



## THE CHINESE CHIMES

### Reunion Number.

136 Hancock St., Auburndale, Mass., Dec., 1940

### COMPENSATIONS.

One of the compensations for partings is reunion, and when it is seven years between meetings reunions can be very enjoyable affairs. We have had that impressed on us many times in this our third furlough from China.

### FAMILY REUNIONS.

We arrived in Long Beach, California, August 3 and went directly to the home of Mary's father. Although he is eighty-seven years old he seemed to me younger, and happier, than when I saw him seven years earlier. Two days after our arrival our two sons joined us in Long Beach, having driven from Vermont in five days. My sister, Mabel, with her daughter, Pauline, accompanied them and are spending the winter in Long Beach.

Although it had been five years since I last saw Harold, and two years that I had not seen James, it did not seem to me that they had changed much. The most notable change became apparent when we got into the car, sat on the back seat, and let them drive us about. It was quite an ordeal for the two who had been accustomed to being the "head of the family" to sit in silence while their sons dodged about in American automobile traffic. We learned gradually to suppress our fears and our "little boys" delivered us in Auburndale without touching another car, or person, and without doing any damage to us, or to the car. "Dad" wishes that he could present as clean a record as that but he can't, though that's another story.

The place of our next family reunion was Deer Lodge, Montana, where we spent a delightful week with Mary's brother and his family on a sheep ranch. The five cousins had a great time getting acquainted, riding horseback, swimming, attending parties and making Chinese food. The "old folks" also had their good times and the week passed much too quickly.

Not until October were there any Vermont reunions and I was the only one who went then. The big "get-together" didn't take place until after Thanksgiving. On Thanksgiving Day the five of us were together in Auburndale and were glad to have with us two China friends, Jo Fuller who is getting an M.A. at Wellesley, and Bob McCandless from M.I.T. Harold had to return to his studies at the Harvard Medical School the next morning, but the rest of us drove to Vermont. There was about ten inches of snow on the ground in Boston, which did not add to the

pleasure of driving, but it did improve the scenery. At long last New England is becoming famous for her winter beauty and crowds of city people go to rural New England every week-end with good snow.

In spite of some absentees there were thirty-five at my brother's for the reunion of the Robinson tribe, and how some of them have changed in seven years, especially the younger ones. We greatly missed my father, who always enjoyed such gatherings, but the memory of his spirit was with us and helped to make the day memorable. Two of my brothers-in-law each shot a deer that morning, the last day of the hunting season.

Friday night and Sunday afternoon I spoke in the Warren church, and Sunday morning I spoke twice in Waitsfield. Those two towns have one pastor and are fortunate in having a young man and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Gregg. Mr. Gregg graduated from Union Seminary last June, and it did me good to see those fine people taking up the church work in that spot that is so dear to my heart.

#### OTHER REUNIONS.

During the week that we had in and around Long Beach we saw the Mark Wheelers, the Scudders, Porters, Legers, E. O. Wilsons and many friends who had helped to make Mary's stay in Long Beach so enjoyable two or three years ago. From Long Beach we drove to Berkeley and had three days at the General Council of the Congregational and Christian churches. Among the old friends there we saw Alfred and Marian Heininger, who had a room next to ours in the home where we were entertained; Mrs. Francis Price, with whom our three children, and Barbara Moran, stayed while their parents went to meetings; the Ernest Houldings, Lois Todd and her mother; Anne and Steve Peabody; and Ed Benner, whom James had known at Yenching.

From Berkeley we drove up through the California redwoods; along the Columbia River highway, where we stopped to see the salmon ascending the concrete ladder at the Bonneville Dam; to Whitman College, where we saw Dr. and Mrs. Penrose, old friends of Mary's. Dr. Penrose is no longer president of the college, though in spite of his blindness he still teaches and was writing a book on philosophy when we were there. The next day we had breakfast with Amelia Burns at the famous Davenport Hotel, where we began our honeymoon, twenty-four years before.

When we reached Des Moines, Iowa, we went to the home of one of James' roommates, Bob Gale. Helen MacEachron, who teaches English in a Des Moines High School, with her three manly sons, went with us and the Gales to the Country Club for lunch where we had a delightful time. Mary and I then went to Helen's home while the boys played tennis and Elizabeth had a swim.

At Ypsilanti, Michigan, we found that we were located in a Tourist Home only a block from the home of the Menzies who used to be at the North China American School. Although we had driven 547 miles that day we made a call on the Menzies, had an enjoyable visit and drank Chinese tea before we turned in for the night.

I have already mentioned the fact that I went to Vermont in October where besides meeting my relatives I saw many other friends. My visit to Barre, where I attended High School was especially pleasant, as was the reunion with Dr. Mathewson and his family at Lyndonville.

#### REUNION AT GRINNELL.

Our visit at Grinnell, Iowa, was so unusual that it deserves a separate paragraph. Harold Matthews had just arrived from China a few days before we got there and it was a joy to see him reunited with his family after his strenuous years in Shansi. We made our headquarters at the home of my college roommate, Dr. Leo P. Sherman, now head of the Department of Chemistry at Grinnell College. Leo and I had not met for about twenty-five years and how we did try to make up for lost time! We were sorry that Mrs. Sherman was away, but her two daughters made excellent hostesses and with their father tried to "sell" Grinnell to Elizabeth. If her brothers were not to be in New England these next few years, they might have made a "sale" for we were very favorably impressed with Grinnell, and our visit there was most enjoyable.

#### AUBURNDALE REUNIONS.

We reached Auburndale September 6 at 10 o'clock at night, but the A. G. "Robbies" had beds ready for us in our new home, which had been vacated only a few days earlier by the Hugh Robinsons when they started back to China. After a few days of rest and enjoyment, James left for his Junior year at Dartmouth, Harold entered the third year class at Harvard Medical School, and Elizabeth started her Senior year at Newton High School. Harold gets home for an occasional week-end, and we see James now and then. The whole family saw the Dartmouth-Columbia football game and four of them saw Dartmouth beat Harvard 7 to 6. I was speaking in Vermont at that time.

Soon after Mary and I reached Auburndale we attended at the Walker Home a three-day missionary conference. Representatives from South Africa, India, the Near East, Japan and China reported on conditions in those fields and told of the unusual opportunities for missionary work. Our American Board World Fellowship was made very real to us, and we were grateful for the share that we have in trying to make real the Kingdom of God on earth.

There have been many pleasant reunions with friends here in Auburndale; Dr. and Mrs. Burgess were here for a while, the Toppings live in one of the cottages, and Mrs. Williams lives across the street. Emma Rose Hubbard and her husband live in Medford and were here one night when the young folks revived the good old days of Paotingfu as they made Chinese "chiao tzus".

Of course we have seen more of our friends at 14 Beacon Street than we would in any other part of the country and our sympathies have been with them as they have struggled with the problems that confront them these days. The most recent reunion at Auburndale was when Lois Gilbert and her four children arrived from China. She came on a special boat that went to bring Americans back from the Orient and they seem to have enjoyed a good voyage. It is a sad state that brought them home, but we are glad to have them

here, and we hope that they will enjoy Auburndale as much as we have.

#### A MOUNTAIN-TOP REUNION.

And now we come to the climax of this theme. We had hoped to see the Ballous at Berkeley, since they planned to be there when we were, on their way back to China. Their boat was delayed so they left Vermont later than at first planned. After our week with Mary's brother in Montana we drove up to Glacier National Park. We camped one night at a beautiful lake on the west slope of the Rockies and drove to the top the next morning. Just before we reached the top we came to a hair-pin curve where there were some stone steps leading up to a lookout. We got out of our car, climbed the steps and while we were admiring the wonderful panorama spread out below us a car came from the east and the driver sounded his horn. We looked and behold, it was the Ballous! I let out a shout. When one Vermonter, with his family, coming from North China to Auburndale, Massachusetts, meets on the Continental Divide in Glacier National Park another Vermonter, and his family, going from Auburndale, Massachusetts, to North China I call it a real mountain-top experience.

#### FUTURE REUNIONS.

Since I reached America I have made about eighty addresses in many churches, schools and clubs. I have found people extremely interested in China and it has been enjoyable to meet many new friends. Mary has done some speaking, too, and sometimes she has accompanied me. If space permitted I would like to make a long list of these friends. I made one trip to Maine, one to Vermont (besides the Thanksgiving trip) have spoken in a few places in New Hampshire, and in many places in Massachusetts. I have no doubt that there are many fine people in the Congregational Churches in other parts of the country, but I am sure they are plentiful in New England. I am looking forward to reunions with these new friends sometime in the future. I wish here to express my appreciation for the hospitality that I have enjoyed in their homes and for the generosity in time allowed me for telling about China. Since I am sending this to many who have not been on our mailing list before let me explain that it has long been the habit of this Robinson family to try and ring the Chinese Chimes at this time of year, hoping thereby to add a bit to the "harmony of the world."

#### AN EXPLANATION.

I have already stated that "Dad" hasn't as clean a record as a chauffeur as he would like. Here is the story: On December 9, while driving in Waltham with Mariel Gilbert in the front seat, Mary and Ursul Moran on the back seat, our car had a collision with a truck. Mrs. Moran was taken to a hospital for six stitches in her lower lip and for the extraction of four front teeth from her upper jaw. While the rest of us were bumped and bruised somewhat we did not suffer any serious injuries. That can't be said of the car, however, and we haven't yet decided what to do with it. Junk men don't pay much for such property and we haven't the cash needed to put it into running order. Our insurance covers damage done to the property of others, and personal injuries, but not damage to our car. It was a terrible experience to go

through, but we are grateful that it was no worse. Especially are we glad that it was a truck instead of a person that was in the way.

AN INTERLUDE. (The Housekeeper Speaking.)

While the rest of the family have been busily engaged in imbibing and imparting information and inspiration, I have been having fun being domestic and playing with the gadgets which American housewives enjoy. I feel I can now qualify as cook, houseboy, or laundryman, and sewing amah. I'm not so proud of my record as a coolie, for while the man of the house was away for ten days I let the furnace fire go out three times. But most coolie jobs are paid for in the rent.

I invite any of you who come to Boston to spend a night or have a meal with us at Auburndale. If you want to be real company let me know in advance, for it takes me the best part of two days to plan and prepare and serve a soup to nuts dinner. There are so many pleasant interruptions and such interesting radio programs. But come anytime--we'll be glad to see you.

M.S.R.

CHRISTIAN REUNION.

As we have pondered over the causes of the present world situation it has seemed to us that one reason why we are in such a deplorable state is that the Christian forces of the world have been so badly disunited. We confess our part of the guilt and pray God that we may do what is within our power to bring the Christians of the world into a closer union.

A few years ago when I was trying to make Christ more real in my own life I started to read the New Testament and underscore every place that Christ was mentioned. Before I had finished my reading I became keenly aware that to me Christ is that which makes mankind one. He is, of course, much more than that, but it seems to me that we have failed miserably in making real Christ's prayer "that they may be one." This year I am trying to help American Christians realize that they are one with the Christians in China, but I am also preaching that we should become more united in this country and with the Christians in other lands. As I have preached this gospel there has come across my path another gleam of light: Not only does Christ make mankind one, He also makes mankind one with God. May the Peace and Joy of Oneness with God through Christ be yours this Christmas season.

H. W. Robinson