Chang, the other day gave an illustration which intrigues me. He explained first that he sends his daughter to a mission school (costing \$60,000 per six months), and \$70,000 for uniform, books etc. etc.) instead of a government school for \$9000 tuition fee. Why? So that she may learn English well enough to go abroad for study later. Then when she comes back she will get a good job! He was at least quite honest about it, but I don't think it occurred to him that there could possibly be any other reason for choosing a mission school.

Yesterday the Collins, Robinsons and I went with the Christensens for a picnic to the Forbidden City. I keep wishing that you and Dad could have seen these places, and then I remember that when you were in China they were still "forbidden" and that no foreigner had then walked in the courts I was in yesterday. Some, indeed, were only opened recently because the part we visited was where P'u-Yi had his private apartments up to about 1927. How Chinese to throw an emperor off his throne, and then allow him to continue living, with considerable magnificence, in one part of his palace! Even after the republic was founded, old Manchu officials in their robes used to come into the Forbidden City by the back gate to pay their respects to the young ex-emperor. We walked for half the afternoon through one courtyard after another, and yet we only saw about one sixth of the whole area. It is really a city within a city. Much of it is weed-grown and a little tumbledown, but magnificent in decay. Golden-tiled roofs of glistening porcelain, massive archways with brilliant painted patterns under the eaves, marble stairs, huge aged evergreens with twisted trunks! All seen in brilliant sunshine against a blue sky! There was a garden with swings for the child-emperor's play and around it the path was mosaiced in

pebbles with pictures of carts, rickshaws, and even a bicycle. The inside of the palace rooms was less impressive. I wish one or two could have been left untouched as it had been when used. They are now used as a museum, but it is not very well arranged and all the labels are in Chinese. The loveliest things - thin bowls carved out of jade, and old scrolls and pictures that would have sent Dr. Hou into an ecstasy - are laid out thickly on the shelves with others whose main value is the massiveness of the lump of jade or other precious material. The most appalling sight to me was the hall where some of the clocks presented to the Throne by Western powers were exhibited. You cannot conceive of more vile examples of Victorian bad taste. There were gold chariots with jewelled wheels, trees of gold with jewels for leaves, everything you could think of, all in gold but looking so gimcrack and gaudy that it nearly made one ill. From the back of this hall I peeped, through the crack of a locked door and saw another court, shoulder-high in weeds, and the pavilion beyond showed dimly through the dusty windows the pale faces of hundreds more of these atrocities! What did the Chinese artists think of us? No wonder we were barbarians if these horrors were the best offerings we could produce to present to the Son of Heaven.

After all this wandering we went out and across a public road and into another Palace enclosure, called the Coal Hill. This hill, quite a considerable one, was formed when the great lakes were dug. It is covered with woods and has several lovely pavilions on it. The view from the one on the summit shows the whole expanse of Peking and the hills around. We had our picnic there, sitting on the cool marble slabs and looking down on the city, and got home soon after seven.

I forgot to tell you about the goldfish. Just inside the gate by which we entered the Forbidden City (it is really the back gate to it) there is a large courtyard with many large wooden tubs standing about. In them are the Imperial goldfish, a very special breed with huge bulging eyes and huge filmy fins and tails. They were all colours, golden, grey, black, silvery, and although rather too queer to be beautiful did look dignified and Imperial.

....Much love Agatha

(To Mary Ward 1/9/1946) "The PUMC (Peking Union Medical College), which was magnificently equipped has been completely stripped, and the stuff taken to Japan, and the empty buildings are used as offices. One sees surgical instruments, almost certainly old loot, on sale in street stalls, but the best things are supposed to be in Japan. This college used to cater for over 200 students, "now we are seven".The hostel is now run as an hotel, so there are 20-30 other people here, some are missionaries, some UNRRA (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Agency) and some are rather pathetic waifs and strays that float about China."

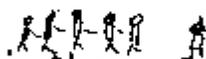
Letter No. 129 6 September 1946. College of Chinese Studies.

Dear David (*Her nephew*)

.... "Many happy returns".... (*David was born on 16 September 1943*) Well, I am living in China now... The Chinese people look very like us except that they all have black hair and black eyes. Of course they all talk Chinese, but when I go for a walk nearly every little boy I meet smiles at me and says "hello" and holds out his hand like this:

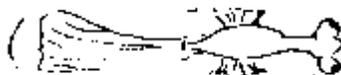


If I try to talk Chinese to them they laugh so much they can't say anything. Their clothes are different from ours and very often made from blue cloth. One day I saw some playing a game. First they lined up like this



The one on the right hand side had to catch the smallest one at the back. The others hold tight, each to the one in front, and run round like playing tig. Then the little one fell and the others fell on top of him so that he hurt his knee. He cried a bit but the others just laughed so he soon stopped. A great many of these children do not go to school. There are very few schools and very few teachers. Some children go to school in the morning only, and some in the afternoon, but the teachers have to work all the morning and all the afternoon too.

This afternoon I went to see the house where the king of China used to live. He was really an emperor, which is a kind of king... (Pu-yi's swings and pictures on the paths... goldfish



Can you write yet? ... This is what my name looks like in Chinese, doesn't it look queer?

杜
愛
德

Letter No. 130 7th. Sept. 1946

Dear Marjorie

... you must be thoroughly fed up with rations by now. ... A family of Hungarians arrived (*the Baboses, missionaries*). They have been in Pei-tai-ho for a couple of months. They spent last winter in Moukden

and before that were in Hulan, far up in the north near Harbin. They hailed me as a fellow Manchurian! In the evening they came to my room, and we talked hard for about 2½ hours and could only stop because Mrs. Babos was sleepy after the long train journey. They have three children aged nine, seven, and two. The older two speak Hungarian, Chinese and English. They have had the most incredible hardships and adventures, and the future is pretty black too as they have no news from Hungary, either from relatives or from their own church. The Church of Scotland has taken them under their wing... They told amazing tales of other even more remote stations than theirs... a aged Dane lives quite alone except for a chicken to which he is greatly attached. During last spring he walked (14 days) to Moukden, and when his business was done set off to get back. They asked him what would happen to his chicken. "Oh, it will be all right. I brought it into my room and left a month's food, and a big pile of snow to peck at for water". The Baboses also told with horror of the terrible days when the Russians first arrived as "liberators".... Most of those who were in Manchuria had come from fighting in the European front, only a few were Mongols. Much love to all three (or four?)

Agatha.

Letter No. 131 9 September, 1946. College of Chinese Studies, Peiping.

Dear Mother,

I am starting a letter to you as an antidote to the startling discovery that the postage has gone up yet again. The 5 gram letter home now costs \$800, just ten times what it was when I arrived in China!.... A new arrival in the College is Dr. Goodrich, son of the dictionary. He is here on sabbatical leave from Columbia University and was to lecture to the language students, but the wire to say the opening was postponed until February missed him and he got a bit of a shock to find only eight students. He went with us on Saturday to the Historical Museum in the Forbidden City, and made it much more interesting as Chinese history is his specialty. An American couple who were on a world tour joined us on that picnic, and the lady charmed me by asking if they could do Ireland in a long weekend!

... The other night there was a knock on my door about 7:30 and a man and woman walked in, greeted me most charmingly as a fellow Manchurian and then we talked hard for about 2½ hours. I suppose the Commission has brought it home to you people what kind of things have been endured by these non-interned missionaries. It simply leaves me speechless with admiration and pity..... called Babos. . . They were forced by the children' s illness to retreat on Moukden... and he worked in the Theological College and YMCA. He was arrested for a few days shortly before the Russians came in He said the whole family was in such a weak state that John Stewart (who told them the Church of Scotland would look after them financially) simply ordered them out of Manchuria for a rest.... they hoped to go home to Hungary, but letters from Switzerland are so extremely discouraging that I gathered it was pretty hopeless . . . They were so friendly and nice, said it cheered them to meet a new person going to Moukden. Isn't it queer that the first Manchurian I met here was a Dane, the second a Russian and then two Hungarians? Then I got a long letter from Dr. McMinn. She had had a "blissful" fortnight in K'ai Yuan but has been persuaded to live this winter in Moukden. She is worried about Miss Simonoff and her future and I haven't been able to send her any very reassuring news....

I am seriously exploring the idea of going to the L.M.S. which is much cheaper... transport is the snag. I priced a bicycle the other day - \$600,000 as new! Of course there are probably much cheaper Japanese ones about, but they are liable to dissolve into the their constituent parts by all accounts.

...Money problems... I've just returned from a laborious morning in banks. I really think it might be better if my money as dealt with by Associated Mission Treasurers as Jack Weir's is. I have often wondered why it wasn't but have tried to be independent. The other blow this morning was that the electric iron, which I bought after much pricing and pondering as an almost necessity, burnt out, but when I took it indignantly back to the shop they refused to change it, or repair it, or give me my money back. On my previous visit my Chinese had been inadequate to ask for a guarantee, so I haven't really a leg to stand on...

Much love as ever, Agatha

Letter No. 132 15 September. 1946 College of Chinese Studies, Peiping.

Dear Mother

...Mr. Griffiths went himself to the CNAC in Shanghai about my cases but no one had ever heard of them... What Penguins did I get in Shanghai? "All Passion Spent", "The Worst Journey in the World", "The Pocket Book of Verse" (not Penguin), White's "Natural History of Selborne", and "The English Miss" by R.H. Mottram. What was our hsi fan like? Sometimes made of rice, sometimes of millet, a thin gruel. Sometimes hardly more than discoloured water with a little mush in the bottom of the bowl. When I was sick (an eye infection) that one day in Kuan Yuan they gave me special rice hsi fan with lotus roots in it, supposed to be good for the digestion; they were slightly crunchy with a delicate flavour. ... A letter from Aunt Maud complaining that I had not written for months - but an envelope costs \$30 now! Also from Alice - how nice that she and Dor were able to go to Iona. Miss Simonoff was tremendously jubilant to get a letter yesterday from Dor.

Last night fourteen Danes arrived. They were the ones in Antung that Mr. Christensen had been so concerned about. They travelled by truck almost to the Russian zone at the tip of the peninsula, and then by mule-cart - several days up the west coast until they reached the railway. They were sixteen days in Moukden. The train journey from Moukden took 1½ days... There is an old man of 80, his wife 79, and several small children but they all appear fairly fit. They expect to go home to Denmark by plane.

The other day I got a surprise visit from two of my Cheeloo students - girls in the path class. They left Chengtu in May, got to Peking (where their families are) in sixteen days. They have been here all summer, and expect to leave soon by CNAC for Tsinan as they hear classes are starting. It was nice to see them but I forgot the name of one!

This morning the Collins and I went to the service in the British Embassy chapel in commemoration of the Battle of Britain. It was rather well done, without the "aren't we a marvellous nation" stuff, which jars. About half the congregation were Americans, easily picked out by the way they stood at attention arms folded or leaning on the pew in front!) It is a nice little chapel, Chinese in architecture but frankly

Anglican inside and there are plaques to Sir Robert Hart and other notables. Dr. Goodrich, who was with us, slept in it as a little boy during the siege of the Legations. He showed us afterwards the piece of wall left untouched with all its shell-holes and "Lest we forget" in big letters across the top. This is interesting but tactless, wouldn't it be much better to scrap the historical interest and forget as quickly as possible?.....

The other day when talking to Dr. Goodrich about books on Chinese writing I mentioned that my father had had a Chalfant. He was quite impressed and said "if you have a first edition" (there was a second recently) "hang on to it, for they are very valuable"

19 August. This week I had a tremendous spate of 3d. mail: Lancets etc. (one Lancet, sent to Borsad, re-addressed to Velore etc., a letter from Ted Gault dated Nov. 1945, enclosing one from Auntie Maud. Mrs. Babos ... got her first letter from Europe for four years this morning, and was jubilant. Mr. Babos is in Tientsin trying to get visas for Switzerland..... The military situation in Shandong is not so precarious now ... I have had no Cheeloo news yet (since mid July).

Yesterday we thought winter had come. I hurriedly unpacked my woollies and (the electricity failing at the critical moment) appeared in coat and skirt, which had not been pressed since I washed it in Nanking! No one else was much better.... I seriously think of buying a long padded gown but it would cost about

\$100,000. Ai-ya!.... I've been waiting three weeks for the time, the place, and the hot water all-together, to wash my hair! Squalor!

Much love to all. A

Letter No.133 22 September, 1946 College of Chinese Studies.

Dear Mother.....

.... On the evening of the 8th., moon feast, Dr. Goodrich took us to two interesting places in the west city. First we went to Ti Wang Miao, a temple that holds the tablets of all the emperors from the very earliest times up to, I think, the Ming dynasty. The only people there were two men who seemed to be gate-men or doorkeepers, and everything looked a little dusty and forsaken. In the largest hall there was a wide shelf along the back wall and arranged on it rows upon rows of tablets, all exactly the same, small and simple with just the name of the dynasty and the emperor written on each. As it was after dark we peered at them by the light of a feeble candle. High on the wall in the centre was the usual portrait of Sun Y'at Sen. After that we went on to a Buddhist temple where they hold a service in connection with the Moon Festival. We were of course too early and sat for a while in a guest room sipping tea and eating sunflower seeds, and entertained by an old priest who was very proud to air the English he had acquired in a year's study in the YMCA long ago. The service was due to start when the rising moon shone over the temple wall and struck an altar prepared with fruit and moon cakes, in the centre of the courtyard. Actually it was cloudy, so the service was held indoors. We were invited in, but stayed outside the open doors. It seemed to be all chanting; at first the monks stood up, with hands folded together palm-to-palm, later they turned to face the Buddha and knelt and did various posturings. I got the impression that most of them didn't know the music of the chants, and I'm sure most were singing Aa-aa-aa instead of the words. The great majority of them looked stupid and sullen

by comparison with the average rickshaw puller in the street. There were quite a number of women taking part in the service. - lay adherents of some kind who do not live there. They have large school also ("Just the same as in your missions" explained the one who was acting host!)

Yesterday we had another very interesting afternoon. Dr. Goodrich is a great asset, as he knows Peking inside-out and has contacts with all kinds of people. He is enough of a Chinese scholar to have the respect of a lot of Chinese who must look on the rest of us as almost illiterates. First he took us to the National Library, a perfectly lovely Chinese style built out of Boxer indemnity money. It has everything up-to-date - filing systems, fireproof shelves, lovely big bright reading rooms, etc.etc.. It is all free for use by the general public, and there were lots of people using it. Then we went on to the Pei T'ang, the Northern Roman Catholic Cathedral. It is a massive pseudo-gothic building, which rather overpowers a large, very pleasant compound. It was successfully defended in 1900 by a mere handful (about thirty) French marines. One priest, who tried to get out with a message, was caught by the Boxers and crucified within sight of the defenders.

Dr. Goodrich took us round to a small unostentatious building in a very quiet corner of the compound, and there dug out an old priest who showed us their library. The priest was Dutch, I think, and talked French with occasional patches of English and Chinese, and the switching from one language to another without warning was most confusing. He was a dear old thing in a long black Chinese robe, skullcap, and pale blue socks with holes in them. A great many of the European books were ancient tomes on astronomy, a reflection I suppose of the time when the famous Jesuit fathers gained such prestige as scientists. There were old geographies that reminded me of the Bockardt we have.

From there we walked a long way out through one of the west gates of the city to the old Catholic cemetery. It's good to be able to enjoy walking again, in spite of the brilliant sun and bright blue sky. The roads are deep in dust, but there is no wind now to blow it up, so one only gets dirty to the ankles. The cemetery is very peaceful, with trees and grass and rows of massive tombs with a tablet inscribed half in Chinese and half in Latin at the head of each. Most of the graves are of foreign priests (French, Italian, German, etc.), but a few are of Chinese. This piece of ground was first presented by the Emperor as a burial place for the great Father Ricci who was actually honoured further by having an avenue of stone animals as in the case of an emperor's tomb. These animals have gone now. Perhaps the Catholic Church decided later that they had too heathenish a flavour about them. Isn't it amazing what immense power and prestige these Catholic missionaries had at the Imperial court in those days? But so far as contributing to China was concerned they seem to have deteriorated, and been far outstripped in educational and medical institutions by Protestant missions. There is a Catholic University in Peking and one in Shanghai, that's all I think. The one here is planning to establish a Medical Faculty.

The other day I saw a caravan of camels in the street. I was in a crowded tram, and had only time to squeak with excitement before we were whistled out of sight.

This morning I went to a Chinese church nearby. The pastor is rather famous, one Wang Ming Tao. He was the product of an LMS school, and when he grew up decided to be a preacher. They wanted him to take a theological training but he claimed to have had visions, which instructed him to go ahead without! He is, I gather, anti-Church-of-Christ-in-China, and has his own independent church here. He travelled about China, preaching during the last few years. The church is very nice, with grey seats and white walls and there was a full and very respectable congregation. His preaching was very dramatic but not over-emotional, I think. I'm afraid I can't give you all his heads, but it was on "Sin" and

he was like the preacher of the sermon said by Carlyle - wasn't it Carlyle? - to be "agin it". Then in the afternoon, having slept for two solid hours to recover from all this church going, I went to Union Church and heard a good, American sermon! And he turned out to be a Presbyterian!

.... I bought for \$2 a second-hand lilo mattress with "dinky little bellows to blow it up"... people who have been recently in Moukden say that bedding, mattresses etc. are so few.....

24 Sept. Yesterday two nurses from Moukden turned up. At least, Miss Ch'en is Matron of Moukden Hospital. The other, Miss Wang, is an old pupil of Dor's. They are on their way to a nurses' conference in Nanking, the first any Manchurian nurses have been allowed to attend for fifteen years. Unfortunately Miss Simonoff had gone to Tientsin for a few days as they came here mainly to visit her. They brought me a letter from Dr. McMinn, and from Dr. Liu a letter and a bag of hazel nuts! Wasn't that kind of him? I did not really get much news from them as they were talking to Mr. Babos in Chinese, but I was able to give them a letter of introduction to Carrie Beagle who will be nice to them in Nanking, and show them things.

Today I got a long letter from Miss Priest. I was quite surprised because she is such a very reserved person and never talked to me very much, but now that I am safely on the other side of the world she has written screeds of interesting things all about her nephews and nieces, and what clothes she has bought. She has heard parcels are easier to send from USA than Britain, seems to remember what I have with me, and asks for details so that she can buy me some clothes and send them out! Isn't that very decent? It won't be necessary, even if T. Blakely doesn't turn up soon, but I will be down to bedrock before very long. Most interesting of all, she met Dr. Hou in New York, and happened to ask him what he thought about my going to Peking for this winter - "His reaction was immediately in favour of Peking. He felt under existing circumstances you would find work or study very difficult in Tsinan so he advocated the year in Peking". "He feels he is quite out of control or even in any kind of touch with Cheeloo". Can only return if President Wu invites him, etc. Poor Dr. Hou. It really is a muddle.

I also heard from Dr. Struthers. Not much news in his letter. They still "hope to open the in-patients wards in a few days". Dr. Sun (assistant in Pathology) still in Shanghai waiting for a plane to Tsinan. One hundred and seventy-five patients a day in outpatients He sounds busy and harassed, not an easy job.

Much love, A.

Letter No. 134 28 September 1946 College of Chinese Studies Peiping.

Dear Mother

.....I got a very nice letter from President Wu - sorry I've left Cheeloo, good wishes for Moukden Medical College. Oh dear, not a speck of news in this letter. The fourteen Danes from Antung left by air for Shanghai. Then to Calcutta, to Denmark. The old dear of seventy-nine consulted me, quite excited, to know what it would feel like to be up in the air.

Much love, Agatha.

Letter No. 135 6 October 1946 College of Chinese Studies, Peiping

It was habit made me put this heading. Really I'm at the London Mission now. Yes, I've flitted! As I had half expected, the Language School put up their board costs to \$9000 plus 5% a day from the 1st. of October. This seemed too preposterous, so I hastily got myself and belongs on to a rickshaw and departed to the West City. Miss Wood is only too pleased to have me as she would otherwise be alone, and a second person in the house helps keep her finances down. Prices are soaring all round. e.g. eggs jumped from \$125 to \$200 each. I really don't know whether to pat myself on the back for being economical in recent months, or to kick myself for not having bought up some supplies while the going was good. Now, having arrived here, I wonder why I didn't move long ago.

I had heard reports of Miss Wood's extreme economy and austere living, and had been a little scared thereby, but in actual fact I find her economies quite ordinary and reasonable, and the diet more interesting and varied than the monotonous food at College. I'm going to eat all I need and pay accordingly, so you need not worry about that. The distance from Language School is, of course a snag, or rather will be in winter. At present the fifty minute walk in the morning is pure pleasure. First, there are some very Chinese streets filled with all the hurly-burly of eating-stalls and fruit stalls, and the local "labour exchange" where men wait to be hired. Sometimes there are camel caravans from the mountains to the west, led by men in great sheepskin coats with the wool inside. After that, for a mile or so, there is a wide tarmac road, which leads over the marble bridge between the Pei Hai and the Chung Hai. The lakes are usually bright blue ruffled by the wind, and round about are the pleasure gardens of the court, little hills topped with pavilions and pagodas. Beyond are the Western Hills, which form a background that looks different every day. Then the road skirts the Forbidden City with its moat, towering wall and golden roofs, and goes through various gateways and arches, all glittering with tiles and gorgeously painted.

After that I cross through smaller streets once more, to the Tung Sze Pai Lou (East Four Memorial Arches). One day I can choose the street where they sell cage-birds if I like, and the next day the street for flowers and potted plants. I don't really regret not having a bicycle, as on a bike one would have to concentrate on traffic and ruts all the time, and walking one can relax and look round. It means an early start. Breakfast seven, classes 8:30 - 10:30. Then I work in the library till it shuts at 12. Lunch at the Language School (\$2000 each meal now) classes 2 - 4, home by bus, getting in about a quarter to five for tea. Dinner 7-ish and usually bed (don't laugh) about 9 p.m. as all this fresh air makes me sleepy. We have no classes on Saturdays and Sundays. Miss Wood (Myfanwy by name) is rather a remarkable bird. She is, I gather, nearly 70, and has been out over forty years but does not look it. She taught in Yenching 20 years or so and was head of the big Middle School here for twelve years. I think the school came first.

She is tall and willowy with a very English accent, which occasionally lapses into Cockney, and is a great talker. Naturally enough perhaps, she is not much good at listening to other peoples remarks, but what she says is very interesting and much of it wise. She spins it out so much though that I tend to go to sleep in the middle and then wake up hurriedly, feeling I have said "yes" in the wrong place. She is very kind, and very anxious I should be comfortable, but I'm not going to be allowed to have a mind of my own. Good discipline, perhaps!

There are three houses in this compound. She and I are in the west one, and the Lee Wolffs are in the east one. They are a young couple who have been living with Miss Wood until this month but when the Busbys left on furlough they hived off. He's a minister and she a doctor and they are a very lively and

brilliant pair. They had a year of Chinese in America, part of the time in the evacuated Peking Language School and part of the time in Yale. They say the Yale methods are 100% better than the methods we have. If so they must be very good indeed. They are doing student work here, being lent by the LMS to, I think, the NCC, for that purpose. They have opened a student centre, and run study groups and so on, and of course continue language study, with a teacher.

The middle house is occupied by a German family called Rock, at least it sounds like that. The father was in some sort of Holiness Mission, or something like that, then gave up evangelistic work to concentrate on publishing Christian literature, and has his own printing establishment here in Peking. There is his wife, son, his wife, two small children, a daughter, and at present two missionaries who worked in, I think, Inner Mongolia, and who recently parked themselves on their doorstep and were taken in. So the other evening I found myself singing lustily very fundamentalist and "bloody" hymns in German to Chinese tunes! You never know what you will be doing next in this life, do you?

Miss Simonoff has gone to her sister's to live. This sounds ideal but the snag apparently is that the sister lives in an overcrowded Chinese house - no running water, etc. - and Miss Simonoff does not want to be "another burden" she says. It will probably be only for a month or two and then she may go to a Russian family in Tientsin where she may be able to give Russian and/or English lessons. The Baboses are - if anything in even greater difficulties. They have scoured Peking for somewhere cheaper to live, so far without success, as no one is keen on a family with three smallish children. In the language school they have two bedrooms and have to pay for four adults, and the food is so unsuitable. For the baby they have been buying dried milk too. Mr. Babos, much to his distaste, asked UNRRA for some of the milk they are distributing, but (after answering detailed questions about what his father did etc. etc. etc.) was told that he did not fit in any category. They have been told they may have to wait three months for visas for Switzerland (where they have friends) and they are still in the dark as to the next step, to Hungary.

Last Sunday I had given a casual invitation to the Baboses to step into my room for a gossip, and I was wondering when they would turn up when there was a terrific thump on the door. Enter Mr. Babos bearing aloft a tray with thermos and a gay selection of tooth mugs, then Mrs. Babos and Miss Simonoff with plates of food! A party! We talked hard till 11.30, on everything from Nylon stockings to predestination and freewill. Mrs. Babos, next day, insisted on giving me a silk kimono, which she once bought on a sudden "spasm". She had seen me scuttling in and out of the bathroom in my coat, and said triumphantly "Now I know why I bought it". It is black, with orange and yellow chrysanthemums on it, very pretty. I didn't like to take it, but what can you do and I had given her odds and ends of milk, cocoa, aspirins, etc, so perhaps that was why. It will be extremely useful.

Yesterday we (the Language School group) went on an excursion to Yenching University. It is several miles outside the city. It is, as you might expect, vast in extent, and very beautiful in layout and buildings. Chinese architecture is expensive to keep in repair, and we were told that 1 million U.S. dollars were being spent on the really urgent repairs! The student who showed us round, on the other hand, spoke of their poverty. Government aid, naturally enough I think, goes first to Government institutions without any foreign support, and this boy said the students were not getting any rice now but only corn (maize). All the students I saw were very well dressed and prosperous looking, and all equipment, as in the library and gymnasium was just the last word in up-to-date efficiency. I could not forget the Chengtu students sleeping in bunks sixteen to a room, eating standing because there were no chairs, and of the one who came to teach me every day with his bare toes peeping out through his boots. So I did not find it very easy to be sympathetic about the corn bread, which I am eating myself

and find very good. It's very hard to sort out the real truth of these matters. One interesting thing was a notice on one of the notice boards recording a resolution by the students (or some section thereof), supporting the view that the American forces should clear out of China.

When I got on to this Yenching bus yesterday I sat down beside a man who immediately said, "Are you the Dr. Crawford who is going to Moukden Medical College?" This was a Dr. Wu, a Moukden graduate with eight years surgery in PUMC, then Chungking, and now working in the Government hospital in Tientsin. He had just returned from a visit to Moukden, and had seen and talked to Dr. Liu and others. Dr. Liu mentioned me and hoped I would come soon as one man had to cope with both pathology and bacteriology, and "I could teach quite well in English"! I often wonder when I will go to Moukden. Who decides? The College Staff? The WMA Committee Irish Council, when there is one? At the moment, of course, I am quite happy to be here, and feel the present language study most worthwhile and valuable. But how long? I also found that this doctor was a classmate, and great friend of the Dr. Hsiang I met in Chengtu! Even China is a small country. And of course he knew the PUMC parasitologist I met in Vellore.

Much love. Any more news of the babe? (*This was Christine, her niece, who was born on August 13, 1946*)

Letter No. 136 12 October 1946. London Mission, West City, Peiping.

Dear Mother.....

.....Christine! I am so glad she has really materialised she sounds a lovely baby.... I wrote to Dr. Garven to Shanghai ...said I was willing to go (to Moukden) as soon as needed ...

Yes, indeed, I often see old gentlemen taking their birds out for a walk. Sometimes not even in cages, but sitting on a little wand with, I suppose, a thread tied to one leg. In Chengtu they used to walk along the top of the city wall with them in the cool of the evening. You still see old customs in Peking. This morning in the tram I sat opposite an old gentleman who ceaselessly manipulated two shining dark brown walnuts in his hand. Dr. Goodrich says this is to keep your fingers supple for writing and playing the lute and suchlike scholarly exercises. One day I saw two old men greet each other with the old Manchu gesture - a sort of curtsey. bending one knee and reaching right down to the ground with the right hand. I get perpetual delight from these streets. Now that winter is coming there are lots of stoves out on the footpath, with a great iron pan on each in which they roast chestnuts in hot sand. Even the "modern" shops have their funny little ways, and I feel quite sorry that the passing of the hot weather has caused one pharmacy to withdraw a lurid poster advertising "cholera drops" and "prickly powder". Drugs, incidentally, are very expensive, and as a result the mission hospitals found it necessary to sell drugs at prices even higher than that on the street. Otherwise patients simply sold what was prescribed. Sulphonamides are \$250-\$300 per half gram tablet, so that an initial dose often costs 4 shillings, in a serious case.

Well, what's the news? Miss Simonoff has gone to her sister's; I miss her, although I still hope to see her occasionally. I'm still very satisfied with my new abode. Miss Wood.... I am perpetually amazed at her freshness and vigour. She came out in 1908... now looks after financial and administrative work in LMS here...

We had a holiday on Thursday - the double Tenth - so some of us from the Language School went, with Dr. Christensen and Dr. Goodrich to the Forbidden City. There were swarms of people. We met a very nice man, a Mr. Ma, who is in charge of some of the antiquities. This was the first day that some new exhibits were on show - over 200 bronzes from Anyang, Shang period. They had been dug up during the war, sold to a German collector and now, with much difficulty, and the financial help of T.V. Soong they were bought back.

Oh, here's a nice piece of semi-gossip. Peking Union Church is at present in the throes of pulling itself together after the war interim, and one subject under discussion has been the calling of a full-time minister. When our five Commissioners were here, Mr. Fraser preached, and everyone, especially the Americans were simply bowled over and said, "We simply must have a Scotch Presbyterian for our next minister." One of them later met Mr. Fraser in Shanghai and asked him if, by any chance, he knew of one who would come out, and he said, "Funny thing, I have a letter from a young Scotch Presbyterian minister asking me to look out for just such a job". To cut a long story short, there was a church meeting this week, about forty present, and an overwhelming majority voted to call this Mr. Easton of Old Kirk, Edinburgh. So you see what one sermon can do! The alternative candidate was an American, formerly on Yenching staff and evidently a very fine and much-loved man, but they all said they must have someone who can preach. ... I just hope this Scot can preach!

This morning we were at the Temple of Heaven... it was lovely and dignified to the last degree. Afterwards we went to an Institute of Preventive Medicine (or some such name), and met an extremely nice Dr. T'ang who is a good friend of Dr. Goodrich's. They are building a big Institute for making sera and vaccines of all kinds, penicillin etc., and are planning research on streptomycin. It struck me very favourably and it will be a great help in Moukden to be able to get supplies from them (and advice from Dr. T'ang).

Incomplete letter No. 137 19 October 1946.

Three distinguished 'visitors' (*books*) arrived - Archbishop Temple escorting no less a person than St. John; and Jane Austen!... No extra postage....

Mrs. Christensen has sold me (quite absurdly cheap but she insisted) a lovely silk padded gown with silk padding which belonged to one of their daughters. Very light and so warm that it makes me gasp to try it on... a deep red, almost "as new".

The days slip peacefully by, one would not know there was a war on, if it weren't for the paper and an occasional personal contact brings it home. The other day our gateman's daughter arrived home. She is a schoolteacher in a village about fifty miles away. She reports that the countryside is terrorised by wandering groups of Communist troops, scattered by the fall of Kalgan, not in uniform but still with guns. They rob, rape, and burn in the old bitter tradition. The line to Moukden is broken again - seven or eight places blown up, it seems, but the damage never seems serious as the trains always run again in a day or two. Another piece of gossip, this time UNRRA I suppose you know all about the terrible corruption and moneymaking rackets that go on. But do you know what the official pay is (why they can be bothered to make more I can't imagine) \$26,000 a day for food, plus \$450,000 a month rent allowance, plus of course their real salary" A lot are being paid off now. They get a huge lump sum for that, on top of all the above. Those awaiting shipment back to their home countries live in a

luxurious hotel in Shanghai on the decoration of which millions of Chinese dollars have been spent - on full pay, of course. No wonder when UNRRA sets this example, CNRRA is a pretty bad smell too. As the sour joke has it, the initials stand for "China Never Never Receives Anything". The UNRRA folk who form the largest group in the Language School are a very funny crowd; some decent I'm sure but mostly exotic-looking and hard-faced....

This morning some of us went to the Forbidden City - to see the famous library of the Emperor Ch'ien Lung. It has never been open to the public, so we had the fun of seeing ancient rusty padlocks undone for us and paper seals broken. The parts where the general public do not go are shoulder-high in bushes and weeds, with masses of brilliant purple convolvulus and flocks of blue Chinese magpies. We picked our way through to a lovely building facing a courtyard where the white marble balustrades were almost buried in vegetation. It made me think of the City of Cold Lairs in Kipling's Jungle Book. The inside of the library was disappointing in a way, because all the shelves were completely empty. The books had all been taken to Chungking for safety at the beginning of the war. But we had the curious experience of walking on a soft carpet of dust. Thick, thick, dust, with thousands of puff-balls blown in through the broken windows from the thistles in the courtyard. And the tracks of mice and cockroach and sparrow were as crisp as if engraved with a pen.

I have seen one or two funerals in the streets lately. They look quite different from the Nanking ones, much more gaudy. The coffin is covered with a gorgeous scarlet embroidered cloth and the bearers have bright red hats with wide black turn-up brims and wear dark green robes with embroidery on them. The rags underneath suggest that they are just ordinary coolies. Priests were less in evidence, but there was plenty of crash-bang music and then the melancholy troop of ancient carriages, and mourners in white, on foot. It strikes me always as a most depressing spectacle, gaudy and undignified.

Peking seems more sensitive to the points of the compass than any other place I've been. The Forbidden City bristles with little notices telling one to go N, S, E, or W, and I'm getting quite accustomed to servants being told to move a chair to the north side of the table, etc.. But yesterday I had the best example of all. A blind man was picking his way along the hutong in front of me and nearly walked into a fruit stall. I only yelped warningly, but a man near yelled "Wang nan tsou", and the blind man instantly stepped a few inches to the south. ...

Much love, Agatha

Letter No. 138 26 October 1946 London Mission, West City, Peiping.

Dear Mother

... I heard from Chengtu that Cheeloo's freight had been sent off and was stuck in Kuan Yuan (unlucky spot!). As my case had no lock (although well-roped and was to have been crated) I have no great hopes of seeing it again. The most important thing in it was my fur lining and I also grudge losing my Chinese picture... My slide box had reached Chengtu and was to be sent to Shanghai "by mission plane". I wrote at once to Mr. Rees to hand it over to our Manchurian party if they arrived.....

Dr. Helen Hewatt has arrived in Tientsin. Mrs. Babos went down to see her... Miss Simonoff is also in Tientsin at the moment. She seems better these last two weeks and told me one day with great glee that at that moment she had absolutely no pain!

I'm sorry if Jean Stockman was worried by not getting a letter from me. I wrote about the end of July... then wrote about the end of August... it still holds good. The postscript in a letter to you asked them to consider some less vague arrangement for the future, either through AMT like Jack Weir, or whatever will be done for the people coming out. I would rather have a definite amount calculated on cost of living, like other missionaries, instead of it being left entirely to me to decide how much I ought to spend.

The weather is getting colder now, and every day in the street I see new styles. Marvellous woolly-furry caps immense black or Khaki capes (ex-Japanese) and so on. The housewives out shopping often have a huge bursting parcel of cotton, for making padded clothes or quilts. I bought a pair of leather wool-lined gloves, by electric light, and found next day that they were a rather bilious orange-brown. My friends make rude remarks, but will just have to put up with them. Most of the time the weather is lovely with a blue sky and no wind, but yesterday was horrid, a grey sky and strong wind, which made the air hazy with, dust.

Last night I was at a lecture by Dr. Coffin, head of Union Seminary, Princeton... Dr. T.H. Sun of Cheeloo is acting as his interpreter, having come from Tsinan for the purpose. I met him by chance and he was greatly surprised to hear that I had left the staff last July! (This one of a series of Cook Memorial lectures Dr. Coffin was to give in China, later India etc.. My doubts of the value of such lectures...) First one man talks in an unintelligible language, making impassioned gestures in an intriguing way. Then you hear a few sentences in your own tongue and have to guess where the gestures came in. And an hour's lecture takes over two hours. Phrases like "render unto Caesar" and references to Jewish history just don't mean anything to university students in Peking who are vaguely interested in Christianity....

Today is sunny but cold. We were to go out for the day to the Western Hills but the truck has broken down...

Later. Well, we had a lovely day after all. Having given up the defunct bus as a bad job, we arranged by telephone to go to the S.W. corner of the Chinese city instead. First we met at a Buddhist temple called Fa Yuan Sze, and ate the packages of sandwiches, which we had been looking at forlornly since early morning. This is a beautiful temple, very well kept with tidy courtyards with glorious old trees in them, the buildings in good repair, and, biggest miracle of all, the interiors had been dusted and were clean and decent. There are eighty priests, and a primary school of over a hundred children. In one courtyard there is a very fine pine tree of a kind, which I have seen also in the Forbidden City. It has white bark, more silvery but almost as pale as a white birch, and with its delicate green needles it is a lovely sight. It is a marvel to me to see the Chinese characters of that time just the same as those used now - just as if you and I could read Anglo-Saxon.

This was all very interesting, but more was to follow, for our next port of call was a Mosque. It was queer to walk along the streets and see more and more Arabic inscriptions over the doorways, as we penetrated a Mohammedan quarter. The mosque, externally, looked much like any other temple, as it was pure Chinese architecture. They let us in and showed us all round with perfect friendliness towards the infidel. The main building had one large hall pleasantly empty and dignified, with rather a low roof. The eaves and doors and roof beams were painted with the usual gay designs, and there

some flower patterns, which I thought, weren't allowed in stricter varieties of Mohammedanism. At least I think I have read that they take the instructions about not making images of any kind so rigidly as to exclude any natural forms in decoration. But then, Chinese Mohammedanism isn't very orthodox.

After taking off our shoes we were allowed to pad about where we liked, and saw the window opening towards Mecca, and a couple of men at prayer. Even during the war, four men from here went on pilgrimage to Mecca, with the full cooperation of the Japs. There is no minaret, but they do sound the call to worship three times a day from some place in the building. Then we saw the room where they do the ceremonial washing before prayer. This was very warm, and pleasantly steamy, so they must use hot water. Along one side are cubicles and at the top one could glimpse a rudimentary type of shower. In the middle was a long bench with a concrete drain in front, and a shelf with rows of what looked like big teapots, for water. A man was seated there, scrubbing face, arms and feet, and having a lovely time. On the other side of the room was a long platform against the wall, with a rug and low table, I suppose for tea. In this room we females were left near the door while the men were allowed to wander further in.....

Much love, Agatha

Letter No. 139 2 November 1946. London Mission, West City, Peiping

Dear Mother

....Everyone is much upset by the bad news about Dr. Helen Hewatt. She had reached Tientsin, but had been bothered with ... her foot. An UNRRA neurologist diagnosed some form of progressive paralysis and said she must go home at once ... left in a few days ... to catch the Empress of Australia...

I got a letter from Dr. Hugh Garven, from Hong Kong... I found an impressive book by him, in a second-hand shop, on the flora of S. Manchuria! Wish it was birds.... (*The book is: Wild flowers of north China and south Manchuria*)

I also got a note from Dr. Gow this week (acknowledging some medical odds and ends) which says they expect to close the College temporarily at the end of November, owing to lack of coal.... This week I met a Mrs. Wu (I think it was), a daughter of old Pastor Liu of Moukden, who was visiting the Baboses. She was very friendly and when she heard I was going to Moukden, and moreover was Dor's cousin, and had actually heard of Pastor Liu, kept patting me on the shoulder in an astonished sort of way.

... Money which Dr. Hou might have used to buy equipment for Cheeloo in America... can't be sent there... seems fair to use it for Moukden...

You say that I should quote expenses here in sterling, and not in meaningless thousands of dollars. I have never quoted Chinese dollars to the powers that be without referring to the exchange rate I am working on. It's not easy to talk only in sterling. Supposing I wrote home and said that the Language School hostel cost £1.4.0 per day and then someone else wrote home and said it cost 15/6 a day, and someone else wrote home and quoted an even lower figure - would the committee not be even more

muddled It all depends on exchange. I am still using up Chinese dollars which Mr. Gould changed away back in April and since then the exchange has risen to nearly double. Then there is the official rate, and the open market rate, and if you get the open market rate of course things are a little cheaper (in sterling) than if you change money at the official rate. I tried to explain this in the letter I wrote to Jean (Stockman, of WMA office) at the beginning of September. I hope it turns up. One of the American missionaries here has taken my £100 draft to Tientsin and is trying to change it into American dollars for me. Then I can sell them bit-by-bit as needed, and so will not lose on a rising exchange. It should carry me on until I am settled down in Moukden, or at least until there are other missionaries out here and we can all be arranged for on the same basis.

If there are any avid stamp collectors in your circle of acquaintance, you had better give them this envelope. The stamps are quite ordinary, but the postmark is a special one only used on Chiang K'ai Shek's 60th birthday. I took the empty stamped envelope along on that day and lined up with excited little schoolboys who had pages from their stamp albums, with stamps on all ready to be postmarked. Everyone seemed tickled that I should do the same.

My only excitement this week was going to dinner with three French students who live near the French Embassy. I met them in Chengtu and two of them were with us on the trip to Kuan Hsien last New Year. They are in China on some sort of exchange studentship, and are studying Chinese full-time, and expect to go back to Paris next summer to sit an exam. If successful they will probably enter the diplomatic service. They are a very lively trio, two men and one girl. I always liked them because they were so friendly and willing to fit into a missionary environment, although they themselves have, I think, only a rather vague R.C. background. Now they are living, the three of them in their own house, which they have had painted and furnished (sparsely but very attractively) throughout. No one seems to be responsible for what they do, but they all three work like niggers all day, and enjoy themselves with French zest every evening. In fact it is a most unusual and rather refreshing ménage. Marguerite, who comes from French Morocco, is about the largest woman I have seen, the very reverse of French petite-ness, and already finds the cold "formidable". Luckily they all speak English, because when I try to speak French nothing comes but Chinese, and not much of that.

They were excited that night because they had discovered a shop which sold French liqueurs - "Just think, real Benedictine, just like home!" said Marguerite. What different things "home" means for different people! We had a delicious six-course dinner (don't worry, only water to drink), as Marguerite seems to have inspired the cook to do French cooking.

I have started at the wrong end of the evening, for the first adventure was to find the place. The electric lights were off they are for some time and sometimes several periods each night, in our part of the city at least - and the Legation Quarter was pitch black as there was no moon. All the respectable people were in rickshaws and pedicabs, so I had to enquire from flitting shapes, and footsteps. As I didn't really know the name of the compound I drew several blanks, but eventually a friendly voice replied from the darkness, with the usual confusion of south, east and west. That got me the right hutong, and after more wandering I spied a cigarette glowing too high up in the air for anyone but Claude Ledan, and sure enough it was he, out roaming the streets in search of me.

This is Saturday morning. I am sitting... drying my hair in the sun. This afternoon the Language people will pick me up and we go out to the Western Hills.

Later: We had a glorious afternoon. First we went to the Pi Yun Sze, a temple that climbs up the hill among lovely old evergreens, and where Sun Yat Sen's body was kept for some time in a horrible glass-topped coffin. The view from the highest building stretched over the whole Peking Plain, with bare brown hills as a background. There were fine gingko trees with bright yellow leaves, and white-barked pine trees, in the courtyards. Later we went a little way to the entrance gate of the Imperial Hunting Park, and climbed up a path through woods until we got to bare moor above the tree line. You looked down on woods of dark evergreens (cypress, I think) with here and there a maple (or something like) a brilliant sunny windless day, but cold when the sun went down, and I was glad of several layers, and a heavy coat on top.

I am looking forward to seeing Christine's photo.

Much love Agatha

Letter No. 140 10 November 1946 Peiping.

Dear Mother

... I was told to try putting "Via Hong Kong" on my letters as otherwise letters are sent over the Hump to Calcutta....

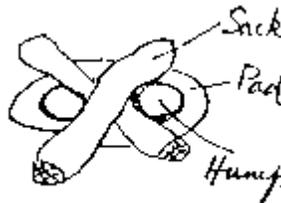
... a letter from Tom Blakely ... he asks me sternly if I realise he is now the Senior Missionary in the Field, but I gather he does not want to be and was very disappointed that Harry Johnstone had not reached Shanghai yet. Dr. Leggate has got over one hundred tons of medical supplies and hospital equipment for Manchuria! From Red Cross and other relief organisations. They think it prudent to accompany this (I should think so!) but don't know when they will leave Shanghai but hope to see me in Tientsin or here.

You say that someone said the "powers" at the Language School were "keen business people". Well, they may be clever, but that is nothing to be ashamed of, and they certainly are both kind and generous and wear shabby clothes! I'm not sure that the Language School is making money. You see, it is all rather American style suffocatingly hot central heating throughout hostel and college, with coal at (pause for arithmetic) £12.10.0 a ton) lots of repairs, replacements in library, etc.. Miss Wood bought coal in August at much less than half the present rate. Wily old bird! ...Mrs. Bewglass wanted something from me... I called it "Universities on trek" ... mostly about the journey.

A lot of new students have come to the Language School, about ten. Three are from Australia... very nice folk.....

A lorry load of us went out again to the Western Hills. This time we went to Pa Ta Ch'u - Eight Great Places - where there are eight temples scattered on the slopes of a valley in the hills. The drive over the plain to start with was interesting because we passed through great settlements of houses built by the Japanese. They are monotonous, ugly, one-storey houses, rather western in external appearance. The Chinese won't live in them - no k'angs etc - and so practically all are empty, and look most desolate. The country itself was lovely, with all the colours of brown fields, pale lemon willow trees, and bright orange of the maize cobs laid out to sun on the farmhouse roofs. We passed many trains of

camels heading for the city with loads of coal. They fascinate me with their extraordinary woolly coats, splayfeet, bright brown eyes, and the clanging of bells on their necks. The way they are loaded is interesting. There is a ring shaped pad, which goes round both humps, and then two very long sacks of coal are arranged cross-wise, like this:



When we got to the foot of the hills we left the lorry and climbed up a paved stone path, which wound up the valley, passing each of the eight temples. The woods were full of maple, Spanish chestnut, and oaks, and there were gingko trees in the temple courts, and the colours were simply blazing with yellow, red and orange. I was so busy soaking in the sun and trees and the lovely shapes of the brown hills above that I came home with only the vaguest recollections of which temples we went through and what their names were - Miss Wood was quite shocked, and I have firm instructions to read up the Pa Ta Ch'u in the guide-book this afternoon. Apparently it is the correct thing at this time to visit the hills and then send some of the red leaves to one's best beloved. Twice on the way back through the city (after leaving the lorry) someone came up behind me and pulled some leaves from the bunch I was carrying. If they had asked politely they'd have got more!

Much love Agatha

Letter No. 141 16th November 1946 College of Chinese Studies, Peiping.

Dear Mother

... My box of Path slides has not yet reached Shanghai, as the Lutheran plane has ceased to function. However, the Chengtu folk will send it when they can and Mr. Griffiths says he'll see it gets to Moukden. People are really terribly decent.

You ask if I really save, in the LMS. Well, last month it worked out at \$3000 a day. Lunch at the hostel was \$2000. Their daily charge is \$9500 a day. So with \$300 bus fare each day I saved about \$4000) = 6/8 a day. From now on the cost of fuel will even things up, so I am seriously thinking of moving back. The main object of being in Peking is language study, and it's not worth spending a lot of time and body heat on a small financial savings.....

I got such a funny letter the other day from Miss McCombe. She started off by reminding me that language study requires Patience, Perseverance, and Concentration, (think of that!), and then tells me that I am "in the vanguard of the new Church Era in the East" (think of that!!) The rest of the letter asks for the prices of a lot of things, and as I have now done the necessary investigations you may be interested in some of them:-

Cheaper cotton material, e.g. for sheets and frocks 10/6 a yard

Wool material, £1 a yard
Very coarse cotton (dish-clothes etc.) 5/-- a yard (27-36" wide)
Knitting wool: either very poor Japanese not worth buying, or else foreign wool at £6 per lb.
Lined leather boots a bargain: £5
Second hand fur-coat lining: £50
Carpet 10 ft. x 12 ft.: £100
Coal £12 a ton.
Eggs 5p. each.
Wheat flour 1/4 a lb..
Candles 1/- or more each.
Butter 1/- a lb.
Ordinary non-absorbent cotton wool 5/- a lb..
Five grains of aspirin 5d, other drugs in proportion.

It often makes me wonder if I'm really worth it, when I think of what I spend being scraped up with people's sixpences and shillings on the Sunday collection plate. Am I worth it? Or rather one must say "Will I be?"

I had fun this week, on the evening of the 14th. It was just a year since I landed in Chungking, so I decided to go on a giddy burst and incidentally repay the hospitality of the French students and some others. In the end the party included also Mrs. Babos, Margaret Garvie, and a new American girl I had been asked to look after. We went to a Mongol restaurant, which combines the virtues of superb food and amazing cheapness. I went the day before to interview the headwaiter, and book a room, and talk price, so that when the great hour dawned we climbed up dark rickety stairs to the tune of raucous and deafening shouts of "Tu Tai-fu"! At first we all sat in a little room around a table on which stood a bottle carrying a guttering candle, and drank tea and ate melon seeds. Then when all was ready we went out; to a semi-open part of the roof, and stood around a great iron stove with a grill on top. You are served with plates of mutton sliced very thin, and bowls of sauce and vegetables. You dip the meat in the sauce and then cook it on the sizzling hot iron, with extra-long chopsticks, while your face burns with heat, and your eyes stream with the smoke. They serve round wheat cakes, which split easily, and you ram the meat in between the two layers and munch it like a sandwich. The cold frosty air had given us all tremendous appetites, and we ate an amount of meat, which would make you poor rationed people's eyes bulge! Afterwards we drank lots more tea, and talked until I missed the last bus home and had to take a rickshaw cab! Altogether a riotous evening.

The Chinese papers are buzzing with a great story this week. There is a great Taoist temple just outside the SW corner of the city. The head (Abbot) and the lay manager have been mis-appropriating the temple funds all through the war. The monks appealed to the police, but nothing was done. Since the end of the war they have again appealed for justice, but the police took no action, making it fairly clear that they were somehow involved with the culprits. Finally, last Tuesday, the monks took their two enemies, and burned them alive. They then drew up a paper stating what they had done and why, and all the thirty-six monks in the temple signed it. They then sent for the police. When the police arrived they found thirty-five monks awaiting them, one having run away. These others presented their statement, and were duly marched away into the city, in chains. It is not known what will happen to them. The police are in an exceedingly awkward position. Isn't it almost incredible? Barbaric, and in some aspects magnificent.

This afternoon Dr. Goodrich took us on a picnic excursion as usual. We went first to Wu T'ai Sze, a temple not far outside the west side of the city. It is built in an Indian style of architecture, a cubical mass, with five pagodas on top, covered with intricate carving. It looks a little queer in a Chinese landscape, but beautiful in the sunshine with the autumn colours of the fields and trees around.



From there we went to the Great Bell temple. The bell is the biggest suspended bell in the world, about fifteen feet high and eight inches thick. There is a legend that the man who cast it had several failures, and at last his daughter threw herself into the molten metal to placate the gods. The result that time was perfect, the bell having a lovely mellow tone. As the dutiful daughter jumped in, one of her shoes fell off, and was left behind. Now, when the bell is struck and the sound is dying away, you are supposed to hear her voice, wailing for her lost shoe.

This temple was occupied by soldiery, and we were such an object of interest that we went off again to a small temple deserted by all but a couple of priests, out in the fields not much further on. We had our tea there, sitting on the steps in the sun.

Tom Blakely has just rung up from the Language School! He is coming to dinner, as he has to go back to Tientsin on Monday.

Sunday. We had a great evening's crack, and heard a lot of gossip and very lively accounts of Shanghai and Croydon and Manchurian fellowships. He goes on to Moukden by train on Monday very keen to get there before Jack W(eir) does anything rash! Dr. Leggate escorts his hospital stuff, or hopes to. Tom B. has no luggage with him, so I haven't got mine yet.

Much love, Agatha

Letter No. 142 17 November 1946. As from College of Chinese Studies.

Dear Jack

Tom Blakely turned up here yesterday and brought your pen! I am very glad indeed to have it, as it is a great nuisance to have to carry an inkbottle around all the time.... Thank you ever so much...

... some of the party are still in Hong Kong, awaiting the return of their baggage from Shanghai, so that they can bring it to Tientsin or a Manchurian port. The Chinese government are still pursuing their sticky policy of forbidding British ships to run between Chinese ports, and of making it more or less impossible for foreigners to use Chinese ships. So whatever one's principles on the matter it is certainly a great convenience that Hong Kong is still a British port...

Love to you and all the family, Agatha

Letter No. 143 22nd. November 1946. As from College of Chinese Studies.

Dear Mother

... Jack and Marjorie's letter, ... with the photo of Christine... she looks most characterful and very lively indeed for six weeks. Please thank them very much indeed.

On Thursday at 6.30 a.m. I got a wire, "Come Tientsin first train, Garven". Well, I jumped into my clothes, stuffed down a little breakfast and tore off across the city to the station. After stagnating for 25 min. in a queue, which I hoped was the right one, I found all third class tickets had been sold, got a second class, and ran after all the other people who were running, and so caught the 8 a.m. train with two minutes to spare. I enjoyed the two and a half hour journey across the flat wintry landscape. The ground was silvery with hoar frost, but the willow trees are still a lovely pale yellow. The fields were bare and empty except for some places where they had beds of winter vegetables and were covering them up with great straw mats, and were building wind-breaks of reeds. As we neared Tientain there was a lot of flooding, many houses having water to the very door, and the people moving about in boats. At Tientsin I got a pedicab man who said, "hao hao hao" very enthusiastically when I asked him if he knew where the C.I.M. was (I of course had no idea), but, after half an hour sturdy peddling he stopped and asked me if we were nearly there, and I realised he had been waiting for me to give directions! We had at least half an hour more of wandering about, enquiring at intervals, but no one in Tientsin seemed to have heard of the Nei Ti Hui. At last my man found a pal who had once been there, and with roars of laughter he directed us, saying it was very far away. So it was! However, it did not matter, as when I did get there all the Manchurians were out trying to get tickets. I was parked in Miss Simonoff's room, and fed on coffee and bread and apricot jam by a nice Norwegian lady. After a while a lady with a broad rosy face erupted into the room, called me Tania and then stared. It turned out to be Miss Maclean! I had imagined her thin, pale and ethereal. She brought Mrs. Findlay along and we chatted. I liked them both immensely, also Dr. Garven whom I sat beside at lunch and we talked hard then and afterwards. There was no very startling news, and what there was, was good. Miss Simonoff is to leave today for Hong Kong on the boat they came by, which was extremely comfortable. All her papers are in order and she was in great form. These three had arrived only the previous night, Wednesday 20th., and hoped to leave for Moukden the following day or day after. So I'm glad I caught that train and had a glimpse of them. Dr. Garven is very keen to get to Moukden before the College is closed for the long winter holiday, so that he can see it in action. They are all to live in Dr. Christie's old house, meantime. He is very keen for me to go to them for Christmas, and I accepted joyfully. The biggest excitement for me was when Nell Maclean handed over the five precious parcels you gave Tom Blakely. My dear, what riches! I had been nearly frozen stiff in the train, so promptly put most of them on! I don't need to tell you how useful and much needed they are. The jumper fits perfectly - everything does and they are already beautifully name-taped. Thank you ever so much. How much did you buy now, and what about coupons. I hope you haven't left yourself high and dry.

After lunch Dr. Wu, whom I met recently in a bus, turned up with four other Moukden graduates, and invited everyone to a feast that evening. I would love to have gone, but knew that Miss Wood would have been in a panic about me if I did not turn up that evening. So finally I departed for the station, visibly fatter than when I arrived, and carrying one paper parcel. It was a most successful day, I did enjoy it.

Last time I wrote I had not really finished telling you about Tom Blakely's visit. We met again on Sunday morning after church, and as we said he was pining for a Chinese meal we went to the Mongol restaurant. Here we had a delicious and tremendous feed for what he (after Shanghai costs) thought was next to nothing. It's amazing what a large healthy man can eat. He went on and on and on, saying at intervals that it was the best meal he had had for years. Most gratifying! Then we drank tea and yarned for about an hour and a half, and after that went to the Forbidden City, and wandered there in a part I had never visited. It is magnificent, with the towering main gate on one side, and marble bridges crossing a canal to the main audience chambers. After that I went back with him to the Language School for tea. I heard later that he left on Monday morning for Moukden.

Now I'd better go back even further. Dor in one of her letters asked me to get in touch with Mr. Kuan, the artist friend of Dr. Crooks, and find out how he had survived the war. I took the opportunity of a holiday we had last week, and eventually, by dint of much enquiring, found the house. (Miss Wood, who thinks all present-day missionaries very poor fish, had tried to insist on accompanying me, as she was sure I would never find it myself, so I'm glad I did get there!). Mr. Kuan was out but his wife (very pretty and friendly) entertained me. The first thing I saw was a really beautiful watercolour of the Chimney pots at the (Giants') Causeway. That gave us something to talk about! I had not known he had studied for two years in London and had visited the north of Ireland. Mrs. Kuan showed me a lot of his pictures, both of Ireland and Peking, watercolours and oils... He paints in western style. After a while he came in and as he talks English things moved quicker! He was very touched and pleased to hear of enquiries from old friends at home, and is going to write to Mrs. Wedderburn. Then Mrs. Kuan brought in their little son of about a year old, the jolliest, sweetest baby I have seen for a long time. It was quite obvious that they both dote on him. Mr. Kuan said he managed fairly well during the Japanese occupation by keeping out of the way. He now teaches art in the Catholic University, and although his house was small and simple there was no real poverty in evidence. They pressed me to go back, and I certainly will.

...I have arranged to move back to the Language School on 30th. November....

One more thing I would very much like Jack to send me... one of his sketches... I think it is safe now and I would enjoy it so much... would he mind sticking it on a card so that it would stand up as I would find it very hard to get mounting material here....

Much love, my dear.

Agatha.

Letter No. 144 31st.(sic) November 1946. (Really at) College of Chinese Studies

Dear Mother

... I am back in the Language School. Actually the prices have gone up again this month - students \$10,000 a day. Non-missionary transients \$20,000. I think the exchange is now about 13,000, officially.....

I have had an awful bout of expenditure. a dictionary (Mathews), which I really can't get on without any longer..., and the trip to Tientsin. Then one day the sole of one of my only ordinary pair of shoes just fell off and, to my horror, the layer underneath was cracked across; no wonder they leaked like sieves. So I got them mended and am also having a pair made for me (ready-mades are almost as dear and don't fit well). The two together cost nearly four pounds. Then the amah broke my precious thermos, and as it is nearly indispensable, I got the cheapest possible for about 12/- and some day soon I'll have to buy a fur cap, as my little green woolly one isn't going to be nearly enough. Altogether I spent about £35 last month, and the only extravagance was the meal I invited the French students to. This money problem is a curse.....

... last week's trip on Saturday afternoon. We went to T'ung Chow, a town a few miles east of Peking, where there is a big American Board mission compound just outside the city wall. The old Arts and Science College which used to be part of Yenching was formerly there. It is a beautiful compound, wide and spacious with nice trees and pleasant buildings - hospital, girls' and boys' schools and so on. A Miss Alice Higgins showed us over. She's an old friend as we met in Shanghai, travelled here on the same plane, and since then she presented me with a nice reddish-brown silk frock from a large bundle of clothes she brought from America to hand over to any waifs and strays still short of clothes! She's on the staff of the girls' school. I was very interested in the dormitories, bathrooms, and kitchens and tried to take an intelligent interest in the different ways of planning the heating of the k'angs. (This was the first time I had seen a k'ang!) I suppose I may have to know about such things in Manchuria.....The hospital was tiny but rather well planned with men's, women's, and maternity units, and a Chinese doctor in charge. It is modern style, with beds not k'angs. However did they nurse patients on k'angs? How do you get at them?

... the other day I was talking to an American girl who is a newspaper correspondent, and who had had all sorts of adventures in occupied and free China, and has been all round the world. She asked me if I was English, and when I said no, not exactly, as I came from Northern Ireland she replied, "Well I must say you speak English remarkably well. What is your native language?" I have of course got quite accustomed to Americans assuming that we were neutral in the war, but this did stagger me.

... in bed with a nasty cold... the Australians have sat on me to keep me in bed. One is a very keen nurse and if I don't watch out I'll be having bed-baths and enemas and dear knows what. Mrs. Babos has been in. On seeing photos of you and Dad on the dressing table, she said "It's so nice to see you all back again." Their plans are still uncertain.....

Agatha

Letter No. 145 8th December 1946 College of Chinese Studies, Peiping.

Dear Mother,

... We have heard that Mr. Findlay and McCreery etc have reached Tientsin and plan to go to Moukden on Tuesday. Mr. Babos is going to Tientsin to see them today especially to discuss finance with Mr. Fleming. He (Mr. Babos) has not been at all well... Mrs. Babos too is not well, very white and depressed... they may go to America where he has hopes of a job in connection with the Hungarian church there.... News of conditions in Hungary is very depressing...

Winter has really set in. When I was out this morning I got into difficulties for having blown a nose made runny by the wind. I put the hanky back in my pocket and found, when I needed it next time, that it was an icy mass. ... By the way, do not be worried by my going to Moukden by train. The trains are heated. Some more Danes arrived the other day after a "luxurious" journey.

We had an unusually interesting trip yesterday afternoon. We went first, by lorry, to the Russian mission, which is a large compound tucked into the NE corner of the city so that it is bounded on two sides by the city wall. It first arose in the 17th. century when a band of captured Cossacks were settled there and told to behave themselves, and I think the first Russian priests were sent to look after them spiritually.

For a time the mission grew very rich and prosperous, with orphanage, printing press, farming, schools, etc. Now it is very poor, and presumably without any financial resources outside Peking. We were shown round by an old priest with long brown hair and beard, bright blue eyes and the sweetest expression you can imagine. His head would have been a not too unworthy model for an artist's painting a head of Christ although he had more nits in his hair than any human being I have ever met. He was bundled up in layers of shabby, greasy old black robes, with a massive silver chain and crucifix around his neck, and a rosary in his hand. He talked a little English in a slow, courtly, way, and charmed us all by firmly snubbing Dr. Goodrich on various historical points - beaming and chuckling when he felt he had scored a point. Dr. Godrich, who is a nice man, enjoyed himself immensely!

The compound seems huge, and rather empty, as they have not rebuilt the buildings destroyed by the Boxers. There are three churches, one in an old Chinese building, and one built in what, I suppose, is Russian architecture. I don't remember much about the third. The Russian one was big and gay, with bright blue onion-shaped domes on the towers, and pink and white patterns on the walls. We saw one or two chapels but were not admitted to the main church, which is not used now, I think. There were elaborate and rather ghastly frescoes of the life of Christ, and a lot of little shrines with images of Christ or saints (icons, I suppose). Some of the pictures of saints had a little glass window let into the picture about half-an-inch across, and in behind was a piece of wood, or some unidentifiable object, presumably a relic. One chapel was for prayers for the dead, and had a child's coffin in it, which had been there for several years awaiting burial. Many of the crosses were this shape.



I wonder if that is peculiar to the Russian Orthodox Church. At present there are only a few Russian priests and a few nuns. Many of the people living on the compound are of mixed blood, since the Russian priests, who are allowed to marry, took Chinese wives. One saw many queer faces. At present there are about 100 Russians (refugees more or less) living in some of the buildings and paying what they can afford, and as many Chinese who pay nothing. There is a primary school of over 100 children. They are taught Russian as well as the usual subjects. Most of the compound is a waste of grass, trees and little ponds, with very little cultivation, but there is quite a good dairy farm with fine black and white cows, a few goats and pigs, and rabbits. A very nice brown-eyed woman who spoke only Russian was in charge of this, and introduced us with pride to her calves and a family of baby rabbits. They sell their dairy produce, and I would imagine that is their main source of income.

We also saw the library, not large, a little neglected and of course mostly in Russian. The corner for English books intrigued me. Many Bible commentaries, dating mostly from the latter part of the last century, some more recent SCM publications, Gray's Anatomy, the North British Review, some Victorian novelists, and so on. (While in the library, I was tickled to see our dear old man pop in behind a bookcase for a moment and blow his nose on the lining of his hat!) Later, while walking over some rough ground, he tripped and fell over, bang, on the frozen ground. He groaned loudly until we lifted him up and dusted him, then smiled sweetly and said, "There, I am careless, and now I am punished, so it is all right", and toddled on. He couldn't have hurt himself in all those clothes anyway.

After that we visited the Altar of the Earth, outside the north wall of Peking. It was bleakly impressive, but had not the beautiful buildings of the Altar of Heaven. The next port of call was a Lama temple, called the Huang Liao, also outside the city. It did not seem very different from an ordinary Buddhist temple, but there were prayer wheels, and the architecture of the central monument is that of a Tibetan stupa. The big Lama temple inside the city has a bad reputation for its discourtesy to foreigners; locking the doors behind them and making them pay heavily to get out. But the men in this temple were very friendly and courteous, pressing tea upon us and "sung-ing" us to the main door with much excitement and chatter. They have a dull life, I expect.....

Much love, Agatha

Letter No. 146 14th. December 1946. College of Chinese Studies, Peiping

Dear Mother.....

The Findlay, Fleming, McCreery party reached Tientsin last week. Mr. Babos went down to meet them, and came back with the suitcase. Everything in it is most useful.... I've got a fur hat now - white lambskin inside, light brown leather outside, pixie shape. Margaret Collins made it for Ted but he thinks it is sissie, and is buying a man's one, and I bought it from them.

At the moment we are in the throes of end-of-term activity. The students - there are twenty-odd now - are giving a party for the teachers and office staff. As none of us talk much Chinese it is going to be quite an effort. I find myself a "senior student". I have got the lovely job of "invitations and decorations" and have spent a couple of evenings happily writing Chinese invitations on red cards. Dr. Hou would curl up in horror if he could see the finished result, but they will give the teachers something to laugh at. Then Margaret Collins and I went to a temple fair, to buy the toys for the tree, and had a riotous time. This kind of thing is really not dear if one goes to the right place, and we got lovely stuffed camels and tin trains for about 10d apiece. We created quite a sensation on the street. I had a bunch of twelve long sticks with balloons on the end in one hand, and a gaudily painted sword in the other, and all the little kids ran behind, pretending they thought it was a balloon-seller. I offered to sell, of course, at fantastic prices, and my sales talk made everybody roar with laughter. They must think us absolutely and completely mad.

On Thursday I went to see Mr. Kuan again. It was partly on business as we had decided to give Dr. Goodrich a presentation, and that a picture of Mr. Kuan's would be the best thing. I'd been told they were priced at \$25,000, but found it was \$ 25 gold - about six times as much! Very embarrassing! However he said, "What about an etching?" And brought out a great drawer-full, mostly the original copper plates with only a few prints. These were only \$3 each so I breathed once more. He is to make some prints and Catherine McKenzie and I go back tomorrow morning (Sunday) to make the final choice of a pair of prints, and to have lunch with Mr. and Mrs. Kuan. He asked me if I would like to go and live with them! I would just love to, but alas it is just as far from the Language School as Miss Wood's and transport much less convenient, one has to walk most of the way.

This is Saturday, and this morning I went out to the Epidemic Prevention Bureau in the Temple of Heaven to see Dr. T'ang... I thought it might be a good plan to find out what products they could now supply (vaccines, sera, penicillin etc.) so as to give the Moukden folk the latest information. He is also such a very nice man that I wanted to make friends a little so that I can ask him for advice later on professional difficulties. He was very kind and friendly. He had met Professor Biggart once at a congress, in London I think, and knew of Sir Thomas (Huston), so we had a great chat. Then he gave me a lift back to the city by car, and on the way did a little shopping in the very Chinese streets outside the Tartar wall, where I had never been. Then I had a successful shopping bout of my own (clothes-pegs - you've no idea how hard it is to keep clean in a windy climate on five clothes-pegs), and a marvellous pair of fur gauntlets - lambskin, (like white astrakhan) inside, and brown fur outside, which I can wear over woolly gloves. They cost 10/- or £1 according to what exchange you think of but either way very cheap.

Oh I forgot to tell you, I received a summons to the GPO and went there to find - three guesses - the mosquito net!! Do you remember? It had been sent (air all the way) to Bombay, Shanghai, Chengtu, Tsinan, Peiping! \$30,000 to pay. Now that I have a perfectly

good net I don't feel it is worth that to me, and am trying to sell it for what it would take to redeem it.

Please thank Jack for getting those drugs. Excellent to have as a little personal store. One is perpetually being approached by the sick and sorry - in this hostel there has until recently been no other missionary doctor, and I've had about thirty "patients", from colds to rape. Oh that I had a stethoscope and an ear syringe and an enema syringe and about a hundred other things.....

The exchange has got the jitters again. The U.S. dollar \$5300 yesterday morning, \$6000 by evening.

Much love, Agatha

Letter No. 147 21st. December 1946. College of Chinese Studies. Peiping.

Dear Mother

... I had hoped to leave this morning (for Moukden) and set forth at the unearthly hour of five a.m. The night "boy" was to call me but I had to wake him to get me some food. That was the beginning of a chapter of accidents. His next bright move was to throw out my carefully prepared thermos of cocoa and give me lovely nourishing hot water instead. After that he was most apologetic and came up to my bedroom and fussed over me like a father especially when I had put on so many clothes that I could not do up the buttons of my padded gown, and he had to button me up "ken hsiao hai tze i yang". Then I set forth into silent dark streets to the station, and found when I got there that the train was not running today. Tomorrow "for certain". I hope so!

On the way back I had a very chatty rickshaw boy who improved the shining hour by asking for an English lesson, so we peddled along to the tune of "One, two, three, four, good morning, I have no money, thank you", which he carolled at the top of his voice.

The big excitement this week was the Christmas party for the teachers and their families. In the end it amounted to about 65 people and a powerful amount of work. It was rather hectic and confused towards the end as some of us realised, rather late in the day, that some of the people who had organised committees and assumed the responsibilities did not seem to be actually doing anything. We (Collins, Robinsons, the Australians and I) had to do two skits and had our first, and very chaotic, rehearsal the evening before the party, and the second half-an-hour before the guests arrived. Margaret C. and I (owing to a deplorable shortage of talent) had the leading parts!! Can you believe it? I hardly can. In Chinese!!! You never know what you'll find yourself doing next in this life. Margaret represented Mr. Chang the head teacher, and I Mr. Kuang, the second in command. Everyone laughed a good deal, and if it wasn't always in the right places it didn't greatly matter. Other items were carol singing by an octet, Father Christmas (Mr. Christensen) and a marvellous topical song by the "Beginners" in Chinese, The food was superb, and all the kids looked a bit dazed after it, what with the heat and their padded clothes.

Another complication this week has been that both Baboses have been in bed with bad throats, so a selection of "Aunties" has been bathing and feeding the offspring. Mr. Babos is up now, which eases the situation, but Mrs. Babos still feels groggy and looks wretched. They have decided to accept the offer of a job in America. They will live in Princeton ... Mrs. Babos got a letter from Hungary (through a friend in Switzerland) and learnt that her mother died three years ago. This upset her a lot, but I think has made it easier to decide to go to America.

Yesterday I got a letter from Tania, from Hong Kong. She has had very bad luck. The boat she was to have sailed on finally accepted only service personnel, no civilians. She is stuck for an indefinite period and finds the cost of living "tremendous". No money had been left for her there, nor her passage paid, so she has had to use almost her last in cabling to Edinburgh for help.

Last Sunday Cath. Mackenzie and I went to Mr. Kuan, the artist, for lunch. We chose two nice copper engravings of Peking for Dr. Goodrich (at least, you would have sniffed at them as dull black and white) they were lovely of their kind, and within our range. We had a very enjoyable meal - not one of those "simple meals" which embarrass one by their extravagance, just soup, rice and two vegetables, with tea to follow, but, oh so tasty. We saw large numbers of his pictures and I don't think I ever saw lovelier watercolours, so clear and fresh and vivid. Tell Jack that Mr. Kuan uses only Whatman's paper and Windsor and Newton colours (in tubes), and that he paints on dry paper. Most interesting to me was the fact that he never touches the same spot on the paper twice, as it makes the colours dull and muddy. For example, in painting a dark tree-trunk against a pale grey mountain he doesn't paint the mountain first right across the paper and then put the tree on top, but paints the mountain e.g. like this:



and then adds the tree in the white space left. He is most emphatic about this; the result, in spite of inevitable white chinks, is really wonderful, and has all the vigour of an oil painting without its heaviness. Oh dear, I do wish I had my paint-box. It just made me ache to start again.

I had an airmail letter from John Stewart (dated Oct. 8th.). He had had orders from Dr. Boyd to proceed to Peking Language School but no indication as to how to set about it, just to write to me, as I knew all the ropes! I don't know anything about how to get from India to China by sea, so I think I will wait till I get to Moukden, and concoct a letter with the help of people there. Poor lamb, he says he thinks the world is much wickeder and also more interesting than he expected. This letter is so old that I begin to wonder if there is any airmail

from India to China, and vice versa. John said he had had difficulty in getting the post office to accept a letter for China at all. Isn't that absurd?

We had a light dusting of snow the other day, but it soon blew away. This last week has been calm and sunny and very pleasant out of doors in spite of the cold air. Margaret and Ted and I went shopping in the Chinese City this morning, and had a grand time rooting about in ivory and jade and picture shops. The prices are fantastic, so we didn't actually buy anything there. At least some things are cheap, but nothing we liked.

Much love, Agatha

Letter No. 148 25th December 1946. Moukden Medical College, Small River Bank, Moukden, Manchuria.

Dear Mother,

A happy Christmas to you! I wonder what you are doing now. Still sleeping, I hope. Well, here I am, I can hardly believe it, I'd better tell you first about the journey. I set forth again on Sunday morning, 5 a.m., having rung up the station to make sure the railway was really open again, and got on to a train so warm that I was soon peeling off many layers. I went 2nd. class and had a whole double seat to myself. My nearest neighbours were three very pleasant women, not very chatty. It wasn't a very interesting journey as the windows were much too frozen over to let one see much. Between Tientsin and Tangku we passed an engine and two coaches lying tilted over on the side of the track - the cause of Saturday's delay, doubtless. Don't worry, of course the Pa Lu do their depredations at night, and passenger trains don't run then. Shan-hai-kuan was quite exciting, with fine jagged mountains coming down close to the sea, and the pale line of the Great Wall climbing the ridges. Before that we passed Peitaihe and Chingwantao - a glimpse of yellow sand hills and bright blue sea - the first sight of the sea since the last day I spent in Madras. At Shanhaikuan I got out with one of the Chinese girls, and walked up and down in the sun, and bought some pears. Most people were rushing about changing money, but I had done that in Peking. A Manchurian dollar, in Peking, had cost me eleven Chinese dollars. I did not go to the dining-car all day as the other people said the food was very poor, but got on nicely with a thermos of cocoa, bread, fruit, and little packets of black shreds which turned out to be dried beef - this bought on the train, of course.

About 6.30 a man came round, letting down the upper bunks and making up the beds (a clean sheet!) and as I was terribly sleepy I clambered up right away. Next morning I found myself nicely partitioned off with curtains - this must have been done after I was sound asleep. We stopped for the night in a siding in Chinchow, but I have only a vague recollection of the train being stationary. Oh, I should tell you the train had separate washroom and lavatory, a basin with a plug and lots of nearly boiling water. Greater luxury still was a loud-speaker which regaled one at intervals with Strauss waltzes and also (a more sensible idea) gave announcements like "In ten minutes we will reach such-and-such a place", or "The ticket inspector is coming, please be ready" and lots more I could not follow. Our trains at home might well follow this. I was disappointed not to see more of Manchuria, but the windows were covered with frost. What glimpses I got looked bleak and bare, speckled with snow. Quite large tracts seemed to be uncultivated.

We got into Moukden right on time. I hung around a few minutes, but saw no one familiar, then went outside and was fallen on by numerous cab-drivers who swore that no foreigners had been there. So, following Dr. Garven's instructions, I rattled off in a cab to the West City compound where eventually I found Dr. McMinn and Mrs. Fleming. They said Dr. Garven, Dr. Kao and Dr. Leo had all skipped church the previous day to meet the train, which never left Peking! (It could not be helped; there was not time for a wire to reach them). They sent a message to the East Suburb folk, and meanwhile I settled down with them for lunch. Dr. McMinn is not very well, had had a bad cold and so had not been allowed to go to Kai Yuan for Christmas. The Findlays and Mr. Fleming were away Later Tom Blakely, Jack Weir, and McCreery came in for a little. Jack did not look well. He evidently worries them by being very independent, e.g. has not enough clothes but refuses to borrow, goes round in cotton socks, etc.. They are doing their best to look after him.

After a while the hospital car arrived (think of the glory of riding in a car!) with Dr. Leo, Dr. Kao and Dr. Garven. Poor things, they had to spend a lot of time on meeting me. (Oh, by the way, McCreery was at the station on Monday to meet me, in case I turned up, but he waited at the first-class exit and I missed him) Dr. Leo was so nice - said he wanted to be the first to meet me, because Dad had baptized him. We dropped Drs. Leo and Kao, on the way, as they had a meeting, and came on here. Miss Maclean and Drs. Garven and Leggate are here in Dr. Christie's old house. It is perfectly comfortable - heating mornings and evenings and very good food, but of course that may be partly Christmas. We did not do much that evening but eat and talk. There just isn't time These folk must have had a great welcome. Over a hundred people on the platform to meet the train and then a welcome feast. And what do you think it was like? Not an extravagant repast for the select few, but everyone there - doctors, nurses, lab boys, coolies; and everybody got a bowl of mien, and two mien pao and that was that! Wasn't that inspired? And could it have happened in any other type of institution?

Yesterday Dr. Garven spent the whole morning taking me round the College. I must say I was agreeably surprised. Of course it is cold, bleak, dirty and untidy, but the essentials are intact - good light classrooms and labs., with a fair number of desks etc., some hundreds of path specimens and with numbered records for at least most of them, and a certain amount of glassware, reagents, a microtome, etc. There is nothing to prevent it being a first-class department (except me!!). The staff problem at the moment is acute. No biopsy work is being done now as the Dr. Hsiang, who has been in charge of both Path and Bact., has taken another full-time job for the winter vacation and left them high and dry. He is much more interested in Bact and if he returns will certainly not mind dropping Path. Dr. Garven is quite certain I must go on at the Language School till April. He will give the Path lectures this year if necessary as he has done so before. It is another burden for him but can't be helped. If I am able to help with biopsy work practical classes and perhaps one lecture a week by next summer I shall be doing well.

Of course, I haven't had time to digest things yet, but I do feel extremely happy and contented about it all (although I can't quite believe I shall ever be able to lecture in Chinese!) There is such a different feeling in the air from the atmosphere of Hwa Hsi Pa, with its treacherous undercurrents. I will not be dependent, for peace of mind, on the kindness of one individual, as I was there with Dr. Hou.

In the afternoon Miss Maclean took me to the Kun Kuang Christmas entertainment. As I had been cold in the morning I changed, after lunch, into my slacks, and with my big coat on top felt ready for anything. We were hardly out of the gate when Miss Maclean stopped short, stared, and said "YOU'VE GOT TROUSERS ON!". I was flabbergasted but she wouldn't let me go back and change, saying that

the girls would be tickled to death, I would be the best part of the entertainment, and assured me no one would be shocked, only amused. It was such a surprise to me as nearly everyone on the campus in Chengtu wore slacks, Chinese and foreigners, and of course most of us wear them everyday in the Language School. They are much the most practical garb in this winter climate, and anyway I can't wear my green skirt all day, every day. The entertainment was a great success, although apparently not up to pre-war standards. However, as all the 260 girls are new this term it wasn't a bad effort.....

A.

Letter No. 149 31st.December 1946. Moukden Medical College.

Dear Mother

... Christmas Day was very full. First a specially nice breakfast with egg and sausage, and presents - soap and cold cream from Nell, a calendar from Dr. Garven, and a bag of acid drops from Dr. Leggate! Then we three medicals went all over the men's and women's hospitals saying "Happy Christmas" to everybody. The wards looked nice with a brave show of decorations, and all the beds had new UNRRA bedcovers with hospital monogram in red in the centre, so it looked very festive. The hospital bedding is falling to pieces with age, the garments have completely worn out so that the patients wear their own clothes. We found Dr. Leo Tung lun hard at it preaching in his ward, and one or two other doctors and the hospital evangelists were at it too. We also went to the hospital Christmas entertainment that went with a terrific swing. Dr. Gao in his speech said it was the first time they had met in freedom for many years and there was a very cheerful atmosphere and a terrific fug. I was introduced, and made my bow. I get mixed up in the days, so I think this must have been on Christmas Eve, for on Christmas Day we went to the Blind School entertainment. It was touching to watch the immense enthusiasm of the girls. Most of the items were little plays and sketches, but the language was beyond me. On Boxing Day Dr. Leo and Dr. Gao - and their wives were in for supper. Dr. Leo is a great talker, and Dr. Gao when once started can tell funny stories all night. We played hilarious games, and even the t'ai-t'ais fairly let themselves go. The racket was terrific. I don't suppose they had had many parties of late years; anyway they stayed from six till ten-thirty and departed most reluctantly.

We have had other parties too; one for the chief women doctors, and three of the men doctors who came for lunch today, so you see it has been a regular social whirl. During the day I have been pottering in the College quite a lot, looking over the books, and teaching material, and the museum etc. The staff situation is becoming clearer to me and boils down to this: Dr. Hsiang of Bacteriology has been in charge of Pathology too. He is evidently not very satisfactory and in any case has plenty to do in his own department... Dr. Pai, the pathologist, has gone off with the communists so "further outlook" in that direction very unsettled. There are no technicians. There is a lab cleaner (Lao Pai) who seems a decent soul!. The class this year numbers fifty-seven! What will probably happen is that Dr. Garven (or ?? Dr. Hsiang) will take the lectures, and when I come I'll help with practical classes and in restarting the surgical biopsy service. There is talk of getting a Middle School "graduate" in to train as a technician. This (training of technicians) is a first priority job, as one cannot run a good lab without them. At the moment the College is closed until February. I will not be back until April and when I come things will inevitably have shaken down to some extent. Dr. Garven is primarily a histologist, but has some experience of both, and has given the Path lectures before. I suspect that he knows much more

Path than he will admit, so he will be a great standby. I don't know where I shall live when I come back... Nell and Agnes Gardiner may share a house, and perhaps I shall live with them.....

Last night I went to Dr. Gao's house for supper. No one else was there, just his family, which was nice. We had a lovely meal - steamed chiao tze (dumplings) and several kinds of vegetables, and afterwards very special and delicious tea. I was shown all the family photos, books and books of them, wedding groups and photos of the graduating class in College, all done up in mortar-boards and staring hypnotically into the eye of the camera. Afterwards we played games, and Dr. Gao did some very skilful conjuring. Altogether a most diverting evening.

1 Jan. 1947 Happy New Year! Tomorrow we all four go over to West Moukden for two days of meetings. I'm not sure if it's "Council" or what, but since it is a mixture of Scotch and Irish it's a joint council meeting. Then on Sat. 4th;. I leave for Peking and start classes on Monday.

Much love to you and to the Roywood family, and a happy new year to Margaret Alcorn.

Agatha

Letter No. 150 10 January 1947 College of Chinese Studies, Peiping

Dear Mother,

First I will get a bit of bad news off my chest, bad news for Manchuria. Pastor Liu Hua-i of East Moukden, and recently appointed secretary of the whole church, and Mr. Ma Ching-hsuan, Principal of the Theological College in Moukden, have been killed in an air crash while on their way back to Moukden from the National Christian Council meetings. We have just heard here, and letters from Moukden may take longer, so it might be a good plan to let R.H. Boyd know. I haven't met either of them, but heard a lot about both while in Moukden, and they were evidently very fine men, and the whole church was depending tremendously on both of them. It is a major disaster. There has been a tragic series of air accidents recently - three planes crashed on Christmas Day, and now this one. All passenger services have been suspended for a week for an investigation. I'm so glad the Collins have got to Tsinan safely. Well, I'll turn to more cheerful subjects...

.... a wonderful batch of mailthe Irish grant to M.M.C. is £1000 a year plus me! Is Quink concentrated powdered ink? No, tiny bottles of very thick ink to be diluted. Advise anyone coming to bring several bottles, local ink is bad or frightfully dear. You comment on the story of the priests who burnt their oppressors; the outcome was that most were acquitted and went back to the monastery, four received sentences of imprisonment, varying up to, I think, twelve years.....

I must take up the Moukden tale... The days there simply flew.. For the last two days we (Nell, Dr. Leggate, Dr. Garven and I) went over to West Moukden for the conference. It was rather wonderful to have twelve people there, when a month ago there was only Dr. McMinn and Jack Weir.... part of the time different people were reporting on various aspects, e.g. Mr. Findlay on the Theological College, Dr. Garven on the Medical College, etc.. Various people (foreign missionaries) had already been to Kirin, Kaiyuan, Tieling, and Liaoyang, so there were first-hand impressions of them too... a few things that struck me: The truly awful state of poor country churches. The Church in the outlying parts is

literally being starved to death, for the pastors and evangelists have not got enough money to keep warm and fed. Half the pastors, and more than half the evangelists have resigned, those remaining eke out with hens, etc.. The economic burden is still increasing. The problems connected with property are simply bewildering, and that situation too is deteriorating. The future position of missionaries is very intriguing, to say the least of it. There has been as yet no invitation for foreign representatives on the Policy Committee, although there is, of course, no shadow of doubt that there will be representation, and that the church is extremely friendly and eager for cooperation. But it just hasn't got itself sorted out yet. Committees have been set up - one for Evangelism, one for education, and a medical board to control the hospitals and allocate funds and personnel, Chinese and foreign, but the first two have not met at all yet, mainly owing to the fact that the key men were away in Nanking. Now, alas, two of them will not be back. The medical board has met, and has asked urgently for Dr. McNair, Dr. Hugh Taylor, and Miss Judy Grieve. This is just a beginning, as they will almost certainly want a lot more doctors and nurses. But the situation is still very woolly and undecided. At these meetings we kept discussing and deciding what ought to be done about this or that, and repeatedly someone would say, "But we can't decide this sort of thing, can we even suggest, or shall we just wait and see what the Policy Committee does?" It struck me over and over again how desperately anxious every one of these people was to help the church, to give and serve and encourage and be loyal to it, with complete disregard of their own preferences or prestige or "what we always did before". They will need all their patience, for it is a frightfully complicated situation, and every day brings fresh problems. For example, (just a small point) in the old days the foreigners used the hospital car a lot. Now, after much discussion and cogitation, they go by carriage, a cold and expensive business, while Dr. Liu and Dr. Gao use the car. This is probably perfectly right, they are the heads of College and Hospital respectively, but how easy it would have been for Dr. Garven and Co. to assume that the old situation had returned, and to order the car when they needed it. Now it is occasionally offered, and gladly accepted. This is a tiny thing, and causes no heart burning whatever, but it is the tiny things, which can cause friction if they go wrong.

By the way, Dr. Liu t'ung lun has evidently done a really magnificent job in holding the Moukden hospital together so well, and taking all the other mission hospitals under his wing as far as was humanly possible. I suppose it is conceivable that if you and Dad had done nothing else in all your years in China but help him to be what he is, it would have been worthwhile. And Dr. Gao is a grand man too, he will be easy to work under, and feel loyal to. That is if he remains where he is, but he is tired and hints resignation when he can be spared. Please keep all I have said private (except Dor if she's interested)..... I found the Irish trio (Tom Blakely, Jack Weir, Marshall McCreery) a varied and diverting spectacle, and extremely nice...Tom Blakely (Policy Committee agreeable) may go soon to Kirin, while Marshall is champing to get to Yiingko (Newchuang). Dr. McMinn will probably move out to Kaiyuan soon.

The journey back was not so luxurious as the journey to Moukden... the Friday train did not arrive, so there was a great rush on Saturday and although John Fleming sent someone at 8 a.m. to queue he could only get me a first-class ticket. (Do not gasp too much - they would not let me pay board at the College, so as I had vacated my room here the whole trip to Moukden cost me about two pounds, well spent, I feel). Marshall was appointed travel agent, so I had the unusual luxury of someone to see me off, at 2 p.m. Alas the Saturday train, due 11.15 a.m., had not even arrived then so we went back to the house and returned to the station about 4.30. The train soon came in, but I wasn't allowed on for some time as the first class carriage was being repaired! Eventually I got into the dining car together with other first-class passengers who all seemed to be Army officers or prosperous businessmen in vast fur collars. A nice man next to me turned out to be some sort of government official in Moukden,

and he invited me to visit him and his wife when I got back. Later the lights in the carriage were fixed so that we were able to settle in. The train left about 7 p.m. and only toddled slowly along to Huang-kun where we stopped for the night. I was in a 4-berth coupé. The others were two soldiers and a civilian. All were very friendly, but not very chatty. My Chinese is too scanty for me to be easy to talk to unless people are very keen to do so. There was still no heat, so I rolled up well in my rug and a railway blanket, which smelled very strongly of bad fish. In the middle of the night the heat came on with a vengeance, and we all woke up gasping, and stripped off numerous layers. One soldier threw open the window which immediately froze so that after that whatever else we lacked it wasn't fresh air! (No, I did not catch cold, thank you).

Next morning there was no water, but I trusted to the Chinese passion for face washing and sure enough they kicked up such a row that eventually a very small bucket of very cold water appeared and we all dipped our face rags in it and had a wipe over. I had a great stack of sandwiches from Pearl Fleming, and Jane Austen's "Northanger Abbey", so the day passed peacefully. It was dull and a little misty, so there wasn't much to see outside. We were very late of course, and only reached T'ang Shan about 8 p.m.. They don't usually move at night, especially on this part of the line, but we went on slowly and with frequent pauses. When we stopped people would wake up and become very chatty, but about all I gathered was "Pa lu Chun" over and over again. (They still call the communists the Eighth Route Army). It was just like people at home swapping bomb stories. Instead of an exciting crisis I must admit that I went sound asleep in the middle of this. Later in the night I was wakened by a tremendous crash, and the man in the bunk above yelled at the top of his voice " Pa lu chun lai la". However, it turned out that the crash was him dropping his tea tumbler, and the yell was just his little joke! So I still haven't seen a real communist. After another good sleep I woke in Tientsin, and from there it is only two and a half hours to Peking.

I got to the Language School about 9.30 a.m., to find that Mrs. Christensen, bless her, had laid out supper for me in my room in case I should turn up in the night.

No more now, much love, Agatha

Letter No. 151 18 January 1947 College of Chinese Studies, Peiping

Dear Mother,

... The main piece of news this week is the arrival of Dr. Fenn and his wife and two lanky sons. He seems a very nice, quiet, unobtrusive man, a contrast to the last gentleman who was, by all accounts, volcanic in temperament. I saw Dr. Fenn yesterday, and he agreed that I may enter for what is more or less the equivalent of the first year exam before leaving here..... However another point has come up which rather throws things into the melting pot, namely a terrific rise in fees. They are now up to \$100,000 instead of \$60,000... but from the beginning of March they soar to \$200 US (American dollars) for a 4-month term. Even if I am allowed to pay one quarter and leave after the end of March, it is terrific. Another snag is that I get my sterling cashed at the official rate - about \$13,000 to £1 - but if I pay for tuition in \$ US I will have to buy them on the street at about \$6600 CN (China National) to \$1 (US), a terrific loss. I don't suppose it would be possible for the WMA to pay direct to the central body in the USA owing to the restrictions on export of sterling. On the other hand, I won't have time to complete the necessary language course for the exam before the end of March.

However, this links on to another piece of news, namely that Harry Johnstone is due here any day, so I'll consult him as to how much I should spend and how exactly to get ahold of it. Dr. Fenn is very friendly, and willing to be helpful, so I'm sure we'll sort it out somehow. Actually, Harry Johnstone was due here on the Lutheran plane from Shanghai today, but it has had its own troubles. It arrived here on Thursday, and had to make a forced landing at the wrong airfield, having previously jettisoned most of the passengers' luggage. A mercy that didn't happen to me, as at least these people have their heavy boxes still safe in Shanghai. One poor Swedish girl arrived with only a small handcase. People have given her quite a lot, but I could really only lend oddments. Another man looks very natty in Mr. Babos' Sunday suit! So the Lutheran plane is still here, being repaired and has then to go back to Shanghai. Mr. Johnstone and Mr. Rasmussen should be on it next time.

The other day I did an awful thing. Do tell me if it was wicked or not. I found the two classic bird books relating to North China and Manchuria in a second-hand bookshop, and bought them after much swithering and bargaining, for the equivalent of £2.10.0. I might never have such a chance again, and alternately gloat, and rebuke myself. But one does need a hobby and birds are mine. If only, if only I had a pair of field glasses I would be set up for life. I have argued it out that this will, as it were, balance all of my own savings that you have spent for me on clothes, that I could have replaced here out of salary; I think this is my first purely selfish expenditure in China, but it's a bad habit to start!!

This week I was at a wedding! Two Friends' Ambulance people staying in the hostel were obviously good friends, but we weren't quite prepared for them to walk up to our table one tea-time and say "You may have heard rumours. We would like to confirm them, and invite you to the wedding on the day after tomorrow". They were married in one of the houses in this compound, where some YMCA language students live (three couples and a single man). A Quaker wedding is rather dignified and simple. A minister prayed a little prayer at the beginning, and then the bridegroom and bride said in turn the part about "in sickness and in health" etc. etc., without any leading from the minister, and then coped with the ring all by themselves too. Then the minister came forward to them, and pronounced them man and wife, followed by quite a long period of silence.

The other day I went over to the LMS prayer meeting. (More as an olive branch than anything else.) I stayed the night, as it is so awkward to get home as late as that. Miss Wood was very affectionate, kissed me well, night and morning, and listened patiently to long-winded blethers about Moukden. So I am evidently forgiven, and feel better about it. There is a new LMS missionary living there now and coming daily to the Language School. When I asked Miss Wood long ago whether Joyce Lovell would live with her and travel to and fro she answered tartly "Of course". Joyce is beginning to envy me my freedom to decide for myself, as she also is finding it very tiring. Bus fares have just doubled, and she has a game leg so that she walks slowly. She uses my room at midday, and eats a sandwich lunch there.....

The fire-crackers are popping off constantly all round, but not as badly as last Tuesday when the ceremony of sending the kitchen god up to heaven produced a fusillade lasting late into the night.

Much love. Take care! Agatha

Dear Mother,

Your letter written on Boxing Day came today... this is the first British mail since about Christmas-time.

... broke my wonderful record, and got a nasty cold and cough... Mrs. Babos insisted on rubbing my chest with a violent red mixture and then swathing me in flannel, while in the eating line the most exciting offering was a glass of yellow wine made by Trappist monks in a monastery in the Western Hills.....

Mr. Johnstone and Mr. Rasmussen are, so far as we know, still stuck in Shanghai. The Lutheran plane has had to have its whole engine taken out. The Lutherans also possess an aged plane, which could not fly, but had a passable engine, so they are going to put it in instead. The snow delayed things too, for the pilot could not get back to Shanghai to collect the engine and bring it here until two days ago, and now they are busy working on it. The plane then goes first to T'ai Yuan in Shansi and then to Shanghai. The sad part is that there seems no hope now that Harry Johnstone will be in Moukden in time for the Li Shih Hui (Policy Committee), which starts next Tuesday.

Jack Weir turned up here two days ago for his two-week-so-called holiday ... to stay with some YMCA language students whom he knew in Szechuan...

The Australians and I went ... to see the Confucian Temple and the Hall of Classics.... I wish I could describe that temple as we saw it yesterday in the snow. No one else was there, so the great stretches of snow in the courtyards were unblemished. The sun came out for the first time for a week, and the colours simply glittered. The roofs are tiled in Imperial yellow, and the woodwork is in intricate patterns of blue and green and gold under the eaves. It is all beautifully empty and spacious and dignified, with none of the monster images that make one ill at ease in a Buddhist temple, however beautiful. A man appeared who let us into the main hall, which is gorgeous in red and gold. There are huge pillars of teak, brought all the way from Burma. In the centre is the tablet to Confucius, quite small and unpretentious with just his name on it, and on each side of the hall are those of his four main disciples. There are some ancient musical instruments kept there, which are played at festival times. Made out the date on one lute (?), which was over 300 years old. One instrument is a great frame from which are suspended pieces of stone this shape:



and when struck they give out a clear tone. They are arranged on a scale, but not our major scale, although near to it. Another frame has one similar block of jade hung from it, which gave a lovely clear tone. The man who let us in played them for us.

I have just been talking to a poor old dear, a retired missionary who is temporarily stranded here on the way home - to America. She looks rather dull, but I discovered 1) that she is one quarter Red Indian, 2) that she had "buried two husbands", and had fourteen great-grand-children, and 3) that she first came to China as a missionary at the age of forty six. She is now suffering from the very trying combination of tapeworms and lumbago.

Rumour hath it that board is to be considerably raised too at the end of this month!! I think the sooner I get to Moukden for good, the better!

Much love as ever, Agatha

Letter No. 153 1st. February 1947 College of Chinese Studies, Peiping.

Dear Mother.....

... Don't worry about all these money complications. It's just one of the inevitable snags of living in China, and everyone knows it is so difficult that when one gets into a mess it doesn't really carry the implications it would at home, since everyone knows they may be in an even worse mess tomorrow. After all, it's not everyone who can say they are over two million dollars in debt, as I am at the moment - what would Dad say? Since the returned cheque was given me by Mr. Gould of CIM I have written to Mr. Lambert of the CIM in Tientsin who has helped so many of our people, and I will send the letter by hand with a Danish missionary who is hoping to go to Tientsin. (The railway line is not in working order today, but will be soon, I'm sure). This is better, I think, than trying to contact Harry Johnstone, as I don't know whether he is in Shanghai, or stuck on a boat trying to get to Tientsin, or even (just possibly) is already in Moukden. The Taku harbour (Tientsin) is ice-bound, and the boat, which was due there last week and was to have taken the Christensens could not get in, and went back to Chingtao. It's certainly a very awkward country to get about in at the moment.

The Baboses were almost in despair at this last jump in prices. Mr. B. was so exasperated and angry that one could hardly talk to him, and poor Mrs. B. retired to bed again, looking utterly wretched. But just yesterday they heard of two empty rooms at the American Presbyterian Mission, which they may occupy, rent-free and they are moving there the day after tomorrow. There are five beds, bedding, and one chair! They may have to buy a stove, but even so it will probably work out vastly cheaper, so they are looking hopeful once more.

We have been having some cold weather. One night there was 44 degrees of frost, i.e. minus 12 Fahr.

I realised yesterday that my worldly goods have now swelled to such proportions that they will no longer fit into my two suitcases and zip bag, so when I do move north I will have to plan something more. After much cogitation I have gone Chinese, ... and have bought enough tough blue cotton cloth to make up a fine big bundle. So by the time I get to Moukden my luggage will have quite a local flavour. I wonder if, by the time I get home, you will want to own me. All bundles and parcels and baskets and battered cases, tenderly tied together with old pieces of rope! One advantage is that nothing looks worth pinching, and I can certainly say I have never yet had anything stolen.

Yesterday I went to the PUMC library. It seems so silly not to have been there before, but having heard that PUMC was completely defunct I did not realise that the library still lurked behind the rows of parked jeeps, and labels of EXECUTIVE HEADQUARTERS and sentries, etc.. It is a wonderful place, and I was shown round by such a nice friendly little man who has been there for twenty years, including the whole time the Japanese were there. Did you hear of the Rockefeller additional endowment of 10 million US dollars to restart PUMC? You will have heard the Americans are retiring

from executive headquarters. That means the abandonment of their function as mediator in China's internal affairs. It's hard to guess what actual difference it will make to the condition of the country.

Much love to you and the Roywood four. Agatha

Letter No. 154 9th. February 1947. College of Chinese Studies, Peiping.

Dear Mother,

... a letter from Dr. Garven, saying that another meeting of council had met and it had decided, during the course of it, that I leave here at the end of February, not March, in view of the greatly increased costs.... This letter crossed one that I sent to Tom Blakely with Jack Weir, in which I said that unless I get definite orders to the contrary I would leave here at the end of February. So great minds think alike again! This letter to Tom gave him a detailed account of my financial troubles, and asked him if possible to send me by hand about \$360 US (about £100 !) to repay my debt to the American Board Mission, my bill here for February, and my ticket to Moukden. I have had a nice letter from Mr. Lambert of CIM Tientsin, and have sent the wretched £100 draft to him (also by hand) to see if he can change it for me in the open market. If not, I shall hang on to it until after the next jump in the official rate of exchange, at the moment the relative difference between the two rates is even larger than usual, and there is a rumour that the official rate will be adjusted again next month. If I leave here before Tom is able to send me the cash, Miss Wood has promised to lend me enough for board, tuition and ticket, and Mr. Strong of the American Board says he will wait until the money comes from Moukden. One of my Australian friends here will receive the money from Moukden and repay Mr. Strong and Miss Wood, and she can then (I hope) get the surplus down to Tientsin for Mr. Lambert who can change it to \$ CN and lodge it in my Hong Kong and Shanghai bank account there.

This seems the best plan. If the money from Moukden comes before I leave, I can of course take any surplus back with me, which is easier still. I just hope Tom can spare me this amount. I am not counting on anything direct from home although I wrote home early in January asking for £40 to be sent to Tientsin, or more if my China account had been negotiated before then. But I have had no word yet and as posts are much slower and less regular than before there will probably not be time for any to come direct from home before I leave here.

I got a letter from Agnes Gardiner from Tientain, and Mr. Lambert's letter mentioned that they had left for Moukden on February 4th.. Mr. Lambert also says that they expect Mr. Harry Johnstone soon. That must mean that he has decided to go by sea. No wonder - the latest word is that all passenger planes are grounded for a month. It's not easy even by sea. Miss G's boat was stopped twice by ice. Another party had a terrible time. They disembarked into a small launch and it was frozen in. They drifted helplessly for 24 hours before they got free. One family with three children had only one travelling rug between them and were really afraid they would die of cold. Of course they had no food. Several missionaries have come from Shanghai to Tientsin as deck passengers! In this weather!!...Dr. Garven says he has already booked a language teacher in Moukden (a Mr. Chang Meng Chui) for me. I'm to have two hours a day, and when I complete the first year course, Mr. Findlay will examine me (wow!). I'm not to start work in the College till I get that exam.. He says we will be very squashed until the heating is turned off which sounds as though Agnes and Hessie will also be in that house. Perhaps it is lucky I bought the lilo mattress. Incidentally, the lilo has been very useful, if not to me, to an old

lady who is now in hospital with sciatica. She won't like it at all if I go and snatch it from under her at the end of the month, but perhaps it will stimulate her recovery.

I suppose I should be working like mad these days, but - alas the time goes like wildfire. Yesterday for example. A lovely long free Saturday with nothing to do. Well, after breakfast I did the week's washing and then sallied forth into the town. A visit to the post-office, a chase round for cheap notepaper, and a visit to the hospital to see the old dame on the lilo. After three-quarters of an hour hard talk (by her) I wriggle away with difficulty and walk for half an hour to get to the Babos' new house. They have taken half a house in a small courtyard belonging to a Swedish Mission, but alas it is not very satisfactory. They found it very dirty, and on the first evening the stove had not been yet fitted up. The Swedish lady next door took in Mrs. Babos and Enike, aged three (? two), while Mr. Babos and the two boys slept in the cold house. They had all their clothes on - fur coats, hats, gloves etc. - and twenty army blankets, and were perished. They have five beds, but no cupboards or wardrobes, a table and a few stools and chairs; but they can't really unpack so it is rather hugger-mugger. The stoves, however, are the great blot on the landscape. They cook on one, in one of the tiny bedrooms, and have the other in a big glass fronted veranda, which forms the sitting room. Unless someone gets up twice in the night to attend to the stove it goes out, and then takes anything up to three hours to get going, and meanwhile the house is thick with smoke.

In any case, all water has to be heated on top of one or other stove (all cooking too, of course) and this may take up to two and a half hours for a big kettle-full. This, combined with all the smoke and smuts, makes it really impossible to keep the children and the clothes clean. Luckily Marisko is better, or says she is but she looks tired. Mr. Babos isn't teaching now, as new folk have come back to the American Mission compound, but it's just as well when he has the stove to cope with! They still haven't received the affidavit, which they need before they can get American visas, and can only hang on and wait. Mr. B. says sometimes that he wonders if he shouldn't go back to Manchuria instead - but under whose auspices?!

Well, we had a very nice lunch, which I helped to cook hard-boiled eggs, potatoes with butter, and some tinned meat and prunes to follow. There weren't enough cups or plates to go round, but with the help of a tooth-glass and thermos-top we did well. The children, who had been shovelling snow in the sunny courtyard outside, shovelled in the food with equal vigour, and there was none of the wailing and coaxing and final tears, which were an almost daily occurrence at the Language School. The present ménage, even if they are grubby, is healthier and more natural for them.

After this I headed back towards the Language School, and passed the bird market on the way. I hate the sight of wild birds in cages, but can't resist the opportunity it gives for a close look at them, and for learning their Chinese names. The old men who sell them must think I'm crazy. I go and stare at every bird, and ask questions, and then invariably walk off without even pricing them.

Having arrived back I did my ironing and had some tea, and then darned and mended for the week. You will be pleased to hear I have now acquired some useful clothes. Kate Makenzie gave me her Red Cross uniform which is fine wool tweed, and just a bit too long in sleeves and skirt. It is a dark greenish khaki, one of the less objectionable shades, and really too dark to dye anything but dark navy or black so I'm going to leave it as it is. I've taken off all the military-looking shoulder straps, pockets etc., and with much brushing, and damping and ironing it is beginning to look like an ordinary coat and skirt. Then I was given a lovely brown thick wool dressing gown, which was given to the Swedish girls here who lost their luggage out of the plane (it had come from America with relief clothing). It was

much too small for any of them, but perfect for me. I don't think it is unfair to accept things like this one really needs, do you? I try to even up by giving away what I can spare, and also medical attention and medicines.

There have been wonderful changes here since the beginning of the month. I'm not sure whether it's directly the fruit of Dr. Fenn's arrival, or because we have now acquired a "Lady Hostess", we would call her a lady housekeeper. A week or so after the Fenns came, we had about a dozen people down with tummy trouble, and when I spoke to Dr. Fenn about various things in the kitchen which might be at the root of it he asked me to accompany him on a round of inspection. This was very funny as of course I'm not exactly a public health expert. However, we sniffed round all the larders and since then the cook has given me a very respectful bob when I go timidly in search of a little K'ai Shui. The cook evidently felt his "face" was at stake so asked for a larger allowance and he would show us what he could do! The result leaves us gasping. Fruit of some kind every day - we have never had any before since I came - butter, we had only had greasy white slabs which optimists called lard and pessimists tallow. And the food now arrives on the table in large dishes from which we help ourselves, instead of individual helpings on cold plates. Today for lunch: soup, chicken and rice, and ice cream! Chinese food twice a week! (Never had any before). Proper curtains are rumoured too. Up till now I have had to pin up a towel before undressing as I directly face the other hostel where the WAACs live. So, life is exciting.

Much love, Agatha

Letter No. 155 16 February 1947 College of Chinese Studies, Peiping

Dear Mother

... Mr. Lambert has taken over the responsibility for that cheque, and as it was a little queer-looking and hard to sell with all its endorsements, he issued a new one to me instead and has already sold it for me at \$3.40 US something to the Pound. I am waiting daily for him to send the money up from Tientsin by hand, at my risk of course, and I have written to Tom Blakely not to send any from Moukden as this will be enough. It is risky to carry money now, as there are so many armed robberies, so I didn't want £100-worth to have a double journey for nothing.

...My dear family, how am I to work at all when a packet of papers or a book turns up nearly every day? I arrived last summer in Shanghai with a Bible and one Penguin, and now I have a library of 25 books!

I skipped church this morning and went to see the Kuans instead... It's a lovely day with bright blue sky and a sun warm enough to melt some of the snow and ice on the roads, so that everything is slippery and squelchy. There are stalls all along the roadsides, mostly selling sweets or fruit - persimmons positively liquifying with ripeness, and little hard pears. This is also the kite-flying season. They are nearly all of a conventionalised butterfly shape; this is very large, up to three feet across. Those in Chengtu were much more varied in design, and often immense things. Mr. Kuan was out so I had an hour tete a tete with Mrs. Kuan. She is very shy, but comes out of her shell much more when he is not there, so it wasn't too bad.. Her home is in Kirin, but she has friends, and Mr. Kuan has a sister, in Moukden, and she has promised to give me their names and addresses. Mr. Kuan had a picture on his

wall, a really brilliant portrait of his old mother.... There was character and dignity in every wrinkle and such bright eyes under the drooping lids. A formidable old lady.

The other day I was invited out to tea by a Miss Studdely who knows Dor.... She's head of a Bible-woman's Training school, is an American, tall and big in build and very charming and nice. She was very keen to know how Dor was after internment.

Much Love, Agatha

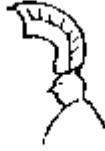
Letter No. 156 22 February 1947 College of Chinese Studies, Peiping.

Dear Mother.

..... I told you I was at the Kuans on Sunday, but missed seeing Mr. Kuan. Well, on Monday he turned up having come all the way on his bike to say he was sorry to have missed me, and to give me "a small souvenir" of Peiping - one of his own water-colours! I was simply flabbergasted. It is simply lovely, a view from the Coal Hill with very characteristic glimpses of the Pei Hai and lovely buildings and further off the city wall and the Western Hills.. Then on Monday I received the \$ US from Mr. Lambert and rushed off joyfully to pay my debt to the American Board Mission.

On Thursday we had a half-holiday to go to the Lama Temple to watch the devil dancing which takes place on this particular day. The big courtyard in the Temple was crammed with people, and the Australians and I climbed up on a raised dais round a flagpole to get a good view. We waited about one and a half hours (toes getting steadily colder as the snow and ice under our feet made their presence felt) but it didn't seem long as there was so much to see. There were Lama priests scurrying about here and there, and no two seemed to have the same costume. The most venerable-looking were in yellow and scarlet, and one had also blue sleeves. Think of that, against white snow, with blue sky above and bright sunshine! The junior priests went in more for shades of russet and maroon, all were very colourful. They all carried their beads we also saw two Mongolian women who came and stared at us with as much interest as we at them. Their hair was in two heavy braids hanging forward on each side of the face, and massively decorated with silver and red coral ornaments.

After this long wait, the great central gate into the next court was opened, and some police squeezed through and began to try to clear a space in the crowd. The "devil-dancers" followed, carrying their masks in their hands. There were about fifteen of them. The masks were very gay and grotesque, and about two to three feet high. One had long antlers like a reindeer, another had horns like a bull, and others were vaguely human. The police and some soldiers took off their leather belts and began to lash about to try to force the crowd back enough to give them a chance to dance, but it was really hopeless and every few feet of space gained was immediately swamped when they turned their backs. I only saw one dancer bobbing up and down and twirling on his heel for a few minutes. There were drums and other musical instruments also somewhere buried in the crowd. Two of the Lama attendants had wonderful hats, which stood up, above the level of the crowd. They were this shape, and a brilliant glistening yellow colour, which really looked wonderful.



The dancers and attendant musicians etc. eventually fought their way out through the outer door of this courtyard, and most of the crowd surged after them. We took the chance to run in the opposite direction, but found the doors to the inner courtyards barred. However, one opened to let a priest through, and we were swept in on the crest of a wave of excited would-be sightseers, while more police fought to get the door shut on us. We had a rather hasty tour round the inner parts of the temple (being by this time thinking longingly of our tea), and saw the 75 foot high Buddha, which is supposed to be carved out of a single camphor tree trunk. On the way out we again found the gates barred, and began to think gloomily of the many tales of foreigners being held in this temple until they bought their way out again. Just then the great centre gate opened, and all the devil-dancers came crowding back again, carrying their masks and scuffling and chattering in an undignified sort of way. Certainly these ceremonies, although picturesque and colourful, rarely seem to inspire either those who partake or those who watch with any sense of awe. We had a good close view of the robes and masks and the antique musical instruments, but weren't quick enough to nip out while the door was open. However a policeman let us out through a side door, which was being belaboured by people wanting to get in. His method of indicating that it was to be one-way-traffic outwards to begin with was to stick his bayonet out through the crack in the door before drawing back the bar! So although we didn't see much devil dancing it was a very diverting afternoon.

On the following day (tut tut, I should have been swatting) I had my language exam.. In the morning 4 hour reading and conversation with "Tiger" which wasn't too bad, and in the afternoon a written paper, which wasn't at all so easy. I'd been told to prepare the 4th. 6th. and 9th. chapters of John's Gospel, and then this paper included a chunk of the 10th. chapter, which I'd read once and forgotten - verses 35 to 38 to translate into English,. I'm not at all sure I understand it in English, and in Chinese it left me floundering. However, it's over.

Who should walk in just now but Mr. Rasmussen! He and Mr. Harry Johnstone arrived in Tientsin after being frozen in the Taku-bar for a week! He goes back to Tientsin on Monday and they have booked tickets for Wednesday. It would be nice to travel with them, but a bit complicated to arrange. I'll probably stick to my previous plan to go on Friday. Today I had a busy time booking a sleeper, closing my bank account, getting a travel permit from the police, and then had lunch with the Baboses. They are flitting again soon, to rooms in the Salvation Army Compound, much cheaper and said to be much more comfortable. All had had bad colds.

Much love, Agatha

Letter No. 156a 16th. February 1947.

Dear Jack and Marjorie

... The Language School has been frequented all winter by flocks of a kind of magpie... a velvet black head, dove grey body and brilliant light-blue wings and tail. To see a bare willow crowded with them, all in bright sunlight just takes one's breath away.

Well, next week I may be in Moukden of course it is only a hope as the line is constantly being broken by guerrilla bands of communists, and mended again, which means frequent cancelling of trains and long delays. These guerrilla tactics are very difficult to control as they are very skilfully planned. The other day a body of men (reported as 4000) entered T'ung chou about thirteen miles from here, burnt the mayor's house and two railway stations, emptied three banks, released 80 prisoners from the gaol, and vanished into the hills. The whole affair was done without fuss or confusion, and no ordinary people were robbed, injured, or interfered with in any way. No one is clear where they get supplies from, but one can't help wondering what happened to the ninety jeeps, which the American forces in Peking had stolen during the past month..

A few days ago we heard that the American Red Cross was leaving and were selling the stuff in their Tientsin warehouses very cheaply to anyone presenting an American passport. So Mrs. Fenn and our housekeeper rushed off by the early train next day and bought up a lot of stuff, mostly tinned food I think, and some sheets etc.. I'm afraid I haven't much news as weekdays are all used up on washing, ironing, mending, going to the bank, and scouring Peking for one or two books I wanted for language study in Moukden (without any luck). The exam next week appals me rather because it is to be set by Mr. Chang according to the old Chinese ideas, i.e. 90% pure memory...

Much love to you all... Agatha

Letter No. 157 26 February 1947 College of Chinese Studies, Peiping

Dear Mother....

...a letter from "Uncle George" from Calcutta - dated 17th. February, he had found Mr. Christensen and the two cases... Uncle George has written to Mamie in Surat, asking if she would bring them to Manchuria.

I've been so staggered in the last two days by the abysmal ignorance of some of my American fellow-students (missionaries) of the Bible. One of the teachers, a very nice woman called Mrs. Yeh (a Christian) conceived the idea of making us tell Bible stories. She started me off on the Fall, and when I was stuck for a word I looked helplessly at my neighbour. She thought I couldn't remember the story and whispered in all seriousness "I don't remember either, didn't the snake bite her, or something?" ... Today the teacher asked "Who wrote Acts?" and mine was the only voice to say "Luke" amid a chorus of "Paul"! The

teachers get terribly mixed sometimes, and the other day someone gave a list of the twelve apostles, which started off with Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and finished up, naturally enough, in confusion. I also like Mr. Kuang's version of the story of the Samaritan woman: Jesus said to her "How many husbands have you?" The woman said "Five". Jesus said "That's right, you have been honest and told me the truth, so all your sins are forgiven." It sometimes makes me a little sick, the way we grind out John's gospel (of all books), in execrable Chinese, expressionless and monotonous, with very little thought of what it's really all about. But even in Chinese, for the twentieth time, I can't read the shattering reply to the woman's glib reference to the coming of Christ without a slight tingling down my spine. Yet some of these teachers have drummed the Living Water, and the Bread of Life into generations of students without ever having tasted either.

I got a letter from Dr. Fenn informing those whom it may concern that owing to other duties, which isn't really accurate, I hadn't been able to complete the 1st. year course, but had studied lesson sheets 1-50, John's Gospel chapters 1--1-13, and half the doctors' course, and could write 400 characters, had been examined on all this and on the spoken idiom, and had obtained (what they call) "honour". There are three possibilities: Fail, Pass, and Honour, and I think you'd have to be pretty bad not to get the last, but anyway it's satisfactory and I'll give it to Mr. Findlay as a basis for planning future tortures.

Last Sunday evening we had quite an interesting talk by Anna Louise Strong, followed by discussion. She is a newspaper correspondent who represents some kind of press in America, and is quite well known. She is the aunt of Mr. Robbins Strong of the American Board Mission here who was involved (helped me) in my financial muddles. She is about seventy at least, but very sprightly and was just back from a stay in Yen-an. She is very pro-communist, as she found what she saw and heard there most impressive, but she had very little to say about the quite definite, often brutal, persecution of the Christian Church, for example in Shantung, and various other things which are hard to reconcile with the lofty idealism talked in Yen-an. What she said about the ideology of the head men (Mao etc.) was interesting although perhaps not new. They quite definitely state that they are not just an agrarian reform party, but are good Marxist communists. However, they say that Chinese communism is not the same as Russian communism, because the situation they have to work in is different. For example, they do not aim at a dictatorship by the industrial workers, since there are practically no industrial workers in China. The Chinese proletariat are therefore a different body from the Russian proletariat. In communist-ruled areas only one third of the ruling body ("elected") are communists, but the two-thirds are hand-picked to some extent and are not united into any party, so that in actual fact the power is in the hands of the (Communist) one third.

One of the first things that the communists do when they take over an area is to have what they call a "settling of accounts". They call a meeting of all the local people - peasants, landlords, etc. and everyone is free to accuse another of injustice. The landlords may be accused of too heavy rents or of other oppression. Then the communist leaders pronounce judgment - fines, parceling out of land and so on. One Christian leader, (I think a pastor) was beaten and imprisoned because a villager dragged up a twenty-year old grievance over a stolen donkey - I think the villager stole the donkey and the pastor exposed him and so he got his own back by some trumped up charge. (This story, and what follows, did not emanate from Miss Strong!) There seems to be no doubt about deliberate persecution of the Christian

Church - burning of Bibles, forbidding all meetings, or the use of words like "God", "Christ", which are recognizably Christian. In some areas there is a facade of religious freedom. e.g. Church services are permitted at certain specified hours, but communist meetings are held at the same hour, and those who do not attend the latter come under suspicion and are watched and punished. I gather that the main reason, or pretext, for attacking the Church is that the Roman Catholic Church in particular is so rich and powerful and owns so much land and property. In Peiping, for example, some amazing proportion of the city is owned by the R.C.s , and subtle and subtle until only careful research would reveal who was really the ultimate owner. This naturally incenses any good communist!

27 Feb. 1947. I went down to China Travel Service to get a train ticket but was told all bookings were pushed on one day - owing to a cancellation early this week, and I couldn't go till Saturday. This I was very unwilling to do as there are rumours of a 25% increase in train fares from 1st. March, and I didn't want to be caught. However there was no help for it and I went on to the Telegraph Office and wired to Dr. Garven "Arriving Sunday", and got some money changed into Manchurian dollars. Then back to the Language School, where I found that CTS had just rung up to say I could get a ticket for tomorrow if I came at once. So I did, and got a second-class sleeper for \$54,000 - only a little over a pound at the present rate!! I'm not going to bother to wire again as who knows whether the train will get in on time on Saturday and I don't mind not being met. The train leaves at 9 a.m. now, so I don't have to get up in the middle of the night like last time. I have bought a small suitcase from the Baboses but it's half full already of stuff Tom Blakely and Jack Weir have asked me to buy - "best China tea, about \$5000 a pound.", when in fact the best China tea is about eight times that price! And "some" mustard, without any hint as to whether foreign or Chinese brand - which makes a vast difference in price.....

Well, I just must pack. Much love, Agatha

Letter No. 158 2nd. March 1947. Moukden Medical College.

Dear Mother....

... a telephone message to say I could buy a ticket ... so I did.

The afternoon was more than filled by saying goodbye to all the teachers and packing and then Mrs. Babos came. In the evening there was to be a welcome party for Cath. Mackenzie's sister but she didn't arrive, so it turned into a goodbye party for the Robinsons and me, and was a most hilarious affair. It seems to me that the British are much more versatile than the Americans in producing funny turns and stories, but they certainly find us diverting if a bit puzzling, and it was a most successful party.

Next morning I set off about 8 a.m. and had hardly settled in the carriage when who should come peeping at the window but Mrs. Babos! Wasn't it kind of her? Sandy is in bed with a bad throat and this must have meant an early start to get the stove lit and the children off to school and then right across the city for 8.30. She had a big bundle of delicious little cakes, cheese and apples for me. I'll miss her a lot.

We got to Tientsin on time and I was staring idly at people on the platform when who should happen by but Mr. Johnstone and Mr. Rasmussen! (They should have left two days before). They had seats nearly at the other end of the train, second-class but no sleepers and had had great difficulty in getting tickets at all. It was grand to have company as it's a long, rather dull journey. The carriage I was in was fairly roomy, and theirs was packed, so they came in turns to sit and talk while the other guarded their belongings. We reached Shanhaikuan without mishap, and stopped there for the night.

We went, in turn, for a little dander in the city. All along the street men would rush up waving a bundle of notes and wanting to change money for you. Mr. Johnstone had quite an adventure for he went out later, about 9 p.m., and was wandering along the line when he heard a shout but paid no attention. Then he heard a click, of a rifle bolt, and thought he had better stand still, and two soldiers ran up. One pressed the point of his bayonet against his chest and they questioned him. He said he was a passenger out for a breath of air, and put his hand to his pocket to show them his ticket, and there was a roar of "take your hand out of your pocket". However, after some more talk one of the soldiers said in disgust, "Oh, he's only an American, he doesn't understand", and he was allowed back to the carriage. I had a very comfortable night and slept well, but they had to sit up all night. There was no chance to take turns in my sleeper as all carriages were locked at both ends all night. Next morning Mr. Rasmussen treated me to breakfast (porridge with milk and sugar on it and two fried eggs, ham, toast and strawberry jam, and tea!) He was in Denmark all through the war...

As we got further north we seemed to pass from early spring to deepest winter. There was a strong wind outside and it began to snow heavily, so the outlook from the windows was very bleak. I saw one man on a donkey, sitting facing the tail, with his hands well up his sleeves, while the poor little donkey trotted against the driving snow.

I forgot to tell you that earlier in the journey I had seen a small aeroplane sitting rather flatly on the ground just beside the railway track. There was quite a crowd round it, and more country folk were still hurrying up to have a look, so it must have crashed quite recently.

From Shanhaikuan on there were long stretches where the telephone poles along the railway had all been sawn down. In some parts there had been repair work, and the poles had been lashed to the remaining stump, or a slender stick fixed up instead. But even where repaired there was a white patch of smashed insulators around the foot of each pole. There were more fortifications and trenches along the line and round the stations than I had seen when I passed at Christmas. Many pillboxes were surrounded by a triple palisade of willow branches, which looked rather primitive for modern warfare. But we saw no activity of any kind. There were plenty of rumours flying. The nicest one that Mr. Johnstone collected was that the train we were on was the last to Moukden for two months. There is talk of military commandeering the rolling stock, and I heard that one train, which got the length of Shanhaikuan, was commandeered. I only tell you this as a sample of the talk that flies around, one can never be quite sure whether it is true or not. (This one was not true.)

Well, we got into Moukden about 7 p.m., only about one and a half hours late. It was still snowing, and no porters were about. However a nice man who had sat opposite me (isn't it amazing how invariably there is a nice man on the seat opposite?!) helped me haul my bags

out - five packages now. I had hardly collected them outside when the others appeared, with Dr. Gao and Dr. Leo and Tom Blakely.

We all watched the luggage like hawks for poor HESSIE Stewart had a suitcase stolen on Moukden platform while she turned her back for a moment to greet someone. The three Moukden folk were here because Mr. Rasmussen had sent a wire, which just reached them that afternoon. They had the hospital car, which first took Tom and the other two men to I Ching Lu (the West Moukden compound) and then came back and took Dr. Leo and Dr. Gao and me to the east. Dr. Leo was terribly tickled to find I was clutching my sun-hat - a coolie straw hat bought in Nanking last summer - and kept teasing me. "Why don't you put your hat on and keep the snow off - that's what it's for, isn't it?". Dr. Leo's father died about a week ago in Chinchow, a very old man, and he is temporarily growing a beard, which I gather is a traditional sign of mourning, and he looks such a ragamuffin. Eventually we three and all my bags and the driver squeezed into the car, and off we went to the Medical College. (At one time, after the Russians had cleaned out the city, this was the only car left in Moukden!). Of course, Nell and Co. weren't expecting me, and we had to make a commotion to get the gate open. (Dr. Leo meanwhile goading me to put on my hat and make a really impressive entrance). In next to no time I had two more eggs inside me, and was snugly in bed with a hot water bottle.

This morning I unpacked and then went to the College Sunday service. In the afternoon we all went over to I Ching Lu for a communion service taken (very beautifully) by Tom Blakely. It was nice to see all the people there again - except Dr. McMinn who has gone to Kaiyuan - and Agnes Gardiner and HESSIE Stewart. Everyone seems to be flourishing and in very good spirits.

... a letter from Jean Stockman of PWA (then WMA) office, telling of Vellore and Borsad. It's rather comforting to hear mild growlings about "the people at 121" and exasperated groans of "they just don't understand".

... I have settled down to a very placid existence. Chinese all morning, including Mr. Chang for an hour. He is a very sweet old man and a good teacher so I'm quite contented. In the afternoons I usually go to the College library, partly for relative warmth, and battle away at writing Pathology lecture notes. The evenings are a mixture of Chinese and Pathology and mending and gossip. We have prayers (just we four) at 9 p.m. and I usually go to bed after that. It has been a very long and exceptionally cold winter and there is a lot of snow and ice on the ground, but no wind. I haven't yet got the things Agnes brought as their house, at the Blind School, is still very confused and uncomfortable, no running water, etc., and I don't think she will unpack fully until she and Nell and I flit into the K'un Kuang house as soon as we don't need heat.

Much love,

Agatha

Letter No. 159 16 March 1947 Moukden Medical College.

Dear Mother...

... I got the things Agnes brought ... all marvellous. It's nice to be able to give Nell back her pillow, eiderdown etc., and to have tea-cloths so that I can contribute my share... The medicines also are most valuable. I haven't yet finished the fifty luminals I brought from home!... So Oliver is home!

Has Dr. Gao any children? Heaps! Four girls and two boys. Two are doctors, one a nurse, and two or three at MMC (I'm not sure if one is still at school). There are about ten women doctors in the hospital. No, indeed, I didn't make a speech at Christmas. Dr. Leo introduced me and I got up and bowed, and said I was glad to be there, in English, and he translated that. I feel that in the present situation the less a newcomer says, and the more they listen, the better. Did time stand still here when the missionaries left? Believe me, it did not!. I'm still floundering ignorantly in a very complicated situation, putting out a timid tentacle now and then.... There is limitless hope, as well as the possibilities of discouragement. If only I could really follow Chinese meetings or discussion. Still, it's better than West China meetings, which were supposed to be in English, and broke into Chinese when anyone got excited.... The big defect at the Language School was that we so rarely had a chance to use what Chinese we learnt....Now take Friday: After breakfast I settled down to Chinese by myself. Then two police arrived, and I had an hour solo with them, filling in a huge form. (They discovered I did not smoke opium, that my mother and brother did not live in the same house - rather fishy - and that I did not belong either to the Kuomintang or to the Communist Party, and many other interesting points. Since they wrote most of the pieces of information down in Chinese I haven't the faintest idea whether they understood what I said or vice versa. Then my teacher came for an hour, and then after that I went to visit, briefly, the technician in the lab (he does not speak English). I came back to find a doctor waiting for Dr. Leggate - more laborious conversation.

After lunch Miss Ch'i of the Blind School came with Mr. Rasmussen and I had a tete a tete with her. At four we rushed off to a clinical meeting in hospital - two-and-a-half hours of Chinese. In the evening Mr. Chang of the K'un Kuang popped in - more conversation, half in Chinese. So you see, although I had no time for "work", there was more chance to hear ordinary talk and to speak, than in a couple of weeks in Peiping.

Mr. Johnstone... preached at the College service this morning and there was an unusually good turnout. I gather that the women students are fairly strong on the Christian side of things, there are a couple of healthy Bible classes and so on, but the situation on the men's side is much more difficult, with a good deal of opposition by some students to the Christian members of staff and the few Christian men students. These last two days the students have been a bit excited, and were on strike on Friday and parading on Saturday together with all other university and Middle School students. (At least the K'un Kuang were at classes on Friday but went off to the parade on Saturday). This is part of a protest by students all over China about Molotov's proposal to put China on the agenda of the Four Power conference. It's the old cry to the foreigner to keep out of China's internal affairs. Some say the objection is that China is not represented at the discussion, others that the other powers have no business to discuss China anyway. They seem to have blown off their steam now and will probably be back to classes tomorrow. I must tell you a funny little thing that happened last Sunday. Dr. Leo was preaching at the College service and it was just a spate of unintelligible noise to me. Then suddenly he broke into a few words of English and added, "Tu Tai-fu will understand that bit anyway." Everyone laughed of course, but it wasn't meant as a joke at all, but like everything else

he says was just what came out of his head. I do like him, he is so divertingly candid and honest and unquenchable. But how can he educate the Ma children for I hear he hasn't saved a penny and can't on the present salary scale?

Love, as always Agatha

Letter No. 160 22 March 1947 Moukden Medical College.

Dear Mother,

...You will have heard the news about Miss Simonoff. A cable arrived here, but no details yet. I do hope Dor is not too sad about it. She was one of the most loveable people I have ever met ... you should hear what people here say about her, especially what she did since the Japanese surrender. I had only heard from her the other side - how wonderful Dr. Leo and Miss Ch'en were, and how they strengthened and helped her. It's good to know they loved and appreciated her so much. Drs. Garven, Leggate, Leo and others have gone this morning to the memorial service in the Greek (sic -, Russian) Orthodox church, and next Sunday the College and hospital will hold their memorial service....

Oh, here's a sad bit of news. I got a letter from a Friends' Ambulance Unit boy in Chungking who had, taken charge of my box of slides and was to take them to Shanghai by lorry.... His lorry fell into a deep river and much of the cargo was lost, including my box. It must have burst open and of course the slides are heavy and would sink, for he only retrieved "Moby Dick" and the "Story of San Michele", and they were too damaged to be worth sending to me.... It's a blow to lose the one bit of my worldly goods, which is irreplaceable and would have been so much use...

Life flows peacefully on. Our hopes for spring wax and wane. One day the sun is out and the sky blue, and the roads are rivers of mud. Then the sky clouds and the snow descends once more. We had over a foot the day before yesterday, but much of it has melted again. Hugh is itching to get going in the garden, and I have signed on as an unskilled labourer. It will be good for my body if a little trying on my shoes.

So far, the garden is an expanse of either brown or white, but there are the remains of asparagus beds, and a thicket of blackberries and black currants and one gooseberry bush. Whether the cook will appreciate an encroachment on the ground which he has used for his kao liang the last few years remains to be seen. Yesterday the snow was too thick for gardening, so we went for an hour's plunging through the snow on the far side of the Little River, after birds. We saw a hoopoe, a thrush, two kinds of bunting and a Chinese hedge sparrow.

This week I have started having an hour a day in the afternoons with one of the women doctors, to try to learn some medical vocabulary. The best teacher is Dr. Ch'en who is in the Women's Surgical department; I like her very much so we really enjoy ourselves. Dr. Leo said I couldn't possibly pay for lessons, so I give them some English as a rather inadequate quid pro quo. There is now an English club on Tuesday afternoons for graduates and staff. The first meeting was last week, and we spent most of the time discussing and passing an elaborate Constitution. On Friday afternoons there is a Clinical meeting at which various of the young doctors give papers - usually three at each meeting on

some subject they have read up. It tends to be too academic and long-winded, and I don't succeed in following much of it as they go at such a rate. At the best I cover a piece of paper with words caught in passing, and afterwards plague this patient household for explanations.

The situation in the Path lab is still delicate. The doctor who is lecturing now is head of the Bacteriology dept., and is one of the very few difficult and unsympathetic ones. I think he feels that since I am here I should do the work. Luckily all the people that matter most do not push that point of view. I mean Dr. Gao and other senior staff, and it is so impossible for me to teach in Chinese yet that I just let things drift along as they are. At present this Dr. Hsiang's brother (or cousin) is lent part-time to Path as technician, but this is not a satisfactory arrangement. I am now in charge of reporting of biopsies, which takes five minutes to half-an-hour a day. But this technician's link with Path is soon to cease and a new boy taken on, to be trained by me. This will really be easier in some ways, as I will be able to tell him to do things, and then expect them to be done!.....

Much love, Agatha.

Letter No. 161 29 March 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother.....

A letter from Tania. Wasn't it nice to have it? She sounds happy, and appreciative of everybody's great kindness, and felt "much better", delighted with Dor's visit.....

... my language study this month is costing about \$6000 (Manchurian) and would have cost about \$50,000 if I'd stayed in Peking, not counting cheaper living expenses - hours per week of course much less.

This week we have had no electricity and no water (except rather dirty well water which one doesn't like washing in). So we all become steadily grubbier. The coal for heating is done, but luckily it is beginning to warm up. Yesterday the sun was really warm. Most of the snow has gone except in shady places, and some parts of the roads are almost dry, so it's quite walkable. This afternoon Hugh is going to celebrate the coming of spring by planting some seeds, but I have promised to go to some sort of do in the College.

Your letter of March 15 has just arrived... really your weather has been weird. Isn't it lucky we didn't have that kind of winter when the war was at its peak - air raids on top of everything else might have been the last straw. But I suppose it's silly to say that as the bombers would probably have been grounded.....

We got an awful blow yesterday - postage up to 270 dollars, about two shillings, for this weight. I hope you feel my brilliant effusions are worth it. Certainly no more non-family letters except an occasional enclosure. Still, I comfort myself by reflecting that I now save almost that each week by not going twice a Sunday to a church which takes up a collection, as I did in Peiping. Not very logical!

I've just come back from a three-hour entertainment in the College! This, in case you haven't noticed, is World Youth Day. The World Day for Women was earlier this month, with meetings and stimulating

speeches, and World Children's day is hanging over us. I came away very exasperated not to have been able to understand more as I think if I had it would have been illuminating. No other foreigner was there as they all were at other things. The big hall was packed with students and their young brothers and sisters... the girls wear the modern style of Chinese gown, in plain dark colours, and often wear a thick tweed western-style coat on top. Most of them have half-long hair sweeping their shoulders, sometimes with the remains of a perm at the ends. The boys are even less glamorous to look at, and wear the most amazing and incongruous clothes - old uniforms, blue suits with buttons up to the throat and gaping box pleats behind, and old sweaters and mufflers which are never enough to keep them from looking cold, and they all need hair-cuts badly. It's such a contrast from India with its lovely saris and graceful movements. But I would much rather have to deal with these students!

At the moment they are very worked up over patriotism, naturally feeling that since they are now really Chinese for the first time that most of them can remember, they must shout the fact from the house-tops. One item in the entertainment was a long dialogue between an aged father and his son who was at the Medical College, and who had turned up unexpectedly at home. He explains that the students are on strike. Then follows a long argument in which I caught a bit from the old father defending Britain and America as China's good friends. At the end there was a touching reconciliation, but I didn't gather which side of the argument won. The musical items were a very mixed bag. We had "Auld Lang Syne" three times with various voices and instruments, and "Rule Britannia (solo in English - wonders will never cease!) and of course lots of Chinese songs and tunes. They had fiddles and mandolins and the kind of Chinese fiddle that blind beggars play on the streets.

It ended up with a play about a long-lost daughter who turns up safe and sound as a beautiful flower-seller. The thing that staggers me most about these students is their complete absence of any trace of shyness or self-consciousness. Any of them can apparently make a long witty speech, or sing a song, at a moment's notice. Once, a boy's voice cracked on a top note in the most comical way and everybody roared with laughter including himself, and he obviously felt no "loss of face". Another one started his solo too high, so he stopped, said "T'ai kao wo shang pu ch'u" and started again lower down. All very sensible, but so different from us. One turn was provided by eight students playing, a la oboe, yard-lengths of brass tubing, pierced with a few holes. The result was very breathy and peculiar, and the performance was badly interrupted when the players could not blow for laughing.

Hessie has been in bed with mild flu, and most of the people at the west have been in bed too with colds and tummy upsets, but we four flourish. Nell certainly looks after us and feeds us very well. We have porridge and milk, and a big egg, and unlimited toast with a little butter and lots of marmalade and honey, for breakfast. Then I have a cup of tea when Mr. Chang comes at 10.30, and there's lunch at one; tea - a real non-American tea with scones and butter and honey - at four; a hefty supper at 6.30, and often an apple if there's room for it at nine or half-past. I am truly very well indeed and very happy to be here, especially in this most congenial and amusing household.

Much love, take care. Love to the Roywoods and Margaret Alcorn

Agatha.

Letter No. 162 6 April 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother....

We are rejoicing again in running water and electricity (most of the time, anyway) so we are clean once more. It is also easier to get things done in the lab. This week Dr. Hsiang moved out of the Path Dept. back to his own room, which is on the north side- and too cold to be used in the winter without heating. The technician situation is deteriorating, but there is hope of getting a new boy who will belong to Path, and I can then dispense with the present part-time loan and be independent. Of course it will mean much more work in the lab for me, but it will all be practice in Chinese. Dr. Hsiang's moving out also gives me a chance to give the place a thorough tidy-up and find what we have really got.

Yesterday was a busy day. In the morning I had asked my teacher Mr. Chang not to come, and set off to do some shopping for paper and record books etc. for the lab. There is, of course a buyer for the College, but I find it hard to explain exactly what I want when I don't know what is available. Everything in the paper line is a terrible price and mostly of poor quality, so that it is hard to use ink on it. I got home about eleven to find Mr. Webster and Mr. Johnstone happily installed, and swigging tea, all our folk being out. They had come to do something about furniture in the compound on the far side of the College. The houses there are, I think, all occupied, at least in part, by Chinese College and hospital staff. The doctors at present in the K'un Kuang house are to move into some rooms there, so these two had come over to shift mission furniture stored in these rooms to others not required. Eventually they two and Hugh and Nell and I went over and spent the rest of the morning staggering here and there and up and down stairs with furniture belonging to the Nairns and Browns and Taylors. Hugh recognised a flowerpot, which belonged to him and returned home clutching it. The house itself is in quite good shape except for one or two broken windows and a damaged stove; the plumbing seemed to be intact. Of course the entire wire mosquito netting is in rags and irreplaceable. Some of the rooms were knee-deep in rubbish left by Japanese tenants. These ghosts give one quite a queer feeling. There were broken dolls, old photos of stiff Japanese women and little girls in gaudy kimonos and one diary written in Japanese (I wish I could have read it!) When we came back I found a note waiting, to say there was a P.M. for me! The last post-mortem recorded in the P.M. book is signed by Dr. Cayton. I'm very keen to get some P.M.s as you can't teach students how the whole body reacts to disease from a few surgical specimens in bottles.

Of course it would be Saturday afternoon, but by great good luck I found the Anatomy technician, who had not yet left. There is no proper mortuary, and the only place to do P.M.s is in the Anatomy lecture-room, on a wooden table, in front of the blackboard, in a shockingly bad light. In fact the background is quite medieval. Then, by more good luck, I met a very decent little doctor called Wu, who is in charge of Pharmacology, and who is most friendly and cooperative, and he promised to send a note to the students' hostels to say any who wanted might come, and he also promised to come himself and help with the language problem. Dr. Hsiang had already left but I only discovered that he'd left a message that he wanted to be present and demonstrate it to the students after all was ready and the students collected! He did not turn up at all so I hope there won't be ructions tomorrow. I had been negotiated with specially to do this P.M. and I knew he wants to have as little to do with Path as possible, so went ahead. All very difficult and complicated. He is a difficult bird to deal with, everyone finds it so, not just me.

To my consternation about 80 students turned up, and the room was packed so that I hardly had elbowroom. I started off gaily in Chinese but of course got stuck after about two sentences, and the rest of the discourse was in a horrible mixture of very slow English translation by Dr. Wu, and Chinese from me to make them laugh. Luckily it was a very good P.M. with lots of things to see naked-eye - for Jack's benefit either chronic glomerulo-nephritis or essential hypertension, with lung and spleen infarcts, ovaries with multiple cysts and so on. The patient was a Korean woman whose husband is, I think, in Harbin and cannot afford either to come here for her or to send money for burial. After thankfully shooing away the students I was helped by the old Anatomy technician and the Bacteriology coolie to "sew-up"! All Anatomy technicians have a macabre flavour and this old boy was no exception. He and David Mahaffey could have swapped some good yarns. They were greatly tickled by my fussy technique, and agreed that it took a woman to wield a needle, and that the final result had not got an "anatomical look" at all. All this took a long time, and was not over till about 5.30 p.m..

I am just back from the Easter Sunday service in the College. There was a long and very dramatic sermon on the Resurrection by one of the hospital evangelists. Normally the morning service is followed by a short staff prayer meeting taken by Dr. Gao, about College and hospital problems, but this morning most people rushed off to another meeting in the Y.M.

On Thursday evening I had a very interesting experience. As you know, I have medical Chinese lessons from some of the young doctors, and as one cannot pay them the quid pro quo has to be English lessons - actually I get far more than my share. Dr. Ch'en Shu chen (an old K'un Kuang girl whom Dor may know) is head of the women's surgical department, and she teaches me two hours a week, and has English conversation one hour a week. She is an extremely nice person, and most up-and-coming (is that an American expression?). On the first evening she told me she had decided to tell me the story of her life - since the best way to practise her English was for her to do the talking. This week, the fourth instalment, brought us to the Japanese occupancy of the hospital, and I wish I had a word-for-word record of all she said. It's a saga. What struck me most was that she said more than once "It was terrible, but we had faith and peace in our hearts, not like now". The truth is that all thinking Chinese are very unhappy and disillusioned and disappointed at the way things have turned out. They realise their country does not show up as well now as when she stood up to an enemy from outside. The present evils come from within, and are far more subtly discouraging. Even some of the Christians are timid and depressed, and only the very strong ones - like this girl herself in spite of what she said!, and Dr. Leo T'ung-lun and the head of the women's medical department - Dr. Leo Shu-chen - and many more leaders - are undaunted at bottom because they have got beyond the point of caring about loss of face, and are willing to admit China is a mess, and to set about improving their bit of it. I suppose the reaction is all the greater because the strain they underwent was so long. It's only natural, and I often think they have far more reason to be proud than ashamed. It's rather wonderful how absorbed they are in the present and the future, and how little inclined to complain or boast of the past. When Dr. Ch'en tells me about their life under the Japanese she really seems to think most about her use of English, and so the picture she paints has an unforced clarity and genuineness which would be impossible in somebody more self-conscious.

Please tell Dor that I told Tom Blakeley that she was collecting money for the Ma fund.... I am still living on Harry Johnstone's bounty.... Hessie and Agnes are also waiting for something definite from home, and living on what they brought with them.... Much love as always,

Agatha

Letter No. 163 13 April 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

Spring has come! Only three days ago there was still snow in sheltered corners and ice on the river...two good afternoons working in the garden with Hugh. There were only two days between but the difference it made was amazing. The first day all was brown and bare with only a few tiny green weeds appearing. But yesterday there were green shoots on the grass and the tiny weeds were blossoming - a kind of miniature shepherd's purse.... There was a jungle of blackberry canes and currants to sort out, and one aged gooseberry bush with offshoots which we divided into no less than twenty-seven little rooted plants. We also planted peas, cabbage, carrots, parsley and turnips, and rejoiced in the warm sun and the busy sounds from the rooks nesting in the trees round about....

(Sunday) we've just all had a cup of tea and are sitting out on the steps, a little distracted by fleeting visits from intriguing birds. There are five kites hanging above us... and one has a frog or something like that in it's foot and is bending down to eat it, very neatly.

Well, we had a second P.M. this week, a little boy with generalised tuberculosis. The family had refused permission and had buried the child, then changed their minds. What a different job it is here from home, with David, exasperating but efficient, at one's elbow. I was confronted with a sealed coffin, and had to get one of the mob of students to help me heave the lid off! And being a pitifully cheap coffin, quite a lot of earth had got inside. Do you mind these macabre details? It just strikes me as such a weird business.

I've been quite busy in the lab this week, but don't get on very fast. The more I probe into the way things have been done the more horrifying it seems, although of course things have been so difficult that one has to make ample allowances. Every cupboard is just choked with junk and rubbish, with a nugget of something valuable buried here and there, and the dirt and dust of ages are being disturbed at last. The coolie who helps me is rather horrified at the antics of the strange foreign woman. He has only been attached to the College for about a year, having previously been in "mai mai" by which I suspect he means a street stall. He gets really worried when I throw things away, and it's hard to convince (especially since he has to wash the bottles) that mysterious dried-up fluid in an unlabelled bottle is best put down the drain. A lot of things puzzle me. Why, for instance, should the lab require (a rough guess) 3000 wooden toothpicks? I have firmly presented all the Japanese books to Dr. Hsiang (who can read Japanese) and the shelves are empty except for a very aged McCallum without a cover, and (don't ask me why!) a copy of "The Fortunes of Christina McNab".

Heat, light and water are a continual problem, and of course there's no gas and oil is very expensive. It's a little awkward being alone in the lab as it means it's not very convenient to find out what things are available, or to get a rough idea of relative expensiveness, there being no one to chat to. Yesterday, having ordered a 100 watt bulb as a source of heat inside the imbedding chamber, I put the new bulb in in the morning and went back after lunch to find it had already gone phut! That was 950 Manchurian dollars down the drain - a dollar is a little over one-and-sixpence. There are piles and piles of slide-trays full of unlabelled sections, pots upon pots full of specimens, some dried up and mouldy, also mostly without labels, and the museum catalogue is nothing like up-to-date. So you can see there is lots to be done, and the longer Dr. Hsiang will go on with the lecturing the better. The new technician-to-be has not yet materialised. It seems difficult to get anyone suitable who is

willing to come. Unfortunately they won't get a very good training from me, not only because of the language handicap but because a technician is best trained by a good technician. I can criticise the results of his work all right, but I don't know the fine points of technique at all. However, meanwhile Dr. Hsiang's cousin continues to help with the biopsies but in a very sluggish manner, and I have no right to apply the spur!

... It's very interesting to hear of Path books even being ordered and they will be received with joy as they trickle in. Pity there aren't more new editions; it's the result of the war I suppose. I haven't ordered Bacteriology books because I won't be working at or teaching that, and the ones in the College library will do for looking up odd points.

.... a letter this week from John Edgar (Morrison). He had met a Chinese doctor in Boston and asked him if he had by any chance met me, and it turned out to be Dr. Hou! Wasn't that an odd coincidence? They went out to a meal together on the strength of it, and John says he was struck by Dr. Hou's "brilliant and interesting mind" I also got a letter from the Baboses. They have been promised an affidavit for May, and may get a boat in June. They have now flitted for the third time and are in a flat in the Salvation Army place and much more comfortable. Since they are saving so much on rent they have been able to get an amah, which I am very glad to hear.....

Much love as ever Agatha

Letter No. 164 19 April 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother.....

... you ask what fawn cardigan I have. Don't you remember Dad's two fawn woollies? I have one, the other's in India. This one is almost one complete darn, but still so warm and light I want to keep it going as long as possible.

... I spend most of each morning now in the lab, trying to tidy it up a bit and find what's there. The dirt and confusion is truly indescribable. You open a cupboard and the junk falls out in a cloud of dust which has seeped in and lain undisturbed for, I suppose, years. I have been pretty ruthless in throwing things away, on the principle that what you can never possibly identify will never be any use. The old coolie who helps, part-time, finds all this activity intriguing and quite mad, but he is beginning to get the idea and this morning when I went in I was charmed to find he had emptied a cupboard himself, putting all the stuff on the bench, and had it clean and ready for the good things to be put back in. Another idea of his was to empty the final deposit of dirty drawers out of the window, and I left him to cope with the inevitable yells of protest from below as best he could. All this is not Pathology, and seems to bear no close relationship to being a missionary, but I think it's no harm as otherwise I'll never know the lab inside-out as one should, and if the word gets round that I'm a fussy nose-creature who know where everything is, things are less liable to disappear.

There was another funny development this week. Dr. Hsiang has been pressing for me to take over Pathology lecturing which I am very unwilling to do as I have my hands full enough, and my Chinese isn't nearly good enough yet. Eventually I promised that next term (from August 15th. on) I would take over all the practical classes, and give one, or if I could, two lectures a week. He was quite

pleased and we parted fairly good friends. After this was all fixed a thought struck me and turns out to be correct - next term, so far as Pathology is concerned, there are no students to teach! The present class, belonging to the old curriculum, take their exam in July, and the next batch starts in February 1948. Loud cheers! This will give me a splendid chance to get the routine lab work going, train a technician to do it next year, and prepare lectures, without any uncomfortable pressure on the teaching side. Isn't it lucky?

The next item of news is that the doctors are at last out of the K'un Kuang house, and we have started to prepare to move in. But what a scene of desolation! I really don't think you would believe it, without seeing (and smelling) it. It is almost incredible that it was a group of doctors and dispensers who lived there. For example, the lavatory basin is just full to the brim. The flush won't work, and they never bothered to ask the hospital workmen to fix it. They have used the outside toilet too until it is unusable - full up - and then just used the floor of a storehouse. All cupboards, larder etc. etc. are full of junk, feet deep: old bottles and papers and broken stuff of every description. The kitchen sink must have been leaking for weeks for the floor is a soggy rotten mess, and the pool of water extended out into the hall. Not much furniture is left, and all of it chipped, damaged, and thick with candle-grease. Nell, of course, left the house with electric fittings and so on intact, but they have left only lengths of flex sticking out from the wall or ceiling. She inquired mildly what had happened to her favourite chair and was told, quite innocently and without any shame or apology, that it had been broken and they had had to buy a chair to replace it; this, being their own chair they had of course taken it with them. The garden is a wilderness of brick-bats, dirty and broken bottles, old papers etc., but a couple of lilac bushes and a few violets have survived. The snag is that these are not the good old days when labour and materials were cheap. Things like wood, glass, paint and paper are a terrific price, so we must make do with a lot, which in normal conditions would not be tolerated at all. Still, the bare bones of the house are very nice. It is built of grey brick, and has green-painted windows and doors which are very pleasant looking. I will have a nice bedroom, about the size of our spare-room, and with a south and a west window, upstairs; and also a tiny study facing north on the ground floor. The other two (Nell and Agnes) have the same: bedroom and study, and there is a nice big drawing room and a dining room, and a spare room which will be used first as a box room. We have spent most of today cleaning furniture, and I have had two good bouts at the garden too. In fact from 8 a.m. till 6.45 p.m., apart from one hour of Chinese and meals, I have been doing hard manual labour. Which will surely convince you that I am well and full of beans.

Tomorrow the College staff are having a retreat at the Blind School. We go over at 10.30 after the morning service here; have lunch there - Chinese food of course - and finish about 5.30. I hope it goes well, for the Christians among the staff are certainly having a very harassing time just now. I don't think there is an indiscretion involved in telling you that a vocal minority of the students are being extremely "difficult" just now. Their demands fluctuate bewilderingly and sometimes they seem to be out purely to make trouble and torment Dr. Gow. The main cry, however, is to turn the College into a Government institution. There is some anti-foreign = pro-China feeling, and some anti-Christian feeling, all muddled up together. A committee of graduates formed recently to mediate, as it were, and through them the students presented a rather quaint set of demands (including "greater friendliness and cooperation between students and staff"! "Give us a chance, say the staff". One difficulty is that some of the younger members of staff agree with, and back up, the students, and would rather see a "really Chinese" institution, even if third-rate, than a better one with foreign and Christian affiliations. Other members of staff are of course whole-heartedly Christian and friendly towards the foreigners, willing to accept help if it will help to produce a College of better standard from the medical and Christian points of view. But as you can imagine, the situation is very

complicated and delicate and it behoves a newcomer to walk very warily. There is no doubt at all that the invitation from the Church for missionaries to come back was whole-hearted and they desperately want our help. But these other elements make it very difficult for them and for us. Some people of course attribute all the unrest to Kuo Min Tang agents, others to members of the opposite party. Both are probably represented but it's not easy to guess who's doing the damage. One cannot expect the present generation of students to be douce and biddable. They have been bred under oppression and uncertainty, and their perfectly laudable patriotism has got a bit distorted. It amuses me sometimes to see Dr. Christie's bust in front of the College, placid and unperturbed by the wall - newspapers covered with denunciations of religion as the opium of the people, under his very nose. However, Hugh says "the College has weathered worse than this", and does not seem unduly daunted by it, and Jack's spirits are quite irrepressible. The K'un Kuang school seems to be in a very healthy and flourishing state, the girls very keen to learn, and bursting with questions on all subjects including religion. The staff of the women's hospital is another very bright spot, they are a wonderful crowd and so friendly and frank and kind to me.

Spring comes apace now. The willows are all hazed over with green and the lilac buds are bursting. Turnip seeds we planted a week ago are well up, in spite of there having been no rain at all. It is mizzling tonight, which will help things on a lot. It is so much warmer that I've put away all my thickest clothes, in plenty of newspaper (thanks to Dor and the Manchester Guardian) and in my "tin suitcase". I'm down to one wool vest and one jumper. I'm glad I brought my mosquito net because the netting on the houses is all ragged (although I'm glad to see the lab windows are all well netted.) The most astonishing number of weeds has come up to clothe the bare earth. Today we dug up the vine. It seems a queer business. You take the vine down from its supports in the autumn, dig a pit, and bend the branches all down into it; and cover the whole thing up with millet stalks and earth. Today we took the roof off, uncoiled the great ball of snaky branches and will later train them up on the wall. The buds on it were swelling already.

Yesterday I saw a little boy walking along the road with his coat over his arm, naked except for a little pair of pants. What a change from three weeks ago!

Did I tell you about our cook's daughter, fleeing from the Communists, and losing two children (one a small baby), when their party was suddenly scattered by an attacking band? Well, after three weeks or so of suspense she has got news of them. The friends who were carrying the children ran off in the opposite direction, and eventually delivered the children to the village where the father still is. So that's very comforting for the poor creature.

No more room. I'll be very intrigued to hear how David gets on at school. Think of it! Christine sounds a darling.

Love to the Roywoods and to you. Agatha.

Letter No. 165 26 April 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

...a letter from "Uncle George" to say Mamie had told him to send (my wretched boxes) to Bombay to Donald Kennedy for him to hand over to John Stewart who was expected to sail from there this month.... even if they only get to Tientsin or Peiping meanwhile it will be a great improvement..... no, my old ankle socks won't rip - they are machine-woven and washed to a felt besides. Oh and I acquired a pair of shoes the other day (don't broadcast this). A mass of UNRRA stuff was given to the K'un Kuang and included foreign shoes mostly far too big for Chinese feet, and Nell and the head Mr. Chang between them fitted me out with this nice brown pair - worn but very comfortable, and a little more dressy for tea parties than my two sternly utilitarian pairs. So I can garden now with a freer foot!... You also ask about my money affairs. No reply yet from bank or Church House, either to Mr. Johnstone or to me. I'm borrowing another £10 or so from him tomorrow, poor man....George Taylor is at last on his way - loud cheers.... Hessie works partly in the Blind School, and partly in the West Church running a kindergarten etc....

This week there have been more ructions among the students, culminating in a real fight between two groups in which knives were used and two students had to be admitted to hospital. They weren't really badly hurt, just cut, but of course they are making the most of it. Unfortunately they are going to law over it, which will, I suppose, mean a lot of unpleasantness and publicity for the College, dragging on for months. There is to be another big meeting in the College tomorrow - teachers, board, the graduates' committee (which has been acting as intermediary between College and students), and representatives from the students. Each group is to have half-an-hour to state its point of view, but I don't think any decision will be reached. The main point at issue is "Kuo li" v. "Sze li", i.e. government basis versus Christian basis = a private college. I suppose it is a sign of progress that this has now come right out in the open. I must make it clear that the great majority of the staff are in favour of a continuation of the present private basis, and for the right reasons, as they are Christians. But it is sad how much fuss a few hotheads among the students, backed by one or two of the staff, can make. Dr. and Mrs. Gow left yesterday for Peiping, for him to have a month's rest there. He is very tired and worried, and just couldn't keep on any longer...I think he is really going to retire soon, and a Dr. Wu now in China proper (evidently a very fine man) is to be invited to take over the Principalship. Dr. Gow's present absence leaves an extra weight on Hugh's shoulders. He has to speak tomorrow, at the meeting, not an enviable job.

...The K'un Kuang house is looking much more habitable, even the garden has been largely dug, and we have put in beans (broad and scarlet runner), beetroot, lettuce, carrot, and turnip seeds. I tried to plant more yesterday, but there was such a howling gale, full of dust, that you really could not keep the seed from blowing out of your hand.

Then, at the beginning of the week, I finally took over the routine work in the lab from Dr. Hsiang as it had come to the point when it was much easier and quicker to do it myself than to push him to do it. Next day, as luck would have it, a boy turned up to apply for a position as trainee-technician, and I restrained my impulse to hang gratefully round his neck and conducted a solemn interview which of course was a farce as I had every intention of taking anyone on a month's trial. He is a junior middle school "graduate", a healthy country lad, and quite pleasant and intelligent. I can't be sure yet that he has good hands for the job, but he is remarkably quick at guessing my meaning! Of course he can't be much help at the moment but I think he very shortly will be, and am very pleased at this hopeful development.

Yesterday evening I had a new ploy. Jack Weir has a lot of British Ministry of Information filmstrips, which he uses in his student work. Do you know what filmstrips are? Just a series of pictures joined

end to end as a strip of film. You use a small projector, and turn the film on from one picture to the next by hand. Jack gives a commentary in very slow simple English so that it really serves as an English lesson for the students. Yesterday he showed two to the students here "The prevention of Malaria" and one on "Babies", really about nursery schools. There were only about forty students at the beginning but by the time we were halfway through were packed to suffocation, including the cooks, lab boys etc., and quite a lot of children. I can't imagine where they all came from. Everyone is, of course, mad to learn English. It is the passport to high salaries and success.

I'm out on the porch in hot sun, drying my hair and admiring the green on the willows.

Much love to you and all at Roywood. Agatha

Letter No. 166 4th. May 1947. Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother.....

We had a very long meeting on Monday of the College staff, Board, representatives of the student body, and graduates. On the whole it probably did good, as the students heard a lot of things they did not know, e.g. about the finances of the College which may make them less anxious to abandon the present set-up. I didn't follow it at all well, however, and everyone was so tired that I didn't like to bother them too much afterwards with questions about what everyone said. Nothing was decided at the meeting - I'm beginning to wonder if anything ever is decided - but one or two of the students did hint, or say - more or less openly, that all the students were not supporting the rebels. Of course everyone knows this, but it is good that they dared to say so. The Christians are being a good deal persecuted by their fellow students, and are as a rule careful to be unobtrusive. In particular they do not seem keen to have any dealings with the foreigners so that all Hugh's tactful overtures and offers of help in the way of Bible class or discussion group or anything they want have met with no response whatever. This is rather wandering off the meeting, but there isn't much more to say about it. There have been no further ructions this week, and the lawsuit over the two students who were stabbed has been dropped, which is excellent.

On Tuesdays we have the staff English Club. They are all desperately keen to learn or improve English, and it is well supported. Usually two or three people tell stories or make speeches, and then we foreigners (who have been feverishly taking notes) criticise their English. We often finish up with a game such as "Clumps". This week we are to have filmstrips like the ones I showed the students, for them to describe.

Meanwhile things are moving briskly in the lab. The new boy is proving remarkably quick, and although he has only been there ten days he can cut, and stain passable sections. I just hope he stays. Dr. Hsiang popped in one day and had a long talk to him.... If they all learn as quickly as he, it would not be such a labour to teach a new boy the rudiments as I once thought.

...The K'un Kuang had a parents' meeting on Saturday afternoon and as Nell had been greatly impressed by the rehearsal of a play, which they were to present, she got permission for me to go in for a while to see it. It really was quite a remarkable production and extremely well acted. It was the story of a girl who was desperately keen to go to a university but whose father forbid it. It was very

harrowing, with a mother dying of T.B. and everyone in tears most of the time. Some of the audience wept too! After that we had a hurried tea and went off in a horse-cab across the city to an International Concert organised by the YMCA. It was in a huge hall, which was packed; there must have been over 3000 people. The music was only good in spots, and I found the actual people much more interesting. First, a choir of about 100 Japanese children (that itself a surprise, I didn't know so many were left here) they sang, among other things, the Hallelujah Chorus, and were warmly applauded. We had a Russian pianist (no choir alas) and a Chinese string quartet, and an American lady with a sweet - but almost inaudible voice. The best contribution by far was by the Korean community. There was quite a big choir of Korean Christians. The women wore white robes with very high waists, long sleeves and very full gathered skirts - they look just like the night-gowned angels in Byrne-Jones' pictures. I was almost as much entertained by a Korean woman in the audience near me. She had a small baby boy in her arms, and during the course of the concert he had three separate meals at her breast and was changed once. So sensible.

Today the hospital staff went for the day to Tung Ling, the East tombs. Most of them, those on duty today, will go next week. The College staff were invited too, so I gladly went. It was the greatest fun from start to finish. We set off about 8.30 a.m., about 200 strong, on sixteen big flat carts. Such a cavalcade! We all sat round the edge of the carts, with legs dangling or sticking out, and whenever we got entangled with another cart, or shaved a bus, there were yells of "feet" and much bunching up together. The road was crowded with traffic, all Moukden seemed to be going to Tung Ling. It took about one and a half hours over a meandering dusty road through flat country where farmers were ploughing and harrowing and sowing crops. Patient donkeys walked endlessly round wells, bringing up water to irrigate the fields.

When we got to the Tung Ling we all got off and were marshalled into male and female crocodiles for the confusing business of ticket-buying. The "je nao" was terrific! Then we had a rather hasty walk through the enclosure containing the buildings leading up to the emperor's tomb. It was very lovely, climbing up a steep hill through pinewoods, with a pear or cherry tree standing out so purely here and there. The actual grave mound is at the back of all the buildings, a rather naked little hill covered with dilapidated cement, and a lot of school children were careering up and down its slopes. I gathered that in the old days no one was allowed into this part at all, and some of the women doctors I was with were rather scandalised.

After this we walked along to a small half-wooded hill and sat in a sort of natural amphitheatre, and had a service with lots of hymns to Chinese tunes and a rather disconcerting sermon on "prepare to meet thy God". It struck me as hard to make Him sound very fierce in such beautiful natural surroundings, but that may just be my unregenerateness.

The next item was lunch. This was extremely well organised. Fancy, a hot meal, cooked in the naked country, for 200 people! They had built two stoves of mud while we were having the service, and had two huge cauldrons of boiling soup bubbling away. It was delicious soup, with meatballs, green stuff and shrimps in it, and as well we each had a hard-boiled egg, two apples and a huge mant'ou. Someone had brought long rolls of white cloth, and so we all sat down in rows at a nice tablecloth and had piping hot food. This picnic was on a bank overlooking the Hun River. After that we all climbed up a hill among the pine trees, and sports were organised on a flat piece of ground on the top. But at this point I wandered off by myself into the woods and had two hours bliss pottering about looking at flowers and birds. The birds were elusive, in the tops of the pine trees, but the flowers were wonderful. You know Anemone pulsitilla the furry one in the rock garden?' Well there were lots like

that but not so furry and with deep-purple flowers. And lots and lots of violets, while the wild pear and cherry were just perfect. I got back to the party just in time to be the last but one in a race (an arithmetic race, as I discovered, having entered under the impression that I only had to run).. We started homewards about 4 p.m. and got in at 6 p.m. Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves hugely and it was a great success. You may wonder who the 200 were: doctors, nurses, office staff, coolies, lab boys, etc. etc..

I forgot to tell you - the Barkers have arrived! I haven't seen them yet since I wasn't over at the service this afternoon. By all accounts they are extremely well and in very good form. His coming will be a comfort to Mr. Findlay I expect, as he had been rather harassed by things in the Theological College. The students there went on strike for a day. this week (this private, please), over some of their number being "called up". I suppose they thought the powers that be should do something, but actually nothing can be done. This conscription is a terrible business, feared and resented by all the men. After all, it is to fight their fellow-countrymen. Also, it is for an indefinite period, and doctors are called up as ordinary soldiers, and so on. The call-up takes many months to come to the actual point, and when that is imminent it seems to be usual to "disappear". Very upsetting to one's normal plans, even when successful, and worrying for relations, but the search for wanted men seems to be perfunctory as a rule.

Oh, by the way, Pastor K'ung of Chihhsien was in one day for tea. He is an oldish man and remembers Dad and you well, and Jack just "so high". He knew about our house at home being called "Easthope". Do you remember anyone of that name? He was probably not a pastor then, of course.

Another interesting thing I saw the other day was in the Blind School compound a completely blind girl climbing a big willow tree. She was about twenty feet up, feeling for twigs, which she broke off and threw down to another blind friend. I heard they made whistles out of them....

Much love, Agatha

Letter No. 167 8th May 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother....

... Tom Blakely got a letter from John Stewart in which he said he really had my boxes. Think of it! It's two and a half years since I saw inside one of them.... Still no word from either the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank or Church House as to how much money I have a permit for, so I can't cash cheques and go on borrowing. I do wish they'd hurry.

... a letter from Dr. Gao from Peiping... he says university authorities in Peiping have had a lot of trouble with students, putting up scurrilous letters (anonymous) on the notice-boards. Just what has been happening here - and I'm sure it must comfort him to realise that it wasn't only his students who are awkward at times.

The College is planning a sort of conference here for graduates about the end of May. About 30 - 40 "old boys" are expected and there is a four-day programme of inspections, lectures, receptions, excursions, all the usual kind of thing.

I am writing this letter during a Pathology demonstration to the students. Both the post-mortems we had a few weeks ago turned out to be very good teaching cases, so I've had a summary of each case and commentary translated into Chinese, and put out with all the naked-eye specimens and the slides, all with pictures of what they show, labelled in English and Chinese. This relieves me of any necessity to try to talk. There is a regular mob in at present looking at the things, and I'm sitting in the corner writing, ostensibly to "answer any questions" but more as a deterrent to microscopes taking legs and walking away.

These students intrigue me vastly. They must be such a funny mixture. I know some are friendly and some are not, but how does one know which are which? Anyway, the best way to win a foothold here is to teach them as much as possible, and as well as possible, because all are keen to learn, and very critical of the present, relatively low, standards. They don't realise what a struggle the staff here have had to keep things up even to their present level, and how infinitely better the teaching here is even now than the Government medical college in Moukden, where there are huge classes and practically no clinical teaching. However, in the Government college they pay no fees and have free food, lodging etc.; and here they pay fees, albeit very low.

At this point a hectic interlude when someone really did ask a question. When, oh when will I be able to talk Chinese? However, with the help of many pictures and circuitous explanations they have all started to beam and say "ming pai la" ("understood"), so all is well.

The K'un Kuang house is almost ready, and we plan to flit on Saturday. Yet, I'll miss Hugh and Jack, but not much as we plan to have a lot of joint meals, probably lunch and tea every day to help the servant problem. In any case Nell has a stern rule against talking "medical shop" at meals, and indeed in her presence at any time. If she hadn't she would never get a word in edgewise, with three doctors in the house, but you should hear the burst of conversation if she happens to be out!

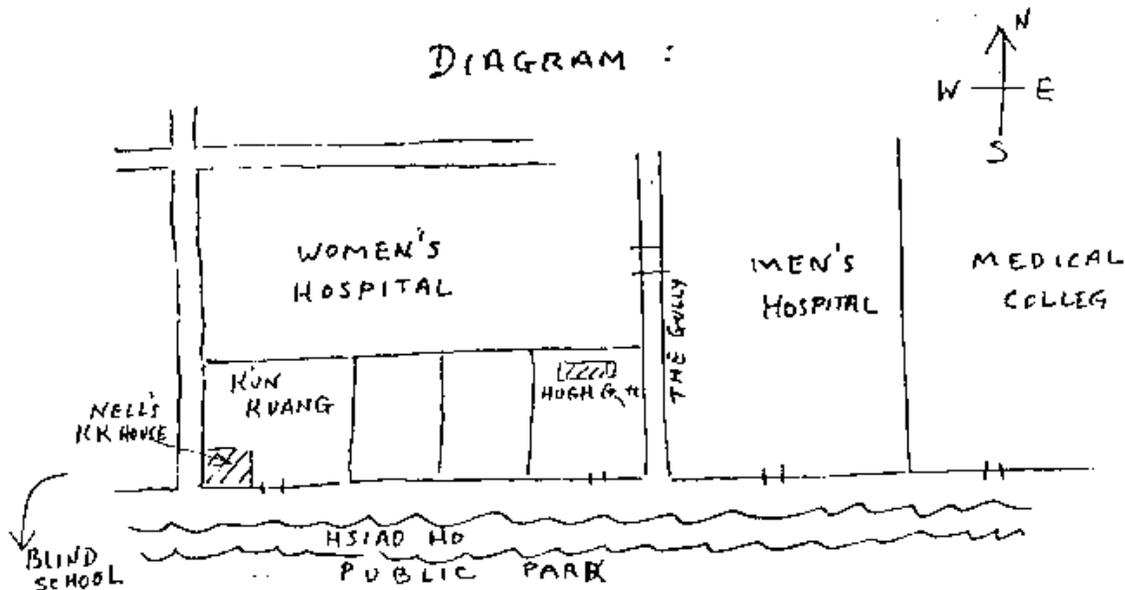
Yesterday a Dr. Ti, an MMC graduate who works in the military hospital here, and his wife, asked us four, and the Robertsons, Harry Johnstone and Tom Blakely to a meal in one of the best restaurants. Of course we had a sumptuous meal, all the usual sea slugs and shrimps and kidneys cut into little frills, and one dish I never had before - snails, very life-like, and tasting horrible.

...One of the women doctors, Liu Shu-chen, who is head physician in the Women's Hospital is one of the first two who are to go to Britain for post-graduate training. She is a very fine person, one of the ones who really held the place together during the bad years. Dor will know her, I'm sure. She is very devout and perhaps a bit narrow, although it is rather an impertinence to criticise a person of such quality. She will probably do most of her study in Edinburgh ... it would be a good plan if she could visit Ireland...

Well, this is Saturday evening now, and it has been a busy day for we have accomplished the "flit". The K'un Kuang is only next-door-but-two;, so it's quite easy to run back and forth. The weather is just about perfect, except when the wind gets up ... outlook on the park and rather weedy stagnant Small River; everything green and fresh. Most of the trees are willows or elms. Nearly every elm seems to have small boys up it, breaking off branches and throwing them down to friends below.

They eat either the new leaves or young fruits, I'm not clear which ...lilac bushes... rhubarb seedlings from Hugh... turnips, lettuces, carrot seeds up....planting seeds of leeks, Clarkia, antirrhinums...Earth where not recently dug, as hard as iron!.....

Love, Agatha



More staff houses to the right of the medical college.

Letter No. 168 16 May 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother...

Your letter of 2/5/47 came in 12 daysThanks for buying sheep skin-lined boots. The ones I have are only lined with woolly cloth and most of it is worn away, and they aren't big enough for two pairs of wool socksThe College has supplied me with two white coats and a pair of rubber gloves....What a wonderful exhibition... what a lark to think of you floating around in a lovely robe, exuding information! One hundred doctors sounds almost unbelievable too. I'm glad you met Dr. Chakko of Vellore. I remember her very well, and her Anatomy Dept., which was a thing of beauty.... (Photo of Christine - such a sweet funny solemn wee creature... How lucky that David's ear was cured so promptly Good for penicillin! Jack Leggate says he can walk round the wards now and diagnose TB by noting all the temperature charts which still show fever after two days in hospital...

On Sunday we were over in the west as usual for the English service and I saw Mrs. Barker and got the books and Burberry. All so precious and useful and completely satisfactory....

On Wednesday we all went over for a Conference meeting. I find these meetings extremely interesting now that I know the people and the situation a bit. If it were not all so serious and important it would be extremely diverting! Poor Harry Johnstone has an awful burden on his shoulders; the entire business and property end is so difficult and complicated. Nearly every discussion seemed to end with, "Well, we'll just have to leave it to you, Harry". He's not a bit well, with chronic sinus troubles and looks awfully thin and worn. By the way, Dr. Mary Findlay (Mrs. Findlay's daughter), Ella Gordon and John Stewart are expected any minute as they were due in Tientsin some days ago. What fun I'll have opening my trunks... John Stewart is to be sent on up to Kirin to keep Tom company this summer, and will then go to Peiping in the autumn ... at least this plan is "Communists permitting" and at the moment the news of the North is not too good, Kirin being almost surrounded. Tom is there now. He went last week, and all his worldly goods followed on a truck (CNRRA I think). This meeting lasted from 3 p.m. till 10.30 p.m. with a brief interval for supper, but luckily Hugh had asked that we be collected by the hospital car, so we got home all right. It is not easy to get about at night as there are no conveyances after dark, and very jumpy policemen who don't give one long to answer their challenge. There was an armed robbery the other evening on the actual steps of the YMCA, quite close to a big main street. I'm not giving you any more conference news, having given a solemn vow to myself to be very good and discreet. A certain young man here got a rap on the knuckles recently because his mother gave R.H. Boyd a very interesting piece of news before R.H. had received the official information about it. So one just can't be too careful, and after all you can't always guess how to censor my letters, only I can do it. What a pity we can't just gossip, gossip, gossip.

This week has been quite busy with work in the new house, putting up curtains etc. Nell has been able to lend me a bed, curtains enough to make me decent, and a mattress. The furniture partly belongs to the house and is partly borrowed. At the moment everyone who has no furniture or has lost it is borrowing essentials from the pool, and I suppose some day I ought to buy my own.

Our lavatory is not yet in order, so we have to go along to the men's house for that. It doesn't do to be bashful! Especially when, if one times it wrong, one finds them both out, and the doors locked, and has to call out the cook from the gatehouse to let one in. "Not mended yet?" he says cheerfully, with a broad grin.

Yesterday evening we had a house warming. All the K'un Kuang teachers came; Mr. Chang the head, three men teachers, and one woman teacher and her husband, and Shu fen - Nell's great friend who runs the kindergarten and Hugh Garven and Jack Leggate. We had a sort of buffet supper as there's no big table, and ate a goose Mr. Chang had been keeping for this very occasion. Then played rowdy games. It went very well and was most hilarious. It means a lot to Nell to be back in this house, like old times. Agnes sends you her love and says she enjoys your letters and will write soon. What a nice comfortable quiet person she is.

Much love, Agatha.

Letter No. 169 24 May 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

... I really got my three cases from India last week... far more clothes than I can possibly wear ... painting things... Susan's field glasses.... a lot of books. I showed the three surviving summer slips, which were all I had last autumn, to Agnes, and she was really staggered and suggested I should keep one as a curiosity since she had never seen a garment in such an advanced stage of decay.

The main news this week is that the College Graduates' Reunion is now in progress. About 100 are attending. Forty are from outside Moukden, which is quite good considering the great difficulty in getting here. I suppose this is the first reunion for a good many years and everyone seems very happy about it. In fact I think it will do the College a lot of good at this difficult juncture as the graduates (especially those who took the trouble to come back for a meeting like this) are so warmly loyal. I was tickled the other day to watch a newly arrived visitor, who had just walked in at the door, catch sight of Hugh on the stairs and rush up to him with such joy, shaking his hand as if they would never let go. You should have seen the faces of some students who were passing, their eyes just popped out with amazement! Do them good! Dr. Gow isn't back from Peiping, so Mr. Ch'in, of Biology, who is the most senior member of the staff here, is acting as chairman and host, he is a Cheeloo graduate and rather an old-fashioned quiet creature, and I find his Chinese almost impossible to follow. But he is very well liked by the students because he is so good at his work, and a splendid teacher. (Recently an anonymous notice went up on the students' board, complaining of the bad teaching, and saying there were only two members of the staff who knew how to teach - Mr. Ch'in and Dr. Garven!). This is all rather a digression.

The first incident in the Reunion programme was a students v. graduates soccer match, very informal especially as regards the attire of the visitors. One stout gentleman, who used to be a fine runner, soon got too hot, and seized an opportunity to peel off his trousers and throw them to the side - when his shirt-tails flapped you could see he had little pants on underneath. He really looked very comical. Only about a dozen students turned up to watch - and there were a few housemen from hospital etc. - which showed what a funny mood they are in. But it may have been partly that they were preparing for the welcome entertainment on the following afternoon. This followed the usual pattern of short plays interspersed with concertina solos and songs. I left after the first couple of hours.

This morning there was a service in the College and over 100 at it. Dr. Liu Shu chen (the physician in the women's hospital) took the service, and Hugh preached. Then, after ten minutes breather we had another meeting at which Dr. Liu T'ung lun, after apologising for a sore throat, talked at full speed for one hour and forty-five minutes, giving a history of the College and Hospital during the last few years. This finished at one, and we separated to eat, and met at 2 p.m. for a group photograph. The afternoon meeting was to have been a discussion on College affairs, but I had reached saturation point; so went over to the west with the others to the English service. There was to be a brief meeting of Conference first, but the almost inevitable happened - so much to discuss and decide that the service shrank to brief closing prayers. Then we jogged home on the usual ramshackle droshky and went to supper with the Garven-Leggate household, and now we are just back.

Tom Blakely is back from Kirin! He was there in all five days, and then the fighting all round was so bad that his Chinese YMCA friends insisted that he leave. He was only allowed to go (by them) on

condition that he abided by their decisions in this kind of thing. He says that Kirin was almost a dead city, the streets empty except for soldiers and an occasional policeman, and all the shops barricaded. He got back to Ch'ang-ch'un all right, and then was stuck there. The Chinese there too were very anxious get rid of him, as the city was very precarious, fighting actually in the outskirts. The railway is broken, no trains running further than K'ai yuan, but eventually he, and the wife and two children of a British consular official got back to Moukden on an American consular plane. Poor Tom, it is such a fiasco, and leaves him still hanging on here indefinitely. He had had such a job packing up all his furniture and belongings (65 packages, I hear!) ready to send to Kirin by truck, but he's lucky he still has them as they might have been lost if they had started.

I told you Miss Gordon and Dr. Findlay had arrived. Now the line between here and Tientsin is well and truly broken, and poor John Stewart kicking his heels in Tientsin. The Language School said they could fit him in, and it seems a great pity he doesn't go on there now ... it won't get any cheaper in the autumn. The problem of finance is getting worse and worse. Isolation (more or less) means soaring prices. Kao liang is up to \$180 a pound as compared with \$50 a few weeks ago. The position of salaried workers, especially schoolteachers, is terribly precarious.

Mr. George Taylor is expected to arrive at any moment, as he wrote to say he had got a passage on a boat to Hulutao, and then would go by CNRRA truck to Chihhsien (Chinchow), and on here by train. There should be no hold-up by that route. He is to live meanwhile with Hugh and Jack.

I oscillate between Chinese and the lab. The lab boy was very unsettled for a day or two as he had heard the Pa Lu had entered his village where he had only an old mother and a sister of sixteen. As "the only man in the family" he wanted to go home, but soon realised that he couldn't hope to get there, and is now a little more settled, but naturally a bit depressed. I just wish I could do more to make life interesting for him, but the wretched language bar, and lack of unlimited time doesn't make it easy. However, he goes twice a week, for two hours each time, to the YMCA, to English classes, and is as keen as mustard about that, which is an interest for him. The lack of electricity makes lab work very difficult as we are more or less dependent on it for a steady source of heat, and fiddling with spirit lamps is very unsatisfactory and time-consuming. The light comes on occasionally in the evenings, at the moment. Long may it last!

No more now. Much love to you. Kindest regards to Margaret (Alcorn) - I think of her much oftener than I send messages. A nice letter from Sally this week, bless her!

Agatha

Letter No. 170 31 May 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother,

... Both you and Dor comment on my sending non-urgent things by airmail. But you see, even sea mail is by no means cheap, I think, so unless I have a big batch to send I restrict myself to one air-mail a week, the one sent to you and I don't always have the news, or time, to write both sides of four sheets to you - hence the enclosures Jean (Stockman)'s letter is most bewildering. Why ever

can't I have an account? Will no further young missionaries be able to hold accounts? I very much doubt if the draft she sent will be negotiable, but will see Mr. Johnstone tomorrow. Poor man....

I'm looking out, on this Saturday afternoon, through the sitting-room door, which opens into the garden. There is a patch of bright green grass, and some big patches of dug ground which look quite impressive now, with neat little rows of lettuce, and carrots, and turnips, and leeks, and beetroot and runner beans (all planted by my own fair hands!) and lots more optimistic sticks of millet-stalk where more things should be coming up. There are a few big trees, and lilac, and rose bushes, and then the low wall, which divides us from the road. Just across the road is the river, gay with boatloads of people out for the afternoon. Crowds of people in the park on the far side, and as a background the orchestra of frogs. We had twenty-four hours downpour a couple of days ago, but today the sun is hot and you can nearly see the weeds growing. The weather has been very cool this month. I was still wearing woollies and having a hot water bottle at night until a few days ago. Most extraordinary, everyone says, but of course the longer it stays this way the better.

How queer to look back on this time last year in Kuan Yuan, struggling with that lassie with the fractured skull. How glad I would have been then to catch a glimpse of the present!.....

Dr. McMinn is back in Moukden.... the communists have been very close (to K'ai yuan) for some time, and of course she wouldn't want to be there if the communists came in as one solitary foreigner might be a nuisance, and complicate things for the Chinese. She must be fed up as she is so contented there, but perhaps it won't be for long. Rumour says that Chiang K'ai-shek is in Moukden this week. Another snippet of news (perhaps they fit together in some way) is that the Communist Party has called a nation-wide strike of all students, teachers, and workers of all kinds for next Monday, the 2nd., as a protest against the corruption and inefficiency of the government. It will be extremely interesting to see what actually happens. Certainly the Chinese won't treat it lightly, and expect demonstrations and arrests and general fuss. As regards affairs in the College, the latest bulletin is rather cheering. The graduates' visit was a great success (from our point of view!). The rebels made a mistake in showing their hand too clearly. For instance, the entertainment on the Saturday - I sat through half of it and innocently clapped - was just bristling with anti-Dr. Gow and anti-foreign and anti-Christian allusions, so much so that during one skit, which I didn't wait for, many of the graduates got up and walked out!

On Tuesday afternoon the graduates asked the students to a tea party, and a lot of heated talk occurred which cleared the air a lot. There was a lot of good advice from the visitors, who afterwards walked round to the front of the College, where Dr. Christie's bust is, and cheered old Dugald! Many of the students are said to have gone with them. All this, from senior men who have gone out in the big world and got good positions, is bound to have impressed the students with the idea that there must be something to be said for the old regime. The push for a government basis for the College has been allowed to die down - a notice from the students' representative council went up on the board to say that the issue was being dropped. Of course this is only a temporary lull, as the real instigators of the whole business are not students but the one or two disloyal members of staff, and who knows what force behind them. But a lull is very welcome, and time probably works in our favour.

... that man Dorland ringing up... ? an FAU Canadian I met in Chungking.... when I was at Language School in Peiping saw someone the image of Reynolds Morton who demonstrated to me in Anatomy

- he answered in a Canadian accent and referred to meeting me in Chungking same man? I can't remember.

.... John Stewart has arrived. And Mr. George Taylor, tonight.... I do wish there was someone at the centre who really knew something about Manchuria, but the powers that be all seem to be "Indian" - R.H., Mrs. R.H., Rosie O'Neill, and now in a sense, Jean (Stockman)...the Commission ...pushing ideas down the throats of a not-really-representative synod, who were too full of grateful and hospitable feelings to want to fight. In fact the Commissioners' report must be taken with large pinches of salt, and in places does not represent the Chinese opinions, but rather what other people thought Chinese opinion ought to be!

Just been next-door with Nell to greet Mr. George Taylor. He looks flourishingly healthy and in great spirits. It will do those two good to have him there, for he seems a very cheery soul. No more now.

Much love to you, my dearest. Agatha.

Letter No. 171, 7 June 1947, Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

...the garden has dried up again to board-like hardness. As we have several elm trees near, it is thickly littered with seeds, which have sprouted into a carpet of seedlings. Where the seeds got covered with a layer of dust, which later turned to a sort of cement after a shower, the seedlings are pushing it up in great slabs several inches across! Last night I put up some stakes for our runner beans to climb, and by 11 o'clock this morning one of them had twined itself around, two complete circles. But there's not much time for the garden these days. I feel I could well divide into three people, one to learn Chinese, one to prepare lectures, and one to run the lab. As for news beyond the compound wall, we don't get much that is reliable.

Did I tell you that K'ai yuan had been taken by the Communists? (*Later note: was recaptured by government.*) Just as well that Dr. McMinn came when she did. Dr. Shih (Yu Ju), the Chinese woman doctor there, and the nurses and some patients left on foot and have reached Tiehling. They were accompanied by the retreating Government troops. We've heard that General Mao Tze Tung is up in the north, directing operations in person. From many stories one gathers that the common soldier on both sides is unenthusiastic, and the whole thing is regarded as an unpleasant and dangerous disease, which has smitten the country, rather than a struggle which any sensible person could be interested in from the ideological point of view. Moukden is as usual, except that we have curfew from 8.30 p.m. till 6.00 a.m.. It has its funny side too. My teacher told me he had seen the poor country folk coming in early with stuff to sell, being stopped for their identity cards or passes, and then - because of course they hadn't any - being kept waiting till 6 a.m. before being allowed to walk on. One hears occasional shots at night, I suppose a jumpy policeman registering efficiency. When this happens the frogs are instantly reduced to shocked silence, and then they burst out in reproachful clamour once more.

Prices go on rising. I'm horrified to find I spent \$81,000 last month - very roughly £20 - but some of this was with an eye to the future, e.g. coal at about £8 a ton. Remember, these figures are very vague approximations and will mean little or nothing when they reach you.

... recent correspondence in the "Scotsman". A very well written and telling letter from the minister of St. Cuthbert's suggesting that the financial difficulties of the Church of Scotland might require retrenchment abroad, and then quoting the opening paragraph of the Manchurian Commission's report (about vigorous life in the church here) as an argument that the retrenchment might well start in Manchuria. The reply by Rev. Jim Dougal is quite sensible but a bit woolly, and anyone reading the two might well conclude that the attacker had the best of it, and that this is the time to clear out of Manchuria. All very unpleasant and dangerous just before Assembly time. Just in case you come across this sort of talk on our side of the water, please tell people that the idea that we should have left the vigorous young church in Manchuria to pursue its triumphant way under its own steam is PERFECT NONSENSE.

An important point is that since the Commission was here the situation has greatly deteriorated. That time was the crest of a wave, and now we must surely be nearing the lowest point of the trough. The financial situation of the church has got worse, and war of course has put things back everywhere (witness K'ai yuan, Kirin and so on), and worst of all the Chinese leaders and I suppose the ordinary members too, are depressed and very tired and discouraged. They need every crumb of comfort and help and support they can get, to help them over this bad time. We were counting up, the other night, the men in the church who could be counted as leaders, and it came to eight or nine at most, and they almost all old and tired. There seems to be a gap then, and the young men are untried and untrained. Just what relationship will eventually be worked out between these younger ones and the foreigner is uncertain, and it may not be the same kind of glad and welcoming attitude that the older men like Dr. Liu T'ung Lun and Dr. Gow Wen Han and so on have. That will take time to work out. But at present - and it's foolish and impossible to try to plan very far ahead these days - the fullest and most generous and patient support from Ireland and Scotland is needed, and anything less would be rather in the nature of a betrayal. Of course I don't say all this out of my own head as it were. It's what I've pieced together from many sources, which go to make up a consistent picture.

A letter came today from Mr. Wilson in the Cash Office - enclosing £50 for salary July-September (so I must be getting £200 a year!) and asking me to tell the bank to refund the £200 deposited there. I can't quite, as I've sent Dor a cheque for £2, but I enclose a letter to the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank asking them to send back £198. (Address: 9 Gracechurch St., London WC3 (c/A 3 Dept)). Will you please ask Jack to send Mr. D.H. Wilson a cheque for the odd £2.0.0 on my behalf. I enclose also a letter and separate p.s. and minute receipt for Mr. Wilson and hope you will not mind leaving them in with him. I hope you don't think my letter to him too sharp, but why on earth should young John Stewart have an account with permit for £400 a year when he has only just arrived, when I'm refused one because I wasn't here in 1939! Daft! I certainly don't want to be dependent on regular lots in this uncertain country, and why also should I lose a lot of money each quarter by getting it in such large dollops. Harry Johnstone was able to take the £250 bombshell off my hands, and will dole it out at the exchange, which obtains at the time I receive the money, but I can't expect him to manage that every time.

We had John Stewart and Harry Johnstone for lunch today. When I saw the former last week he seemed very depressed by losing the chance to start (language study) in Peking, and also because of all the gloomy talk he had heard in Shanghai, Tientsin and here, but today he was much cheerier

and seems quite settled down. He is being taught by Pastor Liu (former Pastor, rather) of West Moukden, and says he's greatly enjoying it, so that's fine.

Much love, as ever. Agatha

Letter No. 172 7th. June, Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother.....

We cleaned rugs here by laying them on the snow and beating them, and the black layer on the snow when you lifted them was amazing....

... At present we have water most of the time, but hardly any electricity. It's far more bother not to have things when you expect them than never to have them at all. Then, our chain won't pull, and we have to trot off to the Garven house; and when there's no electricity there's no ironing done. Life in Chengtu without modern conveniences was simpler in some ways. As for curtains, I've borrowed from Nell, whose belongings were almost all saved for her by her great friend Wang Shu Fen of the kindergarten, and we have some furniture from the pool of what survived. Quite enough. My contribution to the household has been my green enamel tea-pot and Mr. Yuan's picture for which I have pinched a frame belonging to Mr. Webster; I didn't know it was his until after I'd pinched it, so just looked pathetically at him, and being a nice man he he'd not the heart to say a word.

Yes, Dr. Gow is still away. In Tientsin now, I think. But he is being invited - urged - to come back by the board. Dr. Liu is firm, all right. I've never met anyone of such energy and fight and sheer indomitableness. And there's always an imp in him, which pops out when everyone else is at their most glum and dubious. He's a real rock in a weary land to the church here, although of course he has enemies as every strong man has, especially those as forthright and uncompromising as he. How funny Dad should have said that about Paul's epistles, for I often feel the same. It's just the same here now, a bewildering mixture of splendour and weakness. I think I'd go on putting "Manchuria, China" on letters. Quite polite, as it has no Jap. taint like Manchukuo has, and implies that Manchuria is a part of China, which is what they like to remember.....

John Stewart told me something today that made me feel appalled. He said he had come across the rumour at home that I had said that the standard of work in our Mission Hospitals in Gujurat was very low. So that when Bertha went home she actually took a refresher course! What a distortion! And so unfair to Bertha for whose work in Borsad I have unbounded admiration. Of course she took a refresher course, as any sensible body would. It's the first thing I'll want to do myself, and sairly I need it. But what could I have said, and to whom, that could possibly be twisted into such criticism. Do contradict it if and when you can. John also told me that a nurse (McKnight I think was the name, belonging to Windsor Congregation, was coming to China as a missionary but not in our mission because it was such a sink of iniquity - at which point he twinkled and said, "and that includes you!". Have I trodden on any Windsorial corns by any chance? What a pity to lose a real live nurse, but if she is that kind of person she might have found it hard to fit in here I'm just back from the College service. Jack Leggate preached. He always jokes a lot about his very bad Chinese, and although not as bad as he thinks it is it's not very good, as previously he didn't need to use it much. But he preached a first class sermon on "Face", which takes quite a lot of nerve to a Chinese congregation.

Dr. Shih of K'ai Yuan and Dr. McMinn were both there. Dr. Shih terribly sad and upset about having been forced to leave after having stayed by the hospital all these years. K'ai Yuan said to have been retaken, but rumour says that everything in the hospital has been lost. Everyone is so sorry for both her and Dr. McMinn. Dr. Shih goes back to Tieling tomorrow, where the nurses are waiting for her. After that I don't know what happens. We hear that the Nan Man (Shen Tang Medical College, the Government one) has closed temporarily, also a Girls' School here in Moukden. I suppose a lot of students wanted to get back to their families, owing to the unsettled state of Moukden, and they thought they might as well stop classes until things sorted themselves out. The College is quite peaceful, and all as usual. We have bought a sack of rice, and also got two sacks of flour and a lot of UNRRA tinned food - butter, bacon, etc. - and a big tin of kerosene, so are quite snug and ready for anything. It's such a lovely day today. Why can't we all be peaceful and enjoy it? Such a silly war, with no one's heart in it. Someone said "they" (the Chinese) "fear the Communists and hate the Kuomintang", and that's about the size of it.

....No more news or rumour to report. A

Letter No. 173 15th. June 1947, Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

... I got your packet of brown socks, and air-mail paper and also "Trials in Burma" and "String Games" (that last was a brilliant idea - I remember so well when travelling last year in a train, Margaret Turner and I playing the only two we could remember, and how, one after another, a carriage-full of soldiers came over to watch, and retired to their own seats to practice. It looked so funny!).

What's the news? Nothing very startling. No one seems to know what has become of the Russians who were supposed to be marching north from Dairen on their way back to Russia, although this time last week there was a lot of anxiety about possible "incidents" and there was a rumour that they were going to stay in Moukden for twenty days "rest". However, they haven't turned up. One or two more towns have been evacuated by the Government troops and occupied by the Communists, with little or no fighting. The trenches and fortifications around Moukden are said to be complete. Another report is that there is a big army on its way north from within the Wall, to take the situation firmly in hand. But all this is rumour. The newspaper we get ("The Chinese-English Intelligence", published in Tientsin) was held up for about ten days, although the trains did run occasionally during that time, and the papers reappeared, eight at a time, as one small single sheet containing absolutely no local news, and only occasional indirect references to China. Most of it is news of America, with snippets about Russia and Greece but as one whole side is extracted from the "Readers' Digest" and "Omnibook", with Chinese translations alongside, there isn't really much news to be got out of it. The "rumours" I tell you are mostly reports of what is being printed in the local Chinese papers. One report that is widely repeated is that Mongol cavalry, supported by Russian planes, have penetrated three hundred miles into Sinkiang (Chinese Turkistan), presumably aiming at some uranium deposits, which Russia may well covet, for her atomic researches.

But we ourselves go on peacefully from day to day with no change in the routine. Only the rising prices and the refugees from Communist-absorbed (one can't say "captured") areas make any obvious change. The College and the K'un Kuang go on as usual. Indeed the students are much quieter now, perhaps feeling that in view of exams next month it might be a good plan to do some work. Dr. Gao is still in Tientsin, but one or two quite cheery letters have come. He is evidently feeling much better, but I haven't heard if he has made any reference to coming back, and if so when.

I was round at the Women Students' hostel one night, taking prayers. I had been feeling that it was rather bad that I had been here three months and had had no contact at all with the women students, so I asked Dr. Li, who is their warden and also in the Physiology Department if there was any way of beginning to get to know them. She promptly asked me to take prayers one evening, so I had to try. I got her to read the Bible passage for me, to rest their ears, and said the wee talk in very simple English with a summary in Chinese at the end, but I really don't know if they understood either my Chinese or my English. They are not at all hostile, as some of the men were, but just not particularly interested in a foreigner and don't know what to do with one. So I didn't really get the ice broken, and doubt if I will until I start teaching and so have a chance to get to know some of them individually. Hugh says "Go slow", and "be patient" and so on, and (frequently) "It's not like the old days", so although I don't know what the old days were like I just jog along in the lab and at Chinese and wait for things to sort themselves out slowly.

Our garden looks quite impressive, and I get a lot of fun out of it. There is a lot of solid satisfaction in eating something you have planted, and thinned, and transplanted and manured and all the rest of it, yourself. You know that of course, but my gardening at home was too spasmodic to give the same feeling. We have, by degrees, acquired a shovel (for use as a spade), a hoe, Chinese type, bent round the wrong way to make the pushing kind, and a rake, and a watering-can. Hugh, of course, is much more professional, and has an out-door water-tap and very superior compost heap. Our gardens are an unfailing source of conversation. After all, if you want to talk about bad news it's much better to stick to the fact that Something has eaten both our gooseberries. After all, the war news is all rumours; that is sad fact.

I had a sad catastrophe last Sunday when hurriedly doing a job in the lab before the service. I splashed paraffin wax all over the front of my good green (wedding) frock. Ironing over blotting paper and rubbing with xylol only made it look worse, as the frock was dirty all over and any cleaned patch had a black ring round it. Finally I bought a gallon of petrol from the hospital and washed the whole frock in that. Magic! It's just perfect, fresh and clean all over.(Books to send ... Cochrane's new book on Leprosy - in spite of numerous arguments with the said Bob Cochrane (*of Velore, India*)!..

Much love to you and the Roywoods. Agatha

Letter No. 174 21 June 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

...(a fur coat) won't be necessary this winter as I have my long silk padded gown which goes under my big coat and umpteen other layers..... I have the (mosquito) net I bought in Chengtu ... the razors (for section cutting) which I asked Miss Fleming to buy and bring out... alas she had no time.... Yes,

the Robertsons have been sent to Moukden for a year, since it isn't possible for them to reach Seoul yet, which is in the Russian zone. They are living in a flat over the Bible Society House somewhere in the city, and busy learning Korean.

Some news... the Situation (I feel it needs a capital "S") still hangs fire. We heard that Chiang K'ai Shek had promised that if Moukden were not taken before June 20th, there would be enough reinforcements here to hold it indefinitely. The rumour about the Russians coming from Dairen seems to have been pure fabrication, it appears they never even left Dairen! There have been bad breaks in the Peking-Tientsin and Tientsin-Moukden lines, making travel almost impossible. How glad I am to be here, feeling at home with friends and colleagues, and not stuck in Peking in an atmosphere of fuss and gloom. There is still a lot of activity here in the digging line. We see lots of men, and some women and children too, going in or out of the city with a shovel over their shoulder and a bundle with their quilt and food-bowl. Each house is supposed to contribute one worker, or hire one. They sleep on the job, sometimes at least, hence the bedding, and get one or two meals a day, and a small wage. The curfew has now been reduced - we can now be on the streets till 10 p.m.. We heard one good story of a policeman telling the stall-holders in the market to pack up and be off home - this at 4 p.m. - to everyone's great astonishment and fright, they thought the Pa Lu were round the corner. Then some more police arrived and explained that it wasn't 4 p.m. but 10 p.m.! Fancy a Chinese making that mistake, it quite comforts me! The K'un Kuang is still going on as usual, but is having the end-of-term exams next week so that if the school has to disperse early the girls will have them over. The College starts its professional exams next week and we are planning an entrance exam later in July for the new students who want to start in the autumn. There was a certain amount of discussion about this, but we finally decided to go ahead with plans. One snag is that the present final-year class do not graduate until December, so the dormitories will overflow. I have to help in the professional Path exams! I am not altogether looking forward to cooperating with Dr. Hsiang. Finally it was decided that I set and correct the practical exam, and that Hugh co-examines in the orals. I wouldn't really have been any help in the orals as I couldn't have followed what was going on well enough. Poor Hugh, and lucky me!

A letter has come from Dr. Gow, much cheerier and explaining that the break-down in communication has prevented him from getting back, but he is coming as soon as he can, and giving some suggestions and comments in a way that shows he is really "taking hold" again and possibly a little "homesick". Splendid!

Yesterday I was over in the west, having lunch with the Barkers What a nice pair! I enjoyed it a lot. John Stewart is living there now. They talked a bit about Dor... wishing so badly she were here. I walked home across the city, and thereby discovered it was our first hot day, arriving in a damp state, which required a large number of cups of tea. The city looks quite normal, the only out-of-the-way thing being a few mule-teams dragging guns. They were coming in from the east, but looked like brand-new guns, so I don't know how to interpret it. Everyone is blossoming out in their summer hats and I find my Nanking coolie hat quite a superior model, and different from the coolie hats here so I provoke no ribald comments as in Nanking. The garden is flourishing these days - huge lettuce, and beetroot, and turnips and carrots and grapes all swelling visibly....

Much love, Agatha

Letter No. 175 29 June 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother.....

I really don't think you need think West China was a waste of time. Of course I am under no illusions at all about having helped Cheeloo or anything else. But, for example, some time ago Hugh, when talking about some fresh eruption of trouble in the College, suddenly looked at me and said, "How fortunate that you went first to West China to get hardened off, it would never have done if you had come here direct from India!" - or words to that effect.... Incidentally, the College is much more peaceful now, on the surface at least. The Kuo Li versus Sze Li issue seems to be quite abandoned at the moment. Perhaps the Communist advance and the approach of exams have combined to sober them down. I hope that the papers at home have not had very alarming reports about Manchuria to worry you. Of course, the position of Moukden was precarious enough for a while, and most of the rest of the country in Communist hands, but the tide seems to have turned now. Szepingkai has been retaken again by the Government and a lot of the railway there cleared. (Ten thousand are said to have been killed in and about Szepingkai). K'ai Yuan is back in Government hands. It is now the terminus so far as northbound trains from Moukden are concerned. Dr. Shih went there this week and has sent back quite encouraging reports as the damage is not so bad as feared. A bomb destroyed part of the back premises of the hospital, and they have lost their instruments and microscope, bedding, etc.. But the Communists did not find the drug store at all, and the beds are there and almost all Dr. McMinn's own belongings. The first thing the Communists did was to ask where the "American" doctor was, and then searched the town for Dr. Shih and the nurses. It seems almost certain that if they had been there they (the Chinese at least) would have been taken, as the Communists are short of medical workers, and they might have been forced to give up the drugs etc. that escaped detection. So Dr. McMinn seemed much comforted to find that to leave when they did was the right decision to take.

The consensus of opinion now seems to be that this recent Communist drive has failed, and that the pressure everywhere is relaxing. The railway to Tientsin is still rarely in action and there was a recent drive from Jehol in the direction of Chihhsien. But the people seem much more cheerful about the situation as a whole. I'm afraid, though, that reports outside may be unnecessarily gloomy as I got a letter from Dr. Struthers recently, offering Cheeloo as an asylum for any of our staff forced to leave Moukden - this from Tsinan of all places seems a little comic, but was certainly a kind gesture on their part.

We are having a lot of rain and heat now and it is terrific growing weather. Just as well for the sake of this year's harvest. A lot of land throughout Manchuria has not been sown at all because the farmers were afraid to venture out into their fields, so it is all the more important for what has been sown to do well.

Exams start in the College this week. Classes there stop on 15th. July. Dr. Hsiang is off sick with (?) typhoid, so it looks as though Hugh, with my "assistance" will carry the brunt of the Path exams. Much easier for me than co-examining with Dr. Hsiang! The K'un Kuang exams are over, but they go on with classes for another couple of weeks. There can't be a proper Synod meeting this summer as so few people outside Moukden could come in that it would not be really representative. But they are now having a sort of expanded policy committee including all those they can rake up, with powers of discussion only, its findings to be referred back to the Policy Committee (Synod?) for ratification.

The preliminary retreat is this week, about 50 people have registered . People are beginning to talk of holidays. For most people it will be just a flit from East to West Moukden, or vice versa - "you sleep in my bed, and I'll sleep in yours" - but if K'ai Yuan is anyway possible Dr. McMinn has agreed to take me in there for a week or ten days about the end of July, or in August. It's all very fluid so far.

I'm afraid Hugh will have to take the lab while I'm away, and I'm ashamed to give him yet another job as there's nothing I can do for him in return. Especially as the routine work is still very chaotic and bad. I just wish I knew something about technician's work. There are so many things that may go wrong and ruin one's results, and it's so hard to discover which are actually to blame. So far I haven't got it taped at all, but struggle and hope some miracle will happen, and we will suddenly find ourselves producing good sections!

.....Did I tell you that "Daily Light", Chinese and English, has come? I'm reading it, although the light from the Chinese version is a little hazy at times, the English clears it up....

Much love, Agatha

Letter No. 176 3 July 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

....I am writing to Eileen to ask if she could possibly buy a microtome for meUNRRA has let us down ...Dr. C??'s life ...her short article in BMJ on empyema of gall-bladder...

The school had a visit from the Public Health authorities, who sprayed the windows with DDT against flies and mosquitoes, and were going to do this house when Nell stopped them, as we didn't want the white mess on the windows when we have screens. However, she was not in time to stop them trooping upstairs, turning all our bedding upside-down and sprinkling us liberally against non-existent bed bugs. My room looked a little as if a tornado had hit it. Efficiency!

The communist advance has evidently been definitely checked. Everyone breathes much more freely. Dr. Gow is back but has gone to Liaoyang to see his family. Exams on in College. Classes stop for a month from July 15th. I have a holiday (from PathLab and Chinese) July 14th.- 25th. probably, as Hugh can take on then and I'm not keen on asking Dr. Hsiang. We will all probably have "holidays at home", or some may swap beds with someone in the West. I've a vague plan of going to K'ai yuan, but Dr. McMinn has not left to go back there herself yet, so it may not come off. Mr. Taylor (George) has gone to assess the damage to the hospital.

Excuse hasty scribble, it's late. Much love,

Agatha.

Letter No. 177 6th. July 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

... although Dr. Hsiang turned out not to have typhoid, he has been admitted to hospital with bad tonsillitis. So on Friday in a great scramble, Hugh and I invigilated the Path practical exam, which meant a solid spell from 7.30 till 1 p.m.. Yesterday we had half the orals, which turned out to be a sederunt lasting from 8 (really 7.30) till 3.30 p.m., with a ten minute interval for a cup of tea. Hugh did the questioning, and I just listened and was supposed to have some say in the marking. Actually we both independently marked within 5% except in one case where we were 10% different. I had one of the young doctors at my elbow for whispering "what's that?" or "What did he say?" I'm really very glad to have had the experience, as I learned quite a lot about oraling technique, and won't be so paralysed when I have to do it myself. But it's most exhausting to listen to Chinese all that time. We have the same tomorrow (Monday), but mercifully with a gap in the middle.

So Saturday's gardening did not come off, and the weeds grow apace. We have had a lot of rain in the last couple of weeks, which brings everything on with a rush. It's almost incredible to remember that two months ago we were scrutinising the naked stems of the vine to decide if it was alive or dead, and now it has twenty bunches of fine green grapes this size. (About half an inch in diameter)

This morning we had Dr. Ts'ui of the Church of Christ in China speaking at the College service. There was a good turnout, including quite a number of students. This Dr. T'ui came for the retreat in connection with church meetings (not full Synod) in the west. He's a very fine man, and most energetic in spite of being a diabetic - this was the first of four services he took today. Dr. Gow was at the service, looking fatter, but with a close summer-time haircut which makes him look very unlike himself for he went away with a great mop of hair and a heavy lock down over his forehead. He has not yet taken over any work from Dr. Ch'in, who is still acting Principal. At the little prayer meeting after the service I usually pick up some crumbs of news, and this morning heard that the hospital had been asked to look after 150 soldiers (I don't know whether sick or wounded or both), who will be housed in the Government Boys School next the College. Poor Dr. Liu, more burdens for him. The killed at Szup'ing kai were 100,000 not 10,000, including two thirds of the inhabitants. The families of some of our staff were there. One young doctor is the eldest of his family and finds himself with no news of his parents, who were there, and has two sisters, students in the College, one in the Kun Kuang, and a brother in the Wen Hui School, and also his own wife and family to support.

Mr. Taylor got back from K'ai Yuan yesterday. He had slow journeys, so much transport being commandeered by the military, and K'ai Yuan station a jam of trains since it's not used to being a terminus. The hospital had one bomb, (a Government one, of course), and a great many tiles off, all bedding and instruments gone, but beds and almost all the drugs still there. The Communists are still only about ten miles away, and the towns-people are a bit jumpy and expect them back. Dr. McMinn is still in Moukden. She had a bad fall, being a little concussed and bruising her face and left arm badly. However she was up today, and insists she will go back this week. But it's very hard to know whether to try to replace bedding from CNRRA now and then perhaps lose it all a second time.

This afternoon Nell and Agnes and I went to the Robertsons for tea. They live in a flat above the Bible House in West Moukden. These are the Robertsons I nearly overlapped in Chengtu, who are going to Korea when it is possible to do so. Their little flat is very nice, but what a place to live! The trains grind past all day long, blaring their sirens continually so that the room trembles. You have to

keep the windows shut to keep out the worst of the noise and dust. Luckily the electricity is so bad that the trams don't run after about 8 p.m.. Then we went on to a Communion service for all the people who came here for the meetings. This took the place of the English service. The Theological College chapel was full and it was a very fine service, taken by Dr. Ts'ui. Marshall McCreery was there, up for a few days from Chihhsien. It is being quite closely threatened by the Communists at the moment, much more so than Moukden. He seems in very good form. He had managed to unearth one of Dr. Corky's medical books (Ewing) very mouldy and mouse-eaten but still very useful, but seems most amazed that she should think things are anything like as she left them. Still it is lucky he found this and it's as safe here as in Chihhsien. He goes back this week. I believe he has told Mrs. McCreery not to come.

... the poor Baboses ... got their affidavit all right but then found they could not get a visa without guarantees ... about being able to get into Hungary after a year (or two?) in America... terribly despondent.

Any more news about Tania? I have no news except the bald cable....

... I mentioned soap as one of the things you could usefully send me, but when I said that I did not know it was so hard to get. When I left home it was quite easy. So on no account send any. Dor says you tend to spend coupons recklessly on me. This is very bad. No More.

Wed. 9th. famous day! (ARC's birthday) Most of it correcting exam papers. Only practical papers, and strictly factual with no complicated sentences, but still it is an awful slog. I trot round the College first, looking for anyone foolish enough to look leisured, and nab them. They read out the Chinese, and I shout "Whoa", at frequent intervals, for them to translate. Most of them are frightfully bad, because I think the exam was really very stiff, and didn't give them enough time. One bright lass has got one out of fifty so far - I've got halfway through most of them now. So I hope there won't be an explosion when Dr. Hsiang sees my marks.

The only other news is that the cat has had kittens again, the second time since I arrived. Four beauties. The first born in Nell's bed, she being asleep in it at the time. Altogether, this household now includes six cats, one dog, two hens, and about ten chicks.

Later: the three men (from next-door) have just left after my birthday party - chicken, lemon pie and coffee, while Nell told us all the gossip on the Li Shih Hui meetings which she has been attending all yesterday and today. Dr. Ts'ui of the C.C.C. (Church of Christ in China) has been a tremendous success, so obviously sympathetic and understanding and interesting, and the mere fact that he came has made a big impression and had a very encouraging effect. Dr. McMinn is in bed with a temperature, so not away yet and K'ai Yuan is very hard to get at because of floods. No more room!
A

Letter No. 178 15 July 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

... (things to be sent, with Lily Dodds) the microtome and in second place, the boots, take precedence over everything else.the India boxes were a gold mine ... (Comment about former missionaries not asked to return by Chinese) ...the Chinese evidently think that some people are temperamentally suited to the present situation and some are not, and to be weak and sentimental over it would only cause trouble here and greater heart-break to the people concerned. Of course it's hard for the committees at home, but it's also hard for the Chinese, and for the foreigners here. It should not really carry such a flavour of failure and disgrace... .

So far as we know the fighting has died down, and although the tide still ebbs and flows there has been no news of big battles or important places taken by either side. It seems clear that the big battles were at Szep'ing kai. The Catholic Mission there was completely destroyed, but we don't know about the Canadian property. A team of twenty doctors and nurses were selected from this hospital and flown there by Government plane, to help the wounded who were still lying about in large numbers, without medical attention. Government hospitals also sent teams. They will stay five or six days, and then be replaced by a fresh team. At the same time there are 150 wounded soldiers in the Boys' School next the College, who have only two nurses, and all the rest of the work is done by the staff of our hospital. This is no easy job as they are evidently being "difficult". Jack Leggate is the only person who can really throw his weight about, and does so quite fearlessly, which is a great comfort to Dr. Liu T'ung Lun. Not that Dr. Liu minds what he says but some things can apparently only be done by a foreigner.

The College exams are over now. I spent several days battling through the Path practical papers ...(with helpers) I think my friends are just as glad as I am that they are finished. The written papers have to wait for Dr. Hsiang who is better and probably out of hospital now. So I'm on holiday for about ten days, and, as my lab boy has to start his on July 25th., Hugh is to look in at the lab occasionally and write the reports.

Miss Fleming and Miss Service arrived on the 11th....

On Saturday we had an Irish tea party at the Blind School in honour of the Twelfth. There are ten Wild Irish here now, (*Jack Weir, Tom Blakley, Marshall McCrorly, John Stewart, Jilly, Ann and Tom Barker, Harry Johnstone, Hester Stewart, Agnes and ARC*) but some weren't there - Tom Blakely composing a sermon for us on Sunday (and a very fine one) and Jack Weir off on one of his student jobs (many people seedy). In the Blind School Miss Pierce (American, YMCA) and Mr. Rasmussen both in hospital with dysentery, and Hester Stewart in bed with a temperature. Only this house has an unbroken record.

Well, my holiday promises to be very quiet We've had a tremendous amount of rain, so the garden looks rather boggy and battered. I got "Woman's Work" yesterday with my article in it.. horrified to see the wee bit about my being "favourably impressed" by the Medical College... how silly it sounds. It doesn't really matter here, being greeted with loud hoots, and elaborate thanks for my gracious condescension. I suppose Mamie will be home (from India) about now, please give her my love. I'm glad you are being sensible. Who cares if the garden is weedy, you should see this one! ...Rattle of teacups.

Letter No. 179 20 July 1947 K'ai Yuan Hospital

Dear Mother

Here I am after all. Dr. Shih came to Moukden on Thursday to say the coast was all clear, and to collect Dr. McMinn and some nurses, and so I came back with them all yesterday for what will really only be a long weekend. George Taylor is coming tomorrow to keep an eye on repairs that are going on, and I'll probably go back with him. We had a very good journey yesterday, although I suppose it was slow compared with pre-war days. I got a lift over to the west in the hospital car, and picked up Dr. McMinn and Dr. Shih and a couple of nurses, and two more nurses joined us later. The train left about 8 a.m., and although we were only half-an-hour early we actually got seats - or at least somewhere to sit on - in the dining car, the other carriages being crammed. We got to K'ai Yuan station (K'ai Yuan chieh - I forgot the old name) about eleven, found we had to get off at a place where there was no platform, and cross more lines, and then get up on to another platform. You can imagine how awkward this was for Dr. McMinn, but there are always people to heave and pull.

The station was simply thronged, solid with people, but we bumped into the team of doctors and nurses coming back from Szep'inkai. They had had little to do there, and had mostly given anti-cholera injections. So evidently reports were much exaggerated.. When we got outside the station the crowds were almost as bad, and there seemed to be no vehicles of any kind except a few army trucks. Dr. Shih, who is very brisk and efficient, disappeared and eventually found a pedi-cab on which we put Dr. McMinn and some of the stuff. The rest of us prepared to walk into the town, but soon found a second empty pedi-cab, and I was sent off on it (with no idea where we were heading for). After a mile or so we came to a place where there were a few empty droshkies, and here the pedi-cabs dumped us. When the party had collected we piled onto two droshkies and set off on the road to the old town of K'ai Yuan.

It was a blazing sunny day, and very hot, and the country looked lovely after all the recent rain, so fresh and lush and green. There were small patches of flooded ground, and the crops in places looked rather uneven, but on the whole it looked prosperous, and all the land was under cultivation. The road was very bad, and we jerked in and out of ruts, and frequently had to crush in to the side to let lorries crammed with people rush past in a cloud of dust. As there is no train service north of K'ai Yuan, there is great crowding about here and these lorries are being used for public transport. We crossed one or two small temporary bridges over streams, and then came to the big concrete bridge over the river. It had been blown up by the Pa Lu, but the Government troops have made a pontoon bridge, which is really very good, but too narrow for anything but one-way traffic, and we were not able to take the droshkies over. There was a great crowd of people here, lines of coolies carrying sacks of grain were streaming over, and there was an occasional mule cart or army jeep. The traffic was controlled by a field telephone in most efficient style.

Just after we got there they stopped the flow, so we were among the first to cross the other way. Dr. Shih and I walked beside and behind Dr. McMinn to prevent her being jostled. When we got to the other side we found no vehicles of any kind, although there were some coolies willing to carry baggage. One old man went off into the town of K'ai Yuan - its walls were now just ahead of us - and in half-an-hour he returned in triumph with an empty pedi-cab. A hospital servant also turned up to help carry the bundles, and so we set off. It was only a short walk, through the city gate and some small streets.

It was about two o'clock when we arrived, very hot and hungry, so after one brief depressing glance at the bomb damage we went over to Dr. McMinn's house and washed and ate a very scratch lunch (the cook didn't expect us till Monday). After that I slept until after six and I think Dr. McMinn and Dr. Shih did too. After some chat it was time to sleep again, and so ended Saturday.

Today we have spent a lot of time poking about to find how much has been taken by the Pa Lu, and listening to the tales of the cook and other servants of how they hid and protected things from the soldiers. It is really very sad and pitiable to see such wanton destruction. Such stupid destruction. One thing they wanted was empty trunks and boxes, and when they found the box-room they broke open the things there and emptied the contents on the floor (including a dinner set etc. etc.). Picked out what they wanted, and departed with the boxes. So Dr. McMinn is left with a haystack of stuff representing three or four previous inhabitants of K'ai Yuan, and no way of knowing what belongs to whom, and no boxes to put them in if she did know. Her desk is a scene of chaos, papers scattered and wantonly torn up, and a tin of D.D.T. spilled over everything. Many things have been taken - Dr. McMinn's canteen of cutlery, and endless odds and ends of small clocks and mirrors, cushion covers - oh and her linen cupboard is completely empty! It's all such a mess that you really don't know where to start.

The hospital is in pretty bad shape too, although already much improved since Dr. Shih's previous visit. The Pa Lu wanted cloth and so they stripped the covers from practically all the mattress leaving only piles of straw, and naked beds piled higgledy-piggledy. A great many windows have been broken by blast, and the mosquito screens torn, so that now they are plagued by flies. The one bomb succeeded in making a fine mess, breaking through the roof at an angle of corridor and ward and smashing windows and window-frames all round. These days and weeks of heavy rain have completed the mess but already some wards have been cleaned up, some mattresses and bedding which had been bundled away in time, or had been in the wash, or saved for some other reason, are in use, and there are twelve in-patients. Another big loss is the hospital microscope, but we brought a new UNRRA one back with us yesterday.

It is rather a thankless job clearing up, for the people here are rather depressed about the situation and expect the Pa Lu back again. Of course it's only guesswork, no one knows what will happen, probably nothing until the crops are high.

We went to church this morning. There was a very small congregation, much smaller than usual Dr. McMinn said, probably because of all the rain. It was good to see how warmly she was greeted, and how much one of them she is.

I am writing this on Sunday evening in Dr McMinn's study (to share the one acetylene lamps) and at intervals she exclaims about some freshly-discovered loss. They have taken, for example, both her typewriter ribbons, all her paper clips, drawing-pins shoe-polish, a bundle of very particular letters and papers, her store of pencils (except one stub), her boxes of character-cards (all but one!), and so on and so on. She has found one book with the cover torn off, and a note from the Pa Lu scribbled on the front leaf - they have treated her very badly, they say, because she went away and could not be found. Of course she had no alternative, and stayed till the last possible moment, only leaving because if she hadn't Dr. Shih could not leave, and would have been captured. As it was, she had an exciting journey as no carts or droshkies would go, and it was with difficulty that a pedi-cab was found who would attempt the six miles to the station. There was firing all round, and machine-gunning of the road quite close.

This afternoon we slept again, after a very late lunch, and then did a little tidying.

Monday: This morning I went over after breakfast to the hospital prayers with Dr. McMinn and Dr. Shih, and then went round the wards and watched outpatients. There was little to do, as people do not yet realise that the hospital is running again, and bad roads also help to keep them away. More and more details of damage and loss become clear. The storeroom is pitiable - it was piled to the ceiling with UNRRA bedding, soap, etc., and now it is swept absolutely clean. A great source of rejoicing is the drug store. It is in the basement, reached through a trap door in the floor of the little room used as a chapel. An old mat flung down hid the hinge and padlock, and it was never discovered.

At present not much can be done to tidy up the place as almost all the hospital servants are away "building the wall". It seems odd to be back in the days when a mud wall is really a protection in war, but it proved a great help against the Pa Lu last time, and now they are repairing and improving it. Almost all the able-bodied men have been called up to do this work. Pastor Wang was at it all last week, and had a lot of difficulty getting permission to take the day off on Sunday in order to preach. There were only two or three young or middle-aged men in church. Of course, if he could have found and paid a substitute that would have been accepted.

After a morning in hospital we wandered round the garden, which is untidy in a rather attractive sort of way as it has lots of flowers. And I saw through the old Littlewood house, now used as a nurses' hostel. It is very dilapidated, and has also been badly messed about by the Pa Lu.

This must do for now. I will post this when I get back to Moukden.

Much love, Agatha

Letter No. 180 29 July 1947 K'ai Yuan Mission Hospital

Dear Jack.....

...I am in K'ai Yuan now... There has been distant gunfire several times, but not heavy or long sustained. K'ai Yuan itself, at a casual glance, shows little sign of its chequered history - it has changed hands several times. At present the life of the city is rather held up because so many men are working on the wall. I had assumed that the days when a city could shut its gates against an invader, and be to some extent protected by its wall were over, but not at all. The Pa Lu have few or no planes, so it is a question of direct assault; and even a mud rampart is a help. The order has gone out that all the Government-held cities are to be protected in this way. So the smaller ones are strengthening their old walls, and the big ones like Moukden, which spread far beyond their original boundaries, are in effect building new ones. K'ai Yuan's nearest station - K'ai Yuan chieh or Sun che t'ai - is about six miles away. It now acts as terminus for all the traffic to and from north Manchuria, which is a heavy strain on a small country station, and makes for great congestion and confusion. North of this, between here and Ch'ang ch'un, is Pa Lu-held, or at least Pa Lu-harassed territory, and there has been great destruction of the railway. For many miles it has been completely destroyed -

rails and sleepers taken away, and embankments broken down, and the vegetation has grown over in the summer rains and almost obliterated all traces. What's worse is that a big iron bridge has been blown up, and who knows when that can be repaired. One of the big railway junctions between here and Ch'ang ch'un (Sze'ing kai) was fought over again and again and is in a terrible state. It can only be approached by "road", and the smell of the unburied dead noticed miles from the city. This we heard yesterday from a little Japanese woman who turned up here yesterday. She had a baby in this hospital a month ago, and as soon as she could walk she set off north in the direction of Sze'ing kai, to look for her (Chinese) husband, who was fighting in the government troops in that area. She was beaming with joy when she came in yesterday, her shoes caked with mud and the baby hanging on her breast - she had, by some miracle, found her husband who was wounded but not too badly. Can you beat it?

Well, here's another incident that almost does beat it! Another woman, admitted to hospital to have her baby, took it into her head yesterday morning that she wanted to be near her husband, who is also a soldier stationed near Sze'ing kai. The fact that she had had slight pains during the night did not deter her from simply picking up her bundle and walking out. She will probably get a lift on a bumpy truck, and then what?

There seem to be great numbers of troops in this town. The main street is lined by lorries, jeeps, and weapon-carriers. The military have put up a fine pontoon bridge about 80 yards long and 12 feet wide, made of sections of wooden beams screwed together, and resting on a row of iron boats. The loss of the proper bridge is a terrible blow to the city as its lifeline to the railway is cut, and the pontoon bridge is only for foot-traffic so far as civilians are concerned. Fuel is a terrific problem. The hospital has only a few tons of rather stony slack lying out in the courtyard, and no store for the winter. Millet stalks for fire lighting are dear and damp, so we wait a long time for all our meals, and skip tea as just too complicated. There is an acute servant shortage too, as most of the hospital servants have been commandeered to help strengthen the wall. So the work of tidying up the mess that the Pa Lu and the bomb made of the hospital is much delayed.

These last two days I have sat in Dr. McMinn's consulting-room while she deals with outpatients. It is very interesting, and very pathetic. The women and children come to Dr. Shih, the men (many of them gun-shot wounds) go to the man house surgeon. The babies nearly all have diarrhoea and many are fearfully dehydrated. They can't be admitted at present, so you just give saline on the spot and send them off with a day's supply of sulphaguanidine. The other sulpha drugs, and all the anti-syphilitic injections have been taken by the Pa Lu. Most of the drugs, however, were in the basement and were not found. There were a lot of utterly hopeless cases. A mother of five children, who all sleep with their mother on one k'ang in one small room, in the late stages of pulmon. TB. A congenital syphilitic baby, just a skeleton, both eyes blind. A little girl of ten, who had been seen just before the Pa Lu came with an acute otitis media walked in with a huge swelling and several sinuses pouring pus over her mastoid process. She had walked in about two miles, and bowed and smiled politely; she too will attend daily. Then there were a string of antenatal patients, one a placenta praevia. I don't think patients at home would take kindly to the extremely candid verdicts of the Chinese doctor - "If you do this you may die, but it's possible that you may not. If you don't do it you will certainly die soon". One old lady with severe congestive heart failure was carried in by two hefty coolies, and dumped before us. In her husky gasping voice she decided that since a cure could not be guaranteed in a week she just couldn't afford to come into hospital at all, and was carried out again without further ado. There's not much privacy. The next patient and the next patient's children, husband or friend have usually crowded in to watch, listen, and join in discussion and exhortation

with the patient being examined. No one seems to mind this in the least. A common group is the granny, who does all the talking, the mother (daughter-in-law) and the baby. One strange custom is that the young mother often has to pay her own and her children's medical expenses out of her own pocket, which probably means the little nest egg given her by her family when she went to her husband's house. Her husband seems to take no responsibility for these expenses. I suppose the idea is that it is her job to keep healthy, and to keep the children healthy.

On the other hand we had some family trios, a mother and father both doting on a miserable whining shrimp of a son, and saying proudly that expense was no question at all; the child was the important thing. One menace is the habit of buying drugs outside and giving them without medical advice. It's not just the old Chinese drugs but also modern ones, and Japanese variants thereof, which can lead to trouble. I forgot to tell you that the (presumably) grand-daughter of the old lady with the bad heart came running in later to say she knew a shop where you could buy Salyrgan (the name was quite recognisable), and could they buy it themselves, and give it "with a needle?" !

Well, I could run on like this for ever. Mr. George Taylor has just turned up from Moukden. His job is to build and repair, and at the moment he is very busy trying to get dilapidated buildings to hold together. He has come now to see how the repairing of the bomb damage is getting on. I expect I shall go back with him in a day or two as it is a complicated journey these days.

.... if you come across any good medical pictures... please tear them out and send a bundle sea mail. I am going to do a lot of teaching visually... pictures mounted on cards... and get the lab boy to write a translation of the explanation in Chinese.

Love to all the family, Agatha.

Letter No. 181. Only portions survive.

About language study," house-keeping" by turns ... visit from Dr. Hsiang who has "given up his other job" and will have lots of time to help me.

I haven't told you about how we got back from K'ai Yuan. There was very heavy rain most of the time I was there, and the result was some quite bad flooding which damaged a railway bridge and there were no trains for two days. So in the end George Taylor and I came back together on the Friday. We got a lift all the way to the station in a jeep, thanks to the good offices of a general who comes to Dr. McMinn for English. As a result we reached the station about 9 a.m., and the first train left at 1.20 p.m. We sat about on the platform and had long conversations with several soldiers who came to air their English in front of admiring pals. They all seem convinced about the "Third World War" and the invincibility of Russia. The train journey was without incident, and we got home about 5.30 p.m.....

Much love

Agatha

Letter No. 182 August 2nd. 1947. Moukden Medical College.

Dear David

I have not been able to find a birthday present, which would go in an envelope, so I must just write you a letter instead. So this is to wish you many happy returns, and if it arrives on the wrong day don't read any further until your birthday has really come.

Have you gone back to school yet, or are you still having holidays? I have had a holiday, and I went to stay at a town called Kai yuan. It is square-shaped, and has a big wall all round, and in the middle of each side there is gate in the wall. The wall helps to keep out enemies and robbers. There is no railway station in Kai yuan. You get off the train a long way away, and have to ride on a carriage pulled by a horse the rest of the way. When we had almost reached Kai yuan we came to a bridge. It looked like this ... all broken down in the middle in two places. But some soldiers had made another new bridge alongside the big one. It was very clever, because even a big flood could not carry it away. You see, it was built on a row of boats floating on the water side by side, and it was tied to the bank at each side so that the river could not carry it away down to the sea. So we got over the river all right and got to Kai Yuan.

I stayed in the hospital there. The hospital is run by the Church and tried to help anybody who is ill, especially the poor people who cannot pay very much for medicines. A lot of sick people came each day. One was a little boy about your age who had fallen out of a tree he was climbing, and broken his arm badly. His father carried him a long way to bring him to hospital. The doctor gave him an anaesthetic - the same as you had for your tonsils - so as to straighten out the bones in his arm without hurting him. Some of the very small children look very funny because of the way their hair is cut. The bigger ones wear their hair just the same as you or a bit longer. Some of their fathers have no hair at all! They shave it all off in summer to keep nice and cool.

There is a lovely garden at Kai yuan but it was rather weedy as everybody was so busy. There were a lot of birds in the garden. The sparrows were the commonest. They are just like the sparrows that live round houses at home except that the father and mother birds both have brown heads. The sparrows you see round your house aren't like that, are they? Do you know the difference between the father and mother bird? If not, ask Daddy. He used to know, but perhaps he has forgotten. Then there were lots of swallows like the ones at home but with a lovely bright reddish-brown patch on their back behind the wings. And swifts, like this.... when they fly. There was a cuckoo which came quite close and sat on a tree and said "cuckoo" over and over until we wanted it to stop. There are lots of other birds here too which are different from the ones in Ireland. But I think it is very interesting to come thousands of miles, half-way round the world, and find the same birds here (or almost) as some we have at home. There are no robins or blackbirds.

The other day I saw a funny thing. There was a little grey donkey pulling a cart along the big main street. The cart was piled up with sacks of cotton wool, and the driver was lying on top, fast asleep! The little donkey was walking along quite fast and seemed to know where they were going. Wasn't he clever? Or do you think he was only pretending that he knew?

Another day, at Kai yuan, I went to see a mosque. It is a kind of church, but the people who go to church there are called Mohammedans. They don't know about Jesus, and so they don't know as much about God as Christians do. They think it is very important to be very clean when you go to

church. So part of the mosque is a big bathroom where they wash very carefully with hot water before they go into the church to worship God. They think this is more polite to God than to go straight in all dusty and dirty. But one thing that I didn't like was that only the men and boys are allowed to go to church. Women are not allowed to go inside at all, as if they were not important enough to count at all. Think how queer it would be if only you and Daddy were allowed to go to church, and Mummy and Christine could only peep in at the door.

Now I am back home again in Moukden. In this house there are: Three people, One cat, Three kittens (not all the same family), One puppy, Two hens, Ten chickens. And this does not count: the cook and his wife and daughter and two little boys, who live in a little house behind ours. In front of the house is a lake where people go out in rowing boats. On the far side there is a park where lots of people walk about and enjoy themselves. They like it best when somebody falls into the lake! It is very shallow so it is not dangerous, and as the weather is hot no one minds much about falling in.

This word is the nearest thing I know to "Many Happy Returns" in Chinese. You pronounce it like the English word "show".

This is your name in Chinese:

This is my name in Chinese:

You see the part for "Crawford" is the same in both, it comes first, and "David" comes at the end.

Letter No. 183 2 August 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother.....

..... I got a letter from the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank saying I could go ahead and cash cheques! Good for Jean (Stockman)! another instance of Japanese mentality during the war some of the shops in Moukden put paper strips on their windowpanes as a protection against blast. One shop whose windows had small panes did them this way:



The Japanese protested that this was reminiscent of a British flag! However, the strips are still on the windows

The other day I came in to the lab at ten to eight, to find my room a mess of bedding and oddments of male attire, and the two lab boys hastily dressing. The police had been heard coming to their quarters the previous evening, to take any boys they could find for the army. All the technicians vanished just in time, my two took up residence in my room with its comforting Yale lock.

Love to you all, Agatha

(Note 1989: I remember asking how they had got in. The innocent reply was that I sometimes forgot my key and left it in my white coat, hanging in the outer room. I replied that I was indeed very forgetful and often left it there. The message was understood, and of course after that I always "forgot" my key.)

Letter No. 184 August 9th. 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

.....the wonderful news about Oliver and Beth....

...trouble over the microtome. How very queer that a permit should be needed..... the Path slides Bert is preparing..... Dor..... there is no doubt whatever that she is urgently needed....

.....A cool rainy day..... in the garden..... The tomatoes had become a jungle and as the millet stakes rot at the bottom they collapse into a confused mass and finally become afflicted with a horrid disease which makes them go yellow and mushy. So I rooted out a regular haystack of decaying remnants and the coolie's little boy carried it all outside and threw it into the gully. Not what one would do at home perhaps, but so much worse rubbish is thrown into the gully that one gets callous. Then the broccoli were waist high, and shredded by caterpillars, and showed no signs of flower heads, so they were all pulled up and thrown to the cook's hens. Meanwhile Agnes hoed vigorously at the paths. Nell has been in bed this week, not really ill but taking the chance offered by the holidays to try to get rid of some lingering relics, probably, of the time in Africa.

The College has been a whirl of meetings this last two weeks. First there was a week of evangelistic meetings, taken by a man from the south. I only went once as I found him very hard to understand. He was very dramatic, with lots of wee stories to raise a laugh, but not too bad, and as far as I could gather what he actually said, was pretty sound and not too narrow. He took on tremendously and had packed meetings.....This Pastor Shih has made such an impression that he has been asked to come back for the students especially the new class starting next week. Then there is a Student

Conference going on now, about 30 to 40 students, including delegates from the Government Universities, K'un Kuang senior girls etc., run by the YMCA, but really corresponding to SCM at home. I haven't been not open to everyone..... Hugh is speaking at it, also Dr. Barker, and Mr. Findlay comes over every morning to take prayers at 6 a.m.

The lab has been upset this week. My lab boy got another restless fit and wanted to leave me and move to Bacteriology. He thinks he has "done" Path now and is very anxious to learn all the exciting things they do in the other lab. This would be a disaster for me, of course, for although not much help he is a lot better than nothing. I talked to him as well as I could, making it clear that cutting sections was not my job, and that if he left who would do it, etc.? He was taken on on the understanding that he would stay a year, in the hope that by then I would have got someone else. Then I got Mr. Ch'i the chief technician, to talk to him, and after some hours gloom he seemed to brighten up. Finally he appeared at my elbow and said proudly, in English, "I now after this room very diligently work", which sentiment I warmly applauded. He is really a very good lad at bottom, and I wish he was having a better chance. I think one trouble is that when these technician trainees are taken on they come in with the idea that they are here to be taught, i.e. to receive, and not to work. They are off duty every day at 4 p.m., which I feel, gives them plenty of spare time for reading out of work hours.

The present plan is that next term they take the First Medical course in chemistry and physics plus English classes, and dear knows what else. No one wants to bother giving them special classes. But the full medical course is far beyond most of them. ... Liu's arithmetic is very rudimentary, like all his educational background, for no fault of his. There is a plan that Hugh takes over the job of Dean, and if he does he will have power to do something to sort out the mess, but he doesn't yet know when he is to take over the office. As term starts in a week he rather wishes he did know! Meanwhile I plod along very happily, trying to prepare teaching material such as pictures for demonstrations, and short notes to cover all the practical class slides. I feel that the less they have to depend on my spoken word the better, in the absence of Chinese textbooks.

No more political news for some time. Occasional distant gunfire at night is probably only scary guards on the fortifications shooting at straying donkeys.....Curfew later now..... electricity quite often, running water almost all the time... in the west no running water for weeks, very awkward in summer and with so many upset tummies... ..

Much love as always. Agatha

Letter No. 185 August 16th. 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother.....

... we get no newspaper now and have no wireless, all outside news is old when we get newspapers from home it's queer to be so ignorant, and queer how easily one gets used to it.

The Medical College reopens on Monday. The students will be squashed, as the graduating class does not finish till December and the new class of 25 comes in now. Some are sleeping in empty classrooms of the College itself, which is rather a muddle now of old borrowed beds and students disappearing round corners with washbasins and towels. At a recent Senate, Hugh was appointed

Dean of Studies (loud cheers) and Dr. Hsiang (!!!!) was put in charge of the hostel and the students (despairing groans).... some General on the board has a lot of power and no one likes to oppose him at the moment. The student conference sponsored by the Y.M and Y.W. held in the College last week was a great success. There were about 35, from various colleges and schools. Jack Weir's assistant, Mr. P'an, had a lot to do with it. One problem here is that the really active energetic Christians have a rather narrow approach and an atmosphere of no-other-way-but-ours which puts off a certain type of student who doesn't feel at home with the hot-stuff evangelistic emotional appeal. And in the present circumstances, with a good deal of anti-Christian feeling among the students it is hard for the merely muddled and interested to seek help and hard to get in touch with them. Hugh has tried several things and all have fizzled out or failed to get started at all. For example, he was very keen that the Sunday morning services should be a real help in teaching something about Christianity to students who have no background at all, and wanted to plan some sort of coherent scheme to cover the essentials of the Christian faith. But this was disapproved of by all the Chinese on the religious committee, who think you must not attempt to coerce the Spirit as it were, but must leave the various speakers free to say whatever happens to come into their heads. So much easier when the missionary could decide things and not be outvoted at every turn!!...

We had a Conference meeting... Jack Weir, Mary Findlay and John Stewart all go to Peking in October. Ella Gordon is now in Liao Yang Marshall has been to Pei T'ai Hai to look at all the missionary houses and arrange very urgent repairs... Tom Blakeley has given up the idea of Kirin for the moment as it is expected to fall soon. The troops there are a very poor lot. They have recently forced their way into Tom's house and occupied it. They refused to let the hospital staff remove his personal belongings, and in the scuffle one nurse was injured..... Not a nice incident. Other people say Kirin will not be taken. By all accounts Ch'an Chun is not likely to fall, there are strong troops there.....

I haven't yet discovered quite what my responsibilities in the College will be this term. I am to teach "Medical English" two hours a week to "Class 28", i.e. the students who will start Path in Feb., so it will be a chance to get to know them. I have only the vaguest notions of how to teach any kind of English and Hugh says blithely "You will have to use a lot of Chinese"sounds good. Then I plan to give a demonstration once a week to Path "chronics". This takes a lot of preparation but is quite fun. I'm trying to choose a subject like "how tumours spread" and arrange naked-eye specimens, microscope slides, pictures and so on to tell the story. Of course all labels and explanations have to be in Chinese as well as English. My friends in the Women's Hospital correct (or rather re-write, very often!) my translations. There is a possibility of my being demonstrator in Histology four hours a week too. This class is to be taken by Mr. Ch'in the biologist. He is a very nice man and a good teacher, and as all the vocabulary of histology is necessary for Path I would rather like this if it were not for the fact that he comes from Shantung and I find him hard to follow. The nice Dr. Chang Ai-ch'ung who was in charge of Histology has left, for a job in Lanchow (Kansu Province). This is a great blow for the College, but he was very restless, sensitive about student criticism and worried by Dr. H., and after weeks of swithering and asking advice he finally took the plunge and left. He hopes to be sent to America and eventually come back here, but so few who go within the Wall want to come back that it is not a very hopeful prospect. He was a great help to me these last few months, and I miss him badly for translating and correcting odds and ends of work.

I have just been bathing the pup. He was stupefied with surprise and very docile. Now he has run out to the garden and is rolling in the beds to get comfy again.

We've had a great deal of heavy rain recently. July was a wet month and now August is being wet too which is unusual, I gather. The front entrance here floods very easily and after a big shower turns into a stream two or three inches deep. I have several times had to take off shoes and socks and wade, and it's quite a job afterwards to stand on one leg (while holding up an umbrella against the downpour) and get one's wet sandy feet back into wet sandy shoes. It really is bad for the crops. Everyone says the kao-liang is having no chance to ripen.

.... Our curfew is extended now, I think to 11 or 11.30 p.m., a sign of relative peace. So we are not disturbed so much in the evenings by shouted challenges and an occasional (unaimed) shot from the road just outside. Moukden still swarms with soldiers and refugees from the country.

Much love as always, Agatha.

Letter No. 186 23rd. August 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

..... Eileen O. has ordered the microtome.....we struggle on with this one but the results, although usually adequate for diagnosis are very third-rate. ... I have so far counted on UNRRA's promises and when that fell through naturally turned to my own folk.... I don't think the WMA should pay the bill, I'd rather spend that Windsor church money and have it off my mind. £14 very reasonable. Miss Service finally unpacked last week, and gave me Willis (Path book).

Well, this week has been a little hectic but quite fun. I find myself teaching 11 hours a week, and being taught 11 hours a week, and then there's the lab work and preparing practical notes and lectures in the time that's left. First of all, I teach Class 28 English - Medical vocabulary - two hours a week. They are the ones I will have for Path from next February onwards. Their English is so shaky that I have to give them the Chinese for everything so it takes a lot of preparing. So far they have been very docile, and apart from a slight tendency - which I ignore - to put on funny voices when they answer the calling of the roll. Then for four hours a week I help Mr. Ch'in teach histology. This is useful to me, and they will be future Path students of course. The girls were very friendly and willing to chat; the men a bit inclined to curl over their microscopes when I came near, but they were quite polite when induced to uncurl. Then I am giving a two-hour demonstration once a week to the Path chronics. This hasn't happened yet.

The lab boys have an hour a week English from me, and two more people individual English teaching. It makes me much busier, but in an interesting way and I begin to feel I belong. The lab boys have been rather mutinous and difficult this week. The plan for teaching them is awful, I think. One lot attends first year Medical Physics, one lot Chemistry, and one lot Biology. Next year they rotate, and so on. They get a far too detailed and time-consuming course, on an inadequate foundation, but no one wants to spend the time on giving them a special class for themselves. Then Dr. Hsiang gives one hour a week haematology, and they get 4 hours a week English between us foreigners. My boy also has so far gone to the Bact lab 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., so with it all he is not much in the Path lab and the work is almost at a standstill. We all argue and talk round and round, with exhausted pauses while I mop my brow, and the lab boys say sadly "she doesn't understand". Half time I do understand but don't agree. At home one would just have put up a notice announcing arrangements and anyone mutinous could lump it or else leave. But here there are meetings galore

and everyone says their say, no one gives in, and if any compromise is reached you know it is only likely to last about two weeks.

This was another pouring wet Saturday so no gardening. We had a visit at teatime from the British consul and his wife, who came to collect one of the present family of kittens.(Nell's adoring care of cat and kittens)..... The cat's name, according to Nell is Ermytrude, my name for her is Bullybeef but I daren't use it. She is orange and white dazzlingly clean..... hates the pup and chases him, giving him the most awful bangs with her paw. He is of an unidentifiable mixture.....

..... Fancy keeping hens, good for you!

Kai Yuan hospital is open. Nearly all the nurses back now, and men's and women's wards open and lots of out-patients Letter from Dr. McMinn..... their temporary pontoon bridge has been broken by floods, and they had only a rare ferryboat.

I enclose some Manchukuo stamps - they celebrate :

- 1) Industrialisation of Manchukuo(!),
- 2) Japan pep-talk, "i hsin'i te".
- 3) Conscripton for manual labour ,
- 4) Japan and Manchuria stand and fall together,
- 5) Ordinary Jap. stamp,
- 6) Ordinary Manchukuo stamp
- 7) Manchurian Red Cross Association.
- 8) Commemorates 10th. Year of Manchukuo regime.

We had a visit in College this morning from the Minister of Education (Nanking). He is in Moukden for a few days inspection. Yesterday he was at Tung Pei University and had a rough reception, was mobbed by the students, locked in a room, and not let out until they had voiced their grievances and demands. We were luckier here. He arrived after the College service was finishing and after a rapid inspection of the building came in and spoke to the staff and students gathered there, i.e. to the good boys who went to church. The bad boys missed it all, he was away before they knew anything about it! Wasn't that lucky?!

Much love A.

Letter No. 187 30th. August 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother.....

... I went out in old Burberry and whitish pixie-hood you gave me, and weeded armfuls of large juicy weeds. The ground was such a bog that when you pulled a weed you sank in as far as it came out. The compound was a series of lakes, and the front gate a river.....

Last Wednesday was Confucius' birthday, which is celebrated as "Teachers' Day". The Kun Kuang had a terrific do, with speeches and presentations to all members of staff by each class. In fact they have had festivities all week since then, class parties yesterday and a "Whoopee-all-together"

meeting today. The College students managed to control their emotions rather better, as you might guess. We had a long meeting in the morning at which the piece de resistance was a long lecture by Mr. Ch'in on Confucius. The rest of the day a holiday for the teachers and hence for the students, but none of the trainee-technicians turned up either. This was rather bad of them as they had not even asked for a holiday. They are now under Hugh's rule as Dean and Mr. Ch'i (chief technician in Bact and also brother of Miss Ch'i of the Blind School) as second in command. I have a permanent (?) second boy now. This doesn't mean so much really as they attend so many classes..... called Na, not very pre-possessing. He is about 28 and has a wife and child in Liaoyang. He sings or hums lugubriously almost all the time. When I interrupt him to tell him something he looks surprised and says "Aaah" through his nose. However, he may improve.

I rashly gave my English class a little very simple dictation this week and the result was appalling..... unintelligible jumbles of letters are what my pure limpid English evidently sounds like in their ears..... have to go slower.

Hugh has been exercised over the complete lack of student textbooks. They can't be expected to get much out of the English ones in the library. Dr. Pai's lecture notes have been resurrected (he was Pathologist here before going off with the Pa Lu) and they are said to be excellent and very detailed, really a full-blown textbook. So I've chosen out the more important parts, about four-fifths of the whole, and the students will duplicate copies for themselves between now and January. The same system will be followed in other subjects in which there is written material in Chinese. In lots of subjects there is nothing in writing, the lecturers carried on out of their heads or from rough notes.

There is nothing to cover the practical Path class material so one of my present jobs is to prepare that.... ..Of course some textbooks in Chinese translations can be bought from the China Medical Association press in Shanghai, probably in pretty terrible reprints to judge from a medical dictionary I got. But prices are prohibitive. Even to buy the paper for duplicating is a big expense.

Yesterday there was a big armed-robbery near the Blind School. There are a lot of vegetable gardens near there and the people have a lot of money on hand this season as they are selling their produce each day. Four men armed with guns just walked into these people's compound and forced them to disgorge their money and took some clothes and bedding too, and ran off. There was some desultory shooting by the police when they arrived but not really at anything apparently and no one succeeded in getting after the thieves.

Two P.M.s this week. Only babies I admit but better than nothing and both turned out to be very interesting cases.... surgical specimens are constantly giving one interesting surprises too. The baby yesterday was not wanted and I told the coolie to dispose of it and through hurry and laziness and ignorance of how to say "incinerator" I left him to cope with the details. This morning my conscience pricked me and I enquired exactly what he had done with it; and was casually informed that he had thrown it outside and a dog had eaten it. I exploded into Dr. Liu's office to get permission to use the hospital incinerator and he twinkled at me and said, " Yes, it's a barbarous country, isn't it?" You had better censor this bit, people might like it even less than the Borsad flies!!

.....Not long back from the College service. A Dr. Yu preached, an old graduate, who was, for a long time, in Ying'k'o....

Mary Findlay was there and came back for a cup of tea. She is living at the Blind School now and supposed to spend most of the time at Chinese with Mr. Chang who teaches me..... only for a month before she goes to Peking. Her spoken Chinese is of course very good.....Our trio for Language School, also Jack Weir..... John Stewart has done some these last few months with Pastor Liu of West Moukden..... I sometimes get letters from my Australian pals in Peking..... the glory is departed - our delightfully casual unregimented regime is now organised in true American style. I much preferred the Christensens' regime - in spite of the bad food we had a jolly good time!

Much love to all the family, Agatha.

Letter No. 188 6 September 1947 Moukden Medical College.

Dear Mother.....

..... prickly heat and sunburn? Not a prickle, it hasn't been hot enough Saturday afternoon in the garden and Sunday expeditions to church in the West on alternate months are really the only times I am out of doors apart from the few steps to and from College each day. But I seem to thrive on it. After all I was just as sedentary in the Royal. You ask if the situation hasn't deteriorated a lot. It did, in June, but is much more peaceful now, no active fighting at the moment, according to my teacher Mr. Chang; and a late curfew hour which is a sign that the authorities breath fairly freely. Agnes and I often talk of a Saturday picnic, but somehow the garden calls so pathetically. (consultation in garden with Hugh)... One also has to contend with the pup who goes wild with excitement when you put a spade in the ground, and the cat who likes to lie down on the weed you are about to pull up.....

We had another P.M. this week - not to mention another baby one. As usual it does not go with clockwork smoothness as at home. I was warned to stand-by the night before and sent word to be ready for 8 a.m. However it turned out to be a holiday (Victory Day, on the 3rd. of September which seems odd), and the students had a mass meeting, so weren't free to come until after ten. Then when I was, as you might say, with knife poised for the first stroke, the houseman rushed in - "Stop, stop, the family want \$50,000 and the hospital won't go above \$30,000, so it's all off". (This after signed permission had been obtained!) So the students departed by one door and the body was carted out by the other door, I and the goggle-eyed technicians were shooed away to their routine jobs, and I was just sitting down to another bit of work when in rushed the houseman again "It's all fixed up after all" So notes were sent to the students' hostels for them to come back, and the body was carted back, all the lab boys rounded up, and little Liu dressed up again in a pair of rubber gloves that made him look solemn with pride - the electricity went off!! So I did the P.M. in the semi-basement Anatomy lecture room, with a crowd of peering on-lookers, more or less by feel. But it was well worth doing - a Hodgkin's disease, and will be most useful for teaching. These P.M.s would be much less alarming if it weren't for the students!, but I find it just about impossible to discourse brightly in Chinese to these students, and do a P.M. in the dark. Luckily Jack happened in, and I grabbed him and made him teach them all about Hodgkin's disease, which he nobly did in spite of it being a medical case. So I had peace to get on with the job.

It's Sunday now. I'm just back from the College service - a very long anecdotal sermon by an old gentleman I didn't recognise. a letter from Mrs. Fitzsimmons, wife of the minister in Portstewart,

whom I knew at Queen's as Winnie Beck. She's president of their WMA and they want to knit woollies for China such a nice letter..... . It isn't razor blades I need for a microtome, but microtome knives - Hugh Taylor was to go on trying to get them

Much Love, Agatha

Letter No. 189 14th. September 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

.... I am surprised to hear my salary is £300 plus! Far too much under present conditions, and my last cheque for a quarter was £50 which is ample. For example, Hugh and Jack with families at home are trying to manage on £150. You ask if Jack Weir had anything to do with the meetings in College. No, not those. He has some contact through the SCM group, which is linked, with the SCM groups in the non-Christian colleges here. I have no contact at all with the Christian group here, have not to my knowledge ever spoken to any of them. Isn't it a queer sort of situation? Or at least unexpected. It isn't active unfriendliness of course, but just that it doesn't occur to any of them to want to get to know a strange new foreign woman who appears out of the blue, and seems to frequent the Path lab. It will probably take me about ten years to get to the position which would have been automatically enjoyed by a new missionary twenty years ago. If then! But it's the independence everyone has been working for, so why complain!

Miss Janie Henderson has arrived.....

Yesterday Nell and Agnes and I went on a shopping expedition to the big streets over in the West. I had only been once before, so it was quite fun and a new view of Moukden. We bought some groceries - coffee and some marmalade and odds and ends, all dear but not too frightful and such a nice change. There are really two classes of goods, foreign things, good and dear, and Chinese-made goods, not nearly so good and not nearly so dear. For example, Lifebuoy soap a small tablet for five shillings, but local toilet soap with a violent pseudo-floral smell for only 1/3 a tablet. We had one thing pointed out to us that I had not noticed before - a handsome blue-painted box stuck up on a wall, like a big letterbox, with a padlocked lid and labelled "Kao mi hsiang" in other words a box for anonymous accusations! So if you have an enemy it is easy to cope with him. I haven't found out yet who opens such boxes - not the police, probably the K.M. Tang organization. Isn't it awful? No wonder there is fear and distrust and depression abroad. Mr. Robertson, of the Bible Society, told me today how surprised he was to find that Pastor Wang K'ai, who lives in their building, has always a pile of small notes beside him, and doles them out constantly to beggars who come in. He told Mr. R. that he did not dare not to give.

You can't walk along the roads near here without seeing a rather funny sight - a small boy squatting in prayerful attitude at the foot of a wall and facing it. He will have a pipe or tube of some kind in his mouth and blows into cracks between the bricks, or else has a gadget for injecting water. Every now and then he drops his tools and does a little leap-frogging about. I have discovered that they are trying to catch crickets. Then I suppose they put them into little grass-woven cages to sell. I just can't understand the Chinese passion for a cricket or cicada in a cage, with their monotonous "birr birr" like a miniature pneumatic drill.

The Hsiao Ho Yen is much quieter now, as there have been no boats for hire since the beginning of the month. There are always a lot of men and boys patiently fishing from the bank, but I have never seen anyone catch anything. Every morning, just as it is getting light, we hear someone on the far side giving a few awful howls and bursts of daemonic laughter. At first I thought it was just the usual soldiers letting off steam with the Chinese equivalent of catcalls, but it happens regularly every day. Nell says she has been told it is an actor (in the traditional drama), practising! If so he must certainly be the villain, and I don't wonder that his wife, if he has one, sends him off to the wide-open spaces to practice.

This has been another busy week. On Wed. I had two P.M.s, and as it's the day I have four classes, got Dr. Hsiang to do one of the P.M.s. He was quite agreeable, but I was most tickled to observe the commotion he created in getting prepared for the great event. I don't think he can have done very many before. By the time he was ready he had on not only a rubber apron, white gown and rubber gloves but also a full rig-out of surgical mask and white cap! I was sorry because the lab boy who helped him had no such splendour, and it rather undermined my insistence that one living patient coughing at them is much more dangerous than any number of dead ones.

The lab boys have all been having a routine physical exam. this week, and to my horror little Liu - the boy in my lab - has a very suspicious shadow in his X-Ray. He hasn't been seen by Dr. Liu yet, but it looks very like T.B. in which case he'll have to go home. He has no symptoms and is stout and healthy looking, so, if it is an active lesion, should do well, but I'll be very sorry to lose him. He is the only one who shows promise of making a good technician, and is a lot of help already. Also he is a nice boy with a gentle manner and has more idea of taking responsibility and doing honest work than any I have come across. However, it may turn out to be an old lesion, so I live in hope.

The technicians' English class I find quite fun. They are a mixture of those who know the alphabet more or less and those who have done about a year at school or the YMCA, so it's a bit of a muddle. The one thing, they have in common is an urgent appetite to learn, and the lethargy with which routine lab work is tackled is replaced by a lively attention! I thought there were only seven trainee-technicians but last day at least twenty bright boys turned up ("my p'eng yu who works in the dispensary" etc. etc.). I only have them one hour a week, and Hugh and two of the Chinese doctors take them the other days.

The College goes on much as usual. The students still refuse to pay their fees. The latest "reason" is that the seats in the classroom are very uncomfortable. There was another row over an English exam. which they refused to take because they said they had not been properly taught, but eventually (after failing three times to turn up for the exam.) they accepted a compromise. This class had been taught by a Chinese after a previous teacher (German) had been dismissed following complaints by the class. (Don't repeat this..... people may misunderstand and think it means this type of student isn't worth helping quite the wrong attitude).

Much love to all. Take lots of care.

Agatha.

Letter No. 190 20th. September 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother.....

I'm glad Rich's book (on T.B.) has come.... we are now well supplied with general textbooks and need something more detailed on branches of Pathology. And T.B. is so overwhelmingly important here....

.... I think the strength of the Christian position here now is that while China, as a whole seems to have lost faith in itself and in the fundamental sense and goodness of human nature, the Christians have a hope unaffected by the most bitter disillusionment about themselves and their fellow-countrymen

Autumn has come, and the most perfect weather. . . .at intervals we rummage in trunks and put on another layer of clothes. Everyone exudes a strong smell of mothballs. The main news in the lab this week is that Liu, my technician, has got early T.B., and has been told to rest for six months. This is not so easy as his home is in Pa Lu territory. He eventually arranged to go and live with some far-off relatives in West Moukden, but when he came to say goodbye I found this meant sleeping in the same room - on the same kang - with five other people, and the food sounded far from suitable. I tried to get some vitamin tablets for him and that trail led me eventually to Dr. Liu T'ung Lun and when he heard about it all he said was "Oh, we'll give him a free bed in hospital and he can go on taking his meals with the other technicians and we can keep an eye on him". So of course I gladly agreed and it has been fixed up like that. Liu came beaming to see me and said he had now decided to get better! That was on Monday last. Yesterday he came back again to say he was so bored, might he please come back and do some work. So I think he is to be allowed to do two hours a day, and to be out-of-doors the rest of the time. He feels perfectly well in every way, quite plump and no cough; but it's better to be on the safe side and give him a good chance to nip it in the bud. It has been arranged also that one of the technicians in the Bact lab should come in and help in Path a couple of hours a day and make up for the partial loss of Liu. All this going and coming is muddling and not at all ideal, but it is the best we can do. It all makes me more busy and my non-medical Chinese had come almost to a standstill, so Hugh has decided that someone else should be found to help teach Histology, four hours less teaching per week for me.

Today the Medical College went on an excursion to the North Tomb. Hugh and Miss Fleming were busy with committees Jack was busy in hospital, so I was the only foreigner. We went in four trucks lent by the Military Hospital that Dr. Hsiang is (or was?) attached to. We were due to start at 8 a.m., but it will doubtless cause you no surprise to know that we actually moved off about 9.15 . However, it is not far off, not nearly so far as the East Tomb. I tacked on to the women students and to two Dr. Li's who are both my friends. One is the warden of the women's hostel, and one head of the Children's department. When we got there we had a lot of lining up and counting heads and calling of names, but eventually wandered off in a long stream to see the tomb. It was a perfect day after a night of rain, and the colours were as bright as jewels - blue sky, white marble, terra-cotta walls, yellow shining roof and dark green pines. It was all very like the other tomb with the avenue of huge stone animals and the courtyards and buildings, and then, behind, the hillock covered with a cement skin which is the actual tomb. After wandering round we divided into groups and I was with most of the women and two of the men students. We sat in a ring on one of the stone terraces and played games. As so often, I had to admire the perfect unselfconsciousness with which everyone threw themselves into the games, while a crowd of other visitors stood round to stare and listen.

After that we wandered off into the woods and found a good spot to picnic. "We" by this time had dwindled to about half a dozen, including two boys from class 28 (which I teach English to). One of these was very tickled to find I liked flowers and creepy-crawlies, and roamed around like a questing puppy bringing offerings at intervals. This was mostly pure divillment, as he solemnly presented me with a frog, and a praying mantis, all straggly legs and claws. These I was able to appreciate. But when he handed me a bee between finger and thumb, he had me beaten, and I declined with thanks - this was a great joke. After a while we drifted back, and found everyone collected in the courtyard, listening to Dr. Hsiang telling a funny story at great length. This got a great clap. Various other people followed suit, and lastly Dr. Kao. I was glad to hear an especially loud burst of clapping for him, and they roared at his stories and gave another big clap when he finished. This must have warmed his heart a little I think.

By this time it was about 4 p.m. and we went out to the trucks and so home. On the whole I think it was a most successful expedition and everyone enjoyed it and the general atmosphere between staff and students was more easy and friendly than might easily have been the case.

It's Sunday now. I've spent most of the morning going over all the spoils of yesterday with Hugh and his plant books, and wandering with him round our respective gardens.....

You do know, don't you, that I enjoy life here to the full, in spite of and partly because of, all the difficulties and problems. It is so terribly interesting, and we feel right in the thick of real events. The time just flies in an almost uncanny way. You have a much worse time at home, I feel sure.....

Very much love, Agatha

Letter No. 191. (missing first page, probably 28/9/1947)

..... Dr. Liu Shu Chen who, with Dr. Wang the man surgeon, is due to leave in a few weeks for post-graduate work in Scotland will she get a scunner at the Home Church and decide that the light has died out in Britain, or will it widen her? The fundamentalist group is very strong here now, and the foreigners, or most of them, are suspected of being "unsound". Dr. Liu herself has been "speaking with tongues" at an East Church prayer meeting, and there's a lot of that kind of feeling and expectation of the Second Coming and so on. A sort of escape from contemplation of the mess the world is in, I suppose. There is a lot of preaching by self-appointed travelling evangelists without any training, who draw large and very enthusiastic audiences. We have just had a week of meetings for the nursing staff by a young businessman called Sun. All honour to him, and he is obviously very sincere and fervent. But to me it is subtly depressing. He spoke at our "College Service" this morning, and the service, which was supposed to begin at 9.30, went on till after 11, and consisted of a very brief prayer, a very "bitty" Bible reading, skipping all over the New Testament for odd verses and at the end the Lord's Prayer. All the rest of the time was taken up by his very fluent and dramatic sermon on guidance, which seemed to me very muddled and illogical. But the people there just hung on his words. It didn't strike me as being a worship service at all. Then, because we were so late, the College staff prayer meeting had to be cancelled again, and surely if anywhere needs praying for it is the College!! Then, most people, or at any rate some, rushed off to the East Church service, which

begins at 11 o'clock. (The unregenerate foreigners had a cup of tea, and then went round the garden and contemplated carrots and beans which seem to grow to maturity with so much less fuss than human beings.)

Yesterday we had the Medical College sports. This is the first one since 1941. Luckily it was a perfect day and it all went well. Perhaps I enjoyed it more than the others who can hardly help comparing it with the "good old days". A lot of the students did not turn up for it at all, but those who did were in good spirits. There were very few visitors, just a handful of K'un Kuang girls and a few relatives. At the beginning I was rather horrified to find a lovely pink label pinned on my front and a stopwatch thrust into my hand. Thereafter I had the job of recording and timing who was second in each race, while Hugh watched the first in each. Luckily there were no very close finishes to provoke a row and no one was lynched! The most nerve-wracking were the long races, for example the 5000 metres which was sixteen laps of the football field, and in no time you had some boys who had completed ten laps while others were on their ninth or eighth or seventh which is most confusing. The nicest thing about the whole day was that the "Poor Children's School" which is run by the Christian group, arrived in procession complete with banner. They were such funny wee mites and had a simply marvellous time. Some of the students in charge of them were very good to them, organising jumping competitions when the jumping place was not in use, and later in the day when they were feeling really at home they had an impromptu tug-of-war which was killingly funny as they were in deadly earnest about it.

Towards the end of the day one of the students came up to me and most politely asked me to present the prizes. Mercifully my wits were not quite dulled by that time and I asked him to go and make sure it wasn't Fu chiao shih he was supposed to be talking to. After I received profuse apologies - right enough it was Miss Fleming he was after! All this took from 8 a.m. till 5 p.m. with an interval for lunch, so there wasn't much else done yesterday. It gets dark quite early now - about half past six - and at the end of the month the time changes, which will mean 5.30. Luckily there seems to be some hope of getting more reliable electricity soon. We have had hardly any the last few months, but it has come on for two or three hours at a time during the last week. The alternative is a rather smoky oil lamp.....

On Friday the weekly medical meeting was entrusted to the Path and Pharmacology departments. I had good resolutions about trying to talk some Chinese, but in the end it all came out in English. On Tuesday I am to take prayers again in the Women's Hostel and that will have to be in Chinese, which means, for me, more or less learning it off by heart!

Much love, Agatha

Letter No. 192 (called 105 on typed copy) 4 October 1947. Moukden Medical College.

Dear Mother,

.....no letters this week.... The expected drive by the Government troops to clear Manchuria seems to have turned into a drive by the Communists! At least, we have heard that five bridges have been damaged on the line between here and Tientsin, and that Huludao and Yingko have been taken.

Harry Johnstone was to go to Chihnsien last week for a "holiday" and to give lectures at the Bible School there, but the trains were not running even as far as that.

The most disturbing rumour - which has also been contradicted - is that K'ai yuan has been taken, but no news has come of what has happened to Dr. McMinn, Dr. Shih, Miss Jamie Henderson and the nurses. Of course one has to remember that "news" is almost always worse than the truth, because it comes from refugees and it makes a better story to say you got away by the skin of your teeth from a place which was undoubtedly captured, than to say you just got scared that the Communists might come, and so did a bunk in good time! It's bad luck on Dr. Liu Shu Chen and Dr. Wang who are due to leave very soon if they are to catch their boat, as at the moment it seems pretty hopeless to try to get anywhere. I do hope they won't be held up till too late - what an anti-climax. In spite of all this we had a farewell party for them in hospital yesterday. There were two other guests of honour, a Dr. Chao who is going to America to study chest surgery, financed by friends, and Dr. Gao's daughter who is also an eye specialist and who is going to Glasgow for post-graduate study, under her own steam. It was a very happy, friendly party. I was next to the irrepressible Liu T'ung lun, who was in great form (in spite of the news about K'ai yuan) because he had wangled some hospital equipment out of somebody. It was a very good meal - bread and six very meaty dishes - and of course there were lots of speeches. Dr. Liu Shu chen's was terribly "holy" and I felt Dr. Chao's was much more effective. I don't know if he is a Christian or not, but he probably is. Of course he said he was very keen to get to America for all he could learn there, but that there were a lot of things to be learnt here in Moukden. For example he had learnt why Dr. Gao and Dr. Liu had been able to keep going during the last few years. He said that during the time under the Japs, when it was hard to hold services and the College service was just a small group meeting in the library, that he had very seldom gone but that when he did go he noticed that those two were always there. He said that he never remembered much of any sermons he heard, and that what he knew about Christianity he had learnt by watching people like Dr. Gao and Dr. Liu. It sounded very sincere, and as those two are by no means popular in all quarters it must have comforted them to hear such a warm and grateful tribute from one of their junior staff. There was a lot more, of course that I didn't follow.

Nell and Agnes were away all day yesterday with the whole school to the Peiling (North Tomb), so I was on my own. The afternoon was spent in hair washing and gardening. The gardening consisted of battling with a jungle of convolvulus, vine, and blackberry plants, with branches up to 12 feet long. The garden is terribly neglected looking now and I'll have to trust to the frost to kill the weeds. Then when the school returned I went over with Mr. Chang, the Head, to his house to plant some raspberry canes and strawberry runners in his garden. (It was his birthday, so most suitable). He is an awfully nice man, very gentle and easy to get on with. He and Nell are great friends and although, of course, he is really Head, there are few problems that she is not consulted about before they are decided. He keeps hens to eke out his salary, but feeding costs are so high and disease so prevalent that he has got rid of (sold) over 100 in the last week or two and has only 30 now. It's hard to make money even on hens now. The price of Kaoliang, which had already risen steeply, jumped from \$500 per pound to over \$600 in the last couple of days. This reflects the difficulty of transport due to all the Communist activity. I'll try to give you that in £.s.d.: the latest exchange figure we got was about \$12,000 to the pound sterling (although one gets \$5000 to \$6000 for \$1 U.S.). So that's over 1/- per lb for kaoliang. I've no idea how that compares with pre-war prices, but at present (Chinese) salaries it is something to groan about.

The Medical College struggles along as usual. There is still some trouble over students who won't pay fees - although many genuinely poor students have had all or part remitted - and about refusing

to sit their exams. But no fresh rows. The technicians-in-training were in a great pother yesterday over some row they had had with the head technician Mr. Ch'i, and there is some rumour that they are all to be called up. However, I did not get it at all clear. When there is a row they usually come into the Path lab to blow off steam away from Mr. Ch'i, so I get snatches of it. Hugh will have to try to sort it out tomorrow I expect. Little Liu, my technician, who has got the early T.B is, I am glad to say, in good spirits. He has now been settled in a small room by himself to sleep, and eats with the other boys, and does two hours work in the lab each day to keep him from feeling too bored. The other afternoon he came in bursting with excitement to tell me he had seen two big glass bottles in a little shop at only \$2000 each, and did we want them in the lab. I was most gratifyingly interested and wrote the order and sent him off to tell the hospital buyer about them. He came back next day, beaming with excitement and pride to say that he had been entrusted with negotiation for the bottles, and that the office had given him the money and he was to bring them back in a rickshaw! Later he was back to announce that he was at that moment about to depart on the great adventure. Finally there was his triumphal return, plus the bottles, and an exciting tale of how the man in the shop said that if he had waited till the following day they would have been gone! Hair-breadth escape!! Now he is combing Moukden for a few flowerpots for me to put plants in during the winter. It gives him a reason for being out of doors in this glorious weather.

Last Monday was the 8th., Moon feast, and the College had a holiday. So Agnes and I went to the Blind School for tea with Hester, and later we three went for a walk in the country. Poor Hester is having a rather muddled sort of time. She works almost entirely in the Blind School so has to live somewhere there, and the problem is where. Mr. Rasmussen is in the house, Miss Black used to be in, and Hester is in the big house alone. Two families of Danes are due to come at the end of November and the final plan is that one family, with two children, shares Mr. Rasmussen's house, and the one with three children shares the big house with Hester. These two Danes are both doctors. One was to go to a country hospital for a while and then be permanently in the hospital and College here. The other was expected to be stationed outside Moukden. But in present circumstances they will probably both be here. Both families have had language study, first in America, and for the last six months in Peiping. We did not overlap...

By the way..... I had a letter from the Baboses from Tientsin, at last on their way to America, papers all complete. I haven't yet heard if they got to Shanghai in time to catch their boat; there was a little doubt about it. Later: Yes, they did.

I got sidetracked from our walk on Monday. It was lovely to be out among great fields of brilliant green cabbages; all glowing in the late afternoon sun. Not much kaoliang to be seen, but millet and beans. We passed acres of Jap-built factories and workmen's houses, some occupied by soldiers, but mostly derelict and windowless. No more room!

Much love, Agatha

Letter No. 193 10 Oct. 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother.....

.. ... no mail. We heard a horrid rumour that out-going mail has been piling up for over three weeks. Apparently as they are short of planes, even airmail letters may go by train as far as Tientsin, or further, and since the railway line has been damaged that is not possible. Anyway, if you do have long gaps, try not to worry.... No news from K'ai yuan, which is worrying. The trains still run to Liaoyang on that line, but no further. We have heard that large numbers of Government troops have been landed at Hulutao (so it can't have been taken, or else has been retaken) I'm not sure if Chihhsien is still cut off or not, the trains were expected to run soon. The Generalissimo and Madame Chiang paid Moukden a brief visit last week. The curfew has come on again, 9.30 p.m. till dawn. That is all the news of that kind that we have. Everything here in Moukden is perfectly peaceful and ordinary.

Later: Rumour has it that there are bags and bags and bags of mail in!!

Today is Shuang shih Chieh - the Double Tenth - and the College and schools had a holiday. It has been a horrid damp cold drizzly day with a penetrating wind, but I managed to do a lot of gardening in the intervals of routine jobs in the lab. I have been trying to collect some rubbish with which to cover up plants in the winter, but no sooner do I make a little pile than it is spirited away and doubtless burned on someone's stove . Nell and Agnes were both out at a concert at the YMCA so I had tea alone, and the effect of the gardening was such that I got round four scones, three biscuits and three cups of tea. ... Then I went to the College entertainment. As usual the big double room was packed to suffocation, the front rows being occupied by children of the staff. During the lengthy wait for things to begin I noticed Dr. Hsiang's eldest boy clambering out of the window in what appeared to be a most dangerous way. He proceeded to stand upright on the windowsill outside, and then we realised why! The poor lamb wanted to "pay a visit" Most resourceful, don't you think? I only stayed for a few songs and part of the usual heart-rending play in the middle of which the lights failed and I came out under cover of darkness to a belated supper,. These functions are much more interesting to me now that I know some of the students and can recognise which class is which.

This morning we had no classes, just a meeting of staff and students, at which one of the doctors gave a long and, to me, unintelligible discourse about the Republic. By the way, one small point I notice here is that on these national occasions the Chinese flag is everywhere in evidence, but no other. In Chengtu there were usually two flags, crossed, on the platform or at entrance to Campus - the flag of China on one side and the Kuomintang flag on the other.

One of the College rows seems to have been solved at last. The class that will take their exam in December has been refusing to agree to sit a clinical examination, and they have sent several letters to the Senatus, to that effect. Then there was a meeting with the class, at which it was explained to them that the final exam of this College had always included a clinical exam, and that the regulations were not going to be set aside for them. Next morning Hugh received a very brief and insulting letter saying that they still could not give in, and hinting reports to the newspapers and so on. He called an urgent, staff meeting, which decided unanimously that the decision to have a clinical exam must stand. That evening he had an interview with the head of the class and talked to him, and next morning Dr. Gao received a deputation from them to apologise and agree to the staff decision!! This is, I think, the first time the staff has won a clear victory, as other rows have been settled by compromise - or have not yet been settled. Very satisfactory but exhausting to those in authority. (All this about rows etc . private please, except Dor and family). The technicians are still in a fickle mood. Only one turned up to my last English class and two of the others who are allowed to come and listen-in. However, I haven't heard any more about them being conscripted. We had a very jolly supper party this week for an UNRRA girl called Gwenda Chitty an Australian. Harry Johnstone

and George Taylor came too.... tomorrow I go over the west, to spend the weekend with Harry Johnstone and Tom Blakely.

Why, I forgot to tell you about our burglar! The other night I woke about one with the vague idea that I had heard glass breaking. I couldn't get the idea out of my head, so tiptoed down-stairs to snoop. I was staring out of the dining room window trying to get accustomed to the darkness when I suddenly realised that a man was standing stark naked just outside! I ran to the front door, opened it and shouted "Who's that" in what were meant to be intimidating tones, and retreated upstairs for reinforcements. Nell was sceptical and sleepy but wakened the cook and he - armed with the poker (see "Cranfield") - led the procession (Nell, Agnes, me, dog, cat), and we explored the ground-floor and the garden, and sure enough we found a whole pane of glass taken out of the drawing-room window, and he had started on the second one, evidently trying to make a big enough hole to squeeze through. Of course the man had vanished over the wall at the first alarm. Since the police took our barbed wire for the fortifications it has been quite easy to get into the compound, but today George got some wire to put round this corner.

Sunday in the West..... . Harry and I played cribbage as it was a nasty cold windy day out-of-doors. We had a minute but delightful coal fire. Later in the evening the Flemings came over, and then George and Tom came back and the party really began to warm up. Tom made an extraordinary concoction from grapefruit juice (out of a tin) and vodka, and we covered that with a layer of sausages and bread and black coffee. We wanted to hear the news from San Francisco but missed it at 9 p.m. so had to wait till 10 p.m. but we forgot again to watch the time so waited till 11, and by that time we were playing the gramophone and dancing so had to wait till 12, when we really did hear the news (only there wasn't any) and so to bed.

I'm afraid this letter will need careful censoring, although it was suggested that I write an article for Woman's Work on "My weekend in the West"!

The latest about K'ai yuan is that there are about 2000 Communists in the city, which is now surrounded by the Government troops. If the Communists do not surrender they will fight for the city. There is no news of what has happened to our folk, but presumably they are still there. The general feeling about the situation is more optimistic, although no one seems quite clear why, unless it is about the reinforcements landing in Hulutao. Such funny things happen. I heard yesterday of an International Red Cross man who got stuck in Yingko, and in order to get back here he had to take a ticket to Shanghai, intending to get another boat back to Hulutao. The boat he sailed in turned round and eventually came in to Hulutao and he got back here quicker than he expected, although rather expensively.....

Much love, Agatha

P.S. There is ice on the Hsiao Ho and the temperature outside is down to 17degrees F.

Letter No. 194 18th. October 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

Get out your magnifying glass! Postage is up to \$2090 (from \$285) and for only 4 grams.....

Wonderful to think the slides, microtome, and knife may be on the way now do you think the lab people mind? And are you sure you haven't given Lily too many odds and ends?.... How many hens have you? Fifty-two eggs is wonderful.

How nice of John Edgar (Morison) to get the knives. Are they all swearing at me?!.....

Still no news from K'ai yuan, but the situation generally seems much easier. In fact we hear that the Communist push has been halted, and that there will be no more excitements until the spring. Then a Government advance is prophesied to "clear Manchuria"

The big bit of news Miss Jessie Service has had an operation and has to go home at once..... terribly bad luck, when she has only arrived such a short time..... she will go by air.....

The technicians are still being contrary, but the students more peaceful. We had a staff meeting, and there were actually no major problems to discuss..... blessedly dull. I really enjoy my class in "Medical English" with class 28, and for some peculiar reason don't feel a bit shy about trying to speak Chinese when I can't get the meaning across in English (it's meant to be an English class). I find an audience of doctors including Hugh and Jack much more paralysing, and haven't yet been able to talk in anything but English to them.

The K'un Kuang Junior school (about 180, strong) went on a picnic to the Hsiao Ho Yen - part of their Girl Guide activities - not really Girl Guides, but a compulsory Government organisation on the same lines. Terrific excitement, pots, pans and stacks of vegetables! Tomorrow is the graduates' reunion - more "je nao". While all this goes on, the pup and I spend a cosy afternoon gardening. Goodbye. Is this worth 3 shillings? Isn't it awful? I don't care!

Much love, Agatha

Letter No. 195 25 October 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

Ten gram, not four gram, for airmail letters! I enclose a set of five Manchurian stamps someone gave me, which commemorate the return of the Chinese Post Office from Chungking to Nanking.

.....I wonder if you saw Dr. Hou (Pao Chang). Do tell me all you can about his visit. I hear Prof. Biggart's Pathology of the Nervous System is out at last - the new edition. Could you order one for me?...

Drs. Liu and Wang have at last got all their passports and passages fixed up and waiting for them in Tientsin. They leave tomorrow or the next day by train to Chinchow, then hope to get on past the break in the line by bus or truck.....

Did I tell you in my last letter the news from Kai' yuan? The Ta Hui office sent one of their clerks to try to get through and find out what had happened - no easy or safe job. He got to Tieling by train, then changed into very old clothes and went on, I think, on foot. He got within 15 li of K'ai yuan and met a man coming out, who lived next door to the hospital. He told them that the hospital was full of Communist wounded, and Dr. McMinn and Dr. Shih very busy but well. We had heard horrid rumours of Dr. Shih having been killed, so this was a great relief. Our man then turned back, having got this news.

Winter is approaching fast. We have had a little snow twice, but it did not last, and some fog, and bleak grey wintry days. Last night we had a minute fire, so instead of vanishing into our respective studies like rabbits into their burrows just after supper, we all (and cat and dog) sat cosily round the fire, balancing books and type-writers on chair arms, and were very cosy. Steam pipes may be very warm and comfortable but are not an inspiring method of keeping warm. The leaves are almost all off the trees now. We haven't had much in the way of autumn colours, as almost all the trees around here are elms or willows that only turn yellowish, but they look lovely reflected in the blue or steel-grey of the Small River. I heard that there used to be lots of lotuses in the river, but now it has been cleared out, and although I'm sure the lotuses are a loss, the open stretch of water is something gained. It is pathetic to watch people gathering up the fallen leaves for fuel. The other day I saw some small children tackling a tree. The biggest one climbed up and methodically went out along each branch and shook it, while the smaller ones down below painstakingly gathered up the leaves into a dilapidated sack. It seems such a lot of work for a small result. But I suppose they are too small to earn money and if they work all day they may collect enough leaves to cook the family meal. The hospital rubbish - ashes and such - is thrown out into the gully beside the hospital, and all day there are children raking it over with their hands or an old piece of wire to glean the odd cinder which has still a little left to burn in it. Of course they are all as black as sweeps, but usually very jolly. Sometimes they knock-off work and, scratching some squares on the ground, play a kind of hopscotch.

This week has been one of class exams in College, and there have been no classes, so it has been something of a holiday for me, with only some invigilating, and part of an English exam to correct.

I was appalled by the low standard of answers to what I had thought was a very simple couple of questions on the stuff I had done with them. It made me feel like starting from the beginning again, but of course one couldn't. The answers to Hugh's questions seemed just as bad, so it's not all me. Even questions involving pure memory work ("Give the English for the following words") were dreadfully bad and spelling was often guesswork and almost unrecognisable. One funny little thing I noticed in two exams I invigilated, the same class of students, in the same room - on the second day they all sat in exactly the same seats as on the first day. Why? There was no rule, they were free to sit where they pleased. Certainly students at home would not have instinctively sorted themselves out in that way. Are they subconsciously looking so anxiously for something secure and permanent in life that it comes out in little things like this?

The technicians all refused to go to their exams this week. I think we are heading for some sort of blow-up or showdown in that direction! My new boy, Na, informed me yesterday that he had to go home to Liaoyang for five days, to re-bury his grand-mother, as far as I could make out. So I will just have Liu this week for his two hours a day. He is well; immensely pleased by a gift from hospital of an UNRRA blanket. He brought it to the lab to show me! Much love, Agatha

Letter No. 196 1 November 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother,

..... the main bit of news this week is that long letters have been received from Dr. McMinn and Miss Henderson, from K'ai yuan. All well, but what a time they have had! The Pa Lu have now retreated some way to the north, but communications are very difficult because the bridge was blown up again and so on. When the Govt. troops were suddenly withdrawn it was decided to try to get Dr. Shih and the nurses out, but they had left it too late. So the nurses were distributed to people's houses, and appeared in the wards in "mufti", disappearing again when necessary. Dr. Shih was kept "in purdah" (presumably hidden, but operated when it was safe for her to do so). The great risk of course was that these people would be taken away by the Communists who are very short of medical personnel. Dr. McMinn must have been nearly overwhelmed with work. The hospital was full and overflowed into neighbouring inns. The worst phase was when Govt. wounded poured in - neglected, stinking and verminous. The hospital was not damaged at all, but some glass in Dr. McMinn's house was broken by the heavy gunfire. The Pa Lu took half-to three-quarters of the hospitals supplies of drugs instruments, dressings, in spite of Dr. McMinn's arguments and diplomacy. She apparently quoted "my friend Chou En Lai" frequently and at length. No persons' belongings of any of the staff were lost this time. These letters were brought to Moukden by the pastor. They have certainly been most fortunate in all important respects. We had heard that Dr. Shih had been killed, which just shows the gloomy sort of rumours that are so easily propagated. The line to Lioayang is now through once more, and Miss Ella Gordon came up for the weekend for a Conference meeting. The line to Chihhsien has been repaired, since letters come from Marshall (McCreery). His latest venture has been five goats. Whyever five?

.....Miss Service waiting for a telephone message to rush off to the air-field. Drs. Liu and Wang left last Monday, the first plan being to go by train to Chihhsien, then on to Hulutao, and then hope to get on a boat leaving 7th. November to catch the "Canton" in Hong Kong...

Not much news in College, The technicians' English classes have died altogether, and the latest is that they all want to be taken on as lab-boys instead of student-technicians. This means they will not have any classes, but will do a job and get paid for it. This will probably be agreed to, and then the hopeless ones gradually dismissed. My boy Na did not turn up on Friday but sent a letter from his home in Liaoyang to say he was staying until sometime next week. He will not be any great loss if he stays away altogether! Liu, the T.B. one, is in good form, and comes in for a couple of hours each day. He is a nice boy and has some gumption so is a real help, and we are getting along quite well. Another post-mortem this week - T.B. in a child, about every possible manifestation of it that could be packed into one small body. With Liu's help (he fortunately writes Chinese nicely), I have launched out on the job of labelling all the specimens in the Path Museum, in English and Chinese. Since I came I have never once seen a student in the Museum, although they can go at any time if they ask for the key. I think it is mainly because the bottles have only got numbers, and to be at all intelligible to them, they have to look up the number in the catalogue, which is mostly in English, and that is just enough of a handicap to put them off it. The (new) Chinese labels look most decorative and will, I hope, be appetizing to the student mind.

I am also mounting some new specimens but this is very difficult as we have practically no glass jars, and they would cost a fortune to have made. So if we want to mount a new specimen it often means wandering round the museum to look for a specimen to be thrown away. The mounting fluid is

another problem. The main ingredient is glycerine, of which a 10lb. can (which goes no length) costs about two pounds fifty. I have to try to mount several specimens in one jar, so that as much as possible of the cubic space is occupied by what the coolie, rather witheringly refers to as "meat".

I am very relieved to find that I like the students, and like teaching them. I never took for granted that I would because I never enjoyed the little teaching I did at home much, and having heard so much about these students' turbulent ways made me very doubtful about how I would feel about them when I had direct dealings with them. Perhaps being thoroughly disillusioned beforehand is really the best way to start because then the slightest evidence of friendliness comes as something delightful and unexpected, a sort of bonus. They are most attractively alive and full of bounce and most willing to laugh at anything in the nature of a joke. Sometimes of course they don't realise I am making a joke, but if things are a little stodgy I can always bring in a lighter note by stepping backwards "accidentally" off the edge of the rostrum, which is (most treacherously) about a foot shorter than the blackboard.

Miss Service hasn't got away yet..... There was some muddle about the plane, which arrived on Friday and left at once without any of its passengers..... they have had word that it is back again and will leave early tomorrow morning....

This is Sunday evening. The K'un Kuang teachers' Bible Class is going on hot and strong in the sitting room. Harry Johnstone takes it, and the discussion is extremely lively. They certainly are a very fine and united staff, seven men and four women, (including Nell and Agnes). We had a Halloween party for them on Friday, and Nell let me in for it too. She had lots of silly competitions prepared and they threw themselves into it with all their hearts and the roof was nearly lifted by the roars of laughter and general row.

We were over at the West this afternoon for the English service, at least Agnes and I were. We walked as it was a lovely day. They are digging huge holes at all the crossroads, for pillboxes, I expect. The children are beginning to look bunchy again, in padded clothes. Everywhere there are cartloads of cabbages, such a lovely fresh colour, and also the first cartloads of the new "shi kai" (kaoliang stalks). I have heard that in some Pa Lu areas the farmers are not allowed to cut their Kao Liang at ground level, but must leave it tall to serve as cover.. They may cut the heads of grain off if they like, but what a job!

There is a rumour that the Government troops have retreated from Kirin, leaving it to the Communists. It seems fairly certain that the Pa Lu have taken the big hydro-electric station near Kirin, on which Manchuria's industrial life depends, and if so will probably have destroyed it. Some of the Chinese are very depressed about this, as they say it will put things back for many years, even at the best. My teacher, Mr. Chang, was talking yesterday about how black the future of China was. I tried to suggest that if Japan had won the war it would have been even worse, and that at least was something achieved. He was not at all convinced and said "But Japan ran this country very well. Think of all the improvements they made, and there was enough to eat then". He was imprisoned by the Japanese and had a bad time, so if you have him talking like that, it reveals a terrible depth of depression, and loss of confidence in his own country. The other day, appalled by the terribly poor answers to my questions in an English class-exam, I rehearsed with one of the women doctors what I could say in mild rebuke. I thought I had made it very mild and diplomatic, but she was quite shocked, and protested - "You can't expect them to work well when they are all unhappy". They

don't, to my eyes, look very unhappy, but on the contrary full of beans, but I was interested by her warm defence, as she is usually most critical of the unregenerate student body.

We had an address by the Mayor in the College last Monday. He said some good things about not criticizing other people but doing something about improving your own small corner of your own country. However, he seemed to think the highest goal of civilisation was a society in which everyone owned their own car and it cost five pounds to spit.

This must do for tonight.

Much love, also to the Roywood family, A.

Letter No. 197 9 November 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother.....

..... This weekend I am at the Barkers (more gadding, you will say). I came over just before lunch in a great scramble. (The Path cronies have their exam on Monday and began to ask questions about 12 noon on Saturday!). I always enjoy a rickshaw ride across the city, there is so much to look at, and I so seldom see it. The streets change with the season. Carts and carts of Shu-kai (kao liang stalks), and cabbages, and yellow earth for making coal bricks (not coal balls as in Peking). The city itself is very dull - if you took away all the people and all the Chinese characters, it might be almost anywhere in the world unlike Chungking and Chengtu which are Chinese from the ground up, as it were. But the people and the things they are doing are unfailing entertainment. There is the other side too. I saw an old horse, dragging a broken leg, being pulled along by one man while another walked behind with a whip. No one gave this spectacle more than a passing stare. I wish China could realise that all "progress" does not involve spending vast sums on new industry and better roads, but that if our civilisation has anything to boast of it is a public conscience which would not allow such a thing to occur. Of course there are worse things to be seen, you must have seen plenty - a frozen body of an old beggar, lying in the gutter on a winter morning (yes, there is a gutter nowadays, progress!)

What a nice pair the Barkers are. He has the art of talking, not to make conversation but as though he really enjoyed it..... Ann.... works several mornings a week with Mrs. Findlay in the outpatient clinic and also gives classes to nurses. The outpatient clinic, by the way, started in a small way for the very poor, and now is simply swamped with patients. Ann usually has 70 to 80, and Mrs. Findlay the same, in a morning, and this is only kept down to that by refusing admission tickets after 11.30 a.m.

After lunch I was encouraged to "lie down", and found a hot water bottle in my bed! then we lit a fire and had a very cosy tea round it, which seemed to last in some obscure way until suppertime. Then Mr. Webster came in, and as he had spent the day correcting the most appalling Maths. papers the Wen Hui had ever produced, he had to be soothed and fed. After supper we played bridge. Mr. Webster delivers devastatingly direct criticisms of all one's blunders, which kept him busy so far as I was concerned, but finished the evening by giving me a bear hug. It intrigues me to find that,

although I really do like all the colleagues here, they do fairly definitely fall into two groups; those with whom one exchanges bear hugs and the others.

The people at this end of Moukden are not as lucky as we with water and electricity, erratic as ours sometimes is. It is inexplicably complicated. The Findlay's house, for example, never has any electricity, while the Fleming's house, a few hundred yards off, always has it, and this house is off and on during the evenings. This house rarely has running water, and a surface well nearby so dirty that they have to carry water from the next compound. (I hope Dor can bring an Aladdin lamp).

George, who went to K'ai yuan about a week ago, got back on Friday night. He brings a pretty serious account of conditions there. About a third of the population have left, and coal is unobtainable Dr. Shih lived somewhere near the hospital during the Communist period, and slipped in and out, dressed in aged clothes, as an old washer-woman. On the very last day before the Communists left, some of them came to the hospital to check up on the number of in-patients. One was missing - and was at that moment being operated on by Dr. Shih in the "theatre". I didn't hear how it was explained away. Actually, some at least of the Communists must have realised that the doctor and nurses were still about: but apparently they did not try very hard to catch them, or they would have succeeded. It was evidently a terrific strain on Dr. McMinn. Not only had she far more pure medical work, but the strain of talking and negotiating with her visitors must have been very trying. One party came one day to inspect the hospital at about three p.m., and did not leave till after ten. She got a very good impression of the communist military - very well disciplined and courteous - but did not get on so well with the civil officials. From the military point of view the whole affair seems rather Gilbertian! The original Government troops (the 53rd.) in K'ai yuan simply departed bag and baggage on the approach of the Pa Lu, without a fight, and settled themselves in Sun chieh t'ai (the K'ai yuan railway station). They built a great rampart all round, cutting across all roads, railway, etc. Meanwhile the Pa Lu "took" K'ai yuan, without any firing, but camped outside the city as they did not want to be caught. They had a lot of wounded Govt. prisoners, who were treated by Dr. McMinn, and later those who were fit were given passes and set on the road to Sun chieh t'ai to rejoin their friends. They soon returned to say they couldn't get in! There was no opening in the fortifications, and no way of getting in, so please would the Pa Lu take them in again! Later the Pa Lu heard that the Govt. troops in Sun chieh t'ai were being relieved by the 6th. division, whom they had learned to respect in previous encounters, so they decided it was time to move off. So they collected their wounded, said goodbye and retreated about 80 li to the north. Now these good Government troops are again going to be recalled and replaced by the previous weak-kneed ones, so the Kai' yuan folk anticipate the return of the Pa Lu at some not too far distant date.

Of course, the really crucial problem, far bigger than any danger from fighting, is the lack of coal. You can't run a hospital on a few sticks of shukai and some dried leaves, although you might keep body and soul together with that, on the corner of somebody's kang. With such a large proportion of the population drifting away from K'ai yuan, and hopeless communication between the town and the surrounding country districts, it becomes a problem when the tremendous effort to keep such a hospital open ceases to be worthwhile.

Later 5 pm...Well, I am so glad to hear of the second knife (Note 1989: the first knife sent for the microtome did not fit). How very decent of everyone concerned. The price is appalling but if it fits the new microtome the two together will be really priceless here incidentally, the line between here and Chihhsien is broken again. Weren't the doctors (Drs. Liu and Wang en route to do post-graduate work in Scotland) lucky to get out by Huluato when they did?

... Later. We had a wire from Dr. Liu and Dr. Wang from Tientsin, saying they were all fixed up with passports and passages.

This morning I went with the others to the West Church. There is a new pastor there now, a young fellow called Li, who is evidently doing very well. The church was almost empty at the start but almost full at the end, the irregularity mainly due, I think, to muddle over the recent change over from Summer Time. They have just fitted up stoves for the winter, and have to get new piping, which cost \$200,000 (about fifteen pounds.)

I've bought a bed and mattress from Mr. Webster. I plan gradually to acquire a few essential furnishings as I gather that College staff always used their own, not Mission stuff, and the WMA is being so pig-headedly generous to me over money that it's easy for me to do so. It's a little white-painted iron bed with springs, which will be a great improvement on my present sagging, string bed.

This must do for now.

Much love Agatha..

Letter No. 198 16 November 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

.....You had evidently been getting bad news about Manchuria... In fact the news of the fighting is better, the last week or two. The communists got a beating in Kirin - heavy street fighting - one or two other places have been retaken, and there is now only one break, a big bridge, not yet repaired on the railway between here and Tientsin. In some ways, however, things are worse because food prices are rising steeply, also clothes and fuel. When Nell got here just a year ago, kaoliang was \$16. per lb, now over \$600. In the last two or three weeks some things have jumped - warm shoes 50%. Natural enough, but hard on people who didn't buy in time. Now we are suddenly plunged into the depths of winter. It seems incredible that when I wrote last week the ground was bare and the river unfrozen. Next day there was snow, and a skin of ice on the river, and on the second day thick ice and lots of people skating. I now wear seven layers of wool and my "mien ao", three layers wool on feet and so on.

We now have a fire every evening, and there's talk of starting the heater soon. In the College most of the rooms have stoves, not the Pathology Dept. unfortunately, so I have begged house- room in Bacteriology (!) until their heater is started. It really becomes difficult to do satisfactory lab work - or even keep the rooms clean - when there is no heat, no light or electricity (except in spasms), no running water (ditto), and what water does run has chunks of ice in it.

This is a digression. I thought I was answering your letter. You sound as if you weren't sure whether or not Moukden had any fancy new names. I think now it would always be called either Moukden or Shenyang. Yes, I agree that the people at home should get all the news possible, or they must feel

cut off and vague. But with such a fluid situation and the waxing and waning of hope in people here it is very difficult to give "news" which will mean much by the time it is read.....

Yes, do sell Walton's Polyglot if you can get a decent price for it. Would Assembly's library want it? (Note 1989. Became property of cousin, Professor John Faris)

Your letter gave us the first news of the Cairo epidemic..... very serious.... . will it affect shipping going through Port Said? .

.... what a pity you are going to lose your companionable Jersey cow... what a nice birthday-and-Christmas present the wireless must be...

Dr. Gao is back again from Peking He went there by air a few weeks ago to attend a series of lectures by Fuchs, a famous eye specialist. Peking's environs are not very peaceful either. The Govt. medical school in Paoting is moving back again to Peking (more refugee universities!) . One small corner of P.U.M.C. is reopening, but not on any scale until April. Coal is the big problem there too, or one of them.

George went back to K'ai yuan on Monday and got back here again on Thursday evening. Dr. McMinn and Miss Henderson have succeeded in buying a large amount of wood from a furniture-maker. He wanted to get rid of it before the soldiers just took it all. They have also got twenty tons of slack, so the combination should be burnable even if they get no proper coal. So they mean to stay the winter, close the hospital to in-patients, and keep one or two rooms for outpatients, warmed by stoves. All the staff - the remaining nurses and so on - will live all together in Dr. McMinn's house, so they hope to get through all right. The Pa Lu may, of course, come in again, but they are prepared for that. It seems that it would be a great help to the local church community to have even a nucleus of the hospital remain with them, even if the actual amount of medical work done is not great. Dr. Shih is in Moukden this weekend, full of beans, bustling around for supplies. I think she felt the last time that she had lost face by clearing out and leaving the hospital to communists, although no one blamed her, and now this time she has regained her self-respect and is ready for anything.

This week the ten students who failed their Path in July had their re-examination. This time, of course, I had Dr. Hsiang as co-examiner, which was a bit of a strain, but I'm glad to say, we got through without open warfare, although my temper at times wore very thin. He was determined to push them all through, and in marking their papers gave them all over 70%. His marks contrast queerly with mine for the practical in which, with the best will in the world I could only give a pass mark to two! However, on the average, they all got through. It was really rather heart-rending, for they were all terribly scared, after what had been the unprecedented "plough" the last time, and several came to me to plead for mercy and told awful tales of wives and small children, homes lost for two years and more in Pa Lu territory, and waning financial resources which could not stand an extra year's study. One is so torn between pity and exasperation that they should think such an appeal can possibly affect one's marking. Of course I do feel justice demands caution when it comes to failing even the most impossible duds. They were accepted by the College, and got through two years at an abysmally low standard. Have you then a right to say "This will no longer do, out you go"? We must start right from the bottom. Of course, a big part of the trouble is that they really and truly don't work. But why don't they want to work?

.... I heard from Elsie Priest who is back in Nanking and settling down solo in a small flat in someone else's flat. She reports with comic horror that in Ginling College ten foreign staff women are all living in one house.

George has got a jeep from UNRRA! It will be a great help as he does so much running back and forth and here and there... I must, stop as we are all about to set forth in it to the English service in the West. We shall overflow! Last night I had supper in the other house, and played the gramophone afterwards - Miss Service's records which she left behind. Very pleasant. Miss Fleming has the most awful chilblains on her hands. How lucky I am that mine only produce an occasional cracked thumb. In the afternoon Agnes and I and the cook felled a fir-tree (for fire-wood). At least, he sawed and chopped and A. and I pulled on the rope and it came down with a most gratifying smash. The frost rather caught us unawares, and there's not much one can do now in the garden, with the top six inches as hard as concrete. However, we got the vine and the fruit bushes covered in the nick of time.

Much love, Agatha

P.S. 20 degrees of frost the other night, 12 degrees F.

Letter No. 199 23 November 1947 East Suburb Moukden

Dear Mother

Thank you for package of nice picture postcards. Some you have already sent have been given to the West church kindergarten - can you imagine coping with 80 small weans, with no equipment, and anything like paper or coloured chalks too expensive to buy?

Miss Service is home! We got a cable from England. Isn't it incredibly quick? A wire came from Lily to say she would arrive in Tientsin on Dec. 1st. and come on here at once. Loud cheers!! Harry may go down to meet her, partly on financial business I think, and to help with luggage. One can get through now by train, but it is an awkward journey as you have to change at Shanhaikuan (neither side will trust the other with their rolling stock), and there are at the moment two other gaps where you have to get off and go by truck. So an extra person would be a great help. I won't start thinking about the microtome until I see it with my own eyes. The "Canton" with Drs. Liu and Wang will leave Hong Kong tomorrow.....

The latest news from K'ai yuan is not so good. The communists who were defeated near Kirin are expected back in K'ai yuan district, and some of the nurses have been sent home. Of course it may blow over....

You ask for figures about the K'un Kuang (girls' school). There are about 350 girls in all, of which 120 are boarders. The boarders are selected according to their need - those from homes far away and so on. There are six classes, three junior years and three senior years. A girl who completes the third junior year has to sit an open exam. with girls from other schools if she wants to enter the senior school, so you may get new girls entering at that stage. The Medical College has just about two hundred students, of whom about forty are girls. Yesterday we had the graduation ceremony in the

Medical College and twenty-two students got their degrees. These started their course under the 4-year curriculum, but when the new Nanking regulations for a six-year course came in they did extra clinical work. Four more of this year did their extra work in Nanking, Tientsin, and one in Kirin, and they have not yet been able to attend for their final exam.

The graduation ceremony (the first since the war) was arranged in a terrible hurry but went off very well. There was a great scramble around for enough gowns to clothe the staff in a suitably impressive manner, and in the end everyone was suitably clothed. I was especially impressive in Dr. Ellerbek's Edinburgh gown and hood! The new graduates, and all the M.M.C. graduates on the staff had quite nice gowns in semi-Chinese style, black with a panel of green silk down the front. The new graduates also wore mortarboards and looked just about as foolish as people always do look in mortarboards, but no worse. It was quite a nice ceremony, and by a miracle not too long. Dr. Barker prayed and Dr. Gao spoke and then the principle guests - heads of the Tung Pei University, Nan Man Medical College, the Public Health Department, etc. - "said a few words". Then the students each came forward to get their diplomas and made little bows, first to Dr. Gao, then right turn and a bow to the Board members, left-wheel and a bow to the staff, and another half-turn and a bow to their fellow-students. This was all done with such frozen solemnity as to make me want to giggle. Unfortunately, I was sitting beside Dr. Chan chieh-mei who is head of the Obstetrics dept. and who is an imp if ever there was one, and who always had a bad effect on my gravity. My, or rather Dr. Ellerbek's, hood intrigued her greatly, and as we were marching out after the ceremony it was just too much for her, and she gave it a tug from behind and nearly throttled me (to the vast entertainment of any students who spotted this by-play). The new graduates were all lined up in the hall with fixed grins, and were shaken hands with by all their pals. The guests having been got rid of, the members of staff mostly retreated to the library and waded in to the tea and "tien hsin" left over from the entertainment of the aforesaid guests, until hauled out unwillingly to the front steps for a photograph (which you may eventually see). On the whole it was a very pleasant function. I think it will do the students good to see a little pomp and ceremony attached to the process of becoming a doctor!

In the afternoon Nell and Agnes and Nell's great friend Shu Fen and I went on a shopping expedition, and Agnes and I bought mien-p'ao's or rather arranged for them to be made. I had vague visions of a fur one, but the fur alone, even the cheapest, would be about six pounds without the cloth or workmanship. This mien-pao will come to about five pounds altogether, and will be very pretty - I think. The outside dark green with a little pattern.

In the evening the new graduates gave a feast to the members of the staff. It was cooked in hospital, and held in the hospital dining room. It was a pleasant gesture (after recent ructions with these same young gentlemen) and went very well. Dr. Liu spoke well, and a lot of people told funny stories. Dr. Hsiang sang falsetto old-style drama. Even Hugh and Jack told stories, most difficult to be funny in Chinese, and equally difficult to understand Chinese humour, I never follow a Chinese story or see the point. Everyone, from Dr. Gao to Dr. Hsiang, were clapped vigorously and with admirable impartiality!

Much love, and remember me to Margaret

Agatha

Letter No. 200 29th November 1947 Moukden Medical College.

Dear Mother

... bundle of newspapers arrived, enclosure sticking out... what interesting cuttings..... that destruction on the Castlerock golf course as a protest against Sunday golf!! in how many countries in the world could that sort of thing happen nowadays?

Well, we are right in the middle of winter now, with thick snow. We've had our heater on now for a couple of weeks, not all the time of course, but enough to make the house reasonably warm during the day. Our heater pit man doesn't seem very efficient however, and twice we have had floods of water pouring out of the outlet-taps of the radiators. You'd be surprised how much mess it can make in a few minutes. The College has had some heating on too, but that will go off soon, when term stops, and then we will have to depend on a few stoves. So I am confronted by the job of moving over 700 museum jars from the Path museum on the top floor to the tables in the Anatomy dissecting room down in the basement, which will have to be kept above freezing point because of the pipes. The Path dept. will be closed, and we will move into the Bact lab to share the stove. This will not be as bad as it sounds because, as part of the economy drive, all the technician-trainees except two, including my Liu who has T.B., are to be dismissed, and also some of the lab boys in other departments. These boys have been rather taken aback by this move. You remember they refused to attend classes or sit their exams, and finally said they wanted to be lab boys on a salary basis instead. But of course there wasn't work for them and now most of them are to be dismissed. It is inevitable, and reasonable as the College can't be expected to pay them for sitting round the stove and reading the newspaper, which seems to be their present occupation, but it is certainly not what they expected and grovelling apologies have been going cheap, ever since rumours of a cut started to fly round! On boy, whose home is in Liaoyang, actually went over to the West to ask John Fleming, who used to be in Liaoyang, to intercede for them! I don't think any of them will make good technicians and they behaved so badly before that I find it hard to be very sympathetic. All of them have get-at-able families so will not be badly stuck. I have to have Dr. Hsiang's brother to help in Path again. I can't say I look forward to this much as a similar arrangement last spring did not work at all well. However, this is what has been decided, so we must give it a trial. One big problem for the coming months is that over fifty students cannot get home this winter holiday. The dormitories will be closed down, and they will have to live in the warmer rooms in the College.

The teaching term is over now!. Just two more weeks of exams. I can hardly believe it, and feel that the next time I turn round it will be the beginning of next term and I'll be starting teaching in real earnest. It still just doesn't seem possible but one thing that cheers me is that I really begin to like this class 28, and am not scared of them as I was at the beginning. For example, I was taken by surprise by the end of classes, as I thought there was another week of lectures and so had not got over the histology course. I told them I had "tsiao liao" for two more lectures and what would they like to do about it. A terrific babble of discussion broke out and finally the class head said they had decided to ask for an extra two-hours class the day after exams were over, and before they broke up for the holidays. It remains to be seen whether they really come, but it cheered me to find that they would even consider such a thing.

We got a long letter today from Dr. Liu and Dr. Wang from Hong Kong. They'd had a very rough passage from Tientsin but were very pleased with everything else, and the kindness of all the people they had met on the way. The "Canton" was in but they had not met Miss Lily Dodds yet. She is due

in Tientsin tomorrow. The railway is passable now (with changes and probably some bits by bus) but whether she can manage to get all her baggage up is a different story! So I won't believe in the existence of either the microtome or the books till I see them.

The news from K'ai yuan is not good, but we don't know how reliable it is. It is said to have fallen to the communists again a few days ago, and if so our folk are not likely to have got out, or they would have been hear by now. (Later: this rumour probably exaggerated).

This is Sunday morning and I'm settled in the big window of the K'un Kuang sitting room, in the watery sunshine, which filters through the iced windows. I'm in my new mien p'ao, and so warm and cosy. It will be hard to get out of it between now and the Spring. The first appearance in College in it was quite an ordeal as everyone I met, students or staff, grinned broadly and asked if I was warm, while the lab boys gathered and inspected me critically and approvingly from all sides.

Yesterday I had a long and interesting conversation with Dr. Wu ching jen who comes to the lab every morning for an hour to help me with translation. I was swearing at the incubator when he arrived and eventually, one thing leading on to another I found myself telling him that I never seemed to do anything in the College but fiddle unsuccessfully with incubators that don't work, and did he think that was what I was in Moukden for? And in fact what did he think any of us were in Moukden for? He immediately abandoned his attempts to practice his English and talked passionately for a good half-hour on the place of the foreigner in the present set-up. I can only give you the general drift. First, he didn't see any necessity for, at least, the medicals like me to do a lot of talking. "We have plenty of people who can preach well, and take Bible classes, and teach the Tao li, we don't need that, although of course it's useful and interesting to hear what our foreign friends have to say about it. "But", he said, "I have heard many sermons about living a life of service, and the value of self-sacrifice, and I don't remember them, and I don't think they ever did me much good. But nobody could watch Dr. Garven and Dr. Leggate and some of the other foreigners, for years, as I have, and remain the same. It is not what Dr. Garven says to the students that makes any difference, but the fact that they all know he is in before 8 every morning, and never misses a class, and teaches well because of all the preparation he does. And last summer, when our own officials were running off to Peking, you were all busy planning and preparing for this term's work - that was far more convincing that any amount of talk about hope for the future of China. This is what the students notice, not only those who come to services but also those who don't. And they know it has something to do with our religion. But this kind of influence takes years and years to exert its effect. Another thing we notice about Dr. Garven and Dr. Leggate - they don't really mind whether they are in high positions or not. We Chinese like to be on the Senate and feel we have power" - and so on and so on....

This is a very free paraphrase of what he said but I think it gives the general drift. I thought it interesting, because I've wondered sometimes what some of the good people who subscribe money to keep me here would think if they knew I had no part whatever in the religious activities of the College, and did none at all of what they probably think of as a missionary's work. But isn't it awful to be taken as a sort of example - that's what it boils down to?

Later: Just back from service in the West, The ponies have their icicle moustaches on today, and the tramlines are buried for the winter in the packed snow. It is hard to get carriages now after dusk so I walked back with Jack and George, slipping and slithering. Harry has just arrived on his bike for the K'un kuang Bible class, having fallen twice on route.

Much love to you and the Roywood family

Agatha

Letter No. 201 6th. December 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

My "lapsed weekend" I read your comments to Agnes who said, "No, of course no one will think twice about it. Things are quite different nowadays, after all when Nell and Hugh and Jack arrived here, the Chinese had prepared one ground-floor of one house for them, and they shared one bathroom, and so on. You need not worry at all. If I show any symptoms of straying from the paths of discretion, Agnes and certainly Nell will soon pluck me back.

..... Mary Ward sale of sterling cheques Harry Johnston, his job is incredibly complicated a great comfort. Yesterday I got a letter from the Hong Kong & Shanghai Bank, London, saying they had received a cheque of mine (sold to the B.A.T. Company here) but could not cash it as I had no Chinese account. Hysterical laughter on the part of ARC. Now don't chase off to Church House Room 17 with this. It's just a muddle and I have their letter saying I could cash cheques up to the limit of my salary Prices are crazy, flour has almost doubled in the last week. Last week I got \$25,000 for a pound sterling, this week someone else got \$40,000. The official bank rate is about \$19,000 I think. By the way, would you mind sending a postcard to H. and S. Bank, London... to say "Change of address ... Dr. A.R.C. no longer at Peking, but now at you know where". I'm sorry you and Dor had a scramble to produce a "report" from us three. Our consciences are quite clear. Agnes says that the procedure in the old days was to present reports at the January Conference meetings, and then they were sent home. None of us were told to send them early this year anyway we are quite content that Dor should do it I myself have no doubt at all that this particular peg has found its right hole the mere fact that the Irish church has sent three new missionaries to Manchuria has a very real and encouraging effect on the Chinese. It is a visible sign of hope and faith in the future and that is one thing they badly need.

More snow and more snow. Yesterday it was coming down as single crystals, each at least a quarter-inch across so that you could easily see the beautiful six-pointed star patterns. We often have to start the day in the lab by thawing out the staining solutions in the radiator which works up to a moderate heat about that time, I work in eight layers plus mien-p'ao plus a big tweed coat, and keep quite warm like that . Hugh is incredible! He feels the cold badly, and often has on countless layers of wool then a fur jacket, tweed coat, and white coat of outsize dimensions tightly stretched on top. He looks just like a teddy bear (polar variety, slightly shop-soiled.)

We had a great cafuffle at the beginning of the week over technicians. You remember I told you the new boys were mostly sacked, including Na (the full-time second string in Path since Liu got ill.) I was to have Hsiang (Dr. H.'s brother) to help in Path, and was not looking forward to it, as I had found him very slack and unsatisfactory in the spring. The boys were told to leave on Monday morning, so downed tools and departed. I waited patiently for Hsiang to appear and nothing happened. Later Hugh came in, looking ruffled (or as ruffled as he can look) to say Hsiang refused to come to Path, any other department but not Path. Hugh had refused to accept this and told him to think it over, as if

he persisted in refusal he would have to go. Of course my spirits soared and I prayed fervently that H. would not change his mind. And sure enough, next morning he repeated his refusal and departed, having already, so I heard later, accepted another job elsewhere! This was not purely a personal crack at me, but I honestly believe it was mostly because I keep my boys working hard, and none of the others have to, yet. So now I have Na back and the happy family is complete. I'm glad as, although not much good, he is willing and quite reliable as far as he goes. Also he is older than the others and has a wife and child, and never was a ring-leader but just drifted with the crowd. He got two weeks salary in lieu of notice and now claims a full salary for this month on top of that!! What do you think is the just decision on that?

We've had such a lot of stories of robberies lately. Someone walking on the street in a fur coat had the whole back of it slashed out and run off with! Can you beat that? One of the K.K. staff had his bag slit up in the tram, in broad daylight, and when the man found it was only some of the girls' seals that fell out, he handed them back quite brazenly, and no one in the tram dared do a thing about it. The other day a man pushed a revolver into a woman's ribs just outside our gate, took a ring she was wearing, and walked off. So one has to go carefully. The women doctors who help me with Chinese have to stop coming this week as it gets dark about 4.30 p.m., and I only get home from the lab shortly before 4 p.m.

I'm not long back from Saturday afternoon walk and tea with Hester. She now has two rooms in the little house Mr. Rasmussen lives in and Greycroft is closed. No immediate prospect of the two Danish families coming up from Peking. I like Hester increasingly, she has no easy job

Much love, best wishes for Christmas (and I haven't forgotten the 8th.!) Agatha

P.S. I am just back from the closing Christmas meeting of the Primary Sunday School which Agnes runs, with senior K'un Kuang girls as teachers. They are entrancing wee creatures, all bundled up in the most extraordinary clothes, shouting hymns at the top of their voices and just bouncing out of their skins with liveliness. Everybody got a "prize" and at the end all the teachers got "prizes" too - namely the Bible pictures you sent me. It was a great success and I haven't laughed (or wanted to laugh) so much for weeks.

Much love Agatha

Letter No. 202 7 December 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Jack and Marjorie,

Very many thanks for your lovely card ... and the photos. What a great big boy David is and so handsome and jolly-looking. And Christine is a pet I don't know how regularly airmail has been getting out. We have been having a lot of terribly cold weather and heavy snow nearly three years since I saw you...

This is Sunday and I'm back from the English service in the West. Jack Leggate and I started to walk back, and I got along fine on my crepe-soled booties, but he had steel tips on his boots and could hardly keep his feet at all. Everyone was slithering wildly in all directions, falling off bicycles in heaps

on the road, which was a sea of hard-beaten snow with a film of ice on it. Our cabby on the way there had a week-old beard with an icicle sprouting from each individual hair! I saw one funny incident: a coal merchant i.e. a man sitting by the roadside with a weighing scale in his hand, and a small pile (about two scuttle-fulls) of coal beside him. Another man passing by snapped up one piece of coal as he passed and walked on, but the coal-man spotted him and rushed at him with a yell and gave him a great kick behind. It didn't hurt him at all through all his layers of clothes, but he disdainfully dropped the piece of coal, with a scowl, and the incident was closed.

(More about the Sunday School, see letter 201)

Some of the smallest ones were as broad as they were long and nearly toppled over on their noses when they made their bows. One hairstyle might be effective on Christine: make a circular parting on the crown of the head so that you have an island of hair about 4 inches across. Tie it with a red string. It sticks up like an aspidistra.

Much love to you all, Agatha

Letter No. 203 December 14th. 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother.....

Well, we are having bitter weather, "the coldest ever remembered in Moukden" according to some of the doctors. The night before last it was down to minus 26° F (58 degrees of frost). One just tries not to think of what it means to refugees and poor people on the streets. In Shanghai many people who were homeless live on the streets, and one night there was a cold snap and 3000 bodies were picked up next morning. Kao-liang stalks are up to \$1000 a bundle, that's about a shilling at the exchange I am on now, and you may remember the meagre handful that constitutes a bundle. Some friends bought a ton of coal the other day and it cost about £15 - Black gold indeed! (Luckily ours was bought through the school in July).

In spite of all this we are very comfortable. You remember what fun we had trying to see how many layers of wool I could get on for the plane journey? (Note 1989: Preparing in Belfast for the India to China flight with minimum luggage.) I think it was nine. Well, I have nine layers plus my padded gown plus (in College or out of doors) my big tweed coat, and I move about and work in that, which is what amazes me. With all this it's sometimes hard to realise how cold it is. Yesterday, in bright sunlight, I pulled off my glove, thoughtlessly, to open a stiff iron door handle. My hand stuck, and when I pulled it off there were white frozen patches on it. Of **course** they thawed quickly inside my glove and did not even blister, but I now treat door-handles with more caution. Of course this kind of thing must have been commonplace to you in Kirin.

By the way, we don't know where Lily is, and hope she is not stuck somewhere between here and Tientsin.....

Miss Henderson is in from K'ai yuan. Everything there is as peaceful as can be expected, but fuel becoming difficult again. The coal one gets is so poor and full of stone that one gets very little heat from it, which means it gets used up quicker.

Yesterday I had a lunch party for some of the women doctors. Evening parties are impossible now as no one who can help it goes out after dark. I would like to have asked them all, but that would have made too big a crowd, so just asked six that I really know well. Nell produced a wonderful lunch, ending with ice cream. We can't make ice cream in the summer, but nothing is easier in this weather. Then she and Agnes, with great tact, betook themselves to the West on a shopping expedition, and the "children" played games. I had arranged (in a great hurry due to exams) puzzles for eyes, ears, noses, feeling, etc. and this went quite well, and then we had drawing games and other bilingual amusements. When they finally departed to do ward rounds I came down to earth to correct English papers, a very humiliating and discouraging job.

Yesterday was the last day of exams in the College, and the teachers' meeting to pass the results is tomorrow morning. Hugh will be thankful as he, as Dean, has the bulk of the work. As soon as that's over he and I go into a huddle over the teaching of Path next term. With the best will in the world I won't be able to cope with five lectures and four two-hour practicals a week on top of the lab work, so Hugh plans to do some of the lectures. I don't know yet how it will work out.

The last two days we got the whole Path museum moved down two stories to the practical classroom. The first day I broached this to our departmental servant, he was most unenthusiastic. He couldn't do it all himself, none of the other servants were as hard worked as he, etc. etc. I soothed him as well as I could and arranged for some of the other servants to help, and Na and I also did some, so it was a scene of great noise, bustle and confusion. Next morning I was very busy, so didn't see about doing the second half of the job until well on in the afternoon. Just as I was setting off to chase up Lao Pai he came into my room panting and mopping his brow. "Finished"! Did it all myself! Come and look!

In spite of our labours a great many specimens were frozen yesterday and one or two jars broke. However, if they had been left up under the roof it would have been even worse. Tomorrow, the Anatomy benches having now been cleared, we take them down another two stories to what will be the warmest place for the next two months. Even that is no great catch as many of the water pipes are already frozen. In Bacteriology they have to carry in every drop they use (that is nothing new) and carry out all the waste.

Today the College service was held in the Women's' Hospital, as being warmer. Agnes took it (on "Hope", very well) and she looked so cheerful and nice and rosy and hopeful that she was as good as a sermon in herself.

The folks from the West are coming over here today for the (English) service.... Later: they are all away again, scurrying to get home before dark, and we are settling down again with cat and dog in the middle, quite domesticated. There wasn't any new news I think. Oh yes, I am convener of the Entertainment Committee for the Retreat, Doesn't that sound elegant and distinguished? George Taylor and Sandy Webster are the other two victims. Do we sound entertaining?

Much love to you and the Roywood family,

Agatha

Letter No. 204 21st December 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother.....

Well we continue our ups and downs here. Rather unexpectedly the bitter weather has not stopped the fighting, and at the moment things are as fizzy as they have ever been. Indeed, letters may be held-up or delayed and I wonder when you will get this one. If there are long gaps between letters I hope you won't worry. You need not imagine me struggling along in a depressed puzzled sort of way, wondering why on earth I ever came here. On the contrary I am curiously contented and have no wish to be anywhere else, no matter what happens. I am very well, eat and sleep well and am too busy to do much thinking, let alone worrying. One tremendous advantage is to have such congenial colleagues and to be counted as one of the company here is no small honour.....

Dr. McMinn and Dr. Shih and the nurses are all back in Moukden. Miss Henderson had come to Moukden a few days before, and was to go back on Wednesday, leaving at about 6 a.m.. At 11 p.m, on Tuesday night the group from K'ai yuan turned up on the Fleming's doorstep! They had left at 7 a.m. that morning and gone by droshky to Sun chieh t'ai, with the help of a military pass. When they got there they heard the Pa Lu were already astride the line to Moukden, but this turned out to be not quite accurate and one more military train got through, with them squashed on to one of the trucks. I don't know how many hours they were on that, but they got to Moukden about 9 p.m. Then they were stuck, because of course it was long after dark and no vehicles were to be got! So they sat around, with the prospect of spending the night that way until a soldier came up and asked what they were doing and eventually got an army truck to take them to I Ching Lu. (the street in West Moukden where the Theological College and Boys' School are). Can you imagine what a day it must have been in this weather? For it has been colder than ever. The worst we have had was 68 degrees of frost, Fahrenheit, unheard-of for Moukden, everyone says. Anyway, everyone is extremely relieved to have all the K'ai yuan party in Moukden. And Dr. McMinn, who ought to be laid out with pneumonia is full of beans! She is tough! I was over in the West for that night and went in to the Flemings for a parcel on the way back about 8 a.m., and there were Dr. McMinn and Miss Henderson sitting in the dining room, tucking in to a good breakfast! The line still runs off and on to Chihhsien, and Marshall (McCreary) plans to come up to Moukden for a little while after Christmas. But there is no news of Miss Gordon, and Liaoyang is supposed to be at least surrounded. No word of Lily's whereabouts but she is almost certainly in Tientsin or Peking. She must be very fed up. One of the consular wives is with her and is to travel up with her when it becomes possible - or if!

The reason I was over in the West that day was to take one bit of my 2nd. year language exams, the Bible part (John, Mark, Acts, Phillipians, and some psalms). Mr. Findlay examined me and was most benign and fatherly. I really hadn't it properly prepared as even one hour a day with Mr. Chang has tended to get swamped lately, but Hugh said he wanted me to try to get this bit over before Christmas. Anyway, although I stuck at quite a number of characters, Mr. Findlay said my accent and rhythm were good and that was more important. So, I have DONE the Bible! Mr. Findlay fell on the icy road and cracked a small bone in his wrist, but he has it up in plaster, and it does not seem to be bothering him at all.

After that ordeal (in the afternoon) I went over to the Barkers and had a very pleasant evening. First we went to the US Information Service place to a lecture on the Peiling, Tungling, Palace and other antiquities of Moukden, by one of the professors in the Shenyang Medical College. None of us particularly wanted to go, but the last time they had had a lecture only three people turned up, and

this time they had got lots of people, including the Barkers, to promise to go. I was staggered by the heat - it must be about the only really warm building (by American standards) in Moukden. And when the electric light failed I just gasped at the number of lamps lit for one man to talk by - if I could only have got some of that paraffin for my incubator! However, Americans are like that, I suppose. In the evening John Fleming came in and we played bridge but did not stay up late as he thought he had to get up at 5 a.m. to take Miss Henderson to the station. Everyone had strongly advised her not to go, but she insisted, but I think she, as well as everyone else, was much relieved when the dilemma was solved by the arrival of the others.

Ann Barker, very decently, lent me a pair of sheep-skin-lined boots until Lily should come. My own little wool-lined boots were getting rather dilapidated and the lining too worn to be really warm. These are just marvellous, and so cosy and comfortable. She left them behind here (years ago) and thought they were lost, so she bought a new pair at home to bring out this time, so had two pairs and does not use this pair. That morning I came back here in a bicycle rickshaw as I had a lot of packages. I had so many clothes that it was with some difficulty that I got into the rickshaw. In spite of this, and a rug, I was chilled to the bone almost at once. The scarf across my face was very soon a solid wall of ice, and the frost collected on eyebrows etc. too. Everyone had a great white fuzz of frost around their faces. Such a contrast from this time last year - in more ways than one. One great difficulty is that everyone's calculations about fuel are wildly out. That was really the crucial reason for the K'ai yuan evacuation. They had used up the wood and slack so quickly that there was none left, and no prospect of getting coal. How fortunate we are in this house that we have so much, having got it fairly cheaply in the summer.

The College is closed so far as classes go, but we have been busy all week, what with examination meetings to discuss results and so on. The Path museum is now all moved down to the basement, to the tables in the Anatomy room, and when the lab upstairs gets too cold we flit down there and get on with sorting and labelling specimens. This has its complications too. When I was busy upstairs I sent the boy down to get on with the job on his own, and next morning he told me he didn't like being there on his own ("Too many dead men"), not that there are any dead men to be seen at the moment, it's all quite clean and nice, but I suppose it's fairly crawling with ghosts. I pointed out that Bacteriology's rabbit lived there, and would be nice company, but he did not seem to think this was much help. So I try to pop in and out and not leave him long alone until he gets used to it.

It seems quite definite now that we need not hope for more electric light or running water. Recently we have had both, off and on, but they say that all the electric power that is available is to be concentrated on factories and such like. And the water supply depends on electricity. We can buy paraffin but it is a terrible price - 4 shillings a pound a couple of weeks ago, I don't know what it is now.

We have been very Christmassy today. First, the service in hospital (for hospital and College) was really a Christmas one, taken by Mr. Findlay. What fluent Chinese he has, he just preached, obviously without mental translation. Then this afternoon our English service was a Christmas one, taken by Dr. Barker. He asked some Chinese to come too, and had about 30 people, in the sitting room. Sometimes a Chinese service strikes me not as a service but as a religious lecture, with brief devotional introduction, and I thought it was nice that some of them could see what a fine service one could have without any formal service at all. The folk in the West mostly came over in a truck, which John Fleming had got for help in his I.R.C. work, including Dr. McMinn who looks very well.

We had a lot of hard mental work this week. First, the other household sent in a homemade crossword puzzle, which we eventually solved, and it turned out to be an elaborate invitation to a Hogmanay party! So we put our heads together and sent a poem in acceptance. Then we had to make up a sort of acrostic asking them to come in here next Saturday. So you see we are having lots of frivolity.

Much love to you all and take care of yourselves A.

Letter No. 205 December 28 1947 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

A lovely batch of Christmas mail what lovely news about Honor F.W.S.O'Neill's, such a funny splash, very kind but quite daft. I think I've been frightfully virtuous with two articles in "Women's Work" and one in "Daybreak" already sympathy about the loss of clothes is misplaced, it has never cost me a single pang Please do not send any more clothes Newspapers are nice, but precious books - no. You will have realised by the cable, delaying Mamie and others leaving, that things are uncertain Poor Lily is stuck still in Tientsin or Peking I'm afraid it will be a terrible blow to the Pattersons. Actually, I wrote to them the other day..... what has happened to them these last few months is very much the same as what happened to me and yet within a year the whole situation in China had changed greatly for the better and I was comfortably settled in Chengtu Eileen O. sent me a bundle of "National Newsletters" (the descendent of the Stephen King-Hall one)...

Well, we have had quite a hectic week of Christmas festivities. There was nothing special in the College, but the hospital had a service and entertainment on Christmas Eve. It was held in the O.P.D. waiting room which was crammed except for a zone round the central stove, which had been stoked until it was red-hot. I would have been interested to know the percentage of carbon monoxide in the atmosphere!! The service first was taken by one of the young men doctors, then choir items, funny stories by Dr. Gao and so on. As I had to go outside, I left soon after six o'clock while it was still in full swing. Curfew is a nuisance now, but we have got a door open between the compounds now, so that we can get to the Garven household, and through that to the hospitals and College.

We spent the evening at presents and such-like jobs, then, just before going to bed we ploughed through the snow to the next-door house and serenaded them with "Hark the Herald Angels". A choir of fifty-odd from the College and hospital had already been to them, and we were wakened twice in the night by K'un Kuang girls who, I think, can't have gone to bed at all.

On Christmas morning various visitors dropped in, and later Agnes and I walked round to the Blind School to see Hester. We had quite a big party for lunch - Shu-fen, Nell's friend, Mr. Chang, head of the K.K., Mr. Feng, physics teacher in the College, Mr. Kuo, head of Wen Hui Boy's School, and another couple that Nell and Shu-fen knew well. They were out to enjoy themselves and did so, eating hugely and playing games as if their lives depended on it. Shu-fen stayed on for the night with Nell, and Agnes and I went over to the West. First we had tea with Harry and later went over to the Barkers where we were to stay the night. All the folk in the West collected in the Flemings for the evening. First we had what was called a "buffet supper", a name I associate with nibbling minute

sandwiches and unidentifiable things on sticks. But it turned out to be a case of piling ones plate with turkey (tinned of course), sausage, and all the possible etceteras, and going off into a corner and gorging. We even had plum pudding (quite convincingly plummy too), and mince pies, jelly, lemonade, and coffee. By the time we began to come to after all this it was a quarter to nine. The next item was charades, very diverting. I was tickled to see Mr. Findlay unbend - the others were funny too, but he was the biggest surprise. Dr. Barker had written a poem to celebrate the adventures of Dr. McMinn and Miss H. in K'ai yuan then we played more games, and were most hilarious, and by the time Agnes and I were tucked up in bed it was after midnight!

The next festivity was our party last night, for the four from the next-door house, and Hester. Another big feed (these "hardships") of chicken (Mr. Chang's present) and ice cream. We all had poems to show us where to sit The evening's entertainment included an eightsome reel to the gramophone, for which Nell had done her best to coach Agnes and me all week, and the game "Murder". Somebody had a good trick that might be useful to you for a party sometime. It is used by the American Air Force as a test of balance. You put a jam-pot on the floor. Then a candle 18 inches from the jam-pot, and a box of matches 12 inches further away still. You stand with one foot on the jam-pot, lift the matchbox, and light the candle, all without touching the floor

The weather has turned quite mild this last week, the ice has melted on our windows so much that we have to run round all the time to mop up the pools. I have shed layers of clothes. Yesterday, as a result I suppose of this mild weather, we had another heavy fall of snow, but today it is beautifully sunny.

..... another Christmas festivity - a cocktail party at the British Consulate on Boxing Day. It was in the afternoon, but consular cars have passes, and they sent a car for us, and sent us home in one. Such luxury! The previous consul, Mr. Burdett, has recently been transferred to Tientsin, and we were all very sorry for he and his wife were very nice friendly people. The new consul is called Graham. He was here in Moukden in 1938 for a short time, and then went elsewhere in China, including Chengtu. When I got to Chengtu the British consulate had just moved back to Nanking, but he knew a lot of people I knew there, especially Margaret Turner. Margaret had written (or told him?) a long account of our journey from Chengtu, and he was highly tickled to find I had been with her. There was quite a big crowd at this party and I also met a Standard Oil man who had been in Peking. The "Community" people in Moukden at present are said to be a very nice crowd on the whole, with very little of the stand-offishness and heavy drinking etc. as before the war. Of course we over in the East don't see much of these people, but there's quite a lot of social come-and-go with them in the West.

The Robertsons (Bible Society) are leaving soon for Korea. They only came here temporarily until it was possible to go to Korea, and recently got a cable from London to go ahead. It's such a business. First they must fly to Tientsin (which means selling off or leaving behind nearly all their belongings and then go by boat to Hong Kong, and by another boat back to Korea. All this instead of a 17-hour train journey!!

..... we got a wire saying that Drs. Liu and Wang and Kao and Mr Li T'ing K'ue had arrived. The latter I hear is going soon to Ireland. I've met him once or twice but don't really know him.

Much love Agatha

Letter No. 206 4th. January 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

No letters this week. We hear that it is partly at least because there is so much snow. The civilian airport has not been cleared, and the military has limited the number of planes that they allow to land on theirs. So there must be an accumulation of mail somewhere. We think there may be another reason why mail is slower at this end, so if my letters aren't very "newsy", don't blame me, and you too can adjust accordingly.

Not that there is much to report. No news from Marshall or Ella Gordon, but people who came recently by cart from Liaoyang report all quiet there. Dr. McMinn is still in the West, and nothing final yet about where she is to work. An urgent request came for George Taylor to go to Ichang to re-plan their hospital buildings there, and he hopes to get out one of these days, and get back in two or three months. At the moment he is kicking his heels; as in this weather nothing can be done. The Robertsons expect to leave in a few days on the first stage of their roundabout journey to Korea. I'm giving them two sea-mail packages to be posted in Tientsin or Hong Kong for Prof. Biggart of a very interesting post mortem. Jack wants to write up this case, but there are special stains I can't do here.

Well, this week, like last, has been a hectic round of festivities. If you are reading gloomy news about this part of the world you will probably feel it is quite incongruous to hear of our parties, but after all why shouldn't we enjoy ourselves? Just before Christmas the six keenest members of the Medical College Staff English club invited Miss Fleming, Hugh, Jack and me to a supper party in Dr. Liu's office in the Men's hospital. It was great fun - the food not too embarrassingly elaborate, and then games afterwards such a nice friendly crowd Then, the next-door four and Hester's party for us on the 31st. We had a goose, a Christmas present from old Dr. Liu (Dr. Liu Shu Chen's father), and a programme of games that kept us hard at it till midnight. So we saw the New Year in properly with Auld Lang Syne.

On New Year's Day there was a meeting in hospital, and we were all invited by Dr. Liu. You got a little paper with a number of a seat on it as you went in and that meant that everyone was all mixed up. It was nice to see the doctors and nurses all mixed with the carpenters and the man who drives the truck etc.. There was a service and then speeches and reports of which, as usual, I understood about 10%, and then tea and biscuits and sweets. It was a very friendly party. Of course, Dr. Liu talked a lot with his unquenchable optimism. He really is a great man - I say it in all soberness. He just loves a fight and seems to exult in a sea of troubles. Dr. Gao is so different, he just loathes criticism and uncertainty and the buffetings of ill fortune. But if you raise your eyebrows a little at his going twice in a year to Peking for weeks at a time, don't forget that he came back. I think that in his own way he is as great a hero as Dr. Liu, and he certainly doesn't enjoy life half as much. I actually had two minutes talk with Dr. Liu the other day, a very rare thing as he is usually found battling through a long queue of people wanting to see him. His first remark was (I give his exact words), "How's your mother?" and then "How's Jack?". He has several times introduced me as the daughter of the man who baptized him...

After this New Year's meeting I went into the women doctors' house and had a very lively time as they were all in great spirits. They have always been very friendly, but now it isn't just the courteous

friendliness to a stranger, but we don't feel stiff, and I enjoy acting the clown a bit to make them laugh. All I have to do is to talk Chinese, not too carefully.

The next diversion was a lunch-party at the Blind School. Hester and Mr. Rasmussen were joint host and hostess and Miss Chi of the Blind School, Miss Fleming, Agnes and I were the guests. Nell had a previous invitation elsewhere. We ate a lot - another goose - but didn't do much else.

Then today we crowned a hectic week with - what do you think - a children's party, no less. Mr. Chang's five girls, Mr. Wang (also of the K'un Kuang)'s three children, and our cook's three. Also Mrs. Chang and Mrs. Wang. Nell had carefully sounded Mr. Chang beforehand to make sure no one would mind the social mix-up, but as it turned out they were the best-mannered and least spoiled of all the wee ones. ("They" - Kao shih fu's three). The Kao children did not walk in by the kitchen door - oh dear no - but solemnly walked out by the back door, round the house, and arrived on the front doorstep, as though they had come from miles away! We had twelve games - pinning the tail on the donkey, blindfold, musical chairs, and lots more, and a great feed of tea, biscuits, cakes and sweets. I thought the youngest Wang boy would burst. I must have gone to him at least six times, with two plates, and each time he took three biscuits from one plate and three cakes from the other. After this I got tired and stopped, so I don't know yet when he would have given up! The nicest thing was how the two tai-t'ais made themselves at home, and entered into the games, rushing around in relay races, positively squealing with excitement. Hurrah, the electric light has come on. So far the gloomy forecast that we would get no more is wrong.....

This morning the new Dr. Chang who is to be an assistant in Path and Bact turned up. I wasn't sure till he came in which he was, but was relieved to find he is one I always liked the look of. He is supposed to be not at all bright, but I feel it is almost more important in present circumstances to have someone one likes and who is willing to be friendly. He is an old Wen Hui boy. His full name is Chang feng hui. Another new graduate called Chang has joined the Chemistry department. He is older, with a daughter in the K'un Kuang, and was a science teacher before he started medicine. He was the best student of his year, so is in a very suitable job now, and should be quite an acquisition. He is a Ch'ang-ch'un boy, and Harry knew him well there. The third assistant was to have come from Nanking to the Anatomy dept., but can't get here which is a pity.

.... Rumour has it that the line to Peking may be running soon so that will be good news for Lily.

Much love Agatha

Letter No. 207 9th January 1948 Moukden Medical College

..... My Dear, don't be shocked at all by my "laxity". If I use picturesque language you mustn't take it too literally, or I will have to censor my letters in more ways than one, and that would be very dull! I really behave very nicely

What exactly did Dr. Hou mean by "concentration of colleges"? He used to argue with me that M.M.C. and Cheeloo ought to amalgamate (of course in Tsinan!). But Manchuria, whether you like it or not, is a different geographic unit. If you haven't a Christian medical college in Manchuria, how

many of your Manchurian boys and girls are going to go all the way to Shandung instead of entering the local government college? It just isn't practical, China is too big.....

People are getting busy preparing for the retreat. Nell and Mr. Webster are hard at it in this very room now about the true aim of education, etc. etc... I, to my great relief, am not to be a Bible study leader, so I'll be able to enjoy myself.

Last night we three spent the evening at the house of one of the K'un Kuang teachers, and had a lovely meal of chiao-tzes. This teacher, T'ung Sze K'un, and her husband Mr. Wang, live in a little two-room house in the compound, and they are both very small, neat people so that the whole effect is rather like a dolls house. Even the Chiao-tzes were very small and neat.

We have been buying in some stores this week, just a couple of bags of flour, one of rice and 10 pounds of sugar As a friend said the other day, "If anything happens, you foreigners can't go out in the streets to steal food as we can"!!! That will give you some idea of the state of mind some of the Chinese are in. We had heard that flour could be got for \$280,000 a bag and sent the cook out to buy it. He came back to say that it was up to \$290,000, so Agnes gave him the extra money and off he went again. It's only about 10 minutes walk to the grain market, but by the time he got there again it was up to \$300,000 a bag!! However, he clinched the bargain and got a promise that, since it was now nearly dusk, he could get it first thing next morning at that price. And now we have it safe in the storeroom. This cook is terribly distressed when he has to spend money and never seems to see the point of buying today rather than waiting till it is even dearer. The other evening I asked him for a box of matches and found there were none in the house - "too dear". No more room and no more news. I hear a plane - perhaps letters on the way!

Much love as always Agatha

Letter No. 208 January 18th. 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother...

It's four weeks since the most recent letters came. No news of Lily, or of Ella Gordon or Marshall. The news is a little better, with no immediate threat to Moukden. A couple of weeks ago it was touch and go, like last June over again. Jack Weir and Mary Findlay are due to come back here (from language study in Peking) at the end of this month, John Stewart stays for another term. Whether they can get back is another story. I don't know Mary well enough to know how she will react but I can imagine Jack champing with impatience.

I expect you see the news in the papers about the trouble over Kowloon. There have been students processing and protesting, and the British Consulate in Canton is said to have been burnt down. So far no trouble with the students here. We are giving the students some extra English classes these holidays. I have them only once a week; about 40 come. I told them a little sort of story last week, about a "Holiday in Ireland", as racy as possible, and they made sentences with the idioms. At the end, I asked for a show of hands on what subject they would like this week - "India", "West China" or "More about Ireland". Result in favour of India, with no votes for the last, which I found a little chastening!

Dr. McMinn is living now in the Garven-Fleming-Leggate house next door and working in the Women's Hospital. She'll probably do some teaching in the College too next term. The news from K'ai Yuan is that the Pa Lu have left, and that the Kuo Chun haven't come in, but the people are harassed by armed robbers. Every night there are four or five robberies. One of the elders, such a nice old man who keeps a cloth shop, was forced to carry all his stock out to the city gate for them, and to give them all his money too. In Moukden too there are quite a lot of robberies. Several men set on a soldier (who had a rifle!) the other day and robbed him of a lot of money. People are just desperate for food. It's heart-rending when you compare their state with our comfort. The other day when Hester and Miss Ch'i were walking along the road to the Blind School, one of them said something that made both of them laugh. An old woman who was standing outside a cottage, said to them (not angrily or whiningly but in pure wonder) "How can you be happy while we die of hunger". You feel like grabbing all the food in the larder and running out into the street with it. I feel if I ever hear "I was an-hungered and ye gave me no meat" I won't have a word to say. And yet, what can one do but give away a little money and clothes and go on with one's ordinary work?

It's extraordinary what quiet falls on the city as soon as darkness falls. Of course, we are on the outskirts of the city but so we were in Chengtu, but there seemed to be noises all night long. All the watchdogs in Szech'uan seemed to keep up a perpetual yapping. Here there isn't the slightest sound except for train whistles far away. I can't think what the trains do all the time. They must keep running up and down the little bit of line left to them, for exercise.

I had another post mortem this week, tuberculosis again. Of the nine P.M.s I've had on children and adults (not counting babies), six were T.B.! Hospital is very slack now. Only about thirty outpatients in Women's Surgery yesterday, for example. The cost of transport is a big factor. Even a rickshaw to and from the centre of the city will cost perhaps \$10,000 and ordinary people just can't afford it.

.... I have bought a blanket! One of the UNRRA ones which are being sold by the hospital, khaki, good wool and very big, could easily be used double. It cost £1. Not too bad.

(Books I had been reading. "The Wholeness of Man" by Phillis Garlick. "Human Destiny" by Perrie le Comte du Nuoy. "Interim" by R.C. Hutchinson. "Through Chinese Eyes" by Rattenbury.)

..... I am horrified by the M. of I. news of fighting "in and around" Moukden. Sometimes hear gunfire away, but the sound must carry many miles in this still air.....

Letter No. 209 25th. January 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

.....I've had such a batch of letters this week (up to 12th. Jan) Aunt Maggie's death makes me feel not sad but happy and contented. I felt just the same when Dad left us Dor should push to come out here Poor Mamie Oliver's wedding, and now Honor. I'm terribly pleased to hear that Prof. Biggart and Dr. Hou have proposed me for the Path Society. I haven't had to work in Dr. Hsiang's department this winter after all..... You have mentioned the magic word "furlough" once or twice lately Now is the time that our presence means something

here, even mine I believe.after all although I have been three years away from home, I have only just begun to get settled to work.....

We hear Lily has gone to Peking in hopes of getting on a plane from there. The Robertsons are going by plane after all. George got quickly to Shanghai but no news of him having reached Ich'ang I got a letter today from Dr. Asirvatham, the Indian doctor who was assistant in Path in Vellore, and who went to Chicago for post-graduate work.....

... the "situation" is easier, grain a little cheaper. But it's the food situation that is what really depresses our Chinese friends most. One of them said to me recently: "I have no hope now for my country or for my family, or for myself. I am sure that I will not be alive this time next year. If I am not killed, then my family and I will die of starvation. When I first lost hope, I was very unhappy and felt I could not live any longer. Then I thought, after all I am a Christian. If I have only a little time left I must not spend it pitying myself. So I decided to live these last months not for myself but for others, and now I feel brave enough to go on". All this said with a cheerful smile. Isn't it heart-rending? Especially because I feel sure the situation isn't as bad as that. They have lost hope in Manchuria, but God hasn't. I feel sure I will be alive this time next year, and will not be a bit surprised to find myself muddling along in the lab in much the same situation as at present. (This conversation - there was lots more even more intimate - was, I think, confidential so don't copy this bit, just Dor and Roywood).

Another thing said to me recently was, "Why do you talk about 'foreigners' and 'Chinese'? We aren't as different as I used to think we were. We have thoughts, and when we talk to you we find you have the same thoughts. Are we not pieces of one body?" And over and over the refrain "No hope". It is the failure and shame of the centre rather than the threat from the periphery that rankles. It reminds me of the bit in the Psalm, "Had it been an enemy I could have borne it, but it was thou!" When will China get the government she deserves?

We are back to really cold weather now, made worse this last week by a piercing north wind. Even my cod liver oil (now, amn't I good?) is thick and white, like paste.

Little Liu, the lab boy, is not so well. He had positive sputum for the first time. He has had a pneumothorax and is staying in bed, in the technicians' dormitory. I feel I will fight tooth and nail to get him kept on. To dismiss him would be a death warrant as he has no hope of getting home, and no money, and only some far-off relations in Moukden, themselves refugees, without resources. One of his nicest traits is his worry over the chance (very small) of infecting other people and his warm gratitude to the other boys. Who are certainly very kind to him. Their dormitory has steam heat and he has lots of beddingAlso he sleeps in a room with only one other boy (thanks to the recent "purge"), so it's really not too bad.

This morning, I have been reading (a little "Faint but pursuing") the articles in the International Review of Missions, Oct. 1947, which are the basis of the discussions at the Retreat this week. There is one good one by T.C. Chao that I think you would like to read. The last paragraph - both sides - is extremely relevant to the situation here. The same number has an article on Vellore by Dr. Cochrane.

Just back from service in the West. Harry had had letters from Jean (Stockman) and R.H. Boyd acknowledging his letter of late December, and hoping for more . A letter had been brought by hand from Liaoyang, in Chinese, from Miss Ella Gordon. All well there, a lovely Christmas, very busy, and

so on. That's good news isn't it. Nothing very recent from Marshall M., but Hester had a letter a couple of weeks ago and he was flourishing then.

By the way, in case Dor wonders if any of her belongings have turned up, I hear there are one or two pieces of furniture still extant, in Hsinmin, but no trunks or small stuff. Nell and I are to stay at the Findlays for the Retreat, and Agnes at the Flemings.

Much love, and take care of yourself, Agatha

Letter No. 210 1st February 1948 The Findlays, West Moukden

Dear Mother.....

... the last day of the Retreat. ... Ella Gordon is in from Liaoyang! She had been cut off for two months, and only very stale news of her had come by word of mouth, and in Chinese letters, and there had been much fighting around there so that everyone had been worried about her. She had a hectic journey but actually only took 24 hours. Most people who have got through lately took several days. She heard that there was going to be a trial train trying to get through, and got a ticket for it, with help from local officials in Liaoyang. Her cook insisted on coming all the way with her, which was very decent as he is a married man with six weans. Anyway, the train got as far as Chen t'aitze, and alas was attacked there by a large force of Communists. There were about 300 Government troops on the train, fully armed of course, but they put up a very poor resistance. The Pa Lu were very well disciplined and absolutely fearless, standing out in the open (clad in white) and firing machine-guns and throwing hand-grenades. Even while the fighting was still on, the wounded were being whisked away for first-aid by stretcher-bearers. This battle went on for about half-an-hour, during which time Miss Gordon and the cook were huddling down in one of the carriages. Neither was at all hurt. Then the carriage door opened and a voice ordered them to get out with their hands up. Ella kept her handbag in one hand, and the cook, with great presence of mind, kicked out her bedroll, which she was eventually allowed to keep. The rest of her baggage had to be abandoned. Once out, they and lots of other civilians, were told to lie on their faces in the snow while the firing gradually ceased. Then they were all prodded to their feet and hurried off several Li to a village. Ella was questioned by two different officers, but they were very courteous and merely gave her a vivid description of the Generalissimo's defects and her own foolishness in being on the wrong side, then told her she could go "where she liked". She and the cook were at this time in the house of a poor farmer, whose wife was extremely kind, offered them shelter for the night, and a share of their food. However, she decided to get out while she could. The cook made a little sleigh out of some bits of wood on which he dragged her bedding roll for 20 li (!!) until they got to the railway again at Yen t'ai. Here they found the trial train from Moukden, but were later pushed off it, and finally, after much pleading got on to an engine which was going back to Moukden. She got to Moukden about nine or ten p.m., and persuaded a policeman to escort them to the nearest inn (it being long past curfew) where they spent the night freezing on an unheated kang. As soon as it was light they got rickshaws and came on to this house. We know now that the remains of the Liaoyang train Ella was on was completely burnt by the Communists and that during the afternoon, just after she left Yen t'ai they attacked, successfully, at several places on this end of the line, and have destroyed large sections of the railway. So, if you feel dull at home, come out here and enjoy a little excitement!!

The news from Lily is very disappointing. She has been laid up (in hospital in Peking) with middle ear trouble, and her doctor there says she won't be able to travel by plane for "some time". She had actually booked a seat when this happened, isn't it just sickening? Jack Weir and Mary Findlay will have finished their term's work now, and are planning to come by air as soon as possible, perhaps in a week or two. We had hoped Marshall might possibly get up for the Retreat, but things in that direction are such as to make travel even more difficult than from Liaoyang. However, letters from him have come through, and he is quite all right, but he must be very tired of being alone.

We from the East came over here on Wednesday afternoon, and now it is Sunday morning. Nell, Dr. McMinn and I are in the Findlays' house, the others distributed between the Flemings', Barkers' and Johnstone/Blakely menages. Unfortunately both Hugh and Isabel Fleming have been rather upset, and Hugh stayed in bed except for his own paper on the medical side of things. It is really mostly tiredness with him as he has so many worries as well as mountains of ordinary work. Indeed most people are tired, especially those like poor Harry who have to struggle with financial complications. The Church (I mean district congregations, pastors, evangelists, all that side) is so desperately hard hit by the financial and political upheavals that they just don't know where to turn. So although perhaps this Retreat was not so restful for those who needed it most as for the lucky ones like me who need only sit down and listen, still it's done everyone good. We are a smaller group now, what with Marshall and George and Miss Service and the Robertsons and the three in Peking all being away. There were just nineteen. I continue to marvel and rejoice at the quality of these people. I think any conference, however large and representative would have been lucky to have such good speeches and statesmanlike discussions, and any music -hall would have been equally glad to get the talent shown at our party last night! Each day we had a paper from 9 - 10, based on one or more of the articles, in the October 1947 International Review of Missions . Then from 10 - 12, Bible Study. I was in Hester's group with Dr. Barker, Pearl Fleming, Sandy Webster and Jack Leggate, all people I like greatly, but so different from each other that the discussions were most interesting and unusual. Then from 4.30 - 6 p.m. we had a discussion on present problems in Evangelism, Medical work and education - one each day - followed by intercessions. There was also a meeting of conference (a business meeting, I mean) and a good deal of social coming and going. The party last night was a terrific success I had a hot and anxious time impersonating Nell's cat with my head inside a wonderful mask made for me by Shu Fen we finished up with an eightsome reel.

Much love, take care of yourself, and don't worry about us. A.

P.S. There have been student troubles down south over the Kowloon business but none in the College here. One of the staff said to me that if it had happened this time last year there would have been ructions; but "you see they begin to realise that you are their friends". Isn't that cheering?

Letter No. 211 8th February 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

... letter from Col. Oldham of C.M.S. tells me about the C.M.S. doctor Mervyn Hatt who was with us in Kashmir. He arrived back recently from furlough, to his hospital in a town near Calcutta. He found a lot of upset among the Indian staff due to communist propaganda. One evening, while he

and the other missionary doctor and two nurses were at dinner, they were fired at and he and the two nurses killed. The other doctor happened to have moved aside, and escaped. The man who is supposed to have done it was one of their Christian male nurses....

Mary Findlay and Jack Weir arrived yesterday in a CAT plane (a combination of the CNRRA air transport service, not a passenger air service). They wangled this through someone they got to know in Peiping... poor Lily left behind.... Now that Jack is back, there is talk of Tom coming over here to teach English in the Medical College.... he has a genius for making friends with boys and students Mary with her parents for a little while at first Marshall contented and cheerful there are planes between here and Chihhsien so he even gets home letters.

....Agnes and I to Blind School for lunch and walk. All very pleasant. We walked along the main road towards the Hun Ho. It's rather a desolate landscape, quite flat with acres upon acres covered by derelict Japanese factory buildings. Of course they have long been stripped of everything sellable or burnable and even some of the brickwork pulled down. The road had been fairly well cleared, probably by soldiers of the big military camps out that way, and was a deeply rutted track between banks of dug snow. The snow covering the fields had been blown and thawed and refrozen into the most extraordinary shapes. Even in this lean year we met people trudging out from the city with the results of their New Year shopping under their arms - a bunch of incense or a little piece of meat on a string. There are a lot of vegetable gardens round the Blind School, and there was great activity at some of the big storage pits. The matting roof had been taken off here and there, and there would be a dozen or more men weighing great masses of cabbages, with a big steel yard. Some of these pits had a little chimney with a wisp-like smoke coming out - fancy using fuel on that, it shows how valuable a crop it must be. We passed a little wood that is being rapidly hacked to pieces for fuel. There was a great bustle of men and carts and most of the trees were severely lopped.

Harry Johnstone has handled over \$200 million already this year!!

No more news, much love Agatha.

Letter No. 211a 8th. February 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Jack

It seems an age since I wrote, although in a very real sense I write to you every week.

I was extremely interested in what you told me about how the new scheme (the introduction of the National Health Service) will affect your practice. It doesn't sound an attractive prospect ... what is Dr. Adams' attitude? (*Jack Adams was Jack Crawford's 'partner' – they split emergency calls.*)

.... Marjorie, David and Christine... Please remember me to R.J. McConnell and Jamesie Loughridge and W.W.D., if you ever come across them.

Much love to you all

Agatha

Letter No. 212 14th February 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

... the microtome arrived. It is a beauty and a very strong sensible type. The knife, alas, did not fit, and there was no handle with it for stropping (don't breath this to the lab people, of course!) but another knife we had in the lab which was hopeless for the old microtome can, I think, be filed down to fit this one. I have someone working on it, and think it will be possible to "tui fu". Bert's slides are just marvellous. I spent much of our two-day New Year holiday going over them, and the lab boys are duly impressed by seeing what sections can be like.

Well, everything is peaceful and quiet. A few days ago we did hear distant bumps and bangs but later learnt that some of it was the Govt. troops blowing up the ice on the Hun River, to create a barrier I suppose. New Year was very quiet. Only a very few fire-works were heard, and although the empty streets presumably meant that everyone was at home tucking into "chi'o tze" I don't think there's as much money flowing for festivities. Nell, Agnes and I went to Shu fen's house for our mid-day meal. She lives in a tiny house with her old mother, about half a mile from here. They cooked "ch'un ping" - flat cakes the size of a plate and paper thin, and you wrapped up your vegetables in it and then munched at the delicious bundle. We had a tremendous meal with pineapple chunks to finish with, and then settled down to Chinese checkers, which is a great favourite with Mrs. Wang. She is a dear old lady and hops her pieces around the board so nimbly that you hardly ever spot her cheating!! Several friends came in to give their New Year greetings, so it was a very pleasant afternoon.

On the same day, I went with Dr. McMinn and Dr. Shih to see the wounded soldiers in the school next door. There were only about eighty I think, but a lot more have come since. They weren't too badly looked after, probably it seemed heavenly to them. They have beds, lent by our hospital, of course, enough pei wo and blankets (although many were already soiled with blood and pus), and each big room had a tiny stove. The beds were just far enough apart for one to edge along between. The men themselves were mostly the most pitiable objects although all but the very ill were heart-rendingly cheerful. Most were cases of frostbite and were about to have, or had had, amputations of feet or hands. One lad looked as if he were in the last stages of T.B., but when I went near and spoke to him, he silently lifted his blanket and pointed to his feet, both black and shrivelled to above the ankles. He said this had happened to him, not lying out on the battlefield, but while he was a patient in a military hospital where they had no heat and very little bedding, so his feet had got frostbitten. (Addendum 1990 - I asked him where his home was, "Szechuan"! "What are your plans?" He said with a polite smile "I plan to take up begging". I wished him success in his new career, and he bowed with dignity.)

Most of these were boys of 16 - 20, and many were from south China and had not seen their homes for several years. It makes me feel sick to think of what they have to face, if turned out into the streets of Moukden without feet or legs or hands. What hope have they of getting back to their homes, or of surviving another winter. They all looked thin, as though they had been on short rations for a long time. But they were so ready to talk and laugh, so convinced that they would soon be well, and those who could were so glad that they had only lost one leg or arm, that it really revived one's respect for the human race. But it lowered one's already low opinion of the kind of people who can still play the game of war and use these men as their pawns. Some of our young doctors and nurses were going round doing dressings, and each room had an army orderly to sweep up, and tend the stove. Still, there is far too little skilled help for so many patients. While we were there, one man gave

a cry and pointed to pouring blood from his groin. I have never seen a bed fill with blood so quickly. (Note 1990. It must have bled from a large artery as I remember the blood shot up, a scarlet jet about two feet high.) Dr. Shih had her thumb on it in a minute and the team of dressers were called and it was ligatured. But if we had not chanced to be in the room he would have died in a few moments. It amused me to hear the men chattering to Dr. McMinn "Lao T'ai t'ai" (old lady), and saying "Why, you have a game leg too! Is it a false one? Let's see it". With quite a fellow feeling.

We have had lovely weather this week, much milder and thawing like fun. There is even one little spot of bare earth in the garden. I found myself looking at it with great interest, and scratching its frozen surface hopefully - even bare earth is a sign of spring after all these weeks of snow and ice. The Small River is a scene of busy activity these days as there are men sawing out blocks of ice and carting it away. It looks extremely dirty and I tremble to think of it being connected in any way with eatables next summer. They used to get it all from the Hun Ho but that's too far to go out safely nowadays. I don't mean the risk of the Pa Lu, but horses and carts are sometimes commandeered or robbed, and so on.

We have exams this coming week and hope to start classes the week after. Dr. Hsiang and Hugh are sharing the Path lectures, at least for a while, and I am doing the practical classes. I start the week with 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Mondays! My tongue and brain will both be in a knot by the time that's over, and the students will probably be too!!

..... Much love, Agatha

Letter No. 213 22 February 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

..... Everything has been peaceful and quiet all week ...

The new term starts tomorrow. My programme 11 - 1 p.m. and 2 - 4 p.m. on Monday and Wednesday for practical pathology, and 11 - 12 twice a week for English. Then I have Dr. Wu every morning 9 - 10 for translating teaching material, and one of the women doctors most days from 5 - 6 to help me prepare classes. Tom Blakely is fixed up for a lot of English classes Dr. McMinn is to teach some medicine (to her consternation), and Mary Findlay, clinical methods and (?) one surgery lecture a week she is moving to this house today, and I'm looking forward very much to having a fellow-medical around. Mr. Findlay has gone this week to Fushun to take special meetings there. It is very sporting of him, not only because of the "situation" but because he is pretty wobbly on these treacherous icy roads and has, this winter, already broken one wrist and badly sprained the other. Marshall very well but sounds a bit lonely Two wires from Lily so far she hasn't turned up The snow came down again in a heavy fall and is freezing once more. We have had to move all the Path museum again to the top floor of the College, but it's not cold enough to matter now.

.... how nice of Susan and Monty I don't know yet if earmarked sums can be allotted to their specific object. I wish I knew so that I could know what to say in saying thank-you.

This week I have concocted my report for 1947. I'm not a bit clear how much is meant to be a purely personal report to the Committee of how I have been spending my time, and how much should be of general interest about the Medical College of course Hugh vetted it....

This is very dull. Perhaps more "crack" next week.

Much love A.

Letter No. 214 not retyped by ARC (family material only).

Postscript to Letter No. 214 27th. February 1948.

This part is private and confidential for you, Dor and Jack but don't any of you let any of it go any further until you hear from elsewhere. I know you must be pining to know what we are planning to do or not do if there is a change of regime. There have been Conference and Executive meetings to discuss it, as you may imagine, and after one meeting this week I asked Harry how much I might tell you, in confidence, and he said he saw no harm in it under the above conditions. It does seem pretty likely that there will be a change of government in Manchuria, but how soon no one knows. When the fighting comes close, rumour expects it in a couple of weeks. Then it ebbs again and people perk up and talk of months or a year. No one really knows. Many officials' families have left, and a lot of wealthy people who can afford plane tickets, although what they expect to do in crowded Peking or Tientsin (neither of them very secure) beats me. It is doubtful if there will ever be a pitched battle for Moukden; the powers that be may melt if it ever comes to a crisis.

The big problems that concern us are, of course, how the work here and our various institutions here would be affected. Would they be taken over and we, or some of us, invited to take jobs, e.g. as English teachers, or would we be sent out, or just ignored, or what? No one knows, of course. But the chances are that we would be treated more serious and more courteously as a large group in an important city than an isolated missionary in a small town invaded by troops with only junior officers to take decisions. (I am thinking of some of the Danish missionaries stuck and not allowed to work in some of their stations in Communist territory.) The idea is that representatives would beard the head officials of the new regime, explaining how we had come to work for the good of the people, but had a faith, which we could not promise not to proclaim. Then, if there was no hope of being able to do useful work without an impossible degree of compromise, they would ask for facilities or at least permission to get out. The general feeling (judging from experience elsewhere) is that in a big place like this the leaders would be reasonable and there would be little chance of being stuck indefinitely against one's will. Incidentally the British Consul is optimistic and has himself no intention of scuttling off before the crisis. So the policy at the moment is to stay put and wait until it happens if it does. Of course if, in the course of the next period, some peoples' health seemed very groggy they might be advised to leave while it was possible, to do so at short notice. That won't happen to me - I never felt better in my life!

I tell you all this, making it neither more cheerful nor more gloomy than it seems to us here, because I know you will be discreet, and that Dor and Jack will too. It is purely for your private information and comfort because from indirect news we get of what is being said in the papers and on the wireless at home, I think things must look much blacker than they really are. Remember that if any of us wanted to, or had to, get out in a hurry it can be done in a matter of a day or two.

But certainly, none of us wants to leave. There's too much to do and too many good friends. So, rest your heart my dear. After all, we are not left helpless at the mercy of circumstances, of that I feel certain. As for me personally, I know it's quite illogical and me being in my present uncertainty I ought to be worried and sleeping badly, but I'm not! I'm fat and flourishing, and enjoying life as much as anybody with any sympathy can enjoy life in a suffering country. I often feel quite ashamed to feel so contented, but it's better than profitlessly worrying which is only wasteful wear and tear and helps no one.

Tomorrow I shall have been a year in Moukden! What a year - very disappointing in some ways and satisfying in others. What will next year bring?

Agnes and I were at the Blind School for tea today with Hester. Lily was there too, so we heard lots of lively stories of the journey She had been at a welcome tea party this morning. Dr. Liu stood at her elbow, saying sternly "Shake hands", as each nurse came near and bowed. He is a funny man, but carrying a world of worry and anxiety at the moment. She doesn't yet know what her work will be.

A.

Letter No. 215 28th. February 1948 Moukden Medical College.

Dear Mother

...I'm glad the Australian parcel arrived. There are two more to be sent - hastily arranged before George left - the new cheap way which, however, means that Mrs. Taylor does not chose what is in them. A very good scheme. Someone in Australia pays ten shillings and gives the name and address of someone in England. Foodstuffs of which Britain is in most need are then shipped to Britain in bulk (thus saving heavy postage) and are parcelled there by volunteers. Please give Eileen O. a wee bit of something and a nice something to Roywood, the rest to you.

Lily got here on Monday, but did not move over to the East till Thursday. She looks so well, in terrific form ... the amount of stuff she brought! so I have my lovely boots, just the right size. Also a second (microtome) knife complete with the handle which fits both knives, and I have had the microtome slightly altered to fit them, so we are in clover Lily has settled down in the house next door, which now houses Dr. McMinn, Isabel Fleming, Hugh and Jack. Mary Findlay is with us now in the K'un Kuang - a very nice girl and I'm greatly enjoying her company.

Classes started in the College this week. On the first day only 45% of the students turned up but more have trickled in since, and my class is now 30 instead of about 40, which isn't bad considering It is a great relief to find that I can stand up and talk Chinese in an intelligible, even if incorrect

fashion. As dear Aunt Maggie would say, "I say it thankfully, not boastfully". Of course, I don't do it straight out of my head, but go over every word with one of the doctors beforehand, but I do say it not read it, and with time it should come easier. We had been expecting that the College and hospital would go back to a three-meals-a-day programme next month, but grain is so scarce that they are going to carry on on two meals a day. This means a shortened timetable with seven classes between 8.45 a.m. and 3 p.m. So, my two-hour classes contract to just over one and a half hours, which will be easier to fill in! I feel really ashamed these days. I arrive at the lab soon after 8.30 a.m., to find Dr. Chang there. I slip off at 10.30, if not too busy, for a cup of tea. Then again at 12.30 for a large meal, and he has to go on all day without a bite, until 3 p.m.. Of course, I know the Chinese insides seems able to accommodate at one time more than ours, but at present they don't get enough at one time to keep them going. And think of having your last meal at 3 p.m.!

The Spring has officially started for me, today I scraped enough earth in the garden to plant a rose slip in a pot. Lovely weather, and so peaceful that it's hard to realise the world is in a mess.

Love, Agatha

Letter No. 216 6th March 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother.....

There is such a feeling of spring in the air these days. Of course everything is grey and bare except where the snow still lies, but there is real warmth in the sun, and the birds are beginning to come to life again. During the very cold weather there was hardly a sound from them, and they must have been skin and bone under their bunched-up feathers. Now they have had a chance to feed on the bare ground, and the rooks and magpies are positively noisy. I even saw a kite the other day, the first for months. It shows the nakedness of the land that the kites should have deserted us. I haven't yet planted any seeds, but Shu Chen brought me some - cabbage, onion, something in the turnip line, eggplant and what the dictionary says is coriander - whatever that may be. Yesterday, Mary and I patched up an old wooden box, then laboriously hacked lumps of frozen earth, and have it sitting in state in the dining room in preparation for sowing the cabbage. I came down today in some trepidation as I didn't know how much water the earth really contained, but there was fortunately no flood. Nell is really most non-suffering over these manoeuvres. Isn't it funny how the desolation and nakedness of this "garden" has awakened the gardening bug in me?

Yesterday afternoon I also had a nice talk with Lily. having barely got over the joy of having actually got here, she is now plunged into a sea of problems, and quite a heavy teaching programme. She's got a terribly difficult job, for it's so hard to know how much can be expected of people. If the floors are dirty is it because the servants are lazy and the nurses don't bother, or is it because there is no water, and soap and mops are so expensive? It is the same everywhere, of course. I would be ashamed if anyone at home could see my lab, and yet how hard can you drive people whom you know are depressed, anxious, and hungry?

I am just back from the English service, which is in the West this month Agnes and I started off to walk but the roads were an absolute morass of filthy mud, much worse than last year. It's because of the extra-heavy snow, I suppose. So we finally gave in and got a ma che. We soon passed one that

had overturned in the main street, one wheel in a huge pothole in the ice, and the load of what looked like precious, precious flour sacks lying half-submerged in mud. While at the Findlays we heard some news of a new venture that has just started. It is a relief scheme for refugees, run by a joint committee of all the Christian organisations and institutions in the city. (R. Catholic, Baptist, Shen Chiao Hui and our churches.) The aim is to collect money to buy grain for all the thousands of homeless and hungry. Different institutions, e.g. K'un Kuang, Medical College, the East Church and so on, make themselves responsible for supporting a certain number of people. It is really a splendid thing, a real sign of unity called out by the desperate plight of these people. We decided to contribute, not as a separate group, but as individuals in the various institutions we belong to, although of course some people belong to several, which is a little confusing.

I had tea with the Barkers. Ann has wallflowers and stock in flower, and lettuce and tomato up! She is giving me a lovely bowl of young, lobelia plants.

This morning I had an English Bible Class! Amn't I rash? Hugh got one started in the holidays and we decided that when term started we would divide up, and I would take the girls. The men students are much heavier going just now than the women. They (the men) have almost given up coming to the College service. I think there were only four there this morning. The College staff are having a one-day Retreat next Sunday to discuss why the religious side of things in the College is so bad, and to see if there is anything to be done about it. To go back to the Bible Class - ten girls came, which is just a nice number if they keep it up. Out of several suggestions they had chosen to do the story of Jesus' life, so today it was the Birth of Jesus. Of course it's more of an English class than a Bible class but one has to use a bit of Chinese too, and I've been going hot and cold ever since wondering whether I said what I thought I was saying about the Virgin Birth. So perhaps it was a rather rash beginning. (Don't worry, I didn't say much, and anyway I'm maybe more orthodox than you'd think!!) Of course there was very little two-way traffic as they were all very shy, and watched me with bright eyes and inscrutable expressions, like a lot of robins.

There was a medical meeting on Friday, and Path was responsible for half of it. I had the brilliant idea that Dr. Chang should do it, and presented him with a lot of books and references to read up a propos of his last (and first!) post mortem. He wrote a long screed that we ploughed through together, and argued over, and I thought I had got it a bit cut-down. But to my horror, once he was on his hind legs and had got the bit between his teeth he galloped on for three quarters of an hour, dragging in all kinds of irrelevant material, while I got hotter and hotter and did not dare to catch Hugh's eye (he, being chairman, was looking both amazed and reproachful when I did catch it). After that we had two more long papers until even the Chinese members of the audience were fidgeting.

The practical classes are becoming easier to cope with. They get on much slower than I expected. In fact, the material I had prepared for the first class lasted for almost three. Just as well because Dr. Hsiang, who is doing the general lectures, is still bogged down in "Introduction" while I mark time feverishly waiting for him to launch ahead into "Inflammation". I really enjoy the classes. When one has learnt not to expect too much it is quite fun to try and cope with what questions they do ask.

Tell Jack you can buy Streptomycin on the street here! Isn't it absurd? It's a fantastic price of course, but sometimes patients' relatives, whose eloquent pleadings have got them free treatment in the hospital, wander in with some Streptomycin, which they have bought themselves because they heard it was a wonderful drug. ... Much love, Agatha

Letter No. 217 13th. March 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

..... what would we do if there wasn't a Saturday in the week? all very pleasant of course - sitting in the sun darning, watering seeds and planting more, washing clothes, washing my hair. . .

It is lovely weather today, sunny and mild, and nearly all the snow and ice has gone. But the garden is just a bog. And the roads! I was out at the Blind School, and if you had been with me you would have felt Manchuria had not changed much nearly ankle deep in the best places in some parts. One little donkey cart was completely stuck, and four hefty soldiers were heaving at it, while the donkey very wisely made no particular effort to help. Why should he, when no one had a hand to spare for the whip?

We have a lunch party today -Dr. and Mrs. Wu, Mr. and Mrs Wang yu ts'ai (he of the YMCA formerly and now in the hospital office), and Dr. Li yu hsiang (Physiology in the Medical College and warden of the women students' hostel). Mrs. Wu is one of Dr. Liu Shu chen's younger sisters. The story is that he married her after Dr. Liu got up once in a prayer meeting and announced that she had just been guided to say that Wu Ching jen was to marry this girl! Apocryphal perhaps, but a good story. As always now the conversation centred on the two subjects, or rather one subject, of food and money. Ordinary poor people can't afford kao liang now, but eat tou ping - you know, the big round cakes of chaffy stuff left when the oil has been pressed out, and used normally only for animals. Mr. Wang was amazed at the sight of potatoes, as they had not been able to afford any for a month, and the meat was beyond comment. It makes me feel (and all of us, to varying extents) awful to go on eating on such a lavish scale when the same class of people as ourselves are on such short commons. Not that the "class" matters either, but I expect you know what I mean. The other day, at a staff meeting, it had reached six o'clock when someone launched a new and long involved subject for discussion. There were murmurs about the time, "but", he said, "It doesn't matter, we've eaten, why not just go on?" Then someone said "we have, but they haven't; they still have three meals a day", and with a hurried "Of course, of course" the subject was put off till the next time, and we went home to our tasty suppers. Oh dear, we and they. There was no breath of criticism or resentment in this, of course, it seems to be assumed that we are delicate creatures, used to living in luxury and unable to do without it, and the galling thing is, that that is so nearly true).

Dr. Hou is back in China, he has accepted the professorship in West China, and apparently severed his connection with Cheeloo altogether. This is understandable but rather sad, after all his years in Tsinan. The train from Shanghai to Tsinan runs now, regularly and on time. Dr. Struthers was in Shanghai recently to meet someone new, and off they went by the "Blue Express" complete with all their heavy baggage. Changed times for beleaguered Tsinan!! Cheeloo is facing the "biggest financial crisis of its history" owing to the falling off of contributions from America. Why? After all they get a marvellous exchange. We get about \$20,000 to the pound sterling here now, but one US dollar is worth about \$28,000. Cheeloo also had a lot of students who had to stay over the winter holidays and they arranged "work relief" for them, but "the work part of it fell through".....

Do you remember that I left home with 30 passport photos, or thereabouts? well, I used the last this week. We each need four for our new annually-renewed aliens' identity cards. Are they collecting a rogue's gallery, or what?

Tomorrow the College is having an all-day Retreat. It's not really a Retreat at all, but a one-day conference. I would like to run a real Retreat for these people, preferably somewhere like Tung Ling. Programme: very short prayers, morning and evening, so that the good ones wouldn't feel uncomfortable; out-of-doors games; sing-songs; silence room for reading, with lots of light literature and picture magazines; another room for je nao, with gramophone; a party or games of some kind every evening; addresses, if you must have them, on completely irrelevant subjects - "Italian art in the 16th. Century", "Personal reminiscences of a deep-sea diver", "Rock-climbing in the Dolomites" - that sort of thing.

I think it would do a lot of good. And, last but not least, three big meals a day and two snacks. Anyone wanting to lie in bed all day to be encouraged to do so. But alas, one can't get to anywhere nice now, and it would cost a lot. I don't think people like Dr. Liu and Dr. Gao ever really relax and forget their worries in the way, for example, the foreigners all did on the night of the Conference party. Or do they mentally put their feet on the mantelpiece and go to sleep over the Chinese equivalent of a detective story in the privacy of their own homes?

Well, I've been sitting on a hard chair, listening to Chinese from 9.30 a.m. till 6.15 p.m., with a short gap for a meal, so I doubt if the rest of this letter will be very clear or informative. On the whole it was a good show, and struck me as much more real than the ones we had last spring at the Blind School (a large part of it was people getting up and giving a "testimony", at great length). This time there was some real discussion, and some of the real problems were mentioned. The main part of the retreat began after the morning service, and after opening remarks etc., one of the three students' representatives got up and gave a very long speech, mentioning all the "objections" to religion, and to Christianity, which he had collected among his fellow students during the last day or two. There must have been about twenty of them, and the ones I understood varied from the unequal treaties to the divisions of Protestantism. I got the impression that the great majority of the students thought they knew what Christianity was about, and were in fact, abysmally ignorant. And absolutely no sense of proportion. After all, the fact that some Christians smoke, and others think it wrong to do so, does not really knock the bottom out of one's belief in the existence of God. In fact, it seemed to be mostly "Reasons for not believing in Christianity", rather than "Reasons for not believing in Christ."

By the time we got through that it was nearly 1 o'clock and we all went over to the men's Hospital for lunch - mien pao and soup with meat and spinach in it, very good. After that people drifted round for a while, and I sat out on the front steps of the College with some people who were toasting themselves in the sun. The trees across the Hsiao Ho actually had a sort of green sheen on them - not leaves yet of course, but I think the sap must be rising in the twigs to make them look so alive.

Soon after two, we all trooped in again and Dr. Liu made an announcement about contributions to the relief scheme started by the joint committee of all the Christian organisations in Moukden. I thought this formed a neat comment on the students' criticism of lack of unity. Then we got back to the real business of the Retreat. Dr. Liu was leader of the discussion, and started off with a long and fighting speech about the achievements of the Church in the past in inspiring hospitals, schools, and such like. Incidentally he included a very warm reference to "our Tu tai fu lao fu ch'in" who baptized him, and said that if I happened to be writing to my "lao mu ch'in" I was please to mention the fact! Later, after a lot of speeches, some rather silly ones (about Christians not being allowed to smoke and drink and so on) he jumped up again and said that when he was a student his mind was full of questions and difficulties, and the Bible was full of queer things he didn't understand. "I don't understand them any better now, but I know now what I didn't know then - that my sins are too heavy for me to bear

myself, but I can come into God's presence and leave them there and get strength to go on. And another thing I know now, because I have been through it, and that is that, in the face of death everything deserts one and there is nothing left but God and oneself". I wish I could give you a real idea of what he really sounded like. You know, even now a man like Dr. Liu takes his life in his hands and is constantly running risks, which may land him in awful trouble later. But he is completely fearless and abounds with energy and cheerfulness. In fact he is the most unanswerable argument for Christianity that you could well imagine. Of course he has his faults, like everyone else, and can be devastatingly tactless.

Tom Blakely was there, of course, as a new member of staff now that he teaches English. Poor Tom! Some had discoursed at length about Christians not dancing, playing cards, etc. etc.. Then one of the student representatives jumped up and said, with the funniest mixture of triumph and defiance "Well, Pei Mu Shih smokes, I saw him". The chairman hastily smoothed it down by explaining that this was a point on which Christian opinion was not unanimous. Tom meanwhile turned as purple as his shirt. The College expects a lot from him, and I feel it's hard both on him and on Hugh. "Now that Pei Mu Shih has come we will be able to get in touch with the students, we will be able to start English Bible classes", (as though Hugh didn't start one months ago, and wouldn't he cut off his right hand if he thought it would help the students?!) However, we'll see. No more now.

Much love Agatha

Letter No. 218 20th. March 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

Still no letters No magazines or papers for well over three months. ... we hear that Marshall in Chihnsien gets his magazines regularly so it looks as though the bottle-neck is between here and there. The exchange has gone shooting up, and prices too. Indeed today there is no market price for grain, it is just not being sold. Otherwise there isn't much change in the situation here in Moukden. Kirin was taken by the Communists last week. The troops retired from the city in the middle of the night and when the civilians heard what was happening they got into a bit of a panic and thousands of refugees streamed out of the city with the retreating Government troops. Most of them reached Ch'ang-chun about five days later, and some have reached Moukden. One big worry is that with all the unrest in the countryside, and loss of seed-grain, farm implements and animals, it will be a question how much of the countryside will be sown this spring.

The College goes on much as usual. The students are getting very anxious about not having a full enough timetable and are petitioning for extra classes in the late afternoons and on Saturday afternoon. It's as though the future was so uncertain that they wanted to grasp greedily at all they could while the going was good. The fact that they can't possibly digest even what they are getting now doesn't seem to trouble them. The main thing is to get it all scribbled down in their notebooks. It's hard to realise what a handicap it is to them not having any textbooks, or practically none, just their own notes, written in bad ink on abominable paper, with hard pencils or scratchy pens. There is no difficulty in getting them to attend during classes (no poker club in the back row during lectures, or skipping out of a practical class for a cigarette). My afternoon practical classes stop at 3.05 p.m., and they have then had nothing to eat since 8 a.m.,- and classes all day except for a forty minute interval.

But they don't even start to tidy up their microscope and slides till the bell actually rings, and last day it was a quarter of an hour before I got rid of the last of them! So although they are muddle-headed and "difficult" and often appallingly ignorant and bad mannered, one can't help admiring their persistence. Perhaps the fact that they kick up such a terrible row when someone dares to fail them in a class exam shows that they do at least care whether they pass or not, more than a lot of our bright boys at home.

Tom Blakely plans to move into the Dorwards' house in the Huang T'u K'eng, a collection of staff houses grouped round the playing field, right over on the far side of the College from us. I hope he'll get a lot of junior staff and even students in and out. That's something that is badly needed.

On Thursday night Mary, Lily and Dr. McMinn and two Chinese and I were invited to Dr. Liu T'ung Lun's house for supper. I had never been there before. He lives in the former Garven house, which is also in the Huang T'u K'eng. The house is kept simply spotless and so comfortable and tasteful. I don't know how Mrs. Liu manages it, as they have umpteen t'ao nan-ti relatives (refugees) - a household of ten in all. We had ch'un ping - very flat paper-thin cakes and lots of nice vegetables and pork from a pig Mrs. Liu had reared herself. It was simply delicious and we all ate hugely. Dr. Liu talked the whole time, jumping up and down to help the child who was handing the dishes, and he was simply full of beans. He showed me a "Daily Light" which Dad and you gave him at Christmas 1919, on his Edinburgh visit, and he said he still used it. "The Bible is so long and complicated, I am so busy and my head so full of things that I find it hard to settle down to it, but this I can read and I do!! I told him your tale of the boy on the veranda learning his letters from Jack, and he roared with laughter and said he didn't remember. (Note 1990: This was a story that Dr. Liu learned his alphabet by watching Jack Crawford, Agatha's elder brother, learn to read.) Is it apocryphal, or embroidered a little, you naughty one? We couldn't stay long, because of curfew at 7 p.m., but it was a very pleasant party.

This morning quite a heavy fall of snow, blanketing everything ... By lunchtime it had practically all vanished. So I have had a busy time tidying up the back yard, which was rather a smelly midden now that the snow and ice had gone, revealing the dumpings of a winter. Then Mary and I re-made the "rock bed" which is Nell's dear delight in front of the hall door, but which had been constructed on the principle of sticking in the stones on edge at even intervals over a hay-stack-shaped mound of earth. The water was tactless enough to come on while I was in the middle of this, and, in spite of feverish hurrying, it had gone off before I was clean. I haven't had a bath now for six weeks, so it was a pity to miss it. (I'm quite clean you know). After that, the week's washing and a trip to the lab where I found that there had been a flood in Chemistry (due to the water coming unexpectedly, I suppose), and it had got right through to the Path lab, and right through that to the hall below!

One nice bit of news is that Dr. Liu T'ung lun's name has been suggested by the CCC (Church of Christ in China) as one of China's two representatives to the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam. At least, Dr. Ts'iu (the nice CCC man who was here in the summer) wrote to ask him if he would accept if appointed. Of course he can't leave, or won't leave, with things such a mess here, but it is a pity as it would be a fine thing for Moukden.

It's Sunday evening..... the day started for me with the English Bible class seven of the nine came they weren't so paralysed and asked several questions, and some actually had answers to the questions I had given them out last time. So I feel cheered. Perhaps you think it's a very small

thing to feel cheered about, but if you don't feel cheerful about tiny things nowadays you aren't likely to do it at all! Then the College service..... after that I usually wander up to the Women's Hospital..... tell Dor I have tried several times to see the lassie called Hsing, and also Wang Su he, but have always been unlucky and found them out. However I found Dr. Chang chieh mei, and we had a grand gloomy gossip on the perpetual theme, "when the Pa Lu come in". Or "How much grain have you in the house?" The price of grain has bumped down again yesterday and today. It was up to \$9000 a pound, now a little over \$6000. Don't ask me why.

The Government schools are having a lot of difficulty over fees, even more than our own schools and colleges. You see, if a student shows symptoms of being about to pay fees, other children say, "Aha, so you are one of those rich people." The result is that no one wants to admit that they can afford it, even if they are quite well off. The K'un Kuang and the Wen Hui have by comparison managed it very peacefully and are well launched on the new term. A lot of girls have to have free places, of course, but Mr. Chang and the other teachers know the girls so well that it is relatively easy to decide who really can pay and who can't.

Tomorrow is the day when the Medical College students who have not yet paid their fees have to stop attending classes. I wonder what will happen. Of course a great many of them have been let off part or all of their fees - the Board allotted money to help these poorest students, but it wasn't enough for all who asked for help. The N.E. University (the one Jack Weir is attached to, and was with in Szechuan) has just expelled eighty for "pinkness" (Communist sympathies). I marvel anyone had the nerve to do it.

In the afternoon we all went over to the West for the service. We usually hire the hospital (ex-CNRRA) truck, as the roads are so frightful, and Dr. McMinn has to have some sort of conveyance. I had tea with the Barkers, and came home hugging a huge pot of lobelia nearly ready to flower, which Ann had grown for me from seed. Miss Ella Gordon and Miss Henderson are now helping in the Theological Hall. They have about thirty students this term, not bad under the circumstances.

Our old friend, the Lutheran plane, is busy taking out 500 Korean Christians, who then hope to get back to Korea from Tientsin. No joke for the poor things with about a handful of luggage apiece. But they'll be glad to get home...

Much love, Agatha

Letter No. 219 27th. March 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

.....How funny about Marshal; being "imprisoned"! He was encouraged to take a short holiday in Peking, but wrote back that he was very busy, and there was also a stack of very good black bricks that he could not leave unguarded or they would be pinched by the soldiers!

You mention the Iron Curtain in Europe and the fear that something similar might happen here. But remember, this would be a Chinese Iron Curtain, and liable to have large cracks! Mr. Rasmussen, for instance, quite often, gets Chinese friends in from Communist areas where their people are, and has

arrangements for the other way too, irregular and slow, of course, but still the news (and what is more useful) does get in and out. So do not worry about that. There might well be a first period of lack of news till things settled and one got a system working, but remember we would have to deal with a much less cast-iron and inhumane system than that in Europe.

I like Mary Findlay increasingly and we get on fine. It's just as well, as we share a study, but I find, to my relief, that she isn't one of those people who talk spasmodically. We either really talk hard, or else work away in complete silence for a couple of hours at a time.....

Little Liu is in hospital now. He persisted with a positive sputum, and his artificial pneumothorax was not successful because of adhesions, so Dr. Liu took him in and yesterday did a phrenic nerve avulsion. When he is over that and well rested he is to go to Tiehling hospital for a few months for complete rest. So now I just have Na, who is not very well, and not very efficient either. I shall have to make a change some day, but just at present I am too busy getting into teaching to want to launch out on training another boy from scratch. At least, I did start negotiations over an Antung boy, a refugee, of Mr. Rasmussens'. But he wanted promises about the future, and I don't feel like promising anything to a raw lad who might not turn out to be at all suitable.....

This week in the College has been rather upset. The last day for paying fees was reached, and after that all students who had not paid were supposed (by decision of the Staff meeting) to stop attending classes. None of the Chinese felt like turning anyone out of a class, and Hugh, as Dean, felt he had to try to enforce the decision of the staff. The point was that many students had money or had relatives who should have made themselves responsible for their fees, and who did not pay in the hope that they would get off with it. Others were genuinely on the rocks and the problem was how to sort them out. On the first day Hugh went round all the classes with lists of names, and warned them not to attend any more classes. Within an hour many had paid up, but there were still about thirty who had not. This sort of thing went on for a couple of days, but I think it was only the foreigners who made any serious effort to back him up. You mustn't blame the Chinese staff for this, they tread on much thinner ice, and only the most reckless want to offend people nowadays. After a second day, the remaining ones who had not paid, held a meeting to which they invited Dr. Gao, and drew up a statement of the maximum they could scrape up, a) now and b) in a month's time, and the rest, which they see no hope of paying came to something over three million Chinese dollars. Then another, yet another!, staff meeting was held, and ways and means discussed. The Graduates Association in Tientsin are sending a sub; the graduates in Moukden are being appealed to, and the staff themselves are putting their hands in their pockets. It was touching to hear what some of the decenter students have done in the way of refusing help from people who they thought were not well enough off, and then selling their bedding etc. to get the money. And the members of staff who urged personal help by the staff were just those who have barely enough to buy food as it is. Anyway, they are all back at classes again and the situation is easier. I haven't met my class yet since I had to send three of them out, but they still grin at me on the stairs so I think there is no ill will. But it was a very awkward business and we're all glad it's more or less over without worse ructions. And no one more glad than Hugh, I'm sure.

One of my class came into the lab today, and, as he had not yet put in an appearance this term, I was just opening my mouth to be stern teacher when he took the wind out of my sails by presenting me with an invitation to his wedding! Isabel is going too, he is a nephew of Miss Ma, who teaches Chemistry.

Today is Easter Sunday. The College service was taken by Mr. Findlay and there was also an Easter service at the Consulate, taken, I think, by John Fleming, with communion afterwards by special permission of the Archbishop of Canterbury (so we're not off the map yet, you see!!) The K'un Kuang service is at 6 a.m. because the girls - in fact all schools in the city - have to parade during the morning to affirm loyalty and their antagonism to Communism. What ho! Every child has to carry a flag with a motto on it. The College has a holiday on Monday, but Good Friday is a normal teaching day.

Today was an absolutely perfect day so warm that it was hard to believe that the white skin on the Hsiao Ho was still ice. This last week the river has been very animated. You bang a hole in the ice, and when the fish, awakened from their winter's sleep, come up to the surface you catch them with your hand. Every now and then the ice breaks, and you go down to meet the fishes, but it is so shallow this only provides a good laugh for all the people who have not fallen in themselves. Now the ice is too thin for that and there is a lot of open water. We have even got some nice little green weeds in the garden, and Ehryuah- lan is getting green. I did the first digging of the season but found it very heavy going as the ground is still sodden as clay. The compost heap of last summer's weeds and kitchen refuse has been a great success as it is now a mass of nice black rich-looking stuff which I begin to dig in. Never have I met ground with so many brickbats in it. Last spring I dug out hundreds but today every spadeful struck one or two.

... Thursday ... was Hugh's wedding anniversary and Nell decided to have a party just for our two households. Evening dress for the ladies, even me in my brown taffeta and yellowy-green coatie. I had so many woolly vests on I felt as if I was tight-laced. The last time I wore it was at Vellore, with absolutely nothing on underneath but a diaphanous pair of cotton pants, and rivers of sweat running down me all the evening. Being Easter, we had a real burst, a fried egg each and two for the men. Eggs are very dear now so this was really a splash. And bacon and veg., and tinned peaches, corn flakes, and coffee. After that an eight-some reel to the gramophone. Lily, by the way, arrived in an afternoon frock, but when she saw us all in our glory she took off a loose black velvet evening cape and swathed it around her as a long skirt that was so impressive that I didn't know it was impromptu until she took it off for the reel. She also did a sort of miming interpretation of "there were ninety and nine" as she has seen her father and mother do it for deaf and dumb people. It was most beautiful and quite unlike anything I have ever seen before. She afterwards told us how she and her brother used to go to the deaf-and-dumb service as small children. If they jumped about too much while watching their father prancing up and down acting the Good Samaritan or the Prodigal son, there would be a stern "Lily! Lesley, behave yourselves", to break the silence. Ordinary, audible, church must have been very dull after that.

Tom is very busy preparing for flitting his cook has deserted him to go and be a farmer. This was the cook they had had in the bachelor establishment in the West, and they now have a man who has been with Russians, and who feeds them with things fried in deep fat, which is both expensive and hard on the digestion.

Poor Dr. Wu (Wu Ching jen) has had bad news from a Szepingkai refugee, that his father's "hospital" has been razed to the ground by a bomb. No news of his father or mother. The cruel thing is that this kind' of news is so incomplete. He may not hear anything definite for weeks or months, if indeed he ever hears. Mr. Kao, one of the K'un Kuang staff, has heard that his wife (in Pa Lu territory) has been given to another man, and his children put into an orphanage. Is it any wonder these poor people are unhappy and hopeless.

Mr. Findlay was just splendid at the College service this morning. It was the 36th. anniversary of the opening of the College. There must have been 12 - 15 men students there, much better than usual.

Must stop now. Much love, as ever,

A.

Letter No. 220 4th. April 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

.....bad luck that your knee is bothering you now, as that will cramp your style more even than arms and shoulders.

... Hugh is very burdened and worried..... now that spring has come he has an outlet in the garden and that makes life more bearable. It is the food problem that is now the most desperate in the College. There is hope of some student relief money, and that may help temporarily. Some people still have money, though. I told you I was invited to the wedding of one of the students in the class I teach. Well, Isabel and I went, and I was so disgusted by the whole thing that I felt physically nauseated. There must have been about 160 guests, and that meant 16 or 18 tables, at 50 wan each, wine ad lib, elaborate photography, and the best man tricked out in tails and white gloves, although I know that he had not a dollar to pay his College fees with, and all guests - or at least the important ones - collected and sent home in hired cars. It must have cost hundreds of pounds. Why couldn't he have helped some of his poverty-stricken fellow students? It was a Christian wedding! This boy is an only son,..... aunt was in the K'un Kuang. The whole thing made us feel very cross. I suppose these wealthy people feel they may as well spend their money, since they aren't likely to have it longFace, face, face.

Well, to turn to a cleaner subject. You should see our garden! Only a week ago there was ice on the river, now it is hotter than summer at home. Everything is growing almost as you watch it. Gooseberries budding, violets up rhubarb and strawberries flourishing. It is simply incredible that these plants should have survived the low temperatures we had in November and December with only a little shu kai and snow raked over them. Yesterday I had a great go at the garden and raked up about a cartload of rubbish, which we threw out at the back door into the gully, in the pleasant Chinese fashion.

.... John Fleming is flying home as his father has inoperable carcinoma they can't rise to two passages by air, so Pearl is staying here meanwhile. It is worrying for them to be separated..... John will be a terrible loss. His work in the Theological College and the Wen Hui school isn't such a problem, as they can double up, but his main work is the I.R.C. (International Red Cross) relief, which is just about a full-time job and very complicated. We hope George will get back soon and take over. But the last news was that he was still in Ichang, although his work there is finished..... the third to fly home for direct or indirect reasons of health. First Dr. Hewatt, then Miss Service, now John. He is an only child.

Today Dr. Liu took the College service. His vitality and daring is really quite staggering. He seemed to choose all the things he could tilt at in the world today, and went at them hard. All political creeds were torn to bits, and he finished up with warm appreciation of Science as the truth of God, which is not a popular point of view with the devout here!

It followed rather aptly on a long conversation I had on Friday with one of the women doctors here - Dr Lui ya hsiang, Physiology Department. She is one I like very much, a Christian but unobtrusive from that point of view. I realised she did not fit in with the ultra-strict Liu Shu chen point of view. I have been getting her to help me in getting ready for my English Bible class, for although I do most of it in English I try to say the important things in Chinese too. Today we had got to the Temptations (we are doing the life of Christ, in episodes as it were) and I suppose it began to dawn on her that my devil wasn't the horned and hooped kind. Anyway, she was scribbling busily on a piece of paper while I stumbled along, and then suddenly pushed the paper over and said, "Do you believe that?" That was "Fish - reptile - mammal - man". So I said "Evolution? Of course I do!" "Well", she said, "when I say that kind of thing the others criticise me and say I'm not a Christian". Then I was put through it! Miracles. Speaking in tongues. A personal devil. The divisions of the Church. How Christian is Britain? And so on. Luckily she knows enough English for me not to have to wade in such deep waters in Chinese. Oh, and "Verbal inspiration", of course! What bothers me most is that people like her seem to feel somehow inferior, and are altogether too modest and apologetic about their faith, in the face of the strict fundamental type. The latter regard all those outside the charmed circle as having, at best, an incomplete, emasculated, version of Christianity. For example, there is a group now praying for Dr. Shih of K'ai Yuan (who is a staunch and honest Christian if ever there was one), because she has not yet "spoken with tongues" and is therefore not, as it were, a graduate. But what makes me maddest of all (what a cross letter this is!) are the people who fly off within the Wall, not because they are afraid of the Pa Lu, oh no, but because the Lord guides them to do so.

After the service I had a busy morning packing away winter woollies. I still have far more than I can use..... It's better to wear some things out and then have a few really good things to hold on to in an emergency, than a bewildering array of half-worn-out things..... John Fleming took a photo of us all after the service.

This afternoon I saw little Liu. He has had his stitches out of his neck and was in good form. He may go to Tiehling in a week or so. Talking of Tiehling, Dr. Wu went off there today as he heard there were crowds of refugees from the north, and he hoped to hear news of his father and mother. I do hope he hears something definite, even bad news would be better than the suspense which is making him look worn out. The train is running to Tiehling.

We hear that K'ai yuan hospital and house have been pretty thoroughly looted and destroyed, books burned, floors torn up The Liaoyang doctor has also arrived up here. Yesterday a big batch of children from the Liaoyang Christian school turned up. Their teachers had been sent off somewhere. I suppose for "training" and the older boys were simply being put straight into the army. So this group somehow made a getaway and walked to Moukden. One little boy got lost on the way and no one knows where he is.

Oh, here's a bit of news although not at all certain yet. The Chinese family in the house next to the Garvens' (formerly Crockarts') have left, and there's a possibility of Lily, and Mary and me setting up there. It needs a lot of cleaning up, and kangas taken out etc. etc., but is not nearly as bad as the K'un Kuang was, or even Tom's house. So you see we have some hopes of semi-permanency. Of course

it's a gamble, as everything is, but the point is that we're all too crowded as it is, and if the Mission does not take over the house now, another Chinese family will

Stop press. the cat has had kittens. Very nice, one orange with a little white (note 1990, my future "Tigger"), one white with a little orange.

Much love, Agatha.

Letter No. 221 11th. April 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

.....How interesting to hear of you meeting Dr. Kao and Mr Li (Li ting k'uei?) you say I don't give as much "news" as some others. I got such a fright to see the wrath and indignation caused by some other's indiscretions that perhaps I err on the other side. But what I do tell you is true, and not watered down.....

The spring thaw was short and sharp. Some days of hot sun and hot wind, and we even had blowing dust. But it's true that sanitation will be an increasing problem. The farmers find it so hard to plant their fields that there isn't the normal demand for fertiliser, and so it accumulates, overflows or gets dumped in wrong places. So I have been told, at any rate. We are very lucky to live where we do, with grass, trees and open water to look at instead of filthy noisy streets.

Pearl has had a letter from John Fleming from Shanghai. He has bought a return ticket by air. (£350) Attaboy!! This should comfort some of the Chinese who keep asking, not "Are you leaving?" but "When are you leaving?" Of course I appreciate your point about our possibly being a burden and not a help during a new regime. It is impossible to generalise about "what the Chinese think". Some, of course, don't want us at all, at any time. Others would find the presence of foreigners a help under almost any circumstances and in between are the majority who probably just don't know how it will work out any more than we do. If only it was a clear-cut issue, it would be much easier to decide. But for the present anyway one prepares next week's classes and next autumn's vegetables, and hopes for the best..... George Taylor is in Shanghai and hopes to be back in Moukden on the 17th.. The sooner the better, for Harry is trying to do John's refugee work meanwhile and is just overburdened with work. Millions of dollars flow into him and are whisked away from him, and he's on all possible committees and takes services here, there and everywhere. He was over here the other day with an American lady who represents relief organizations in Shanghai, and who has come to Moukden to assess needs here. We hope she will be able to help with the problem of students' food she collects facts and reports to headquarters.

I was over at the Blind School with Mary, to see Hester. All the way we passed people with baskets, digging up a certain weed (a kind of wild cress by the look of it) that is edible. Most of them were children but there were even one or two old gentlemen in nice silk coats. There must be a lot of people now tasting poverty for the first time. The country was looking very lovely, the brown bare fields relieved by the tinge of green on all the willows. We have had two days of rain, so although it was very windy there was no dust.

Yesterday I had a very strenuous afternoon, spreading manure all over the K'un Kuang garden. I used our coolie's little handcart and every trip from the big pile near the gate made the handcart disintegrate further. It was a relief not to have it collapse altogether before I finished. The K'un Kuang was having a "Holidays at Home" type of excursion. All the little Junior Middles asked the Senior Middles for a meal: they dug holes, and made little fireplaces, and cooked the whole thing out-of-doors in the compound. All the teachers and servants sat down to the meal too, in fact when all was ready the gateman barred the door and joined the party too. To judge from the noise it must have been a roaring success. It's these small things that remind me how much outward circumstances have changed. It is less than a year since we went on a trip to the Tung Ling. Then some months ago the K'un Kuang had a picnic in the park across the "Small River" - a few hundred yards away. But now with so many soldiers and riff-raff about, that's not possible.

Nothing much of interest in the College this week. The re-examination of the students who failed in December was on. Very poor results. Only one out of eight got a pass mark (only just!) in my question on the English paper that I was correcting last night.

Yesterday I also had a nice long visit from Wang Su he, one of the senior nurses and a friend of Dor's. I met her first in Peking on the way to a nurses' conference in Nanjing. We had tea and I showed her all my photos - Lao Mu ch'in ("exactly like me"), David, Christine, ad infinitum. She was very bothered by a further exodus of hospital staff. Eight nurses had left that morning, without giving warning. Two of them graduates and six in training. This is a big problem and has affected the doctors too. In fact, the medical departments have hardly anyone of any experience left It makes it very hard for people who have to arrange timetables or teaching curricula. Dr. Liu Shu chen's family have left and gone on Peking. Her father got a ticket a few weeks ago and then "laid the matter before the Lord" and decided he must stay. He gave away his ticket and everyone was rather impressed. a couple of weeks later he and his family vanished, and in a day or two a wire announced safe arrival in Peking. Of course it's easy to criticize and I certainly don't feel like blaming those who honestly admit that they, or close relations, have affiliations with the K.M.T. and who decide ... for family reasons, to clear out. After all, the Chinese run greater risks in all directions than foreigners do. (N.B. Not for circulation please, you, Dor and Jack only.)

It just makes one respect all the more the ones who do stay. One thing you may be quite certain of - Dr. Liu T'ung lun will never leave. I think he will continue to run his hospital if he is the last person left on the staff. The marvel is how all these people get air tickets - only an occasional one sets out to walk it. Tickets (black market) now cost over eight million dollars, which at a recent exchange is well over £50. That is to Peking.

The lab boy, Liu Shao yen, left for Tiehling yesterday. I wonder if I'll ever see him again? His refugee relatives scraped up \$60,000 (about £4), probably by selling winter bedding, and one went with him to Tiehling. He resolutely refused all my most tactful offers of money, even through impersonal channels. It's nice to find a boy like that so independent. He would only accept a little to buy stamps to write me frequent letters! He and Na get on well. Na electrified me yesterday morning by coming to me and saying that there was no work to be done, and might they, please, spring-clean! The next time I popped in, they were up to their elbows, as it were, with all the shelves bared and washed, and the servant, with rather an unenthusiastic expression, was contemplating the pile of dirty bottles that had appeared in his sink.

Now that our English service (during its month when it takes place in the East) is held in the College, Isabel and I are responsible for getting the room ready. We wanted to turn the little American organ round the other way, and got a shock when we saw the back. It was open, and in among the works were (among smaller objects and an inch of dust) a large illuminated poster saying "Appreciations to Lady Cripps" and a large tin of black varnish!

The colour washers are busy in our new house, and the kang and broken-down stoves have been taken out. I'm digging up the hen-run for vegetables. So, with luck, I'll flit once more in a few weeks time. Not that I don't get on well here, but Lily wants to set up house, and Mary and I are the logical ones to join up. I'm looking forward to it.

Much love, Agatha

Letter No. 222 18th. April 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

... letter of 4th. April.(sic! - too recent?) It's odd to read of people assuming, even then, that Moukden had fallen, when of course it hasn't, and of Oliver hearing on board ship that we had been advised to leave. We have never been advised to leave. George is expected back tomorrow. I hope he brings some relief for the College. The situation there is really critical, and of course everywhere faces the same situation, just not quite so close. Meanwhile Lily, Mary and I are fixing up the new house! Lily has engaged a girl as servant, but she lives over in the West, and can't come to us till we have settled in to the house. So we depend on precarious daily help from Hospital coolies, spared as a favour, and an occasional refugee. One day, no one will appear then suddenly four or five. However, things do get done, slowly. The house is not nearly as bad as the K.K. was, I mean it isn't smelly with dirt, except one room, and everything is cleanable. The rooms look very nice now that they are all freshly colour-washed.

There are two front bedrooms, both very nice, looking over the Hsiao Ho, and a small room looking east. At the back there is a bigish, but very dark, room which we will use as a box-room for all the Crockarts' and other people's trunks, and the too dilapidated furniture. Then there are two tiny back rooms, one we will use as a storeroom for food, and one for a spare room. The bathroom and lavatory are both reasonably cleanable. Downstairs there are two nice sitting rooms and a tiny room with a kang and a stove. The kitchen is still chaos. Lily is to have one of the downstairs sitting rooms as a bed sitting room, and the small bedroom, and Mary and I each get a big front bedroom as a bed sitting room, and we'll eat in the second sitting room.

..... at the moment (Sunday 2 p.m.) I am sitting out on our front steps in a howling dusty wind keeping an eye on two men in the garden and two in the house. Lily has a plan of "doing for ourselves" as far as cooking is concerned, but this does not sound very practicable as Mary knows as much about cooking as I do (!) and we are so busy. I think Lily will come round to the idea of a cook as she finds things so much more difficult than in the "old days".

... A good bout of gardening.... quite a big patch of garden in front with some lilacs and old straggly rose bushes round the edge, and two small pine trees a square, probably used as

a hen run, should be well manured. I dug it up and planted beans and peas lines of little sticks to stop the sparrows from undoing our labours. We are leaving the grassier bits the rest will be mostly potatoes. The yard at the back is still a midden, with an unspeakable latrine in one corner we are spreading our mountain of ashes over the front path, which, in the thaw, was a deep lake

Hugh is off today to the Pei Ling (North Tomb), to watch birds with the second in command at the Consulate.

I have just been on a round of mild chivvying. When one stops watching, these men tend to vanish into thin air, and are found round the corner contemplating the view. I am not a very good gaffer, and much prefer to do it myself, but you will be glad to know that I still have instincts in the direction of keeping the Sabbath. One funny thing is that the Chinese don't seem to have inherited any tendency that way from their Scotch/Irish spiritual ancestors. You go to church, it is true, but the rest of the day is a good opportunity for all kinds of committees, meetings, parties and so on.....

The Bible class still goes on and there are now seven regulars, sometimes one or two more. Next week we have the "healing miracles of Jesus", which will be quite a job to discourse about in "simple English". Preparations for it brought on another long theological discussion with my shy friend in Physiology - the origin of evil, free will, predestination.... I can't cope intelligently with such arguments even in English (of course I talk to her mostly in English). But it's grand to have a real argument between equals, and I think she likes to voice her "heresies" when she finds I don't fall down in a horrified faint.

Later Nell and Agnes were at a service in the East Church - 120 baptisms including 17 K'un Kuang girls. Isn't that splendid in these times when to be a Christian will be a serious liability and everyone knows it. There are plenty of bright spots like this. Here's another. The K.K. drill teacher, a fairly new man called Yang, had arranged to go with his family to Peking. They could not afford air tickets so he would have had to go with them on the journey as it would be partly on foot. His old home is in Peking and he had two offers of jobs awaiting him. Then a friend arranged relatively cheap air tickets for his wife and child, and Mr. Yang has sent them off alone and is staying with the K'un Kuang. Isn't it decent of him? Tell Dor that Mr. T'ien has gone - I don't know his ming-tz'e ... he had a lot to do with education, a pillar of the kirk for many years. He went to Tientsin last week. Mrs. T'ien is still here, and two of the children. She has a flourishing midwifery practice and is a very redoubtable lady. She was here for lunch yesterday, also Shu fen, Dr. McMinn, Dr. Shih of K'ai yuan and one or two more - a hen party.

You ask if I ever give students Saturday tests. The trouble at the moment is to get them to sit even half-term exams. The truth is, they are distracted by fear. I think Mencius was right : "Feed men, and they will be virtuous". I'm not being cynical, really, because I know that a Christian faith will make even a hungry man "virtuous". But our students are not Christian.

Much love,

Agatha

Letter No. 223 25th April, 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother.....

Snippets of news George Taylor is back, by the Lutheran plane, with a ton of medical supplies (of course only a drop in the bucket, but every little helps). Two Danes have also arrived. One, a Miss Neilsen, used to be in Antung. She only went on furlough a little over a year ago, and indeed I think I met her in Peking. She has the idea of walking back to P'i t'sai kou, but this would be rather daft. Anyway, she'll probably do what Mr. Rasmussen tells her, he is a great autocrat! Mr. R has just been appointed head of the YMCA here. Mr. Shih, the present head, is to be sent to America. The other Dane is a Mr. Olsen who is to help in the Wen Hui he is an agriculturalist, formerly in P'i t'sai kou.

The Lutheran plane is still going back and forth, taking Koreans out on the first stage of their journey home.

I saw Dr. Liu the other day and gave him your message and greetings. He beamed and patted me in a most fatherly way.

The College food problem is considerably eased. The local government authorities have given the students 3000 chin of kao liang at a price cheap enough for them to sell one third of the grain to pay for the other two thirds. This, of course, will last only three weeks. But later another letter came, saying they were granting a chin of grain a day at rationed price (about a third of that on the street) to each student from Pa Lu territory (that is, about 80 in all), so hope springs up again. Of course the root cause of trouble is untouched. (This bit secret.) The rows over food are just an excuse for trouble. The policy of destruction embraces more than bombs under railway bridges. Over the head of it all we had four days holiday last week. Actually, I was busy enough as, from this week on, Hugh and I will have the Histology practicals, as Mr. Ch'in has left to escort his family out to Nanking. Of course Hugh will have the responsibility of the talkie-talkie at the beginning of each class, but I still have a lot of brush-up, both of the pure histology and of the Chinese terms. Still it will be quite fun and I will learn quite a lot. Then I had to take prayers in the Women's Hostel at only one and a half day's notice, which involved some hectic preparation, but went all right except that I lost my way in the Lord's Prayer. It didn't matter much as everyone else forged ahead without me.

Then we have been busy at all odd moment in the house. It progresses slowly when no one is about the casual labour becomes much more casual I am very proud of the garden!Yesterday afternoon we were all three hard at it, washing the lavatory pan and the walls of the bathroom. Provided you really know that the dirt in the bath won't come off on one's behind it does not seem to matter so much. The servant problem has now been fixed up. We are to have one of the two men servants at present in the Garven household. He's a crusty old man called Pao, and spits, but at least knows the job, and can cook, shop etc.. This seems quite a reasonable arrangement. Servants' wages are going to be a terrific problem soon. Prices of foodstuff have gone up five-fold in the last month, but there hasn't been much change in the exchange. Indeed it's hard to know where we are heading.

Lily has had a great bug hunt on in the hospital this week. She really has created quite a stir already. The attitude was that, after all, bugs were just part of the established order of things,

and there was nothing to do about it. But Lily has managed to stir up quite an interest in the chase, and the Lust to Kill has been awakened in the whole nursing staff.

Later The "new" Danes were over for the service. Miss Neilsen is a big fine upstanding person and seems very nice. She brought me messages from Mr. and Mrs. Axel Christensen, who are back in Peking. They are going to take over a house near the Language School and run it as a hostel George was not over because his jeep broke down, so I didn't get any of his news. We had the usual monthly discussion about wages and this time the tentative figure is one million dollars (for one man) for April. Doesn't it sound staggering? I'm not sure what it would mean in sterling, but the last exchange I heard, the American dollar was 100,000 local dollars, and the pound will be about double that.

Enough about money! All the willows are green, the vines are budding, and the swifts and swallows are here in their hundreds. I look out every morning on a placid blue lake, with patches of new rushes the colour of young rice. It will be nice in the new house, for I have been lucky in the "toss", and the front room with a balcony has fallen to me. I can go out there and look at birds in the early mornings, and even sleep out there if it gets really hot

I've now had two letters from little Liu, from Tiehling. He writes quite chattily and seems reasonably happy. He has now, to his great joy, been moved to a big 15-bed ward, which he likes as being very je nao. We would pay extra to get a room to ourselves if we were ill!

The K'un Kuang had an excursion to the Pei ling (North Tomb) on Friday. I had heard it said that such things would not be possible this year, but then other reports came that it would be quite all right. They walked from the tram terminus and had a gorgeous day. It is changed in some ways. No tickets now, you just walk in, but some parts are occupied by troops so that you can't get in. There is a new building in the grounds now, a sort of mausoleum for the soldiers killed in Manchuria. They are all cremated and the ashes are in rows in little urns, each with the name of the soldier, and his Province, on it. I am quite agreeably surprised that they have been treated in such a relatively t'i mien way in these chaotic times. Of course, the whole Pei ling is swarming with soldiers, idly sight-seeing, and one would think it would be rather depressing for them to see so many shelves as yet unused.

Our kittens are terribly funny these days - three weeks old and just at the most attractive stage. Their mother is a cat of character, thoroughly spoiled, of course. The other day, Nell asked the cook what ideas he had for our supper. "Oh", he said, "I have done some meat for your supper. I bought it for the cat, but she won't eat it"! So we had nice roast meat for supper. We tease Nell well about this, you may be sure. Actually, it was very good meat and Kitty deigned to eat her share when it was roasted to her liking. We have Chinese food at lunch now, and only occasionally meat in the evening, but I find it's a very nice and satisfying diet.

Much love,

Agatha

Letter 223a 25th. April 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Jack

I was very interested to hear in a recent letter from Mother that you have decided to remain outside the new National Health Service I suppose it's a choice between freedom and security. Anyway, you must have lots of patients who will stick to you under any arrangement

Life is very busy and that keeps it from being worrying, as it would be if one stopped to analyze the situation. But one begins to feel that no place in the world is particularly stable at present. We continue the round of classes (punctuated by ructions), English (language) club, clinical meetings and so on. One thing is that all this unrest, and the feeling that to some extent we are all in the same boat together, does make it easier to make Chinese friends. I have some very good friends now among the younger members of staff. The more I know them the more I like them and wish there was a brighter outlook in front. The stories we hear from those who have left to find more security (usually for their family's sake) within the Wall makes one feel very sorry for them too. It is evidently very hard to find work anyway and the problem of setting up a new home is pretty hopeless. Some are, frankly, trying to get back here! Some say that as far as hospital experience goes, they have not seen anything nearly as good as our own hospital here.

It's a crazy world here in some ways. You can buy sulphonamides, penicillin and streptomycin at any quack drug store, and they are widely used by the completely ignorant for everything under the sun. My lab boy, who has had an early apical lesion for about six months, told me that a refugee relative was going to sell his winter bedding in order to buy an injection of streptomycin for him, but he promised to wait until I had been consulted. Doesn't it take your breath away? The craziness and the generosity. Exasperating, and humbling, just like China.

Much love to you and Marjorie and the weans. Agatha

Letter No. 224 2nd. May 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

..... How did people get the impression that I lectured in Chinese!? Of course I don't and couldn't, so please squash it. I only take practical classes and teach English (the latter mostly in English.)

This week has been very busy, rushing in at every odd moment to do something to the house. The woman servant arrived on Tuesday and we felt rather disappointed as she had a rather adenoid blank look and was rather grubby. She is a protégée of one of the pastors in West Moukden. Her husband is in the Kuo Chun army, and she has had no news of him for a year. She has no children. We are gradually getting used to her, and she is really a good worker. I, knowing how long it took me to clean the white paint of one door (with some plaster fallen from the ceiling as abrasive), take off my hat to her efforts these last few days. She is also quite

pleasant looking when she smiles, and one of her first spontaneous activities was to have a bath and wash all her clothes. So, here's hoping.

It has been very slow getting the kitchen end of things going, as next door's Pao shih-fu is not to flit until Lily flits, and Lily can't flit until he has had a day or two to get his kitchen fixed. However, I moved in to sleep on Tuesday, Mary last night and Lily probably will tomorrow, and we may start meals here next Tuesday. At the moment my hairbrush is in this house, and my toothbrush in the other house, and so on with all my belongings.

Yesterday afternoon (Mary was operating and Lily over at lunch in the West) I had a bout of furniture beating - upholstered chairs and sofas. The damsel and I were nearly suffocated as they were all thick with the dust of ages. Later, having acquired a crop of blisters to prove my virtue, I had a good excuse to stop as I was to go over to have tea with Harry and George. So I left all the chairs and sofas outside until I should get back as they were too heavy for two to manage. Lily turned up with a community friend from the West and proceeded to make use of her to carry them in! I'm sure the said lady is not accustomed to spend her afternoons in such strenuous ways. I had a nice time and a good gossip and inspected Harry's garden with a critical eye, measuring his peas against mine, and joining his curses against the sparrows George is trying to sort out the IRC work John Fleming had to leave behind they did see each other in Shanghai, but what is pumped into one in a few hectic hours isn't always what you want to ask about a few weeks later. They had been running a sort of factory where the refugees made clothes and sold them to pay for the cloth and their food. This is not a paying proposition now, as no one wants to buy clothes. Indeed a lot of people are selling their winter clothes, bedding etc. to buy food. It is pathetic to walk along the streets and see an old gentleman or lady with the traces of gentility on them trying to sell a few household oddments - a chair, a few vases and so on.

Later. Sunday evening. This evening we had the first meeting of a teachers' fellowship that has been started, mainly by Dr. Liu, for the College staff. It went fairly well, I thought, although only about 16 came. Still, that's most of them now, and a nice friendly size. It was in Tom's house, on the patch of grass at the front. First we just sat round on a few chairs and rugs and had tea and biscuits. Then Dr. Liu prayed and we had a little discussion about planning evening prayers in the men's hostel. Later we had games, then Agnes, by invitation, took prayers. Tom is to start a discussion group for them (the men students). He is really a marvel. He was wandering about one afternoon and happened to meet two students, and of course being Tom, got into conversation. He invited them to come to his house after supper to continue the chat, and to bring anyone else who wanted to come. The whole class came, about 30, how's that done?!

We had Lily in for supper tonight in the K'un Kuang house, and now it's late and I'm so sleepy that I think I must stop. I'm really very sorry to leave Agnes and Nell. After some ups and downs things have been very pleasantly "up", and we are good friends and get on very happily. However, it is better to leave in that frame of mind than because one has to. And the new household will be fun too, when we are clean and settled.

Nell's kittens drank milk from a saucer today - the 29th. day- I am to get one - a great honour! He is orange with white paws and perfectly lovely.

Much love Agatha

Letter No. 225 9th. May 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother ...

....that Dor is actually sailing on July 2nd. what about Mamie?

By the way, I think the stamps on my letters must be all right. The weight is always the same; less than 10 grams, but the postage goes up at least every two weeks. The gum is a problem. All one can buy is very bad white paste...

We're all settled in now in the new house..... Tom Blakely has been able to give up a lot of stuff, like curtains, rugs etc. that he acquired very cheap from community people who have left. This morning we had an almost complete eclipse of the sun. When we came out from the College service the light was quite pale and weird and as the sun was covered with thin clouds we could see even with the naked eye that it was moon shaped. Today we have.....a howling gale, it has blown away one of Mary's windows and dumped it down in the garden, but three of the six panes were not broken! Yesterday we had drenching showers and hail...

We had the S.E. Asia representative of the "Times" last week. He visited College, hospital etc. - a very nice man called Harrison.

I have had a peaceful week, and a busy one, in College. The final years have been kicking up a lot of dust, but the class I teach are pretty settled now, I really like teaching them. It is so much more interesting now that I know them all as individuals by name. Why, I forgot to tell you, I have been put on the Senate now. Doesn't that sound elegant! It only means a lot more meetings. All heads of departments are on, I count as that now, hence this dubious privilege.

Much love, Agatha

Letter No. 226 16th. May 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

..... I heard today that Dor and Mamie are going to Yunan under CCC.

We are nicely settled down in the new house, it is very comfortable and pleasant. Lily and Mary are both very congenial and it feels much more like my own place, with the hospital and College flavour about it..... We are all so busy that I am extremely thankful that we don't have to cope with our own meals as well..... Lily realizes that now too.

The students are still very stirred over the future, and minor fusses over exams, food etc. are frequent. We have a sort of outdoor fete on Thursday and I'm to help Tom to organize the entertainment. Mercy on us, the things one finds oneself doing! Excuse a scrappy letter. I enclose one to Dor and one from a Chinese friend of hers.

Much love as always A.

Letter No. 227 22nd. May 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother,

Your letter of 4th May came this week... so quick I think it must mean there is no censorship.

.....There is nothing more I can report from here - just more talk and more indecisions and perplexities. But the daily routine goes on as usual which is a very soothing and stabilizing factor! When you are too busy to think from Monday morning till Saturday evening it leaves little time for worry and fuss.

On Monday evening we had a farewell meeting for Dr. Wei who has been Professor of Anatomy for many years. He and his family are going south. He is a funny excitable wee man but a very sound teacher, and will be a great loss. He was Dean before he resigned and Hugh was pressed into the job.....

Another evening we had two of my doctor friends in for a meal and some games, and another evening Lily had some graduate nurses in. then on Friday I had to provide most of the programme for the Clinical Meeting. It's like running a whole lab meeting on one's own, but at least there's no shortage of interesting cases, and the programme at least would not have disgraced a lab meeting at home. But there isn't much time to read the things up, and I'm afraid the pathology is very elementary and sketchy. Of course I do my talking at that sort of meeting in English.

Then on Wednesday I had another post-mortem. Its ages since I had one on an adult. When I went into the Anatomy room to start it there were three strange men, standing round the naked body and looking exceedingly dour. I asked who they were and was told by the doctor from the ward that they were a brother and two friends who were going to watch the P.M.. Instinct told me this would not be a good plan, and for half an hour we had heated discussion. Then we were at a dead-lock, I would roll down my sleeves and begin to edge off, with polite smiles and expressions of regret; this would provoke a fresh burst of talk, and I would move forward again and begin rolling up my sleeves. Our trump card was, of course, financial - free drugs etc. if they gave consent. Finally they gave in and went out, and I locked the door. But in half a minute there were thunderous knockings and shouts - "lao mu ch'in" was dissatisfied. So we started all over again. Finally it was settled, but I nearly messed it up again by a mild request for a signed permission. Eventually even that was forthcoming and I actually got the P.M. done. The friends came in as soon as I had finished sewing up, and viewed the body with suspicion but were reassured and took it away quite pleased, with many mutual expressions of thanks... It was a very interesting case - an acute leukaemia in a grown man, and he also had syphilis of his heart, and the inevitable old tuberculous lesion in his lung.

Another letter from little Liu this week. He is certainly very faithful in using the money I gave him for stamps. He writes a good letter, chatting about the other people in the ward, and the tree he can see from the window etc. He is very upset because his relatives have not answered any of his letters, but I don't know where they live so can't anything about it.

.....The poor little things in the garden are drowned one day and the next day they are baked and almost torn up by a warm howling gale full of grit. Yesterday we had tea in the garden in the

shade of our own pine tree, and afterwards Mary and Jack Legate and I went for a walk round the other side of the Hsiao Ho and looked at birds. There were lots of birds, but too many people to make it very pleasurable. You no sooner stand still a moment than a group forms round to stare at you and speculate as to what you can be looking at.

We had another Conference meeting today but nothing decided, just talk, talk, talk, talk. Really very exhausting. The one redeeming feature of these interminable discussions is that we are such a friendly united group. In spite of violently-held and diametrically opposing opinions there is no scratchiness which is really rather remarkable. Then, of course, after we come home we have more interminable post-mortems! However, you may feel quite sure that nothing will be decided except after very full and complete discussion. There seems little hope of getting cut-and-dried Chinese opinion. They would find it extremely hard to take the responsibility of deciding anyone's future - one way or the other.

Tomorrow we are, most of us, going to a party at the British Consulate, it being Empire Day. There is to be a film of Princess Elizabeth's wedding, which attracts me more than the usual cocktails and dancing, which is rather dull..... I'll wear a frock you never saw, a chestnut-red silk frock, all wee tucks in front (given me by an American missionary in Peking in the days of my penury) with a necklace of green stones.....

Oh, I got such a nice surprise this week - a long letter from Dr. Hou from Chengtu. When he left Chengtu he told me firmly that he would not write to me, because when he wrote a letter (in Chinese) he tried to make it a work of art, and it galled him too much to write in bad English, and I must just content myself with the fact that we were friends, letters or no letters. Now this comes because, he says, he and his wife were so worried about me and wanted to know how I was. He sends "much love from us all". Doesn't that warm your heart? But he also says "I am very fond of your mother"! He also says "We had lunch together in an old restaurant and the food was delicious". Isn't the word "old" a funny Chinese touch? He also tells me, with great pride and joy, about the baby he held in the plane. As for himself, he says he is unable to go to Tsinan for several reasons - his wife is very much against it, and now his eldest son has T.B. and could not possibly travel. But he says he does not know how long he will be able to stay with West China Union University and when he leaves there the future for him is completely uncertain. The rest of the letter is about his teaching programme and new developments in the lab.

We expected our kitten to come to us today, but Nell, being busy with the Conference meeting, had no chance to devote her Sunday to the comforting of the bereaved parent, so the parting has been postponed. I have decided to call him Tigger in memory of two distinguished cats of that name whom I have known - Mary Ward's and the one in Chengtu. I am afraid I am not going to follow Nell's example of having him in my bed at night. He will sleep in the kitchen in the hope that a catty smell will discourage the mice and rats.

Well, I must stop, and look over tomorrow's classes. I continue to enjoy teaching in spite of all upheavals and the struggle against the language handicap. Of course the students are exasperating and not in the mood for work, but one can hardly blame them. We had a meeting with them all on Thursday, for games (mostly organised by Tom). Tom really is a marvel with students. They are round him like flies on honey, and he enjoys their company so.

Much love to all of you,

Agatha

Letter No. 228 30th. May 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

....We have had more Conference meetings this past week, and a tentative plan for the future has been arrived at and sent home, so I am free to tell you about it. It has been almost impossible to arrive at any clear idea of what the Chinese leaders thought. This partly because they differ so much in outlook among themselves, and partly because their opinions differ from day to day, according to the latest news or their mood, just as ours do. But mainly I think because they find it so hard to say to any individual either "Stay!" which may involve danger or inactivity - or "Go!" with its flavour of discourtesy and loss of face. So Conference finally adopted a plan for reducing numbers should the situation get worse. The points in favour of reducing numbers at all are (1) Some people in bad health would undoubtedly soon become a liability under bad conditions. (2) If financial support from abroad stopped, the fewer extra mouths for our friends to feed the better, especially when it is likely to be hard for anyone to get food. (3) Most reports suggest that the chances of doing useful work under new conditions are small. There is great disagreement about this as some think that a big city will be much more hopeful than country districts. Points of view vary from those who regard this as a God-sent opportunity for a new kind of evangelistic work, to those who anticipate forced inactivity, a sort of internment or even worse. (4) Some think it is good strategy to send some out (especially young ones) to provide a nucleus of people ready to return in the future. (Certainly the gap between the "Peace" and the return of the first foreigners in November 1946 was most unfortunate). The idea is to try to ensure some continuity.

Well, to get down to brass tacks: The groups are as follows: (1) To leave soon, under medical advice: Hugh Garven, Harry Johnstone, the Barkers. Hugh has had a bad tummy (probably a definite organic lesion), and is very thin and generally worn-out. Harry's asthma, bronchitis, hay fever, etc, have given him a lot of bother, and he is very thin. Another cold strained winter would probably knock him up. Tom Barker has osteoarthritis of hip and spine, and should not go through another cold winter. The Barkers hope to get work further south in China, the future of the other two is not certain yet. George Taylor will also leave soon, as he feels his job as architect etc. is quite hopeless now. These five will probably leave in July.

(2) Isabel Fleming, Sandy Webster and me. To leave, contingent on the closure of the institutions we work in. A lot depends on how the situation develops in the next month or two. The continued existence of the Medical College and the Wen Hui is not directly contingent on the entry of the Pa Lu. Financial stress, shortage of grain, and the steady drift away of both staff and students may make work impossible before a political crisis. I am not completely happy about being included in this group, but the sensible part of me concurs with the reasonableness of it, and I had decided that this was, so far as I could see, the right course for me to take, before Conference clinched it. But I admit that the possibility of leaving this place and never being 100% sure that it was the right thing to do, and not a desertion, still bothers me. I really

don't think it is the possibility of unpleasantness, which deters me so much as the feeling of hopelessness I have of being able to do anything like my own job under a new regime. The chances of there being a job for a Christian foreigner pathologist seem extremely remote. On the other hand, perhaps I am putting my pathology before my Christianity and if I did stay on might find a more worthwhile job in some quite unexpected direction. The chance of being able successfully to change my spots and become a clinical doctor are not very bright, as I imagine our new masters would not be very tolerant of anyone not genuinely efficient.

Well, anyway, there it is at present. Who knows how it will work out.

By the way, those leaving are quite definitely instructed by Conference to do so with a view to returning here should it become possible. We will always consider ourselves (the young ones anyway) as Manchurians in exile.

(3) Hester Stewart, Ella Gordon, and Mary Findlay. All asked strongly to be allowed to remain, but are to go before a crisis, so as not to be caught by a change of government. They are young therefore more likely to be able to come back later, and with less in the way of roots and contacts here, and women which seems to agitate one or two of the stronger sex! So you see I would probably have come into this group if not included in the last.

(4) Those to remain whatever happens - The Findlays (senior), the Flemings (if John can get back, if not Pearl gets out), Jack Weir, Tom Blakely, Jack Leggate, Dr. McMinn, Nell, Agnes, Lily, and Janie Henderson (12). These have all had certain aspects of work allotted to them, but of course in a new situation the pattern of things might be so different that they would just have to carve out new jobs.

Another Conference meeting tomorrow (the third in eight days). But this is for more ordinary business and I think the worst of the agonizing discussions and votings is now over.

Things are difficult in the College these days as the place is simply buzzing with rumours, and the Head has not yet made an official explanation to the students to clear the air. The students tackle me with awkward questions which they don't dare to ask those whose diplomacy and language are more adequate to answer them.

I lost my assistant Dr. Chang this week. When I went in on Monday Dr. Hsiang met me with the news that he had already left for Peking. Actually the plane did not leave, and is still grounded for repairs. He had been planning this for months, but had never hinted it to me or anyone else in authority.

However, I can manage without him as he is not very bright; but he is a nice lad and I feel he is making a mistake as he has no plans or arrangements made, beyond getting out.

I had a very rowdy and successful party last night for my Bible class girls. Nine came..... and we all enjoyed ourselves greatly. Certainly Lily and Mary are very easy and congenial housemates, and make this kind of thing very easy to do and enjoy.

The kitten came to us last Monday. The first two days were awful as he squeaked continually and I

was nearly reduced to asking Nell to take him back. Now he has settled down, and is most entrancingly playful and very affectionate.

Much love, my dear, I await your reactions with great interest.

Agatha

Letter No. 229

(There is a letter, (No. 229) undated, with "Private and strictly for yourself alone" on it which must have been written to mother sometime during this period, giving the same ideas of alternative plans for the future. I had been told to ask the advice of "three seniors", and remember talks with Hugh, who believed the right thing was to leave as work under Communists would be not only impossible but our presence would be no help, Tom Barker, who obviously longed to stay, and told me that if I stayed I would be a "member of the Church in China in this world and the next", and Harry Johnstone who was the most helpful because he said he didn't know what to say to me).

(The letter ends: If I go it will be because it seemed the lesser of two evils. It is all very tragic and there are people with much more difficult problems who are greatly to be pitied. I hope there will be no criticism of any kind from the home end.

Agatha

(I had told Conference "I would stay with the College as long as it exists in its present form, and when it ceases to exist I will..... decide the next step.")

Letter No. 230 6th. June 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

.....Liu from Tielhing still writes (in Chinese of course) I get someone to it if I get stuck. He seems quite cheerful and happy. After he had heard no news from any of his family for a long time, one of them turned up to visit him, with a present of honey and money. They must be decent folk. Our Chinese food is very nice, so don't waste pity on us. We usually have kao-liang porridge for breakfast, and either kaoliang or rice for lunch with a vegetable dish or soup, and tea to follow. Sometimes we have mien t'iao or shao-ping for a change. Then our evening meal is an ordinary two-course affair and we usually have meat in some form. Any kind of grain is so expensive that meat is not relatively so dear! We have heard that - apart from house rent - one could live for six months in Peking on what we spend in a month here!

There is no new development in the situation here and we are in the thick of preparation for exams. I will only have the Path Practical to look after and a share of an English exam. There are only two weeks teaching to go for class 28 (my lot) and then I will be much freer for a while.

No one knows yet whether the College will open again, and I think it quite possible there will be a short holiday and then teaching will start early. Class 28 is not normally due their professional exam till early December. So I've ceased to think much about the future and will just wait to see how things work out in the College in the next few months..... You doubtless wonder whether, if I have to leave here in the next few months, I will ask for a furlough or will get settled somewhere else for a short time first..... better to get a foothold somewhere else first so as to know what I was coming back to..... I have already accumulated a list of things I wanted to bring back here..... to fill gaps in the museum, teaching slides, various stains..... certain things I want to get experience in..... So, my dear, if you hear of a sudden change, don't assume that I will necessarily arrive on the doorstep.....

The heat has suddenly come..... a blasting hot dusty wind that has wilted more than the garden..... Tom Blakely asked all the West suburb foreigners to tea..... and a concert of gramophone music..... After that Lily and Mary and I went up to the Women Students Hostel to have supper with Dr. Ch'en and Dr. Li Yuhsiang, my two best friends. This was great fun, a delicious meal but not embarrassingly expensive, and then just talk and card games..... We came home in the cool of the evening when the wind had fallen and the air was damp with dew.

This morning the preacher at the College service failed to turn up, and Dr. Liu took it himself. As sermon he told us about his experiences in prison. It's sobering to hear it from someone who has been through it, especially when told so gaily and confidently by one who may well have to go through it again.

There were only about five men students, I wish they could all have heard it. I think he only sounded solemn once, and that was when he said - "Remember that nothing that can happen to you can be so bad as to be locked up in a cell and hear your friend in the next cell screaming under torture for hours on end. All you can do is stuff your fingers in your ears and pray for him". On one occasion he felt very depressed and unhappy and couldn't think why. Then he examined his conscience and discovered that what was wrong was that he had been rude and argumentative to a guard who was beating him! When he made up his mind that the next time he would be as "dumb as a sheep before her shearers" he felt much better. Most people would have been rather proud of having the spirit to "argue" under the circumstances!

Now it's evening. I've come in from watering the poor parched garden. Even the kitten is a little limp today..... It is nice when one comes into the house, to have a scrap of orange fur run up with welcoming purrs and all kinds of diverting tricks.

The two Danes, Miss Nielsen and Mr. Olsen, left yesterday to try to get to Antung. They can go a certain distance by train, then there is a gap of about 20 miles no-man's-land and then the Communist-run railway. They have a lot of stuff that they are trying to get in, e.g. bottles of saccharin tablets, which are a relatively compact form of sweetness and can be sold to make drinks in summertime. You see, it's no use to take much money. We don't know if they will get through, indeed most people think they will be turned back by either the Kuo Chun or the Reds, but they have not appeared yet. They are certainly very sporting to try, for once in it's not likely to be possible to get out. I'm not quite sure what they hope to be able to do when they get there, but Antung is one place where the Christian community has been fairly well treated, and services can still be held, etc. It varies tremendously from place to place. The big problem for foreigners there (there are several Danes) is money. Mr. Rasmussen's main job is smuggling

money in by merchants who are able to come in and out, and through their business operations can somehow get money to them. But never enough. Every minute and cryptic letter is a request for more.

No more this time. Much love,

Agatha

Letter No. 231 13th. June 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

There have been no letters this week, but one incident will amuse you. A man from the local Post Office tracked me down with a form to say that a registered parcel, posted in Leicester, had reached Peking, and would they forward it to a local address or return it to England? I told them to send it to John Stewart as he may as well have the good of it, and our paths may cross. So now you know why you couldn't trace it! (Note 1989: This was the mosquito net ordered to be delivered on board ship in Liverpool in February 1945!)

...We had a College staff meeting at which it was decided to have six weeks summer holidays from July 1st. to August 15th.. I am relieved, as class 28 had been agitating for a very short break of one or two weeks, and then straight on with lectures, and I haven't begun to write lectures for next term. Of course, Dr. Hsiang may still be here and will, I hope, continue to do some of them, but when Hugh goes I will, at least, have to take his one-a-week. The crucial point as to whether there will be the staff to carry on next term or not was carefully avoided. I think a lot of people are waiting to see what others will do, and no one likes to be the first to decide. Dr. Liu is quite decided to continue under any circumstances, and with any kind of staff, of any quality. So, we will just wait and see. It is all extremely hard on Hugh, who is looking wretched and has a terrible load of Dean's work, examining and correcting papers, as well as all the worry about the future. And it is also very hard on Dr. Liu who feels, I think, that his main support is to be taken away, leaving only shifting ground

As to the general situation, everyone seems a little cheerier at the moment. I haven't been able to analyze quite why, as there is fierce fighting on the outskirts of Ch'ang ch'un and also about Chengteh. But some people seem to think Moukden may never be directly attacked, but just by-passed. Of course, life is easier in the summer. The food situation in College is also better. The Government has offered to give money for food and tuition fees for 50 new students at each of the four private colleges: Yengching, Ginling (in Nanking), ours and one more whose name I did not catch we are in good company, aren't we? We would only take in 25 new students, if it turns out that we are able to do so. It may not work out as well as it reads in the newspaper, of course! For example, Government school teachers get very high salaries - on paper - but are usually months in arrears. Ours may be badly paid, but they can at least count on getting it on the dot.

My friend Dr. Wu has now sent out his wife and child and father. His mother will go soon. There are still two sisters, one at the K'un Kuang and one at the Medical College. I was so sorry for

him, for when his wife left here the baby was showing signs of T.B. meningitis. Now he has had news that the baby is very much better, quite well, in fact. Whether this is the result of streptomycin given early, or it was all a false alarm isn't certain. But naturally he is cheered to think that he has as hope of seeing his son again. Mrs Wu (junior) is a sister of Liu Shu chen, and has latent chest T.B.. Dr. Liu's son has just been admitted to hospital with a recurrence of a T.B. chest.

One thing that is planned for our holiday is a physical examination of all the students. I am afraid there will be some terrible revelations. They have poor food, only two meals a day and study, some from 8 a.m. till 3 p.m. and often have other classes later, as well as their own reading. Many of them are painfully thin, and pale to greyness. They clamour for more classes and lectures, to get anything possible crammed in before a crash, but half the time when they do come to classes they are too tired to do more than mechanical scribbled down notes. Although they are not working well, I feel them much more friendly than they were. Perhaps it's only because I'm not a stranger now. I'll give an instance. The custom is for classes to stand up when the teacher comes in, and sit down after an exchange of good mornings. For the first few months only a minority stood up for me, and in a straggly fashion. Now nearly all do, and although the grins may have a hint of impudence in them, it is much better than a cold stare.

By the way, I am going to get my green coat and skirt "turned". It is not only grubby but also very faded. Hester and Harry both got suits turned lately, at a cost equivalent to about two pounds.

We had a great party in the West yesterday afternoon. Five of our group had June birthdays the Flemings have a hard tennis court ... so we played tennis, even me!! and had a sumptuous tea, including strawberries and cream supplied by Hugh. A very nice girl who works in the British Consulate was there and as a result we were sent home in a Consulate car - a great improvement on clinging to a dilapidated droshky in all that dust.

In the morning I was at the K'un Kuang "graduation". About 36 Kao Chung and about the same number of C'hu Chung "graduated", with lots of speeches and a visit from the Commissioner of Education etc.. The term does not finish for another month for the other classes but these were hurried through as so many were leaving to go inside the Wall. It was a very pleasant ceremony, starting at 9 a.m. and the whole programme of tea parties, concert etc. etc. did not finish till 6:30 p.m.. Then today Nell had a school service this morning after it, and all spare minutes filled with tearful farewells from girls about to leave.

Talking of "graduation" ceremonies. The Kindergarten (formerly part of K.K.) had one recently and each wee creature had to bring umpteen thousands of dollars for a farewell group photo!!!

I'm going to stay with Hester for a few days in the early part of July for a real holiday. Won't that be nice? I like the Blind School, it is so nice and countrified and quiet.

I had a visit from a Dr. Ching, bacteriologist in the Shenyang Medical College (the government one). I had corrected the English of papers he had written on typhus research, brought to me by Dr. Hsiang. He turned up with a present of about 30 eggs! I am to go over and see his lab sometime in July. He has a young sister in Class 29, who comes to my Bible class.

Young Liu writes again from Tiehling - his main news is that his ears no longer turn red in the evenings, which he used to consider a very bad sign.....

Much love, as always. Agatha

Letter No. 232 20th. June 1948

Dear Mother

.... It was a shock to read of Auntie Maud's death in her London flat. I remember noticing how happy she seemed there and how much people liked her for her funny impulsive ways. And she certainly did a lot of very fine work during the war.

..... I'm glad the flit to Glenard is accomplished,(Note 1990, "Glenard", 123 Marlborough Park, Belfast, was the new house of the Rankin family, cousins.) . That will leave Dor with a freer mind Harry, Hugh, George and the Barkers will, we think, leave in early July Dor will have left when you get this

The chances of the Medical College opening in the autumn seem fairly good at the moment. Certainly Dr. Liu is determined to. It is, of course, a question of how many members of staff are left then. It is not yet decided whether we will take in a new class of students. Nearly all the K'un Kuang "graduates" have gone or are going inside the Wall, but there would be some Wen Hui boys and of course some from Govt. schools.... Cheeloo is planning to move - Foochow or Hangchow, not certain yet. The line is again cut, so they may not be able to. If Cheeloo Medical College moves, the Hospital will stay on. Dr. Smylie will remain in Tsinan with the hospital.

Clothes I am really very well supplied. At the moment I'm wearing one of the dresses Susan left behind in India.....

I'm glad Isabel seems so happy in Richmond Lodge (note 1990, girls' school in Belfast)

Our garden grows apace. We are eating our own peas and lettuce. The soil is not good except for one patch which was a hen-run The pao mi (Indian corn) there is twice the height of that elsewhere. Your everlasting pea is along the low stone wall.... ... a magnificent big bushy Anterrhinum with huge deep red flowers that I nursed through the winter....

Lily is about to dive into a maelstrom of activity. They have taken on a class of 30 new nurses, and she is to do a lot of practical demonstration classes, three or four each day. The nursing situation is pretty desperate. There are, besides Lily, only three nurses worth their salt in Men's and Women's hospitals combined. Altogether there are ten graduate nurses, but the others are recent graduates who are terribly lacking in not only knowledge but in willingness to serve, or take an interest in patients in fact, if you don't have a friend or relative to feed and nurse you, it's just too bad. And the young doctors do nothing to raise the standards. What use is there in telling nurses how important asepsis is when they can see the doctor rooting around for something in "sterile" drum with unwashed hands, and shutting the lid up again without turning a

hair. Still, it is undoubtedly the best hospital in Manchuria. The other, Government, hospitals are medieval what a wail!

Of the last batch of twelve K'un Kuang girls who applied to be taken into this next class of nurses, no fewer than seven had to be turned down for lung tuberculosis. This is exceptional however, as the K.K. diet has been very poor all winter - two meals a day of Kao-liang and some little hard beans, very rarely any green veg, and no fat, or of course meat. This is not the school's fault. The food is managed by the girls and reflects the average financial status of the boarders. The staff does all it can to help in trying to get grain at reduced prices and so on. It is really marvellous what a good scholastic standard they have kept up, on such a poor diet, and the general spirit of the school is just fine.

Only one more week of classes and then the last of the exams. Things will be slacker then. I don't know how Hugh will get through everything before he has to leave. There is such a lot of donkey-work in connection with exam. marks and results, not to mention the financial side of the College. I don't think he will hold on much longer and just hope he will get away without breaking down.

I was over at the Barkers and stayed the night.... Pastor Li and his wife (of West church) came for supper. He is a young man and looks most insignificant, but he is turning out splendidly in a very heavy and difficult job. He was telling us about a mill they had set up on the church premises (or very near by) to grind Kao-liang, beans, etc. to make a little money to help the church. Very enterprising of them and sensible. There will have to be more and more of this kind of thing if church workers are to live and continue their work.

I walked back in the early morning. Just a perfect day, sunny and cool. Fully half the people on the streets are soldiers. Twice I saw what is a very common incident nowadays. A soldier, as usual recklessly riding a bike, touched or approached too closely by a luckless rickshaw man. There is a roar of anger and the rickshaw meekly stops. The soldier then strolls up to his victim, cursing him up and down, and then administers a few vicious kicks. The poor man just stands and takes it without a word, the only safe course.

Well, my four pages are full. I hope this isn't too depressing a letter. There are lots of bright spots too, but they are more illusive, not so easy to write down...

Letter No. 233 26th. June 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

No home mail this week. a letter from Dr. Hou. He has been appointed Prof. of Pathology in the University of Hong Kong. This is a good thing, I think.....

Just three more days of term, two exams and one more class. I will be glad as it has suddenly turned hot, and one doesn't feel teaching is much use when the students are so tired and languid. The poor things are still on two meals a day, 7.30 a.m. and 3.30 p.m., and some have classes steady on (except for a 40 minute gap) from 8 a.m. till after 3 p.m.. The student body

are fairly peaceable at the moment. I think the news that Hugh was leaving was a big shock to them and they begin to realise how much they owe to him. There are, of course, plenty of requests and petitions, but courteous and understandable, even when not practicable.

We have been planning a student's conference. Last year there was a very successful one held in the College, a joint one for students from several sources, run by Jack Weir. This year Jack began to plan for one a few months ago, and prepared and translated a lot of material and circulated it. Later he had to drop the idea of a Conference as the Tung Pei University and Govt. Medical School etc. are evacuating south. Now it has been proposed that we have our own, on a less ambitious scale, with speakers mostly from the staff. It is rather a delicate situation as I think Jack would like to run it, but after all Tom is on the spot. Jack is to be invited to give the opening lecture on "The meaning of Life", which with all his background he should do very well. It is not a full programme, just evening meetings, which at that time (July 14-18) should be plenty. Each day there is a lecture at 6.30, then discussion groups from 7.30 to 8.45 and then Evening Prayers. The title to be "Victorious Living". I, to my horror, was put on the committee to plan it, and so far have only succeeded in making clear my unsound modernist position! For example, an innocent suggestion that as four different speakers were to be invited to give a series of talks, they should meet first to map out the ground between them. This was very firmly and unanimously squashed and I realised my lack of faith in the Holy Spirit's ability to put the words into their mouths at the time! Another difficult point is the discussion groups that Tom and I feel are the most important part. It was a struggle to get small groups, and then someone said it would be necessary to plan and arrange the groups beforehand, in detail, "in case the students ask questions that the leader could not answer" (At which point, of course, I wickedly wanted to point out a lack of faith in the guidance of the Holy Spirit!) But it is bad of me to jeer, for these people have forgotten what freedom of speech feels like and may well be afraid of being trapped into making an unguarded remark.

The Conference was first mooted at last Sunday's Staff Fellowship meeting. This Fellowship is Dr. Liu's idea and really a very good one. We've had two now, both at Tom's house, or rather in his garden. First tea and talk and the gramophone - all sitting round on the grass on mats and cushions. Then half-an-hour's discussion about student problems, especially on the side of the religious work. Everyone talks more freely than at proper staff meetings, where we sit stiffly in the library with the secretary taking notes. Then - being China - half-an-hour of games. Finally evening prayers....

Oh, by the way, I have got my second year exam!! Not quite in the orthodox way perhaps. The book on "general reading" - Chinese stories - was dropped out as it cannot even be got. I did my composition, in character, some months ago, and Hugh was so busy that for a long time I heard nothing about it, but that has been passed now. The last lap, the 15-minute speech was an ordeal still in prospect, but the Language Committee decided to get a report from Dr. Li of the last time I took prayers at the hostel. So I got that over without all the agony of doing it in front of examiners. Hugh himself knows only too well how much or little I can do, as his room in College is just opposite the practical Path Classroom and he was often standing there with the door open drawing histology diagrams on a blackboard, while I was talking to the class. So he must have heard every word, to my perpetual embarrassment.

Today I had a visit from young Liu, from Tiehling. He came up to be examined and X-rayed. He is fatter, in very good spirits and the X-ray shows slight improvement. He had heard that a

relative of his had come into Moukden from his home in Pa Lu territory and so has had the satisfaction of hearing that his Lao mu-ch'in was very well, and had not suffered from the Pa Lu. "Only the rich have nothing to eat and nothing to wear". Liu's three months in Tiehling are almost up, but he has made friends with a military doctor in Tiehling, a Christian, who has arranged to take him into the military hospital there "for about six months". It seems a funny arrangement to me, but in China red tape does not count for much. He seems very pleased with the arrangement himself, and perhaps after that he will be able to start earning again. Anyway, he promises to keep on writing to me, and he knows that he has friends here if he finds himself on the rocks.

This hot weather is terrible for the garden. From about 10 a.m. everything just lies down, limp, and by the evening looks positively shrivelled. Our peas ripened so quickly that they are over now, but we are beginning to have beetroot and turnip, and of course lettuce.

We have heard that Miss Nielsen and Mr. Olsen reached Antung safely, but they had to abandon a lot of their stuff en route.

The price of grain is soaring again these days. In Ch'ang ch'un kaoliang is \$200,000 per lb. I'm not sure what the exchange is, but one U.S. dollar is about \$3,000,000 Manchurian dollars, and the pound will be a little over twice that. So you see it works out at over 5/- a lb. Ch'ang ch'un is, of course much worse than here. The last price I heard for Moukden was \$120,000 (Manchurian) a lb. and that was two days ago.

Nowadays hospital prices are not quoted in dollars at all, but in pounds of kaoliang. An exchange rate is issued by the office each day, and when you advise a patient to have a tooth out or some medicine you have to do a little sum to find out the price. Then if people can't produce the money, and go away to try to raise it, they may come back to find it has gone up. It is really dreadful how money, money, money has permeated our Christian hospital, but to some extent it is inevitable in order to pay the staff and other necessary expenses. But I can't help thinking that many disgruntled would-be patients will denounce us as "mai mai" - a business concern - if a change comes.

No more this week

Much love Agatha

Letter No. 234 3rd. July 1949 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

Your letter of 20th. June from the (Giants') Causeway came yesterday..... I am very glad you are enjoying the change, and Mary (Ward)'s company. I am glad you approve of Conference's decisions..... what a comfort it is to have such an understanding mother... all is well between us two, no matter what happens.

Yesterday we had another Conference meeting. Letters from home had asked for more "facts" about things here, so various people had concocted reports on different aspects of work. This is most difficult to do concisely and often boils down to "on Tuesday we decided this and on Wednesday opinion veered round and we decided the opposite, and on Thursday we decided to postpone a decision until next week" and so on. Are these "facts", and yet what else is there? I sympathise with the Home Boards in their desire to know what is happening, but the plain truth is that we don't know ourselves.

The Lutheran plane is due one day next week, and Hugh is going over tomorrow to the West, to be on the spot for it. I'll miss him terribly..... He has some business to do for the College in Shanghai, then I suppose to Hong Kong to wait for a boat..... I have given him your address..... be nice to him if he should turn up.....

This afternoon there was a farewell meeting for Hugh in the College, just a very informal meeting without speeches, and only a cup of tea and biscuits..... .. a fan which everyone signed. Hugh was very pleased that they should have interpreted his real taste in farewell meetings. On Wednesday we had the closing meeting of the term in College. There was no Graduation, which will take place in December. Dr. Liu spoke, and gave them various bits of good advice. Then Dr. Hsiang, as proctor, also very well and with quite a high tone and Christian flavours. Then other people announced the Students' Conference and a series of evangelistic meetings being held this weekend. Finally Hugh spoke, and at the request of some students, it was on "What I believe" ("I believe in Work", but it went on from there!) It was a magnificent effort and he was well clapped at the end. It was, I suppose, the only chance he has had (Sunday services don't count, when so few come), to speak to the student body as a whole on what the foundations of his life were, and being his last chance he fairly let himself go for once. I don't think they will easily forget it. There is no doubt that, while the material difficulties of the College have greatly increased during the last few months, the spirit of unity in the staff and of friendliness and understanding in the student body has begun to sprout. It may be a feeble shadow of what it was in the "good old days", but it is very cheering and comforting, and makes one all the more loathe to give up now.

The problem of food has become even more acute. The price of kaoliang has doubled in a few days. Today it is \$140,000 a lb. and three days ago, when our garden boy was here for a day's work, his daily wage was \$80,000. You just can't keep up. This boy should eat a pound and a half a day, plus vegetables. In Ch'ang ch'un! (still besieged and now surrounded by a zone 30 miles in radius where the Communists have ploughed in the growing grain), kaoliang was selling a few days ago at \$400,000 a lb. The army is fed by grain brought by air, but we hear that they store that and buy "on the street" which increases the shortage.

Some of the students were complaining bitterly to Tom the other day about the "good advice" they had got from Dr. Liu at the closing meeting - to rest, relax, take exercise, etc.. They said it was not so hard to forget your hunger when you were busy working hard, but when you once relaxed and began to think about it, it was far worse. Some of them were in, one night, playing games - not by invitation, they just wander in at all times. And suddenly one of them gave a little groan and murmured, involuntarily, "Oh, I'm so hungry". Tom says he felt so ashamed he didn't know what to do. He had nothing in the house he could offer to so many except a huge tin of peanuts which he emptied out on the table, and before he could turn round they had all vanished. A lot of the students had plans for making money during the holidays. One had

bought an ice-cream freezer and for a few days did quite well, hawking it on the streets. Then with the sudden rise in prices, no one could afford to buy it any longer and he was left with a useless freezer. Very few of the students can get home, so they will nearly all be living in the dormitory all through the holidays. Jack Weir's Student Relief is arranging work relief for some, but it only scratches at the surface of the problem.

Classes and exams are over now. I gave in my last marks yesterday. The Practical Path class exam marks - the only thing I am solely responsible for - were not as bad as I had feared. The chronics are still all very bad, but some others have done very well. Of 35 students ten got over 70%, and 13 failed..... By the way, I have really got my 2nd. year language exam. My "general reading" was not complete. This was because the book prescribed was unobtainable, as I had been plaintively pointing out for months. So now I have got a story by Hu Shih in very easy modern Chinese to read during the holidays, not officially as part of the exam but to complete my education, I suppose! Anyway, the day's work is a much more urgent spur to language study than any exam...

Well, I must stop as it is late. I'm writing in bed, with the kitten between my legs. Time he went downstairs. Much love. Please thank Jack and M. for letter from Skerries. Poor Jack, how very worrying things are. Agatha

Letter No. 235 9th. July 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother.....

.. in bed with a very minor complaint... having a lovely rest.... Dr. Hsiang reporting the biopsies... I lie in bed at the open window and watch the lake and the people strolling in the park.

Hugh and George and the Barkers left today. It is most melancholy to think of the first gap in our circle. It is a perfect day for flying, calm and sunny. They drop the Barkers at Peking and go on to Shanghai, which they should reach this afternoon about 6 p.m. It is hard to get passages home, but Hugh hopes to get one early in September. So he will have two hot and uncomfortable months to put in. George isn't certain yet what he will do. The Barkers stay in Peking for a while to see old friends, then go on to Foochow to the Theological College there. He is to teach New Testament there.

The College is a bit stirred up over talk about moving south, but it seems very unlikely that such a plan will turn out to be feasible. The expense is one huge difficulty, and getting suitable accommodation another. We are probably going to have to cancel the Students' Conference as so far only one student has signed on. They are annoyed that no student representative was on the committee to plan it, which was a mistake. It's possible too that they fight shy of discussion groups at the present moment. It is a great disappointment. They have, incidentally, been going in quite large numbers to an evangelist of the red-hot but not highly educated type, who has just had a series of meetings in the College. This will confirm the opinion of those who contend that that is what the students need. It may be what they like but it is not what they need!

Dr. Li Yu Hsiang, my friend in the Physiology Dept. leaves tomorrow or the next day. She is going to America for post-graduate study. Another big gap.

Much love... Agatha

Letter No. 236 15th. July 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

..... taking things easy. ... writing lectures at home. It is terribly hot, not like last year. I got a letter from Ann Barker from Peking. The plane which dropped them in Peking was to take Lily's heavy luggage, left there by her, to Shanghai, but the truck turned up an hour late, just when they were about to give it up. The students were demonstrating, and the police had closed the West Gate, so it had to take a long detour. It took them two hours to get to the Language School! There has been a lot of very nasty student trouble in Peking lately. The crowds of Government students evacuated from Manchuria (by government order) found there were no arrangements whatever for teaching them and staged a demonstration to protest. Accounts differ as to whether students or police fired first, but in the end 13 students were killed and about 100 injured. Two of the Shenyang Medical College students were among the killed, and they have temporarily suspended evacuation of the remaining 400.

We had robbers in the courtyard the other night. They tried to break in the door into the cook's house. When we heard the banging and shouting we sounded our burglar alarm! This is a large petrol tin that we beat with an old umbrella. It makes a simply terrific din. This wakened Jack Leggate next door, who shouted out of the window to the cook, who yelled back with great presence of mind, "There is no need to bring the gun"! (Of course none of us have such a thing). By this time lights were on in all the houses round, and the robbers disappeared hastily over the wall. There is a lot of thieving now. There are so many soldiers about, especially ones convalescing from wounds, and they have nothing to do but wander about looking for mischief. They steal potatoes from the fields at night, and we often hear a burst of firing - either the soldiers scaring off the farmers, or the police creating an air of efficiency from a safe distance. For, of course, the police don't dare interfere with soldiers who are a law unto themselves.

Hester and Ella Gordon are planning to leave about the end of August, Ella probably to Ichang, Hester ? C.C.C. (Church of Christ in China). They were both very unwilling to leave at all, but have been so unsettled at the prospect of having to eventually that I think they feel it better to settle into work elsewhere soon.

No more news. Much love Agatha

Letter No. 237 16th, July 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Marjorie and Jack

... your letter from the Skerries.... It all sounds very worrying (whether Jack should go into general practice in a National Health Service overwork etc, or an office job - dull)

..... It is really terrifically hot, one just drips all the time even at night, although there is usually relative coolness in the early morning. Four more may leave about end of August: Harry Johnstone, Marshall McCreery, Hester, Ella. It seems tragic that our small group, brought together with such difficulty, should have to break up so soon, but no decisions were taken without long and repeated discussions. There is nothing fresh about my position as it depends directly on the future of the Medical College. We are waiting for news from Hugh, who is consulting the powers that be in Shanghai as to the possibility of moving the junior years south, probably to link up with Cheloo-in-exile in Foochow. There are great difficulties, possibly insurmountable, but the idea is still on the mat. If it does come off, I will finish teaching Class 28, which will not move in December, and then would go south to take on Class 29. I must say I don't look forward to Foochow, if it does turn out to be there. The language is quite different. Students would understand our northern dialect, so I could teach in the kind of Chinese I use here, but for training lab boys, and coping with servants and shops one would have to use Fukienese too. An awful prospect. Still, it does seem about the only hope of preserving a nucleus of the staff of this College for any length of time, for the economic situation here has a strangle-hold on everything, quite apart from the chances of a Communist regime.

We don't get much world news here. Tom Blakely has a wireless and sometimes we hear some from him. We have had no outside newspapers for about seven months. There must be a pile for me somewhere, including all the Christmas books I had to write and thank people for sending! Tell mother the famous parcel posted in Leicester turned up at last!! It was brought on from Peking, by air, by Mr. Christensen - he was up for a brief visit. (See Letter No. 231.) It turns out to be from Collins, a Penguin, "All Passion Spent", which I have already got here! Too bad, the only new reading matter for seven months. We are well off for books really, as several people found their boxes of books intact when they got back.

At the moment we are faced with a curious problem, which could only happen in China. The minimum postage for a letter home is \$32,000, and the largest stamp is \$1000. So you have to get 32 of them on an envelope. This incidentally almost weighs the maximum weight, so you can't enclose much. The only feasible plan is to go to a post-office and get it weighed there before it is stamped. I send mine by one of the College servants. Presumably he sticks the stamps in rows overlapping each other. I wonder what they look like when they get to you.

We are actually getting an addition to our College staff today, a very fine surgeon called Wang who was on the staff years ago but has recently been in the army and working in the Military Hospital in Moukden. There have been plans to move the hospital south, though nothing definite yet, and he has been allowed to leave and join us here. He is a very nice man and everyone is very cheered to have him back. He is to have a welcome feast today, a nice change from the farewell parties, which have been much too frequent of late.

I have been busy these days, trying to get started on teaching material for next term. I have the stuff for the practical classes already written, and nearly all translated but next term, with Hugh away, I will certainly have to give one and perhaps two lectures a week as well. So I have launched out on "Blood Diseases", dabbing it all out with two fingers on a borrowed typewriter. It is annoying, as I had written and given these lectures at Ch'engtu and then lost both the notes

and the up-to-date book I had worked from. The best here is a 1936 one, and you know how much has happened since then - the Rh factor and Folic Acid, etc.. And I find too that nobody knows anything about the anaemia one actually gets here. At least there is a vague impression that there are dietary deficiencies behind most of them - probably correct. But no one has worked at it scientifically or can even tell me what the commonest blood pictures are. All the books say is that pernicious anaemia is extremely rare. If only I had time, I feel this a field simply crying out to be explored, and one, too, which does not need elaborate apparatus. Perhaps some day in the peaceful future!

Much love to you both and to David and Christine. Please share this with Mother.

Agatha

Any news of Will, Maurice, and Ronny, (*cousins*) I have not heard for a good while?

Letter No. 237a Extract from a letter dated 18th. July 1948. (To A.M.C, mother.?)

The Medical College is on holiday now until the middle of August, so I am not doing much but trying to write next term's teaching material, and writing letters Our small circle of foreigners has begun to break up, which is very sad. Dr. Garven, the Barkers and George Taylor left a couple of weeks ago, and Hester Stewart, Ella Gordon, Marshall McCreery and Harry Johnstone probably leave about the end of August. We expect John Fleming back fairly soon, which will be one on the credit side. Of course all the people are not going home. Hester may conceivably link up with Dor and Mamie, and Ella may be going to Ichang - anyway somewhere in China. And the Barkers go to Foochow, others are doubtful.

We are planning to reopen the Medical College next term but at the same time are making enquiries about the possibility of moving part of the College to South China, to preserve a nucleus of staff and equipment and give the students a better chance to finish their course. It is a terrific job and will be terribly expensive as we would have to do, at least, the first hop by air. I think I will tell you about it, changing the names, and see what it sounds like.

You know, of course, that the whole of the British Isles is now in Communist control, with just the small islands of London and Belfast and Liverpool holding out. The nearest fighting to us in Belfast is about Lisburn, which is a great improvement from last February, when it reached Shaw's Bridge. The rest of Ireland and England are pretty well cleaned out, a lot of industrial equipment shipped to Russia, and very little agriculture going on. We have had no news of conditions in Scotland for some months.

The Queen's students are in agitation to move the university to the continent; (that is the 200-odd who remain!) Since Northern Europe is all pretty well in Communist hands, but Paris is still holding out, we would have to go there - staff and their families, students, equipment and books, by air. From there a few key members of staff might go on by air, the rest possibly make their way to the coast, a bit risky, and try to get round by sea to the Mediterranean. The most hopeful place to settle seems to be Marseilles (the same distance from Belfast as Moukden is from Foochow.) But it is crammed with students and even there food is not easy. They have just had

disastrous floods. Another snag is that not one person in Queen's knows any French. Of course educated French people mostly know, or understand, some English, and we could teach our own students in English, but for ordinary living purposes, and for training technicians, nurses, etc. we would have to learn French. Having only just picked up a smattering of English I rather dread this. And of course, no one knows how long Southern Europe will be free. Financial support is a snag, as our home missions in America are already doing their best, and special relief funds here are already overtaxed. The Government, also in the throes of a financial crisis, is not likely to be much help. The exchange is now £572 to the American dollar and varies wildly in an upward direction.

And so on!! Doesn't it sound wild? And yet that's really what the position is here, not to mention the great and increasing shortage of food in the "British Isles".

A.R.C.

Letter No. 238 20th. July 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother.....

Letters have come from Hugh from Shanghai..... the whole prospect of moving is certainly very complicated and frightfully expensive and I personally begin to feel it just is not feasible The future of the whole of China, even south of the Yangtze, is so precarious that in a short time we might have to meet the Communist challenge anywhere. And would we be in a stronger position here, without the stigma of having run away from them once? This is my own opinion, remember, I am not quoting anyone and may have changed my mind by next week!

Well I continue to lead a very placid existence. My little temperature, such as it is, is better, but there is little to do in the lab these days and I find it more convenient to write lectures at home with all my books around. That takes most of the morning. Then lunch and a long snooze till tea One wakes up, feeling cross and bathed with perspiration, gradually coming to over tea. After a bath, some mild pottering in the garden or visits to one's neighbours, and supper at 7 or 8. Then early bed with a book..... I've missed my turn for a few days at the Blind School. Ella is there now, then we hope Mrs. Findlay will go as she badly needs it, and then Hester will be packing up to leave. I shall miss her, and the walks out to the Blind School for tea. Mary is over in the west for her holiday this week and the next. I could go there of course, but am not a bit attracted as it is towny and stuffy and enclosed. We have a much pleasanter place here. In the evenings we often sit out on the little balcony and look around over gardens and lake and green grass and trees with people strolling about and enjoying themselves. I only wish I could join the little boys who swim about in the lake with no clothes on. They look so jolly and brown and cool, but oh, so thin, poor kids.....

Our Indian corn is just ripe now and we are enjoying it - so sweet and tender, Jack would like it.

I got a long letter from a new American woman pathologist just out to join Cheeloo-in-Foochow. This was to give me her hopes and plans for the department, in case we moved there. A very nice friendly letter, but oh so American! A long list of "objectives" on a scale that would require

not only a mint of money, but also a complete revolution in the Chinese economy and social structure. I'm afraid she is in for some disillusioning shocks.....

Much love Agatha

Letter No. 239 25th. July 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

I'm at the Blind School after all. Mrs. Findlay was too busy to take a holiday just now, so yesterday morning I wrote "Finis" to my lectures for next term and in the afternoon came out here for a week's holiday. Dr. Hsiang is doing my work in the lab so that I won't have to trail in and out each day. He has changed greatly in the past year. Instead of veiled and not-so-veiled rudeness he smiled and jumped to his feet when I went to ask him to do this for me, and when he heard what it was, patted me paternally on the shoulder (!) and said that it was no trouble at all, and to have a good time and not hurry back. And he really sounded as if he meant it. I don't mean, of course, that it is only in his attitude to me that he has changed, but in his general friendliness and cooperation all round. I also had a long chat with Dr. Wu, who is now doing most of Hugh's work as Dean. It is good to see how naturally he has taken on such a heavy responsibility and the way he is working and planning for a very uncertain future. We are still awaiting full reports from Hugh about the possibilities of moving, and so there has been no meeting of the Board yet to make any final decision.

I got over here in time for supper and afterwards went for a long walk over the fields in the cool of the evening, with Hester. It was just lovely to stretch one's legs along a country road once more. The last real walk I had, also with Hester, we ploughed through snow and were nearly frozen stiff.

It was a lovely evening yesterday, with lurid purple clouds, and a red and gold sunset. The fields are very dry and there were donkeys clanking round and round the irrigation wells to water the crops. Most of the potatoes have been dug early to save them from robbers, so many fields are empty. Others have Pao mi (Indian corn) or kao liang.

Monday 26th. I didn't get far with this yesterday, as we were sitting outside and it was very windy. There were a few brief blinks of sun, which were enough to make my legs bright red last night. We had a very lazy Sunday as it was so hot, no church, and snoozing most of the afternoon. Miss Ch'i came to supper and afterwards we went over to see Mr. Rasmussen who is in bed with a tummy upset. He is only out of hospital about two weeks after a month there with dysentery. At the moment Hester is in a rather embarrassing position, as her impending departure has upset Miss Ch'i, who has been rather unreasonable about it all. It is very hard on Hester, who is only doing what Conference has told her to do, and I think it is quite right for her to go soon if she is going at all and get settled into work elsewhere. After all, she did not come here to work with the Blind School, but is filling a gap, when she really wants to get on with her own job. If we are going to reduce staff, someone has to go first, and the Blind School, with Mr. Rasmussen living there, and other people taking classes part time, will suffer less than the College losing Hugh, and the Theological College losing Tom Barker. So one of my functions at

the moment is to "stick closer than a brother" when Miss Ch'i comes into view, and keep the conversation on a harmless plane..... All this gossip private.....

We had another good walk in the evening and I've spent half this morning trying to identify the flowers we found, in Hugh's book..... We had terrific rain all night, and I had a ghost in my room! I was wakened by a crash of thunder, and found the room was pitch black and something was tugging at my bedclothes. I said, "Who is it?". No reply. Tried to turn on the light - no electricity. Tried to light a candle - matches damp! Finally got a match to burn - and there was Hester's little dog, sitting under the bed with a corner of the sheet in his mouth. He is frightened by thunder and always comes to look for someone to comfort him. So the two of us exchanged a few sympathetic noises and went to sleep again.

This morning it is so cool that I am actually wearing a cardigan, sitting out in the porch, with the cat on one side and the dog on the other. The sky is covered with thick black clouds so we are in for more rain. The garden here is very nice as the cook is a great gardener - gladioli, zinnias, portulaca a blaze of colour. It is very peaceful and quiet, a great contrast to the Hsiao He Yen, which has constant noise from the park, the shouts of children bathing, and the hsiao mai mai calling out their wares.

Tuesday I'm having a terribly lazy holiday. The mornings I spend sitting out in a shady spot in the garden, doing a little knitting, a little reading, and a little letter writing, like an old granny. In the afternoon we snooze in our beds. Then, after tea, walk, but not very far or very fast. I can just feel my physical and mental batteries recharging. Actually, the nights are the least peaceful time as one is wakened practically every night by shots and yells, and all the dogs in China bark their heads off. With so much robbery going on now, what will it be like next winter? Of course this compound has a wall all round and a large and fierce-looking Alsatian who roams around all night.

Your letter of the 11th. came yesterday, also a nice long one from Alice, others from Elsie Priest (she has a job and a bed all ready for me if I am thrown out of here!) and young Liu in Tiehling. Did I tell you Liu came up to Moukden a couple of weeks ago to report. He has now settled down in the Military Hospital there, under the wing of a Christian member of their staff, and seems quite happy and content. Yes, I agree entirely with your comments on the future of M.M.C. - that it would be better to close than struggle on at too abysmally low a standard. But I think that one must draw the line pretty low now. Bad as our standards are now, they are much higher than those of any college in, yes I think I can say, in North China. It is better to produce some badly trained doctors than leave the wretched people to the care of ignorant and completely selfish quacks. Anyway, it is not for us foreigners to decide the future of the College. We have given our allegiance to an institution of the Chinese church, and must abide by the decisions of the governing board, which is overwhelmingly Chinese in personnel. There is nothing new, so far as I know, about the future. One or two loose ends of information are being awaited before the Board can meet. Meanwhile, the entrance exams for the new class are on. About 140 have entered, compared to 700-800 last year. Of these 19 are Wen Hui boys, and about 12 are K'un Kuang girls, but not the best of their graduating classes. All the best students have already left for the south.....

Yes, like you, I am exasperated by the attitude of people like F...K... ("waste" etc.). Do they really know what the church they belong to is, do they feel they are a part of the Church in

Manchuria, or elsewhere, and responsible for it, members of one body? I think it is going to be very hard to explain to people like that. After all, they will expect me to protest that it's all well worthwhile and that I don't regret coming here (if only to save my face, and avoid admitting having made a quixotic blunder). But how to convince them that one really means it? Especially as quite likely one will have to report a story of outward failure, and possibly complete collapse of one's work. And yet, I am completely and contentedly convinced that even to fail at this kind of job is of more value than any amount of success at a conventional job at home. But it sounds so crazy to say so - "foolishness" and a "stumbling-block".

By the way, don't be too hard on the people here whose outlook seems to us narrow and self-righteous. Of course I disagree with them violently in all sorts of ways, but they are not in the same category as the people of that point of view who irritate one at home for this reason. That they have been through such a lot of trouble and have risked so much, and are now risking so much, and looking forward to such a dark future which they could try to avoid - that one does not feel they are superficial in their wrong-headedness.

Must stop, Much Love Agatha

Letter No. 240 28th. July 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear David

I am writing you a letter for your birthday, because there is no way of sending you a present. There are no trains or boats to the place where I live, so all the letters (and people too) have to go by aeroplane. That means that it costs a great deal of money to send parcels and even big fat letters. How are you, and how are Daddy and Mummy and Christine? I heard that you had a lovely time at Skerries. Can you swim? I don't think I could swim at all when I was your age, but boys usually learn quicker than girls. This year I have not had a holiday at the sea, but I am staying in a friend's house just on the edge of the city where the fields begin. It is very hot here in the summer time, much hotter than in Ireland, so we do not go out much in the middle of the day. In the evenings we go for walks across the fields. It isn't a bit like the fields in Ireland, because there are no hedges. You don't know where one man's field begins and another farm ends, but of course the farmers know, so it doesn't matter. The farmers work very hard in the fields all day and it is so hot that they usually only wear a pair of shorts and a big straw hat. They are so sunburnt that they are nearly as dark as Indian people. You often see small boys helping their fathers in the fields. You see, a lot of them never go to school at all. This is quite nice for them in a way, because they have no bother doing lessons, but after they grow up it must be dull not being able to read or do all the other things that you can do after being at school. So I think you are really much luckier than they are.

At this time of year the fields are usually very dry, because it has not rained for a good while. Here and there, there are wells, with a very clever machine made of wheels and buckets. There is a donkey harnessed to the wheel and as he walks round the well, the buckets go down into the water one after another, and come up full of water that pours out over the fields. In the evening, when it is getting dark, the boys often ride home on the donkeys' backs. They try to make the donkey trot fast, but usually he won't do more than a walk. I suppose he is tired with

walking round the well all day; Sometimes you see a donkey pulling a plough. They always use horses in Ireland, don't they?

The other night we had robbers! There were three or four of them, and they climbed over the wall round our garden. The cook (who is a man) lives in a little house of his own in the garden, and they tried to break the door to get at his things. One of the doctors who lives next door heard the noise and shouted out, "What's the matter?" The cook was very clever. He shouted back "It's all right. There's no need to bring out the gun"! Of course none of us have a gun, but when the robbers heard that they thought we must have one, and they were so frightened that they ran away and didn't steal anything.

Have you ever seen any Chinese people? They all have black hair and dark brown eyes, and they think it very queer that we people from other countries have different colours of hair - yellow, and red, and brown - and sometimes blue eyes. Another thing they think is very queer is that our noses are much bigger than theirs, which are usually rather flat across the top. So one of their names for foreigners is "big-noses". When I am walking along the road I often hear people say, "look at the big-nose with funny yellow hair". Of course, they don't mean to be rude - Chinese people are usually much more polite than we are - but they don't know that I understand what they are saying.

I have a cat now. He is about three months old, orange with four white paws, and a white waistcoat in front. He is called "Tigger", after Tigger in Winnie the Pooh. He sometimes comes when you call him by his name, but not always. If you want him to come at once the best way is to sound the gong. Then he comes running because he thinks he will get something to eat.

Well, the paper is all full. Many happy returns of your birthday, from Aunt Agatha

(Also coloured drawings of Farmer, scorpion, watcher's hut in a field, Tigger (the cat), Indian corn ("we eat it every day"), and his name and mine in Chinese characters.)

Letter No. 241 8th. August 1949 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother.....

This week we had a very interesting visit from Dr. W S. Flowers. He is in the CCC (*Church of Christ in China*) and also in the Council of Medical Missions in China, the body which advises and helps with relief supplies and placing of refugee doctors in Christian institutions etc.. He has travelled all over China, and knows the situation as a whole in a way no one else does. Although I may not have mentioned him before, he has helped a lot with supplies for the hospital, and information about the possibilities for moving the College. Hugh stayed with him in Shanghai. He got a chance to come up on an RAF plane, which was bringing in stores for the Consulate, and stayed one night. He expected that we would already have come to some decision about the College, but we hadn't, so there was a lot of discussion and talk between him and different groups. It was really very valuable as a lot of people got a chance to talk freely and air their views. Dr. Liu is such a tremendous talker himself that sometimes junior members of

staff just can't get a word in edge-wise. Dr. Flowers is a very nice man, an English Baptist missionary. I feel glad to think that if ever it comes to the point of closing the College I will have him to turn to for advice as to where I might go. He told us a lot of interesting things about what has happened in areas taken over by the Communists. (Their field is Shantung, Shansi and Shensi, so he knows a lot at first hand.....)

He said that the attitude of the Communists to the church in any area taken over could usually roughly be divided into three stages. First comes freedom to travel, preach etc., and the churches were placarded "Freedom of Religion". During the second phase, control was tightened, hospitals and churches taken over, relations with foreigners became unfriendly. The notices stuck up on church buildings, "Guard against superstition". In the third phase there was open persecution of the church, preaching completely stopped, foreigners ordered out under their own steam or under armed guard. The typical placard was now "Down with Christianity". One good point was that he did not seem to have heard of Protestant missionaries being interned or imprisoned, except perhaps for a short period before trial and ejection. The R.C.'s have suffered much more in this respect. So it seems that if things went badly the foreigners would be allowed to leave..... In one area, near Tientsin, foreigners have actually been given permission to go across the lines to Tientsin, and back with hospital supplies but this is exceptional. Another story is of Weihsien, Shantung, (where the big internment camp was).....The foreigners had all left some months before the Communists took over. The Chinese staff, after a brief period of "education" in Communist ideas, were reinstated in their hospital with a few additional Communist members of staff. They were obliged to take in a class of "medical students", who were to graduate after a six months course. The group of Christians soon found the position intolerable, and said frankly that their ideas were incompatible with those of Communism, and that they had a faith that they could not but proclaim. One doctor, whose Christianity was of doubtful sincerity, joined the Communist Party, but the others who refused to do so got safe conducts across the border into Nationalist territory! This is discouraging to those who think Christians should be able to cooperate in a Communist institution, but reassuring from the point of view of what happens if you refuse. However, such treatment is exceptional. The Chinese have usually suffered much more than the foreigners. He (Dr. Flowers) thinks it clear that the presence of foreigners (except, well-trying and well-trusted senior medical missionaries) have no hope of being able to help the church in an occupied area, and the outlook for any kind of education to keep a Christian flavour or reasonable standards is hopeless. That, of course, is just his opinion, others disagree and think that in some areas foreigners might still be allowed to be a help and support to the church. But on the whole, the picture he paints supports the decision of Conference to reduce staff and not to count too much on possibilities of useful work after a change. It is all very tragic and depressing - and what is the right line of attack on Communism? The most hopeful bit of work is the Christian hospital, which has some chance of continuing and giving at least a witness by example. The economic situation becomes crucial there, as all treatment is supposed to be free, and food and drugs extremely hard to get.

Last Sunday, while I was at the Blind School, I had a very interesting time at the Roman Catholic Mission centre in the South Suburb. Hester was busy. Jack Leggate, who was over for the weekend with Mr. Rasmussen and Miss Ch'i (head of the Blind School) and her mother and I went. The first place where we called in was the Cathedral, rather a fine big building with twin towers and not too fussily elaborate inside. It was really quiet and dignified and there were quite a lot of nuns and ordinary folk scattered here and there, at their private prayers. Then we went

to visit the hospital. They have practically no in-patients, as they can't afford to feed them, but have a busy Out-Patients Department. in the mornings. Everything was as clean and fresh as could be, no flies even, and of course our visit was quite unexpected. There was a Chinese woman doctor, and we saw several nurses - all nuns of course, in full black and white regalia, as at home. So hot! They were terribly pleased to see us, especially Jack, who is an old friend as he has been in charge of distributing relief supplies etc.. In fact, they were quite embarrassingly hospitable, beaming all over, and bowing us in and out of every door. We sat in state in the guest room, with Popes and Saints staring down suspiciously at us, and drank a horrible peppermint drink (UNRRA, I suspect). Then the doctor came with us to another compound, about 15 minutes walk away, where they have schools, an orphanage, and an old men's' and old women's home. There were five or six French nuns here as well as Chinese and some were old patients of Jack's. He is one of these terribly friendly people who can get on with anybody of any race or age and make friends with them inside five minutes, and it was really funny to see the dear creatures fussing round him and exclaiming in ecstatic French over the photographs of his wife and little boy which are invariably brought out at an early stage of any new acquaintance. I thought they all looked very frail and tired, even the young ones. Indeed the healthiest-looking and quite the merriest was an old dear who had been there 35 years. They all come for life, no worrying over whether or not to leave before the Pa Lu come in! You come and settle in and work till you die. Jack scolded one for looking so thin and she smiled all over and said, "Yes, I won't have long to wait now before I go to Heaven." And another said "Well, there is no great hurry". Of course we had to talk in Chinese as our French was as bad as their English. When I heard how "French" their Chinese sounded (guttural Parisian R's), I realised how English mine must sound, and I wonder how the Chinese manage to understand any of us. This part was not quite as spick and span as the hospital, and the orphanage was pathetic. So many thin frail little creatures, several blind, others with other deformities. They have many children left at their doorway, abandoned by parents who can't feed them. Most of the blindness now is due to Vitamin A deficiency. It is just heart breaking to realise how easily it could have been prevented.

John Fleming is in Peking, we hear! We expect every day to hear he got a plane, but it's not easy now to get in,.....

Much love, Agatha

Letter No. 242 15th. August 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

... No, there wouldn't be any use sending food parcels.... A lot has been done by the relief organizations, using the Lutheran plane, but sometimes the relative cost of petrol and grain is such that it isn't worth while.....We got letters from Hugh from Hong Kong. He had seen Dor and Mamie. Mamie is repacking to go by air to Kunming, and Dor was setting off directly to Swantow..... Hugh was there while the typhoon was raging..... due in London on September 7th. - our old friend the "Canton", of course.

It has been much cooler these days, and we are all perking up like wilted flowers after a shower.... The crop situation is going to be very bad, as there has been a plague of a kind of greenfly..... at the Blind School we had millions of them blowing past; as thick as rain, and even putting up an umbrella did not prevent one getting simply covered. It is supposed to have ruined about 70% of the crop for a radius of 100 li around Moukden. news, just this moment, the damage has not been so severe as feared, and that kaoliang has dropped a bit today.

The most awful tales come from Ch'ang ch'un. There is no hoarding there now, as any who had some have been robbed or have eaten it themselves. The price of kaoliang is quoted as ten million dollars a pound, about £3 very roughly, which means there is none and the bark and roots are also almost all gone. There are reports of people selling their girl children..... The most pitiable are those who have fled from the city to try to get food in Pa Lu territory. The Pa Lu does not allow them to cross their lines, and the Nationalist troops do not allow them to get back, so they wander in no-man's-land until they die. Now that the Pa Lu have anti-aircraft guns the Nationalists can only drop supplies for the troops with difficulty and at night. Of course Moukden is very far from that state as yet. Many thousands are hungry, but few, I imagine, have actually died of hunger yet. But both beggars and thieves are becoming a big problem. We in our house are very vulnerable to beggars as we share a front-gate with several families and there is no watchman. You just feel you can't refuse, especially if there are children, but then they come back and back. One man was becoming a pest so I decided the other day to say "NO", he lay on the front door step for four hours, yelling and moaning and wailing at the top of his voice, and telling the whole neighbourhood that, it was the "good people" who were the most hard-hearted, and so on. The previous day he had done the same for a shorter period, because he was dissatisfied with a pair of shoes Mary had given him, and wanted a different pattern. It really is an awful problem as it's quite impossible to give to all of them. I could spend a year's salary in a short walk through the city, and feel pretty sure every penny was really needed.

Well, we start term this week. A fair proportion of students will not get back. For example, a good many went to Peking because food is so much cheaper there and they calculated they could save more than the fare. Now petrol has risen, fares have risen and they are stuck. Others who stayed have not succeeded in making any money in spite of all their efforts, it goes on food as soon as they earn it. No one can afford to pay them to work, so most have tried to do it by selling things on the streets. A few have succeeded in getting day-labour on farms in the country round about. They are just struggling on by the skin of their teeth, and how can they settle to study? Class 28, my class, is to have its work this term divided into two periods. During the first two months they will get intensive teaching in pathology, bacteriology, pharmacology and public health, in case the College decides to move the pre-clinical students before the winter freeze-up. Such a move would involve Dr. Hsiang, Dr. Wu, Dr. Chen (the man) and me. Then in the second half of term they will get clinical lectures and English, from the staff who remain here. So, the next two months will be pretty hectic, but I have held out against taking on too much, as that would not help the students. I will have twelve hours practical classes and, so far, only one lecture a week. A Dr. Chang (a Kirin friend of Tom's) is to help me four hours a week with preparation, and Ch'en Shu chen will too. Of course it is extremely problematical if we will move. There are lots of difficulties, not the least the weakness of our staff. Our staff is weak from loss of senior (and junior) members, and weak also from sheer weariness and worry, and a natural disinclination for more and different problems. We shall see!

... You remember I started to get my costume turned ages ago. The Japanese tailor who was doing it left suddenly when it was at the tacking stage. Then a Russian I was trailing left for the US, and what with hot weather it got left over. Now I'm having it done by a little Chinese tailor. It will be very cheap, about £1, and I hope satisfactory.

..... I went to Harry for money. He was just coming down to breakfast, pretending to be cross, as he had been up till 2:30 chasing a missing 6d in his accounts, and then up again at 5 chasing burglars. This time they had broken in to stored trunks of people no longer here..... they have a burglary about once a week there nowadays. Moral, what you don't have you won't lose.

Did I tell you John Fleming got back last Sunday, less than a week from London to Moukden, and he was delayed by engine trouble twice. So any time we have £400 to spare I'll pop home and see you for a few days....

Don't think we foreigners are short of food because of all my talk of grain scarcity. Rightly or wrongly we go on with a good diet, and not very expensively thanks to the exchange. I spent £70 - £80 in six months (January to June 1948). This included food and servants, no stores not included in amount spent (sic).

Love A

P.S. the photo of us on the College steps shows several of the poster strips which were stuck all over the College, inside and out, urging the moving of the College to the south. The big placard is, of course, just the name of the College.

This afternoon we went over to the west for the English service. We hadn't had one since June as everyone was tired with the heat, and the transport is so difficult. Up till now we have used droshkies a lot, but now there are hardly any on the streets. I suppose they can't feed the horses. Even the bicycle rickshaws are fewer than before. Most of them are hired by the men who ride them and it is hard to make the amount required by the owner, as well as a livelihood. Because of Jean McMinn we took the hospital car, which we sometimes borrow - and pay the petrol - but that came to 4/- each so "going to church", becomes an expensive pleasure! Later, as it gets cooler, most people could walk or bicycle but Jean at this end, and Mrs. Findlay at that end are the problem. John Fleming took the service and afterwards talked, and answered questions about his visit home. He painted a glowing picture of the interest and sympathy of the folk in Scotland, but was extremely reticent about his visit to Ireland, where I'm afraid he must have been disappointed.

Lily heard the news about her father ('s death) this afternoon. It has been hard for her, waiting for the inevitable, and it is probably almost easier for her to know it's all over.

Love,

Agatha

Letter No. 243 29th. August 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

..... Hester and Ella have left.... Harry is likely to leave in another week and will go to Hong Kong
..... hasn't been at all well..... perhaps get a freighter thereMrs. Johnstone likely to be in
Belfast before him.....

I have had Mrs. Findlay staying with me all week.... One night we had Dr. Wu and Dr Ch'en and Isabel and Tom and Mary came in unexpectedly, quite a party. Organising a party means a lot of trotting around for one borrows the gramophone from A, playing cards from B, spoons from C and so on. I sometimes wonder if Chinese guests think we have all got everything, or do they observe the significant sameness of the entertainment in our various house! Mary has been doing a locum for her mother and is frantically busy. Lily, over in the West for a holiday, has had flu. pulled down and depressed.... She and Mr. and Mrs. Findlay went over to Tom's and I came over to the West to keep Mary company. I found the Findlay household in great confusion as it had just come out that the cook (who had been with them many years) has been stealing right and left - American dollars, food, drugs etc.- and doing a mai-mai with the stuff in a street nearby!!! It is all most unpleasant as Mrs. Findlay has always trusted him completely, and being so busy and not much in the house has not been able to check up on things. They had begun to suspect him recently, and had not wanted to be convinced, but now it seems quite certain. Mr. Findlay did not want to have a blow-up until they had got a hope of another servant, and this man does not yet know for certain that we know. So Mary and I keep our ears cocked for suspicious movements all the time. He has already given notice, and was to have left on Wednesday next, so he may want to make hay while he can. Mary has been out such a lot seeing patients that I am acting as receptionist and keeping an eye on the cook. What we do catch him red-handed I can't imagine. It really is a problem when you have not got a proper police force to call in. They use such brutal methods and any stolen goods recovered are more likely to be "confiscated" than returned to the owner, so it isn't any help.

It is awfully bad luck on the Findlays who can ill afford to lose so much. They are always putting their hands in their pocket to help this or that old friend, or a second cousin of a friend's friend, so that it makes things especially difficult on the financial side.

The people who come with hard-luck stories are an increasing problem as so many are genuinely on their beam ends (Not quite all, I am annoyed to find I gave some perfectly good kaoliang to help a man bury a wife he does not have!) Refugees come from Pa Lu territory and turn up after a frightful journey, so glad to be among friends and only asking for a job, any kind of job, which will earn their food. And there just isn't any job to give them.

The hospital is retrenching, cutting down staff all the time, not taking people on, and other institutions are the same or worse. And these poor people just stand, perhaps in your hall, and say in a bewildered way, "But I'll do anything. Can I not just stay and work for you. Any kind of work." And you have to say "Sorry. I'll give you a meal and then you must go away". And they say, "But where to?". If only there were a few such people, or even a few dozen, or a few hundred, one would feel it possible to try to think of a solution. What is the Christian thing to do? Open ones house and one's store-room to all who come until everything is gone - which would be within a week - and then leave Manchuria penniless or stay and yao fan (beg one's food), or

what? Or go on as one does, living in comfort and doling out a little here and there when one is caught? And what one can do only prolongs the situation a tiny bit longer. Sometimes one feels the merciful solution would be an atom bomb to wipe out three quarters of the population and leave the rest to grow food.

A lot of Mrs. Findlay's patients are Russians, and yesterday, while waiting for Mary to come back from a visit I entertained one Russian woman.. The youngest son of a friend of hers is dying of Typhoid. These people have been forced to take Russian (Soviet, I mean) citizenship, but I'm not sure what their position would be under a new regime, yellow or white. Not easy at the best. And they have been through so many changes already - Japanese, Russian, Chinese Communists, and Chinese Nationalists. They are mostly on their beam ends as so many had jobs with foreign firms - e.g. British and American Tobacco, etc. - and have been all paid off in recent months when the firms closed down. Some have tried to get back to Russia. The woman I was talking to, and her sister, worked in the B.A.T.. They were given a final bonus in the form of a case of cigarettes each. One case is now all sold and "eaten". When the second is done, what then? Tania's nephew has got a job, I'm glad to say. But his mother, Tania's sister is in very poor health. I think Tania found the happiest solution.

.....Some information about Wuchang has come from Dr. Kao. (Foochow is pretty definitely off, over-crowded really.) The biggest problem now, as I see it, is the support of the students if we do move. I have got the impression that they will demand free board and fees like government students, and will drift off if they don't get it. Then the staff will drift too, and our laborious flit will be for nothing. But don't broadcast this personal impression, please. All is peaceful in the College at the moment, however. I have had no trouble at all in my class. Those who have paid come to all classes, those who haven't turn up to lectures but are ignored. Very anomalous and queer but at least there is no open warfare. To me personally they are all most pleasant and courteous, a quite different atmosphere from the first months I was here. I wish they could get a proper chance from the beginning of their lives, after all they are exactly the same raw material as the people who turned out so splendidly in the old days, and gave this College such a good name.

Much love A

P.S. Tom has acquired a cat. He took it across the city on his bike, and it yelled all the way, and nearly escaped four times - to the great delight of the populace.

Letter No. 244 5th. September 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

.... Dr. Flowers' report.... one part comments on the anti-R.C., and, to a slighter extent, anti-American, policy. The R.C.s are in bad odour partly because some of their missions are rich in land and buildings and also because in some places they have taken a much more openly anti-Communist position. For example, in Jehol the monks organised the defence of one city themselves, or at least helped to so conspicuously that when the Communists got in they quite

naturally shot them. A few Americans and Scandinavians have also been killed, but not as part of a thought-out policy. For example there was a very sad case of three or four who were travelling in the country in Honan, in a battle area, and the bus was stopped and they among others were shot. Moral, don't go wandering unnecessarily about the country in case you meet an irresponsible or stupid officer in charge of a small band. There is, everyone agrees, no risk of deliberate bumping off of foreigners in a big place like this. The worst one need fear is internment or having one's food dependent on morally difficult conditions. Many people take a much more optimistic view.

Things are likely to be more expensive from now on. A new currency has been brought in, one new dollar equal to 300,000 of the old. The pound has been fixed at eleven point something to the new dollar. We have to get our cheques cashed at a bank now, so will only get this official rate, not the black market rate. The exchange will, presumably, be altered from time to time but will not be as sensitive as the black market was to rising prices. Servants' wages are the biggest expense. They have been provisionally fixed at 60 chin of Kaoliang per month for a manservant. At the moment this is £120 a year! It's little enough from their point of view.

More information has come from Dr. Kao as to possibilities of moving to Wuchang. I have only heard the news second-hand so can't report accurately. Anyhow everything seems reasonably satisfactory and hopeful, except (a big exception) the hopes of getting any appreciable amount of financial help from the government or other sources. Dr. Kao saw large numbers of refugee students from government colleges sleeping on the roadside in Wuchang - no living accommodation for them at all, not to mention classrooms or teaching. So one can hardly blame the poor harassed Ministry of Education if they can't do much to help a private institution that has resources abroad. There is no doubt at all that they appreciate the high standards and good work of Christian colleges, and would like to be able to help them to continue. Dr. Kao is, I think, back in Nanking now and will later return here to confer.....

Harry left yesterday. It's a melancholy business, I will miss him a lot. He left on an American Liaison Group plane.... That leaves only five Irish - Tom Blakely, Jack Weir, Agnes Gardiner, Lily Dodds and me.

The hospital has now decided that in-patients must pay in actual grain, so the O.P. waiting room has been turned into a place for receiving and weighing it. Such a palaver!!

Such a funny thing happened last week. The students were having a welcome party for the new class and asked for the afternoon off so, at 2.15, it being hot, I was flat on my bed in a pair of knickers, reading a book. Furious ringings at the doorbell, so I hastily covered myself and hurried downstairs. A letter from Dr. Liu - "You have been elected a member of the Medical Board of Synod. Didn't you know? We are all waiting for you." So I hastily dressed and tore off. Afterwards I asked him what possessed them to put me on, and he pointed out that they wanted an Irish representative of the College (and I am the only full-time medical foreigner on the staff!) . . . Actually an extra Chinese would have been much better. But Chinese leaders are as hard to find as anything else. Actually, Dr. Liu does most of the talking and deciding at this, as at all other committees and boards of which he is chairman. I don't mean this in a nasty way, he's a born leader, and he doesn't fear responsibility or criticism.

Lily has come back, quite over her 'flu..... Our poor old cook, who had a relatively placid existence under my reign, as I was busy, hardly knows if he is on his head or his heels! We have been getting in coal for the winter, and planning where to put stoves. (All provisional on Mary and me being here, of course, but one must plan ahead.) Unless the College, and thus Isabel and I and (?) Mary leave fairly soon I don't think there will be any great enthusiasm for doubling up households. After all, we are on top of each other all the time anyway, with no holiday breaks, and although we get on well there is no point in straining human nature too far, and restricting one's freedom to have visitors. Of course, things may become so tight financially that we will have to join up to save servants.

By the way, His Majesty's Consul General has invited ARC to be his guest at Lady's Night at the local Rotary Club, and to supper afterwards at the Consulate! Next Saturday. Wow! Mary is also going as his guest - apparently each of them can take a regular harem. I don't know anyone else going except Jack Leggate The clothes problem is still unsolved, but nowadays afternoon frocks, not long ones, are worn at that kind of a do I have a nice tomato-red one I got from an American lady during my luggage-less period

Such a sad blow the other day. Silverfish in the wardrobe where Lily and I hang our frocks and coats. I have four casualties, the blue blouse you sniffed at as being too common a colour in China (hopeless, like a sieve), my Queen's blazer, my old orange-brown jumper and a frock - these are darnable.....

It is much cooler a joy to get into bed not just on it Tigger doesn't like it, though. He wanders around in a puzzled way till he finds where my head sticks out, then pokes in when refused, he perches to sleep on my hip or knees. Contact with missus is the great aim, and such purrings He doesn't stay at night - this is a morning visit. If a gong goes he's off like a flash.

Much love A

Letter No. 245 12th. September 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

Dr. Gao is heading for home now and there is bound to be a decision soon. I am afraid that if we decide to move only the three junior years (the only practical plan), there will be a lot of trouble from the two senior years. They are giving a lot of trouble already, demanding more classes, and then not turning up and completely neglecting their ward work. When I think of how we worked as "pupils" and how we dreaded the very idea of a ticking-off from the staff-man! It doesn't worry them a bit here. Even the nurses have been up in the air this week over one who was punished for some major offence. However this did produce one good laugh. One thing they do is to put up notices during the night with defamatory remarks about the powers that be. One batch had been removed on Friday morning; then yesterday Lily, who had been sleeping in the new nurses' dormitory, thought she would be noble and go round and do the dirty work, as it's easier for a foreigner. Sure enough, she found two pretty virulent-looking ones with lots of red on them, and triumphantly left them in Miss Shih's office for her to decipher. When she got

back after breakfast she found the office staff in convulsions. She had taken down the notices for the Sunday service!

Yesterday we had another long meeting to hear the report of conditions in Ch'ang chun from Dr. Chou. He has been head there for some time, and arrived in last week with a group of six nurses and student nurses. A staff of 35 including three doctors is still there. The other three doctors did not want to leave for various reasons (children who could not travel etc.), and they agreed to him going as there was not nearly enough work for them all. Conditions are evidently appalling now. The price of grain went up from \$20,000 a chin to about \$25,000,000 inside a month. So many people leaving last spring were selling grain that the hospital got a good store then, and so has enough to keep the staff going for about eight months or more - depending on how much they spend on feeding patients. Drugs are a fantastic price - one tablet of a sulphonamide \$4,000,000 (over one pound). (Note 1990 Presumably this was still the "old currency".) The only people who can afford to pay are the military officers and they seem to have money ad lib. They were also willing to pay through the nose for extra "treatment" to postpone their discharge back to active service. So in one way or another the hospital has kept going. Ours is the only hospital of any kind that has been open for some time now. The picture he painted of a starving population, blown up with oedema, eating earth and leaves was just awful. Apparently the "lao pai hsing" (old-hundred-names - the proletariat) did not get much of the food that was dropped on Ch'ang chun from the air, and quite a number of people were hit and killed. One package went through the roof of a neighbouring house.

His story of his journey up to Moukden was a regular saga. He posed as a teacher, and the others as his students (to avoid being kept by the Pa Lu, doctors being so precious), but he had proof of his identity sewn inside his clothes as it might have been necessary to admit he was a doctor to avoid being killed. They took all the clothes they could, to exchange for food. The conditions in no-man's-land are simply awful. They were lucky, as they had only 24 hours to spend there, but sometimes people have to hang around for a month before the Pa Lu organise a sort of inspection to see who they will let through. And, of course, no one is allowed back into Ch'ang chun. The description of this area was just awful, with unburied bodies lying everywhere and the fearful stench. The two armies are, according to Dr. Chou, "hen k'o ch'i" (very polite), and do very little fighting, but at night he heard them shouting rude remarks at each other - "Hei! Pa Lu a!" and a string of taunts, then a voice from the Pa Lu lines returning the compliment. When they questioned him he told the story of being a teacher, and so on, but someone recognised him and he had to admit his identity. However, a few fountain pens and other valuables changed hands and finally the officer said, "Oh, all right, you can get out, you must go to Kirin, you can't go to Moukden." More talk, and he was told to write his own pass, and it was sealed. Of course he wrote Moukden instead of Kirin, and off they went.

He said they were very well treated in Pa Lu territory, and were given food in exchange for clothes, and allowed to ride on a cart. The Kuo ch'un, on the other hand, are liable to rob you and give nothing in exchange. The journey took only about eight days.

It is a big problem, what to do with these people coming in as refugees from outside hospitals. They usually demand a lot, and deserve a lot, which makes it very hard to go on being just, with values fluctuating so wildly. Dr. Chou wants to go to Lanchow (Kandu), where his family is, but he has heard that the job he had hoped to get there is filled.

Just after this meeting, Mary and Jack and I were collected by the Consulate car, and were swept luxuriously away to the Moukden Club, to the Rotary Club party. A contrast! At first I thought it was going to be awfully boring, as there seemed to be nothing to do but drink cocktails or play roulette with handfuls of new -local - dollars (for charity). However, after a while they put on some gramophone music (with huge big records made of plastic which played about 15 minutes!), and began dancing. So the rest of the evening I danced, as being less embarrassing to my Presbyterian conscience. Mary got heavily involved in "helping" the consul to play roulette and, to her horror, could not lose. The more they played, the more dollars they seemed to collect. However, a lucky run of bad luck brought her down to one dollar. So we said to her to hurry up and lose that and we would go off for supper. However, she started to win again, and we had to bring her away, saying plaintively "But what will I do with it?", and looking at her ill-gotten gains as if they would burn her. The consul was terribly tickled by the peculiar reactions of his guests. Then we three, and another couple who are connected with the consular staff went back there and had a very nice supper. Very exciting salad which must, I think, have been Russian, as we were served by an immensely fat Russian woman. The Consul has a most peculiar cat, small, pure black, with very long fur and such short legs that it reminded me of a black furry caterpillar. The Consul - Graham - was stationed for a time in Urumchi in northern Chinese Turkistan and he had a lot of interesting yarns about that. We came home just after curfew and were stopped several times by a soldier or a policeman with mounted bayonet gleaming in the light of the headlamps. Always the same conversation: "Give the password". "I don't know the password. British Consulate." A grunt, and the face peers in at the window and inspects the pass and us. Then on again. The driver said that when driving Tom back one night recently he was stopped no fewer than 18 times, and another 18 on the way back.

A letter has come this week from Ella and Hester in Peking. Apparently there is work for both of them there with Ellen Studdely, so Hester wants to stay too. It seems an excellent arrangement. They will be able to do a lot with Manchurian people, schoolgirls and students, who have moved there.

Much love Agatha

P.S. I trust you to censor suitably both the roulette etc. and the Ch'ang ch'un news. A The Ch'an ch'un Christian school has now 6 teachers and 8 pupils.

Letter No. 246 19th. September 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

.....(Eileen Barkley's conversation with Mother) But I haven't decided to stay here "whatever happens". If the College moves I shall go too. If it closes I shall look for a job elsewhere. I am pretty sure now that I would not be able to do much of the work I was appointed to do in a Communist-run college and there is no great likelihood of my having to make the experiment. As for leaving now, however, neither you nor Eileen would expect me to do so if you were here and knew the situation in detail. I am being useful. I teach 17 hours a week as well as Bible class, English club, and reporting the biopsies. If I left it would be quite

impossible to find people with the leisure to take on all this. And as to whether it is worthwhile, I feel it is. The College is not dead yet. It has, if it moves, it still has a hope of ultimate survival and return here (sic). The standards may be bad in comparison with home ones, but there is simply no comparison with the depths to which Government-sponsored education has sunk There are, I think, only two reactions now. One to say - this idea of Christian education (as we would like it to be, and as it was 20 years ago) is impossible. Let us give up and go home. Let China go down into the Dark Ages, there is nothing we can do about it. The other is to compromise as to standards, and comfort ourselves by the fact that our graduates have some idea of scientific medicine, some glimmering of Christian medical ethics, and that that is a worthwhile contribution to China and the Christian church in it. I don't think the inner situation in the College is nearly as bad as it was a year ago. The students are still exasperating and undisciplined, but they do trust the staff and respect the ideals of the College much more than they did. For example, I feel perfectly happy and at home now with my class 28, and they are all very friendly and courteous, and work much harder than they did. There is no doubt that on that side things are much better, it is the outer pressure of approaching famine that is going to be crucial. Meanwhile we go on with plans for a possible flit to Wuchang if the money can be raised: and various other snags overcome. Dr. Gow is expected back any now, from his visit to investigate, and then there will be lots more meetings, and some decision reached. Meanwhile, this last week, every department has been busy making inventories of essential apparatus, and weighing each item so as to be able to present the Board with a rough estimate of tonnage, and therefore of the expense involved. All this activity gives the students the impression that everything is fixed up, and we are about to depart. No amount of explaining will convince them that it means anything else. There will be a terrific flop if it doesn't come off, not only for the students but for the staff who are hanging on in the hope of going out still as a group.

..... Marshall is going home... he has a wife and family at home..... the particular job is district work..... he had almost a year completely "alone" in Chihhsien which must have been a big strain in these times, so everyone feels he has earned a furlough. The Chinese there are very independent, they can carry on..... Yes, Pastor Liu of West Moukden (an awfully nice man) does go in for a "dog-collar", but I've never seen any other Chinese pastor in foreign rig-out.

You ask what I mean by saying that the exchange is £572 to the American dollar, etc. I only meant that if there was inflation in Britain comparable to that here, the pound would be worth very little compared with foreign currencies, e.g. the American dollar. It's only a picturesque way of expressing this, and the actual figure means nothing.

... If we do move it will pretty well have to be in November as term stops (for those who would go) on the 15th. of October, and then there are the exams. What bedlam it will be if it comes off!

Such extraordinary things happen nowadays. Mary admitted a schoolgirl with the following history. She had been walking along one of the small roads here with a friend, on their way to school (in broad daylight). She noticed two soldiers and put her hand in her pocket to slip off a ring she was wearing. He noticed the movement and drew his revolver. He shot her through the legs, and went off with the ring..... Another woman had been alone in the house when an acquaintance of her husband's turned up and spun her some yarn and she went off with him in,

I think, a ma che. Having got her to a lonely spot he beat her up..... and threw her into a cesspit. Lively times....

Much love,

Agatha

Letter No. 247 September 26th. 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

... .. No, my account of money drawn from Harry in six months is correct, but perhaps misleading. It included no coal, which is bought in summer, and winter coal is partly paid for by the mission I think. Also, four or three in a household is much cheaper on servants than someone on their own like Tom, or a married couple on a salary. Harry was a great manager, and saved us money in countless ways. Now with the new currency and fixed exchange it will be much more expensive . Grain (but not rent and transport) is much more expensive here than within the Wall. Even in Chihhsian, which has still fairly regular rail communication with the outside world, grain varies from one fifth to one tenth of what it is here.

I got my green coat and skirt back in the end, and it is a great success, just like new, but not quite "New Look~ although I did get the skirt let down....

I haven't heard from Dor from Swatow yet but others have.... No, Mr. Christensen did not open his hotel in Peking...

We had a letter yesterday from Hugh, mostly written on the day of his arrival home. He had been "wearying for news for so long". I got a long letter from Dor today, enclosing snaps of David and Christine....

..... Dr. Gow has not returned but is expected tomorrow or next day. Then there will be an orgy of meetings - College Executive, Senatus, and finally a Board meeting on Friday, which should make the final decision to go or not to go..... to Hua Chung Christian College in Wuchang. They have no medical faculty, and so we would be on our own and independent. The folk there have been extremely friendly and cooperative. There is accommodation, for teaching and for living, and a lot of fine missionary doctors (London Missionary Society, L.M.S.) etc., who might help later with clinical teaching. What fun if I ever joined up with Dorothy Entrican, queerer things have happened! There are snags of course, but on the whole it sounds very hopeful provided (two big provisos) we can raise the money, and the students can raise enough to keep themselves, and secondly, Dr. Gow will agree to lead the experiment. So we wait anxiously to hear what he feels and thinks. There is a lot of troubled water to steer through meanwhile. For example, the two classes we planned to leave behind to finish their clinical work here (27 and 28) are mad to go too and are sending the most heart-rending appeals to the Senatus. Class 28, which I teach, mostly, has behaved well these last few months, but are mostly very impecunious. Class 27, who have their final exam in November, and only a year's hospital experience after that to get through, have not such a good case, and have also been

behaving very unreasonably lately over other matters. These are both big classes, and would double our problems of expense and accommodation. Altogether it is a terrible problem and one feels so sorry for them, as they are just terrified of the future here and the threat of starvation..... There are just two more weeks of teaching for me, then exams, then what? You know, I really enjoy teaching these boys. I used to feel vaguely dissatisfied with myself because I wasn't any good at original work and didn't like the idea of teaching. But now I enjoy it, and even the job of getting my ideas clarified so that they can be got across in elementary Chinese is a sort of game. I like to see them all with their heads down, scribbling for dear life, and when I see the quick sideways look at someone else's book that means "What was that, I didn't catch it", I know that's a point against me. Of course, the pace is too hot at the moment, and one hasn't time to prepare as well as one should, and there's no chance to correlate the lectures and practicals closely, as one could if one did (or controlled) all the Path teaching. Several people sharing the course does not make for coherence, especially when one of them is now in Scotland!

Today we have a visitor, a Miss Silver, Dr. Flowers' secretary. She has worked with him for years, when he was doing Red Cross organizing during the war. She is a nurse and is now on a tour of nursing schools. So Lily is very glad to have a chance to discuss problems with her.... ...Incidentally she brought me a parcel of paraffin wax, bitumen, and Canada balsam, which apparently wandered out here from Edinburgh. They are all things I have needed for a long time, but I can't for the life of me remember sending an S.O.S home!

Later Dr. Liu and the three senior nurses came for tea, and we have had a lively time. Dr. Liu, as several times before, told Miss Silver how he had known me as an infant in Chihhsien, and I as usual said plaintively, "But I wasn't born then", he never remembers that it was Jack. Then we had a lightning tour of the College, and went to the College service.

A tragedy has happened this week. Our Tigger has disappeared. It's two days now, so I fear there isn't much hope. Anything so attractively furry is in danger, this weather. I do miss his friendly ways, and the pressure of his furry body on my legs in the mornings after he was allowed upstairs...

Two nights ago we had a terrible night of thunder, lightning and rain, so yesterday we had a great afternoon of gardening in nice damp earth. We planted some nasturtiums, antirrhinums, salvia and marigolds in the hope that they may live through the winter in the house (if we're here to enjoy them).

No more news. I'll write a note to Eileen O.

With much love, Agatha

Letter No. 248 October 2nd. 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

.....It is still not decided whether we do move to Wuchang or not. There have been several meetings (seven in four days!) but the Board is meeting again on Monday. I think the choice will

be between closing down altogether, and a decision to move provided the fairly certain help from the Red Cross materialises. So you see it's still problematical. The Chinese staff who would go with the College have not laid in their winter's coal and grain, and naturally enough find the rapid approach of cold weather very unsettling. Not that this dilatoriness is anyone's fault. We keep hoping for definite news of financial help from various quarters, and even if that end were cleared up, the pros and cons are so well balanced that it is really extremely difficult to know what is the right thing to do. Dr. Gao is back, two days ago, his position also not clear. On the one hand there is the certain cessation of work - the death of the College - but money is saved for use at some future date. On the other side there is a small chance of survival, but at a great financial cost; and if the venture failed, well it would be sad to think of so much generously contributed money being lost. One point is that if the College closed down indefinitely the interest of the people at home would soon die, and to start a new college say ten years hence would mean starting right from the beginning; also there might then be difficulty in getting a private institution registered with the government, while one already in existence might be able to continue.When I try to make up my own mind what the College really ought to do I just boggle at it and am very thankful that I am not one of those on the Board with responsibility for deciding.

We are having some nurse-maiding to do these days, for a change. A woman who lives in the gate-lodge of this compound is ill, and as she has three small children, Lily has been helping a lot. One child is in hospital, but the other two have more or less adopted us. Mei mei is about four, and Ti Ti is about two and a half. They both go to a Kindergarten nearby, and as we paid the fees (from our sack-full of millet) they come periodically to show off their accomplishments. So loudly, in fact, as to be embarrassing. This is a great change from a few months ago when they were impenetrably shy. There is something terribly comic about children at that age, and they are so solemn and serious about it all. In fact small Mei Mei told us yesterday that if you did not learn your action songs properly then you didn't get your rationed (cheap) grain from the school. It's young to have such cares on your shoulders isn't it? Lily was busy all yesterday, bed-bathing the woman and fixing the house, and Mary and I meanwhile kept the two kids out of the way, in the intervals between other jobs. I haven't laughed so much for a long time.

This morning, while Mary and I were still at breakfast, Ti Ti arrived in, looking for the Lao tai tai (Lily) who was having her breakfast in bed. Having inveigled him outside again and blown his nose for him, we thought that was that, but when running down stairs soon after I nearly fell over him, laboriously toiling up dragging a large cardboard box, and a venomous-looking pair of scissors - still looking for the Lao tai tai. Another embarrassment is that these two infants now regard our house as an inexhaustible source of food, and on several occasions have found beggar children on the road outside, and escorted them trustfully up to the door, waiting to see that we respond properly, and then escorting them out to the gate again. Another funny thing yesterday. The two of them were watching Lily, who was coming back to the house with an enamel basin of Mrs. Wang's, with one or two things to wash in it. "Look" says Ti Ti to his sister, with a chuckle "the Lao tai tai's got our niao p'en." (Which I presume means "potty")! So you see, we have our diversions, by the way.

I had a very busy evening, changing my room round for the winter, moving the bed away from the window etc., as it begins to get cold at night. We have been able to get a lot of things from Tom's house, some his own and other old stuff stored there. So I have now a thick blanket over

each window as a curtain (dark red with brown stripes) and a rug on the floor, so it looks very cosy and nice.....

Perhaps next week I can really tell you what the College is going to do.

Much love, Agatha

Letter No. 249 October 9th. 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother...

We still don't know for certain if we are moving to Wuchang next month. The Board decided last Monday that if the money was forthcoming we should - that is, they came to a decision on the general principle. Meanwhile, we wait impatiently for news as to whether the Scottish Red Cross funds we have applied for to help in the flight are forthcoming. If they aren't prepared to grant us, say £4000 - £5000 it's hopeless; if they are, it will still be difficult and expensive, but worth trying.

To go back to your letter. I don't understand the bit you quote about the new currency being more favourable because a new gold dollar now equals about a shilling instead of about \$3,000,000. The new dollar is just a convenience, a few pieces of paper instead of a great heavy parcel of hundreds of bank notes to carry about. The reason why it is unfavourable to us is that exchange regulations have been tightened up so that we now get the official rate instead of selling sterling cheques at the black market rate. So the money does not go nearly so far. The official rate does not reflect the actual purchasing power of the money in the way that the "open" or black market did. There is also a new rule (or rather a new fuss about an old rule) that one must not hold foreign currency, so American dollars are simply pouring into the banks. The law is that if you are found with foreign currency on you are put in jail, and the person who informs on you gets 40% and the government 60% of the money. Of course I have no doubt that in a short time the country will drift back to the old arrangement in which American dollars and gold nuggets were the only ways of keeping money. Even grain is a nuisance to store as it may go bad or be stolen, or eaten by rats. Recently grain has been hard to buy in Peking, increasingly so. The price doubled there in 24 hours, and it is very scarce at any price. The St. Paul (plane) has been bringing in loads of grain for relief organizations, some for us to pay our servants with, etc.. But now it is very hard to make up the loads. This is a tragedy at this end as there are many people desperate to get out. One hears the most pitiable stories. I think the worst are the Russians. For instance, Pearl Fleming told me yesterday of an old lady of 76 who came to her to ask if John could get her on the next plane. She has been in Moukden 36 years, she has three sons who were taken by the Russians during their occupation three years ago, and she has had no news since then. She has no relations here, but a friend in Tientsin had sent her enough money for a ticket. She had been waiting for a chance day after day, and now all her money was gone, and all her food eaten.

Then there was a young Chinese girl who had walked from Ch'ang ch'un with four children, ages from 7 years to 2 months. She is living in the drive in front of the air office, all her money spent on tickets. And of course if someone like this is pushed on a plane in front of the queue,

the hundreds waiting, and almost equally pitiable, are frantic with indignation. This week Dr. Liu and Pastor Wang Pi Te of the East Church are to go to Shanghai for the C.C.C. conference - general assembly, rather. They went over on Thursday to be weighed. The people waiting at the office recognised Dr. Liu, and so many begged them to do something for them that he was quite sickened, and postponed his passage for two days. Pastor Wang went on ahead as he had other business and was in a hurry. I think Dr. Liu will go tomorrow - if the plane has got a load of grain to bring in. Dr. Liu will probably not be back till sometime next month, so if the College moves I may easily not see him again.

Lily says one of her comforts is the brisk way in which Mary and I empty every dish she puts before us, and she puts plenty!..

Later: I have had a nice but brief weekend with Janie Henderson. The next excitement was that Rev. Noel Slater turned up. He had sent John a note, by the St Paul plane on Saturday, to say he was not sure he ought to come, but if he did he promised to bring his own food. We are not reduced to that yet! He turned up in the middle of the English service and after that spoke for about twenty minutes, nothing much really..... I didn't see any more of him..... he went back to Peking this morning.

The next excitement was an urgent message from Tom to say that Lily was detained in hospital, and could not go with him to a Consulate dinner party to entertain a British Foreign Office official who had just arrived, and for heavens' sake change and come quick as the car was waiting. So I dashed into best frock and green beads as usual and nabbed Mary's good coat, which is more like a posh dinner than mine is, and off we went. The Foreign Office man turned out to be very young and pink and silent, with ears that stuck out, so he wasn't too alarming, but I'm afraid I didn't collect any inside secrets about British foreign policy from him. Then home, about 10.30, laboriously stopping at least a dozen times to explain to armed guards who we were.

Today has been busy too with a committee meeting about exams, a demonstration class, and a long histology spot exam. I have just finished correcting the "spot" and am very pleased as there are only two failures out of 22, and most are very good indeed. It will be a nice class to teach Pathology to, if I ever get the chance.

..... I got a 3d today (a printed matter package) which included a lot of nice cuttings and a typewritten copy of a bit from a letter of mine about a talk to Dr. Wu. I hope sincerely that all that did not go in. (i.e. was printed somewhere). You see, even if names were cut out, he, seeing the report, may recognise it and perhaps not be at all pleased at being quoted, and not at all accurately. I don't want people here to get the idea that what they say to me is written home and may get printed, even without names being mentioned. I know Dr. Liu got a copy of the Report (Annual Report of the Committee in Scotland which raised money to send to the M.M. College). So Dr. Wu may well have seen it, even if I haven't. Anyway, it's too late to worry now.

Agatha

Letter No. 250 16th. October 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

.....Well, we are still in a state of "chassis", as Joxer said in "Juno and the Paycock". The money side of things is in a great state of confusion, as the new currency seems to be going in the way of the old. Although it's a bad time to change a lot of sterling at the official rate, as prices are soaring even in the South. So the problems of paying for, or organising, transport are multiplied many-fold. There have been a lot more meetings about it, and there will be more next week. We have not had any definite promise from the Red Cross and are always awaiting confirmation from Edinburgh of the tentative approval of the transfer of financial support to a College-in-exile. So you see, everything is still terribly vague. Meanwhile the staff is worried and perplexed, as some have no plans made for passing the winter here. The students still prepare feverishly, and no amount of cautions will persuade some of them from selling warm things, which they will soon need to wear.

I had my last classes on Thursday (for class 28) and they are now, most of them, busy revising. Exams start this week, but I have none till next week, when orals (Pathology) practicals and paper are on the 27th.- 30th. After that, if we still plan to move, there will be a frenzy of packing.

Several of class 28 only paid their fees a couple of days ago, just before the two-month time limit expires, so now they have to make up a whole term's practical work in ten days. It really is lucky I have all the practical slides' notes translated and duplicated as it means they each can have a copy of a fairly detailed description of each slide, and can work at it themselves without too much individual help from me.

The, latest idea is that if we move, this class, 28, goes too, so in that case I will be able to give a bit more teaching to the ones who fail. If we don't move before winter, I don't know quite what will happen, but I imagine quite a number will go south, and try to get into a Government college where they will get their food free. I don't say "food and tuition" for the Government colleges are so swamped with students that there must be mightily little teaching going on. The latest news of the Government Medical School here is that they are going to try to get to Formosa. (This is the one I went to visit with Dr. Hsiang some weeks ago.) There are a lot of students belonging to them still hanging about in Tientsin and Peking, but not many are left here as a lot have drifted off.

Prices of grain are a bit cheaper here at the moment. This is because the local authorities have started a scheme of advancing money to anyone who will go out into the surrounding countryside and buy in grain from the farmers. Later they sell it in Moukden at a profit, and hand back the borrowed capital. In this way a lot of grain has been brought into the city and that means a temporary lowering of prices.

We are getting a lot of fun these days out of our adopted family. Did I tell you that the mother of a refugee family who lives in the gatehouse of this compound was ill in hospital? The father is at work all day. The usual programme now is that he or one of us takes the trio to the Kindergarten nearby in the morning, and they drift home themselves about noon. When we get home for lunch at about 1 p.m. there is usually a hungry trio on our front porch. The eldest is a little girl of about 7, then there is a smaller girl about 4, and a little boy about 3. We hurry through our meal (as our cook disapproves of the whole performance, and we daren't keep him waiting), while Ti ti rattles the door and shouts "Old woman, I'm hungry" over and over again. Then we appear

with their big bowl of millet, which has been on our stove all morning, and off we go to their house and set them round on their kang with their bowls. Mei mei, aged four, is adept with chopsticks, but Ti ti prefers to get right down to it. When this is all over, and faces wiped, we head back to our porch and whoever happens to be free has the benefit of a first class entertainment for as long as they have time to enjoy it. They aren't a bit shy now, and I must say I like being vehemently hugged and climbed upon, even by a rather grubby infant. Lily has some odds and ends of coloured wool, and has been knitting them socks, beautifully gaudy in transverse stripes of red, orange, green, pink etc.. When Ti ti realised who these wonderful objects were for his face was a picture. Pure undiluted rapture! He gave one squawk, grabbed the gaudiest pair and rushed into the house. I went after him, and traced him into the sitting room. I peeped in, and there he was, perched on the sofa, filthy little cloth shoes on the floor, struggling to get his socks onto his grubby feet, and chuckling and crowing with a great beaming smile on his face. He eventually stumped proudly out to show them off to the "Old Lady" outside, and it took a lot of ingenuity to get them off. This afternoon we plan to give them all a bath (being Saturday). That will be fun, believe me! They really aren't dirty children, except the bits that stick out, as they are decent people, down in the world, but any children of that age would get dirty if left to the tender mercies of a busy, tired father for a couple of weeks. In fact, the eldest one feels her responsibilities very much and is constantly rebuking the other two. Her face, when Ti ti forgot himself so far as to make a little pool in the sitting room was a sight, although he himself was merely amused. Mei mei can crack hazelnuts with her teeth, so one is liable to be offered a wet slobbery piece of nut, as a great favour!

Thursday was Agnes's birthday, and Lily, Isabel and I were there for supper. We had a lovely meal of soup, roast meat, potatoes, carrots and sweet potatoes, followed by tinned peaches and coffee. So, you see we can still have a splash at a party. Afterwards we played "Newmarket", which is a low gambling game and I finished deep in debt.

The weather is just glorious these days, but it's getting very cold at night. We have had a hard frost now for several nights. I've collected lot of flower seeds, I wonder if they will ever be sown, and where. (I said the same thing last autumn!)

We have had quite a lot of extra stores sent in by the St. Paul plane. Just odds and ends e.g. butter from Peking and some peanut butterwe have been using tins of "army spread" and margarine all along. I have started vitamins and cod liver oil..... so you see you are not the only one who is being good!!.

.... I'm glad to see that you gave Walton's Polyglot to John Faris..... I don't know anyone else who would appreciate it more, or have more right to it.

Later: My dear idiotic mother, you gave me quite a fright, with such self-scolding that I thought you must at least have fallen off a tram and broken your leg. And all because you forgot to stamp a letter. I have several times received inadequately stamped letters (not from you) and they came without any bother. I do things far sillier than that every day and they don't worry me a bit. One day, while teaching, I realised that something was wrong as the class was giggling and then it dawned on me that instead of saying the Chinese for "fibrosis" I was saying "the Acts of the Apostles" - after all they are both clumsy four-syllable terms, and I just got off on to the wrong mental track.

Later, Sunday: A wire has come - the £5000 from the Scottish Red Cross has been granted!
..... Did Mr. Kerr get the Zoology chair at Queen's?

Much Love

Agatha

Letter No. 251 23rd. October 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

You ask what milk we use, during the summer goat's and cow's milk were both gettable, and we used goat's milk from the Blind School herd. Now the price has gone up so much that we get only one small bottle a day, and use tinned milk if we want a milky drink.

..... more meetings this week, culminating in a Board meeting which decided the College should move about the middle of November, in spite of the recent rise in prices in the south. The new currency has pretty well gone to bits, and it is also very hard to get grain etc. at any price, people just aren't selling. However, the situation here has worsened too as both Ch'ang ch'un and Chihhsien have been taken by the Communists. There is a chance that the latter may be taken back as there is fierce fighting still going on, but Ch'ang ch'un has been abandoned. So, it will not be possible to keep the College on here for more than a month or so as we have not laid-in coal for a winter's session, and it now costs about £30 a ton. So it certainly is move or close. It's a big gamble, but in Wuchang we have a chance of survival and doing worthwhile work, here none. So if all arrangements can be carried through, off we go, and please begin writing to Wuchang, Central China....

I think I'd better tell you who the "we" are:

1. Dr. Gow, principal, later to teach eyes and meanwhile perhaps teach biology until Mr. Ch'in rejoins us in Wuchang next year, we hope.
2. Dr. Hsiang, public health. Will teach anatomy until Dr. Wu rejoins us. Also, we hope, next year. Also responsible for business arrangements in the College office, etc..
3. Dr. Chang, bacteriology, and at present, histology. Looks after the men students and their dormitory.
4. Dr. Wu, pharmacology, and at present teaches some physiology. Acting Dean of Students.
5. Dr. Chang, biochemistry, and at present teaching some physiology. Hostel master under Dr. Hsiang.
6. Miss Ma, chemistry and biology. May or may not go. Hostel warden for women students. (Very "holy", I don't like her and rather hope she does not go.)
7. Isabel, chemistry and, if Miss Ma does not go, hostel warden for women students.
8. Tom, English and English treasurer.
9. Mr. Feng, physics and Chinese treasurer.
10. Me, pathology, English and (?) histology.

And we hope to get back Dr. Wei (anatomy) and Mr. Ch'in (biology) who moved south this year to temporary jobs. Also Dr. Li yu hsiang, who has gone to America for a year's postgraduate work (physiology).

You will ask where next year's clinical teachers are coming from! Well, next year is next year. There are Dr. Wang and Dr. Liu who are due back from Scotland next spring, and they may come to Wuchang instead of to Manchuria. We hope some of the L.M.S. and Methodist people there will help. They sound most welcoming and willing to help in every way.

The set-up in Wuchang is that the College is tacking on to the Hua Chung Christian University, President Dr. Francis Wei, who is well known and has been to Britain etc.. They have no medical faculty but are lending us classrooms and the part-time use of their science labs. The students will live in part of the Ren Chi Hospital. This is an L.M.S. hospital, which was rather going down hill for a mixture of reasons, shortage of staff, a large new R.C. hospital next door, etc., and they had planned to close it down anyway within the next two years. When Dr. Gow arrived, pleading for accommodation, they very generously said this was the obvious solution, and decided to close down as soon as we needed the building. One part is a training school for midwives, so they are not closing the midwifery wing, but have sent an urgent request for Mary Findlay to go and take that over. The person who ran it is leaving to get married. Of course I very much hope Mary goes, it would make all the difference to me, but it has not been decided yet. This arrangement covers the pre-clinical years. Then, for the clinical teaching, there is the Union Hospital in Hancow (where a Dr. Gillison has been very cooperative) and a Methodist hospital, both very keen to help but they are on the other side of the Yangtze, so it will mean the students have to go there to live when they start clinical work. That side will have to be planned before next autumn, but it is not an immediate urgency. I am sorry to be cut off from a hospital, but I hear the R.C.s. next door have shown signs of being very friendly, and I mean to try to get them to send me their pathology specimens. Will my North of Ireland supporters hold their hands up in horror at the idea of our mission cooperating with R.C.s? Let them!

I haven't yet any idea of what the place is really like, or where we shall live, or anything like that.

By the way, I never explained that the move is made possible, or rather not obviously impossible, by, A., a grant of £5000 from the Scottish Red Cross, and B. a vague but generous offer from the E.C.A. (Economic Cooperation Administration), an American fund to help rehabilitation in China. The future running expenses will, of course, fall almost entirely on the home support from Ireland, Scotland and (?) Denmark. This is because the only representative of the Danish mission here is Mr. Rasmussen, and he is on the College Board, and is dead against the idea of moving. He was not at the last meeting, as he has been ill, so it was a unanimous decision.

Have you heard about Harry? He was..... ill in Shanghai and later in hospital in Hong Kong very carefully investigated by Howard Montgomery probably needs an operation when he gets home awfully bad luck. Mrs. Johnstone probably in Belfast before him.....

The enclosed photograph is very bad, awful of me (a hag-like creature, all wrinkles)..... one of Harry, Lily and Jack Weir..

Much love as always Agatha

Letter No. 252 October 30, 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

.....Mamie living with Meg Cranstoun..... Australian Language School. Will settled in Cambridge..... Dorothy Entrican in Siaokan. Margaret Collins now evacuated from Tientsin to Hankow. Dor better settled.....Harry Johnstone ill on way to Hong Kong. (Note 1990. Harry's illness turned out not to have been as serious as feared. He had a major operation on return home and recovered well.)

This week has been simply hectic. The lab is in chaos, littered with packing cases and straw, and all kinds of equipment. The students have been in and out doing eleventh-hour revision and one had to more or less snatch the microscopes from under their noses to pack them. Yesterday we swept the litter to one side and I held the practical exam. I was quite pleased with the results as all but six of the 30 passed. Then, today, Dr. Hsiang and I have been oralling from 9 till 4.30, with a very brief break. Only five failures. Of course our standards are not very stringent, but circumstances being as they are I feel those we have passed really deserve it. This class includes a lot of very poor students and many of them have been using every spare moment lately to try to rake up some money by selling their things in order to be able to go to Wuchang. One boy turned the proceeds into shoes, others bought grain. Then last week the ones who had bought grain were in terrible despair, for the price of grain temporarily went down. But now it is soaring up again, so they hope to realise their money again at a better price. But all this makes a very uncertain atmosphere in which to prepare for one's professional exams! Three of the class went to their homes in the country on business matters before leaving for the south, and they must have got stuck, for they haven't turned up again. The Pa Lu flow in and out of small country towns and mess up local communications, so that such journeys are always a bit of a risk, if one wants to be back for certain on a particular date.

Tomorrow morning we have the papers, and in the afternoon I have a session with an intern who is writing a thesis, and after that the papers, my bit, to correct. So I'm writing my home letter today while the going is good.

It was definitely decided this week that Mary Findlay goes with the College to do the midwifery I told you about in Wuchang, and help in the clinical teaching in the College. I am very pleased indeed. So, in the intervals of other jobs she and I are packing and weighing our own possessions. We are on our own this week, as Lily had a short but sharp bout of (?) flu and is over in the west recuperating. I'm not sure what day she will be back. Meanwhile Mary and I have got the vegetables into store for the winter, and will be in tomorrow to scrounge for stoves. The weather is really getting quite cold, with ice on the river and so on. I wear my mien p'ao and your invaluable furry boots all day. The autumn just seems to have vanished.....

Our "family" is in great form. Their mother is a lot better and will be out of hospital on Sunday. Just as well, because she got ill just after she ripped all their padded clothes for a wash, and it's beyond us to do much about a complicated job like that. Now that it's colder we get more peace as they play in their own house most of the day. Mary or I, whoever is free, or both of us, go at lunch time with the big bowl of Kao liang and jug of milk and it is great to see them wade into it and hear the latest gossip from them. It is really most satisfying to see how jolly and fat and rosy they look now. Before Lily started to keep them they were very whinny and miserable looking. I

don't suppose it is all our doing, of course, as Mr. Wang has a steady job now, but it didn't leave much margin.

Isabel has got shingles on her face - what you had. Such an awkward time! Meetings every day and all the lab and household stuff to be packed, and then to have this. Luckily her exams are over. She is going about, shrouded like a woman in purdah. You see, we don't really know when the St. Paul may begin to evacuate us, and it behoves us to be ready. The 6th. (of December) has been mentioned for the first trip, but I very much doubt if it will all go as per programme. Nothing in China ever does. I just can't realise that I may be away from here within the next fortnight. I just hate the thought, and am glad to be too busy to think. Of course, we may be caught even yet. If so, I have no regrets and don't see, looking back, any decision I can regret now. So, whatever happens, you have no need to worry about me, dear heart. I'll stop now, but leave it open for a day or two.

Later: Nothing fresh, much love as always, Agatha

Letter No. 253 15th. November 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

I wonder will you get this, but it's worth trying. I am typing it so that it will be easier to read. I do hope you have not been worrying quite unnecessarily about us all here. You would be surprised to know how normal and peaceful everything is. It was a great comfort that there was so little fighting, and already living conditions are easier, food cheap, and people look less starved and hopeless. All we foreigners are well, except Mr. Rasmussen who has had typhoid, and Jack Weir who has also had a temperature (a mild paratyphoid?), but is also much better. Mrs. Findlay has moved Jack into her house to be nursed, as it was awkward for him alone in a house. Otherwise our daily work is much as usual.

I am not so busy as I was but still have some Pathology revision classes, and Histology, and also once a week on Acts! There may be a little more housework, but nothing drastic. So you can imagine Lily and Mary and me sitting this evening very snugly round the stove in the sitting room, Lily typing lecture notes, and Mary knitting a jumper for one of the Wang kids. The electric light is quite good now, and rarely lets us down. Mrs. Findlay was over today to see us and had lunch and tea with us. Her clinic is going strong.

On Saturday I went over to the Blind School. It was a lovely mild day and it was nice to see the family parties out in the fields, preparing the cabbages for storing in the pits. We had quite a store of our own cabbages and turnips and carrots, and are quite proud of our own small garden. So far it has been much milder than last winter, and I'm only beginning to feel it chilly working in the lab. This year it may not be necessary to move the museum downstairs, which was such a nuisance last year.

I'm afraid I find a typewriter very bad for one's flow of thought, so please excuse a dull letter. I will write weekly until we know whether this can reach you, and you try addressing letters here by the same route. In the meantime I'll not write to anyone else, so please pass the news on to

Church House and others interested, e.g. Hugh, and Harry if he has turned up. In case this should, by some freak, be the first letter to reach you for some time, I think I'll just go over everyone by name.

Next door, Jean very busy. Clinical exams today, for example. Isabel, better after a nasty bout of herpes ophthalmicus, you will sympathise. Jack as usual, keeping us all jolly. Tom, well and busy, always popping in to chat and share the latest gossip. Nell and Agnes, in their house, also well, and finding life very interesting. I haven't been over in the West for a few weeks, just laziness really, but John and Pearl, Sandy, and the Findlays and Janie have all been over here at one time or another to see us. I plan to take a walk over to the west tomorrow to see them all.

Well, do write and tell me all the family news, and how you are and how the garden is growing, and so on. Remember that's all we really want to know. And by the way, my dear, your last letters have not been very easy to read, except to the practised eye! Well, goodbye for this time, my dear, and don't, please, worry. I am very well and happy, and find life extremely interesting.

With much love to you and to the Roywood folk and all my good friends at home. Agatha

Letter No. 254 24th. November 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

I'm not sure that my last letter got away, but there's no harm trying. I'll number my letters from now on, counting this one as No. 2. All goes well here, and I feel hopeful about the future, if one can be adaptable about unimportant things. It is extremely interesting, and I am so glad not to miss it.

We may have holidays fairly soon, something like last year, as coal may be hard to get. I don't mind as there will always be a little lab work to keep one from getting stale, and I'll have some more writing of lectures and Chinese with reciprocal English. These last few months I have been so busy with a hand to mouth existence getting lectures ready that there has been far too little time for reading.

Last week I went over to the Findlays for the weekend. In the morning I helped Mrs. Findlay with the clinic (which flourishes) and was lazy most of the rest of the time, reading and knitting, and talking to Jack Weir who is still running a temperature and very fed up with himself. We still think it must be some bug of the typhoid or paratyphoid type, so there is not much to be done but wait till it goes away. On Sunday I went for tea to Sandy and Janie's, and Sandy took the English service there. The weather had changed and was quite amazingly mild, so I simply stewed walking back on Monday morning.

Did I tell you that the rule of the road had been changed back to the original "keep to the left"? I had never got completely accustomed to the other way and feel this much more natural. It has been so mild that all the ice in the Hsiao Ho Yen has completely disappeared, and yesterday evening it was raining hard and just like a November day at home. This time last year we were

having that desperately cold weather which was supposed to be a record for Moukden. However, this evening seems colder, and we are going to light the baby stove in the bathroom to keep the run-away pipe from freezing. We have no running water in this house now as we cannot use the heater, but it is easy enough to carry water in.

We have just had a visit from the next-door cat. I think the next time Nell's cat has kittens I must ask for one, for I do miss Tigger and his funny little ways. He wouldn't be so hot on my tummy in bed as he was in summer.

You would like to see our sitting room at the moment. We have the stove lit, so we all tend to congregate there. Then Mary and I have both been washing the week's woollies, and have them all strung around to dry. This room's stove is a very warm one, with a flat place at the side where we keep a big jug of water all the time, so we constantly have hot water at hand. All our house comforts, in fact. A guest of Lily's popped in the other night, unannounced, and found me stripped to the waist, having a good wash, however the medical profession is not easily shocked so why worry.

This must do for now, I think. Lily says to tell you that she is doing her best to keep me in order. She hasn't really any difficulty as we are a very happy family.

Much love, and please take great care of yourself so that we can go on the spree some day.
Agatha

Letter No. 255 December 2 1948 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

I'm afraid it is more than a week since I wrote, but there is not much to tell you, and the fact that one is not sure you are getting the letters makes one less inclined to write. We are on holiday now in the College, so I am free to do the odds and ends one normally has no time for. Last week Mr. Findlay got a bad cold and was in bed, and Jack was still in bed with a high temperature. So Mrs. Findlay, who has her hospital to run as well as umpteen other jobs, was in a bit of a hole. So, as neither Mary nor Lily was free, I went over to the west as a sort of district nurse! I'm sure you would have been extremely tickled to see me bed-bathing a limp and biddable Jack! Although I am forced to admit that he refused a repetition next day. Then I paddled round, doing visits, first to a little Russian boy who may have typhoid. He and his mother and grandmother live in one room, and a pretty fuggy room at that. The mother spoke English quite well, but as usual I was amazed at their almost complete ignorance of Chinese, after many years.

The next visit was to a Chinese family, where a little boy was supposed to have meningitis, so that meant crawling around on the kang trying to do a lumbar puncture. As he was crying with headache even before I got there, and his mother's ideas of coaxing him to be good was to tell him he would soon die if I did not do it, you can imagine the hullabaloo. Then there was the old mother-in-law to placate, and altogether it was lots of fun. (When I took the fluid outside to look at it, it was a relief to see the sparkling clear pure look of normality.)

I had to come home after a few days as, at that time, I still had a few classes. Now the nursing school is in the middle of exams and as they are very short-handed I have been helping Lily with that. So, although we are on holiday, there is no time to be bored.

Yesterday, Mary and I had a very nice walk, out along the country roads beyond the Blind School. It was a very mild clear calm day. Some of the pools of water were partly melted. It was good to stretch one's legs, one is inclined to get into a rut and just vibrate between College and hospital and home.

Excuse this awful typing. The electricity is bad tonight, and although one can see the keys all right it is hard to see what the result is like! Tom has just been in for a minute after skating on the Hsiao Ho. He said he had a tail of about a dozen youngsters, some hanging on to his coat tails for a ride.

At the moment I am reading a very good novel, "Green Dolphin Country" by Elizabeth Goudge..... the first part is about the Channel Islands and then it moves to New Zealand.

We had College Graduation on Tuesday, the programme much as last year, but different guests of course. This was class 26, the year, which has just finished its intern year in hospital.

Our three children are still very jolly and we get a lot of fun out of them. One of us usually drops in each day and there is a riotous welcome. Ti ti jumps about all over the warm kang with only his little shirt on, looking like a frog, and the two sisters hang round one's neck demanding stories. It really is very heart-warming, especially to me as I usually don't know how to make conversation with small children.

No more news now. Everybody is well, except Jack Weir, and the latest report of him is that his temperature seems definitely on the downgrade. Mr. Rasmussen is much better but still very pulled down.

Very much love to you and the Roywood folks, and do take care of yourself and don't worry. I am well and happy..... Agatha

Letter No. 256 January 2nd. 1949 Hsiao Ho Yen Moukden

Dear Mother

I am afraid I have not written for several weeks, as we were told it was quite hopeless, but I think I will try again, just on the chance that it may reach you someday.

I am afraid you will be worrying if you don't get news. If only you could see us all and know how well we all are. Everything is peaceful in Moukden. The new government is very quick and efficient at organizing things, and of course the improved communications mean that food is very much cheaper. It is a great relief to see the change in the faces of people on the street - no longer thin and pale and hopeless looking, but visibly more cheerful and well-nourished.

The last two months have been quiet for me as the College has been on holiday, but I have had small groups coming to the house for English of one kind or another, almost every day, and the routine biopsy work in the lab has also begun to get back to normal.

We had a grand time at Christmas, which cheered everyone. Such kindness on all sides. We had an interrupted sleep on Christmas Eve, with one group of carollers after another, and a splendid packed meeting (service) earlier in the day. This last week we have been entertaining quite a lot too, and all our little parties went off well.

I have forgotten to report on the invalids. Both Mr. Rasmussen and Jack Weir are very well, out and about..... Mary Findlay had a mild attack of infectious jaundice, which lasted about two weeks but she just managed to get well in time for Christmas. She was over in the west with her family.

A party of our College and hospital staff is just back from a two weeks visit to the medical colleges in the north. I haven't had a chance yet to hear their news. A lot of methods of teaching in these colleges are quite different from ours - shorter courses, less formal lecturing and note-taking..... expect we will adopt some.

..... have got a new kitten..... grey tabby with white paws and front..... from the Consulate people who had 7 cats in small flat!

Very mild winter..... when ice good I tried to skate..... each time I sat down about 30 little boys would shout "No. 5" or "6", and so on each time I sat down, and made encouraging remarks.

Goodbye for now. Please write "Via Siberia", it may get here.

Much love, Agatha

Letter No. 257 9th. January 1949 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

It's curiously difficult to write letters when there are none to answer..... neither is there anything startling to relate. I am having a peaceful time, preparing lectures, reading, doing some Chinese, housework, mending, little walks, and a lot of mutual visiting for chit-chat, which fills up the time well. Biopsies are fairly slack, but of course I am at the lab too for a while each day. Lily has been in the house all week with a nasty cold..... however she's better, and she and I walked out to the Blind School this morning after the service, and were regaled by Mr. Rasmussen with tea and the remains of his Christmas cake. The Danes have several special kinds of little cakey things with different names, which they make at Christmas. He is much better and was over here this afternoon at the English service.

Mrs. Findlay has not been well this week. We think that if she had not caught it very early, and dosed herself 2-hourly with sulphonamides she might have had pneumonia. So Mary has been

over there this week, coping with the clinic. She had about 20 patients on Friday morning! I feel it dull without her.

Our new kitten is a great success! He is tremendously playful and has the most endearing tricks. He is not so choosy about his food as dear lamented Tigger was, but gets through a surprising amount of Kao liang.

Everyone else is flourishing..... it is a very mild winter. I haven't had a single trace of a chilblain..... partly thanks to your furry boots. Tell Miss Pim that I wear her knitted gloves, sometimes alone, sometimes under fur ones. Horrors! the kitten is crawling up my back!

We had the second little snow fall of the winter the other day, about two inches deep.....

Several friends have come from your and Lily's old home (Kirin?); nice to see them.

Please give my love to Jack and Marjorie, and all my friends.

Agatha

Letter No. 258 16th. January 1949 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

(Letter No. 7) I enclose No. 5, which came back, but as none of the others I have written have come back I am trying again.

Mrs. Findlay is much better..... not back to work yet. So Mary is still over there, running the clinic. It is really too big a job for one person (Ann Barker used to share it), and Mrs. Findlay has been trying in all directions for a doctor to help her, but so far with no success. So we arranged yesterday that I was to go three days a week, for the big clinics, until someone more suitable turns up. Of course it isn't my line, and neither my Chinese nor my medicine is adequate, but when you get anything up to 140 patients in a morning, anything is better than nothing. It will be fun for me, and will give me something to do, and I'll enjoy the walks over. They start at 9 and go on till about 1.30, so I'll have lunch there.

At the moment the students and College staff are away on a course, so I have even less to do than before. However, there are always a few people who want to go on with English.

Yesterday we East-enders all went to Tom's to eat a goose he got as a Christmas present. It was a wonderful feast, with all the extras, and everything piping hot. I don't know how his servant managed it, in a cold kitchen (the ceiling's down) on one smallish stove.

This is Sunday morning. We have just finished our house cleaning and will soon go off to the hospital service. Lily is well and busy, and so is everyone else. I can't think of more news, so goodbye for now and much love as always. Agatha

Letter No. 259 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

Letter No. 8. I do wonder whether you get any of these letters that I send off into the blue. Even if rather dull it will be better than nothing so I hope some get to you. I wish there were some to answer....

Everyone is well here now, Mrs. Findlay is much better, up and out, but still easily tired, so Mary still over there, and I go on the clinic mornings, three times a week. On Monday we (Mary and I) had 146 patients, Wednesday and Friday were not quite so hectic. I find it good fun, but difficult as my knowledge of the local dialect isn't up to all the old wives talk and my medicine is a bit hazy by now, especially doses etc..... I collected a lot of nice bits of "t'u hua" and tried them on one of my doctor friends in hospital here until she was in absolute fits and told me to be sure not to say such awful things in polite society! The worst patients are the Gynaecology ones, as they have so many peculiar ways of describing their diseases. I didn't know, for instance, that "yu hsi" (to have happiness) is to be pregnant. Then we often have some of our recent deliverers in, and all those I have met so far have been very courteous and friendly, both the men and women.

All this fills up three days a week, as I have lunch in the west and get home about 3.30 p.m.. These last few days have been amazingly mild and so the streets have been thawed to a really spring-like quagmire. One feels like taking a spade to the garden, and it's hard to believe there is at least two months of winter left. We rather dread the thaw from one point of view as all our pipes are frozen up and full to the top, even the lavatory waste pipe, and we must wait for the thaw to see if they have burst. So every drop of water has to be carried, not only in but out. The place we throw things out is shared with our Chinese neighbours, so one coughs loudly before hopping round the corner, and if there is an answering cough then one has to retreat, and make a later sortie!

My lab boy (Wang ch'un lun?) has gone back to Antung for the New Year. He has been away from home two years, so is greatly thrilled at the thought of seeing his wife and family. So I am on my own in the lab, but it doesn't matter much, as things are slack around Chinese New Year.

Our kitten is growing very big now and is a great pet. He particularly likes Lily and usually she eats her meals with him on one shoulder. He peers interestedly at each mouthful as it comes up. In the evenings, if one makes shadows on the carpet with ones hands, he goes dashing about after them, and gets worked up into a positive frenzy.

I was up at hospital today having a New Year feed of chiao tze with one of my friends there. I don't think I can eat as many as you said Dad could, but I don't do badly. In the end I arrived late for the English service, exuding a strong garlic aroma.

Isn't it lucky you sent those vegetable seeds out with Dor? Most people have none, at least no new ones, only a few left overs. Of course one can buy cabbage and carrots etc., but not things like peas, beetroot and so on, which do so well.

It will be Marjorie's birthday soon - isn't it clever of me to remember? Give them my love please. I'm not writing to anyone except you, as there seems so little chance of letters reaching you. So please, when you have a chance, give my love to Jean, Isabel, Susan, Eileen, Sally, Mary - out of sight is not out of mind, quite contrary-wise.

Much love to you as always Agatha

Letter No. 260 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

..... I went over to the west for the weekend..... on Friday morning to the clinic and stayed till after the Monday clinic.....stayed with Sandy (Webster) and Janie (Henderson), but was round at the other houses quite a lot. On Sunday morning I went with Janie, not to the West Church but to the new congregation at Ho p'ing ch'u, and had a good 55-minute sermon in a very cold church. In the afternoon we had the usual English service..... afterwards we had a great thrill, as John read out a letter he had received from John Stewart (junior -"wee John"). It was our first news of what had happened to Hester, Ella, the McTavishes and John himself. I'm glad he's with the Leo Wolffs, but I'm very sorry for Hester and Ella as I'm sure they feel rather at a loose end.

Mrs. Findlay still not back to work.... Mary is still there. I enjoy the clinic work three days a week, although a lot of it has to be guesswork, which goes against the grain. The room is too cold and too noisy to make it easy to examine patients and I find myself working by rule of thumb. Cough and no fever, not thinner, Pect. Stim.; Cough, thinner, Mist. pect sed and cod-liver oil; Cough and fever, sulphadiazine. It's not much use prescribing "rest" as one wants to do for all the T.B. cases. What would you do with a man who has a huge T.B. abscess in his buttock and a fistula in ano, who drives a carriage all day for a living, bumping about on a little hard seat? He is the only earner in the family. To "Rest" is to starve!

Yesterday I gave my first anaesthetic since the summer of 1940! Isn't it awful how time passes? They use pure ether, which I'm not used to and I thought the patient would never go under. Still it is comfortingly safe.

Yesterday I was trying to coax a little boy to open his mouth and let me see his throat. His mother gave him a shake and said to him, "Go on, she won't hurt you, she only wants to see if there are worms in your teeth."!

Lily has shaken off her cold, everyone else is well and we are all quite comfortable. The school people are on holiday of course, except for odd English classes etc., but the hospital is very busy. The kitten is saying that he has been left out in the cold quite long enough, and wants to warm his paws!!

I have put on four pounds in the last three months, isn't that good work, so you needn't imagine us all fading away.

Much love to you and to the Roywoods and any of my other friends you see. Take care of yourself, Agatha

Addendum: At the bottom of this page is written, in an odd spiky hand: " Dear Mother, I forgot to tell you to try to send letters to some place in Soviet Russia asking them to forward to me. For instance Postmaster of Vladivostok. It may reach me. But keep secret about that. You may tell it only to the kitten."

Letter No. 261 February 23 1949 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

I'm going to try a new way of getting a letter to you, as I fear the many letters I have sent in the other direction have probably all failed to reach you. Anyway, I hope you (or rather Church House) got the cables saying we were all well. That has been about our biggest worry, that our friends at home were worrying about us and there was no certain way of reassuring you. We are all well, although most people have had minor upsets during the winter, and Jack Weir and Mr. Rasmussen both had pretty bad attacks of something like typhoid. Since the change of regime, food has been much cheaper and easier to get for everyone, including us, and I have put on 4 lbs. weight since the beginning of the winter. We had already laid in our winter coal supplies and have not had to double up. So you see from the point of view of living conditions everything has been much more normal than we may have anticipated. Work for some of us has been very slack for these winter months, as there has been a long winter holiday for the schools and Medical College, and the students and Chinese staff have all been away in special training courses. The lab work has been slack too, and it is difficult to settle to preparing for future teaching, so I have been trying to turn into a G.P.! I have been going over to help in Mrs. Findlay's clinic for outpatients. It has been growing tremendously and there are also quite a few visits..... 170 outpatients on Monday. Last week both Mrs. Findlay and Mary were off with colds and temperature and I had only a new M.M.C. graduate to help me..... The Hsiso Ho yen hospital is very busy too, so Jean and Lily and Jack are all up to the eyes. Nell and Agnes are well, with not much to do; the same applies to Tom who is lonely with all his colleagues and students away on their course. In the West, all have odds and ends of work in connection with the Theological College (which still has a few students about) and odd English lessons and services. Mr. Rasmussen is still living at the Blind School.

We were very pleased recently to get letters from John Stewart in Peking. He was in great form, bursting with optimism. He has just got engaged, we don't know who to. A lot of our friends are still in Peking and Tientsin. The railway is through once more, but slow. It was good, for example, to see once more after so many months, the boy who once learnt the English alphabet on your veranda, from the youthful Jack. (Dr. Liu tung lun.)

Please pass on the news to Church House, and ask them to make sure Edinburgh has news too. There's always the chance this may reach you, while other peoples' families have no news. One can honestly say everyone is well and in no material difficulties. People have been extremely thoughtful and generous. Please pass on news also to Hugh, inadequate as it must be. I suppose Harry has left Ireland again to go back to Canada? I hope his gall- bladder

trouble has thoroughly cleared up. We heard (through John S.) that the Moderator had died. R.H. Boyd will be up to the eyes. Please give my love and greetings to all my friends, especially of course the Roywood family. Also, very especially, Jean and David (McCaughey), Mary (Ward), Susan (Montgomery), Isabel (Megaw-Kennedy), Eileen O (Bartly), Sally - I could go on saying names for a long time. Please also a note to Col. Oldham, 23/1 Amherst St., Calcutta - I did not manage to answer his last letter, and would like him to know I had not forgotten him.

Love to Margaret Alcorn, and much love to yourself, and do take care and keep fit and don't worry more than you can help. Agatha

Letter No. 262 February 28th. 1949 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

I wonder very much if you have received any of the letters, about eight in all, which I have sent in the other direction since the beginning of November. During the last few days we have had a great thrill in receiving a few letters from home, Jack Weir got one from Miss Grills, and Isabel one from Jessie Service (dated about the middle of November), and another came through Switzerland from John Stewart (senior). So it seems as though it might be possible to get letters to you indirectly through south China. I am sending this to John Stewart (junior) and asking him to send it on to Mr. Christensen in Shanghai (since that post still seems to be running, curiously enough) and he will forward it to you. Then you, please, try the same technique in reverse. Send a note to Mr. C. (remember, he is an awfully nice man and a friend of mine), enclosing an envelope addressed to Rev. John Stewart, c/o Rev. Philip Lee Wolff, Yenching University, Peping, and the letter to me inside that. Mr. C. is a semi-business man and has some mission money of ours, so it is all right to ask him to stamp letters. We will manage to fix it up with John from this end, for the next stage. I don't know Mr. C.'s address in Shanghai, but I am asking John to add it to this letter. Another possible plan is to send a letter, just one as an experiment, to me c/o Postmaster, Vladivostok, and "Please Forward."

Well now, having got these weighty matters off my chest, where does one start, supposing that is, that you have not had any of my other letters. First, I feel well and very comfortable, though not as busy as I would like, but that may come. The take-over, on November 1st., was very peaceful and easy, compared with many other places. During the first week there were daily air-raids by the defeated side, but apart from a lot of windows broken over here in the east and ceilings down, there was no damage and no one hurt in our compounds (nor anyone we knew), except a few cuts. The taking over of the city was very quick and efficient; such things as water, and electricity, trains, post etc. were started and have been better than for many months. We missionaries have been treated very courteously all through, and are still living much as we were last winter, except indeed that it has not been so cold, and food has been easier to get and cheaper. It has been a great relief to see the effect of better food on the general population, the people are visibly fatter and have more energy. No frozen bodies on the roads in the mornings, etc..

Hospital continues very busy. There will be big changes under new management, in the way of expansion. The College is to be greatly enlarged, with thousands of students and a four-year course. There has been a long holiday since November. During December a party of Chinese staff went to the big medical college north of Harbin to study the new mass-production teaching methods. Then, since about the beginning of January, all the students and a lot of the staff have been on a training course. It continues for another two or three weeks and then they will start plans for the new term. Owing to all this I have had a very long holiday. It has not really been difficult to fill in the time what with lab work, such as it is, some Chinese, medical reading, and until the students went away, quite a lot of English teaching including Acts. Then of late going over to the west three days a week to help with the clinic. It has grown tremendously, in fact to a positively embarrassing extent. One morning last week there were 170 patients, 140 is more usual. There are quite a lot of visits, especially to children of the liberating army's families. I certainly in my wildest dreams never expected myself to be doing that kind of job, and you will realise how inadequate both my Chinese and my medicine is. Still, it is good fun and an unusual experience, and I must say I enjoy it, although I have no desire to change my spots permanently.

Everyone else in our group is well (except Mrs. Findlay with "nasty colds which did not clear up"). Jean and Jack are very busy in hospital. Lily too but will be more so when her classes start next week. Nell and Agnes are preparing for a new term....

We have heard the good news that Harry's op is successfully over, also the splendid news of Hugh's job..... it would have been such a shame if he had missed the bus through being here and not got a satisfying job when he went home. I hope Hester gets something satisfactory to do, she has had a rotten time.

Much love.....Agatha

Letter No. 263 April 24th. 1949 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

Still no home news..... If you do write better try a Hong Kong address e.g. c/o D.M. Holmes, Messrs. Butterfield and Swire, Hong Kong, with a covering note. He is Pearl Fleming's brother.

Not much to report here. There are plans for starting classes in the College in a few weeks, but I won't have any Pathology to teach till August, when Class 29 starts. I don't mind a bit of a gap to finish lecture notes and avoid a busy programme in the hottest part of the summer, although in some ways I have had my fill of holidays. They have a short intensive course of about four months, and I will try some of the new techniques as an experiment, which will be quite fun. They are a nice class and keen. I have already had them a bit for histology.

Monday morning: Last night was very lively, with processing and singing and bonfires, because of the victory. (*Note 1990: Possibly the capture of Shanghai.*)

Saturday was a terrible day of wind, a real gale that shook the house and filled the air with driving clouds of dust and grit. It came up so quickly that although I hurried home to rescue my washing, I found it on the ground, minus a sock and clothes peg, which are miles away, I expect. There was a great heavy jar of antirrhinums on the porch, which I could only just carry, which had been blown clean off and smashed! It took most of yesterday morning to clean the house of the drifts of fine sand

Hospital has been having a detailed inventory, as we had in the College last week, so Lily was busy and not able to go over to the English service in the West. The hospital service was in the evening, crowded as usual. Nell took it.

We are busy in the garden these days, when weather permits. Jack has given me a bit of their ground as they have a lot and we very little. Our new neighbours are quite intrigued by all this manual labour. We chat over the fence and give them seeds. My peas are well up, but other seeds have had no rain and are hanging fire. It always amazes me that they ever come up at all in such powdery sandy soil. At home one is so used to planting things in a bog....

The city is much tidier than it was. The streets have been cleaned and the worst places levelled, and planted with trees which are the responsibility of the people living nearest, to protect and water. A great open space at the East Gate, which used to be a sort of market and such a crowd as to be almost impassable, has been cleared and planted out as a park, with trees and flowering shrubs and little paths. There are proper little platforms where you stand to wait for a tram, and queues, which do not disintegrate on the approach of a tram.

Much love, and do not worry..... love to all the family too. I wish I could write to them all but it doesn't seem worthwhile to bother people to forward any but the most essential letters when there is so little chance of their arrival. Agatha

Letter No. 264 May 8th. 1949 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

This is letter No. 9, sent south. I do so wonder if you have got any.....

The name now is really Liaoning Medical College, Hsiao Ho Yen, East Moukden, and a notice at the door says it is a part of the University of China.....

.....the whole garden, almost, is planted now. One has to take advantage of any free time after rain, and there are so many meetings to attend that it isn't always easy. I think our gardening activities are observed with considerable amusement and surprise by our new neighbours, and it makes a point of very friendly contact.

I had quite a busy day, in a nice way, as after our well-earned breakfast I went off to visit our colleagues of Falls Road persuasion. (Roman Catholics.) I don't know why I don't go oftener, as they are awfully nice and friendly. They were very interested to know where Dad was brought up, but alas his daughter had to talk to them in Chinese. Then after I got home (it's quite a long

walk) I was so stewed that a bath and some clothes washing was the order of the day. Lily was meanwhile taking big bunches of lilac to the wards in hospital, as it was just at its best, and our garden has big bushes all round. Later Mary and Pearl came for lunch, and we talked clothes with Pearl (it's quite a problem with her now as the baby is due in August), and Mary cut my hair. Then we had the English service in the K.K., taken by Lily..... the usual good tea afterwards when we swap all the gossip. Soon after that it was time for the Hospital/College service, and then Lily had another meeting and I came home to supper..... So you see, there is no monotony. Weekdays are the same. There is no very immediate prospect of starting classes as the buildings aren't by any means fit for use. The students are very busy helping with this work. I go on with preparing notes, and there is a Japanese artist now in the lab who is preparing large wall diagrams for teaching. The several hundred mounted pictures I prepared last year are very useful as a basis, but will have to be copied on a large scale to cater for the very large classes in future. It is extremely interesting to be able to see at first hand how the new ideas of teaching work out.

Mary is now settled in the west with her mother. It is really the obvious solution for Mrs. Findlay, but I miss Mary a lot, and I think she enjoyed the work over here better. However, they have plans for ten in-patients over in the west, so they will not be so restricted as before.

My latest job is the post-mortems in the military hospital. I enjoy going as they are very friendly and extremely keen to develop the Path side. One very rarely gets P.M.s in our hospital, in fact I haven't done one for over a year.

Everyone is well at the moment, and most folk are busy. Life is extremely interesting and one has no time to worry. If I knew you were as light-hearted and enjoyed life as much as I do I would be perfectly content. It is a great comfort to have such amazingly nice colleagues, every one of them so different. Do you ever get news of Hugh, I wonder, and of Dor and Mamie, and Hester, and Marshall, and Harry?

Much love..... and love to Jack and Marjorie.

Agatha

Letter No. 265 May 23rd. 1949

Dear Mother

I did not write last week as the communications in the south were probably not very hopeful, but I think I will try again, just in case. Now that Shanghai has been taken, perhaps the postal service will be better. I have still not got any letters from home, except a February one from Mary Ward, since October.... Some Danes have had quite a lot of letters both via Hong Kong and direct.

Well, things are much as before. We are all well and busy at one thing or another. I am busy preparing teaching notes. In future the students do not take notes themselves, but the stuff is duplicated and handed out to them. As the course is short it has to be very simple, and the new

emphasis is to have as much as possible expressed in diagram form. So my old notes are only useful as a foundation for me to work from. I don't know when Pathology will start, as it is not yet certain when the College will open at all, probably about the end of June. Then there is a month when my class finishes their anatomy and physiology before I start. There are two young assistants now in Pathology who will do part of the teaching.

These past few weeks I have done quite a lot of P.M.s at the big military hospital. The young doctors there are very keen and friendly, and so I enjoy going. Two nights ago I had quite a time of it getting home. The P.M. was over about 9.30 p.m. and as it was pouring rain they sent me off in a truck. The truck broke down and for over an hour they took bits out of its insides and tinkered with them, until everyone was soaked, also the inside of the engine. Plaintive requests for the Jeep from me finally bore fruit, and as we were only a few hundred yards from the military hospital we soon set off in it. It had no hood, and incidentally no lights, so we got well wet. After several hair-breadth escapes the inevitable happened and we knocked down a traffic signal, which got a bit tied up in the under parts of the Jeep so that all the water fell out of the radiator. We progressed, dry, to a garage where various sleepy gentlemen in their night attire actually succeeded in mending the leak. They decided that having no lights was all right on the main road but a bit tricky in winding pitch-black lanes, so started to mend the lights. All this time it was pouring cats and dogs. Neither the lab boy nor I had hat or coat. However, we decided it was better to give it up and walk, and at last were allowed to do so. Of course they were most frightfully apologetic and distressed about it. The boy and I waded home through rivers of mud and got in about half-past twelve! So you see, we see life!!

..... Mary and her mother very busy getting ready for opening their in-patient department. They will have ten beds, midder and gynie and have accepted nine student nurses.....

The garden is doing well, but alas those lovely seeds you sent with Dor are quite dud. Only one or two carrots came up. The Red Sea must have been too much for them, yet they were packed in lead "for the tropics". Still, one can buy lots of useful seeds.....

Very much love Agatha

Letter No. 266 29th. May 1949 Liaoning Medical College

Dear Mother

Only a few days since I sent off a letter in your direction but there is a chance of sending one as far as John, so it seems a pity to waste it. Needless to say no news from you yet. Perhaps now that Shanghai is taken, something may be done about foreign mail.....(addresses).

No news this week, really. The College is beginning to make an effort to move out to the new buildings on the other side of the river, and classes are planned to start about the middle of June. My class 29 still remains as a unit. They have a month of anatomy and physiology to finish, then start their fourteen weeks pathology. It looks as if I will be able to teach most of this course myself, with two demonstrators to help and to teach small sections of the course

themselves. I quite look forward to it, although it will be a slog. However I have my eye on a bike, which will mean I can go on living here. I feel some responsibility for this class, but none for the mob that follows, if you follow my train of thought. But delays are quite possible. I will do my best though.

I have had a bit of a cold this week, after my drenching that night when the truck broke down. Of course I should by rights have pneumonia, but am much tougher than you would think. The lab boy, just out of hospital with T.B., did not even get a cold So I have had three lazy days in the house, but am up yesterday and today. It was a good time to choose, as I have missed a great cleanliness drive. The others were hard at it yesterday, Jack polishing sterilisers all the afternoon, while Lily was buried in the storerooms. It's quite a good idea, and they seem to have got a lot of fun out of it all round. The staff of each department did their own place and now rest from their labours until it needs it again. Meanwhile I had a leisurely afternoon, tidying my linen cupboard (that sounds good, doesn't it?). The idea was to sort out all the very dilapidated things for immediate use and later abandon them, and save the others to cut a dash at the proper time. My rule now is that if something persists in turning up in your drawers for a year, and you still don't know who it belongs to, you just sit down and put a name tape on it, which saves further bother. I'm afraid my sense of property is wearing a little thin; you will have to keep a strict eye on me.

The garden is flourishing but dry. Yesterday was the first really hot day, so I also took down my heavy winter blanket curtains and put up thin summer ones, and they look so nice...

Much love, as always, and to the Roywoods and any friends you see.

Agatha

Letter No. 267 June 5th. 1949 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother....

I'm over at the Findlays this weekend..... There was a bunch of home letters a few days ago but none from you.

I left Lily in the throes of a "bed-bath" drive, the sequel to last week's cleaning drive when the hospital was tidied up. Now it's the patients' turn. The lab goes on much as usual. At the moment I have two doctor assistants and three technicians, but it ebbs and flows. In a week or two we will be flitting to the new buildings across the river, but I've got the promise of Pearl's bike so it won't be too bad. I'll probably only go once a day, and do lecture notes at home in the afternoons, so it won't be too heavy work until teaching begins, and that date is still uncertain. The students are busy with building and repairing and so one doesn't see much of them.

This afternoon the service is over here, I think Tom is taking it. I'll be going back tomorrow. Lily has Mike, the kitten, to keep her company..... Sorry this is such a dull letter. I write every week - do you get them?

Much love as always..

Agatha

Letter No. 268 June 12th. 1949 Liaoning Medical College

Dear Mother

..... Do you get my letters, I wonder?..

It is getting very hot during the days, but still very nice and cool at night. This morning I came to about half past six and languidly drew the curtain to look out, and there was Lily digging. It was her birthday yesterday, which seems to have had a stimulating effect, don't you think? She and I and Jack Weir were asked up to Tom's to a birthday party (a joint one as his birthday is today) and were regaled with great splendour. Cocktails, (vodka ones!), then salad, mutton with mint sauce, new runner beans and roast potatoes, followed by strawberry shortcake. So you see, missionary life still has its hardships. After that we played the gramophone.

I must tell you a good joke... .. someone was sorting out a lot of old boxes of stuff, so as to sell some, use some, etc. He came on a little tin box and on opening it came on a slab of chocolate. He thought of sharing it round but began to nibble at it and soon that idea did not seem worthwhile, so he just finished it off. Then he happened to look at the box it had been in, and behold it was "Laxative chocolate".... twelve adult doses at a sitting.....No need to describe the sequel!!

The Pathology lab stuff has been all moved out to the new buildings, except what we use for the day-to-day section cutting. We (the lab boys, doctors and I) are still doing our work here, as there is no teaching to be done and it seems silly to trail back and forth to the new College every day. This arrangement, while a bit muddly, works fairly well, and is very restful. I just go on working at my lecture notes at home and the others in a tiny, and as yet unoccupied, room in the College with of course frequent visits to me and vice versa. I have to start right from the beginning again with notes, as the new style requires them to be very simple, without of course leaving anything out, and expressed as far as possible not in words but in diagrams. It is an interesting experiment, but a great deal of pathology simply cannot be put into simple line diagrams to be duplicated on a smudgy machine.

..... Mrs. Findlay's... in-patient beds opened yesterdaya select few were there, mostly the Board. Tremendous need for somewhere to take in the badly-off lao pai hsing. (old hundred names, the proletariat.)..... Midder and gyne.....

Much love Agatha

Letter No. 269 June 17th. 1949 Moukden Medical College

Dear Mother

This has been a red-letter week, for three days ago I got a letter from you, the first since October, dated 17/4/49. You have "Via Siberia" on it, but there is no indication whether it really came that way. It was very comforting to realise that you had got at least some letters from me. I am very sorry that you have had bother with your hands, but I gather it is better, at least your writing in this letter is as good as ever. I do wonder who you will get in Windsor. Jim Boyd would be good, but I suppose he is well settled down in Gt. Victoria St. Poor Eileen, please give my love and sympathy to her. (I would write to her and others, but feel when so many people are using John Stewart for sending on letters, it is only fair to keep it down to the minimum. I'm sure she will understand). How very grown-up David sounds, I'll be scared of him! Interesting about Mr. Himathal, I though he had left long ago. It is very strange to hear that so few of your seeds have come up. The ones you sent me by Dor were just as disappointing. The beets were funny. I shared the packet with Jack Leggate and Tom, and we all waited patiently for at least five weeks and I gave up hope and dug up the place to sow something else. Then, just two days ago, when I was going round Jack's garden he said, "Well, the beet have done well in the end, I nearly gave them up as hopeless." And behold, a beautiful crop!! The garden is looking well, though, and we have our own peas, leeks, radishes, parsley, and potatoes, Indian corn, and eggplant coming on well.

Yesterday I got a lovely long letter from Dor. It was written on the third of May and reached John Stewart on 12th. June. She had had a letter from you in which you said you had had eight letters from me. I am so glad now that I persevered in writing. For a long time the P.O. promised nothing, and sent back a lot, but I just re-posted them in the pillar-box, and it seems to have worked!. Dor says the Barkers have invited her to join up with them for a holiday, so we know from that that they are still in Fukien. This is the only news of them we have had since October. John Stewart is greatly thrilled because his fiancé Joan Cleaver, has got to Hong Kong and he hopes to get her up to Peking in the late summer. Trust John! His letters from P. sound to us as if from a different world, although of course P. always was different from here, much more easy going and cosmopolitan.

You would be surprised how domesticated I am getting. I have just finished a little silk dress for the future Fleming baby, and am quite surprised how elegant it looks. That baby will certainly be well clothed!

College work still rather hangs fire, everything takes so much longer than they expect to complete. So I just jog on preparing teaching material, and writing up P.M.s and biopsy reports. There are more specimens than ever since I came here, which is nice. I have not forgotten that it is now four and a half years, and am making plans accordingly. There may be several, which will be a nice change from solitary voyaging. Things take a long time to arrange, so if nothing happens do not be disappointed or worried, just possess your soul in patience and I will do likewise. This letter has been written under difficulties, as Mike, the cat, is sitting pressed up beside me and putting his paw into the works whenever he can. He is a darling, so companionable and funny in his ways. I can't think why you don't get a kitten. No bother, and so much fun, not a responsibility to exercise and keep clean like a dog. Is Roy (Roywood family's dog.) still going strong?

With much love to you and everyone. Agatha

Letter No. 270 June 27th. 1949 Liaoning Medical College

Dear Mother

This weekend I was over staying with Mary and her mother, and was sitting peacefully knitting, when Mrs. Findlay came in and said, "What would you like best of anything?" I was starting to say "Two months at Pei tai ho" when she proceeded to hand me over one, two, three, four, five letters!! Yours of 10/5, two from Susan, of 21/4 and 1/5, Margaret Rankin's of 17/4 and one from Dor. Well, you can imagine what a sensation. They had come to the College and Tom had seen them and leapt on his bike and brought them over. By now everyone except Tom has had at least one family one. I had had one from you before, of 17/4. I am glad you have had some from me. I'm not clear which they were, via Siberia or sent on by John Stewart. Yours are mostly marked via Siberia, but I think they have probably come the other way. Some have two Moukden postmarks, 12/6 and 25/6

Please tell David I liked his letter very much, and congratulate him on his prize. He must be very good company for you, in and out so often. It's good news about Anne's baby. I just can't imagine her with two sons. What news of Henry and Eleanor?

We are all in good form here, just jogging along..... at the end of this month Lily goes over to the west to live for a few weeks to have a semi-holiday, help the Fleming baby into the World, and teach Mrs. Findlay's new class of nine nurses some practical nursing. The East Hospital nursing exams are on just now..... I will stay on in this house so that it will still be open when she comes back, but I won't be lonely, with Jean, Isabel and Jack on one side and Nell and Agnes so near too The College has not opened yet. The lab is slack no teaching.. ...

Everyone is well..... Agnes goes to the Blind School most days, that is her job since the K'un Kuang stopped. John Fleming and Co. are still busy in their (Theological) College. They and Mrs. Findlay's staff join up each morning for what Mary calls "Over half an hour and three hymns", I tell her it is good for her soul and I can see the difference in her since she left here. They have had several in-patients in the west.....

I think I will send this via Siberia for a change, as shipping may be uncertain for a while Much love to you, Jack, Marjorie and the children. How is the new Medical Service working out for Jack, does he regret now not getting that job? Have my two suitcases arrived? Agatha

Letter No. 271 July 3rd. 1949 Liaoning Medical College

Dear Mother

..... three days ago I got a most mysterious wire from Hong Kong, with birthday greetings and what I took to be "family all well" signed "mei-mei" (In Chinese.) ... I tried to get a cable to you some weeks ago via John when I didn't know you had had any letters so perhaps this was an answer. Lily and Agnes(had had letters) so we can hold our heads up with the Scots! The April W.M.A. minutes said you had had seven letters from me, all in one day, what fun!!

..... There really isn't any news to send. We are all well. It is still uncertain when College will open, so I am jogging along with little to do. Still, although dull, it is better than a terribly hectic teaching programme in the hottest part of the summer. I wasn't really looking forward to 1.30 - 4.30 six days a week, plus preparation, during July and August. And I don't think the students would find it easy either. So I read, prepare notes, and write the reports and do a little mild gardening in the cool of the evening, and gossip with the neighbours, and sew and wash, and eat and sleep. Not a very useful life, I'm afraid. Lily goes over to the Findlays today for a semi-holiday. I hope Mary may come and stay with me for a bit of holiday, but she is very busy. Pearl's baby is due in a month..... John, Jack Weir and Janie Henderson are all busy with College classes. Sandy's school term is coming to an end soon.

We have just had two days of almost continuous heavy rain, and a lot of thunder and lightning. The garden is a bog..... There is a plague of insects of some kind in the country, which means that crowds of school children have gone out to handpick the crops.....

I wonder if my two suitcases ever got home. We got word that Mr. Christensen had sent off all the stuff that had accumulated in Shanghai, and that may have included my two. Just use anything usable that you need, like sheet or blanket, and leave the rest aside. The precious collection of path slides that Bert sent me is there too, I just didn't dare to risk a second set getting lost. I wouldn't dare face him if that happened.

Much love to you. Don't worry about me, there is no need to, and keep well. Agatha

Letter No. 272 July 7th. 1949 Liaoning Medical College

Dear Mother

This has been a marvellous week. ELEVEN home letters! Three from you (3/3, 2/4, 24/4) three from Jack (whoopie! nos. 1, 2, 3) three from Mary Ward (30/3, 17/4 and 5/6), one from Jean McCaughey, and one from Alice (12/4). One or two were sent on by John Stewart, others have "Via Siberia" on them and others were just addressed in the ordinary way, so it does not seem to matter much how you address them..... They have all been well read and re-read.

I'm glad you went to Greenore for the wee break..... Yes, I do know it a little. Do you remember that Easter I went on a Geology excursion to Rostrevor? We tramped all over that country, including Carlingford Mountain, and I remember well coming down the mountain into Greenore and rowing across to Warrenpoint.

Lily went over to the west..... I am "alone in my glory", except for the cook and the cat..... Luckily we can get ice this year, so it is not such a job dealing with leftovers. Of course I go out to the next-door folk or the K.K. quite often for meals, or have some of them in.

Mike, the cat, is very good company. Except when sent out to the garden he sticks close beside me. Even when I have a bath, he comes too, and sits precariously on the slippery verge, watching every move in a way I found quite embarrassing at first. In the evening we go round the walls looking for spiders, his passionate joy. He sits up on my shoulder, and you can

positively hear him talk "Stop, stop, there's something up there. Steady my back legs please and let me stretch up the wall. Bother, it's only that old black smudge we looked at last night. Can we move on now? I think I see something up in that corner".

Yesterday I had our gatehouse family in for baths, three of them plus a little friend. The noise and excitement was terrific. Shrieks of joy, while the bath water turns black and soupy, and the children emerge pink once more. A very good time was had by all, and it's some slight relief to their mother who is busy and "hadden doon" with a sick husband.

Today is the double seventh, and since four a.m. we have hardly been able to hear ourselves think with the uproar..... several bands singing, processions, drumming, speechifying through megaphones across the river, and the eternal bugle practice. I have shut a lot of windows and doors and retired to the back room. To add to the je nao there have been planes dropping leaflets. They look so pretty, a great cloud of glittering white flecks against the blue sky, like flocks of white doves, but settling so very slowly, it must take about five minutes for them to reach the ground.

.....No more news..... everyone is well. Much love, take care of yourself. Agatha

Letter No. 273 July 17th. 1949 Liaoning Medical College

Dear Mother....

No more letters..... The College is on holiday now for a month. This does not make any real difference to me, as there are still biopsy reports to do and nothing else. There have been sweeping changes of plan this last week, namely the fusion of our College with the one in the west, so there will be more flitting and rearrangement of staff. It makes the date when classes may start even more uncertain. Entrance exams are going on now. The idea is to have one college of higher standard than either separately.

..... They have quite a lot of excitement in the Ai Jen Hospital in the west. Mary did a Caesarian the other day, with Lily to give the anaesthetic, and they had twins the next day, and so on. Mary and I find our mothers have a lot in common, e.g. "But I have rested, and "Oh, but I'm feeling much better than I did yesterday." Agnes Gardiner, Jack Leggate and I may be going down to Tientsin soon if it can be arranged, just a sort of trial trip, but of course go on writing letters here as usual. Travelling is naturally not easy yet, lots of red tape and long delays. It will be hotter in Tientsin, but even so it will be a nice change. We will stay in the C.I.M., I think. We have heard it is practically empty. We have also some very nice non-missionary friends there who were previously here.

.....The garden is a frightful jungle of weeds, but brilliant with portulaca. I must save some seeds of the nicest colours, because although I suppose it would not grow out-of-doors at home, I don't see why it would not grow in pots or boxes in the veranda. My other speciality is some pao mi (maize), about twelve feet high.

We heard Marshall had got a permanent church, Ballycairn, it sounds ideal for them.....

Much love as always

Agatha

Letter No. 274 24th. July 1949 Liaoning Medical College

Dear Mother

No more letters from home the latest from you was 10 May. It has been pouring much more rain than last year but it hasn't been so hot I have been packing and sorting as things seem to be moving a bit in that direction. Don't be disappointed if we are held up There will be Agnes, Jack Leggate and me, and probably Mr. Rasmussen first, then Isabel and Sandy (who aren't yet quite clear of their jobs). You will understand how sorry I am in some ways to be beginning to pack up, but I must admit I am getting a bit tired of having so very little to do.

Jack Weir has gone on a jaunt to Tientsin, and will be back sometime this week unless he gets his permit extended. I mean Peiping, not Tientsin, although he will stop off there too.

In-patients extension of Ai Jen is full up. Jean's old colleague moved over there to help. I'm still on my own in this house, but have quite a good time, being asked out to a good many meals. Mrs. Findlay is coming over today to stay here but only for one night. She's as hard to get out of her own house as you are. I've been making two very snappy petticoats out of an old bit of silk..... Mike, the cat, keeps me company although he has begun to go out at night after lady friends. He came in the other morning, very excited and talkative, with a large scratch across his nose, and as it is apparently sore he hasn't washed it since and looks very peculiar, with a clean white face and waistcoat except for a dirty patch on his nose. The garden continues to flourish, both what I have planted, and the weeds. It's really too hot to work in, or even sit out in (as well as very public), but nice to look out at.

Much love as always

Agatha

P.S. Try a letter soon to Soldiers' and Sailors' Home, 22 Hennessy Rd. Hong Kong.

Letter No. 275 July 31st. 1949 Liaoning Medical College

Dear Jack

It's a very long time since I wrote to you and Marjorie, so this week I'll write to you instead of mother, and you can share with her. I got your letter of 3/5 this week. Thank you all three very much for it. The news in it (weekending at Greenore, and the W.M.A. trip to Rowallan) will seem very stale to you now....

I am in the middle of preparations to leave here on furlough. I hope to travel with Agnes Gardiner and Jack Leggate, and there will be another trio soon after us, Lily Dodds, Isabel Fleming and Sandy Webster. I simply haven't the vaguest idea when I shall actually arrive home. You can try to imagine how complicated and uncertain travelling is now. When I left Britain I thought I had the record number of documents, permits, photos, etc., but it is nothing to this, and of course ours have to be all translated into Chinese. Then the shipping situation is a bit confused too. However, I shall do my best to be with you by Christmas.

Apart from this, not much news here. Everyone is pretty well, but of course jaded with the heat. Not that it has been as hot as last year, and there has been a tremendous lot of heavy rain. I have given up the garden in despair, and it is a jungle of huge weeds. Still, it produces some useful vegetables. I am still living alone in this house, which will be shut up when I leave. Already we have sent a good deal of furniture over to the Ai Jen Hospital and the house is a bit naked. Still, in summer one does not mind much.

Must stop now A few lines to David. Much love to you all.

Dear David. Thank you very much for your two letters..... it is so long since you wrote them. The first..... you winning second place in the race at sports. The other with the picture of the house. You have got on very well with reading and writing. I have not written you a proper birthday letter this year..... it would be funny if a birthday letter did not get to you until Christmas. It takes a long time, ask Dad to show you on the map.....

Love from Aunt Agatha

Letter No. 276 August 15th. 1949 Liaoning Medical College

Dear Mother

I didn't write last week, as I was busy with last minute preparations and thought I would wait and write from Tientsin. Our exit permits have been granted (but are not actually issued till the last minute), but a severe typhoon has damaged the railway so badly, and in so many places, that it will probably be some days or weeks before we will get to Tientsin. We hear a big bridge is down and there are a lots of other breaks, and several feet of water in Chihhsien, etc.. Still, we know how clever the Chinese are at patching up such things, so are not unduly depressed, and just jog on from day to day, ringing up the railway station daily to enquire. "We" is Agnes, Jack Leggate and me, but it looks as though, if we are delayed much longer, Isabel, Lily and now Nell may not be long after us. Sandy is probably waiting a month or two as his work is not quite finished. Shipping from Tientsin is the next big difficulty. The C.I.M. there help, but they say the only real hope is to be on the spot and take any chances there are if a ship turns up. So there will probably be a long wait there too. It is supposed to be very hard to get a ship from Hong Kong, and living there is about a pound a day. So if I get that length, and seem likely to be held up there for a long time I shall try to fly, and will pay the difference myself.

The big news this week is the arrival of the Fleming baby, a fine little girl of eight and a half pounds. Pearl started at 10 p.m. on Friday night, and the baby was born at 6.20 a.m. on Saturday. Not bad for a first baby, after 11 years of married life! You can imagine how pleased they are, they have been very keen to have children. Pearl is very well. The cook's comment on the baby was "How big!, How fat!, How clean!" Everyone is much relieved to have this safely over. She had the baby in her own house, of course, with Mrs. Findlay and Mary to help, and now Lily is installed as nurse and is enjoying herself.

I can hardly concentrate to write, for the noise of drums, bands, megaphones, and cheering. Today is the celebration of the victory four years ago of the Red armies of China and Russia over Japan. It is raining on them, poor things, but it takes more than that to damp it down.

We have had our farewell meeting in the College and hospital, a visit to the pictures, a feast and a meeting where there were lots of speeches, including yours truly, impromptu and of course in Chinese!!

No more room. Much love to you all

Agatha

Hong Kong address : Soldiers' and Sailors' Home, 22 Hennessy Road.

Letter No. 277 September 21st. 1949 Liaoning Medical College

Dear Mother

Here we are, still, waiting more or less patiently for the railway to be repaired. I suppose you heard from previous letters or the wireless that there had been a typhoon, and terrible flooding between here and Tientsin, so that bridges were damaged and a lot of the railway line impassable. There has been no through train to Tientsin for a fortnight, and still no definite word of when there is likely to be. We ring up the railway every day to enquire. You can imagine the swarms of other people doing the same thing, so I expect when trains do start it will not be easy to start. However, it is wonderful how the time goes in. I have been helping Jean to pack, as she is moving over to the west soon, and have also got this house pretty well emptied of stuff preparatory to evacuating it. The garden I have given up as a bad job, as the weeks when I was not able to do anything in it allowed it to go back to the jungle stage. We have had a terrible lot of rain, day after day (our share of bad weather on the edge of the typhoon, perhaps) so everything is a bog.

The other day Lily came over from the west for a while and we two were to go up to Tom's for lunch. The heavens simply opened over us on the way, and we were soon over our ankles in a river! However, Tom had scalding footbaths waiting, and a selection of garments, not to mention roast duck, and a little something for our stomachs' sake.

Today is Sunday. We go over to the west for the service. Pearl's baby is doing fine, and so is she. It is a great relief to all our minds to have that over, and so well over. John is a very proud father and can hardly stop grinning, and he is most daring in dandling and bathing his daughter.

Miss Bansen, one of the Danish missionaries, has come in from Suiyen (I'm not quite sure of the name) to live at the Blind School. She is old, and rather decrepit. She had an awful journey, nearly five days on the road, so she is very tired. Mr. Rasmussen is not away yet, of course, as like Agnes, Jack, and me, he has been delayed by the breakdown of the railway. It looks as if Miss Bansen will be the only foreigner in east Moukden next winter, unless someone comes over from the west to live with her.

Well, I must stop. If every stage is as long as this, we will be lucky if we see each other before Christmas! But don't worry, I am very well, and the heat is nearly over now.

Much love

Agatha

No letters from you for many weeks; latest dated May 10th..

Letter No. 278 September 1949 Liaoning Medical College

Dear Mother

Well, we are all here still, but there are rumours of the trains being through soon, so it is possible some of us may leave even this week. Most unfortunately Jack Leggate has got amoebic not dysentery, as he has no symptoms and it was found on a routine check-up, but of course he has to go through the whole treatment. It will take several more days, and then some to get over the treatment. So Agnes and I may go on ahead. Then Jack and Isabel, and the next group will be Lily and Jean McMinn and Nell Maclean. Sandy is a bit uncertain just when he will leave. There is no word of possible boats from Tientsin until the end of September, but one has to book on the spot in person so it is worth going early to get near the head of the queue. Actually, we have no idea how many people are waiting in Tientsin. Mr. Rasmussen has not got away either, of course, but will leave in a few days, if the railway is O.K.. Tom is also leaving, but the time is, as yet, quite uncertain. The rest of the folk still have work.

We have been enjoying very cool weather. In fact, I have had to do quite a lot of unpacking to get at a few woollies. If we are too long I'll have to get my tin trunk back from the agents who are to send them by freight, to get at some blankets! It is such a comfort to be cool again, and indeed there is a lot to be said for not travelling as we once expected, in the middle of summer. It is grand to be able to sit out in the porch, half in sun, I am getting quite brown again. I'm sure you would be shocked at how seldom I wear a hat. Dark glasses, and an umbrella if it is going to be a very hot sun for a long time, are all I do. I think Isabel has the only topi in the mission.

Well, the days go in slowly but pleasantly. I have been trying to play the Chinese flute this morning, and another long thing held like an oboe. Nell can produce squawks but I only wheeze. It is very funny watching someone else puffing, and we all got the giggles.

I was over for the day with Mary on Friday, and another day she came here. We just sat about and chatted. There has been a swimming pool opened at last, in the west, but absence of bathing suit, distance, and distrust of an upset due to the dubious water just at an awkward time will probably keep me out of it.

Much love to you and the Roywoods and all friends you see.

Agatha

Letter No. 279 September 5th. 1949 Moukden

Dear Mother

Well, we are still here, waiting for the wretched railway to be mended. Agnes and I really thought we were going to get off last week, but more heavy rain made another bad break, and so we didn't get off. Dr. Liu got back a few days ago, but had to leave all his luggage and crawl over the remnants of a broken bridge, and then board a second train. There's not much point us doing that and then having to sit and wait for our luggage to turn up! Anyway, we can't buy tickets till the line is through and the latest word is "three or four days".

We had the christening of the Fleming baby yesterday. First a short service taken by Tom (the senior minister on the field) at which there was quite a crowd, then a smaller group for cake and ice-cream on the Fleming lawn. The baby, Jennifer Mary, behaved very well, just one squawk during the service, and some healthy yelling later on to show what she could do. Mary and I did the decorating of the chapel (of the Theological College), with lots of flowers, all in pale pink and mauve and white. The font was an electric light shade in sort-of pseudo-alabaster, set on a cut-glass posy ring upside-down, but it looked well, and you would never have guessed what it was. Lily made the christening robe. I thought they ought to have had a programme, saying, "Baby by Rev. and Mrs. Fleming, baptism by Tom, decorations by Drs. Findlay and Crawford, and sound effects by Jennifer Mary"!!

Life goes very peacefully and uneventfully over here in the east. I spend most of the day in the next-door house, and just go back to my house to sleep. As I have been expecting to hop off any day I paid off the cook at the end of the month..... I am getting through a lot of reading

The other day I had a letter from Dor, posted last June, from Hong Kong; I gather she was still in the old job. It gave me some news of the Assembly, and she had had a letter from you. This is the first letter I have had for a long time yours, I think, dated in May..... I have written almost every week all the time. A letter from John Stewart (senior, Scotland), came, written I think early July, by the northern route. They had evidently had occasional letters up to that date.

The swallows are very excited, getting ready to go south. I can't think why they make such a fuss, when they don't have bother with trains and such like. But the autumn is not nearly as interesting as the spring.... I have not seen any passage migrants yet. Nothing but the

ubiquitous swallows and a few shrikes. It seems odd in the kind of garden that at home would have a great variety of small birds.

Much love as always. Agatha

Letter No. 280 September 14th 1949 Hsin Hua Nan Lu, Tientsin

Dear Mother

Well, Agnes and I are here at last in the C.I.M. in Tientsin, waiting for a passage to Hong Kong. We have a passage booked from Hong Kong to London, leaving October 7th, S.S. Glenartney, but it seems very doubtful if we shall catch it, as the boats here have few passages and are all booked up. There is always a chance someone may fall out, and then we get their places. We have had a hectic three days rushing from one office to another and getting a most searching medical examination, complete with Khan test, X-ray, chest etc.....isn't it daft? It is fun being here, though, and a real change and holiday, and only delay to try our patience, no worry. I will write a proper letter in a few days. This is just to catch a chance of forwarding letters, and is only a hasty scrawl at the end of a busy day. Isabel, Lily and Jack arrive tomorrow.

Much love, see you soon (I hope!)

Agatha

Letter No. 281 September 25th. 1949 On board S.S. Hunan, between Tientsin and Hong Kong.

Dear Mother

Well, I feel this is the first real letter I've written to you for about a year and I hardly know how to start. It will take a bit of time to get accustomed to saying what I like instead of sticking to the weather and the cat all the time. You will have got a cable by this time I expect, so you will know that Agnes and I have passages on S.S. Glenartney leaving Hong Kong on the 7th. of October. The ports we call at are Singapore; October 11th., Penang; October 21st., Colombo; October 24th., Aden; October 30th., Suez; November 3rd., Port Said; November 4th., Genoa; November 8th., and London; November 14th.. I expect we will have to spend a night in London and cross by Liverpool, arriving on the morning of the 16th.. If I'd been alone I'd have gone to Jean McCaughey's but I'm afraid two of us would be an imposition with their big household. Anyway this is all quite a long way away still, but it does seem odd that it should be happening at all.

There is so much to tell you about the last year that I think I'll try to write it all down in order, when we get on to the Glenartney, instead of doing it in snippets. Just now I have a lot of letters to write for people in Moukden and have hardly got round to my own friends at all.

I wonder when you last got letters from me. I have not had any from you since June, but got some news indirectly in a letter from Dor. Incidentally it looks as though I would not have time for a trip up to Swatow to see Dor as I had hoped very much to do if delayed in Hong Kong.

Agnes and I are together on this ship and we are steaming steadily over a blue calm sea, and no one seems in the least interested in us, so the blockade cannot be very serious. We are very comfortable, in a cabin for two, and feel very well.

There are two Danes from Antung also on this ship. When we left Tientsin, Isabel Fleming, Lily and Jack Leggate were there, waiting for passages and will probably follow in a week or two. Nell Maclean and Jean McMinn were planning to leave Moukden at about the end of September after Jean had done a locum for the Findlays to give them a holiday. When we left Moukden, on September 13th, the Findlays were trying hard to get permits to go to Peking for a couple of weeks, but it looked as though they would not succeed in getting travel permits. Then, Sandy Webster was expecting to leave about the end of October, and Tom perhaps sometime later. That will leave a group in West Moukden, where the Theological College and Ai Jen hospital are going ahead with little interference. There will be Mrs. Findlay and Mary, John and Pearl Fleming and the new baby daughter, Janie Henderson and Jack Weir.

Just why our group are leaving is a long story, and I don't think I can launch out on it now. It boils down to the fact that some people still feel they have worthwhile jobs and others feel they were doing more harm than good. And of course there were lots of other reasons - family, health and so on - in each case. As for me, my big reason is that I just did not see a possible missionary job in front. There has been no teaching (of medical subjects) in the Medical College since the Communists came in, and almost a year of unemployment was a bit wearisome, but of course that was temporary. The new medical curriculum was just being started when I left. Everything was very much changed. Our College had been merged with the big government medical college in West Moukden (previously the Japanese one) and then the whole thing reorganised, some batches of students sent north to Ch'ang ch'un, or to a place north of Harbin. I heard that the pathology class had about 1000 students and 34-40 teachers. The crucial difficulty to me was that one's real missionary work which lay mostly in the informal contacts with students would have been impossible. Even if one's professional work had been acceptable (and I think it might have been), one's nationality and religious background was deeply suspect. Friendly visiting etc. was practically nil, and for one's friends' sakes not to be encouraged. I believe that the best thing for the church in Manchuria now is to lose, so far as possible, its foreign and "imperialist" flavour, and "work out its own salvation" in this new situation. That it can and will do so I feel quite sure, because the vitality and strength of the Christian group is wonderful, but this does not depend on the presence of foreigners. However, this is my personal opinion only and I don't want you to repeat it, because it is obviously, not shared by those who have decided to remain and it is not fair to them to broadcast this point of view too widely at home. After all, there is no reason to assume that God wants all of us to do the same thing, and indeed it certainly looks as if He didn't.

In case you hear I have been sent home on grounds of ill- health, I'd better expand that too. During the last year, or a little more, I have had several bouts of feeling tired and seedy with a temperature varying from normal to a maximum of about 99.4 degrees, this going on for a few weeks and then clearing up for a few months. I had one go in June, with a slight cough and Dr. Liu X-rayed my chest. He saw the slight shadowiness around the root of both lungs, which was

there several years ago, and which Dr. Crozier then thought was probably the remains of all my bronchitis etc. as a child. It had not, to my eyes, changed at all, but on the strength of my being a bit under par, a medical certificate was duly sent to Conference, recommending furlough. I agreed to leave with Agnes and Jack Leggate, not because I felt my state of health was anything to worry about, but because of the reasons connected with the work given above. You see, for the sake of one's friends it did not do to be too candid about reasons for wanting to leave. I got quite well soon after this decision was taken, and have had great difficulty in looking fragile ever since!! In talking to friends at home I think just say - what is quite true after all - that I was almost due for furlough anyway. Don't say anything about being ill, or they will laugh when they see me, fat and flourishing and well sunburnt.

I expect you wonder whether I expect to be back in Manchuria. Well, my dear, I just don't know. It just does not seem possible yet to look ahead very far. I want to get home and enjoy myself with you and all my friends and buy a lot of clothes and try to catch up on all the new developments in pathology. Do you realise we have had no ordinary mail, papers etc., since December 1947, and apart from a few American journals and an odd B.M.J. I don't know what may have been happening in the medical world. I do hope I won't have to speak at meetings. It would be a nightmare at the best of times, and at the moment so extremely hard to know what to say and what not to say.

By the way, did the two suitcases sent home last year ever reach you? One was the Revelation suitcase and the other the small one you sent out with Marshall. When you write, please let me know. At the moment I am separated from my heavy luggage (as usual!) Before we left Moukden, the railway line had been broken for five weeks by floods, and when things got going again freight seemed to be more bogged up even than passenger traffic. We never expected to get away from Tientsin so quickly, so we arranged that if the luggage turned up soon it would be sent after us, and we hope it will be in time to catch us up on the Glengartney. I have enough in my two suitcases to keep me warm enough all the way, but if I don't get at my trunks on the way I may arrive very shabby in my old green coat and skirt and ever older Burberry!

You will see from the itinerary that we seem to be a long time in Singapore. I think there should be time for an air letter to catch us there, as we will probably not leave until the 19th. or 20th.. Hester Stewart is in Singapore now, you know. It will be nice to see her again. I think "S.S. Glenartney, The Glen Line Shipping Company", will be enough address to reach us in any of the ports.

We hear that Hong Kong is absolutely bogged up with people trying to get away, and with Chinese too. Dr. Hou is there, in the University of Hong Kong. I'm looking forward tremendously to seeing him. We wired from Tientsin asking for accommodation in the Soldiers' and Sailors' Home, which has one flat for missionaries, and if full up I expect they will find somewhere else for us to stay.

We are really having the most amazing voyage from Tientsin, five days on end now and almost dead calm, and blue sky and sea. we pass fairly near the coast of China, and there are lots of little islands which are occupied by the Nationalists and are the base from which they blockade Shanghai and other ports about here.

Please forward the enclosed (mostly for Tom, another big batch went direct to his mother.

Much love to you and all my friends..... Much love to Jack and family. I hope they will write too.

I hope this is legible, it's blowy on deck.

Agatha

Irish and Scottish Presbyterian missionaries who worked in Manchuria during 1946 1950. (See also the list in Austin Fulton's "Through Earthquake wind and Fire".)

Scottish

Dr. Ann Allen (wife of Rev. Tom Barker)	Doctor, West Moukden
Rev. James Findlay	Theological College
Dr. Rose Findlay	Doctor, West Moukden
Dr. Mary Findlay	Doctor, M.M.C.
Rev. John Fleming (and Pearl, his wife)	Theological College
Miss Isabel Fleming	M.M.C.
Mrs. Janie Henderson	Teacher, West Moukden
Dr. Hugh Garven	Dean, M.M.C.
Miss (now Rev.) Ella Gordon	Theological College and Liaoyang.
Dr. Jack Leggate	Doctor, M.M.C.
Dr. Jean McMinn	Doctor, West Moukden and Kaiyuan
Miss H.B.K. (Nell) Maclean	Teacher, East Moukden
Mr. George Taylor	Master of Works
Mr Alexander (Sandy) Webster	Teacher, West Moukden

Irish

Rev. Tom Barker	Theological College
Rev. Tom Blakely	Theological College and MMC
Dr. Agatha Crawford	Doctor, M.M.C.
Miss M.L. (Lily) Dodds	Nurse
Miss Agnes Gardner	Teacher, East Moukden
Rev. A.K. Johnston (Canadian)	Theological College
Rev. Marshall McCreery	Church work, Chihnsien
Miss Hester Stewart	Teacher, Blind School
Rev. John Stewart	Stuck in Peking
Dr. Jack Weir	Teacher, non-Christian College, West Moukden.

Associated

Rev. Rasmussen (Danish Lutheran)	Blind School
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Some people had to leave quite soon after arrival for serious health reasons or because their work was totally brought to an end. A group from East Moukden (including A.R.C.) left between September and November 1949. Six remained in West Moukden. (John and Pearl Fleming, Rose and Mary Findlay, Jack Weir and Janie Henderson.) They left in August 1950 after the Chinese Synod had decided to "advise the withdrawal of the remaining missionaries."

Agatha Crawford. December 1990.
Revised and corrected 1994.

POST SCRIPT

This post-script was written aboard ship between Hong Kong and England. A few sections have been omitted here as they were written as "aides memoirs" for me on things like the organization of the Theological College and the boys' school in West Moukden (about which I had little knowledge) for use as background when I gave talks to Church groups in Ireland. I have also omitted one or two sections where I let off steam concerning "them" in a way which was wonderfully cathartic and comforting at the time but which is not reasonable now. Also, as I am still fearful of naming Chinese friends in a "public" forum, the actual names of Chinese have been deleted.

Agatha R. Crawford

December 1990.

During the first few months after the occupation of Moukden by the Communists I made spasmodic efforts to keep a diary, but it became more and more difficult to write down any frank account of what was happening. Before leaving I burnt what I had written and so what is written here is merely the memory of past events, and probably inaccurate in detail especially as to dates.

During the last week in October 1948, it became increasingly clear that the entrance of the Communists would not be long delayed. High-ranking officials and army officers left by plane, and government offices became increasingly more deserted. Gunfire was heard in the distance, but rarely loud enough to rattle the windows. During these days arrangements were still going on for evacuating the senior classes of the Medical College to Wuchang and even on Saturday, the 30th, packing was still going on. On Saturday afternoon, however, several members of College staff whose lab equipment was not yet completely packed, stopped work and went home, showing that, in their opinion, it was now hopeless. It was on this day also, I think, that ground staff etc deserted the airport.

The Pathology professional exams. took place on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday of this week. A few students had left by the last planes for Peking but nearly all turned up for their exams. I remember that during the written paper on Saturday morning (October 30), gunfire was particularly loud and one bang made the whole roomful of students duck simultaneously. It reminded me of a sea anemone, when you touched it, especially the way the individual heads came up one by one afterwards!

It was on the Friday or Saturday that Tom Blakely went to a government office to get our identity cards stamped for travel to Wuchang. He found no officials, only an old servant who knew where the seal was. Since neither Tom nor he knew how to write the characters for Wuchang, they made out the passes for Shanghai! On Saturday and Sunday Jack Leggate went several times in the hospital truck to collect bags of flour at the airport. There too, all responsible people had left and there was only a youngster who said, "help yourself."

On Sunday morning, 31 October, there was total silence in the whole city. Then the distant sound of a church bell. Lily said, "It is the bell of the Catholic Cathedral calling their people to prayer."

On Monday morning, 1st Nov., the last of our daily College staff meetings was held at 8.30 a.m. It only took a few moments to admit in words that the move to Wuchang was off. It was decided that we should unpack the College equipment in case the packing cases proved too conveniently tempting and were shipped off as they were to some Communist college. As we left the meeting I met a student of Class 28 and asked him to go and find some of his friends to help me unpack. In a few minutes six or eight of them were working well and the floor of the big front classroom was knee-deep in straw and paper. It only took an hour to undo the work of days. When only detailed tidying remained to be done they ran off elsewhere to see the fun. The lab technician and I continued work, cleaning up the microscopes and sorting out the slides until about 11a.m. When there was a sudden burst of shots quite close. We ran to the window and saw the courtyard in front of the hospital full of a melee of soldiers, running in through the big gateway. In a few minutes it became evident that there were two kinds of soldiers, the Kuo chun (Nationalists) in their big fur hats with earflaps and laced boots, were throwing down their rifles and peeling off their bandoleers. The others had soft cloth shoes, and pale khaki caps - the Pa Lu (Eighth Route Army) at last. The technician was at my elbow, whispering "Pa Lu, Pa Lu" (he was a refugee from Antung) then recovered himself and started to reassure me. The old servant also came in to tell me not to be frightened, they would not hurt foreigners. I found all this kindly solicitude rather touching. People were now crowding out on the College steps to watch, among them Jean McMinn, so we went down too. Then Jean went down among the soldiers to try to find the officer and tell him not to scare the patients. What had happened was that a lorry load of fleeing Kuo chun had stopped at the hospital and run in to hide, and a lorryful of Pa Lu chasing them naturally ran in after them, but I don't think they can have been shooting to kill as no-one was even hurt, just windows broken etc.. The clerks in the office got quite a shock when their door burst open and the Kuo chun soldiers rushed behind the desks for shelter, with Pa Lu after them! By the time we got out, they were beginning to load prisoners, rifles, etc. on to the two lorries. The Pa Lu soldiers were well armed, and all looked the same. I asked one soldier how you told an officer from an ordinary soldier, and he looked rather scornful and said, "There is no difference. We don't wear good clothes", and looked me up and down, but I had on a very dirty and ragged "white" coat over an old "mien p'ao" so was even shabbier than he! The lorries drove off, leaving a few soldiers who hung around the Hsiao Ho yen most of the day.

My housemates had missed all this fun, Mary being in the operating theatre, and Lily in bed with a cold. I heard that the Sister in charge of the theatres ran out into the corridor and accosted the Pa Lu angrily, "Be quiet. We are operating." And they were! During lunch we saw two Pa Lu coming up the garden path but they just looked round and did not come in. We were having Chinese food - Kao liang (sorghum), and cabbage, and felt that if they did come they would quite approve our simple diet. The rest of the day was quiet, but that night the city was bombed at intervals by Nationalist planes. Most of the bombs were said to have fallen in Tieh Hsi and around the arsenal to the east of us.

Nothing much happened on Tuesday morning. I was busy bringing the lab back to normal and chivvying the hospital workshop for stoves for our house. Planes were heard overhead at lunchtime and suddenly there was a terrific bang, which brought down bits of ceiling and broke most of the windows on the east and south sides of the house. Mary was still in bed - with jaundice - but luckily had moved a day or two before from the little east bedroom, where a whole window frame was blown in and the bed was covered with glass. It was all such a mess that we decided to start with a cup of tea, when Tom Blakely came in. He had had a very narrow escape as he was actually looking out of an east window, and the glass in front of his face was the only pane on that side of the house, which was not smashed. This bomb must have hit an ammunition dump; the huge column of smoke and dust, which rose, reminded us of atom bomb photographs. I went over to the College soon after and found everyone had run off in great panic except the Pathology servant, who was pottering about the lab mourning the broken windows. In the museum quite a number of specimen jars had been thrown from the shelves to the ground, but only two were broken. A row of microscopes in my room showed a curious blast effect the doors of the cases (which had not been locked) were all standing ajar and each microscope had moved out about one inch.

I don't remember what happened the rest of the day, except that I discovered how long it takes to burn a book and we had our last tin of sausages, with Jean McMinn to help us eat it. That night was very disturbed by people hammering and shouting at the compound gates. We thought the gates would be broken in, and in the end Lily and I moved heavy furniture against our front door and downstairs window shutters, which made us feel more secure. We thought it was probably robbers taking advantage of a time of unrest, but heard next morning that it was Pa Lu soldiers looking for billets.

The next few days are rather mixed in my recollection. Classes were temporarily suspended in the College; partly I think to give people a chance to get their broken windows stopped up. This was quite a problem as wood and glass were both so hard to get and very expensive. We fixed ours temporarily with old pieces of wood and cardboard, and later used glass from old pictures left behind in the attic by colleagues no longer in China. Luckily the weather at this time was remarkably mild, the first really cold snap did not come till the middle of November.

Leaflets had been dropped by Nationalist planes to say they were going to bomb Moukden daily between 12 and 2 p.m., and apart from the first raid at night and a few other bombs; they kept pretty faithfully to this arrangement. The danger spot was the arsenal to the east of us. Every morning the road past the front of the College was crowded with people carrying their children and more portable belongings on handcarts or occasionally on a "ma ch'e" (horse carriage). In the evening, when the raid was over, the stream flowed in the opposite direction. The bombs were dropped from a great height, and from accounts we heard, very accurately on the whole. Some of our neighbours put in a lot of hard work digging air raid shelters in their garden, but we did not bother and sure enough, the raids did not last more than about a week. I remember digging in the garden one lovely afternoon while the planes came round again and again. As they reached the level of the arsenal one could sometimes see the sunlight glint on the falling bombs, and then there came the dull heavy explosions.

It was on the 3rd November, I think, that Dr. Pai visited the hospital. I was passing through the courtyard in front of the men's hospital when a man in blue uniform came in through the main gate. He was followed by an armed guard and looked round eagerly. Two hospital servants rushed out and shook hands with him and he gave me a look full of curiosity, but did not speak. He was interviewed by Chinese members of staff, but did not see any of the foreigners, although he asked what foreigners

were here. The story is that he asked what we were like and was told "Oh, not bad at all, they eat kao liang just like us".

When the bombing was over, classes restarted in the College, in a spasmodic sort of way. Of course class 28 (which had been my class for Pathology) had already had their professional exam and were beginning attendance in hospital. I gave them a few (optional) Pathology demonstration classes to parallel what they were being taught in the wards and they nearly all came. They were very keen on their work now, and some even used to come to the lab to see the biopsies of cases they had seen in hospital.

It was, I think, about the 5th or 6th of November that Mary and I went to the bank to try to change some U.S. dollars into the new currency. The streets were very quiet and orderly. Indeed there was, by all accounts, little or no disorder or looting during the transition period, and the Communist troops themselves were well disciplined and courteous. There was such a crowd outside the bank the first day that we went that it was hopeless, so I went again early next morning. In the end a soldier directed me to a side gate where a crowd of about 60 people were waiting. As usual someone began to talk to me ask me what country I came from and did I belong to the church. Everyone listened with interest, and then to my horror a man next the gate into the bank began to bang and rattle at it and shouted "K'uai i tien rh, pa! Wai kuo jen lai la." (Hurry up! A foreigner has arrived.) I protested vigorously that I was in no hurry and would of course wait for my turn, but a soldier inside the bank had unlocked the door and was peering out. He beckoned me in and the entire crowd pushed me to the front (I saw now that they all had numbered tickets!) and in I went. It was quite normally bank-like inside and in a few minutes I had changed my dollars and was shown out by another door.

All this time we were, of course, wondering greatly what the future of our institutions would be. One afternoon the head of the Ministry of Education (Ch'e pu chang) came to visit the College. He was a gentle old man with an arthritic knee. He said a lot of vaguely benevolent things to the effect that any person or institution which were willing to serve the people would be welcomed by the new government. The government were also very willing for any private schools and colleges to continue, although there might be some changes - the addition of "cheng chih" (politics, or rather Communist doctrine) to the curriculum. This sounded good and we were very hopeful of some arrangement that would allow the college and schools to continue with enough independence to preserve their Christian flavour.

I forget when it was that we began to realise the true state of affairs. One crucial difficulty was that no money from abroad was to be allowed into the country. The government could not be expected to finance the College unless they had control of the running of it. The students had a meeting and we were told that they were 100% in favour of petitioning the government to take over. This was followed by a staff meeting at which practically all the Chinese members also agreed that the only solution was to ask the government to take over the running of the College. Only the foreign staff, and one or perhaps two Chinese, were inclined to think it a pity to give in to the pressure of circumstances too easily. The Chinese staff were, I think, unanimous that to close the College was simply not practical politics. The findings of this meeting and of the students' meeting then went before the Board, which also decided to petition the government to take over. This was the beginning of a long period of negotiations which dragged on through December and January until a formula acceptable to both sides was found and signed

One effect of this movement on the part of the College was that the hospital was dragged in too. Theoretically, if allowed to charge fees, the hospital might have continued as an independent,

Christian organization, but the government authorities considered it, and with some reason, as essentially the clinical field for the Medical College, and inextricably bound with it. There was, in the hospital, a nucleus of people with a much stronger urge towards independence, and more willingness to take the risks involved in trying to keep outside the official framework. But so much agitation was stirred up among the nurses and servants, mostly by the more ardent revolutionaries among the College students, that it soon became obvious that it would be quite impossible to run the hospital as an independent institution. It is curious to look back now on the record of these negotiations over College and hospital. In one communication from the government it is stated that under certain circumstances they "might be prepared to consider" undertaking responsibility for running these institutions. This is a curious way of expressing what was already a detailed plan! The "conditions" under which the government undertook to "tai kuan" - take control - for eight years were also, in view of later events, rather ironical. However, all this is recorded in detail elsewhere. (1990: *I think now that it was Chinese courtesy not to grab at it too quickly.*)

During the weeks before Christmas the students had little to do, and I was very pleased to find that my English bible-class survived, although only a few girls came. The students were constantly holding meetings and hearing lectures and were most enthusiastic over the new regime. I remember the joyful face and shining eyes with which one girl told me "we have democracy now, meetings every day!" They were very friendly and came freely to my house, indeed I had one or another group for English almost every day.

Early in December, the graduation ceremony for class 26 took place. It was an odd affair in some ways. On one side of the platform were the staff, looking self-conscious in academic robes. On the other, the distinguished "lai pin" - guests - in khaki or blue uniforms and, as always, wearing their caps. We started with a hymn, I think it was "Onward Christian Soldiers" and a reading from Luke, Chapter 4, verses 6 - 21. Then speeches by the guests. They were all communist leaders and mostly had southern accents so I did not understand much. One man, who later had a lot to do with organizing the political training of the students, described the new medical ethic. Formerly, he said, a doctor's first duty was to his patient. If a person was ill, then the doctor treated him as well as he could, no matter who he was. Now that was all changed. The doctor's first duty was now to the Party and to the revolution. If the person belonged to the Party or was potentially on the side of the Party, then the doctor might treat him. If, however, the person was antagonistic to the party, the doctor's duty was to let him die, and the sooner the better! To hear such a doctrine preached (that is the right word) from the platform of our College to a graduating class made one feel sick. It was not only pre-Christian, it was pre-Hippocratic. None of the Christian visitors were asked to speak and the only foreigner to take part was John Fleming, who pronounced the benediction.

Shortly before Christmas, a party of Chinese College staff, and one or two from the hospital, and some from the Nan Man Medical College (formerly the Japanese one) went north to the Medical Colleges at Harbin and Cha-ma-szu to learn something of the new methods of medical teaching. At that time the course lasted a year; three months of communist doctrine, one month of manual labour and eight months of "technical education." It was everywhere assumed that medicine was a branch of technical education and very much on a par with engineering. One felt that the human organism was considered as an engine, and one merely had to learn where to apply a little oil or how to change a damaged part. The emphasis was always on the how, rarely on the when and never, as far as I could see, on why.

The main principles on which they were working were:-

1. Mass production to meet the needs of a) the army and b) the great mass of the rural population now without any medical help. This was a good idea, if not overdone, but a thousand students simply cannot be turned into useful doctors in 8 months. Perhaps if they had concentrated on simple first-aid and the use of half a dozen drugs they could have done a great deal to serve the "lai pai hsing" - the people. But the aim was to produce, for example, a surgeon capable of tackling any operation, and the result was ignorance combined with the most dangerous over-confidence.

2. Specialisation, again to save time. A student was trained from the start to be either a surgeon, a physician or a specialist in eyes, ears, nose, throat and skin - wu kuan. Ultimately each village was to be served by a team of three, one of each.

3. Visual education. The minimum of theory and the maximum of practical experience. The students did not take notes themselves, but each student was given a copy of notes prepared by the teacher, with numerous diagrams and very little written matter. In addition, large numbers of wall pictures, diagrams, and models were used. It was probably to some extent a picturesque exaggeration, but I once heard the boast that even an illiterate, unable to read Chinese characters, would be able by this method to graduate as a doctor.

The students at Chu ma szu lived an almost monastic life. They were never allowed out of the university grounds and every minute of their time was occupied by organized activities. The proportion of men to women students was roughly, I think, 3 to 1, and men and women worked, ate and played together; they slept in different dormitories. The students were organized into groups of three, often two men and one girl and these three were together from morning to night, sharing in all activities. Any sort of individual activity was firmly discouraged and more or less impossible. Each group was supposed to include one bright student, one of medium intelligence and one stupid one, and the best student was responsible for seeing that the other two understood their work. (Later I heard that this practice was to be abandoned as it tended to slow down the progress of the brighter students and gave them no time at all for individual study. I don't know if this reform has actually been put into practice).

These students at Cha ma szu got free tuition, free food and clothes, even paper, pencils etc. were supplied. They had three good meals a day and no worries on the material side. They were said to be 100% enthusiastic about their College and their future work for their country. No one wanted freedom to go out, or to do anything outside the organized routine.

Even their recreation was organized to the last minute to promote the end in view. For example, special packs of cards were prepared for their games; there was a pathology set, for example, (I never saw it) each card representing some fact or object in connection with pathology, so that even when playing games they unconsciously soaked up medical knowledge. Singing is another great recreation, and these students had only two kinds of songs: (1) Communist doctrinal ones and (2) medical ones. I heard one about the structure of granulation tissue, how it filled a wound, became covered by epithelium, and what happened when infection was present. These songs were often made up by the students and, if good, were adopted by the whole body.

An example was described of a day's teaching. Supposing the subject for the day was Hernia. In the morning the class would meet in groups of about 30, each with its teacher (very junior - often a graduate of the previous class.) They would first review the anatomy of the region, with the help of

numerous large wall diagrams and ingenious models. After a time, the class would break up into the groups of three to discuss together what they had seen, and make sure they were all quite clear about it. The teacher would be on hand for questions and criticism. The second stage was the performing of the operation for hernia, on dogs. First the teacher would demonstrate it, then, in theory, each group had one dog to practice it on. Rumour said that so many thousands of dogs had already been rounded up and used by the university that you could not find a free live dog north of Harbin! The teacher watched and criticized the work of each group, and afterwards the whole class discussed difficulties, errors in technique, etc., and voted on which group had done the operation best.

In the afternoon, the students met in hospital and theoretically, the students themselves then did the operation on live human patients. Obviously in practice, each student could not possibly have a patient to himself, as the supply of hernias could hardly keep up to the vast numbers of students. But the boast was that a student under their system might know nothing whatever of hernias at 6 a.m., and by 6 p.m. he had actually successfully performed the operation.

After all this was over, the class met again to discuss the day's work and to compare notes. Finally certain students met the teacher to tell him in what way his teaching had been inadequate, or not clear.

Owing to the large number of students, all at the same stage, there were altogether about 20 - 30 (?) junior teachers. These, so far as I could make out, led a hand-to-mouth existence, being taught by the department head what they would pass on to the students the next day. Each junior was only responsible for a very small section of the full course, and taught the different groups in rotation. This was said to be a satisfactory system, as what they had to teach was down in black and white in the students' notes, and there was little risk of getting into deep water by encouraging the students to think and ask "why". Also noteworthy is the absence of direct contact between students and an unpicked variety of patients. At the best a student encounters one example of each disease, and even then the emphasis is on operative technique, not on history, aetiology, symptoms, signs, differential diagnosis, or treatment after operation. How to operate, yes, but not when. Clinical experience was something to be soaked up without guidance after graduation.

I will describe now a demonstration of this method of teaching that I saw some months later, during July I think, at the Nan Man Medical College in West Moukden. It was a demonstration of the first class in surgery and the subject was "How to scrub up for an operation" and "Local Anaesthesia". There was a teacher and a group of students. The teacher showed them how to put on gown and mask, how to scrub the hands and, for how long, how to put on rubber gloves, and so on. True to the theory, he simply demonstrated what to do, in great detail and very clearly, getting the students to imitate him, and to repeat the different steps of the procedure. There may have been a brief passing reference to the object of all these manoeuvres, but if so I did not catch it. The fact that the teacher himself had lost touch with underlying principles was seen when he showed them how to pull on a rubber glove and he then proceeded to smooth it onto his left hand with his bare right hand. He obviously did not know that even a scrubbed hand (especially if sweating) is only relatively sterile, and should not touch the outside of a sterile glove.

After this, which took about one and a half hours, a small trolley was wheeled in on which was a large dog, roped securely so that it could not move a muscle, and its jaws bound up cruelly tight so that it could not make a sound. Its eyes were rolling wildly and it was panting hard. Its shaved side was cleaned up with iodine etc., and a local anaesthetic injected by the teacher. After an interval much too

brief for the anaesthetic to have had full effect, the teacher made incisions and showed how to sew them up. At this point everyone was crowding round to look, and as it was impossible to see or hear, I went away. I heard later that after removal of the dog there was some discussion in which members of our staff criticised quite vigorously, especially the lack of a theoretical basis to give the student an understanding of why the various methods were necessary.

December 1948 (?) It was a lovely afternoon and I went for a stroll along the bank of the Hsiao he yen, eastwards. Ahead were two small boys, about 12 years old, in uniform, running and skipping about. Beyond them was a dark mass lying near the edge of the high bank. One boy ran ahead to look at it. The other called to him. "Is he dead?" Answer, "Yes, quite dead. The dogs have been eating him." The second boy caught up with his friend and they both stared at the body. Then one said, "Let's push him into the river." They heaved together and got him over the edge - bump, bump, splash as they jumped about and cheered. They had shrill little voices. They continued their walk, but I had had enough and turned back.

Christmas 1948. As Christmas approached we wondered whether there would be any Christmas festivities. Neither the College or the hospital had yet been taken over and the hospital was going on much as usual outwardly, though with much internal unrest and agitation. However, a day or two before Christmas, people suddenly became busy with preparations. The old decorations were rooted out and the wards were decorated. The nurses' office got busy over presents for all the staff and, although there was a little unpleasantness when one group complained that they did not get as much as some other class of worker, it all blew over. On Friday afternoon, Christmas Eve, there was a Christmas service in the big double classroom in the College, and we went in to find it packed. Not only was the hospital staff well represented but there were many (50 or so) medical students.

Next morning, Christmas Day, there were services in all the wards, taken by various people, mostly foreigners. I went to the children's service, taken by Lily. The rest of the day was equally busy. We went to the Blind School for a while to their service and entertainment. The local children who come to their Sunday School were there, 60 or 70 of them, all agog with excitement. After a while we had to leave to get back for the hospital feast at 3.30. One or two of the little fat pigs, which had been roaming the compound, had met their end, so we were well filled up with "fei chu jou". (Fat boiled pork.) There were no speeches, since so many people were there that we were all divided up into different rooms.

On the evening of Christmas Day, I had invited the women students to come for the evening. They almost all turned up and it was a great success. The most childish games were the ones that went down best! After supper, Lily did "The ninety and nine" hymn in deaf and dumb sign language, and they were quite fascinated by that. Later it happened that in a game where people had to play forfeits, one girl sang a carol as her forfeit and after that we went on singing carols and finished up with the Lord's Prayer - I hadn't planned it that way, but it came quite naturally. That evening we were visited by no fewer than 6 sets of carol singers - the men students came and sang their carol again, and there were also a group of women students, the dispensary, and several classes of nurses. The men students finished up in Tom's house, where they stayed till the wee small hours, and left the floor deep in peanut shells.

Shortly after Christmas, those who had gone to Cha ma sze returned, and some days later all the Chinese staff of the Medical College, and the students went over to live in the Nam Man Medical College (all but two who cried off for "health reasons".)

The students who went over to live in the Nan Man shared with the staff and students there in an indoctrination course. It lasted about three and a half months, and during this time we foreigners on the College staff had practically no contacts with our Chinese colleagues and students. This course was strenuous and left little free time. In the mornings everyone met in the large auditorium to hear lectures, three or four hours long. The conscientious ones took copious notes. There were also prescribed textbooks. The first course was on the history of the growth of society (primitive communism, feudalism, capitalism, communism, etc.). Later, more detailed study of Mao's plans for China and so on. It included a great deal of vigorous anti-American and anti-British propaganda, Opium Wars, unequal treaties and so on. The Russian set-up was described and held up as the model. The general thesis was "The old is bad - all bad, therefore the new is good - all good". One old thing to be uprooted was superstition, which included all religion and belief in God.

In the afternoons there were "discussion groups", each with one or more trained Communist propagandist to help and guide - often just youngsters repeating parrot-fashion what they had been taught. "Discussion" was not what we think of by that name, but each person in turn expressed their opinion on some point, and then was told if that was the right answer or not. There was no true give and take of argument, no development in the "discussion".

Other activities were study and discussion of daily newspapers - all now expressing the orthodox communist interpretation of events, singing of Communist songs, drill, and preparation of wall newspapers on blackboards. These "pi paos" were a great institution and were often extremely well done, with spirited cartoons and beautiful lettering in different coloured chalks. They really took the place of a magazine. Sometimes a student would write up their life history, confessing their faults in the past, and expressing their gratitude and joy at the liberation brought to them by Communism. Religion came in for a lot of virulent criticism. Students and staff known to be Christians or to have come from a Christian background were tackled by those in their group, and argued with, criticized and ridiculed. To maintain a belief in God was a sign that you had not yet seen the light. A halfway position, maintaining faith in God and at the same time a willingness to co-operate with the social reformation side of Communism was not to be tolerated - not a radical enough change, not "ch'e ti" (thorough). When finally a person gave way under this pressure and acknowledged his complete repudiation of the past, and his 100% loyalty to the new order, he often seemed to experience a great sense of relief and enthusiasm, and the language with which this was expressed was very reminiscent of a person who has just undergone a sudden religious conversion. These patient and repeated heart-to-heart talks, the urging to confess the sins of the past publicly and so on were an exact parallel to much religious propaganda techniques. Even those already "saved" into Communism continued to meet together constantly to hear lectures, and for discussions, and for mutual criticism and self-criticisms. Staff, students, men, women, those already convinced Communists and those encountering it for the first time were mixed together in the discussion groups. The same group remained as a unit throughout the whole three and a half month course.

During this time, negotiations over the transfer of College and hospital to the government went on, and were completed, and the agreement signed about the end of January. There were eight conditions - the government to "tai Kuan" (take control) for eight years, the buildings were for medical use only. The name, and staff were to be retained, property and equipment to be returned after eight years in as good condition as possible. Former religious activities to be allowed to continue, and a committee to advise on running the institutions to be set up, four members elected by them and 3 old graduates elected (?) by the Ta Hui (Synod). This committee had never been set up when we left. These were

the main points. After this was signed a meeting was held in the K'un Kuang hall to celebrate the changeover. It was held at a few hours notice, on a Sunday afternoon. We foreigners on the staff were all invited, and attended. It was rather painful. In a brief sketch of the past history it was simply stated that Dr. Christie had started a hospital in Moukden, and in order to have trained staff, also founded a medical college. There was no mention of his reason for starting medical work in Manchuria, nor any reference to the religious basis of the institutions. The general theme was "the past is past, let us forget it, the new day of liberation has dawned". A brief reference to the foreign staff - anyone with professional talents, which could be used in the service of the people, was warmly welcomed and it was hoped we would all stay on and "co-operate". Outside the door of the Kun Kuang building were several blackboards, placards, and slogans. On one blackboard was "Ta tao chi tu chiao." (Down with Christianity.)

During December, January, February and March, I had very little to do in College - just routine biopsies. There had been no teaching to do since the previous November, and it was not possible to prepare for the future, as no one knew what kind of teaching material would be used. So, as the Ai Jen Clinic in the West was busy, and Mrs. Findlay not well, I used to go over there three days a week to help. At that time it was purely an outpatients department, with anything up to 200 patients on each clinic morning. In addition, there were a few visits to patients whose friends said they were too ill to come to the hospital. The Communist patients became rather a nuisance, as the local kan pu (union officials) became very peremptory in their demands. Usually it was a child who was ill - "very ill with a temperature of 104°, unconscious" was the usual story. I went out several times to these cases but never found anything more serious than a temperature of 99° to 100° and a dirty tongue. The attitude always was that the doctor would not help unless diddled into coming to see the child. As a rule one found that two or three of their own doctors were already in attendance, and the child was getting penicillin, quinine, and goodness knows what else, preferably by injection. The poor infants had learned to fear the arrival of a stranger as likely to mean another jab with a needle, and would start yelling as soon as you entered the room.

These people mostly lived, many families together, in large buildings requisitioned for the purpose. They were moderately clean but rather higger-mugger, and there was, of course, no privacy whatever. When you finished examining the patient, they would ask you what the fee was and sometimes write a chit for you to sign. Then they would run off to the office and collect the money - that is, the government paid, not the individual. This meant there was nothing to check their demands on the doctor's time. One day I went to visit a child whom Mary (Findlay) had visited a few days before. He seemed much improved and there was no need to prescribe further. When asked what the fee was for the visit, I said (having no idea) "\$ 100,000". The child's father smiled and said, "the other doctor only charged \$ 50,000". I was rather taken aback but explained that now the child was so much better they could easily have brought him to the clinic and saved the free altogether, and my valuable time, but if they didn't want to do that it was fair that they should pay more. It was a different matter when the child was very ill and could not be taken outside without danger. This explanation was accepted without question! If one did go to visit a patient in one of these rabbit warrens of humanity, it was usual to have one person after another come and say, "just while you are here, please come and look at my child". One day I got thoroughly exasperated and said "No"! I have no time to examine all these children with nothing wrong but teething." I walked briskly out and turned to my armed escort and said, "Come on, hurry up", so he took to his heels and ran down the cement corridors with his gun and ammunition clanking around him. I had to run too so as not to lose my way in the passages and it must have looked very funny! I remember that when we did get to the front door, he was already trying to crank the Jeep to drive me back. He was very short and his belt was

stuffed with two revolvers, which dug into him when he tried to bend over. He kept straightening up, stuffing the revolvers in at another angle, and then bending again to tackle the crank handle.

It was February or March, I think, when the new Communist Principal of the College arrived and settled in to the house next to the one Lily and I were living in. His name was Ch'en, a Shanghai graduate who had been Principal of a Communist medical college in Antung. He, his wife, two children and a Japanese amah lived in the upstairs flat, while Dr. Hsiu, the new head of the hospital, and his wife lived downstairs. There were also two servant lads, I am not sure if they slept there or not. A large amount of furniture was carried in, and although I was never inside the house, the glimpses through the windows looked comfortable, and there was a vase of flowers in the window. They watched me dig the garden and plant seeds with much interest, and Dr. Ch'en accosted me over the fence in a very friendly way and asked for any spare flower seeds I had.

More Communist staff gradually infiltrated the hospital, while a group of juniors, who afterwards belonged to the College, arrived and camped out temporarily in the empty rooms of the College. No one ever introduced us foreigners to them, nor them to us. They would peep curiously into the lab, and vanish in an embarrassed way when I looked around and said, "please come in".

One day a large tin of specimens were sent to the lab, they were hearts obtained in Northern Manchuria from cases of an endemic disease, K'e shan ping. (Named after a mountain, K'e shan.) I was ill at the time, but a couple of weeks later several people from the W.S.P. (Health Department) arrived to ask about the results. They were a little gauche and embarrassed but soon became quite friendly when I showed how glad I was to see such interesting specimens. Later I sent them a detailed pathological report and they lent me some journals and some of the original research done on the disease by the W.S.P. during the Japanese regime. I felt much cheered by this co-operation. Later I wanted to complete my notes on one or two points and, as I was still ill, sent a letter in polite Chinese, to the doctor mainly concerned. I explained why I was not able to call on him, and asked if he could help me, say by lending me the appropriate journals that gave the figures I wanted. There was no answer that day, as he was out when my technician called with the letter. A couple of weeks later my boy called again to ask if there was any reply and returned with the verbal message that Dr. X was too busy to deal with the matter. This small incident is an example of the gradual hardening of attitudes during these months. Also of the fact that they were willing to ask for help, but once they had my path report, were not keen to help me. The same doctor quoted my report in a public lecture, but did not mention that it came from me!

We did, however, have a friendly visit from the head of the military hospital. He wanted Jack Leggate to go over and give their staff one or two lectures on recent advances in surgery and wanted me to go occasionally to help them with post-mortems. Since I had not done a p.m. for over 15 months I was, of course, delighted. It turned out that, being a military hospital, they did not need to get permission to do a post-mortem and they did one or two almost every day. None of their doctors had any special training in pathology and so, would I give them a hand? It turned out, in fact, that they had a body waiting for me at that moment! I wanted to go to the west for a meeting but they sent a Jeep to I Ching Lu for me after it was over. On arrival I was given tea in the office, and we talked for a long time - on British Imperialism among other subjects! At last an extremely embarrassed houseman called him out for a moments parley. There had been a mistake, the body was buried. However I went over several times during the next two or three weeks and thoroughly enjoyed the friendliness and keenness of the staff there. Jack Leggate, of course, also accepted his invitation and gave a lecture on Streptomycin. It was much appreciated.

My last visit to the hospital was rather unfortunate. They always collected me in a truck or Jeep and left me home again, and this night, having finished at 9.30 p.m., we set off for the Hsiao Ho Yen in a large truck. It was a dark night, and pouring cats and dogs. We had only gone a few hundred yards when the truck's engine coughed and died. For the next hour and a half the lab boy and I sat in the drier parts of the truck while three or four drivers and mechanics struggled with the engine by the precarious light of handfuls of burning newspaper. They ran back more than once to exchange parts with the Jeep but all to no avail. I tried to insist on walking home but "No, no, you'll get wet, and it will be all right in five minutes". Their "face" was at stake, so we just had to wait. At last, after more pressure they gave up, and then began to re-exchange the borrowed bits so as to drive me home in the Jeep. Soon we started off gaily in the open Jeep, and I realized why they had been unwilling to do so before - it had no lights! On the main street we did fairly well, as it was lighted, but even so we did in the end run bang into a traffic direction post in the middle of a crossroads, and damage was done to the radiator so that all the water ran out. We drove straight over the wreck with hideous noise, and went on with an engine which must have been getting red-hot, to a garage of sorts in a side street near the back of the hospital. The driver and his friends (still full of jokes and laughter) knocked up the garage keeper, who came out peering through the pouring rain, and they actually, between them, mended the radiator. I was still asking plaintively to be allowed to walk and finally pointed out that without lights the winding hutong (lane) would be completely impossible for the Jeep. They protested that the night patrols would not let me pass, but in the end let me go, with profuse and sincere apologies. The lab boy and I splashed our way through rivers of mud, and explained ourselves to several puzzled sentries, and eventually got safely in at the hospital gate. This excursion finished my visits to the Military Hospital as I got a mild bronchitis and a temperature, which would not quite, clear up.

It was I think during March (1949) that we first heard the new plans for the expansion of the Medical College. A large piece of land south of the Hsiao ho (Small River) was allotted to the College by the government. There were many rather tumbledown buildings on this site, and these were to be repaired and used for medical students, nursing students, etc. There were to be thousands of students and a shortened course, but no one knew details, and rumours varied.

About this time the staff and students arrived back from their propaganda course. One of the first things to be done was a full inventory of the hospital and College equipment. Small groups of students were put in charge of different departments, each with its leader. The five who came to the Pathology department all belonged to class 27. I helped them to do the inventory, as there were so many things they did not understand, and did not know the names of. At first, I sometimes did some counting myself and told them e.g. the number of boxes of slides in a certain drawer, but this was ignored, the drawer reopened, and the boxes recounted. In fact nothing was taken for granted! I spent a whole morning checking the inventory of reagents and bringing it right up to date, then handed them the list to copy - but no, each bottle had to be re-examined, discussed in low whispers and laboriously checked. In hospital they were even more particular, and counted the store of rough toilet paper by the sheet!! At the end of their work, their leader gave me quite a pep talk, explaining that from now on all these things were the property of the people and were to be used for the good of the people, not like the old days. So from now on we were to preserve equipment carefully and not destroy or waste anything. At this time the students were at the summit of the wave of enthusiasm and spoke in terms of "we". Later one could note exactly the first onset of cold disillusionment, by the change in pronoun to "they".

Now that the College staff and students were back from re-education, the work of "chien hsiao" (the setting-up, or founding of the College) was begun. The students, men and women, were soon moved out to the buildings on the new Ho Nan ("South of River") land, and lived there under conditions of considerable discomfort and hardship. I don't know exactly how many there were - a good many hundreds, some brought from other colleges and some new students. They were not all to be medicals, some were to do nursing, technicians' courses etc.. They were used as manual labourers, to repair the buildings and to build a wall surrounding the whole property. The buildings had been stripped of everything removable by the "lao pai hsing" ("people") and were mere shells of brickwork. The students lived and worked there for 3 - 4 months, laying bricks, mixing mortar with their bare feet, and so on. Some of the girls told someone they had been busy clearing out the clogged latrines. Some found this work very exhausting but they became hardened and sunburnt, and most of them seemed to enjoy the feeling that they were really building up their College with their own hands. The team spirit and rivalry between different groups was very active, and was encouraged and used to the full. They continued to have lectures and discussion groups.

Meanwhile, the staff got down to planning the new curriculum, and preparing new teaching material. Full staff meetings were held and everyone encouraged to talk and give ideas, but actually the plans were already threshed out by the inner cabal of communist leaders, so unless you proposed what was already decided on, you got nowhere.

The curriculum was an extremely complicated problem, as our present students had to be catered for and at the same time, the change effected to the new and much abbreviated three year curriculum: First year: yu k'e (preparative courses), chemistry, physics, anatomy, physiology, etc.. Second year: Pen k'e (regular courses), pathology, bacteriology, pharmacy, etc.. Third year: One year of clinical lectures. The very short eight-month system was never decided on, as ours was to remain a College of rather higher standard. Large numbers of new students (not all of the same standard) were to be brought in, most to form a new "yu k'e" or first year, others to join up with the fused class 31 and 30, total 80 students; class 29 was to go on as a separate entity, to specialise in medicine, and class 28 was to have one more year of clinical subjects (taught in the class-room) and were to be obliged to specialise. My responsibility was to teach pathology a three hours a day, 1.30 - 4.30, six days a week, for 14 consecutive weeks, beginning about the start of July. Previous to this, their second term's work in anatomy and physiology was to be squeezed into two weeks!! However as time went on, the time for restarting classes was postponed over and over again and as it eventually turned out, the above programme was never put into operation at all. Meanwhile, everyone was to prepare lecture notes, copiously illustrated with black and white line drawings, for duplication, for giving out to the students. I protested that I would not have time in six weeks to do this and translate them into Chinese, and that none of the few people whose English was adequate would have time to help me with the translation, and proposed other plans for teaching this first class. However, no excuses were accepted. A friend told me later that my remarks had been criticized as showing unwillingness to co-operate. So I agreed to write the English notes and the Dean's office took responsibility for the translation, which they said would be quite easy and could be done by some of the students. As it turned out, none of the teaching material I gave in was ever translated and before I left a good part of it had been mislaid and could not be found.

First one, and a few weeks later another, young graduate appeared in the lab, and told me they had been appointed my assistants. This was typical of the way things were done - I had not asked for assistants, and had not been told they had been appointed, or what they had to do. I set them to revise their histology and pathology, and to study the current biopsies and post-mortems. But I soon

discovered how out-of-date and "feudal" my ideas were. I found out in this way. One of the new ideas (an excellent one, rightly used) was that each department or working unit should have a meeting called a "chien t'ao hui", say every week or every fortnight. Everyone connected with the department attended - doctors, technicians, servants. Path and Bact met together with one chairman. The purpose was to discuss our work, and any points that should be changed. Each person in turn spoke, and mentioned their own "yu tien" - strong points and shortcomings, and then gave criticisms of other people's ditto, with suggestions for improvements. These meetings are a characteristic of the Communist set-up. In practice, one of two things may happen - either hypocritical mutual back scratching, and self-depreciation or else thinly veiled cattiness through which the resentment of years may boil over. I think that only a real humility and courtesy could keep such a meeting from deteriorating in one of these two ways. I actually only attended one, as later I was ill. I had to speak first. I tried to keep it fairly impersonal, said that the strong points about the Path lab were the reliable and loyal assistants and the weak points were the fact that we had so few post mortems and did not do many special staining methods. The lab boys were too shy to speak much, and of course were much too polite to criticize. The lab servant gave me a good mark (?) for being in and out of the lab at all hours - you never know when you'll meet her! But some good was done when the new assistants in bacteriology and public health got some grumbles off their chests at the dullness of their lives at that time - nothing to do but sit and read out-of-date textbooks. I felt that this kind of meeting, skilfully handled, might be very useful.

In the old R.V.H. (*Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast*) days we might have got on even better in the Emergency Blood Transfusion Service if there had been more general discussion not just by the doctors over morning tea, but including the technicians and the invaluable Mrs. Larmor who provided the tea for the blood donors!!

This is a digression. What I got out of the meeting was that I was to remember that teaching methods would be quite different in future, that the young would do the actual teaching and the older people would merrily guide from the background. In this new method, experience was not necessary. The young were to be given much more responsibility than before. So next morning I discussed the situation with the only assistant I had at that time. We divided the course between us. He chose certain parts (the most difficult) and became at once transformed from a state of bored apathy, to one of marked, if rather transient, enthusiasm. I gave him what notes I had prepared for his criticism (and got plenty of it!), while after a long struggle with the available textbooks he produced a set of notes on blood diseases which I criticized much more drastically than he expected. When the second assistant appeared I wrote a letter to the Dean, explaining that, in line with the new ideas, I was dividing the course between the two young doctors, would help them with the preparation of the lectures and with the detailed planning of each day's teaching as it came, but would not actually teach the students themselves during class hours. The two young doctors were quite tickled at this prospect, seeing themselves as budding professors holding forth to the class. However, the official reaction was interesting. "That was the theory of it, yes, but please would I teach class 29 myself as the two assistants had no experience - later, of course, they could take charge".

Meanwhile, the building at the Ho Nan which was to house the pre-clinical subjects was being repaired. We had meetings to allot the different rooms, and each department then made detailed plans for electric fittings, benches, and so on. The old College building was to be completely stripped of furniture, even built-in benches and other fittings, so as to save money so far as possible. This was the first hint that the amount of money available was not unlimited. The students also did a lot of the

more skilled work, under supervision, such as plumbing, electric fittings and so on. They were completely responsible for planning the fittings and furnishings for their own dormitories.

I was not up and about at the time when all the equipment, furniture, and teaching material was taken from the College to the new buildings at the Ho Nan, but managed to arrange for the essentials for biopsy work to be retained and moved into the hospital lab and one lab boy was left to do this work. He brought the slides and new specimens to my bedroom each day. During the latter part of June, as I had not been well again for several weeks, I wrote officially to the College authorities to say that I would not be able to undertake the heavy teaching programme, and would go on furlough if it became possible to leave the country. I had prepared lecture notes (new style) for more than half the course, but later stopped, as no one really wanted them.

I wasn't in bed all the time. I can remember, on a day of pouring rain, finding a great mass of bottles and papers outside the front of the College, and realised that it was the contents of the Pathology Museum. The labels in English and Chinese, which I had laboriously prepared and stuck on the bottles, had washed off and many bottles were cracked.

During these summer months, we had very few Chinese visitors. One reason, of course, was that everyone was so busy. For example, the hospital routine began early in the morning with breakfast, I think at 7 a.m.. Work all day till about 4 p.m. From 4.30 - 6 a lecture or discussion group. Then after the evening meal there was frequently another meeting from 7 - 9 or 10 p.m.. In addition, there was a good deal of private study and preparation, as every few weeks there was an exam. to assess progress in political thinking. Most of the exam. questions were not even on "facts" but asked for opinions - e.g. "should the Russians have taken away the heavy machinery with them when they cleared out of Manchuria in 1945? Should they return it now?" The answer is "Yes, they were right to take it, to save it from the Kuo Min Tang, and it doesn't matter now whether it is used in Russia or Manchuria since in either place it now serves the People". Other questions were "Who won the last war against the Japs? Was it the Russian Army, or was it the atomic bomb? (The only two factors of any importance!) Answer, of course, the Russian army. There is only one correct answer to any question and if you don't give it, of course you get naught. One student did so badly in one exam. that he was punished by being put down a year in his medical course, although he was one of the very best students in his year. I was told that when they wanted "yes" he said "no", and when they wanted "no" he said "yes"! Such inspired cussedness was extremely rare. I did not hear of any other examples, and it showed great strength of character. Later, I saw him in hospital so I think his punishment had been allowed to lapse.

One of the most tragic things about the situation was the fact that so very few students (or teachers) retained any vestige of intellectual independence. On one occasion, when the College porch was decorated with blackboards and placards, the most conspicuous slogan was "ta tao ko jen ti sze hsiang" - which, at the time I translated as "down with individual thought" but later was told a better rendering would be "down with stubborn, self-centred thought". When the students returned from their propaganda course, they all had to fill in a form giving particulars of their past history, including religion, if any. (This was in itself nothing unusual, we all had to fill in such forms several times, often with a detailed life history.) Rumours varied as to how many filled in their religion as "Christian".

Towards the end of the students' time of hard manual labour at the Ho Nan, they held a meeting to vote on who were the best workers: "Model Students". Two of the names proposed were of boys who were formerly among the number of faithful attendees at the College services. This provoked an

outcry. "They can't be called 'model students' because they still believe in religious superstition, they still believe in a god, their thoughts are not yet thoroughly changed", and so on. After a good deal of argument, however, it was decided that the point under discussion was which students had been the best workers during the period of chien hsiao, and from this point of view these two were beyond criticism. So, their names, plus two others not from our College, were posted up as the four "model students".

The majority of the students seemed still to be friendly towards us foreigners, so far as we could judge from rare casual contacts. It depended very much on circumstances. Sometimes one would meet a group marching along a road, and one's smile and wave would be met by a dead cut. At other times, meeting a student in the city, he would stop, shake hands and exchange a few friendly words. It became very rare to have visitors in the house. To be openly friendly to a foreigner was, of course, something the Communists criticized. We foreigners had everything against us - religion, nationality and "unwillingness to change our thoughts".

Up to the time I left, Dr. Christie's bust still stood outside the College entrance, and the portraits of him and of Mrs. Christie were still hanging in the library (facing large coloured prints of Lenin and Stalin). I imagine that at least so long as any foreigners are there, they will be left. *(I was told in 1987 that the bust had been melted down during the "Great Leap Forward", when there was a push for metal production - the back-yard iron furnaces etc..)*

I have not yet explained that all these months, until we left, the foreigners on the hospital and College staff received salaries. I do not know exactly how they were compared with the salaries of the Chinese staff. At first we (medical foreigners and Tom Blakely, who taught English) all got the same amount. For several months it was about three and a half million dollars. These salaries were pooled by Mission Conference and each of us foreigners got a living allowance, which for several months was two million each. We gave our servants, so far as I can remember, one million a month at that time. Later on, the hospital and College brought in a scale by which the amount of your salary depended on years of service, experience etc.. I don't know if it included a family allowance scheme (one did not like to ask questions about salaries in case it looked as though we were not satisfied). For the first few months we were paid in money. Later, part of the College salary was in money, and part in little tickets or tokens, which could be exchanged for goods only in certain government-run shops. John Fleming used to collect all our tokens and exchange them for sugar, which was expensive to buy in small amounts. Since about half of us missionaries received salaries from the Communists (those in the College and hospital) and others didn't, the salary pool did not quite cover our living expenses. Another source of income was selling furniture, books, etc., belonging to missionaries who had not come back after the war, and were never likely to do so now. Books, sold on the street for paper, got a good price. Most of the furniture, carpets, etc. were gladly bought by the hospital, as they needed furnishings for the gradually increasing staff.

It was interesting to note that in spite of the vigorous propaganda to the effect that the old regime was all bad, and the products of the new regime so superior, there was great keenness on the part of the powers that be to collect as many of the old graduates as possible to staff the enlarging institutions. During the latter part of June, three doctors were sent south to Nanking and Shanghai to persuade as many as possible to return to work in the new set-up in Moukden. Only a few doctors came back, or promised to do so. The hospital and College were anxious to hang on to any experienced staff they had, even those whose opinions were of the wrong colour. This was because they were so desperately short of properly trained doctors, nurses, etc..

The Ai Jen Hospital, in the west, was expanded at this time (June 1949). A house nearby was turned into an in-patient department with ten beds for midwifery and gynaecology. The foreigners there were still busy and needed in both the Theological College and the hospital and so, naturally, took a different view of their duty as to staying or leaving, from ours who lived in the east. Even those of us in the east who still had work to do (Jean McMinn and Jack Leggate, for example) felt increasingly that our position vis-a-vis our Chinese Christian friends was becoming so difficult and embarrassing that the most helpful thing to do was to clear out.

During July, Jack Leggate, Agnes, Isabel, Sandy and I began inquiries as to how or whether we could leave. At first the situation was that the police in Moukden said they had no instructions as to how to deal with this question, but they would give us permits to go to Tientsin for two weeks and we could enquire there. For various reasons we were unwilling to do this - partly a fear of being stuck indefinitely in Tientsin, unable either to go on or to come back to Moukden. A letter from the China Inland Mission in Tientsin reached us in answer to our inquiries saying that the authorities in Tientsin could do nothing, we must get exit permits in the place where we lived. This seemed to be a stalemate. Meanwhile, we got on preparing to leave, those with a lot of goods and chattels selling, giving away or packing them. We got in touch with the heads of hospital and College for permission to leave, and for documents to put before the police. They were most co-operative, almost laughably eager to do everything they could to help us to go. I remember well a long July morning spent wandering in a bicycle rickshaw through the Ho Nan trying to find Dr. Ch'en's office. (He was the new Principal of the College.) The sun was hot and my temperature made it feel hotter. Having found him at last we had the usual struggle, as I could never follow his Shanghai dialect. Communist leaders never seem to have a private office. There is always a big untidy desk, and several chairs where unidentifiable people (who are never introduced) sit and smoke and study the newspaper. However, as I have said, Dr. Ch'en was most friendly and co-operative, and wrote the appropriate letters, and a note to help me further.

Time drifted on, our hopes and our patience waxed and waned. It was sometime in August that there was an announcement that any foreigners could leave the country, if they had no bad record with the police, left no debts behind, and had the required guarantors. We had to have a guarantee from some organisation such as the hospital, and one from a business firm, and had to fill in forms with reasons why we wanted to leave, and give a detailed life history in English and Chinese. We did not have to say whether or not we wanted to return to Manchuria. Also, of course, photographs. Our heavy baggage we gave to a transport agent, and that meant eight copies (in Chinese and English) of a detailed list of the contents, one copy to be checked and stamped by the police. All this took time and many visits to the police. At last, about the middle of August, we got a wire from the C.I.M. in Tientsin to say there were certain passages from Hong Kong to London available and wired back to accept. The police promised to push our papers through quickly, but just as we began to think we were on the point of leaving, the railway line to Tientsin was broken by severe floods due to a typhoon. This caused a hold-up of about five weeks for us, and also held up the party who were down south finding staff on their return to Moukden.

During August, it suddenly became known that the whole plan for the expanded Moukden Medical College was being abandoned by authorities "higher up". The Ho Nan buildings, on which our staff and students had expended so much time and energy, were occupied by soldiers, and our College equipment was either carted back to the old College building (e.g. much of the Pathology Department's furniture), or taken over to the Nan Man Medical College in West Moukden. We realized

that our College was to lose its identity altogether, and not even to continue under a new name and management. It was completely fused with the College in the west, and our hospital in future was to be merely an annex of the Nan Man Hospital. Students and staff were redistributed. Classes 30 and 31 were absorbed into much larger groups which included students from the Nan Man and Antung etc.. etc., and some were to be sent to Harbin, others to Ch'angch'un. Class 29 was incorporated into a big class in the Nan Man College. (I heard that the pathology class had 1000 students and there were six professors of pathology, seven or eight assistant professors and a big group of 20 - 30 demonstrators!)

Pathology classes had not begun yet; the students were having full-time classes in parasitology. These sweeping changes were very disconcerting also for the staff. Meanwhile, a class of about 250 final year students specializing in medicine were living at the Ho Nan and coming over daily to classes in our M.M.C. building.

These sweeping changes of plan were very discouraging and disappointing not only to our old staff, who felt more at home and more secure in a set-up which, in some ways at least, ran parallel to the old College. It also was a blow to the Communist leaders who had put so much effort into planning the new curriculum. Just before we left we went to a demonstration in the College of some of the new teaching material - wall diagrams etc. - which had been prepared during the previous few months, and they were really excellent, beautifully drawn and well thought out. Most were done by Japanese artists from rough sketches by the lecturers (or occasionally from pictures in books). It seemed a shame that all this should be swamped in a big new scheme. The students too were disgusted to find that their months of work at "building their own College" should be swept away without warning. Their wonderful "freedom" and "democracy" began to seem less wonderful, and many of them realized that they were, in fact, being used by powerful leaders at the top. There was a great deal of injustice. Students who had been accepted for the Medical College had to suddenly sit another entrance examination. Since they had done no studying for over a year, most failed. Some handed in papers blank except for such sentences as "How can we answer these questions when we have had no chance to study?" Then again, the students had been promised free education with everything provided. Now they were suddenly told that fees would be charged. Theoretically at least, poor students would continue to get free tuition or reduced fees, but we left before we could see if this worked out. Certainly, one got the impression that there was much less money to be spent on education than had been assumed a few months before.

Before we left, "they" were even planning to remove the whole of the College library to the Nan Man College. This had been mooted before and successfully resisted. It was a foolish plan, as, from now on, students were to be taught Russian rather than English so that the library would be of no use to them. Many of the Nan Man teachers knew Japanese rather than English, as this had been the Japanese Medical College, and even lectured in Japanese, much to the bewilderment of the majority of the students! The only people who could and did use the English material in the library were the hospital staff, old College graduates both Communist and not, and they bitterly bewailed the impending loss of their library - as few of them had books of their own.

As I have said, Russian was to be the second language. Classes were already being held in the hospital, optional but widely attended. They were taught by Russian-speaking Chinese, as a real Russian teacher was found to be too expensive, and nobody could afford to go. During the earlier plans for an expanded M.M.C. there had been plans for teaching first-year students very simple English and medical terms, and some Latin and Greek roots etc..

The new, Communist, doctors in hospital and College all wore the regulation uniform, a very ugly blue or khaki suit of jacket and trousers. Men's and women's clothes so far as I noticed were the same. All enthusiastic supporters of the new regime very quickly adopted the same clothes. Most of the women doctors and senior nurses on the old staff stuck to their Chinese gowns, but this was rather taken as a sign that they were old-fashioned and feudalistic in outlook. It was customary for the really ardent pro-Communists to keep their caps on all the time; even doctors going round the wards wore their caps, with white coats over their uniform. If one's clothes were shabby, so much the better. A very important and powerful member of the inner cabal went round for days with a large hole in the leg of her very shabby cotton khaki trousers. It was a sign of the true revolutionary spirit. One of the regular lecturers in the course given to the hospital staff frequently spat on the platform during his lectures - he was at one with the people, of the earth earthy. People were criticized not only if their houses were too comfortably furnished, but also if they were "too clean". One man we knew (not living in Moukden) deliberately smoked the walls of his rooms to make them look dirty and avert criticism. I think perhaps that this kind of criticism and propaganda was only the first stage, the stage of pulling everyone down to the same level of poverty, dirt, and simple living. People with big public health schemes on foot, would build up from the very bottom and teach the people that spitting spread tuberculosis and so on. The general principle was that since the old was all-bad, one must first destroy it entirely; the old order of society, the old educational system, anything tainted by feudalistic and imperialist ideas, etc. must all go. Witness the dispersion of our College in an attempt to destroy it body and soul. Then, when you have cleared the ground, you can build the New World without being beholden to anyone. One could give many examples - e.g. an order went out in hospital that the bands on the nurses' caps, which showed the different grades of seniority, were all to be removed, so that they all looked alike. On going into a ward one could no longer look round for a cap with a red band and steer for that, so it was very inconvenient. I imagine that before long some new system will be devised - perhaps one or more red stars will serve the same purpose, but will not have the taint of the old regime about it!

About June or July everyone on the College or hospital staff were given a "mark" - as they called it, using the English word. That is, a badge. They were oblong brooches of brass with a hammer and sickle in red and the name "Liao Ning I K'e Ta Hsueh" - Liaoning Medical College. The flag used during all these months was the flag of the Chinese Communist Party - red with a hammer and sickle in the corner (like the Russian one but minus the star.) I did not see the new National flag until I reached Hong Kong, when a fair number were to be seen on the streets for the double tenth. (October tenth.) It is red, with one large yellow star and four smaller ones - supposed to symbolise the five races composing the Chinese nation. (Han Chinese, Manchus, Mongolians, Tibetans, Mohammedans - Hui.) There was no recognized National Anthem, as the new Communist government had not been set up. One of the many Communist songs we heard most frequently was "Mei yu kung ch'an tang chui mei yu Chung Kuo" - No Communist Party, no China. Some distance from our house, but not far enough!, was a conjuror's show which had a brass band in front, playing very fast and very fortissimo from dawn to dusk. Their repertoire comprised about five tunes, one or two Communist ones, including the above.

During the winter one good story went around. A powerful group of Elders of the North Church took it on themselves to "call" one of the recent Theological College graduates, or a final year student, to be their Pastor. Someone else remonstrated and said that the business should go through the Synod. "But why?" was the answer, "we've got religious freedom now, haven't we!"

There are still some points to mention which don't fit into a chronological account:-

1. Servants We had thought that we might not be allowed to keep servants, but such matters of private life were not interfered with in any way. We continued to have one servant. He was frequently summoned to meetings, like everyone else- there were frequent propaganda meetings for the inhabitants of each street or district. On one occasion our, Mission, servants were summoned to the central police station and questioned, but we never heard much of what happened. On another occasion some police were snooping in the Findlay's house. They found the cook's wife in the kitchen (she had pushed her husband outside as she thought him stupid!) They asked her what the foreigners ate, the pot of kao liang for lunch was on the stove, and she just pointed to it and said, "There, you can see for yourself. Do you think they eat grass?" They left, seemingly quite satisfied. There were stories from, e.g., Shanghai, where servants only in foreign employ for a few months demanded, and got, huge amounts of pay-off money - six months of salary or more. We had none of this.

2. A friend told me once how her family, who lived near the hospital, had a group of Pa Lu soldiers billeted on them for some weeks shortly after the occupation of Moukden. In the evenings they used all to sit round the stove together and discuss many things including Communism and Christianity. When the soldiers were to be moved on, they tidied up the whole compound, brought in fuel to replace what they had used, and then the officer wrote a sort of testimonial which he stuck up on the compound wall for all to see. It said that the family were good people who had treated the soldiers of the liberation army well, and so on. It was this kind of situation which gave the ordinary Christian an opportunity to explain to the communist what Christianity really was. A lot of the prejudice against the Church was based on sheer ignorance, as in the official propaganda Christianity was lumped in with all the grossest superstitions. We heard that one Church was trying a new way to help such ordinary church members to answer the questions they were constantly being asked. On Sunday evenings, three or four Church members would each give a short address on one of the subjects, which was frequently coming up in conversations with communists. Afterwards they would discuss it and the pastor would criticize and gave suggestions. On, e.g., How to answer the question, "Why do you Christians believe in God?"

The basic difference of belief, which was constantly cropping up was belief in God. The official communist propagandists taught emphatically that there was no God and that to believe in God was sheer superstition, which had to be purged away before one could enter heart and soul into the revolution. They could not understand how otherwise intelligent people could continue to believe in a God. Unfortunately, the strongest and most militant Christians were mostly of the type, which believes in the verbal inspiration of the Bible and distrusts many scientific ideas that don't fit in. One question, which was brought up before the discussion groups in hospital created quite a furore - "The origin of man - was he created by God or by Evolution?" The Christians sprang to arms and contended that he was created by God because the Bible said so and the communists were equally confident, with their feet firmly set on scientific truth! It seemed terrible to us foreigners to find how shallow the understanding of this kind of problem was, by people who had received not only a Christian but also, presumably a scientific education in a modern medical college. However, the main effect was that the Communists found that belief in God had unexpected vitality, so perhaps more good was done than harm.

3. The official communist attitude was always "freedom of religion", although I heard that one communist lecturer explained that this meant freedom, not to propagate your beliefs but to believe what you liked in the privacy of your own heart. In that sense there was freedom of religion in Moukden in the year 1949. No one was commanded to "recant or ..." From the Christian point of view

freedom of religion included freedom to try to convert other people to it. There was a story of one evangelist who turned up in a country town to take religious meetings. The local officials questioned him who gave you permission to come here and preach?" He replied, "Mao chu hsi" (Chairman Mao) and got off with it.

Until a short time before we left, no one, either foreign or Chinese could travel, or indeed sleep away from their homes without permission from the police. In order to get a "lu t'iao" (travel permit) you had to give adequate reasons for wanting to travel. To do "mai mai", business, was an adequate reason, but to preach or attend a Theological College was not. A short time before we left these restrictions were lifted and people could travel freely. Probably regulations south of the wall were never so strict, as two travelling women evangelists came up from Peking in the spring, and they had given "evangelistic work" as their reason for wanting to come and had been granted travel permits. One of these women in particular was a most eloquent and persuasive speaker and had immense success and crowded meetings, not only in Moukden, but also in different parts further north.

4. From the very beginning, one of the favourite subjects for propaganda lectures and discussions was Russia. Indeed, no matter what the subject was we always - in the propaganda meetings I went to - got round quite soon to the glories of Russia, and stayed there. Russia was the friend of China, the perfect model. The great heroes were Marx, Lenin, Engels, and so on. During the last few weeks a variant crept in. Russian friends were coming to help China. They must be welcomed, and treated as the friends they were. There were many rumours of how many thousands of Russian soldiers, technicians, etc. were arriving - had arrived - had actually been seen marching along the streets, but we never saw any marked influx with our own eyes, up to the time we left. In the railway station the day we left, there was a huge wall picture showing on one side a group of Chinese farmers, workers and soldiers greeting warmly a group of Russians of different types. During the last few weeks there was definitely more nudging and comment when one walked in the street, and one was often asked, on buses, if one was "Su lien jen" - Soviet. When you said "No, British", people were, however, just as friendly as before, except for very rare exceptions. One day when I was standing waiting for a bus, two schoolboys behind me had the following conversation - "Look, a Russian". "No, she's British." "How do you know", "The Russians aren't as clean as that".

5. From the time the Communists came in until about the end of February, we got no letters, and those we posted were sometimes returned. Sometimes when our own letters came back, there was written on the envelope "No service, except to Soviet Russia, and other democratic countries". Once a letter returned with a post-script, written presumably by a kind-hearted censor. "Dearest Mother, I forgot to tell you to try to send letters to some place in Soviet Russia asking them to forward to me. For instance, Postmaster, Vladivostok. It may reach me. But keep secret about that. You may tell it only to the kitten."

Our departure from Moukden was delayed for over a month by serious flooding, and this gave the hospital and College staff time to think of giving a farewell party. We don't know for certain whether the idea originated with our friends among them, or with the Communist heads. The latter were certainly anxious to give us no excuse for saying we had been turned out. All the foreigners in the East were invited, and this was rather embarrassing for some of them, as they were not sure whether they were being farewelled or not. First, we were taken to the cinema, but the electricity was off, so after kicking our heels there for some time we were taken off again in the truck to the museum in the west suburb. This was very well arranged and labelled, and I think (but am not certain) that this had been done by the communists as the stuff had been stored away during the previous unsettled period. There were

neatly uniformed attendants in each room, who answered questions, but did not pester you with unwanted information. There were the usual large portraits of the Soviet pantheon, Lenin, Marx, Engels etc..

After a while we drove back to the cinema where we came in for the second house. The whole cinema had been hired by the College-Hospital and was crowded with staff and students, nurses, technicians, and servants. Before the picture started, different groups sang communist songs, and there was a lot of a curious kind of community backchat that was very commonly used to fill in time at the beginning of their meetings. The leader of one group jumps up, and turning to his flock will say something to them in a low voice. They immediately shout it out in unison at the tops of their voices. Some other group leader who thinks of a witty reply, prompts his group in the same way and so it goes on. Question and answer, retort and counter retort, all yelled out in absolute unison by dozen or more voices. It always struck me that there was something peculiarly typical about this amusement, for the leader's words were taken up instantly and shouted out with great vehemence by the whole group acting with the precision of a single body and certainly without them having time to think what the words meant. I rarely caught the sense and so I don't know what it was all about but some of the retorts caused shouts of laughter from the rest of the audience. Some of it was simple "Why are we waiting?" and such like.

When the picture came on, there were three. First an old Russian documentary about whaling. Then a news film showing the rejoicing in Peking after the liberation, and Mao, Chu te, Liu piao, etc. reviewing the victorious armies. It was odd to see the leaders, each standing at the salute in his (American) Jeep, driven slowly past long lines of (American) guns, tanks etc.. Mao looked fairly self-controlled and dignified, but Chu te's face was one great smile of triumph. The third film was a documentary about the different products of Manchuria - gold, iron, coal, timber, and the different crops. To judge from some of the pictures of heavy machinery in motion, I think it must have been taken some years ago.

(I might mention here another film I saw a few months before, to which the hospital also gave free tickets to all its workers. This was a Russian film of a great athletic meeting held in Moscow in May 1947 or 1948. It was a truly terrifying picture, showing hysterical mass enthusiasm for Stalin of many thousands of people. It seemed an exact replica of what one had heard about the Nuremberg rally with the Fuhrer at the centre of idolatry. We saw several shots of Stalin in his box with Molotov and other senior officials; Stalin was grim and poker-faced in all the glimpses one had of him. There were thousands of athletes taking part, and most of the show consisted of mass drills of a complicated and colourful kind. Sometimes the performers wore different coloured clothes so that they made beautiful and intricate patterns on the floor of the stadium. For example, once when the whole arena was carpeted with people, they all simultaneously changed their headgear so that a life-like portrait of Stalin was produced. This and all the other items featuring pictures or effigies of Stalin produced frantic applause. The whole show was almost miraculous in the exactitude of the drilling and timing of so many thousands of performers. One act I remember was an acrobatic display. Each team came running on, and built up a human pyramid on which there was tightrope walking etc. - and the arena was covered by perhaps 30 different teams all doing it simultaneously, to music, with the utmost precision. In another act, a strong man came out into the centre with a carrying pole on his shoulder, at each end of which was a huge ball. He dumped it down, lids flew off and from each ball jumped 8 or 10 small children who proceeded to do drill and acrobatics. There were ordinary track events too, I think, we saw the end of a marathon race.

To return to our farewell party. After the cinema a few of the head Communists took us foreigners to the best restaurant in town where we had a Chinese feast, and then we returned to the College where the rest of the Chinese staff were waiting in the first class-room for the real farewell meeting to begin. There were tien-hsin (cakes, sweetmeats) and that horrible Pepsi Cola (legacy of UNRRA, I think) and speeches by a lot of people. Then those of us who were definitely leaving were each asked to speak, and were presented with the usual fans signed by those present as a memento. This was the end of a truly exhausting day. Later, after I had left Moukden the Wei sheng pu (Health Department) gave another farewell party, with more speeches.

Finally Agnes and I left on Sunday morning, the 13th of September. The hospital had been most helpful over all the arrangements for leaving; the office helped us with all our negotiating with the police and with baggage and in buying the railway tickets etc. and they sent us off that morning in the hospital truck. The station was simply crammed with poor people who had been held up, like us, and we had been very lucky to get 3rd class sleeper tickets. There was a perfunctory examination of hand baggage, but we had to buy, then and there, a piece of thin rope to tie round my suitcase before they would let it pass (it was a strong tin case, locked, and with a big strap round it, but the rule was that everything must be roped!) John Fleming got someone to let me up through the mob on the stairs to the barrier, but we waited there until the train was almost due to leave. A few mothers with children were picked out and allowed through. Another man ran us down the stairs and around and along until we managed to get on the train and find our places just before it moved out. The train was almost full already with passengers who got on at the north station. We heard from someone on the train that only about ten people, including us two, were allowed on at the Nan chan. (South station.)

We had a good journey of about 22 hours, not too uncomfortable. The bunks were in three tiers, the middle one folding up in daytime, but you weren't allowed to have a snooze on the top bunk during the day. The guard came along and when he spotted someone up there (doing no one any harm) he called to them to come down at once, it wasn't the time for sleeping. We heard that a few days later, people were not allowed to choose which end of the bunk to put their heads - everyone had to be the same way round.

We spent a week in Tientsin. We had got our exit permits from the police in Moukden, and they only had to be stamped by the police in Tientsin. But we still had to go through a complicated medical examination at the Central Hospital, which meant a lot of waiting about in one department or another. It included height, weight, temperature, and pulse, history, a few thumps on one's chest, and a round of the ear, nose, throat, eye, skins, and dental departments. Also routine urine and faeces examinations, Kahn test for syphilis and fluoroscopic examination of chest.

Tientsin struck us as much more normal in appearance and atmosphere than Moukden had been. One saw very few people in uniform, and some people were still wearing quite good clothes, whereas in Moukden a great many people were in the ugly jacket and slacks and no one dared to wear good clothes. Still, this was a superficial impression only, and doubtless if one had been working there one would soon have come up against the snags.

Agnes and I were lucky in getting two passages on a B. & S. (Butterfield and Swire) boat, which were left vacant by people who could not get their papers complete at the last moment. Otherwise we might have had to wait weeks or months for a passage to Hong Kong. The fact that we had passages booked from Hong Kong to England gave us some priority. On leaving, we had a thorough baggage examination, but nothing was objected to. Everything spread on the dockside. I was asked what a

block of embedded tissue for a pathological examination by Professor Biggart (in Belfast) was. My Chinese was inadequate so I said, "I quai jo", (a piece of meat). "Passed".

Addendum written after reaching home in 1949 and based on notes taken by a missionary friend, about to leave a few days after Agnes Gardner and I did. It reports a conversation with a Chinese friend, not word accurate but the sense of the conversation recorded as truthfully as possible and sent to me later.

"The church in Manchuria will always remember the contribution of the home churches, and the close ties which bind us. The church in Manchuria is conscious of our brotherhood that depends on a common Father - difficult to express, but felt everywhere. They are conscious of being part of a worldwide Christian fellowship. There are difficult times ahead for the Manchurian church, but certain individuals and families will survive. They have already had such experiences in the past (i.e. under Japanese oppression) and know that God's hand is there and Christianity cannot therefore be wiped out. The human effort (seen in the communist movement) has inherent defects that will be the ruination of it. The Communist rule is too strict for the Chinese. What they want to do takes time, there is a long way to go and their plans are not well thought out. e.g. to pull down the College and then rebuild from the bottom in order to destroy its spirit. The rapid military success has been too quick, and will lure them into disaster. Famine likely next year, but loads of grain are meanwhile being shipped to Russia. The Communists' intentions are good, their methods 'haywire'".

He was asked why the foreigners were all leaving the College and the hospital - 'Are they not satisfied?' he answered that "the foreigners had all come by invitation to work in a mission hospital, a Christian college. Now that these institutions were no longer in existence, their contract was automatically dissolved. If the government wanted the foreigners to work in their institutions they would have to invite them."

"The position of the Christian church reminded him of trees in autumn losing their leaves. The time would come when the leaves would appear again. He hoped that we would return in five or ten years' time when this period was over. Then we would see who had stood the test!"

Dr Liu Tun-lun, one of the first students at MMC and a long-time professor and Head of the College, died on 18 June 1986 (he had been in hospital during DSC's April/May 1986 visit and too ill to see visitors.) This obituary of him was written by Agatha in late 1986 for publication in a Church magazine (*Good Works*) - I do not know if it was ever published.

Dr. Liu T'ung-lun

Born 1893, Died 18 June 1986.

A letter exists, written by Anna Crawford from Chinchow in May 1910, which includes the following sentences: "Liu T'ung-lun is a very clever boy five big school boys were baptised yesterday, he was amongst the number Alek (Alexander Crawford) first read the names, then asked all separately if they 'before God and men promise... to follow Christ their whole life long' ... then they are baptised." At that time Liu T'ung-lun must have been seventeen or eighteen years old. He joined the first class of students in Moukden Medical College, graduated as a doctor in 1917, and

joined the staff of MMC. There followed a short period of post-graduate study in Scotland in 1919-1920, and he then returned to serve in MMC as physician and later Medical Superintendent.

Few people have survived, for ninety-four years, such a life of varied dangers and sufferings as Liu T'ung-lun. The stories of his experiences in prison and under torture during the Japanese occupation of Manchuria in the 1930s and early 1940s are known to his friends. Once, during a later period of deepening trouble and danger, he was asked to tell what lessons he had then learned. He warned us against worrying overmuch about the "less important" fears of imprisonment and death, and urged us to prepare against the "much greater danger, the temptation to hate". That was the quality of his leadership. It is by his life as a much trusted and loved leader and friend that he will be remembered most clearly by his colleagues.

During the Second World War, conditions in Moukden were of severe hardship and loneliness, which would have caused lesser men to despair. Foreign medical staff were either expelled or interned and staff, money, fuel, drugs, food, bedding, instruments - all the "necessities" for running a hospital - were almost totally exhausted. Dr. Liu not only kept the Moukden Medical College's hospital open, but helped nine other Christian hospitals in the Northeast to resist the pressures from the Japanese occupiers to close their doors. Soon after the end of the war a visitor asked Dr. Liu how he had kept the work going, and he replied that it was not he who had done it and he called for some of the nurses. "They did it. Look at their hands". The rough hands scarred by frostbite told the story.

For the following three years contact was renewed with the churches and supporters in the West, old friends returned and money and equipment began to arrive. Then came Liberation and with it more profound change. Dr. Liu's great interest had always been the treatment and prevention of tuberculosis, and when the Moukden Medical College was merged into the China Medical University and he was removed from his position as Medical Superintendent of the hospital he was sent to work in a sanatorium in Pushun, later moving to the outskirts of Moukden (now called Shenyang). Here he carried out work on the control of tuberculosis and wrote a book based on his experience.

During the so-called "Cultural revolution" in the years 1966 to 1976, he was subject to severe attacks, both physical and mental and his work was rejected. Ironically he himself suffered from the disease he was dedicated to defeat, especially the side effects of the early antibiotics used in treatment. These facts were learned later, for the almost thirty years from 1950 until 1979 almost no news reached us of friends in China. Then the miracle happened and among the letters which began to arrive were a few from our old friend, now in his 80s, still cheerful, uncomplaining, and undaunted. In 1982 a celebration of Dr. Liu's sixty-five years in the practice of medicine publicly reinstated him and paid tribute to his work of service to the People of China. The group photograph that day shows him surrounded by 145 old colleagues and alumni of the Moukden Medical College and newer colleagues and friends from the China Medical University.

Dr. Liu spent the last years of his life as a patient in the Third Affiliated Hospital of the China Medical University in Shenyang - the successor institution to the Moukden Medical College's Hospital of which he had been the Medical Superintendent. He was surrounded by friends, cared for by one of his daughters, still writing letters, still in touch with the local church. On June 18th. 1986 he died and the world feels emptier without him.

Austin Fulton has told me that on one occasion, during the Japanese occupation, Liu T'ung-lun and another man were taken out from prison to be - they assumed - shot. The other man said, 'We're finished' (wan-la). "Not finished, accomplished" (ch'eng-la), replied Liu T'ung-lun. Now, many years later, "ch'eng-la" is the word which sums up the life of a great and faithful man, and we are grateful to God for him.
