

*Dear Girl! -  
Enclosed a  
copy of my letter re  
our trip Hongkong  
to Kunming  
Yours - Edward*

RECEIVED

Chengtu, Sze.  
November 13th, 1938.

JAN 3 1939

Dear Friends:-

~~There was a time when getting into West China by the Yangtse river route seemed quite a job - beset as it was with many difficulties. They seem less formidable in the light of our recent trip via Hongkong, French- Indo-China and Yunnan. Perhaps it was the fact that we were going by a strange route rather than actual discomforts or difficulties of travel that made it seem so much harder. We had received a considerable amount of advice regarding the journey, but most of this consisted of statements that "this and that" were impossible so that throughout the trip to Kunming from Hongkong we were in a constant state of anxiety regarding the next stage of the journey.~~

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Perhaps I should say that is an editorial "we." For it was my task as leader of this party to try to foresee and avoid as many of the obstacles as possible. We left Canada as you know on Sept. 3rd sailing on the Empress of Asia a party of 24. This party was made up of:

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- Rev. and Mrs. E. W. Morgan,
- Rev. and Mrs. G. E. Rackham and Nan, Ruth and Joan
- Rev. and Mrs. John Kitchen and Gwen
- Rev. F. J. Reed and Donald
- Rev. and Mrs. G. S. Bell and Neil
- Dr. and Mrs. I. Hilliard
- Miss M. Dougherty
- Mrs. A. Vaught.

Dr. and Mrs. Hilliard were young missionaries going out for the first time as was Miss Dougherty of the W. M. S. Mrs. vaught is a member of the American Friends Mission coming to Szechuan to rejoin her husband. At Kobe, Japan, we had two other new missionaries join the party - Dr. and Mrs. Ralph Outerbridge, who had spent the summer in Japan with his parents who are prominent members of our United Church of Canada Mission there. Again, at Shanghai our numbers were increased by Mrs. E. W. Edmonds and her three children - Arthur, Robert and Nettie. You will perhaps remember that Mr. Edmonds died of a heart attack on Aug. 13th while crossing the Pacific with his family. That was a great loss to the Mission as well as to his loved ones. Mrs. Edmonds asked to be allowed to return to Szechuan and continue their work. This the Board of Foreign Missions agreed to allow, and so they boarded the vessel at Shanghai, where they had remained for some weeks. We were all deeply moved at the sight of that little family group standing on the dock as our vessel slowly drew in at Shanghai. So it was that with this large party of 25 men, women and children we arrived at Hong Kong about 10 a.m., Thursday, Sept. 10th.

Early in June I had written to the management of the Phillips House at Hongkong - an institution somewhat like the Missionary Home in Shanghai, asking for reservations for our party. I had also asked them to book passage on the mail plane to Chengtu for all the women and children as well as for Drs. Hilliard and Outerbridge, whom I wanted to get into Language School as quickly as possible. Before I left Canada I had received a reply stating that passages had been booked on the large Douglas air liner leaving Hong Kong on Sept 27th. This would have taken our people to Chengtu in from six to seven hours. But while we were still in Vancouver we heard the news of the shooting down by the Japanese air force of one of these mail planes. Thus we knew before leaving that we should have to take the longer journey via French Indo-China for all the party. From Shanghai I cabled asking that reservations be made for us on the steamer running between Hongkong and Haiphong, the Indo-China port.

Miss McGill of the Phillips House met the ship and said to me, "You have to make up your minds before noon whether you are going to take the reservations I have made for Sept. 30th as the Company will not hold them longer." This seemed simple enough at first thought, but it became complicated after reading some of the letters awaiting us. One of them asked that we should take delivery of a new truck which the Mission had bought. The question then arose as to who would go with the truck. After consultation among the group we decided that Messrs Morgan, Reed and Hilliard should take the truck with a load of trucks, and that all the rest should continue as planned by the Indo-China route.

Immediately after lunch, or tiffin as it is known in the Far East, I crossed from Kowloon on the mainland, where we were staying, to Hong Kong. There is a wonderful ferry service between the island and Kowloon, which is a piece of territory leased by the British and under the administration of the Hong Kong government. Ferries leave every five minutes during business hours and take about ten minutes to cross the marvelous harbor. I had often heard of this great harbor, but had no real idea of its size, its sheltered and strategic situation. There were a great many British war vessels lying at anchor. We were there during the time when the Checko-Slovakian situation was so intense, and there were many rumors as to what would happen, if war should break out in Europe.

That afternoon was largely taken up with getting an account opened with the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank, and in trying to get the passages booked on the French steamer, "Canton" going to Haiphong. It seems all so simple as one looks back at it, but in reality it took up several hours altogether. The difficulty was that we had twenty-two persons - big and little - and there were at first only nineteen berths available. However, by persistence we finally succeeded in getting accommodation for everyone in the party. We had, however, to get visas and special papers from the French Consulate at Hong Kong guaranteeing admittance into Indo-China before the shipping company would finally issue the tickets. Later this bit of the task was held up because the vaccination certificates of some members were more than five months old, which was the limit set by the French authorities, whereas anything up to five years was acceptable by the British quarantine officers at Hong Kong. So these folk had to be vaccinated and get certificates before the tickets were handed over.

*X-2000  
K. G. G. G.  
off.*

The getting of those steamer passages required about a dozen visits to the booking office. The next step was to get bookings on the mail plane from Kunming - the capital of Yunnan province and the end of the railway line from French Indo-China into China proper. This again required a good many trips back and forth to Hong Kong city. At the same time the fact that we had already had a whole plane chartered for the 27th made it somewhat easier to get bookings under the changed conditions. I got enough bookings from Kunming to Chengtu for Oct. 6th, 7th and 11th to take all of the party except Mr. Rackham, Mr. Kitchen and myself as we had decided that we three men should remain in Kunming to look after the baggage and freight.

The day after these bookings were fixed I received a letter from Mr. Hibbard, our Mission treasurer in Chengtu, saying that he had received a letter from Mr. Evans of the English Methodist Mission in Kunming requesting that missionaries passing through Kunming should not come in parties larger than about eight persons. Here we had booked passages on steamer, railway and plane for 22 persons. You can imagine my feelings upon getting that letter. It was quite impossible to break up the group into three parties and avail ourselves of the air passages we already had. But we did make plans to have two parties go two days apart from Haiphong, and so arranged it that most of the first party would go by air from Kunming on the 6th. We'll just leave that part of the story for the present.

None of you who have not been to the Orient nor had experience travelling with a party of missionaries can picture the job that we had to put across in the one week in Hong Kong. For not only had we to get ready to leave on the steamer going on the 30th, it was just as necessary to be out of the Phillips House for they had booked all their rooms for another very large party of people due to arrive on Oct. 1st. But it seemed as though everyone in our Mission had sent orders for goods of all kinds, but especially groceries. Normally these are sent by parcel post from Shanghai, but all that traffic had long been stopped by the fighting along the Yangtze river. People in the interior were running out of supplies, and these could not be replaced locally except at most prohibitive prices, such as a dollar or more per pound for coffee, and other things in proportion. Not only that, but ordinary means of transport are so disrupted that unless these things can be taken along by people going into the interior, there is little hope of getting them at all. So the game went on - running to the tailors to fit on summer suits, trying to find fruit jars for someone ~~else~~ else, getting delivery of a shipment of drugs from Shanghai for some of our hospitals, hunting up the shop where the body was being built for the new truck - all these and scores of other jobs made the days more than full from daylight till late at night. And sandwiched in between were frequent meetings of our group to decide this or that question. And was it hot? Whew! Some of us fairly faded away in that torrid weather because we had not light summer suits with us. By the way, here's a record for you. We were in Shanghai from about 10 a.m. till the last tender left for the ship at 11 p.m. At 11 a.m. I called on my old friend Hen Kong, the Shanghai tailor, at 9 p.m. he delivered to me three suits and three pairs of khaki shorts. The three suits were all woolen ones, so you can tell the world that is moving the immovable East. That beats his former record for quick work made when Peter Kyne, the American novelist visited Shanghai some years ago. I found that taking exchange into consideration that clothing prices were much cheaper in Shanghai than in Hong Kong. But it is a myth about British woolen goods being cheaper at Hong Kong because it is a free port. They were dearer on the whole than similar goods in Canada.

There was much re-packing of goods to be done in the evenings. we had decided that as many of the trunks brought from Canada, as we could send that way should go overland by truck. After some dickering we hired a three tone White truck on the understanding that it would carry 2½ tons of luggage and other packages. Each family was allowed so much weight on the trucks, and everything ~~else~~ else was to go with the larger party by Indo-China. All this meant a lot of additional work in packing and weighing boxes - this was all to the good for those of us in need of slimming exercises, and waiting until late in the evening didn't help matters very much, *for the nights were about as hot as the days.*

However, the morning of sept. 30th arrived at last. George Mackham and John Kitchen were allotted the task of going to the ship and checking receipt of all baggage and freight sent aboard. About 2 p.m. I took the rest of the party and started for the docks. We had to go in two parties by small motor launches about two miles to the west end of the harbor, and about half a mile from shore. There was the usual confusion surrounding a ship about to leave a port on the China coast. Cargo of all kinds was being unloaded from a half a dozen junks on each side. The launches could not get near the ship and so we had to clamber over these junks and other launches to get to the companion way. On board confusion seemed confounded or compounded ~~perhaps~~ perhaps both. There seemed to be passengers and ~~baggage~~ baggage everywhere. In the midst of it all we saw George and John soaked to the skin, or rather from the skin out, heaving on a rope trying to get all the scores of cases of freight and baggage off a junk on to the ship. It seemed to be the only way to get it on. That is to do it oneself.

Another party of people came aboard carrying quite a variety of fruit. Some in our party remarked that these French ships do not supply much fruit and we had come aboard with about everything else under the sun but fruit, that the meals would be mostly of things fried, etc., etc. So Wesley Morgan, Fred Reed, and Irwin Hilliard agreed to go ashore in a launch and get some fruit. In an hour they were back with 100 oranges for the crowd. By this time George and John had made a good job of getting all our stuff on board, including a cook stove for the Hilliards, which was delivered without a crate. Imagine what that stove would be like before it reached the Chengtu plain! After considerable palaver we persuaded the captain to have the ship's carpenter ~~crate~~ crate the stove. They were very decent about it once they had agreed to do it, and refused to accept any payment except the "cumshaw" we gave the carpenter.

We finally got ourselves sorted out and into our various cabins for being but two berth cabins the families had to be divided up. I was the odd one and found my cabin mate to be the new Portuguese Minister to China, and we had, I think, one of the smallest cabins on the ship. Only room for one person to move about in it at one time. But it was a relief to get under way and feel that we could relax for two days before taking on the ~~NEX~~ next stage of the journey. It was a delightful trip except for a few hours in the second night when we emerged into the Gulf of Tonkin from the straits that separate the island of Hainan from the mainland. By the way that peninsula on the mainland opposite Hainan is the place where the other were were to go to start their overland journey with the trucks. It is called Kwang Chow Wah. They were to leave Hongkong the following day, but things did not work to schedule for them.

Fortunately, my cabin was on the upper deck and I made a new Pacific record in leaping from the upper berth to the rail, and incidentally beating His Excellency, the Portuguese Minister by ten minutes. I felt rather peeved about it all as that was the only time I was sick crossing the Pacific this time. Terrible to spoil a precious re like that less than ten hours from port.

We arrived at Haiphong about 10.30 a.m, Sunday Oct. 2nd. The last few hours of the voyage take one along a very interesting piece of coast. The scenery was indeed beautiful. Well, we went through another spasm of the utmost confusion. One would think that the ship had suddenly caught fire and that it was essential that everyone should get on to the dock within the next fifteen minutes. I had telegraphed a week before to a Chinese firm to meet us and make arrangements for trans-shipping our baggage and freight from the ship to the railway station. They were there to meet us, but a number of other parties had sent similar messages. So it ended in us carrying on a sort of see-saw contest as to who had the services of the English speaking representative of the firm, as well as his gang of coolies.

We held our own very well indeed in getting all our baggage out of the cabins and on to the little flat cars - about three feet wide and six or seven feet long - which were run alongside the ship and on to which goods were loaded and pushed across the road to the customs shed. But when it came to getting the 111 pieces of heavy baggage out of the hold it was quite another matter. We eventually found ourselves the last gang getting away from the ship. Of course, we had sent the women and children on to an hotel. But there we were four men and Arthur Edmonds and Neil lined up with fifteen flat cars of goods headed for the Customs office. Perhaps it was a good thing for us that we were last and that it was then about 2 p.m. on Sunday. At any rate, after a brief bit of parling with the French Customs officer he said, "Well, if you get it away to the railway station without delay you can go. If it remains here, it will have to go into the examining shed and you will have to wait till tomorrow to get it through." Needless to say we promised to make it disappear as quickly as the proverbial snowball would in a spot almost as hot as the spot usually associated with the snowball.

My next job, while the others went off to lunch, was to go to the railway station and buy our tickets which had been booked. It was Sunday and only a few people were around the station. No one seemed to know anything about these bookings, but we finally rooted the French station master up from his Sunday siesta to get some action. I said we must have the party go in two parties in order not to congest the accommodation at Kunming too much. But said the station master, "If you go all at once, I'll give you a whole car to yourselves - first, second and third class. You can have the whole car and divide yourselves up as you like in it. If you do that, you can leave your baggage on board at night. If you go in two smaller parties, you will have to take off all your baggage each of the two nights on the way to Kunming. (These trains only travel in daylight, all passengers leave the train, at night.) I advise you to take the whole party at once." The head man of the Chinese Transit ~~Company~~ Co who had come to the station with me also strongly advised me to do it. I had no one else from our party there to consult with, so had to make the decision myself. I told them to go ahead and make out the tickets that w

It was now 3 p.m., and I thought I would dash over to the hotel some half mile away and get something to eat. I had had nothing since breakfast at 7.30. But lunch or tiffin was long over and nothing whatever could be had. It simply wasn't done. Another complication arose just then. Those who had gone to the hotel earlier and knowing that we had planned to travel by rail in two parties - having the first party go on that Sunday evening to Hanoi from where the Kunming train leaves - told the hotel manager that we wouldn't need all the accommodation asked that night. So when I announced that we were all remaining that night and leaving on a special car in the morning to be attached to the Hanoi train at a certain junction, the manager of the hotel announced that the other rooms previously assigned to us had now been allotted to other guests.

That was too much for me in my weakened condition. I turned the problem over to the other men and went back to the station to attend to checking baggage and making arrangements for shipping the bulk of our heavy stuff by freight. It seemed as though one had to scrap not for any concessions but for one's rights. At first, the lad in the office said there was no baggage allowance, which I denied most vehemently. An American who had just gotten through with his said they had only allowed him 15 kilograms per ticket. I said that we were allowed 30, and so the row went. I finally had to send for the head man of the Transit Co again. When he came the question was soon settled by our getting the full amount. His fluent French was a great help.

By this time the other men had come from the hotel and were able to help in getting the freight piled up and counted. I think we counted those cases at least thirty times before we got agreement with the number of pieces as counted by the coolies of the Transit Co. So at 6.30 I went with the transit man to his office to settle up, and about 7.15 arrived at the hotel for dinner. By putting in other beds and cots into the room we already had the whole party was finally accommodated for the night, a dinner was to be ready at 7.30. They had set a long table in a private dining room, and, oh boy, did that dinner taste good.

The manager of the hotel and the Transit people said that our train would leave at 7.10 a.m. and a man would come from the Transit firm to help us get to the station and on the train. Arrangements were made for a sort of breakfast to be served in the rooms at 5.30 or 6 a.m., I think it was the latter. Those beds were as hard as ----- . At any rate, I was quite ready to get up at 5 a.m. About 5.30 someone rapped on our bed door. It was the man from the Transit firm who asked if we were ready. I replied, "You said you would be here at 6 a.m. with rickshas to take the luggage and it is now only 5.30." He turned away without a word. About 15 minutes later he came again and in great distress announced that he had made a mistake about the time of the train, and that we were due to leave six o'clock. The special car was to be attached, as far as the junction, a slow train, and not to the fast motor carriage which would leave at 7. for Hanoi. Just imagine the situation. A party of 22, some of them still in bed, and the train due to leave within fifteen minutes from a station half a mile away, and transportation to it by rickshas. Well, I did some flying about determined we would go down with flying colors. The breakfasts were forgotten about in the mad rush. I ran out to the street and called all the rickshas in sight while Neil roused the tardy ones. By six o'clock the last ones left the hotel and I jumped into a ricksha and followed, wondering if we had all our belongings.

You can picture to yourselves that parade through the streets in the early morning. Each person had several pieces of baggage in the ricksha, and the ricksha pullers being urged to run faster. Those who arrived first said they heard the train whistling as it pulled out of the station. At any rate, when I arrived at the tail of the procession they announced that the train had left. What a disappointed looking crowd we were!

I immediately asked for the station master. When he appeared he said that they had held the train for ten minutes, and there wouldn't be another train to which our car could be attached until the following morning. That did put us in a hole. I said that the fault was certainly not ours, since the Transit Co. and the manager of the hotel had both told me that the train on which we were to travel was to leave at 7.10. The station master replied that the 7.10 train was a fast one made up of one vehicle, motor cab and passenger car combined, and that there was no room to take all our baggage as nothing but small hand baggage was allowed on it.

Again I replied that the fault was with the Transit Co. who were looking after us. Therefore, something had to be done to get us to the junction to catch the train to Yunnan that day. If we did not get through we would miss our air passages on the 6th, since we would only arrive after dark on the 5th, etc. etc. The French station master shrugged his shoulders and threw up his hands and said, "It is impossible. You cannot take so many people on the motor carriage with so much baggage. I replied, "It must and has to be possible." No, he said, "only part of the group can go to-day. The others must go tomorrow." So I said, "You persuaded me yesterday to send all in one party. All our arrangements are now made to go that way, and go we must, and this morning on the fast train."

So it went on back and forth for nearly half an hour. Finally, and I suppose in desperation to get rid of us, he said, "All right, get into the car there (for the motor train had by then pulled in to the platform) and put all your baggage where you can, but it is distinctly contrary to regulations to load that car in such a way." Then I said, "I suppose you will telegraph to the station master at the junction and request him to have a car ready for us on arrival." After a bit of hesitation he said, "Yes, I'll do that." So we went to work and piled all our baggage into the car and in we got ourselves and at 7.10 we were on our way to Yunnan.

This Deisel engined motor train was certainly fast, and within an hour we overtook the slow train we should have taken. That run of two hours from Haiphong to Gialam, the junction, was very interesting passing as it does through a very fertile delta on which heavy crops of rice were growing. But just then our interest was centred on whether a car would be ready for us at Gialam. I had taken the Transit Co's man along with us in case we should get into another 'jam' at the junction. On arrival he got the station master and the latter said he had received the wire to prepare a car. Presently, they shunted a coach up to the platform and we loaded all our baggage on it. Our luck was good for this coach had just come from the shops after being overhauled and re-painted. There was plenty of room for us all and for all our baggage.

There was barely time to fill the water tanks when the train from Hanoi, to which our car was to be attached, arrived. And well within an hour we were on our way. For several hours we ran through more of the delta country until we began to get into some hill country. All afternoon we ran through jungle land with tropical vegetation of all kinds including bananas. At the stations the latter could be bought very cheaply. The heat was very intense and the cars were very hot even though all windows were wide open. Thanks to recent rains there was little dust. The scenery was certainly interesting to us who had not seen jungle country before.

About 7 p.m. or a little later we arrived at the town of Lao Kay on the Indo-China side of the border between that country and China. The train we were on, as indicated before travels only in the daytime. Passengers leave the train and stop in hotels over night. We had made plans whereby several of the men and Neil were to stay on the car so as to watch the baggage as there was no way of locking the car. I took all the women and children down a dark street for about a block to the French hotel, which is actually managed by Annamese. They said they hadn't enough rooms for all our party, but after some pressing we got six rooms, and later could have had another but by that time all were in bed, into which we managed to get the whole crew. In some cases having <sup>THREE</sup> two to a bed. We got dinner for twelve of the party, the rest of us had to do without as apparently the kitchen supplies ran out, or the staff went on strike at having to continue working after 9 p.m.

In the morning I was up at five to get all the thermos flasks filled with ice water, buy some rolls for our use on the train that day, etc. This water business on this trip was very funny. On the S. S. Canton from Hongkong to Haiphong there was always a variety of wines served with the meals, but we had been warned against drinking the cold water served on the ship. So there we were with undrinkable, or so we thought, water and conscientious objections to the other drinks. The mothers were especially anxious about the water supply, so the only thing we could do was to buy bottled mineral water for which we had to pay. All along the journey to Yunnan we also had to be very careful about the kind of water we got at the hotels for our bottles. But we came through safely so far as sickness from water was concerned, or in fact any other sickness actually due to the risks of the journey.

However, to continue the trip. we left Lao Kay about 7.30 that morning and pulled across the bridge which spans the river separating Indo-China and China. On the Chinese side is the town of Ho Kou - "River Mouth." Here we were detained for nearly an hour for customs examination. While there I got in touch with the train conductor who wired ahead to Kai Yuen, where we were to stop that night, asking for accommodation at the hotel that night. We had no difficulty with customs or passports. In fact, they never looked at our baggage at all. The head Chinese in the Customs service there is a native of Kiang Tsin in Szechuan, the big place between Lushow and Chungking on the Yangtze. When all the formalities were completed the train started and we were actually back into China again, weeks after our brief stop in Shanghai.

Immediately after leaving the Ho Kou station the train entered a tunnel. This was the first of more than 170 tunnels, long and short through which we were to pass during the next two days. The railway is really a marvel of engineering skill. It follows in the main the valleys of two river systems, winding up and up, in and out and across valleys and gorges. Sometimes we could see the road or tunnel we had gone over or passed through nearly an hour before on the far side of a valley. By noon there was a considerable difference in the degree of heat we felt, even though there was bright sunshine. In the afternoon we passed out of one tunnel on to ~~an~~ a steel bridge which spanned a chasm between two mountains and passed directly into a tunnel on the farther side. Throughout these two days the scenery was very fine.

We arrived at Kai Yuen about 6 p.m. that day and were met by a French manager of the hotel, which was called the "Bungalow." It was really a number of two storied houses. The rooms were large and clean with running water and electric lights in them. There was plenty of room for all the party and some even had baths that night. The dinner was particularly good and this helped to put everyone in good spirits again. Eating on the train was quite an interesting game. There were so many tunnels that one often had to stop in the midst of taking a mouthful and wait until we got through the tunnel. There were no lights in the train so we were in darkness each time we went into a tunnel.

The third day's run into Yunnan was uneventful except for the truly marvelous view one gets as the train comes over the ~~crest~~ crest of the last high range and starts down the slope to the plateau on which Kunming city is located. It was a beautiful landscape which lay spread out before us. And those grades on the railway! It is like riding on a roller coaster at times, the way they would shoot up a slope and down another.

All that day I kept wondering what kind of a reception we would get from Mr. Evans of the English Methodist Mission, since we were so flagrantly breaking or ignoring his request that only small parties should arrive at one time. However, at a station two hours' run from Kunming a young Chinese chap, Mr. Lee of the Kunming Y. M. C. A. met us at Mr. Evans request. Mr. Lee was a delightful young fellow who spoke excellent English. He had been in the U. S. for several years. He told us that Mr. Evans was unable to take any of our party into his own home as his house was already full with a party which had arrived some days or a week before and had not been able to get air passage as yet. But said Mr. Lee, "We have arranged accommodation at two other places." So on arrival Mr. and Mrs. Rackham and children, Mrs. Edmonds and her children went to a Chinese hotel with foreign style accommodation. This was newly opened and proved not too bad for a short stay. No foreign food was served however, and they had to go to the nearby Chinese Y or over to where the larger group was located. This was in a newly overhauled Chinese style home. It was to be a Club House for Returned Chinese students. That is, students who had studied in other countries. It was just ready to be opened, and Mr. Lee, who was the manager of it, kindly offered us rooms there. The beds were foreign style with Chinese mattresses and padded quilts. The first night some of us had to sleep two in a single bed as

there were not enough rooms to go around. We had to have a sort of pick-up supper from the food we had left from the train journey. The next morning managed to get breakfast too, and after that we either went to a Chinese ~~eat~~ Y for Chinese food, or had some foreign food prepared by a cook who had worked in an hotel in Chekiang province. The serviettes he gave us were all marked, "Hotel Tiny, Hangchow." We were told that was where he had formerly worked.

Immediately after breakfast I went to the Air Company's office to find out whether our first party could go that day. They said the plane had been detained in Chungking and would not be down till the next day. They said that the first crowd could go on Friday, the following day, but that only part of the second group could go on Saturday. The reason given was that the Hongkong office had instructed them to give four of our bookings to the Dutch Ambassador, the Portugese, Belgian and some ~~of~~ other Minister. However, by Tuesday of the following week we got the last of the group away when Mrs. Morgan and Mrs. Vaught went to Chungking. They had to wait a little longer, but they had from arrival been the fortunate ones in that Mr. Evans had gotten them into the home of Mr. Smith, another Methodist missionary.

All these women and children arrived safely at their destinations. When that was done, I felt that I had done my bit, and on consultation with Mr. Rackham and Mr. Kitchen who were still in Kunming with me I decided to leave by plane on Thursday. They offered to remain behind and look after the freight which was coming from Haiphong - some 92 cases, and try to get it off by truck to Chungking. So I sailed away on the big Douglas air liner on the Thursday to Chungking. It was a strenuous business while that trip from Hongkong lasted. During the period from Sept 22nd when we landed in Hongkong until our arrival in Kunming on the 5th Oct. I lost sixteen pounds in weight. If we had foreseen that the plane service from Hongkong to Chengtu would be interrupted we would never have come in so large a party, but having come there was nothing to do but go through with it, BUT NEVER AGAIN.

However, we have very much to be very grateful for. As one looks back on it, and sees the possibilities for trouble and difficulty on such a route with so large a party, I am deeply thankful to God for the many travelling mercies that were ours. There were many anxious moments, but all worked out well, and we have all arrived safely and well at our stations. More than that most of our goods are here, and while there is at present great uncertainty about when the balance of our groceries, etc. will arrive from Kunming owing to rapidly changing military situation we have all our clothing and enough things to carry on with.

Yesterday and a week ago yesterday the Japs came here to Chengtu with 17 planes each time and heavily bombed the air fields north and south of the city, but didn't bomb the city itself. Yesterday the windows in our house rattled with the concussion of the bombing. The Japs are pushing ahead in the Central China front and one wonders what the end will be. But in the meantime we carry on.

With kindest regards and best wishes to you all,

sincerely yours, *Donald Bell*