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Bostick Family, Missions

First Baptist Church (Shelby, NC)

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1-22-1934

### Correspondence - Attie Bostick - Jan 22, 1934

Attie T. Bostick

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Kuling, Kiangsi, China.  
Jan. 22nd, 1934.  
(My 50th birthday)

Dear Friend:-

"If wishes were horses all beggars could ride", and "if wishes were letters", you would have had this and other letters ere this. So many times I have thought of it and wanted to write you, but we are nearing the completion of three years of sickness, such sickness has been a great suffering for Dear Flora, while for me it has been a long drawn out season of anxiety, with an almost unbroken string of unsuccessful efforts to relief, which has been an experience for me, almost (if not fully) as hard as sickness itself. Eighteen months ago we came to this glorious mountain district where many people have come and regained health and strength, and also a place where summer conferences are held. Thus we were hoping that in a few months we too would be able to return to our work in health.

While T.B. was suspected, no doctor (of the eight having given attention) is fully persuaded of it, though ever so many examinations have been made. But we know that after her close call with pneumonia she had one relapse after another of pleurisy. Thus oft repeated disappointment, with all the unavoidable noises here, and likely with some other difficulties, her nerves have collapsed. She is especially weak and sits up only about an hour each day, having a poor appetite, though she has eaten sufficient to keep up her weight. She can read almost none, can stand but little talking, and, though ~~as before~~ she still has the same social disposition as in former days, she can have company but seldom and that for only a few minutes at a time. How hard thus to keep up hope and cheer, but for the most part she has kept cheerful and hopeful.

There is no doubt but that my place is right here with her; at least, that is plain to me now, though I was back at Pochow five months last winter. The help we have could not be beaten. We have a faithful and efficient young cook, with a wife that is devoted to Flora and as willing as anyone could be, and has come to know and understand what and how to do things for her in a most splendid way. We also have a trained and experienced German nurse, who takes much of my load. Thus you may wonder what there is for me to do, but there are things that frequently arise where my presence is most necessary.

Building began near where we thought we were fixed for the winter and we had to move. The finding and deciding upon a house was a job that I, only, could attend to. Soon after moving, the servants had a charcoal fire (open) in their tight little room at night. The next A.M. they were late in starting their



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Building began near where we thought we were fixed for the winter and we had to move. The finding and deciding upon a house was a job that I, only, could attend to. Soon after moving, the servants had a charcoal fire (open) in their tight little room at night. The next A.M. they were late in starting their work. I went to investigate and found them all but dead (many do die of this coal gas) and but for immediate help of us here and kind neighbors, they likely would have died. This, even with me here to have the burden of care, was a very hard shock to Flora. They have been slow at getting back to themselves and Flora has had a dragging hard experience following it. But in connection with this, we had an experience that makes one rejoice for the goodness that exists in the hearts of men and women everywhere, though this observation and experience was an abundant surprise and joy to us. Our doctor lives more than a mile away, so I went a quarter of a mile to a doctor who is up here for his health, hoping to get him to either come or send (we had no other servants) for our doctor. In a few seconds after I entered his door, he was on the way back here and his half-grown boy, coming to help if there might be anything he could do. The wife and another half-grown son started in the other direction, and almost immediately after I had gotten back home there were ten Americans, including this doctor and a trained nurse and two cooks on the spot, with a willing heart and a mind to do things, seeing and understanding what to do. Their arrival also meant the arrival of breakfast for three, from each of two homes, with the offer to provide for our dinner and supper that same day. But with their help we had a good cook in the kitchen in time for supper, this cook



staying with us until ours was ready for duty.

This discovery of our neighbors (for only three of the ten had ever been in our home before), was not a full compensation for what we experienced, but I tell you that it went a long way toward taking off the keen edge of disappointment. Thus you see and we saw, "Friends in need are friends indeed". And they are worth more than silver and gold.

With the exception of five months at Pochow, I have been here these eighteen months. Besides trying to keep quietness about the house, encourage to come, look for and receive the few guests that come, and always staying with Flora while guests are with her lest she get overtaxed in talking, which she does with just a tiny bit too much talk, besides the string of other things about the house that fall to me, I take part in services occasionally. The Universal Week of Prayer was observed here and I had the lead of one of those services, besides leading the Christmas service at the Chinese Church. There is an English service Sunday and Wednesday of each week and I try to attend these and lead occasionally. Then there are many matters of real importance that come up at Pochow, which call for my consideration. Thus I have a great deal to do in the way of keeping in touch with things there and this requires many letters. So I am far from idle.

There is much that might be reported in China as to general conditions. The civil war and rebellions, bandits, etc. take up much space in the Chinese papers. But upon the whole there has been quiet in our district for these several years. The bandits have been near enough so that our official has gone to the remote parts of his county and given them battle, and others have caused the city to be very watchful.

Then as to Mission work, the word is heard on all sides that there never was a more opportune time for the spreading of the Gospel. You doubtless have read of the Shantung Revival. This has been wonderful, and it has to a large extent spread into our Interior Mission. There are so many things of interest in connection with this. Some of the worst sins ever heard of have been hidden (and unforgiven) in the minds and hearts of church members, and in some instances in the lives of preachers and church leaders. Many have confessed these and seem greatly blessed. The matter of restitution has been made in many instances. Some of the things that they had gotten wrongfully years back, when they were in our schools; others when they have handled money for the Mission or missionaries; others - and this is the point where more have restored than on any other particular point - have given as much as three months' salaries trying to make up for the "tithe" that they had not given into the Lord's work. In most instances these lives seem to have been blessed, following such awakening and restitution.



Our work at Pochow has been going on in an encouraging way. When we returned from furlough, we brought a new tent that had been contributed to the work. We had one already that had been in use for twenty years. These two tents have been in many districts all over our Pochow field, and those attending these tents (generally three workers with each) on each and every tour, report the best of interest and many that seem eager to find and follow the True Way. This team work is about the most strenuous that I know. Sometimes the actual preaching or witnessing time in a day is from five to ten hours. Besides this tent work, many meetings are and have been held. One each spring and one each fall, at the central station. Then at set times and appointed places, among our twenty out-stations, there are meetings. Besides usual meetings for preaching, our plan of a Bible conference twice a year has been kept up, when some forty gather at the central station for a class meeting lasting about a half month.

We get good and encouraging news from the children. The very bright pictures that come of the two dear little grand daughters do much to keep our home and hearts cheered. And what is more, keep our hearts tied to and drawn toward old home. I wonder if any of you try to guess how badly we want to see them and enjoy