

***Nanjing at Last! September and October***

*from Drinking Wine*

*Unsettled, a bird lost from the flock--  
Keeps flying by itself in the dusk.  
Back and forth, it has no resting place,  
Night after night, more anguished its cries.  
Its shrill sound yearns for the pure and distant--  
Coming from afar, how anxiously it flutters!*

*It chances to find a pine tree growing all apart;  
Folding its wings, it has come home at last.  
In the gusty wind there is no dense growth;  
This canopy alone does not decay.  
Having found a perch to roost on,  
In a thousand years it will not depart.  
T'ao Chi'en (365-427)  
(Tr Wu-Chi Liu, 54)*

Dear Folks,

9/6/85

Let me tell you about my spacious accommodations here at Nanda. I live on the second floor of the foreign experts building, twelve two-bedroom suites on a courtyard with a garden behind. The Waiban offices are downstairs. The foreign teachers' building with one room accommodations is next to ours. My large bedroom is air-conditioned and has a huge soft bed with mosquito netting and pink satin stuffed coverlet. A large cedar lined wardrobe contains my woolies; a chest of drawers my small items and a desk facing out into the garden is where I am sitting now writing you. Next door is my sitting room with a refrigerator, two overstuffed chairs, another desk and chair, and a square dining table which I have covered with a piece of red satin. There is a smaller bedroom on the north, with a single bed for visitors. I am using this as my TV room and library den. Off the entry hall is a small kitchen and a bathroom. Each unit has a balcony looking south over the sunny garden! We are on the south end of the residential campus, a lot of flat roofed 8-storey buildings without elevators where the students live 8 or 10 to a room. The north campus has buildings with the traditional Chinese-style sloped tile and wood roofs with rafters and gables. According to feng shui, the academic campus buildings on the flat land are fire on earth and are suited for those wanting to gain respect and goodwill from the community, for their honesty and integrity, and are ideal for school or library or hospital. The flat land and the flat topped concrete buildings (with clothes flapping out the windows), however, are earth on earth--only good for "run of the mill operations, mass housing or everyday commercial enterprises. Success is sound, but there is little room for development or expansion."

Last Saturday we had a meeting with the leading cadres of Jiangsu Province, who explained the situation of education in this province. It is the richest province, so they have put out a glitzy book and gave us all copies. All the foreign experts teaching at any college in Nanjing were introduced. Included were 15 members of Amity, a group founded here in Nanjing by the Nanjing Theological Seminary. They are all missionary types, teaching language or culture here at various colleges. Among them is a Maryknoll, Jack Cuff from Chicago, who was in my Chinese class with Cheng in Chicago. He has been stationed in Hong Kong, knows Cantonese and can read Chinese, but he was studying Mandarin to come to this very place. As soon as I saw him at the meeting I recognized him and greeted him afterward. He was glad to meet someone he knows because he's the only foreigner teaching at his college (the Hydrology Institute) and now plans to come eat with us occasionally. It turns out that there is also a Christian Brother, Guillermo Danino, from Peru, who has been teaching Spanish here for three years already. Lynn Conroy, a former nun like myself, from Seton Hill, teaches here this term and has become my friend. We had Mass on Sunday morning in my apartment and then lunch together. Marvelous to find such friends so far away. After that I rested all day Sunday, and now my lung congestion has gone away, thank heavens. I must take it easy here, for when I work, e.g., unpacking all my boxes, I get overheated and perspire and get in drafts, then get this congestion. I do a lot more resting here than in the U.S. It takes a lot out of me--not only the weather, but all the bureaucratic confusion.

9/9/85

Jim Friend--our department chair from Chicago State, who met Huang Zhongwen when I brought him to visit CSU back in May--arrived Sunday night from Shanghai. When Jim heard that Huang and our president had arranged for an "exchange" of a teacher from CSU in exchange for a student from Nanda he was first to apply, and now here he is! Xu Xin from the English Dept. met him at the airport, (I couldn't help but recall that no one met me when I arrived) showed him the sights of Shanghai and brought him here and will continue as his personal aid, it looks like. Xu Xin is probably aiming for an exchange with us, courtesy of Jim, in years to come (and in fact, he did get one). Jim was offered similar accommodations to mine but chose to have one room in the Foreign Teachers Building, so that he could have a completely air-conditioned space (only one room of mine is air-conditioned). He showed it to me--a cocoon: his window was all covered with drapes with no view of the garden.

Did I tell you that practically the first night I was here, someone came knocking very late on my door. Although I was ready for bed, I opened it and a young Chinese graduate student stood there with a melon. He had carried two of them all the way from Xinjiang for me, sleeping on the floor of the hard-seat carriage four nights, hugging the precious melons for me. One had rotted. His favorite teacher, Margaret Wei, had sent them to me all the way from Xinjiang. .

That is the way the Chinese are. They will do any favor for someone they admire.

I had my first class this morning, and what a mess it all was. I was told to meet my undergraduate class of American literature from 7:30-9:20. When I arrived in the small classroom, I found instead 50-3rd year composition students. I learned that they were supposed to be Jim Friend's class, and he was supposed to meet them at 7:30, while my literature class was originally down from 9:40-11:30. But Xu Xin had asked Jim what time he preferred to teach, so he naturally said 9:40-11:30, and since he is a man, he was given my time slot and I was told to come for the early time. Neither my students nor his had been notified of the change. So my class will now meet at 7:30, and all his students and all my students will have to rearrange their schedules, and some will have to drop because they already have classes scheduled at this time. That's how they do things here: to accommodate one man, they'll inconvenience 70 students and a woman teacher. Yet how innocent they are of any wrong doing. To them it's obvious that a man, especially a department chairman back home, has precedence.

There have been other problems as well--too small a classroom and now problems getting books. I was told by the person in the Foreign Language Reading Room that the books donated by the Fulbright professor last year are to be used only by the teachers and not by the students, though I had specified in my letters to Huang that I wanted my students to use that text. However, after much fussing and fuming and considerable sweating by me in this humid climate, we have managed to get a few things sorted out. They have managed to find a classroom for my graduate class, which they have transferred from Tuesday to Friday, in spite of the fact that I had written many letters requesting no class on Friday. I believe that the class was changed because one of the men students had a conflict with his Chinese literature class and requested the change. I met the student, and he was apologetic. I really like the students and think I will get along well with them after we all get settled down to work. However, I don't think their level of comprehension is high, and the textbook will probably be too difficult for the undergraduates. I'm going to have to revise my syllabus to something more modest. Meeting just two hours a week per course encourages the students to take as many as 20 hours of class a week, so they have no time for homework.

I have finally gotten all my books unpacked and put onto shelves of my apartment, which is quite livable, and I have managed to air-condition the entire space by keeping the doors and windows closed and running the air all the time. It's such a treat to come back from class or town and enter my cool space. September must be the most humid time of the year here! Nanjing is one of the three furnaces of China—owing to the oppressive humidity in the Yangtse River Valley. (Chongqing and Wuhan are the other two.)

There are many foreign teachers here and most speak English as the lingua franca. There's Deirdre Vyse, an inspiring musician from Bath. This is her third year in China and at her first two posts she was the only foreigner, so

she has learned Chinese. There's a German couple with children. A Japanese-Chinese woman Yahui and her American husband Ken Olenik, a visiting scholar doing research, are here with their two young children, Andrew and Lisa. My next door neighbor is a fastidious Japanese woman, Masako, who is constantly bringing me little gifts. The Chinese are gift-givers too. Zhang Boran, the head of the English section, gave me two books, both translated into Chinese by him. The Chinese are busy translating everything they can. I admire their industry. If the system were just not so messy, they would have more time for their work. As it is, they spend much of their time straightening out messes someone else has made.

Every time we go out shopping, we draw a crowd. The Chinese here in Nanjing must not have seen many foreigners, for they gape and stare and collect around us as if we were bizarre. I hope they'll get used to seeing us around and ignore us. When I bought fabric, everyone was watching and wondering, feeling the material to see what special magic a foreigner might see in it. Being under observance cuts down on my buying. Life here is very inexpensive. I probably pay no more than \$2 for three meals a day. Each meal averages about 1.80 yuan. There are 2.8 yuan per dollar. I got \$150 in renminbi in Beijing and still have 100 yuan left.

Tomorrow is some sort of holiday, but I don't have the day off, as I don't have any classes. Actually, when the classes meet only once a week for two hours, I don't want not to meet with them. I did straighten out my graduate class and found a room for it on Wednesday morning, so Hurrah! In the long run all will be well. It's just getting there that's so hard.

Dear Folks,

9/13/85

It was good to talk to you on your anniversary. You don't seem so far away at all. I got some letters at last--from you and from Gerda, telling me about the news from the Barclay, but no mention of how my cats are. I miss them. I see a few small cats around here, tied up. (Chickens are also tied to rocks. I assume they're not pets but for the pot.) At night some of us walk around the neighborhood and look into the one or two room hovels that Chinese live in who have no danwei (work unit). These are thrown up against walls, e.g., of our university or of houses in the little hutangs or side alleys, covered with corrugated metal roofs. Inside we see a low ceiling with one light bulb. There is a bed, a small squat table, a couple of stools, one line strung with clothes drying, some utensils hanging on the wall, and that's it. Everything seems dwarfed in size in these homes. Sometimes the walls are just lath; plaster is extra. The floors are concrete. We even saw a one-room house that looked like just a large box, with a bunk bed, on the top shelf of which were the man's belongings. But the people seem to live outside, in front of their homes. They bring their table and stools and woks out and cook and eat, then squat (everyone squats--it's the normal position for conversation) around talking with the neighbors about the day's business.

*Grass hovel filled with wind and dust,  
Not even a tattered blanket to sleep on.  
A gust comes, I ask him in:  
On the ground, a straw mat to sit on.  
In the house, there are no coals,  
Only willow hemp to start a fire.*  
Wang Fan-chih (590?-660?) Tr. Eugene Eoyang

Last night Lynn Conroy and I took a stroll. In the midst of such houses, we came upon a large compound with new apartments and balconies, with a large attractive dining hall, and a courtyard in which were parked minibuses, nice-looking cars and jeeps. We wondered who could get such nice quarters, complete with a bank of trees that cut off the ugly sights of the surrounding hovels. The dining hall was lighted up and we approached and looked inside to see a banquet in progress behind screens--the way they serve Westerners in some places. It looked like everybody was wearing an army uniform. We then noticed that the jeeps were all army jeeps, and we realized the army gets special quarters and special dining privileges like foreigners do. If you're in the right group, China can be very good to you. We are actually free to enter any of these compounds. In fact, we can go more places here than we could if we were in Italy, for example, where you are not allowed into any government buildings. China doesn't have the paranoia about searching everyone who enters that Israel, for example, or other countries with lots of enemies have. Ordinary Chinese, however, cannot go into Western preserves like the Jinling Hotel, (the new posh hotel in the center of town only ten minutes away by bike), unless they look like prosperous overseas Chinese. But if you look well-kept enough, you can go in anywhere here, although there are "guards" at the gates. Actually they just stand or sit talking with each other and nod to us. Being a "foreign expert" with a university name badge can get us in, but any Western-looking person can enter. The students who wear t-shirts and shorts are even welcome into the swankiest places. I remember when we went into the Xiangshan Hotel dining room in shorts and t-shirts after climbing Xiangshan Mountain in the rain. The elegant hostess in her long scarlet gown didn't bat an eye as she showed us to a table.

Yesterday (Thursday) I had the day off, so I spent it decorating my apartment. It was the first day that bronchitis didn't bother me. The weather is moderating a bit. Aside from my lungs, I have been healthier here than in Chicago. It's so humid that I don't have dry skin. I had found some artificial flowers at a department store in town and arranged them in a basket Masako had given me. I put them by the window by my balcony so they catch the light from behind. I then cut Chinese paintings from a book I bought for one yuan, along with reproductions of Chinese hanging scrolls on biblical subjects which Guillermo had given me. I now have a gallery of Chinese art in my entry hall. Then in my sitting room I put up the few hand painted silk flowers and birds that I have bought so far. I stowed all the copies of books for my graduate class in the large glass-fronted cupboard in my sitting room, to get rid of the boxes in my



About 50 students attend My IMAGES OF AMERICA film class in the 200-seat lab, though not all are registered. The university has a 3/4" NTSC system, so can copy my Beta tapes using my machine and show them in class. They have also moved my classes to larger rooms by moving around other classes. My schedule thus will be Monday 7:30-9:20 undergraduate American Literature; Wednesday 9:40-11:30 graduate American lit (American Authors), and Wednesday 2-4 Images of America. Thus I can have Thursdays and Fridays to travel, so I can go to other cities and give lectures. Tuesdays I will work with the Foreign Language Research Institute on their survey of Twentieth Century American literature. Now all that I need is time to work on my Chinese, for I feel helpless not being able to express myself. I also bought a brush, ink and stone to do calligraphy. I hope I can find someone who likes to do calligraphy to work with.

When I was in the video lab, I gave them a tape to try to record; it turned out to be a 1983 Frontline program Looking for Mao. Those in the room and halls all paused, fascinated to see themselves on American TV. It was a happy coincidence.

9/16/85

I'm entering my second week of classes, and things are looking better. My box of tapes arrived safely at last, fortunately, for I saw a public announcement in the compound of foreign language classrooms listing all the tapes I would be donating to the university. Huang Zhongwen had claimed them for the university even before they arrived! The sound lab is able to copy my tapes, have already started, using my VCR to transfer them to their commercial 3/4" format. Next week we will start seeing some "Images of America." I'll start with silent comedies--Charlie Chaplin's Gold Rush and Buster Keaton's The General. Even those whose English isn't good can follow.

My other two classes have been moved to rooms that are large enough to accommodate the numbers of students who are taking them for credit or auditing. More students are coming than are registered. The Chinese students seem to want to audit everything they can, especially in English, so they can practice. Many undergraduates are taking 20 hours for credit and auditing 6. Fortunately they live on campus and their lives seem to revolve around the triangle of dorms, classrooms and dining halls. My graduate course in American Lit has over 20 students, not the 15 for whom I ordered books. They will have to share. After I passed out the books the first week, someone told me that not all those students were even registered in the class, so I have probably given away some books I'll never see again. Students just come audit to hear English; how is the teacher to know? "This is one of the ten key universities," is the mantra I hear students and faculty invoke frequently and reverently, so students from places as far away as Harbin are drawn to it by name alone. There is a large graduate class here from all over China.. Someone told me that this large class was the result of wide recruitment, based on the offer to get an MA in English. After they had arrived they were told by Huang Zhongwen that only a select few of them would

be allowed to get a master's degree here; the rest would only be given certificates. My large class this term resulted from Huang Zhongwen's decision to allow only the eight accepted MA students in his class; all the rest of the graduate students in English were put in mine.

I have bought a bike! It was like buying a new car. A few of us placed orders at the Friendship Store for a Phoenix (the top of the line), then had to wait a week, go back on Sunday morning, pay in foreign exchange 174 Yuan (about \$60). I had my picture taken while the shop was getting the bike in order. All the people who helped or stood by and watched the transaction got into the picture. Today I had to go to the police to get a license.

Another procedure has been acquiring all my official documents, so I won't have to go through the hassle I did with Customs again. Now I'll have many papers to show, all with my picture and name in Chinese (Shang Ma Li ) and the official stamps on them. One is a red danwei card issued by Nanjing which identifies me as a foreign teacher. One is a white Foreign Experts card which allows me to pay in renminbi. Chinese businesses or hotels which allow me to use it are supposed to write down the amount I spend in renminbi. I also have a green identity card from the Public Security Bureau which I have to have with me in case I leave China and need to get back in, I suppose. I had to go have more pictures taken at a shop on Zhongshanlu. It's still the monsoon season and the humidity is terrible, so I look wilted in the photo on the white card.

Last Saturday night, after a big party given for the foreign experts by the Waiban, we dropped in on a Saturday night disco party at the Student Club across from our compound. Students were sitting or standing around the edge of a huge room listening to some slow Western songs like Tennessee Waltz or Amazing Grace, sung in Chinese to a Chinese beat. Boys were sitting holding hands with boys and girls with girls for moral support. When we foreigners came in the DJ put on some "disco" music--i.e., fast, and the Chinese teachers encouraged us to get up and dance, assuming that we would all jump at the chance to fling ourselves around with abandon to "our music." We made fools of ourselves to oblige them. They all applauded loudly. After a couple of hours a few boy-girl couples had the courage to get out on the dance floor, by which time it was 11 p.m., time to close up and go home.

*Old friends know what I like:  
They bring wine whenever they come by.  
We spread out and sit under the pines;  
After several rounds, we're drunk again.  
Tao Chi'en (365-427)  
(Tr Eugene Eoyang, 54)*

Let me tell you our schedule here. We do everything early. We go to bed early--about 9:30. (The light bulbs are so dim I could ruin my eyes reading in bed.) We get up early, about 5:30. The Chinese do exercises. We have breakfast about 6:30, especially when we have a 7:30 a.m. class as I do. Morning classes are from 7:30 to 8:20, from 9:40 to 11:30. Lunch starts at 11



and is over by 12, so I can't tarry if I want to eat at the Foreign Teachers' Dining Hall just outside our compound. There's a nice two hour xuixi (rest) from 12 to 2 p.m. Then afternoon classes are from 2 to 4; some are even from 4 to 6, but dinner starts about 4:30 and is over by 6.

After dinner some of us foreign teachers go walking around the neighborhood until about 7. At 7 we watch TV. (Chinese news is mostly about political meetings; foreign news shows mostly train or plane wrecks--disasters. ) Sometimes I read for a couple of hours; fortunately I have my own marvelous library. Then I take a bath and go to bed by 9:30. Some students stay up very late at night studying. It seems there's nothing to do here after 9 p.m. All the restaurants close about 8, so we're back by 9 from dinner. I'm leading a good, wholesome life. Now that I have my bike, I expect to ride around the city during my 2 hour break.

I enjoy watching the weather report on TV. I noticed that most other cities in China are much cooler than Nanjing these days. We're still in the 22-30 C range, while other cities have gone down to the 12 to 22 C range. I hope it stays warm long into the fall. It is really perfect weather now. I'm still wearing all my summer clothes. Back in Chicago I'd be wearing sweaters; I notice on the international news that people in Europe and the US are wearing jackets. Nanjing has the ideal weather during fall. In winter it's very cold; in spring it's humid; in summer it's hot and rainy, but fall is supposed to last almost into December. I hope so.

I've been walking or riding my bike around the neighborhoods, and everywhere I see more and more "free markets," places where people can set up a little table and start selling things. One man sells chickens and ducks from a crate for 30 cents apiece. Another sells vegetables--egg plant, onions, cucumbers. Another sells kitchen utensils, another plastic containers, another home-made wire products. When they all set up in a street together, the traffic is bottlenecked and it becomes quite lively; everyone is forced to walk through and see all the items. They say these people are getting rich; I hope so. Not far outside the university's south gate is a man who sits all day with a height and weight measuring scale. He charges only one mao (3 cents), but he gets so many customers that it adds up. I bought a plant from a plant-seller for 90 cents. Everyone told me I paid too much. These free markets stay open very late at night and open early in the morning. They never seem to sleep, whereas the state employees all get their two hour xuixi from 12 to 2 plus other rests in between and go home about 5:30. What do they care?

9/23/85

Now I know what the Chinese clinics are like. I've had a cold coming on for week. My body still hasn't adjusted to Chinese humidity, I guess. The cold lodged in my chest and I became hoarser and hoarser. I finally went to the clinic here on campus. It's set apart over on the east side of the residential section of campus, past all the student dorms. The urine stench was even worse there. I was asked at a ticket window whether my problem was nei (inside) or wei

(outside). I said "Wei" and was given a nei ticket for 10 fen and was shown into a small room with a woman doctor (?) in white with a white hat. Other patients were sitting around on little stools while I tried to explain to her my problem. I learned I had bronchitis ( ). She gave me some pills and cough syrup.

That was the weekend we had planned to go to Shanghai. Even though I had a fever, I went because I couldn't find anyone to buy the train ticket. Four of us left about 10:45 Friday morning in a soft-seat car. I drank tea steadily while gazing at the rice fields in Jiangsu Province. At 3:30 we arrived in Shanghai, got our return tickets at the train station (you can't buy a round trip ticket in China) and took a cab to the Peace Hotel, right on the Huangpu River. The clerk told us there were no rooms there; "No rooms in all Shanghai," he blithely claimed. The foreign teachers' practice is to hang around a hotel long enough, even occupy an empty room, until they give up their waiting game and find a place for you. I didn't feel well enough to play the waiting game, so I called Lloyd Neighbors at the American Consulate--he's in charge of Fulbrights--and he told us we could stay at two rooms in his building. We took a cab out to the Consulate and were happy to find very nice quarters there, for nothing! He also invited me to a reception Saturday at the Consulate honoring Ambassador Hummel, who is leaving China and retiring. Friday night we had dinner at the Jing An Hotel, one of the famous old hotels in Shanghai that date to the days of the international concessions, when France, Britain and the U.S. had settlements here. Shanghai seems to be an international haven still, where foreigners come and find hotels that resemble old European hotels.

Lynn and I took two buses to get to the waterfront by 8:30 a.m. to go on the river cruise. For 8 yuan we got a soft seat in a top deck cabin, with tea, apples, peanuts, candy, pop, icecream, and a TV movie while cruising out the Huang Pu River to the mouth of the Yangtse. There we saw miles and miles of huge freighters waiting unloading, as well as small sanpans and even a junk.

Back at the Peace Hotel we met Sarah and Sandra for lunch on the 8th floor, overlooking Shanghai Harbor. We treated ourselves to a feast that even included orange juice, a luxury I haven't had since arriving here. Xiao long baozi (little dragon dumplings) were the treat we liked most. After lunch we strolled to the nearby Friendship Store where all the goods of the Orient are on sale. I bought a black silk cotton padded vest for winter and a down coat with hood. I had laryngitis but had to keep shouting Chinese to get anywhere. Most of the other foreign teachers don't know any Chinese, so even if I have lost my voice, I must screech out something. It is very annoying, especially when I have a fever and cold. I was so exhausted I took a cab back (cheaper than in Nanjing) and rested before walking over to the reception at the Consulate. I wasn't exactly dressed for a Consular do, but no one paid any attention; besides, by this time I had completely lost my voice. The Consulate in Shanghai is located in the former French concession and is even more impressive than the Embassy in Beijing. It has twenty-foot ceilings and stained glass and beautiful paneling.

At the Consulate I got to talk with other Fulbrighters from other universities and hear their experiences. Most seem to be living in luxury hotels in Shanghai, where they are not suffering the culture shock that we in Nanjing are, living right

in the midst of all the raw smells and sights and sounds of China. Moreover they aren't getting around on bikes and trains the way we are. They're dependent on their Waibans, who apparently are very helpful, even planning a five-day trip to Hangzhou for one of them on a holiday when our waiban is taking us on a one-day trip to a mountain that isn't even in the guidebook. They're living first class, while we're living second. However, each side has its compensations. Not many Americans would probably choose to live right in the midst of it as we do here at Nanjing University. At the Consulate, as at the Embassy, they're living on an island where it's air-conditioned and they can order the food they want. We take whatever we get, which sometimes is pretty revolting.

On Sunday morning we got a cab early and went to the Jade Buddha Temple, which has two jade buddhas, one reclining and one sitting. The temple was protected during the Cultural Revolution, so was not destroyed. It is now a tourist attraction and has a faithful crowd of Buddhist worshippers. It had a peaceful atmosphere with the incense and quiet. Afterwards we tried to get into a park where Lu Xun is buried, but it was closed, so we went right to the train station and waited an hour to get on our train. We had the air-conditioned soft-seat car almost to ourselves. Again I drank gallons of tea. Hot tea must be what keeps the Chinese well in this climate; they are constantly flushing out the germs. I haven't gotten a sore throat, thanks to the hot tea. We arrived back about 4:30. We need more trips like that to reassure ourselves that we are free souls and not just bound to the round of classes-meals-dorms here at Nanjing. This place could take over our entire lives because we live here, eat here, have all our friends here and think we are completely dependent on it.

9/26/85

For the first time in over a week I feel like myself. The weather has turned a sort of Indian summer--warm but not humid. The last few days it has even been cold, so today's sun was welcome. I had no classes today, so I stayed in bed late, made my own breakfast and lunch and sat out on the balcony all afternoon in my big lounge chair reading. I didn't get overheated and cold, the problem I seem to face everyday, heating up then going into these cold damp classrooms. I can imagine that it'll be worse in winter. I'm hoping that whatever virus I've had for the past nine days will immunize my system to the Nanjing bugs, so when the really bad weather comes, I'll be ready. I haven't had this bad a cold in years. It started in my lungs, then moved up into my head and weakened my whole system. (Someone suggested I picked it up in Beijing at the Great Wall, where there is dust everywhere from the desert winds.) I sleep many hours more here than I do in Chicago, and I lie down during the 12-2 rest, but I still can't shake it. Others have been having colds and general enervation as well.

It's probably part culture shock which my system is subtly reacting to. After I've been here awhile, I begin to feel the monotony and sterility of life here, and I miss so many people and things. My life in Chicago is so varied and rich. There doesn't seem to be anything or anyone lively, boisterous, spontaneous

here. Everyone--faculty and students--seem traditional, predictable, parochial, even narrow, pinched and boringly respectable, with no eccentricities allowed. No one is cheeky or outrageous or even sophisticated. I have one student from Shanghai--Cen Ye Feng who seems to have some sophistication. He wears fashionable clothes and knows how to get things done. He has "guanxi" (connections). The other day on campus I met him near the urine cart--where huge plastic containers held urine gathered from the latrines to use as fertilizer in the countryside. "Liquid gold," he quipped.

For a peasant people, the Chinese have no country dances or country music or contests like Italy, for example has, where each city has its medieval pageant with costumes and contests. Here they only rehash Western dances and music, slowed down to their staid pace. Nor does there seem to be any literary or artistic creativity. The writers are all busy translating and the artists are copying traditional or western art. There's no glamorous set, e.g., theatrical or musical people--only some young people trying to look like Western gang members, with permed hair and girlfriends with make-up and perms. Everyone else wants to look the same--bland, mediocre, banal, unobtrusive. Nowhere is there anything colorful or exotic.

*Orchids grow through spring and summer,  
Their luxuriance so green and lush.  
Secluded and alone, they color the groves in vain,  
their red petals rising from purple stems.  
Ever so slowly, daylight turns to dusk;  
Ever so finely, autumn winds are born.  
The season's flowers have withered and fallen,  
How could one fulfill their sweet intent?  
Ch'en Tzu-and (661-702)  
(Tr. William H. Nienhauser, 89)*

Now that people are putting on their fall jackets, everywhere I see the same dreary blue-gray. Nowhere is there any fashionable or gay dress; no, everyone is as plain and utilitarian as possible. Everyone looks exactly the same--all Mao all the time. There's not even a refugee or minority community here in Nanjing to bring in different ways. A foreigner, then, is a great sight; children point, adults stare. Everything we do creates a crowd. We are the show. If I see anyone fashionable, I know she's a foreigner. Masako, the Japanese woman, dresses up every day in fashionable suits.

Even the birds seem to be plain sparrows; not a scarlet cardinal or bluejay or even a robin to be seen, much less a red-headed woodpecker. Only the little songbirds in cages offer some color and joy. Perhaps that is why people treasure them in lovely cages with silk or velvet covers. It reminds me of the Susan Glaspell story "A Jury of Her Peers." Maybe I'll teach that.

What if we let our peasants--poor whites from Tennessee or poor blacks from Mississippi-- create our culture for us. This dusty dreary monotonous culture might be what they would come up with, as the Chinese have in letting

their peasants create their mainline culture since the "Liberation," as my students have taught me to refer to it.

Part of the bleakness I feel is that people are just ciphers here. They don't mean anything but more mouths to feed, more bodies to house--superfluous--that's how they must feel, trying to find a little niche to survive in. It's really painful to be talking to these students about America, holding up a dream that is beyond them. From the first in our country, everyone was important and valued for what he could contribute. The neat New England farmhouses and villages in the 19th century were beyond anything the people here have known after a culture 4000 years old. It's no wonder that America is the most interesting topic in the world to them. As an American teacher, I automatically attract students and outsiders who want to come in their spare time and find out more about America and possibly have me help them get there.

No wonder the Chinese love their holidays, which they celebrate in a colorful fashion. This weekend we'll be celebrating Moon Festival with a banquet and a trip on the Yangtse River. On Sunday we have to teach our Monday classes, so that Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday we can celebrate "National Day," the founding of the PRC. The Waiban will take us to a mountain in Anhui Province for a one-day trip. It will be a little rest, I hope. Even on days I don't teach people come to see me. I have at least two groups a day. The Chinese often don't come alone; they bring three people with them, so I'm addressing a group. No matter that I have laryngitis; if I can stand up, they don't seem to notice I'm ill. It's making me decide not to answer the door when I'm not well.

My chief comfort is my apartment, now that I have it decorated cheerfully and may sit out on the balcony in the sun; second are the various members of the foreign community--Lynn, Jack, Guillermo, Deirdre, Masako and Jim, though I disagree with him; third are the books through which I escape; fourth are my students. Once I get my VCR back, watching movies will be the fifth. The Party Congress is the only item on TV these days.

10/2/85

I am now feeling better; at least my chest has cleared up and now I have only a bad head cold and no taste buds. Maybe the penicillin helped knock the inflammation. I still don't feel well and am still taking it easy and mostly lying in bed. Yesterday, however, was October 1, National Day, and I went on an all-day outing with the other foreign experts and the Waiban and various dignitaries on several hard-seat buses to Anhui Province, to visit a mountain Buddhist sanctuary and also a "farm production brigade," formerly a commune. The best part of the outing was driving through the countryside where rice and wheat are grown. We could see the rice harvest going on all along the way, and the farm we visited had the rice sheaves laid out on a concrete yard, where a water buffalo was dragging a millstone over it to crush the shells and release the grain. Eventually the rice is spread out over everywhere, even along side the roads, to

crack the shells. I love the countryside much more than the cities. The cities are more or less heaped with debris and litter and squalor, but the countryside is neat and well-cared for. There are little fields everywhere growing lettuce, soybeans, corn, every kind of produce. The rice fields are recognizable by the dikes on which people were squatting. Flocks of ducks and geese forage for rice in the harvested fields. The dikes allow the fields to be flooded into rice paddies. The ducks then forage. In the same fields they plant wheat in the winter. Now the farmers are using the buffalo to plow the fields in preparation for planting wheat. Besides the geese, ducks and water buffalo, we see plump black sows and little pigs, along with the ever present donkeys. I even saw a black and white dog looking after a herd of goats. It gives me a good feeling that here is something the Chinese know how to do well and can succeed at. In fact, the countryside is becoming very prosperous, as we can tell by the nice two-storey brick homes they are building here, which are much nicer than the city dwellings.

The farm we visited has increased production by over 300% since 1979, we were told, and the 35 families now have new brick homes to replace their former straw huts. The home we visited had a courtyard, on one side of which were the living quarters, with three rooms--two bedrooms on either side of a living room. The living room looked like a church, with a buffet as the altar and a clock as the tabernacle, on either side of which was a candle and a vase with flowers. Instead of pictures of saints, the walls were covered with pictures of beautiful babies cut from calendars. Pictures on the wall used to be considered bourgeois; now, however, they have gone to the opposite extreme and every inch of the wall is covered with rosy pictures. Across the courtyard was the kitchen and dining room. In the middle of the yard was a sort of flower garden; to one side was a pig pen and to the other a chicken coop. That seemed to be the arrangement in all the houses.

Jiuhua Shan or Nine Flowers Mountain was named by the poet Li Bai:  
*Looking far ahead from Juijang, /I saw the peaks of Mount Jiuhua  
Emerging from the Heavenly River, /Like nine beautiful lotus flowers.*

The Buddhist monastery, one of the many sacred mountains of China, used to be the largest one in China, with 800 monks. Now they say there are 100, but I bet there aren't that many. What was wonderful were the crowds going there, and the fact that children, who used to be taught to mock religion, were now being shown by their grandparents or by the monks or old ladies at the shrine, how to bow--worship--by joining two hands together and pressing their foreheads to the cushions. I took several pictures of children doing this, and an old lady there was ready to chase me away with a stick for being so irreverent. There were many Chinese tourists there, not just us Westerners. Jack Cuff went with us. On our bus were Jim Friend, his ever-faithful Xu Xin, Jeff and Leslie Buck, Jack, Lynn and I and the Bushes. I have many pictures of this outing.

10/3/85

I feel much better this morning. I took Sudafed to get rid of the head cold and it must have worked. I only brought a bottle of thirty, so I hope I don't have another cold like this.

I've watched several videotapes with friends. Last night we watched *My Bodyguard*. I'm glad I brought films along; they while away the evenings. In the mornings I listen to the VOA and the BBC from 6:30 to 8:30 to keep up on the world news in depth. In fact, the coverage is more complete than on the programs I listened to in Chicago. My *Time* magazine subscription has been coming regularly. I should have changed my Smithsonian and National Geographic subscriptions to come here as well.

10/7/85

I'm still remembering our trip of October 1 to Langya Mountain in the Jiuhua Shan. I loved going out through the countryside and seeing the rice paddies and the water buffalo plowing the newly harvested rice fields in preparation for planting the winter wheat. I also loved seeing the prosperity of the countryside. Fewer people, more greenery, animals, trees, nice brick homes--these are all things I miss here in the city. The fresh air also helped my lungs. The pollution and humidity that are endemic to the city are unhealthy. I found out that the clinic did not give me penicillin, because of fear of an allergic reaction. They wouldn't give it to me even at the Workers' Hospital, but rather another antibiotic.

However, I now have found an alternative to medicine. A wonderful woman Mrs. Mao, came in and took a look at me and said "You don't look as lively as you did when you arrived." So she is teaching me *qi gong*, breathing exercises. She is 63 years old but looks only 50. She does one and a half hours a day of gentle exercise every morning and has shown me how. She comes over and practices breathing exercises with me in the evenings; I feel better after being with her. She teaches English literature and later this fall will go to Asheville, N.C. to teach Chinese culture and language at the University of North Carolina. I am helping her to prepare, mostly by encouraging her to take her husband along. The U. of N.C. will only be giving her \$1000 a month, out of which she has to pay her airfare and her living and traveling expenses. She also has to pay back to Nanda her full salary in American dollars plus something for the general fund, so the university can buy equipment with foreign currency.

"I'm still grateful for everything," she protested, "because years ago none of this would have been possible. I grew up in Shanghai where my mother raised three children on nothing. We couldn't even afford melons in the summertime. Now there are melons and fruit and vegetables in abundance, so no matter how bad things appear there's always the past I remember and that makes me grateful for the present."

*Idle, I enjoy only tranquillity:  
Beyond the fence is wilderness.  
The place being remote, I love all neighbors.*

*My courtyard filled with many nests, I weary of birds' chirping*  
*Lu Kuei-meng*

My undergraduate students are a little disappointing. When I come into class, they are all reading, almost chanting, the lesson aloud, the way they have done all their lives. I think they haven't even looked at the readings at home. When I ask the simplest questions, they are either unable or unwilling to answer, so I have to carry the whole burden of class. They are very attentive, striving to understand what I am saying, but they will not take any chances by expressing themselves or their opinions. The material is probably beyond them. The Ministry of Education claims it is trying to encourage them to speak up and think for themselves, but they can't change the habits of a lifetime in one year. They'll have to start with grade school children, so they can grow up feeling secure about talking out in class. I think it's too late for these college students.

On Sunday I went to an art exhibit in town at the Nanjing Museum with Liu Haiping, a member of the Research Institute. He studied drama at Harvard and has been asked to return for a conference next year. With him was his friend Zhu Muoren, an artist from Yixing, now living in Nanjing. We saw two exhibits--one of contemporary Chinese painting, the other an exhibit of the works of Fu Baoshi, a painter who has been dead since 1965 but whose landscapes are marvelously fresh. We agreed that both exhibits would be given a big play in the West, but here there were only a few people. We met Fu Baoshi's son and daughter, both painters, he in Nanjing, she in Japan. Haiping said Fu Baoshi left a big home to his children here in town where the son lives now, following in his father's footsteps.

Tomorrow I am going to have a calligraphy lesson from Ren Rong, a student at the Nanjing College of Art. He speaks no English, so I'll have to practise my Chinese with him. Lynn is going to join our class. He's going to take us to the Xinhua Shudian (Bookstore) to get the right paper and brushes and then give us a two hour lesson every Tuesday afternoon. If I'm good enough, maybe I can get him to teach me a little landscape painting too. Haiping's friend, hearing I am interested in painting, is coming over next Monday night to give me a demonstration of landscape painting. At last I feel that I am meeting interesting and different Chinese--Haiping, Zhu Muoren, Mrs. Ma--these are the colorful flowers.

Deirdre gave me a lesson in Zodiac signs. She is a dragon and fits the character perfectly--dragons are always spectacular. I am a sheep--they love to graze in a comfortable pasture with plenty of nice food.

10/15

I feel fine at last. After the first month of bronchitis, I was beginning to wonder, but after I went to the Workers' Hospital and began getting the shots of lincomycin hydrochloride, I got well fast.



Last week three of us Lynn, Sara and I went to Wuxi for some R and R. On a huge lake with gardens and lovely modern hotel accommodations, Wuxi is only two and a half hours from here on the train to Shanghai. We went immediately out to Lake Tai, checked into the tourist hotel and began relaxing. We walked around the parks and gardens and sat looking at the lake. We went row boating under bridges and among willows and pavilions. Then we shopped. Every Chinese vacation must include shopping for the local handicrafts. I bought a blue cloisonne bowl that I now have on my dining table with potpourri to give fragrance to my apartment.

About 4:30 we returned to the hotel, showered, washed our hair and lay around until dinner time. Such luxury! The dinner was wonderful--all tourists, but it cost only 5 yuan each (not even \$2). After dinner we attended a concert of Chinese music, including dancing.

We slept wonderfully after that nice day in pure air. Unfortunately the next day a typhoon arrived to prevent us from taking our planned boat ride around Taihu to visit the various islands, so we returned to Nanjing by an earlier train. We now have a nearby R and R place--only 7 yuan away by train.

poem about Lake Tai

On Monday it was still raining and cold and miserable, like winter. After class I stayed in bed almost all day and fought off the last stand of that dreadful cold. I didn't take any medicine; I just let my body suffer the onslaught and fight back, and today I feel wonderful. Maybe my body at last has the key to the Chinese bugs and can knock them out as soon it recognizes them.

Last night (Monday) Zhu Muoren came over and painted a landscape of Huang Shan for me that I'm going to have framed. Today (Tuesday) I had no class, so we rode our bikes over to the Jiangsu Art Gallery to see an exhibition of Chinese paintings just donated by a retired Chinese general. It contains paintings from the late Qing dynasty (the last dynasty that ended in 1911) and some modern twentieth Century Chinese painters. I am learning a lot about Chinese painting. Then this afternoon Lynn and I had our first calligraphy class with Ren Rong, who told us he has two paintings exhibited on the second floor at the Jiangsu Art Gallery, so we are going back on Saturday afternoon to see his Dali-esque oil paintings.

I'm enjoying the extras here. Next Sunday the Waiban is taking us on a one-day trip to Yangzhou, another wonderful shopping place I hear. I'm getting into the spirit now. I've started buying Christmas gifts to send home. I enjoy it here when I am well. The Chinese are so kind and gracious. Having little worldly goods has left them unspoiled and made them concentrate on human relations, at which they are very good. They give us foreign teachers a lift by appreciating us to death. Everyone feels it; that's why there are so many people from so many countries; everyone finds it rewarding to help the Chinese. Even if their government isn't the one we would like, the people deserve all the help we can give them.

poem about fall weather

Mid-October and the weather has gone from hot and humid to cold and humid very rapidly. I am now wearing long underwear! It is so damp inside that I feel cold without a shirt under my sweater or blouse. I bought a wool cardigan that is very warm and will have to look for more winter clothes than I brought. Fortunately China is a textile paradise; if you aren't looking for high fashion, you can find good quality. I have to buy men's sweaters and jackets, though, because the women's sizes are too small.

On October 24 I have been asked to give a slide-lecture. My topic will be "Colonial America" using slides I got in Williamsburg and the South as well as New England. I hope I can get a decent projector by then. The equipment here is abominable and no one knows how to operate it properly. These lectures are jammed with eager students. Jim Friend couldn't believe it when they overflowed the hall for his talk last week. We are all invited to give talks so the students can practice their English. Everyone comes; there's nothing else to do.

10/22

It has been raining steadily for over a week, ever since we came back from Wuxi. It is cold as well, and many people here have colds. I've been fighting one off. I feel like a host to all the new Chinese bacteria. To add to the misery, Russia has sent "the Siberian Express," a cold wave from Siberia, just as we get an arctic cold front in Chicago. I have begun wearing long underwear and more clothes than I wear in the depths of winter in Chicago. Yesterday morning, I had to go to a 7:30 class in the rain, from the south end of the residential campus to the north end of the academic campus, but I just put on all my warm clothes and went out, indifferent to the rain. I'd rather spend the time with the students, helping them and myself escape all this miserable weather. We were studying the Declaration of Independence and spent most of the class talking about "all men are created equal." One boy asked "are women equal to men?" So we had a discussion about that, and one brave student said he did not think so and proceeded to give all the stereotyped ideas about women, so I had a fine time with that. I told them about my experiences of discrimination at Chicago State. I told them about the women faculty's class action suit. They were fascinated. Anything we tell them about America amazes them.

I didn't go with the group to Yangzhou Sunday because the bus ride took seven hours round trip in a drafty, uncomfortable bus. The park there was beautiful, they told me, but walking around in the rain didn't appeal to me. When they returned, Lynn, John and I had Mass at 4 p.m., with a long theological discussion at homily time. After dinner, we watched a tape of *Moscow on the Hudson*, along with Charlie Wilson, an ex-seminarian from a Protestant seminary in Tennessee, who is also teaching English with Amity, the group Jack is with. A lot of religious groups are interested in Nanjing because of Nanjing Theological Seminary--the only Christian seminary in the country, I think. Last week there

was even a group of Italians, including three bishops, who came through and stayed overnight at the Nanjing Hotel. Jack and Guillermo went to meet them, but again, it was raining and cold, so I stayed here and showed *The Razor's Edge* to some others here.

As you can see, there's always something going on here. If it's raining and cold and I don't have to go, I can skip it and stay home. Only class can get me out into the rain now. I'm still trying to get the leftover germs out of my system. I'm trying to take antibiotics through a ten-day cycle. They only give them for 3-day cycles, so I have to keep going back. By the time I feel good again, I stop, whereas I should complete the cycle to sweep out the leftovers and late bloomers.

The ordinary Chinese don't know about germs being airborne; they think people catch colds because they don't wear enough clothes, so they bundle up till they look like they're wearing space suits; meanwhile they hack and spit and spread their germs around. I feel sorry for all the little Chinese children, of whom there are multitudes. How do they resist germs and stand this cold damp weather in their unheated homes? There is no heat all winter long here for the ordinary Chinese, unless they have small coal or charcoal burning stoves, which many have, I assume. But there's no central heating south of the Yellow River. Right behind our building is the Children's Hospital; there is a steady stream of mothers bringing their precious "only child" for some life-saving treatment. At the Workers' Hospital the time I went, I saw a father carrying his son on his back, because the boy was too weak to walk. What if his only child dies in this harsh climate? Can he have another? It might be too late. I hear that in the countryside, if a couple has a girl they are allowed to have a second--hoping for a boy. If I ask a Chinese these questions, they say, "Chinese children have special immunities to stand this." Or if I ask why old men are hauling heavy carts like donkeys, they say the old men have nothing to do and prefer to make a little money by the only kind of work they know to do. They don't want to stay home. If I lived in one unheated room, I'd want to get out and move about too.

There is great interest in or admiration for the military here, to judge from the children who sport the green outfit and cap of the soldier with the red star. Recently some soldiers came to campus for a meeting (compulsory attendance) with the students in the nearby student club. We could hear them shouting all evening. It sounded like a huge pep rally. Later we found out the students were being told about the situation of their war with Viet Nam. Apparently there's some border conflict for which college age youth are being psychologically prepared by these rallies to "do their duty" if war expands. On one hand, there's so much unanimity or conformity here; on the other, the leaders know that conformity doesn't help the Chinese in business, where initiative is needed.