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Death of Hazel Todd

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RECEIVED LOS ANGELES? CALIF
JAN. 26, 1943

China Inland Mission
Liuan, Anhwei, China
December 4, 1941

Dearest Family,- So sorry I haven't written for so long but when you understand the circumstances I'm sure you will forgive me. When I last wrote it was to tell of Hazel's illness. At first we thought it was malaria - a peculiar kind. But later it seemed to be a light case of typhoid or para-typhoid. As soon as we found that neither sulfapyridine nor atebrin did anything to help, we realized it must be typhoid. So we sent for Mrs. Costerus. Yuen Si Chie, the Chinese nurse, did very well in nursing, in fact, did splendidly. When Mrs. Costerus came Hazel seemed much happier to have a close friend as well as an excellent nurse there to care for her. She improved daily so on Saturday Nov. 15 her temperature was normal and remained so on Sunday and Monday. In the morning after her ten o'clock feed (she was on a 2-hour schedule of liquid diet from 6 A.M. to 8 P.M.) Mrs. Costerus smilingly told Hazel to have a wee nap while she went down to wash up Hazel's dishes. We were keeping all Hazel's dishes separate in case of infection. About five minutes later Mrs. Costerus and I were talking at the foot of the stair when we heard a peculiar noise from upstairs. Mrs. Costerus rushed upstairs and I followed and found Hazel having a heart attack. She was already unconscious. Mrs. Costerus sent me rushing for hot water bottles and boiling water. Fortunately we had some water almost boiling so it didn't take long. Mrs. Costerus gave 2 injections and did everything in the treatment for such attacks working swiftly and efficiently under great pressure but all to no avail. In less than ten minutes she was gone,- about 11 A.M. We were simply stunned. It couldn't be. She seemed so bright and cheery just a few minutes before. She talked of what she would do as soon as she was well. The first thing she planned to do was to write to her Mother. It was all so sudden we were simply numb. I sent at once for the deacons but they didn't arrive till nearly 2 P.M. We also tried to wire Shanghai and to Mr. Costerus in Liuan. But there was a great deal of difficulty about sending the wires as they were moving the office at the time. Not until Tuesday morning could we get them off. The wire to Liuan was garbled so it said Miss Costerus died. Of course Mr. Costerus was worried so came without waiting for ~~dinner~~ dinner though it was on the table. He came so fast, walking of course, that he got a huge blister nearly as big as my palm. It got infected so he had to stay over a few days for which Mrs. Costerus and I were thankful.

It was painful to have to make all the funeral arrangements. We decided her family would like it if the coffin were a good one so we paid \$500. for it. The rest of the expenses were not much as prices go now, as we did not want the funeral to be elaborate. According to Chinese custom a funeral is a time for much feasting and even marry-making. We abhorred the thought of such a procedure so had everything as simple as possible. The coffin was brought Monday evening. It was one which old Deacon Teng had bought for himself a dozen years ago, a heavy one of wood from Kiangsi. The Chinese custom of encoffining was followed. Mrs. Costerus and Yuen Si Chie had done the laying out soon after her death as Si Chie came in at once as soon as she heard. All afternoon the Christians came one by one or in groups weeping and mourning, going upstairs to weep by the bed. She was put in the coffin on top of the thick cotton mattress pad which had been folded. A blanket and the pretty wool quilt she liked was put on top with a white silk handkerchief over her face. We all wept and wept while this was being done. Afterward the Christians sang a hymn and then Teng Mao Sheng prayed a lovely comforting prayer. Neither Mrs. Costerus nor I slept that night though we went to bed rather early. The next day, to keep our minds occupied, we started putting all her things away. Knowing the thieving servants we had we knew it was necessary if things were not to disappear. I didn't tell you that 4 days before Hazel died the cook walked out without a word of warning,- just a blunt announcement that she was leaving the next morning. And off she went leaving me with a sick person and a guest. Our girl took over the cooking but she is an epileptic

Ruth
Dec. 4, 1941

and is simply filthy. I couldn't bear to go into the kitchen but was so distraught and so busy I hadn't time to clean up the kitchen and do the cooking myself. So we just suffered it. Everything tasted like ashes anyway so what difference did it make. Both the cook and the girl took advantage of the situation and stole charcoal, big piles of wood, cooked food, fruit, oh, anything I left out for an hour. All the food supplies I had had locked up and doled out by the teaspoonful or they would have all been gone.

On Wednesday morning Mr. Costerus arrived. We decided to have the funeral that afternoon. The deacons had bought white cloth for the Christians to wear at the funeral, long pieces worn over the shoulder and tied across the body at the hip. It is the custom to give the cloth to everyone at the funeral. But if we started to do that the whole city would come and there would no doubt be a riot, a real one. So we knew it would be in accord with Hazel's wishes to have the cloth used at the funeral and then given to the church to be used at subsequent funerals. The church used to have lots of white cloth just for funerals but it was all stolen during the Jap. fighting or afterward. All the Sunday School children were given small bits of cloth about a foot square which they wore at the shoulder. These they were allowed to keep. Yuen Si Chie and several others of the church young people made some very pretty wreaths of evergreen. They made some paper flowers and used them and chrysanthemums on the wreaths which were hung on the coffin. Mr. Costerus and Teng Mao Sheng presided at the funeral. Both paid loving tribute to Hazel's life and love for the Lord. It was touching to hear Teng Mao Sheng tell of the pitiful conditions under which Hazel lived when she first returned to Shucheng 2 years ago. She lived in the ruins without even a door for the first few days. She surely did not spare herself, truly giving herself for the Lord's work, not counting her life dear unto herself.

When the men started to carry the coffin out I thought I couldn't bear it. It seemed so terribly final. Of course I knew she was rejoicing in the presence of the Lord but it didn't seem real that she really was gone. I know now what it means to be bowed by grief. We had decided that since the church has no cemetery and it is against the law for foreigners to buy land (though I'm sure arrangements could have been made had it really been necessary) we would use a corner of the garden. So Hazel is resting under a big spreading tree in the garden she loved. We plan to have that corner enclosed with a pretty wall of brick and tiles made with a sort of open work of a pattern in tiles so one can see through. The Chinese make very attractive walls like that. I plan to plant a border of flowers around the wall inside and have turf put over the grave itself, surrounding it with a border of stones. Between that and the flower border we will have a path covered with sand to keep down the weeds and keep it nice. I think her family would like to know it is well kept. The church plan to put up a stone over the grave. We have gone through all Hazel's things sending home what we think her family would like. Some other things which she said she was planning to give to some of her friends we set aside for them and added some more things we feel sure she would have approved. Some of her household things Mrs. Costerus and I have bought and some we are sending to Mel and Mary Beth Suttle who are short of such things. It has taken quite some time to make an inventory of everything and get everything packed up.

No word has come through from Shanghai but I'm sure they will approve my leaving for a few weeks of change. So I'm going to CYK to Margaret to spend Christmas and New Year returning soon after. I hope by that time to hear from Shanghai in regard to a fellow worker. Mrs. Costerus and I left by chair coming here in 2 days arriving on Tuesday. We brought 2 boxes of stores for the Steeds so had our things and theirs sent by barrows. We were elated to see our stores from Hofei arrive on Saturday after almost despairing of their getting through. As I was almost out of sugar I'm glad to have 90 pounds safely in our storeroom. Traveling in the winter with woolens means taking a trunk as a small suitcase can't hold everything hence the need for barrows. I'm waiting for them to arrive. As soon as they come I can leave by boat for CYK. I've not had a single home letter for over 3 months. Here's hoping! Lots of love, Ruth.

China Inland Mission

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LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA



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INLAND, LOS ANGELES

November 26, 1941

Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Todd,
Box 672, R.R. 2,
Strathmore, Calif.

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Todd:

As Acting Secretary in Mr. Canfield's place for a few months, it is my sad duty to convey to you news which has just reached us by air mail from our main center, Philadelphia, of the death on the 17th of November from typhus fever of Miss Hazel Todd. Accept our very deep sympathy and be assured of our prayerful remembrance.

Evidently the news took some time to reach Shanghai for it was a week later that the cable was sent from Shanghai to our Mission center in Philadelphia, and up to the present, this is the only news we have received of the illness and death of Miss Todd. We can only conclude that it must have been a sudden illness, and as is the case in some instances with typhus fever, the crisis comes within the first few days.

My wife and I knew Hazel and met her in Shanghai during our years of service at that center. Her work was greatly appreciated, and I can assure you that she will be deeply missed in our Mission. As soon as further news of the circumstances of her Home-call comes, we will communicate again with you.

Much prayer has been offered for the health of our workers on the field. Typhus fever seems to be becoming more prevalent. Only recently we loss an Assistant Superintendent, Mr. Arnold Strange, in Shensi province and other workers have been down with this dread disease.

We sorrow with you in the news that has come but thank God we do not sorrow as those that have no hope, but through our tears we can rejoice to know that God's servant is in His immediate presence where there is fullness of joy and at His right hand there is pleasure forever more.

Yours in the hope of Christ's return,

Herbert M. Griffin

Memorial Rite Held For Valley Missionary

STRATHMORE (Tulare Co.), Dec. 31.—A memorial service for Miss Hazel Todd was held in St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church here with the pastor, Rev. Paul Prichard, in charge.

Miss Todd, a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Todd of this district, died in China November 17th of typhus fever while doing missionary work in connection with the China Inland Mission. She had been a missionary for twenty one years.

Miss Todd took a special course of training at the Bible Institute in Los Angeles immediately after her graduation from high school.

She visited her parents here in 1927 and 1937 on furloughs, sailing from San Francisco October 17, 1938, on her last trip to China.

Rev. Prichard was assisted by Rev. Samuel Harris of Whittier, who was pastor here during Miss Todd's girlhood, and by Rev. Charles Barkman, pastor of the Lindsay Presbyterian Church.

Letters were read from Rev. J. Stanley Roberts, a former pastor, from the China Inland Mission Board and from a former coworker of Miss Todd in China.

All praised the high courage, great devotion and kindly deeds of Miss Todd.

Four brothers, Evan, George, Charles and Gordon Todd, and their wives and families as well as a sister, Mrs. Alice Chase and her family, were with their father and mother in the Todd pew during the services.

Two sisters, Mrs. Isabelle Hornbuckle of Pasadena and Miss Winifred Todd, were unable to attend.

STRATHMORE WOMAN DIES AT CHINA MISSION

1941.

STRATHMORE, Nov. 29.—Miss Hazel Todd, former resident of this district who for the past 21 years has served as a missionary in China, died November 17 in Shucheng, Anhwei Province, from typhus fever according to word received yesterday afternoon by her parents, Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Todd of Strathmore.

Because of disrupted communications in war-torn China, it was seven days before word of her death in the interior province reached Shanghai headquarters of the China Inland Mission board, under which Miss Todd had served. The news was then cabled to the United States headquarters of the mission board in Philadelphia and relayed to her parents here.

No details of her death other than that it was the result of typhus fever, were received.

Born in Minnesota 48 years ago, Miss Todd came with her parents to California in 1909, living in Sierra Madre until 1911, when the family moved to Strathmore. She attended the Porterville Union high school and graduated from the Bible Institute in Los Angeles.

In 1920, Miss Todd went to China as a missionary for the China Inland Mission, serving first in Hunan Province. For the past 21 years, she had devoted her time to that service, with the exception of three years spent on furlough at various times in the United States. Her last visit to her home here was in 1938.

Besides her parents, Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Todd of the Strathmore district, Miss Todd is survived by four brothers, Evan and Gordon Todd of Lindsay, Charley Todd of Terra Bella, and George Todd of Visalia; and by three sisters, Mrs. Isabelle Hornbuckle of Pasadena, Mrs. Ed Chase of Angels Camp, and Miss Winifred Todd of Strathmore.

MISSIONARY WHO DIED IN CHINA HONORED

Porterville Recorder, 1941.

STRATHMORE, Dec. 29.—A memorial service for Miss Hazel Todd, who died in China of typhus fever November 17 was held in St. Andrews Presbyterian church, in Strathmore Sunday afternoon, December 28.

Miss Todd, first-born child of Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Todd, pioneer citrus ranchers of this district, went to China as a missionary with the China Inland Mission in 1920. Two furloughs had been spent at home, one in 1927 and one in 1937. She last sailed from San Francisco, October 17, 1938.

Rev. Paul Prichard had charge of the service assisted by Rev. Samuel Harris of Whittier, pastor of St. Andrews in 1920 and by Rev. Charles Barkman of the Lindsay Presbyterian church.

Mrs. C. W. Bouldin and Mrs. J. R. Fillmore sang favorite hymns of Miss Todd. Letters were read from Rev. J. Stanley Roberts, a former pastor here, from both the Philadelphia headquarters and the Los Angeles branch of the China Inland Mission, and from a woman co-worker in China, who is now married and living in Los Angeles.

Present with the father and mother were their sons, Evan, George, Charlie and Gordon with their wives and families, their daughter, Mrs. Alice Chase and family. Mrs. Isabelle Hornbuckle of Pasadena was unable to be present as was Miss Winnifred Todd who is ill.

FORMER LOCAL RESIDENT DIES IN CHINA FROM TYPHUS FEVER AFTER 21 YEARS SERVICE AS MISSIONARY

News of Death of Hazel Todd Takes Seven Days To Reach Shanghai From Station in Interior; Cabled to United States Yesterday

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