

Ying Compound
2 San Tiao Hutung
Peiping.

Saturday June 22 1946
+ Sunday.

Dearest: Yesterday morning we flew back from Kalgan in a plane sent by the Army for our use and in 40 minutes flew high over these romantic mountains, over the Great Wall and in the time it takes to commute to New York from Scarsdale came a distance that would measure 100 miles by the creaking wheels of Chinese carts. We flew to Kalgan last Tuesday to see Chinese Communism at home, so to speak, and so that we would hear and see for ourselves. Well we did and it certainly was worth it. I could write 20 pages but I've got too many appointments this morning to be as leisurely as 20 pages call for. Kalgan is the capital (or was) of Inner Mongolia. It has the dryness of Western Texas, crystal clear air, marvellous mountains and a pastoral life that is almost the same as the film GRASS showed. And it is dusty beyond belief. The old houses are mud - walls and roof - and everywhere the gates, the towers, the narrow lanes, the heavy doors, the look-outs and peep holes remind you of barbaric raids, invasions, and a pastoral, nomadic, fast or famine frontier ~~type~~ of life. Oh dear I can't possibly convey ~~it~~ all the pictures I shall remember. Wednesday night, ^{in Kalgan} after going to a Communist theatre to hear two choruses which were not remarkable and two short plays which were interesting but of course not understandable in point of dialect we came back to the hotel slept an hour and a half and then took a 12:30 AM train to a place called SHEN HWA where we got into or rather onto a rough cart and joggled two hours in the moonlight arriving at a mud village at dawn. First we had tea - hot water poured over some 15th rate tea (?) leaves while two sleepy boys killed 0.2% of the flies in the room. Then to get 2 hours sleep on a big brick bed in a peasant's hut. Then breakfast with millet + bean paste as the main course. I think that if you had been present your choice would have lain between starvation and morning sickness - the

dishes were so strange. They give you two bits of paper to wipe off the chopsticks before starting to use them. Then we spent the day visiting the sick in innumerable peasants houses and it was hot and dirty and fly ridden. Just the Middle Ages so far as animal life goes. And yet when we walked 10 li (3 1/3 miles) along the hard mud dikes between rice fields or bean patches there could not be more beautiful mountains to look at.

It was simply delightful to return to find your letter of June 3rd awaiting me here. I was sort of low about Sandy's disappointment and his illness; I hope the next word will be good. Carol's letter was characteristic. If she and Louis could find some staple farm product that would head off the next Chinese baby they would render a great service. But as long as infant mortality stays high large families will actually have a positive raison d'être. Thanks to you and Peter for fixing the ventilators in the pigeon house. And wasn't it nice to see Tommy Milne! He sounds like a perfect extrovert. And the news of the upstairs garage brought a smile to my brow and I decided to lie down for the rest of the letter. How can you love me now? Why do you? Mater Misericordiae! Last Monday I bought just a little bit of jewelry for you and Nancy - not much but ^{honest} I didn't know you had done the upstairs garage when I bought it! And one of the nurses here had a Chinese seal made for Nancy which I think you will see. I don't know quite how to work out the right hand character is GUH and that stands for Greg. The upper left hand character is NAN and ^{TSEE} means Blessed and the lower one means crystal or jade so her name is Blessed Crystal Gue. This is what will be

called her "chop". I hope she will like it and the other thing or two. I am going to practice with it before I send her a letter for my first efforts here with a pretty dim.

The three cornered efforts to stop the border warfare between the Kuomintang (the one-party controlling the National Govt) the Chinese Communists ~~and General Marshall's organization~~ are sadly ineffective and terribly complicated. The PUMC buildings ^{the representatives of} house all three parties. Since the PUMC is their landlord - so to speak - we get nice treatment from all three. We shall have an Army plane to take us to Chungking & Nanking. Probably we shall be starting for Chungking on Tuesday the 25th and back in Nanking by the 5th or 6th. We don't yet know what we can do in point of getting from Shanghai to San Francisco. Probably the best address for you to use from now on is Cathay Mansions Shanghai and mark it Hold for Arrived and also Rockefeller Medical Commission so it will be treated with a little more care than might otherwise be the case.

It is sweaty hot this PM and I've just finished with the fourth Chinese visitor + interruption. God I shall be glad to see you again! Whenever there is something interesting or beautiful I miss you in waves + cataracts.

x x x

And then came another Chinese followed by another and then out to dinner and a rather tiresome evening on the roof of the Peking Hotel at

the Officers Club looking at a lot of American officers and the weird range of Americans, Russians, Eurasians and Chinese girls they had there. It is now Sunday AM and already the first Chinese visitor has taken 3/4 of an hour after breakfast.

Perhaps I can describe the dinner night before last that the Communist General Yeh gave us at the King Hwa Restaurant. Passing through a number of court yards we came to a big room where the host and his friends were standing. Handshakes + introductions and then sitting down around a circular table to have a cup of jasmine tea and a cigarette. Polite thanks through interpreter to our host for invitation. After about 20 minutes of tea (they fill ~~you~~ up your cup as soon as it gets low) we moved over to another round table and were rather ceremoniously seated the host opposite me and the interpreter on my left. Table piled high in the center with a mountains opening salvo of salad. ~~Hot~~ Yellow Chinese wine (hot) in tiny cups all ready. Host picks up his and looking hard at me says ~~extra~~ what sounds like Yo wealth, Oh Hell Oh Well You well but not Your Health as it obviously tried to be. He adds "GAMBAY" which means "bottoms up." And you and he both show the empty cup to each other as proof that you have taken all. Then washcloth chopsticks and the host waving his sticks towards and over the meal signals the beginning of the attack. Soon five or six waiters begin bringing in the dishes. Some soups, some vegetables, some chopped meat and vegetables, some fish, some prawns, — I suppose we had fifteen to twenty separate dishes. No water, no tea, just hot wine from a China tea pot and all too frequent invitations to GAMBEI with one or another of the hosts

Recalls the New Yorker picture (Peter Arno) of the waiter pouring soup
the bar at a customer poured out flat on the floor and say "Will that be all sir?"

Finally came the blessed bowl of rice that marks the end of the meal. Then back to the other table for direct chilled cooked apricots under a blanket of whipped cream. And after a ten or fifteen minute interval another round of jasmine tea and then with a pretty speech of gratitude on my part which the interpreter cut in half we rose and departed with handshakes all around. Oh and I forgot to say that on this particular occasion the general ordered a photograph made of the party which we posed for in the courtyard. The promptness with which you can leave a Chinese dinner gets you home between 10 and 11 always. The chopstick technique I am much better at than formerly and the Chinese are so agreeable and socially alert that and accessible that I have enjoyed what might sound like a pretty awful round of food & drink. I would need eight pages to describe the food — if I could remember it — but the principle is choice tid-bits in a mountain at the center of the table and a new mountain about every five or ten minutes.

If G.E.R. sends you a copy of the diary perhaps Nanny and Sandra might read a page or two to get a reason why Poppa passes the post box with such a sense of shame for not having written more often home and to them, and also so that they'll see with their maturing eyes what kind of work I'm at. I'm not too sure they will understand but — and here came two more visitors and please forgive so punk a letter. Lord I look forward to YOU and in California of all places! Love unbounded and soon to be unbound.

Gregg Doctor Nuncle Jop.
My Chinese title is G.U.H. DA) FOO