

Kunming, March 2, 1941

Dear Gladys:

This is to thank you a million for such a nice letter and Christmas card. In December I took three weeks holiday visiting the western part of the province. The further west one goes the more beautiful and wonderful the scenery. Had a wonderful time! On the way back when passing your place, I thought: "How are the Days? And where are they? How nice it would be if they were still there, for I would certainly pay them a visit!" Then only a few days later your good letter and card arrived! Funny, isn't it, how things happen.

How often I think of you and the good times and eats at your place! It is good though that you left when you did, for life has been very hectic ever since. An hour after returning from holiday the alarm went and off to the country I beat it for five hours. January 29th the city proper was very badly damaged. Most of the bombs hit within 2 to 5 blocks of my house. They hit the Confucian temple; peuter street has 18 craters in it; and Ma Sher Kou (the hilly part of Chen I lu with the Department store in it) was completely demolished. February 26th, exactly four weeks later, the city proper was severely bombed again. About 100 bombs just inside the Big East Gate, down Fu Ku Lu, where a dispensary was burned to the ground and all other buildings completely destroyed, through Wei Yuan Kai, where the market is and the dragon's city house, and the lower part of Chen I Lu between the pilou and telephone comparison just this side of the circular place. Everything completely wiped out!

As if there were not enough tragedy in the city already, to top things off the Eros Theater, next to the YMCA, collapsed the evening of February 27th. It was FULL of people and only a very few succeeded in escaping. I feel sure that well over 500 must have been killed. The building was newly done over in the summer and only finished in September. It was three stories high and the walls the width of ONE brick! The contractor has flown the coop.

The disgusting part of the whole business is the complete lack of defense at this end. The yellow jays can just come to this place and do as they please, without any interference whatsoever! Hardly a shot was fired during the last two raids. I should say not more than two or three.

We are busy as the devil in the office sending out second notices of advice to Americans to return to the US and issuing new style passports to ALL Americans. What a job! I'm in the office every morning at 8 and stay until 5 unless the alarm goes, in which case it means coming back to the office after the all-clear and working until all is finished.

Mrs. P. and baby left the 18th. There are only 3 American women in town. I miss the Colonel as we used to play bridge every now and then. However, I get a game or so in with the Lanzalavis quite often. Saw her yesterday returning from the club after a few games of tennis. They are both well, and leave the city every morning regardless. *The L's send best greetings!*

My villa is still intact. Thank God! I say good bye to it every morning. The flowers now are at their best. Right in front of me on my table is a bowl of the most gorgeous orchids I've ever seen, pansies, fiesias (sp.?) and magnolias. The huge double red camelias are out and my newly planted nasturtium have produced one bloom, from yards and yards of vine. Why?

During air raids, I usually go to the country, 5 miles out, where the Michelsens are living. Do you remember them? They are the same nationality as the sisters and lived just below them. There I have lunch and a nap. The too, we get in a few games of Russian Bank each time.

The death of Polly was most tragic and unnecessary. He had an injured leg from being struck by a truck outside the Big East Gate during the first air raid. It had been dressed once. He was told to come again for dressing, but didn't. On Saturday night he was at the Consulate for dinner. The next day he was in the country for lunch where he insisted on climbing to the top of a mountain to watch the bombing of the city (which was really terrific). That was the day the sisters place went up. I was lying amongst the graves just outside the North Gate. I was so scared that my hand wouldn't close for half an hour. On Monday morning Polly and his brother-in-law, PB, both badly scared from the bombing of the previous day, started to the Urquharts in Si Shan with the intention of parking Polly there for a rest. Near Si Shan many trucks were parked. Polly and PB were afraid to go on to Si Shan, so took a side road. After some time the care landed in the ditch. PB walked on to get help. Finally Polly and the chauffeur succeeded in getting the car out of the

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I've not seen Julia Wong or Phyliss Liang since the Meyers left. They don't seem to be at consular parties. There isn't much entertaining these days, you know.

It is good to know that you are happy in America. My plans for coming home this year are very vague. But if and when I do come, I'll let you know for I surely will look you up! Thanks again for writing. Do it again soon. I am very well and working hard. Please send me some of the latest American jokes. Boy, howdy, aren't the British doing swell!?! It won't be long now until the yellow jays will think all hell has broken loose. Goody! Goody! Goody! Best regards to Charles Healey and love to you, As ever, Mac