

Alisa Morgan and Kate Tello (editors)

*From the Stage of the Pasadena Playhouse to the Theaters of World War II:
The Chinn Letters from the Dr. Fairfax Proudfit Walkup Theatre Collection
(September 3, 1941, to June 6, 1946)*

Shelfmark

California State University, Fullerton (CSUF).

University Archives and Special Collections.

SC 10.

Dr. Fairfax Proudfit Walkup Theatre Collection.

Correspondence.

September 3, 1941, to June 6, 1946.

Fourteen letters (numbered 1 to 14 below).

Introduction

The fourteen letters edited below are part of the “Dr. Fairfax Proudfit Walkup Theatre Collection” that is held in CSUF’s University Archives and Special Collections. This vast collection of 262 volumes and 50 boxes, containing (among other things) letters, drawings, and dolls, was donated to CSUF in 1971. Playright, producer, and costume designer Fairfax Proudfit Walkup was born in Tennessee in 1887, came to California after World War I, served as Dean of Costuming at the Pasadena Playhouse, published *Dressing the Part: A History of Costume for the Theatre* (1938), earned a Ph.D. from the University of Utah (1951), and later became a faculty member in CSUF’s Theater Department. She passed away in California in 1976.

It was perhaps through her activities at the Pasadena Playhouse that Fairfax Proudfit Walkup met David Chinn of San Francisco, a Chinese American who may have been a student of hers. David’s older brother, William G. Chinn (1919-2004), was introduced to her via letter. The letters edited below were written by David (letters 1 and 5) and William (letters 2-4 and 6-14) between September 3, 1941, and June 6, 1946, and addressed to her. These letters represent a small selection of the hundreds of letters written to Fairfax Proudfit Walkup in the years before, during, and after World War II, many of them composed by her “theater kids” while they were stationed with the military both in the U.S. and abroad. After serving in the war, William became a renowned mathematician; David was hospitalized in 1943 (letter 9), but his further fate is unknown. As historical primary sources, these letters give us a behind-the-scenes look at life during World War II, both at home and abroad. They address a wide range of topics, including theater, costuming, literature, movies, education, and translations, as well as military training and tours of duty, and they make reference to a number of significant individuals, including the dancer Jacques Cartier (letter 1), Major General Eugene L. Eubank (letter 8), General George S.

Patton, Jr. (letter 11), German theologian Martin Niemöller (letter 12), and entertainer Frank Sinatra (letter 12).

The letters are in good condition, written in cursive, on everyday-use paper (some sized for letters, some) larger. Only one letter is typewritten (letter 8). In some cases, the envelopes have been preserved (letters 8, 10-12, 14). The transcriptions below preserve the spelling, punctuation, and capitalization of the original letters. Page breaks are indicated by a forward slash (/).

Edition: Letter 1, David Chinn to Fairfax Proudfit Walkup and Paul,¹ September 3, 1941, [no place]

Sept. 3, 1941

Dear Mrs. Walkup & Paul,

So glad you wrote me when you did, for I've been in the process of writing Paul & you ever since he left town. I regretted tremendously that he was unable to get hold of me, but I definitely left word at home for Paul to leave me his phone number. I wasn't able to stay home the times he called, since I was so uncertain of my own time then. More about that later. I didn't know where to reach Paul, since the last time I saw him he said he was "caught in the draft." I'm so glad he's with you. What about his work? This is my last year of / school, thank god! Somehow my mind doesn't function as well now academically speaking, as it used to be do. I was never much of a scholar, only my grades are misleading. This conformity, discipline, etc. gets on my nerves. I want to be free and about doing some creative work. Last May I met a dancer by the name of Jacques Cartier.² He's a solo dancer & has bookings with the Town Hall Series and besides playing in New York three months each year. Have you ever heard of him? Through negotiating for him in obtaining Chinese costumes from a³ actor friend of mine, Wong Hock Sing,⁴ we got to be quite good friends. I told him of my plans to tour the country with a Chinese troupe eventually. He though the mat-/ter over and said it was a splendid idea. He approached the Chinese Relief Committee for us & proposed that they sponsored this project personally. He thinks that Wong is as good as Mei Lan-Fang⁵ was in his way. Wong is a fine artist and a wonderful person. He is so full of unsophisticated charm which is disarming. Especially good is he in at fighting playing plays. Other than a

¹ Identity unknown.

² Jacques Cartier (1907-2001), dancer. See "[Jacques Cartier, Fire Dancer Extraordinaire](#)," *article*, Santa Fe Living Treasures, accessed June 2, 2019.

³ Illegible deletion.

⁴ Wong Ho[c]k Sing (1913-1994), opera artist and actor. See Roger Daniels, *Asian America: Chinese and Japanese in the United States since 1850* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1988), photograph (following page 174).

⁵ Mei Lanfang (1894-1961), Chinese opera artist. See Joshua Goldstein, "Mei Lanfang and the Nationalization of Peking Opera, 1912-1930," *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique* 7, no. 2 (2009): 377-420.

beautiful stylization & technique he's arty to the point of being almost artless. I'm enclosing a photo of him that he took of himself (you see, he's something of a photographer as well) that you may see for yourself. I've no doubt that he would win an western audience over easily if he remains himself. I must see to it that he does that for that is more important than every-/[thing] else in the world, don't you think, Paul? So far this much has been planned. We are to go to China to recruit a troupe of about sixteen people⁶ besides ourselves I'm to be official interpreter and Art Director. Anna May Wong⁷ has been approached as commentator before the curtain. We shall have special costumes, and furnitures, & curtain made. We plan to have four half-hour acts an evening. Two members of the committee have flown here to see Wong & they have approved. All that remains is personal contact with a Mrs Wine,⁸ sister to Sec't Stall, info has been delayed by her child's death. Isn't all this too wonderful for words? Think of what it would mean for all concerned f from / every angle. What a Cinderella story it would prove to be! It would be the climax to my meeting with people like you two, and Jacques Cartier plus many others. How fortunate I'm in the way of friends! What a millionaire I am! Keep your fingers crossed for me, for then you might hear more about Wong Hock Sing & Chen Shih-Chi (yours truly glamorized!) What fun I we can have together then when I can be host to you who have been so kind & encouraging. Suppose you shake the fortune telling sticks⁹ for me & wish hard while you do it. Wish I was doing something good like John,¹⁰ but if this project materialized I would be doing my job. / Who does Elizabeth Fairfax¹¹ look like? I hope, like Granny, for we need more like her in this dark age. You must have Paul write me soon. You see, I don't think he can regret our not meeting last time more than I do. I was busy running about negotiating this project. Best regards to all.

Yours ever, David

*Edition: Letter 2, William Chinn to Fairfax Proudfit Walkup,
October 1, 1942, [no place]*

October 1, 1942

Dear Mrs. Walkup

My brother David assured me I shall find a smile and a welcome at your home if I should happen to be at the vicinity of Pasadena. Somehow or another, I have managed to "come into possession" of a pass for Los Angeles this weekend and I

⁶ Illegible deletion.

⁷ Anna May Wong (1905-1961), actress. See *Anthony B. Chan, Perpetually Cool: The Many Lives of Anna May Wong (1905-1961)* (Lanham, Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, 2003).

⁸ Identity unknown.

⁹ Items used in a Chinese practice to predict the future.

¹⁰ Presumably John Proudfit Williamson (1912-1970), Fairfax Proudfit Walkup's son.

¹¹ Identity unknown.

should like to drop in for a short visit perhaps mainly to find that much rumored smile. This is on awfully short notice, I understand; I would have notified you much sooner. Passes are uncertain.

Sincerely, William Chinn

Edition: Letter 3, William Chinn to Fairfax Proudfit Walkup, October 7, 1942, [no place]

Oct. 7, 1942

Dear Mrs. Walkup

In accordance with all rulings of etiquette. I should have written you a good deal sooner, but etiquette is such a frightfully formal thing and at times so inhibits our true expression! Apart from the idea that this is in accordance with etiquette, I do want to thank you and to tell you how much I appreciate your gracious hospitality. So much so, I have been talking hardly of anything else. In my letters of the last few days. / But I don't suppose being even as engrossed tho does forgive me from the unspeakable faux-pas! Just the same, however, whether I have made my myself an outcast in your domains, I already know where your key is kept; and you can no more ban me from your house than you can expect to tell ALL who now know, where you are changing the hiding place for the key. One thing I want to let you know particularly well; yours will always appeal more as a home than as a house to me. / I shall look forward to the time when I can again invade the sanctity of 369 California Terrace¹² to settle within the big swivel chair, and to pour over forgotten lore. I thank you again Mrs. Walkup, it was indeed a pleasure!

Most Sincerely, Bill

P.S. Please forgive mistakes and printing.

Edition: Letter 4, William Chinn to Fairfax Proudfit Walkup, November 5, 1942, Indio, California [Camp Young Desert Training Center]¹³

November 5, 1942

Dear Mrs. Walkup -

I have just returned from a two-weeks furlough home and am sending you two costumes David asked me to bring you. I have am going to post the package instead because I want to en lighten my baggage before I return to Young from Indio - nothing else meant. I have with me also the copy of Li Wa¹⁴ which I

¹² The house at 369 California Terrace, Pasadena, California 91105, was built in 1924 and still standing at the time this edition was completed (2019).

¹³ The letterhead suggests that William Chinn was writing this letter from Camp Young Desert Training Center in Indio, California, which, at that time (World War II), served to prepare U.S. American troops for fighting under desert conditions.

¹⁴ Presumably an adaptation of *The Tale of Li Wa*, a historical Chinese text. See Glen Dudbridge, *The Tale of Li Wa: Study and Critical Edition of a Chinese Story from the Ninth Century* (London: Ithaca Press, 1983).

understand, is your “brain baby.” I shall return this script in person for reasons which I shall set forth here on. I am expected to be in Los Angeles by Monday, and shall look forward / to a short visit whenever the first opportunity permits. The visit is one of the reasons for insisting that I deliver the script in person. Another reason is that I did not intend to return the script immediately because after its reading en traine, I thought it would be really nice if I can send it to one of my friends in San Francisco for a quick Brouse [sic] and I but first, I must obtain your permission. Hence, necessitating a visit if I were to even foster the hopes of “talking you into” parting with Li Wa again. So near yet so far! I am writing with a / quaking hand which comes from contending with luggage when luggage never has been my forte. Please pardon. And so, until I see you again, I shall bid you Aufwiedersehen¹⁵ which is a redundance.

Aufwiedersehen, Bill Chinn

*Edition: Letter 5, David Chinn to Fairfax Proudfit Walkup,
November 24, 1942, [no place; based on content, presumably San Francisco, California]*

November 24, 1942

Dear Fairfax,

Just happened to drop by The golden Star Radio Co.¹⁶ Sunday & so I went in to see if they may have any records since I inquired last. Luck upon luck, a new shipment of records just came in, they are so appropriate too you know, Fairfax. I often wondered whether you have a charmed life or not. Things just happen to you! The one numbered #56036AB¹⁷ is the only one left. 56036A can be used for the chattering effect, 56036B for love or that garden scene. If you use it so, then you might send the one I left you to the [illegible]. Use your own discretion about the matter. / No. #1019¹⁸ is good for the wedding scene. It is most appropriate. No. #1020¹⁹ should be used for the fighting scene very easily. It is a song of victory. Have you seen Bill yet? He is staying at the U.C.L.A. attending meteorology school as an aviation cadet. He lives at the Hotel Claremont.²⁰ He brought the script & some costumes with him. Hope you can use them the latter. The blue outfit is for an traditional scholar. The red robe is a modern man’s outfit. Saw Walter²¹ before he left for sea. Entertained him at a night club. Have heard nothing from the draft board yet . still keeping my fingers crossed. Love to Paul & the rest.

¹⁵ “Aufwiedersehen,” German term for “good bye,” or literally, “until [we] meet again.”

¹⁶ The Golden Star Radio Co., radio shop/recording studio in San Francisco, California.

¹⁷ Unidentified record.

¹⁸ Unidentified record.

¹⁹ Unidentified record.

²⁰ Presumably the Claremont Hotel (established 1939), 1044 Tiverton Ave, Westwood Village/Los Angeles, California 90024; still operational at the time this edition was completed (2019).

²¹ Identity unknown.

Dave

Let me hear from you soon

*Edition: Letter 6, William Chinn to Fairfax Proudfit Walkup,
December 9, 1942, [no place; based on content, presumably Los Angeles, California]*

December 9, 1942

Dear Fairfax,

I have moved into the Glendon Apts²², 1070 (?) Glendon [Ave.], but my address will be AAFTD²³ UCLA²⁴-Class 5. I'm not sure I can get into Pasadena Saturday because the class is slated for something during the weekend. However, I shall give you more definite word this week end.

Most Sincerely, Bill

*Edition: Letter 7, William Chinn to Fairfax Proudfit Walkup,
May 23, 1943, [no place; based on content, presumably Spokane, Washington]*

May 23, 1943

Dearest Fax,

All this time has passed and I have not written, but what can I say? It is as a person who has already decided to plea guilty - of course guilt is his only plea. Not much difference from the parable of the lost coin,²⁵ I do miss you, Fax - both you and Harry;²⁶ and I can honestly say I lived in your house - lived, as perhaps Yutang²⁷ would have it. Since my transfer to Fresno, I've moved once to Salt Lake City for a 3-days stay and west again to Spokane. Friday marked my arrival and I had been doing nothing in particular. I shall start on my duties tomorrow as orderly to some general - really a houseboy's duties. It will be novel experience, and because of its novelty, shall no doubt prove no interest-/ing. It may seem shameful that I do not try to direct my efforts into some field more to my forte, but I had tried in meteorology, and after all, assignments are not altogether to my discretion. It didn't seem to take long to turn a section leader in dynamical meteorology into a houseboy, does it? but I suppose the tides of fortune sweep us in war even as in peace, don't they? Speaking of sweeping and

²² Presumably Glendon Manor (established 1929), 1070 Glendon Ave., Westwood Village/Los Angeles, California 90024; since demolished.

²³ AAFTD, Army Air Forces Training Division.

²⁴ University of California, Los Angeles.

²⁵ *The Holy Bible*, Luke 15:8-10.

²⁶ Identity unknown. Perhaps a reference to Fairfax Proudfit Walkup's sister-in-law, Harriet Louisa Osborn Proudfit (1890-1963), married (1922) to Lucas Proudfit (1895-1932), Fairfax Proudfit Walkup's brother.

²⁷ Presumably Lin Yutang (1895-1976), Chinese philosopher. See Rain Yang Liu, "Lin Yutang: Astride the Cultures of East and West," in Carol Hamrin and Stacey Bieler, eds., *Salt and Light: More Lives of Faith That Shaped Modern China* (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2011), 158-175.

of war and peace, Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace*²⁸ swept me for all the few pages I turned this afternoon. I had decided to read it, but somehow had convinced myself to subside to a less dynamical mood for the moment, and I have, in end, withdrawn *How Green Was My Valley*.²⁹ This post library has quite a few nice books I had / been forevermore promising myself to the treat. You remember shortly before my induction, I was doing work as a student and such luxuries I'd always postponed for the holidays. You will remember too, there weren't the usual holidays and hence I was caught short. This way at least, my present assignment may be a blessing. & Spokane, with its verdant environs and calm atmosphere attracts me as some sort of a rest haven. How I shall feel after I assume duties, will of course be due its influence and may be another story. Don't you feel the health-inviting-ness in these evergreens though? But this invigorating stimulus is quite different from the laziness in the spreading Magnolias down South - and to be satisfied, one really must have both. Sometimes the hustling-bustling activities in the North is / over-emphasized, and one needs to turn to the passive scene for nourishment. It is often the rest that does the building for quite the action is so much accredited, isn't it? But now, I'm really being a very poor talker allowing myself to slip from the one thing to the and other; still, there isn't so much real difference in the two, is there? And the trees are but symbolic of their regional characteristics. How are you nowadays tearing away life and limb? Is "short" Dorothy³⁰ still on her high horse? you can spot her anywhere, can't you? If you should come across her again, my regards - also my invitation to come and give these Washington firs competition? Have you heard from Frances lately?³¹ Regards to you two and Paul.

Affectionately, Bill

P.S. Harriet³², DON'T TRY TO SPIT IN THE MAJOR'S FACE!

*Edition: Letter 8, William Chinn to Fairfax Proudfit Walkup, September 27, 1943, [no place; based on envelope, Fort George Wright, Washington] [typewritten]*³³

27 September 1943

²⁸ Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910), *War and Peace*, Russian novel, serialized 1865-1867, published 1869.

²⁹ Richard Llewellyn (1906-1983), *How Green Was My Valley*, Welsh novel, published 1939.

³⁰ Identity unknown.

³¹ Identity unknown.

³² Presumably Fairfax Proudfit Walkup's sister-in-law, Harriet Louisa Osborn Proudfit (1890-1963), married (1922) to Lucas Proudfit (1895-1932), Fairfax Proudfit Walkup's brother.

³³ This letter's envelope is preserved: return address: Pfc. William Chinn, 39085412, Hq. sq., II B. C., Ft. Geo. Wright, Washington; addressed to: Mrs. Fairfax Walkup, 369 California Terrace, Pasadena, 2, California; post mark: Spokane, Wash., Sep 28, 1943, 11 AM; includes stamp "Buy War Savings: Bonds and Stamps."

Dearest Fax:

Just imagine! I am a full day late answering your most adorable letter, but I am sure you will forgive me. I can offer you no excuse whatsoever; perhaps it was just a no-'count-ness that got into last night, but the fact remains that I haven't done anything any way to let you know I heard from you, and so, even a no-'count-ness in a person will not be ample excuse, I might say. I was quite, quite glad you gave me Paul's address. Two quite's: one for his address alone, and one for having the address coincident to the address of a very close friend of mine. All the time I have been writing this friend, I had no idea Paul was with him. I just dashed off a short note telling him so. I'm afraid I had to be rather short because I couldn't hope to be as flightily chatty as you in yours; and, being so horribly, horribly discouraged, I couldn't bear make the attempt. In all your gossipy chattiness (goodness such adjectives!), Fax, you bring on sweet reminiscence, and I had to push your heavy black leather BACK into the library to preserve this same reminiscence. Just rest assured, Fax, when I can jump hither, thither about Los Angeles again, you are BOUND to see me at 369; I know where the key is, and shall hold no reserve. It is a promise. 369 seems to be a mystic set of numbers indeed; Especially to someone who dwells into the mathematics of things as much as I claim to. be The number, three always has an appeal, and this was repeatedly emphasized in 369 as a multiple of three and the number sequence 123. When I specified the mystic appeal of 3, I am resting more or-less on how man has often allowed his unconscious slip into the number without seeming effort. Such statements as "there'll always be a third time," and "the Trinity" and the use of three in the normal run as a count to get ready, get set, go all vouch for its frequency. Perhaps it is because we are living in a space of three dimensions; but I'm afraid this is becoming too boringly technical. We better say three is a mystic numbers and let it stand all the more mystic, oughtn't we? I didn't think Claudia³⁴ was as good as I had expected. Of course, there wasn't much of a subject to build on, but my disappointment wasn't so much in the plot; that is just a question one must take up with the author. I thought that the acting was very much exaggerated - particularly on the male part. It seemed to me he was more occupied in the endeavor to make this / his vehicle than he was to make a true success of the play by enacting faithfully too the demands of the character. I wonder whether you can agree with me; do you suppose it the really good actor should be so much an interpreter of the role that he might put in his own personality in addition to the one he is portraying? or are you demanding as I am demanding, that he must be so good, he must forget his own individualism in faithfulness to his role? I am insisting that the individual's as is expected of the actor to retain it. Such roles as of the nature. I suppose you know

³⁴ Presumably *Claudia*, film (comedy), directed by Edmund Goulding (1943; 20th Century Foxed), starring Dorothy McGuire and Robert Young; based on Rose Franken (1895-1988), *Claudia*, play/Broadway hit (1941).

what I'm trying to say so awkwardly; guess the thoughts aren't all too organized in my mind. But now Yes, I was with the Forrests³⁵ and after them the Eubanks. Gen E.³⁶ and family have been splendid all along, but I am now trying to get back into the cadets, and am afraid I must leave them. He got me a re-check (which the Maj. Refused, remember?), and I was found to be correctible perfectly when my eyes were dilated. And I missed school all this time over nothing! But I'm closing now to catch the mail, and in my rush, will have to leave some more wonderful things the Maj. did to me. In my haste, though, I might squeeze in this li'l morsel. You remember that I was established at the school as as Section leader on dynamical met. (that is, I was one of those trying to pound the stuff into some of the others not having too on average). but when I left, that fellow (whom you wanted to spit at, remember?) not gave me an efficiency rating of satisfactory which is subsequent to excellent, superior, and very satisfactory, and which, I might say, is the army polite army way of saying, poor, but passing. This incidentally, mars my service record of a string of excellents, and is most incompatible with the letters of reference the profs have furnished me. However, this time, I am applying with an indorsement of the commanding general, and, perhaps, this will help smooth things out a little. Still, there are the rumours that these courses are to be discontinued all over, and, if so, I'd simply be out of luck. Hope not, though. And so, abruptly, but with all my heart, I close with my fond Love, Bill

P.S. What mischief is Harriet up to her necks in these few days.

*Edition: Letter 9, William Chinn to Fairfax Proudfit Walkup,
November 8, 1943, [no place]*

8 November 1943

Dearest Fax,

I'm afraid we have both lost Dave now. I'm rushing home tonite by way of Caldwell,³⁷ Winnemucca,³⁸ Reno, Sacramento which promises to get me there by within 24 hours. As yet, I have no idea what happened or how all I know is, He went sometime last Friday in a hospital. If I can remember to do so, I shall most assuredly write you from 'Frisco.³⁹ Please forgive this hasty appearance.

Love ever, Bill

³⁵ Identity unknown.

³⁶ Presumably Major General Eugene L. Eubank (1892-1997).

³⁷ Presumably Caldwell, Idaho.

³⁸ Winnemucca, Nevada.

³⁹ San Francisco, California.

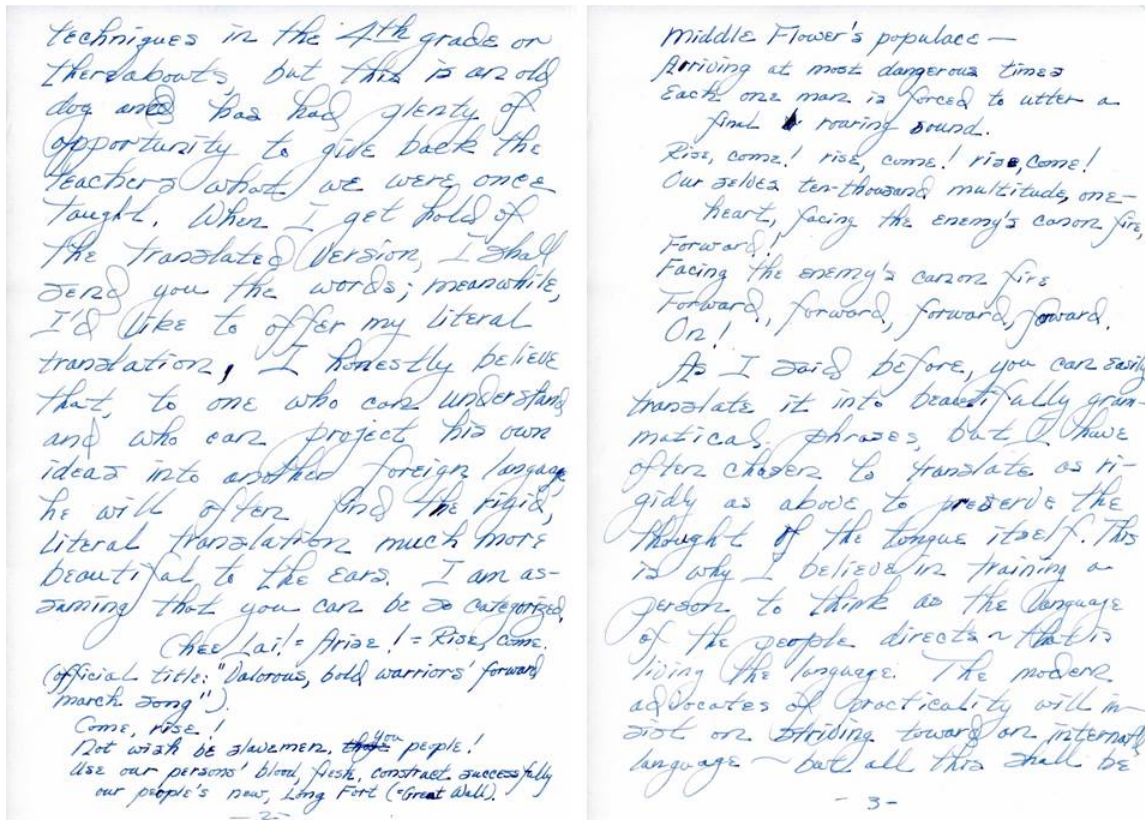


Figure 1: Letter 10, William Chinn to Fairfax Proudfit Walkup, June 29, 1944, Chico, California, pages 2 and 3 (featuring "Chee Lai"/"Arise" (March of the Volunteers)).

Edition: Letter 10, William Chinn to Fairfax Proudfit Walkup,
 June 29, 1944, Chico, California⁴⁰

29 June 1944

Dearest Fax:

I've thought of writing often but all Lazy Bill does about writing is think about doing so - once in a while, he does get out a letter or two and feels quite, quite proud - as if he had done something substantial toward the war! I was on such a dangerous trend once or twice the last two weeks, but I thought that I'd like to get hold of the promised music to the famous Chee Lai.⁴¹ First; it was indeed a promise and most solemnly made. Here is finally the completion of fulfillment rather, of the promise. You must pardon my amateurish attempt at copying these notes. To be sure we've been taught such / techniques in the 4th grade or thereabouts but this is an old dog and has plenty of opportunity to give back the

⁴⁰ This letter's envelope is preserved: return address: Lt. Wm. G. Chinn, CAAF, Chico, California; addressed to: Mrs. Fairfax Walkup, 369 California Terrace, Pasadena, 2, California; post mark: Chico, Calif., June 30, 1944, 10:30 AM; includes one eight-cent Air Mail stamp featuring an airplane.

⁴¹ "Chee Lai"/"Arise" (March of the Volunteers), Chinese national anthem (provisional 1949, official 1982), lyrics by Tian Han (1934), music by Nie Err (1935).

teachers what we were once taught. When I get hold of the translated version, I shall send you the words; meanwhile, I'd like to offer my literal translation, I honestly believe that, to one who can understand and who can project his own ideas into another foreign language, he will often find the rigid, literal translation much more beautiful to the ears. I am assuming that you can be so categorized.⁴²

Chee Lai! = Arise! = Rise, come.
 (official title: "Valorous, bold warriors' forward
 March song")
 Come, rise!
 Not wish be slavemen, those you people!
 Use our persons' blood, flesh, construct successfully
 our people's new, Long Fort (= Great Wall). /
 Middle Flower's populace -
 Arriving at most dangerous times
 Each one man is forced to utter a
 final roaring sound.
 Rise, come! rise, come! rise, come!
 Our selves ten-thousand multitude, one-
 heart, facing the enemy's canon [sic] fire
 Forward!
 Facing the enemy's canon [sic] fire
 Forward, forward, forward, forward.
 On!

As I said before, you can easily translate it into beautifully grammatical phrases, but I have often chosen to translate as rigidly as above to preserve the thought of the tongue itself. This is why I believe in training a person to think as the language of the people directs - that is living the language. The modern advocates of practicality will insist on striving toward an internat[ion]al language - but all this shall be / accomplished at the expense of richness. in thoughts. In a sense, it is comparable to the request that all mathematical operations be reduced to addition alone because one cannot grasp calculus; calculus is itself fundamental an additive process, after all. I can never forget commissioning day; Fax when my friends gathered at your home. Don't think I can say exactly how I feel; that tea in itself so significantly opened 369 to my friends that I found it difficult to leave L.A. vicinity. After such a series of wonderful days down Southern California, I'm afraid I am have become rather spoiled and hence find Chico a sort of ghost town (with lots of people in it). As I say, Chico is by no means a small, small town; but I s'pose / it might as well be so if you don't know people there. We no longer have to ask anyone permission to step out of the post gates as we had to as enlisted men, but we find ourselves staying in the post nite after nite all the same - it's strange how things can turn out sometimes! but then, this may do us good as it may eventually forced [sic] us to keep on with our studies. For the present, I am trying to clear my

⁴² The translation is edited above with the line breaks of the original letter. Italics added.

correspondence, I received the papers Harrie⁴³ sent home and was delighted to have gotten; I want to tell you how I do appreciate the consideration you* gave me.

*Both of you.

Affectionately, Bill

P.S. What's Paul's address again?

Edition: Letter 11, William Chinn to Fairfax Proudfit Walkup, January 28, 1945, [no place; based on content, presumably Italy]⁴⁴

28 January 1945

Dear Fax,

You will have to excuse this "official"⁴⁵ stationary, but when you're beggar, you can't afford to be chooseys [sic] all too well and when you write on company time with company supplies, you are almost placed on a beggar's status. Probably you will find no need for such an apologetic note, but I feel it almost imperative to exaggerate such trifles that the more horrible crime will not be felt as keenly that is, if things can be seen as a matter of relativity. The more horrible crime in reference is the past negligence to 369 California Terrace, I have just received your Christmas greetings and was well impressed with the verse. Something different than the 1943's "Out of Egypt I sent my son"⁴⁶ and in a less conventional style, though I seem to like this year's the more; can it be my unconscious rebellion for the conventional? Or is the rebellion really consciously felt but more consciously suppressed because I do not dare be as brave outwardly as I believe I would like / to be? I shall let that question dangle in mid-air since I don't honestly have the answer-nor do I think it matters much one way or the other. So much. Since I have been stationed in Italy, I have been going along fairly decently, fairly comfortably and in such conditions wonder whether it is unpatriotic. But one must then determine whether patriotism is measured by simply the burden one bears or by the unnecessary burden one insists on bearing also. That must also remain unanswered for the time. The statement of my conditions there, and whether it is "proper" or "improper" whether it is "patriotic" or "unpatriotic," the fact remains That I am fairly decently settled. In the few months overseas, I have had the opportunity to visit a few places in

⁴³ Identity unknown. Perhaps a reference to Fairfax Proudfit Walkup's sister-in-law, Harriet Louisa Osborn Proudfit (1890-1963), married (1922) to Lucas Proudfit (1895-1932), Fairfax Proudfit Walkup's brother.

⁴⁴ This letter's envelope is preserved: return address: Wm. G. Chinn, 2d Lt. A.c, 0-881250, 1261st AAFBU, RAFD, ATC, APO #396, c/o PM, NYC, NY; addressed to: Mrs. Fairfax Walkup, 369 California Terrace, Pasadena, 2, California; post mark: U.S. Army Postal Service, 771, Jan. 29, 1945; includes two three-cent stamps featuring Thomas Jefferson; "Airmail" written across the envelope in red pencil.

⁴⁵ The letter is actually written on plain stationary.

⁴⁶ See *The Holy Bible*, Matthew 2:15.

North Africa including a tour of Casablanca.⁴⁷ In Italy, I have had the chance to enjoy a few days stay in Rome where I romped [sic] around covering spots like St. Peter's, the / Catacombs and the Sistine Chapel, all of which coverage were not a bit disappointing as sometimes places which have been given a romantic touch are apt to be. The other day Col. Conroy,⁴⁸ my CO. from Indio dropped by for a visit on his way back to the east coast of Italy where the outfit is now stationed and Fax, you can imagine how wonderful it was to see him again after all these months! I guess you have heard me rave about him before, he hasn't changed a single bit! some short day hence I shall try to get East for a visit practically all my buddies from the hospital unit are there yet and it shall be wonderful to talk to them as they had followed Patton⁴⁹ across the desert! Guess I'll stop now Fax and in these days of rationed goods, I guess I'll ask you to share this with Harrie. Best regards to you two.

Love, Bill

*Edition: Letter 12, William Chinn to Fairfax Proudfit Walkup,
July 5, 1945, Naples, Italy⁵⁰*

5 July 1945, Naples

Dearest Fax,

In defense of myself and all that is mine, I insist on defending my address. No woman can curse my address like that and get away with it - lady or no lady! Perhaps if you will try to understand that the 500 series in the APO⁵¹ applies fairly extensively th to the Mediterranean Theatre, that the 1400 series of the Army Air Forces Base Units belong to the European Division, and that 1417 is assigned to Naples and her satellites, in the ATC (Air Transport Command) the flow will come oozing from your gray matter and logic will assume its place / reference my address, Let me warn you, though, to prepare for the first shock when thought starts its functions. While ignorance (ahem) may be likened in some respect to an eclipse, the leading-out process may not be as slow as the transit of the moon across the sun and it is advisable to prepare yourself!!! Anyway, amidst the swarm of insults and injuries (I can hear you sobbing away broken-heartedly even now) I hope I have explained the system out my address

⁴⁷ Casablanca, Morocco.

⁴⁸ Identity unknown.

⁴⁹ U.S. Army General George S. Patton, Jr. (1885-1945) who, in 1942, had supervised the Camp Young Desert Training Center in Indio, California, where William Chinn may have met him; see above (Letter 4).

⁵⁰ This letter's envelope is preserved: return address: Wm G. Chinn, 2nd Lt., A.C., 0-881250, 1417th AAFBU, EURD, ATC, APO# 512, c/o PM, NYC, NY; addressed to: Mrs. Fairfax P. Walkup, 369 California Terrace, Pasadena, 2, California; post mark: U.S. Army Postal Service, 771, Jul 7, 1945, A.P.O.; includes one round two-cent stamp featuring George Washington; six-cent "Airmail" stamp.

⁵¹ APO, Army Post Office.

/ operates on (← please note delightful preposition on tail end). However, let it be said that I have received mail from these here parts addressed something like: "Lt. Chinn - Napoli;" or "Air Terminal-ATC" or . _ or I bet, though the APO boys had a lovely time. How I have marveled why I ever received those sloppily addressed letters - or how! With the understanding that you will be building an addition to the house, I anticipate the need for / expansion - and if you were to retain both front and back gardens, may I suggest that the problem be solved by wrapping up your library and sending some to my home? Make sure, of course, that much talked about swivel chair is on the shipment. Now that we have completely solved the problem, we shall start on a war trophy campaign. So far, I've been so far away from the fight that what I see of war trophy either belongs to some one else or that it's not up to the excitement other war trophies / will induce. As a tragic result - no war trophies. For a while, I held a few Italian troops in ready shipment to your showcases, but have since learned they are to be regarded Allies. It is strange, isn't it, that we will admit an erst-while enemy to allied status with such rapidity - I do not quite understand the philosophy of these peoples whose motto of the earlier days are painted all over the cities' walls: "credere, obbedire, combattere!"⁵² together with the bond-cords and hatchet blade symbol of Fascism; / I am assuming, of course, that, once the hatred of an enemy had been instill [sic] through total indoctrination, the impression left is of more permanency than as conditions seem to prove - merely a matter, as it were of turning the spiget on or off. I am inclined to be a bit more skeptical - especially after instances like Niemoller⁵³ have been revealed who have been "laughed" in our faces for having believed he was anti-Nazi" when all he objected to was a little / personal inconvenience. But I was talking of war trophies. Since, I cannot add to you proposed showcase, with reminders of war experiences, I have been trying to get some a doll from Milan - one of the nicer piece [sic] of handiwork seen around these parts - but Milan is fairly difficult to get to, - which adds to the value - maybe? Anyway, it's worth a try. Since VE day,⁵⁴ activities went up in a great spurt and since \mathbb{F} transportation to the States and elsewhere / have been orked operating smoothly, activity is again settled and perhaps on a lessening trend. During this interval, I've been roaming around down the coast on my off-days to Amalfi, Ravello, Sorrento and Capri,⁵⁵ and find here abouts, the spots where tourists have made Italy famous. The places do have their quiet scenic beauties and majestic cliffs - though these cliffs

⁵² Slogan of Italy's National Fascist Party during World War II: "Believe, Obey, Fight."

⁵³ Martin Niemöller (1892-1984), German Lutheran theologian; initially in favor of the Nazis, later a member of the Confessing Church which opposed Adolf Hitler's policies; incarcerated 1938 -1945.

⁵⁴ VE (Victory in Europe) Day, May 8, 1945.

⁵⁵ Amalfi, Ravello, Sorrento and (the island of) Capri are locations south of Naples on Italy's southwestern coast.

cost lives I the invasion campaigns. But if one has the time to admire, these are the places. My disposition, I / don't know and am leaving for the events to occur as they may happen to occur, - but I do know that it will be sometime before I can hope to make the homeward trip - I'm such a youngster yet relative to service overseas. My friends of Indio are all coming through Naples under the discharge system; perhaps I had never had the foresight nor fortitude to have stayed with them, but reunion here brings on many happy nights though I hesitate to say we were ever exactly / tipsy. (ahem !) So gehst die Nacht!⁵⁶

Love, Bill

P.S. Speaking of my location, I do believe you should have deduced from my Christmas message - weren't those the lines of Neapolitan Nights?⁵⁷ "Our hearts surrender, to nights of splendour..."⁵⁸ Tsk! Tsk? Why don't you read Dick Tracy⁵⁹ instead of Orson Welles?⁶⁰

P.P.S. Frankie⁶¹ came and went within a week; how he sent us! Wonder if he's sure war's over here!

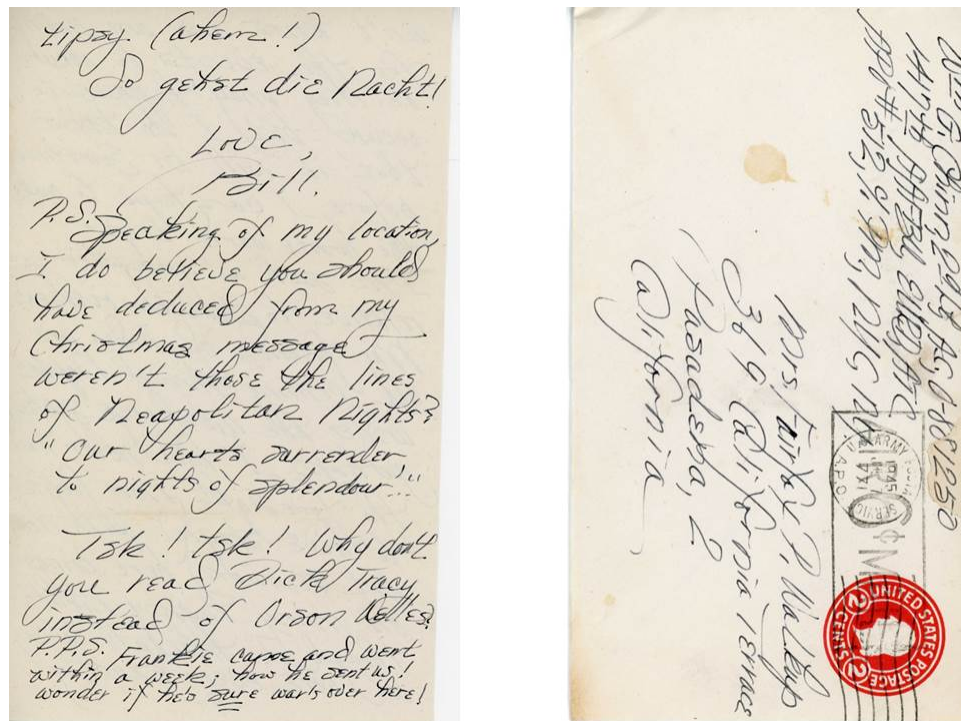


Figure 2: Letter 12, William Chinn to Fairfax Proudfit Walkup, July 5, 1945, Naples, Italy, page 10 (featuring the P.P.S. reference to "Frankie," i.e., Frank Sinatra) and envelope.

⁵⁶ Should be "So geht die Nacht," German for "Thus passes the night."

⁵⁷ "Neapolitan Nights," song for the 1928 silent film "Fazil," starring Charles Farrell and Greta Nissen.

⁵⁸ The correct lyrics are, "Oh, nights of splendour / Your charms so tender / Make love surrender / Till stars are gone."

⁵⁹ "Dick Tracy," U.S. American comic strip (since 1931).

⁶⁰ George Orson Welles (1915-1985), U.S. American writer-director and actor.

⁶¹ Presumably Frank Sinatra who was on a USO tour in North Africa and Italy at that time.

Edition: Letter 13, William Chinn to Fairfax Proudfit Walkup, [undated], [no place given]

Fax: -

Enclosed also picture ~~h~~ which has been promised ever so many days; since it is most regrettable that I cannot hand it to you personally, I shall hope for some future visit at 369. As I seem to be forever fulfilling the obligations I have so casually tossed upon my own shoulders, I have yet now another obligation to be fulfilled. Obligation, / as it is in its intrinsic derivation, the fulfillment of these obligations are, to be sure founded on a solid sincerity which springs alone from the wells of the heart, to put it tenderly. I am now giving you the tra official translation to "Arise!" Though this is not the National Anthem,⁶² I do believe this is the March you meant. / Will promise to teach you how to sing this in Chinese when I come around again, however, in the meanwhile, if you wish, I s'pose you might enlist the help of Tanya of White Man Folly⁶³ fame. Have you been keeping in contact with Sadie⁶⁴ and others of the Sam clan?⁶⁵ Hope so, 'cause I've found them to be quite delightful people. In closing, would suffer / you to forward Paul's address once again - such is memory! Affectionately and with pleasant memories of 369, I beseech ed you to take good care of the library chair; also my deepest regards to Harriet.

Bill

Edition: Letter 14, William Chinn to Fairfax Proudfit Walkup, June 6, 1946, San Francisco, California⁶⁶

June 6, 1946

Dearest Fax -

Just learned you're to go away for year.⁶⁷ Gee, wish I had known sooner. I had intended to come for visit right after finals (around 20th) Don't s'pose you'd be around, would you? if only - Do keep me in touch won't you? And p'haps I might be able to do better after school's over.

Love, Bill

⁶² See above, Letter 10. "Arise" became China's provisional national anthem in 1949 and was raised to official status in 1982.

⁶³ Presumably Tanya Oakes, "White Man's Folly" (1943).

⁶⁴ Identity unknown.

⁶⁵ Identity unknown.

⁶⁶ This letter's airmail envelope is preserved: return address: Wm. G. Chinn, 715 Comm[ercia]l Street, San Francisco, Calif.; addressed to Mrs. Fairfax P. Walkup, 369 California Terrace, Pasadena 2, California; post mark: San Francisco, Calif.8, June 7, 1946, 11:30 AM; includes one green United States of America eight- cent stamp, featuring a war plane. William Chinn's San Francisco residence at 715 Commercial Street in Chinatown was built in 1907 and still standing at the time this edition was completed (2019).

⁶⁷ Presumably because she was continuing her education at the University of Utah where she would earn an M.A. in 1947 and a Ph.D. in 1951.

P.S. How will 369 do without?

“[How] “[will] Pasadena “[do] “[without]?”

ABOUT THE EDITOR: Alisa Morgan of La Verne, California, earned her B.A. in History at California State University, Fullerton (CSUF) (2017), where she is also a member of the Theta-Pi Chapter of Phi Alpha Theta (History Honor Society). She is currently pursuing an M.A. in History at CSUF, working on comprehensive examinations on early modern European history, as well as the U.S. in the world.

ABOUT THE EDITOR: Kate Tello of Corona, California, earned her B.A. in History from California State University, Fullerton (CSUF) (2014), where she is also a member of the Theta-Pi Chapter of Phi Alpha Theta (History Honor Society). She is currently pursuing an M.A. in History at CSUF, working on comprehensive examinations on the history of immigration and labor in the American West. The primary-source edition published above originated in the “History and Editing” course offered by CSUF’s History Department.