

Waller Field, Arima  
Jan. 8th, 1972.

Dear Lily & Folks,

It grieves me to report that the newly born babe has passed away, ~~saeracely~~ <sup>scarcely</sup> 12 hours after birth. The whole house is in gloom and we are only left with the brief memory of a tiny sweet baby with fine features, a broad chest and a strong voice. We were shocked. Kwok Hing was overcome with grief.

Earlier in the day Kwok Hing brought me the happy news of the birth of a son. He was most happy and proudly said, "Now, at long last I have arrived. I have fulfilled my ambition. I have successfully discharged my duty to the family." Jubilantly he went about his work with zest. We were all in a happy mood.

Later in the evening, Hing, an tirely changed man, came to me with the sad news from the hospital. In total dejection, with head bowed and arms hanging limply on the side, he chokingly said, "We have failed to keep the baby." All at once without ceremony, we both embraced each other in a huddle for a long time sobbing over our shoulders. Murmur-~~ingly~~ incoherent <sup>words</sup> to each other, we could not hold back our tears.

The family is in deep sorrow. Kowk Hing is sadly and bitterly disappointed, an entirely a different man, silent and morose. Being constantly in his company, it is up to me to do all I can to console him and comfort him. I have advised him to bear this tragic misfortune with fortitude. I have advised him to be brave and be of hope and have faith in the future.

I have suggested that he should take a vacation in the States for a change of environment and atmosphere. He could leave the factory business in my care during his absence. The factory management is simple and I am confident of being able to take care of it with very little difficulty. With the help of a couple of key men to attend to details, it is not a hard problem at all. Though lacking in business sense, I pride myself of not being senseless in other ways, for I am mentally sound and alert. And I am physically fit too. *the factory will be safe in my hands.*

~~Meanwhile~~ Meanwhile, in his present hour of sorrow, I would like you to write Hing comforting letters of ~~consolation~~ <sup>consolation</sup>, cheerful letters to bolster his low spirits and uplift his morale. Tell him not to despair and get discouraged. Tell him to accept Fate with philosophical fortitude. Tell him to be <sup>of</sup> hope and have Faith in the future.

Both Yuk Yee and Sum Yee are doing fine in America. Yuk is in college in Maine and Sum will graduate from High School, <sup>N.Y.</sup> next Summer. <sup>Recently</sup> They spent Christmas in Toronto together, each ~~going~~ there separately from different directions. Their cousins of the Wong family recently came to Canada to study and there all the cousins converged in Toronto for the Christmas holidays. It must have been a most remarkable and enjoyable reunion for all the <sup>at</sup> cousins who have been separated from each other since their childhood days in Hong Kong. I admire the pluckiness of these teenage girls who ~~xxx~~ had to travell long distances from separate directions each by herself all alone.

Kwok Hing told me of the long distance telephone call from Frank, last night. I am sorry I was asleep at the time and missed the pleasure of exchanging a few words over the phone.

Best wishes to all.

Lovingly,  
Chen

*— over —*  
P.S. For future convenience, we have

P.S. For future convenience, our registered cable address is as follows:--

" LIGAN" Arima , (via Port-of-Spain)

to open cut here



An air letter should not contain any enclosure.  
If it does it will be surcharged or sent by ordinary mail.

Sender's name and address  
L.C. Lee,  
Waller Field, Arima,  
Trinidad, W.I.

Mrs. Lily L. Hsu,  
1737 Jackson Street, Apt. 101  
San Francisco, Calif. 94109  
U.S.A.



BY AIR MAIL  
AEROGamme  
AIR LETTER

Waller Field, Arima.  
Feb. 11th, 1972.

Dear Mabel & Ed.

Lily and Charlie are with us now. They arrived last Monday evening. They seem to like this place tremendously. They are in constant conversation with Kwok Hing probably cooking some business ideas among them. I am not much interested. The enthusiasm that I had before coming here has downgraded to a low ebb. Still uppermost in my mind is the ~~idea~~ idea of returning to Hong Kong, going back to the kind of life that we have been used to. We three <sup>(Ka So, King Seng and self.)</sup> are nothing more than lepers, being disintegrated by isolation. Contrarily, Lily and Charlie <sup>are enthusiastic</sup> will bring back to you folks' grandiose schemes for development of selected enterprises.

I want to thank you for sending me the Chinese poetry books which I appreciate very much. I am learning some valuable points on verse writing which is <sup>a</sup> fascinating pastime to while away my idle hours. I also want to thank you for the birthday gift you sent Ka So. King Seng and I also want to thank you for our shares. Ka So also received similar gifts from Louise. Please telephone her our thanks. I will write her separately later on.

Kwok Hing is doing quite well in his business. ~~He~~ Besides canning which is his business mainstay, ~~he~~ has ~~established~~ established promising connections for export of local products, as a sideline. He has taken Charlie to country towns collecting ginger from the farmers for export. They have amassed 4 tons and are waiting for more to make up a sizable shipment to Europe. Kwok Hing hopes to ship 100 tons during the year and expanding it to something like a 1000 tons per year in time to come. When once this sideline is developed, this little sideline could easily become a lucrative venture.

Overleaf are samples of ~~my~~ a beginner's attempt at verse writing. There are bound to be many laughable errors.

They are not intended to be shown ~~in~~ in public. They are only for your private amusement.

Yours with love,

*Chen*

姊妹花開五門齊  
 青龍四喜枉作為  
 十三不搭搭未成  
 平斷不門首先啼  
 天上飛來快活仙  
 壽如亦到同賀年  
 迷神歡叙四方城  
 不外想撈利事錢  
 千里遙遙夢廣州  
 歲月轉轉厭此留  
 太平鴿子非幻夢  
 美景循環還快轉頭

Dream of eating pigeons  
 at Tai Ping restaurant, Canton

Lily's  
 nickname

P.S.-Ka So <sup>King Seng and I</sup> also received birthday gifts from Sue. Please thank her.

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L.C. Lee,  
 Walter Field, Atlanta,  
 Trinidad, W.I.

Sender's name and address

Mr. & Mrs. Ed Gee,  
 1199 Laurel Street,  
 Berkeley, Calif.,  
 U.S.A.



BY AIR MAIL  
 AEROGARME  
 AIR LETTER

to open

Wallerfield, Arima  
April 24th, 1972.

Dear Mabel.

Thank you very much for sending me the Chinese book on Poe. Eagerly I thumbed through the pages and studied its contents. I found it to be the exact book that I wanted,--an introductory course of instructions for writing prose. I find the book interesting, simple and enlightening. I have received many books on the subject. Some of them are too far advanced for a learner like me to comprehend even the basic steps that should be taken in verse writing, not to speak of the fines of the art. This reminds me I must thank Mrs. Yung <sup>容孝如</sup> for her gift book "Discourse on Poetry and Prose". It is too dear a book for

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BY AIR MAIL  
AEROGRAMME  
AIR LETTER



Mrs. Ed. Gee,  
1199 Laurel Street,  
Berkeley,  
Calif., U.S.A.

constant  
a novice to tackle, but I am keeping it for ~~future~~ reference. Please  
give her my thanks and appreciation.

We are all well. Sound in mind and body, but bitter in  
thoughts. ~~mi~~ Sad experiences during the past year will continue to  
haunt me wherever I go,—be it Hong Kong, Taiwan, Canton, New York,  
San Francisco or Trinidad. I have lost interest in many things and  
am less enthusiastic about future prospects. Fortunately I am keen  
at reading. It is the only pastime that I have left that provides me  
with the greatest pleasure. I have even given up smoking, just to see  
how long I can continue the boycott. I am also writing less and less  
to my friends and I am hearing less and less from them. Gradually  
and steadily I am retiring, withdrawing myself into my shell. What  
else could I do? My eyes and ears are not what they used to be. I  
can't hear or see very well. My jaws are deformed and my tongue is  
damaged. I can't eat and chew my food properly and I can't speak  
distinctly. My memory is bad. I am losing sense of time and fail to  
keep tab of the days of the week. What I need most is company, the  
companionship of congenial friends speaking the same language and  
having similarity of interests. I mean friends with common sense,  
intelligent and entertaining, serious or humorous, either educated  
or uneducated.

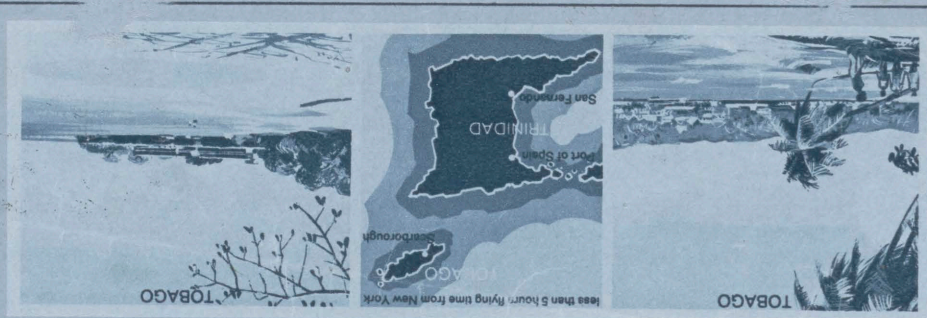
Having disposed of the above frivolities, here I have a propo

I have a proposition to introduce to you for your consideration and consultation with interested parties.

Here in Trinidad, I think Lily, Charlie, and Louise have met a native of our neighboring village named 林潤芳, who owns and operates a well-established and paying 餐館 that does a daily business averaging \$600. He is thinking of retiring <sup>when</sup> by selling the entire business or a ~~half~~ half interest. He and I had a talk and I urged him against giving up entirely. I suggested cooperation with some close friends to operate the business <sup>when</sup> while he goes on vacation of taking it easy. I suggested partnership with our family with one of your sisters to manage it by turns. He thinks very highly of Louise and said on many times that she would be more than capable of running the whole business. The location is good. The business is thriving and profitable. The operation is simple and the work is not demanding. I think we could buy a half interest for \$10,000 (\$5,000 U.S.) What do you think of it? Consult with the rest of the folks and interested friends. It caters take-out orders of as much as \$500. which means no extratwork for indoor employees. I was shown ~~an~~ order consisting of only 炒飯\$4; 半燒炒飯\$4; 燒雞\$6. All the dishes could be done by a 3rd rate cook. What do you think? Chew

margin of profit is 30%  
\$600 @ 30% = \$200 per day

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Sender's name and address  
L.C. Lee,  
Waller Field, Arima,  
Trinidad, W.I.

Waller Field, Arima,  
June 17th, 1973.

Dear Mabel.

I have your kind letter of the 11th for which many thanks. I appreciate your deep concern for me and Ka So. First of all I must allay your fears about us and correct whatever wrong impression you may have about our abrupt return to Trinidad. I am pleased to inform you that we are both well in every way. We have suffered no outside pressure of any kind as to have interfered with our movements. Our sudden decision to return to Trinidad was because of the increasing unfavorable circumstances with which we had been confronted. If an explanation is sought for the step we have taken, I would say it was due to "economic pressure" for which only we ourselves were responsible. In view of our stringent condition, we consider it urgent to practise economy at once by foregoing all pleasures and abandoning all travelling; by retreating to a place where the standard of living is the cheapest; by giving up all social activities; by denying ourselves of all extraneous comforts and luxuries. We'll have to prepare ourselves for a life in seclusion and shun all public life. It is to be a ~~humdrum~~ dull and a humdrum life, but what else could we do in view of present circumstances? It is a bitter pill to swallow, to be sure.

I could get adequate and immediate relief, if I were to raise the flag of distress and signal for help. But it is not my nature to beg and ask for outside help and succor. I prefer to suffer in silence and patiently wait for a favorable change of fortune. I will begin my life in seclusion by practising to be a Buddhist monk, indulging in daily meditation and devoting my time to reading. Then probably before long I might become a fit inmate ready to be taken to an insane asylum.

Three years ago I left H'Kong with high enthusiasm and dreams of great achievements, only to have been disillusioned shortly upon arrival. Unpleasant circumstances have threatened serious disruption in family relationships. I have suffered great pain and bitter disappointment. My dreams have been shattered and I am now left with no alternative but to repair as much of the damage as has been done and let time do the healing of all wounds. As if the above were not sufficiently distressing, the unbecoming behaviour of the younger generation is another source of grave concern.

I am afraid what I have written in the foregoing is not of pleasant reading. So, here goes a few items of less serious nature.

Yesterday was my red-letter day. I received a number of letters from S.F. Canada, Taiwan and Hong Kong. I have set aside next week to answer all of them. It is Father's Day and I must thank you for your gift check which came so timely and served me so conveniently. Kwok Hing also presented me with an upholstered reclining chair that has 3 adjustable positions for comfortable reading. I greatly appreciated it, particularly here in Trinidad where I find reading is the only available employment that is open for me.

Oi-ling's eldest daughter Elaine is to graduate from High School on the 19th. She has enrolled at the U. of California. Before coming out West she is to have her summer vacation visiting her uncle Frank's family in Italy. I have written her that Sherman and Sussane will be in Paris by the 24th. I hope these young people will have an opportunity of seeing each other.

Louise has sent me a few color pictures that were taken in Jo-Jo house. Of these pictures I like best the group pictures showing us 6 brothers and sisters together. The one showing me and you 3 sisters is the best of all. These group pictures have souvenir value. Please tell Louise to have half a dozen reprints made of them for me.

I close with love and best wishes.

Brother *Waller*

BY AIR MAIL  
AEROGRAMME  
AIR LETTER



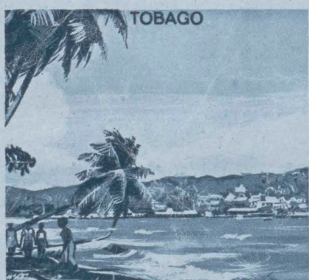
*Please  
Return after  
you read this*

Mrs. Ed. Gee,  
1199 Laurel Street,  
Berkeley,  
Calif. U.S.A.

Sender's name and address

L.C. Lee,  
KHLI Canning Plant,  
Waller Field, Arima,  
Trinidad, W.I.

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Dear Gloria.

Waller Field, Arima,  
Nov. 21st, 1973.

Last Sunday the 18th I had my birthday party, --my 81st. It was a big party and superbly planned and managed by Kwok Hing. The dinner was attended by guests that filled the 14 tables to overflowing capacity. It was a happy occasion.

We had a strike among workers in the postal service. I didn't receive a single piece of mail from anyone anywhere for nearly 3 weeks. The strike is over now and the mail started to move a couple of days ago. I received a big bundle of accumulated mail matter. There were letters, printed matter and birthday cards aplenty. I want to thank you for your splendid DESIDERATA card. In my solitude I appreciate the stimulating and encouraging thoughts that it contains. It helps to dispell gloomy thoughts that oftentimes come over me. I should like to have a few extra copies of this card to send my friends. If available please get them and forward them to me by ordinary mail. Now with the accumulated correspondence and letters coming in a continuous stream, I am going to have quite a time to clear them and keep my correspondence up to date. As soon as that's done, Yuke Yee and Sum Yee will be home for the Chirstmas holidays. That will keep my time fully occupied for the year. My study of Chinese and practice in Chinese brushwork will have to suffer for the duration.

I hope you and your parents are all keeping well. Please do write and keep me informed of how you all are getting along. With all best wishes,

Yours ever lovingly.

Uncle Chen

Waller Field, Arima,  
Nov. 23rd, 1973.

Dear Mabel & Ed.

At long last the postal workers strike has ended and mail delivery has resumed. Having not had a letter from anyone anywhere for nearly 3 weeks, I was happy today to receive a stream of mail matter coming into my hands. This resumption of mail service must have been well timed for my benefit. Besides letters, periodicals and magazines I received a big collection of congratulatory birthday cards for my 81st birthday, which was celebrated only a couple of days previously. According to Chinese tradition, the 81st birthday is a big occasion for celebration with pomp and ceremony, as circumstances permit. My birthday was celebrated with a dinner party at a delightful restaurant. Being a newcomer here, the dinner was attended only by new made friends and many relatives whom I had not met before. There were 15 tables all fully filled and overflowing with guests who came to offer congratulations and best wishes. An atmosphere of old Chinese tradition was in evidence <sup>however</sup> by the decoration ~~on~~ the wall with an image of "Longevity God" and panels of Chinese couplets with words appropriate for the occasion. The text was simple in composition: 福祿壽皆全誰如此老, 兒孫婿均孝預祝期頤

It would have been <sup>a</sup> grander celebration if all the folks of both the Bayside and Norwalk families were present in full force. At the dinner I was called upon to make a speech which I did. I began my speech with an introductory remarks in these words:- "The aged talk of the past. The young talk of the future. Since I am no longer young I can't speak for the youth. Since I do not claim to be old, though advanced in age, I am not well qualified to speak of <sup>the</sup> past. The past is gone and could not be seen. The future has not appeared and could not be predicted. The accuracy of claims and allegations of the Past and the Future are open to exaggeration, ~~and~~ falsehood and extravagant promises. The old could claim credits for superhuman achievements <sup>in the past,</sup> and the young could promise magical wonders in the future. Not being in position to talk of the future and the past, I shall confine myself to talk about the Present or Realities".

Having made these introductory remarks, I then went on to give an explanation of my coming to Trinidad which was influenced by Trinidad friends. First with my old friends <sup>Eugene</sup> Mr. Poon, we had business dealings in the importation of Trinidad asphalt to Canton. Then from Mr. Eugene Chen our Chinese Foreign Minister, a native born Trinidadan,

I learned more about Trinidad and its potentials. The accounts and opinions given me by these friends aroused my interest in Trinidad and turned my thoughts in this direction. It wasn't much of a speech, but it was well received because of the interesting information about my business connections and close association with Mr. Chen who was born here. It was an oversight of mine not to have invited the gathering to my next Big Birthday when I reach the age of 91. As a whole the birthday party was a success. In fact it was the best that I have ever had. Credit must be given to Kwok Hing who had superbly made all the arrangements.

In the next few days I shall be busy with attending to clearing all accumulated correspondence. After that I shall have leisure to continue my attempts at Chinese translations--that is translating interesting Chinese prose into readable English. In searching for materials, I confine myself to selecting those that are simple and of humorous nature. The following are a few examples which I think will interest you.

"Any vagrant with money could become "Chairman".  
A phoenix in distress looks less noble than a fowl"

有錢亡八坐主席  
落魄鳳凰不如雞

"A blow drew forth flames of anger,  
Bystanders looked on with clattering teeth".

一拳打出眼火  
對面睇見牙煙。

"Lingering here I calmly sit,  
Each passing day seems twice as long.  
If I lived three score years and ten,  
Hundred forty would be my age".

寧事此靜坐  
一日是兩日  
若活七十年  
便是百四十

"T8s said when time for haircut is due,  
Hardly a man leaves his hair untrimmed.  
Barbers who trim the hair of others,  
Are themselves in turn by others trimmed!"

甯道頭堪剃  
寧人不剃頭  
世之剃頭者  
人亦剃其頭

Note:- The following is the text of the Chinese couplet on the panels that decorated the wall in the center of the dining room at my birthday dinner. The text is simple in composition and lacks the elegance of excellence in a literary sense, but quite appropriate to the occasion. (I dare not criticise it too much)

福祿壽全誰如此老  
兒孫婿均孝預祝期頤

Loveingly yours,  
Bro. Chen

Waller Field, Arima,  
Nov. 23rd, 1973.

Dear Mabel & Ed.

Aren't you surprised to hear from me so soon again?

You'll have to thank my absent-mindedness for this pleasure. The principal message I wanted to convey in my preceding letter <sup>but I forgot</sup> was to thank you for the nice birthday card you sent me and also for the clever #99 check which was such a surprise. Everyone enjoyed the cleverness of the figure and suggested extending it to 99999. Instead, I converted it into TEN equals of 9.9 each in red paper envelopes as "good luck" gifts for distribution. In my last letter I was carried away in giving you full account of the birthday party and forgot about to thank you and express my appreciation of your kind thoughts. ~~But~~ After having posted my letter I was aware of my absent-mindedness. So, I hasten to remedy the mistake I have made. Surely, old age is creeping on me.

For a similar reason, I forgot to mention what I ~~want~~ wanted to say in my letter to Gloria. I meant to tell her of my loneliness here. With not a single old friend within call, I yearn for companionship. I wanted to explain to Gloria that although I have no companions present, I do not lack company. Isn't it a paradox? Yes, I have plenty of company. I have flies about me in the day time and mosquitoes at night. In the evening, the air is filled with the croaking of frogs and toads. Then there are always moths, wasps and numerous kinds of bugs and insects, bees and ants. There are lizzards of various sizes, and sometimes, a few grass snakes would come to call and pay me respects. Oh, I have plenty of company, but it's undesirable company. What I want is companionship of congenial friends.

Bye, bye and good luck. I close with all best wishes.

Lovingly.

Bro. Chew

to open cut here

BY AIR MAIL  
AEROGRAMME  
AIR LETTER



Mr. & Mrs. Ed Gee,  
1199 Laurel Street,  
Berkeley, Calif. 94708  
U.S.A.

Sender's name and address

69 L.C. Lee,  
KHLI Canning Plant,  
Waller Field, Arima,  
Trinidad, W.I.

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Waller Field, Arima,  
Nov. 28th, 1974.

Dear Mabel & Ed.

I see Gloria is home from the East. I suppose she will stay over for Christmas and until Joe and Gloria's new baby has arrived. It is good news on this Thanksgiving Day. I have received word that both Yuk Yee from Maine and Sum Yee from Syracuse, N.Y. will be either in Norwalk or Bayside for Thanksgiving. We here expect them to come home for Christmas, since they have <sup>gone away</sup> ~~left~~ for so long. Ka So's brother, Suen Chong and his son who have been here nearly 8 months will be surprised to see how the two girls have grown. Together we will have a reunion dimly reminiscent of old times in Hong Kong. Suen Chong and son are of great help and they have initiative in doing things. When off duty or when work is lagging, they will turn their attention separately towards doing other other jobs in the factory. The factory continues to operate if not on our main product, it is on something else. ~~for~~ <sup>has forced</sup> the non arrival of beans, <sup>the</sup> factory undertakes a contract of doing canning/a <sup>for</sup> third party. The sideline project of manufacturing Chinese sauce (ZEYO) is developing very satisfactorily. In addition to their regular work, <sup>Chong and son</sup> ~~they~~ have been devoting ~~some~~ their spare time to processing this sideline. Gratifying results are in evidence. We have processed about 40 huge plastics containers, each holding about 400 pounds of sauce. The first batch has "ripened" or "matured" and ready for sale. I have tasted a sample of it and found it far superior (真的) than what is now sold on the general market, both in quality and aroma. What we have made is merely a test in processing. We are encouraged by the excellent results. We should concentrate our efforts in promoting this sideline which is more attractive according to all business calculations. I have high hopes in this sideline.

I think of Tim dearly. I have the greatest admiration for him. How is he and how is Carol and their children? Has he been going somewhere on vacation? Tim is a real top doctor. Carol + Tim, please write sometime.

How are the folks in San Francisco? Do you people get together much? How's your luck at Lake Tahoe? I should suggest that Keno is the only game there that's worth playing. Turn your back all the others. Best of luck to you all.

Ever lovingly.

Chen

Waller Field, Arima,  
Nov. 28th, 1974.

Dear Gloria.

Today in America is Thanksgiving Day. Come to think of it, I have blessings too numerous to be thankful for. This sheet of paper is too short to itemise them in detail. At ~~this~~ <sup>only</sup> moment I am thankful that the local postal strike is over and that your letter has come through and reached me finally, for which I am most thankful. For your information, your letter was dated the 26th Oct. posted in Berkeley 29th Oct. stamped at the Arima Post Office on 25th Nov. and reached my hands/day before yesterday. More than one whole month had elapsed which marked the duration of the strike. For one whole month I didn't receive a single letter from anyone anywhere! Am I not ~~thankful~~ that the strike has ended?

Gloria, isn't there a motor car named "Rover"? You should get one and be its owner. You certainly have been "roving" around a bit first in one place and then in another. It is hard to keep track of you. The space I have allotted to you in my address book is smeared with too many alterations. Now, I don't even know whether this letter will reach you in Berkeley or <sup>is it going</sup> to be forwarded to some other address elsewhere. No matter where you roam it seems you are always in employment which means you are constantly earning your way. You have demonstrated that the old adage :- "A rolling stone gathers no moss", is not necessarily true.

My granddaughters Hoong Yee and Hoong Wei are now studying in Austria. Recently they spent a few days in Budapest. They like the city and the nice people there. My other granddaughters Yuk Yee and Sum Yee will be coming here for their Christmas holidays. What I like about these grandchildren is that they are keenly interested in learning Chinese, preferably Mandarin. This is another thing for which I am thankful and of which I am proud.

I think of Tim and his family constantly and similarly I think of Sherman and his. In your roving if you happen to see anyone of them, please extend them my best wishes and deepest affection. I am glad to hear Joe's Gloria is expecting a new baby. Isn't this another item to be thankful for on this Thanksgiving Day?

I am always anxious to hear from you. Lovingly.

Waller Field,  
31st December 1974

Dear CM

陳清文

Tomorrow is New Year Day 1975. It is customary for one to make New Year resolutions. Resolutions are of good intentions, but they are so fragile and easily broken. Like international detent, international treaties, non-aggression pacts, truce agreements etc. Though they are of good intentions, their chief purpose is for temporary accommodations, political expediency only to be broken at convenience. In order to be in fashion, I too have made my New Year resolution. But, mine is unbreakable and will remain ~~unviolated~~ <sup>unbroken</sup> to the end of my life. I Resolve to Begin Smoking in 1975. At 82, I should become of age to indulge in any worldly vices. In all truthfulness I can crow from housetops that I started smoking at the ripe old age of 82. I have ordered my grandchildren to search for my old pipe; clean them with brandy and have them ready for me to RESUME my first smoke on New Year Day. For years past I have been yearning for smoke. After long periods of constant reading, my first thought on each occasion was to have a smoke. But each time I reminded myself of my handicap that it was impossible to smoke with toothless jaws. To overcome this difficulty I have thought of many ways. One of them was to attach a wire contraption onto the shoulder to uphold and support the pipe when smoking. But such a device needs the ingenuity of an inventor or someone with the training in engineering. Pending the completion of such a device, I shall have to resort to use <sup>ing</sup> both hands each time I smoke.

The climate here may be healthful. The beaches may be alluring <sup>and</sup> ~~with~~ beautifully lined with waving palms, but life to me here is uninteresting; it is dull and ~~sluggish~~ sluggish. Happily living is simple and the cost of living is low. Aside of daily necessities there are not many things worth purchasing or readily available on the market. . Among the people, dress is simple, food is sufficient while other needs are few. There ~~is~~ is very little entertainment, amusement or recreation. Like a hermit I seldom venture out. When I do go out, the post office is about the only place I visit. I go there for stamps which are my biggest item of expenditure. My other sundry needs are limited to writing materials. Next time I go out, I'll have to add a tin of tobacco to <sup>shopping</sup> my list.

My life here is not an enviable one. It is true, food and shelter is assured me, but I am only leading a loafer's life, non-creative and non-productive. I feel myself an outsider or like an excess piece of furniture pending to be disposed of by the junk man. I realise that things are slipping away from me. It seems I am gradually losing my grip on the world. At best I am but a precious piece of family heirloom like the grandfather clock stored up in the attic, only to be shown when company calls. These are unpleasant thoughts, but what is more deplorable is the absence of friends. The lack of companionship is the height of misery ..-----

L.A.

Waller Field, Arima,  
Jan.1st,1975.

Dear Lily and Folks.

Happy New Year Everyone. All best wishes. Good Health, Good Luck and Good Cheer.

Although I have nothing to do, my mind is in a state of confusion being occupied with scores of sundry matters that are of no great importance. It has been that way for the past two weeks during the Christmas season. I had to attend to every little thing personally and single handed. Letter writing, selecting greeting cards, hunting up addresses for mailing, checking omissions; all this work is <sup>tedious and</sup> time consuming and even heart breaking.

We are all well here and I am happy to see Yuk Yee and Sum yee home for the Christmas holidays. They are leaving for school in a day or so. My other grandchildren are all well and it gladdens my heart to know that they are intensely interested in <sup>studying</sup> learning Chinese. With Suen Chong and his son here, Kwok Hing is relieved of work pressure and has more leisure to attend to major business demands.

I have just sent a letter to my old friend Mr. Chen in Taiwan. I enclose a copy of it for your perusal. Its contents will give you some idea of how I have been faring here. I purposely made a copy of the letter to send you thus saving me the task of writing you an extra letter. The contents are of mutual interest to the rest of the folks. I hope you <sup>will</sup> pass it along to each of the ~~other folks~~.

I hope everything with you and the other folks is O.K. Please write when you have time. (Excuse me. I have to smoke.) Lovingly, Chen.

PASS AROUND to Sheman + Tim  
Return it to me afterwards

Waller Field, Arima,  
Jan. 10th, 1975.

Dear Mabel & Ed.

KUNG HEE FAT CHOY.

This greeting may be late for the New Year just past, but it is timely for the Chinese New Year that is coming around the corner. Homaine, my youngest granddaughter barely two years old, came tottering towards me with clasped hands and kept repeating "Kung Hee Pak Choy" which sounded like 恭喜白菜. She is cute and the way she said the greeting words, was so comical that we all could not help laughing. Ka So laughed till the tears came running down her cheeks. You would give good loud laughs over it <sup>too</sup> if you were here. By the way, I wish you sisters would come and pay us a visit.

I made a New Year Resolution. I resolved to smoke and had my first smoke on New Year Day. Imagine a youngster like me starting to smoke at the tender age of 82!

It was a joyous experience. How blissful! Actually, it wasn't my first smoke. It was my first smoke after 4 years of abstinence. I gave up smoking 4 years ago after surgery. My abstinence was not because of doctor's order. Neither was it because of tobacco's harmfulness. It was because of circumstance. My surgery left me totally toothless, a deformed jaw, a twisted tongue and numbed lips the lower part of which is still insensitive to touch. With all these handicaps, pipe smoking is next to impossibility. Yet, in spite of all these drawbacks, I was determined to renew acquaintance with my long ~~and~~ neglected pipe, even though I have to hold it to my mouth with both hands. I have been smoking since January 1st. Each morning when I get up, one of the very first things I do is to grab hold of my pipe and smoke away. I feel happier. I can concentrate on my reading. My <sup>temperament</sup> ~~temperament~~ has improved. Ka So says I am less cranky.

Life here continues to be with its normal calm, unexciting and uninteresting. After the festive holidays, business is slow in picking up its pace. The canning factory has stopped running for some time and it is still at a standstill. Lack of raw materials and lack of can containers and the tardiness of business revival are some of the causes. Activities are less pressing and we are diverting our attention more and more to other fields. Suen Chong and son have been running the tractors and cultivators over a large area of land. Kwok Hing has planted a large field of okra (gumbo) intended for export. He has started a nursery of rubber tree plants for budding.

Already<sup>he</sup> has more than 500 plants started in the nursery. These trees after budding and transplanted will form quite a sizable rubber plantation. If successful and encouraging enough, ambitious plans would be formulated for extensive cultivation. This will take time no doubt and we have to be patient. Meanwhile we will have to rely on the smooth running of our canning business for survival.

Some time ago I sent Lily a letter addressed to you folks in the family. The letter would have given you latest news of what had been getting on here. I hope she has shown you the letter. I would like to have more news about you all. How are things getting on with you? I hope you both are keeping good health. How is business getting on? I am greatly concerned about Louise and her family. She writes me once in a while but her letters do not reveal much about how she is faring and family, except a few comforting words. Now that Way has given up the noodle factory, what is he doing now? Is Stanway attending U.C? and staying home with her? Do Albert and family come to visit the family often? Diana and Bob wrote me but did not mention how Louise was at home. My latest about Gloria is that she has gone to Washington; and Joe's Gloria has a new addition in the family. I suppose Sherman and Suzane are doing well and their kids are about ready for kindergarten. I haven't heard anything about Tim and Carol for a long, long time. I hope they and family are well. How is cousin Edward Lee? Is he still in Berkeley? I <sup>haven't</sup> ~~didn't~~ heard from him also for some time. From an indirect source I hear Charlie's big birthday party was a tremendous success. It was a big party of about 100 people with tables and tables of mah-jong going on. There wasn't enough room in Mon Kwong's new house to accommodate the players and Vivian's huge bedroom had to have some of the furniture removed to make room for mah-jong tables. Please tell Frank I have received a nice Christmas card from Dennis and Elsa. I am glad to hear Dennis is graduating from law school this coming May.

Well, I think I must stop writing now. My two fingers are about worn after trying to <sup>R</sup> ~~m~~ ~~u~~ ~~d~~ ~~e the typewriter for so long. Besides, I have additional work to do. I must clean my dear old pipe and have a good fresh smoke.~~

Ka So sends her love to all. With best wishes for the year,

Yours every lovingly.

Bro. Chew

Waller Field, Arima.  
October 25th, 1976.

Dear Y. M. Lin and  
H.W. Wong.

I wish to thank you for your cabled message of condolences in my hour of deepest grief and sorrow. I appreciate your kind thoughts and comforting words of sympathy. My dear and beloved wife passed away peacefully at the Community Hospital Port-of-Spain about mid-night of the 13th of October. She now rests in God's hands free of suffering pains, free of worldly cares and worries. May God bless her.

My son Kwok Yin, my daughter Oi-ling and her husband Bill Tsai flew down from New York to assist in making arrangements for the funeral which took place on the following Sunday the 17th. Church service was held in the Anglican Church attended by friends and relatives some of whom were formerly Canton residents, and there were a couple of families from our own native village in China. The service was simple, but it was impressive in its simplicity.

My late wife had an old case of chest trouble (T.B.) which was not too serious. After staying 2 months in the Chest Hospital, the doctors were satisfied with her improved condition and discharged her for home treatment. She also had a bad case of diabetes that had weakened her physically. At times she had to be helped in her walks. When we discovered her legs and stomach had become swollen, we decided to send her to hospital again. Except for these ailments she was all right in every other way. Her mind was clear, her appetite was good and her speech was normal. On her way to hospital, she was smoking a cigarette. I told her that smoking was prohibited in hospital. Smilingly, she tossed away the cigarette stub as if to say this was her last smoke. And so it was!! Who would have thought that after entering hospital, only a few brief hours, we were informed she had passed away. I wasn't aware of the sad news until early the next morning when Kwok Hing told me the hospital had telephoned him of what had happened. It was so sudden. I was stunned speechless.

My beloved wife was a kind and gentle lady, soft spoken and pleasant. Friendly and courteous she was noted for her genial disposition, well liked and highly esteemed by all who knew her. She had no quarrel with anyone and bore no malice towards anybody. A life partner and confidante for 3 score years and more, she and I travelled together side by side, in fine weather or bad. Together we shared our joys and sorrows, our successes and failures. Together we suffered hardships and heavy losses through the ravages of intermittent wars for more than half a century. Though we had managed to escape unscathed, we had lost all our worldly possessions. Being a person tolerant and forbearing as she was, she never whined nor whimpered over our misfortunes. She accepted adverse circumstances philosophically with stoic calmness. Together we had travelled A LONG WAY in life's journey. On each milestone we had made our marks,--some were distinct and clear and intelligible; some were vague and meaningless; a majority of them were foolish and ridiculous. Nevertheless, we had made some sort of a record for the guidance of our descendants. Now my life-partner is gone and I am left to continue the rest of the journey alone. Without the benefit of her companionship I am conscious of a strangeness that is weird and eerie. Each morning at breakfast I face her empty chair across the table. I realise now the true meaning of total emptiness, a VOID in one's life. Total emptiness may be a doctrine of Buddhism, but we are earthly people and are concerned with life's realities. Of what interest is there in life, if life is a VOID? My daughter suggested that I should take a trip elsewhere for a change of atmosphere and environment. I am not so inclined. I feel wearied and tired and do not care what is to become of me. My chief concern and interest is the well being of my children and their families. It is great comfort to know they are doing well. My beloved wife was extremely proud of them and happy that all our grandchildren were progressing in their education and chosen careers.

Yesterday my kindergarten granddaughter took out a vitamin pill from a bottle and offered it to me. Surprised, I asked her why. She at once replied tersely, "Grandma's Orders". Evidently her Grandma had assigned her the duty of giving me a vitamin pill each day. It was characteristic of my late wife to be so over-concerned about my health. Emotionally touched, I gulped down the pill without a minute's hesitation. But, poignantly I could not help holding back my tears.

This is getting to be too long a letter. I shall close now until my next writing. I hope this will find you all in good health. Again I must thank you for for your kind concern and deep sympathy in my bereavement.

Regards and best wishes to all friends.

Yours very sincerely,

A. C. Lee

Waller Field, Arima,  
Dec. 13th, 1976.

Dear Mabel & Ed.

Today is my birthday. Your gift check arrived right on the dot. I thank you very much with deep appreciation. I didn't know it was my birthday. I know it was somewhere around probably a few days hence. Not until Jemaine came over with a cake made by her Mommy Yvonne and said Happy Birthday that I realised the day. Curiously enough it was exactly 2 months to a day since Ka So passed away on the 13th October. Ordinarily I seldom paid much attention to observing my birthday. Usually it was Ka So <sup>who</sup> saw to it that a bowl of noodles was prepared for me at breakfast and greeted me with a few chosen words of good fortune. My birthday this year took on a strangely different atmosphere. There was no Ka So present to greet me. There was no bowl of noodles. I sat down to a silent breakfast with suppressed sobs and sighs. It was with wet eyes that I gazed at her empty chair across the table.

I am now adapting myself to a new way of life,-the life of a widower. It is a life of misery and heart rending. We have a domestic maid to do the heavy household chores such as cleaning, laundrying and cooking. But there are many other things that need personal attention and supervision. From now on I have to tend to my own wardrobe,-doing some mending and sewing or hunting for something to replace a lost button. When the maid is on leave, I have to prepare my own breakfast of instant coffee, instant oat meals and soft boiled eggs. I haven't learned to fry or scramble eggs without over burning them. For other meals I rely on a good can opener and canned foods such as corned beef, luncheon meat, canned milk and peanut butter.

Kwok Hing will be leaving with his family for New York to morrow to visit Yuke Yee and Sum Yee. There isn't much work in the factory. During his absence,

it will be closed. I shall be left the more alone to look after King Seng a pitiful abnormal person who is helpless to fend for himself. At the same <sup>time</sup> I shall serve as a caretaker for the factory.

With the passing of Ka So I feel terribly sad. My mind is troubled with grave thoughts. Fortunately I am physically well and my thinking is fairly clear. I hope my sanity will remain with me unimpaired. I feel lonesome. Recently I hear a few of my old friends have passed away. I feel deserted as if bandoned and left alone in the woods. I can't help humming to myself the mournful tune of a sad song—"T'is The Last Rose Of Summer":--

T'is the last rose of Summer left blooming alone.  
All her lovely companions are faded and gone.  
No flower of her kindred, no rosebud is nigh  
To reflect back her blushes or give sigh for sigh.

Early this month Lam Yat-min and Peter Lum came on a Caribbean cruise with their wives and visited me. It certainly was a real treat for sore eyes after having not seen each other for years. They brought me a few tins of ~~mo~~ tobacco enough to last me a few months. They provided me with news of many of our mutual friends in the Bay Area. How are our own folks? I hear Charlie is also having difficulty of hearing. I am similarly afflicted and haven't been able to listen to the telephone for years. In ordinary conversation I can't hear what is said. It is a most annoying nuisance.

How did you enjoy your trip to Greece? I hope you had an enjoyable time. I hope you both are keeping good health. Please write me once in a while and tell me news of the family folks and friends. I close with love and all best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

As ever yours.

Bro, Chen,

Waller Field, Arima,  
Feb. 17th, 1977.

Dear Ed. & Mabel.

Today is Chinese New Year Eve. May the New Year bring you good health and many blessings. By now I hope you have returned from Lake Tahoe with pockets well filled and bulging. With us here the New Year will pass unnoticed and unobserved.

Here, I have so much leisure I do not know what to do with it. I find diversion in browsing over old books and select<sup>ing</sup> passages for a little translation. I have come across some poems by Ming's father. The following is one of them which describes very aptly my present situation.

"Not allowing my legs too much leisure,

Often do I roam the neighboring fields.

With staff in hand, slowly I stroll accouple of miles,

watching the running brooks here and there, and viewing the distant hills ~~afar~~."

未應腰脚太偷閒  
野徑時時一往還  
緩步扶藜三五里  
近看流水遠看山

I want to thank you for your handsome New Year gift check which has come so timely. I appreciate it and thank you most sincerely for it. My situation is far from comfortable, I admit, but it is not as precarious as depicted in one of the poems I have just read:--

"My stove-fire is dead with cold ashes all day long.

My wife seeking credit for food has not yet returned.

I have no way of escaping my mounting debts,

And yet, you frequently come with helping loans."

甌爐整日是寒灰  
荆室餘糧尚未回  
我已無台逃債去  
君還不時借貸來

for

Here is a humorous verse by Wu Ting-fang who came to Canton fighting the cause to "Save the Constitution!"

去年南下到 Canton.  
荏苒時光 ALL YEAR LONG.  
國事不堪回首憶  
護法問題 ALL GONE.

The year just past was a disastrous one for my family. I do not know what the "Year of the Snake" portends, but I hope it will <sup>bring</sup> us good luck and better fortune. Wishing you and family all the best,

Yours ever affectionately.

Bro. Chen

San Francisco.  
July 23rd, 1977.

Dear C.M.

I have been here more than a month. What with my brothers and sisters and the many Canton friends who have been competing to excel one another in extending hospitality and looking after my every comfort. I am inclined to prolong my stay another month or so before returning to resume, as you say, my immobilised life style in the Est Indies. Another reason for my intention of extending my visit, is that a couple of my old friends have not been quite well of late. Cuyler Wong Hon-wei, my former Traffic Manager is undergoing treatment for a suspected case of cancer in the lungs. He is to have daily ~~radi~~ radiation for two weeks. Another friend Lam Ya-min, former Head of Public Works in Canton is suffering with a severe cough that has been bothering him for the past month. Not until these two friends have recovered from their afflictions or show encouraging signs of improvement, will I leave them with a peace of mind.

Before I forget, I wish to tell you that a nephew of mine, Dennis Lee will be visiting Taipei next month on business. I have asked him to call on you and pay my regards. He is an up-coming attorney-at-law in Los Angeles, son of my brother Frank whom you well remember in old Canton days, who used to bother you with his never ending whistling in my Canton house. When Dennis comes to call, treat him as you would treat a son of mine, a struggling youngster fighting his way for a place in the sun. Give him the benefit of your advice and wise counsel.

A boyhood friend of mine, Hugh K. Liang whom I had introduced to you when he was visiting Taipei a few years ago, is now here from Washington D.C. We are having teas and dinners together almost every day. He has the greatest admiration for you, and praise you to the ~~skies~~ skies. He said if government officials had your brains and your ~~intell~~ intelligent analysis of national and international affairs, the country would not have been in such a sad state as it is today. Before he finished extolling your qualities as a diplomat, a statesman, etc. I had to interrupt him by saying you had often come to me for advice and my opinions on matters of national and international importance, - and also on how to play and win at mah-jong games.

Vis-a-vis mah-jong games, I agree with you that youngsters possess the speed and finesse that oldsters lack. I also wish to emphasise that oldsters have the skill acquired by long practice and the cunning of a fox learned by experience over the years long before many of the youngsters were born. Of course win or lose, the outcome of a game depends upon the fickleness of Lady Luck. I have always been known to have been born under a lucky star.

I am staying at the YMCA. As its name implies, it is for ~~Chinese~~ Christian young men. Old men and heathens who have not embraced ~~Christian~~ Christianity are refused admittance, UNLESS however old, they can run up and down the hilly streets of S.F. with aid of a walking stick. ~~Those~~ Those heathens who only go to church once in a blue moon, or are familiar with passages of St. Luke, St. Matthews and St. Look-See are also allowed entry and permission to enjoy the Association's privileges.

I know of no vegetarian restaurants in Chinatown, but there are restaurants that also serve vegetarian dishes in addition to their customary menus. You may say vegetarian dishes are tasteful and have enough calories even for coolies. I am glad you have found the right kind of food for you. You are welcome to it. I don't care the least bit for it. If only I had my teeth or functionable dentures, lead me to a substantial meal of meats. I long for juicy beefsteaks, Cantonese roast pork, Peking duck, Yunnan ham, Mandarin fish and Irish stew.

Enclosed, please find a Big Treasury Note for US\$50.00. Try and cash it, for postage on letters expectantly forthcoming.

Sincerely yours, *LC*

/Copy letter from C.M.Chen.//

Dear Looksee.

Years ago in Canton when we were youngsters of twenty plu, you were good at decoding, hence I believe you are still good at deciphering hieroglyphics. I say this because I have never learned to manipulate that infernal machine known as a typewriter, therefore hope you can successfully wade through my indecipherable penmanship.

In reference to your apt truism regarding bad pennies turning up unexpectedly, I must say I accept this fact, but I wish to warn you that the patience of an oldster must not be put to the test for a prolonged period. You should have made allowance for his physical infirmities being aggravated by premonitions relating to the well being of another oldster.

Your 2nd & 3rd paragraphs inform me of your desire not to disturb the peace of your relatives and friends. This move is wise and very considerate. I, however, wonder why the YMCA and not one of the Homes for the Old where the attention of servants, nurses and dieticians are provided at a price. We have such Homes in Taiwan, hence don't charge me with making cheap jokes. Coming to the matter of variety of food available, I would advise to eat sparingly. Guzzling does not agree with old age. Eat less but with more frequency--say five meals instead of three solid ones.

As for the Lingnan Club and its mah-jong games, I suggest that you don't spoil the games of the youngsters, because the oldsters with their infirmities do disturb the speed and finance of the younger. One unfortunately has to give up many things enjoyed in days gone by.

You claim to be an early riser and that being the case, you go about patrolling the empty streets at 7.30 a.m. I wish you to know that I can get at most 4-5 hours' sleep during the night and am up & about by 6 a.m. counting my rosary instead of shadow boxing. I do unlimber for half an hour or so to remove stiffness of the joints. En passant, during my life time I have tried but unsuccessfully to conform to Buddhist & Confucius teachings. In the English Schools Public i.e. very ancient private schools, I had to attend Service every morning before going to my classes. There I would sing lustily, listen to passages from St. Luke, St. Matthews & others, but I had definitely refused to embrace Christianity. In the Varsity every Sunday morning, one had to go to chapel but fortunately heathens are exempted. So you see how badly brought up I was.

I am glad to learn that in Chinatown as now have dishes from various provinces instead of those from Canton only. Actually there is no gourmet like a Chinese gourmet who can be difficult to please at times. Do you have vegetarian restaurants? Actually vegetarian dishes are tasteful and have enough calories even for the coolies.

While on a holiday, do make full use of it before returning to your Trinidad to resume your semi-immobilised life style. Quietude has its virtues, but a prolonged one can be trying.

The last paragraph of your letter wishes me au revoir; this I accept with all seriousness because I still believe that we will meet in a couple of years or so somewhere in Taipei, H'Kong, Canton or Amoy. I pray that we will live to see that day and visit the old Cement Factory in Canton to celebrate.

Look after yourself and write when you have time to spare. My regards and respect to all your relatives and friends.

Yrs. C.M.C.

Waller Field, Arima,  
Mar. 4th, 1978.

Dear Mabel & Ed.

Thank you for sending me the Chinese newspaper from San Francisco. I have read the marked item about Sherman's attendance at an International Conference. Participation in such an august Conference is a distinction of no mean order. It is a tribute paid in recognition of one's capabilities and accomplishments. Rightly, due recognition should be given publicity in the press. You are justified in being proud of Sherman. In this respect I heartily join you.

The Chinese newspaper you sent me contains much news not only of the Chinese community in America, but also about mainland China and Taipeh & HongKong. We have no such publications here and we have very little news about our Motherland. I wish you would continue to send me copies every once in a while, even if it takes considerable time in delivery. To save postage, you may send only the front pages that contain the important news. The inside pages contain mostly advertisement and no news of great significance. King Seng here is very eager to read Chinese newspapers.

We had a breakdown in our boiler which threw the factory totally out of operation. Kwok Hing has gone to New York to seek machinery spare parts and replacements for the damaged boiler. He has been gone a week. Yesterday he telephoned that he won't be back till a week later. Meanwhile, everything here is at a standstill. Sun Yee is here with us and she has become our handyman since Hing's absence. She takes her younger sisters to and from school everyday, and does some shopping for the family. She also comes to see me for chats and to keep me company. I am grateful for her being here. We laugh and joke and do crossword puzzles.

Sun Yee is an art illustrator and designer. She is contacting a few advertising agencies in the interest of promoting her line of work. She

contacted one agency and the man in charge invited her for an interview. She went to the agency office and had a lengthy interview. Unknown to each other and both speaking no Chinese, the interview was entirely on business matters. Later on we discovered the man is also a Lee of our own village. Further enquiries revealed he is a descendant of one of the branches of our own family, therefore a close relation! His father is two generations below me and one generation below Kwok Hing. Sum Yee and his father belong to the same generation. So, Sum is the man's aunt and the man is Sum's nephew. What a curious incident!! Another surprising revelation is that the man's mother, a native Trinidadian, went to China and lived in our village many years ago, and learned to speak our native Nam Long dialect. Her house in the village was close to ours, and she was the first person to discover our dear father's fatal accident right in front of her house. She was the first person to give the alarm and roused the whole village for help. Talk about strange incidents, this one is hard to beat.

We are all well here. King Seng is in robust health. Like me, we seem to be immune from affliction of any kind, not even a common cold. He has a tremendous appetite and eats most of the time. He reads a lot and absorbs what he reads. But he does not know how to think, he does not know how to put his knowledge to applicable use. Whatever knowledge he has is like the mass of words in a dictionary, which are of no earthly use unless consulted. I often consulted him about how a Chinese word should be written. He would at once give the correct answer. Mentally he is retarded. He has some measure of intelligence but he does not know how to think. Manually, he is clumsy with his hands. He does not know how to handle a broom when sweeping a floor. He does not even know how to wash dishes. I have to teach him even the simple task of frying an egg. But I love him in spite of all his shortcomings. His peculiar behaviour and pitiable condition deserve our heartfelt sympathy, the sympathy and help of all right thinking people.

I have just replied to a letter from Gloria. I hope she ~~finds~~ moves to live near you. *11-*

*Yours with love  
Bro. Elias*

Waller Field, Arima,  
Sept. 20th, 1978.

Dear Sisters Lily, Mabel & Louise.

This letter is addressed to you three sisters, well knowing that Lily will soon return from her reunion with her children, grandchildren and great-grandchild. A few days ago was the 15th of the 8th Moon on the Chinese calendar, an auspicious Festival Day when Chinese everywhere rejoice and celebrate in thankfulness for the bountiful harvests of the year and for remembrance of our beloved ones. It is particularly significant to the wayfarers who are far away from home. On that particular day, the Chinese calendar has accurately timed it always for a Full Moon to appear, bright and shining most of the years. In China, lighted lanterns of various shapes and sizes appear in every household to add a spirit of joyfulness to the celebration.

In Trinidad where the Chinese community is small and families are widely scattered there wasn't any celebration and jollification of any kind this year. In the evening I sat outside the house in lonely solitude. With my trusted and inseparable pipe for company, I had an extra cup of coffee as a gesture of celebration of this Festival Day. Inaudibly, I mumbled the words of a famous Chinese poem, which I have crudely translated in English as follows:-

"Lifting my head I gaze at the bright shining moon.  
With head bent low I think of family and home".

舉頭望明月  
低頭思故鄉

Ming/Shen, Hoong Yee/Wei have each separately written reporting their experiences of their recent cross country trip to the West Coast where they had the pleasures of seeing all of the family folks in the Bay Area. They enjoyed the kind hospitality extended them by the aunts and uncles during their brief visit. Fun parties, lavish dinners, frequent luncheons and leisurely tea sessions must have kept you all busy most of the time. Not to speak of sight seeing trips, visits to interesting places and historic spots, cable car rides and mah-jong games, day after day must have been exhausting. While all such activities must have been enjoyable, it was the opportunity of personal contact with one another after long separation that enhanced the love and warmth of family. Ming/Shen and family are now back at home. The memory of their recent visit with you all will long be remembered.

Years ago when Ka So was living I too had dreamed of taking a similar cross country trip to the West Coast by Greyhound Bus, stopping at various places while en route, to take in the sights of each interesting place of note. Ka So had not seen much of the outside world. It was my intention to take her around with me as a guide. Now that she is gone, I have no longer any desire for distant travels. I have to content myself living here to make out my remaining years.

not

Mabel, you have given me the current address of Gloria that I asked for. I am getting a new address book to keep track of my friends and their movements. Many have been moving from place to place, too frequently that constant changes had to be made in the address book. The many alterations have made the book disfigured beyond recognition. Not a few names had to be struck out, for they <sup>have</sup> gone to places where there is no postal service. Some have gone to associate with saints and keep company with the angels. Some have gone to the Devil to depths below to continue their devilish pursuits and play mah-jong with those who had gone before. Only a few valid names and usable addresses are left. It is necessary to have a new address book of the remaining few names that are valid. I intend to keep up correspondence with these few for the next 10 or 15 years.

I hope this will find you all in good health and everything with you is going well. As to myself I am in perfect health. Only such old age ailments as hard of hearing and being toothless that hampers my eating, that makes me miserable at times. Otherwise I am alright in every way. Best wishes to you all.

Ever lovingly.

Bro. Chew

P.S.

Mabel. Some years ago on my arrival at San Francisco, I remember a lady friend of yours handed me a couple of books on Chinese poetry. I still have the books which I lately on occasions thumb through the pages looking for a little amusement in my idle hours. I find it quite a pleasant pastime. I think her name is (容李如心). I don't remember knowing her. Who was the lady? Please tell me more about her.

L.C.

Oct. 16th, 1978.

Dear Mabel & Ed.

I am surprised to receive 2 copies of 鐘鼓 the mouth-piece of 致公堂 of which I am a member since 1909/1910. It is news to me that the 2 youngmen, Tom Wu and Lee Chung-chun are leaders of this patriotic organisation. I have read every article with much amusement. According to legend, the organisation was started by 5 monks who were forced into exile by the Manchu invaders who brought the downfall of the Ming Dynasty. These monks devoted their efforts to restore the Ming Dynasty by ousting the Manchu alien out of China. At first it was a secret society whose exploits resembling those of Robin Hoods. I was among a body of "revolutionary youths" who were initiated into this society at the suggestion of Dr. Sun Yat-sen during his visit in San Francisco. The initiation ceremonies took a whole night long before we were "reborn" equipped with secret codes, secret signals and signs, and secret salutations in public by which we were identified as members. Through more than 300 years of its history, this society has outlived its initial object and usefulness. Present day writers still dream of past glories, never cease to blow "one's own trumpets". Almost without exception each article is full of self-applause, self-glorification, self-approbation, and self-importance; full of wild claims of credit for every little "achievement" contributed by self or others to the Cause; full of inaccuracy and exaggerations. The organisation is not a political party. It has no constitution, no clear policy, except flouting such vague terms as "demoncracy", "political rights" "equality and freedom". The contents of this publication are oftentimes of a laughable nature. I find them a source of funny stories for pleasant entertainment and merriment.

By the time you receive this, I think Lily should be soon

Waller Field, Arima.  
Jan. 26th, 1980.

Dear Lyn-Poon-Tow & Co.

Kuo- Kuoh Hing

The year 1980 augurs well for the family with good omens of happy occasions one following soon after the other. Frank said it started with a BANG. I said it started with a series of BOOMS big or small audible from afar and near. First it began with the happy occasion of Ed's 70th birthday. It was soon followed by Gloria's wedding, and then Irene's "triumphant return" from the Orient with rich rewards. In celebration of these happy events, you folks must have had rounds and rounds of banquets, dinner parties, entertainments and joyous gatherings of kinfolks and friends.

Then, about the same time, Kuo and family returned from New York bringing with them a large supply of working materials for his sideline. Within 10 days of their return 70 percent of the imported goods were disposed of, yielding enough to pay the cost and expenses incurred for the trip. The remaining 30 percent when processed and sold, will be clear profit. The sideline business is growing with gratifying results. Yvonne is business-minded and a capable business assistant. She intends to pay another visit to New York for more supplies and materials urgently needed in the business. The satisfactory development of this business with such gratifying results is one of the reasons for us to be thankful for all that the New Year has brought us.

I am happily surprised to receive a letter from Hoong Yee written in excellent Chinese. I am happy because she takes great pains to learn the Chinese language like her sister Hoong Wei. I wish all my grandchildren would take a deeper interest in learning Chinese, at least to speak it if not to write it. In her letter Hoong Yee says that Hans, my grandson has earned all A's in every subject in school. This is another good cause for me to be jubilant.

Nor is this all from the New Year. For the first time in decades, I have received a letter directly addressed to me from our native village. Checking the postdates, only 10 days elapsed from date of posting to date of delivery.

The letter is from our cousin Yun Poon, (遠 鵬), son of our Fifth uncle 君炎五叔 who is about Louise's age. He described his struggles during the past decades. He managed to survive by transporting goods and passengers on his bicycle to and fro among the villages and Shekki. (Merchandise cargoes often weighing 500 lbs).

Now because of his advanced age, he has turned over to his son, the transportation of goods, and limited himself to carrying only passengers. He speaks very highly of his son who is now married to a girl from our next door village 林屋進. His son is a hard working farmer in addition to his cargo transport business. Yun Poon also said in his letter that he had been taking care of our ancestral graves performing ritual worships all these years without interruption. He also requests me to take action for the recovery of our ancestral house in the village which is now occupied by the Commies as their Command Headquarters. I will keep this in mind and wait for an opportune moment to have this problem solved. I have at least established means of communication with the long lost homeland.

In view of the happy occasions and glad tidings aforementioned I have good cause to be jubilant. I am in high spirits. You will of course pardon me for writing so lengthily, for I am now in a writing mood.

Here, everybody works. Even "grandpa" has to keep busy with swatting flies, fighting mosquitoes, removing frogs, toads and lizzards from his bedroom and bath. He has to rescue moths and wasps from their suicide drowning in his soup and dishes on the table at meal time. Aside from these chores, he has

his moments off, for relaxation. It is then that he smokes his pipe, drinks his coffee, ~~he~~ does his reading, yawning ho-hum, ho-hum oft and on. Often, while sitting alone, he would lose himself in reveries, reminiscing over old times and old associations.

While engrossed in reverie, memories of our dear mother and father came to mind. Both our parents were devoted to the family and deeply concerned about everyone of us. In their latter years I am glad they were happy to have seen how well each one of us was doing and getting on in the world. They were a kind-hearted pair, friendly and socialable, well liked and respected by all those who knew them. The family had suffered much through the war years, yet they were undaunted by adversity and took things as they came, stoically and calmly. They had an optimistic viewpoint on life and often put on a smiling face, whatever the circumstances. Jocular, and possessing a deep sense of humor, they often caused laughter among people present. I remember mother when she wanted a cup of tea, she would extend the empty cup to Lily laughingly mimicking the Shanghai dialect by saying, "SOR--yi-Bei". (茶一杯)  
Father realising his hair was growing thin deplored about it to some friend. The friend said in a complimentary way, "Nine out of ten bald heads are rich". (十个光頭 九个富). Father replied, "Just my luck! I happened to be the 10th".

Well, folks. I think this is a long enough letter for this time. I shall write more later. Meanwhile, the Chinese New Year is near at hand. I take this opportunity to wish you one and all A Happy Chinese New Year.

Yours with love,

Bro. Chew,

P.S. Sum Yee is keeping herself busy doing one thing or another. Currently, she is organising an Art Class with some friends, for teen age pupils. She is hoping for a bigger class with more pupils. The other day she asked me to draw a diagram of our family tree. I have done so and am enclosing a copy of it for your pleasure. You may have it redrawn and make a more presentable copy for more Xerox copies for distribution to members of the family.

Waller Field, Arima  
Feb. 4th, 1900.

Dear Ed. & Mabel.

I have your two letters of different dates (9th/22nd) which came in one envelope, a couple of days ago. I missed the happy occasion in celebration of Ed's 70th birthday. With all the kinfolks of the family and friends, I can well imagine the joyous time you all must have had. I also missed Gloria's wedding that followed. I send best wishes to the newly weds for a happy married life crowned with great achievements and success.

I am ignorant of prose and poetry. Here is a free translation of Tai Chung's Chinese poem congratulating Ed's 70th birthday.

"In a mansion on Berkeley Hills,

By the Golden Gate in San Francisco.

There lives he, a man venerable of age

Revered and highly esteemed, threescore and ten.

Robust and strong, sturdy as oak, stately as the

Evergreen pines.

May he be blessed with longevity through the years,

And all the good fortunes that life brings."

( Please don't laugh at this crude rendition.)

We are all well here. Nwok Hing is getting along fine with his sideline. Yvonne intends to go again to New York for more supplies and raw materials, in another 2 weeks.

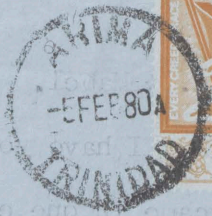
I hope you have received from Lily copies of my letter to Lyn-Poon-Tow & Co. It will <sup>give</sup> you a fairly good idea of how I am faring. My greatest complaint is lack of friends and companions for interesting conversations. I haven't even anyone near to <sup>with</sup> talk in our village dialect. Soon it will be forgotten.

With all best wishes for the Chinese New Year.

Ever lovingly.

Bro. Chew,

BY AIR MAIL  
AEROGRAMME  
AIR LETTER



Mr. & Mrs. Ed.W.Gee,  
1199 Laurel Street,  
Berkeley, Calif.94708  
U.S.A.

Sender's name and address

ICL  
KHLI Canning Plant,  
Waller Field, Arima,  
Trinidad, W.I.

An air letter should not contain any enclosure.  
If it does it will be surcharged or sent by ordinary mail.

space for closing flap



To New York • Toronto  
Miami • London  
and The Caribbean

space for closing flap

Waller Field, Arima,  
May 7th, 1980.

Dear Mabel.

Thank you very much for your letter of the 25th with enclosure of news clipping and your gift check. Kwok Hing is taking care of the check. There is no need of outfitting myself with new clothes and wearing apparels. I have enough to last me my life time. I have dozens of ties, socks and handkerchiefs. I still have a good many shirts that Frank gave me, which are still unwrapped and unused.

I have no worry about my board and lodging, and my daily expenses are practically nil. My needs are meager. In this place of balmy weather I can sleep on the bare floor with only a sheet for covering, provided there are no mosquitoes and other flying insects to bother me. I do not join in the universal complaint of inflation and high cost of living, as long as the price of tobacco, coffee, peanut butter, milk and oatmeal do not increase; and the Post Office does not increase the postage for mailing letters.

So Canton is about to have a skyscraper hotel with thousands of rooms and Lee Man-chak, an old friend of mine is having a hand in it. No, I do not know a single "big shot", but curiously all big shots know me. I only know common friends. If any one of them ever becomes a big shot and feigns to know me, he is no longer my friend.

I suppose Lily, Louise and Charlie are getting ready to start on their trip to the old country. Please remind them not to neglect paying a visit to our beloved mother's grave when in Hong Kong. They should pay homage and express our gratitude in prayers for all blessings that mother had bestowed on us.

Irene must have returned from her trip to the Southeast countries. She is an energetic girl, capable and resourceful. In addition to my deep love for her, I am proud of her. My only daughter, the only girl of us three brothers!! A precious

jewel in the family. Just as Gloria is in your family and Ying Chuen in Lily's, she has a special place in our hearts.

Canton and Hong Kong seem to be in a splurge of development. Construction work is in the forefront. Gloria and T.C. will have vast opportunities in its participation. I am glad they have come in contact with Lee Man-chak, a veteran Hong Kong resident who is deeply engaged in such enterprises. My brother-in-law Suen Chong in Taipo Market is also in the construction business. I hope all these parties will have occasions to work together in participation.

I have no definite plans about my future movements. The Embassy has sent me an application for visa, which I have filled out and submitted. I am now waiting for further news about it. I will keep you informed of developments.

The canning business has totally stopped. A new sideline is taken up and it is showing promising prospects. Although nothing spectacular, the sideline is yielding gratifying results. Yvonne and Kwok Hing are kept busy at work and they are enjoying it. Sum Yee is busy with her art work, about which I don't know a thing. She is also tutoring an arts class every Saturday. I myself have a special program of work, ---reading, letter writing and smoking in the day time and do a lot of thinking in bed at night.

How are you all in Berkeley? Do you and Ed go to office every day? Do you see Lily, Charlie, Frank and Louise often? Please drop me a few lines every once a while. If you happen to come across any special or interesting news in the Chinese newspapers, please clip them out and enclose them in your letters to me. Thus, I shall be informed of how things are getting along in the outside world. How is Lily's leg trouble? Is it still bothering her?

Ever lovingly.

Bro, Chen

利己損人  
欺貧教富  
神憎鬼厭

P.S. Lee's father 利希臣 was said to be a notorious gambler, an oppressor of the poor who dreaded and hated him. His name was taken up to describe him in this manner.

利已損人  
欺貧敬富  
神憎鬼厭

Waller Field, Arima,  
June 2nd, 1980.

Dear Mabel & Ed.

Half of our brothers and sisters have left for Hong Kong and thence to the mainland on a tour of our old country. It will take them at least a month visiting the many historic and interesting places including the Great Wall of China. They will have an excellent opportunity of paying a visit to our native village to worship at our father's grave as well as our mother's grave in Hong Kong after more than 30 years of neglect due to our absence. It is a memorable visit. I hope they will have plenty of pictures taken of the occasion and their visit.

It is true, I am living in isolation more or less. The few old friends I have left are widely separated. The only contact I have with them is by correspondence. I am still deep in sorrow over the passing of Ka-So. After more than 50 years of our happy married life we have been part of each other. Now that she is gone, the light in my life is extinguished. It seems that I am living in a vacuum of total darkness. Life no longer holds any interest to me. I am not especially particular where and how I am living. It is so meaningless without Ka-So near me. But I think of her many times a day. I have a picture of her in my bedroom and one in the outer room. Each time I pass her picture I would bow my head in prayer reporting the activities and achievements of my children and grandchildren, and telling her the doings of each of our kinsfolk. Though physically she is <sup>absent</sup> ~~absent~~, but after my prayers I feel very much comforted and I can even imagine her reactions to my prayers in her mannerisms, her tone of voice and her <sup>customary</sup> ~~customary~~ smiles of approbation.

I understand Oi-ling on her initiative has established my status of Permanent Residence. I have not received official confirmation and as yet, no documentary evidence in support of my newly attained status. I am in no hurry.

No matter where I live, one place is as good as another. I have no desire to do any travelling, but I am eager to visit my other children, grandchildren and close relations. Participation in social activities and functions do not fascinate me. I only enjoy informal meetings with old friends and close relations over a cup of tea and chit chat about old times.

We are all fairly well here. Kwok Hing's side business is progressing quite satisfactorily. Her daughter Sum Yee is occupying herself with her art work and tutoring an art class in town. Personally I am in good health but I am aware that I haven't the vim and vigor of youth. Mentally I am still sane but my thinking seems to be a little slow. I am becoming somewhat lazy and sluggish. I haven't the alertness in doing things. I am even careless about my appearance in dress. Having no friends and companions for pleasant conversations, I am often seen in pyjamas all day long, never venturing out of the house. My only pleasure is in reading. I am constantly seen with a book in hand. In fact I have been doing so much reading that my eyes are getting ~~heavy~~ <sup>bleary</sup>. Together with my other old age ailments such as difficult hearing, faulty memory, toothlessness plus a damaged jaw and a twisted tongue, I am no credit to the pleasant company of any social functions. It is most inconvenient and very embarrassing. I feel I am no longer a part of the world and content myself to keeping away alone by myself. It is not unusual of me to remain at home by myself and not even go out of the house for days on a stretch.

How are you all and the rest of the folks? I suppose you are in frequent touch with one another. How is Gloria in Hong Kong? Hong Kong must be quite a thriving place. I hope she likes living there.

I will write more when I hear from you. Meanwhile, take good care of yourselves.

Lovingly

Bru. Chen

Wallerfield, Arima.  
Julu 25th, 1981.

Dear Mabb1.

At last I have recovered your Oaklanaddress which I had mislaid. I hasten to send you this letter together with a picture showing a young man nearing 90, coming home from town after a 2 mile walk. He was fully laden with food supplies which he had obtained on credit. Describing the picture I have composed a Chinese doggerel, which roughly translated into English, reads as follows:--"Credit shopping in town involves a walking distance of 10 li's. Returning home fully laden, leisurely I trudged my homeward way. With Credit standing in good order, coming home was never empty-handed. With daily food thus assured, there is also comfort even in poverty."

Sun Yee has gone to New York on business and pleasure. Kwek Hing also left here with Homaine for England to accompany Jenaine home from school for the Summer vacation. We are expecting them all back within next week. Meanwhile we are left to "hold the fort" during their absence. The place puts on a deserted look and living condition is miserable. I have been through many a situation much worse than this. Fortunately, my health is good and my mind is still in good working order. For all these blessings I am thankful.

Oi-ling wrote that you want to have a list of the positions I have held in my career. It's a long list and varied and I could not remember them all in their proper order as to their dates and year. Briefly, My career may be said to have begun with my acquaintance with Dr. Sun Yat-sen. I first met him in San Francisco in 1910, when he was outside on tour abroad to propagate the Chinese Revolution among the Chinese communities ~~inside~~ of China, particularly in America. I accompanied him wherever he went on his speech making tours. I returned to China in 1914 when he was living in Shanghai. I joined him and served as his private secretary in which capacity I held until his death in 1925. During the years whether he was in office or out of office I was his private secretary in charge of confidential correspondence and private codes he had with prominent political leaders of the country. This close association with him afforded me with the unique opportunity coming in contact with the leading political leaders, intellectuals and the literary lights of the day such as Wang Ching-wei, Hu Han-min, Tai Chi-tao, Tan Yuan-kai, Yang Shukan (Szechuan), Shao Yuen-chung and many others.

As his private secretary in China, I accompanied him in many of his adventures military exploits and armed expeditions against rebellious regional military ~~govern~~<sup>a</sup> governors (Tuchuns). The whole country was in turmoil. It was/period of internecine warfare.

after  
It was not until/Dr. Sun's death in 1925 that I entered government service and began my political career. I was appointed Member of the Kwangtung Provincial Government and concurrently Commissioner of Industries. Then in 1930, Chungshan District was designated Model District and I was appointed its first Magistrate. I served a year and then appointed Managing Director of Canton-Kowloon Railway which I served 8/9 years until the Japanese Invasion when we had to evacuate Canton and retired to Hong Kong, where I founded the Asia Book Company under the sponsorship of Asia Foundation.

Our Dad returned from America in 1930 when I was serving as Model Chungshan District Magistrate. He was not impressed with the higher offices that I had held in the past, but he was proud as a peacock to see me magistrate of our native Chungshan District. Wherever he went he heard complimentary remarks at the mention of my name. He enjoyed the joke made by some wit satirising "Model District" as 有飯縣 instead of 模範縣 and called me as 有飯縣長 — "riceless magistrate!"

How are you keeping? I hope everything is well with you. I am glad that Tim and Sherman will be coming to visit you. As I am planning to come West some time in August or early September, I hope I shall be able to see them again. I am fairly well here. My health is good and my thinking is still clear. I am grateful and thankful for these good blessings.

How is Louise? How are Charlie and Frank? I hope they and their families are all well. I am anxious to see more of you people, to be more with you sisters and brothers together before it is too late. We will organise fishing trips to Lake Tahoe. Probably we might catch a whale of a big fish as a reward for our trouble.

Please write often and keep me in touch. Wishing you all the best,

Lovingly yours.

Bro. Chew

P.S.:— Also enclosed is an autographed script written by Dr. Sun especially for me because of my interest in agriculture. "Agriculture is the root of Good Government."