5-15-1918

Letter from May-ling Soong Chiang, 1918-05-15, Shanghai, China, to Emma Mills

May-ling Soong Chiang

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15 May, 1918

Dear Dada:

I am glad your play has turned out such a success, and that finally you have a little time for rest.

Since my Father's illness, I have had no time for music, study or typewriting. And since his death of course, I have had no inclination for anything. Father's funeral was very quiet & simple with only his most intimate friends notified. There was no music, band or anything customary at Chinese funerals. Mother and we children wore very coarse canvas clothes. When Father passed away, we decided not to bury him at West Gate Cemetery where most of our relatives on Mother's side are buried in spite of the fact that we have land there. As you probably know, all Father's people are buried in Canton, and for reasons, we think it best to have him buried in Shanghai. Well, by good luck, we learned that a new cemetery called The International Cemetery was just ready - so we went there and found it extremely pretty and...
clean. So we bought the land - the whole square enough for all our family. Father was the very first person to be buried in that cemetery. You know, he liked being the first in any kind of competition; so I know that if he knew this, he would be awfully pleased.

Since Father’s death, we have been so busy getting the house back to shape. In all likelihood, we shall move to our house on Seymour Road, [page break] as both my sisters are leaving Shanghai. This house is too large for Mother and me, as T.V. is in the office all day, John at boarding school and Joe off at day school. I wish you could see the house! The inside is beautifully finished in Teakwood with carved doors, double flooring, and a wonderful tiled conservatory and a tiled kitchen! Downstairs, there is a medium size hall, a lavatory, a [page break] smoking room, a large dining room with panelled ceiling carved, the butler’s pantry and the kitchen. On the second floor are three bedrooms, a large living room, a large square hall, and a wonderfully spacious bathroom. There are also two large
closets for clothes, -
and closets in Shanghai
are so rare. On the
third floor is the roof
garden where we are
going to spend our after-
oons. For a wonder too, the
house has a basement with
cement flooring. You know
this house here has no basement.
Then too, by the house is
a green house where I and
the gardener are going to
cultivate roses for the
flower shows. We are
going to build the garage
three stories high, as the
second floor is for the
servants’ quarters, and the
third floor for a truck
room. The garden is
very large and pretty
with a pavilion for palms.
In the winter the conservatory
will be the palms room.

This house on Ave. Joffre is too large
for our needs, as it has
three floors, and we think
of Father every time we
turn around. And to tell
you the truth, the ceiling
is so high, and the
rooms so large that it
is impossible to make
it cosy. It looks spacious
and elegant; but not
cosy or "homey." You know
what I mean! We are
going to sell all our
furniture except Mother’s
wedding furniture and our
carved Blackwood Chinese
parlor set. Our furniture
here is too large for the
Seymour Road house.
I wish you could see the Seymour Road house. The woodwork is wonderful, and the windows are exquisite. Luck is with us; for the people who owned that house are Norwegians and they built that house with the intention of living there all their lives, - until this war broke out, and they had to have money to return. Everything about the house is exquisite, & as the couple never had any children, the property is in a beautiful condition. When we move there, I'll let you know. With both my sisters away, and their servants and children gone, Mother and I should feel lost in this big house all by ourselves all day long. The floors in the house are so hard to keep decent, and we need a horde of servants about this place. At the other house we shall be quite comfortable with a cook, a boy, a coolie, a chauffeur, a gardener and the two amahs for Mother and myself.

Father left everything in order, and as Mother knew all about his affairs, we have had no trouble, speculations by people outside as to whether Father died a millionaire or only mediumly well off would be amusing at any other time. As for the past seven years,
Father has been "a gentle- [page break] 
man of leisure," no one 
outside the family knows 
how he stands regarding 
property.

Mother is bearing up 
bravely. At first we 
were all nearly crazy: 
but we realize that he 
is much happier than 
he would have been had 
he lived, for Brights' 
Disease is very uncomfortable. 
He has been such a 
marvelous father to us! 
And we love him even 
though he is no longer with [page break] 
us.

Miss Hart is in Thai: but 
I haven't been to see her 
although she wrote me.

With love 
Daughter

P.S. I had just gotten my new spring 
clothes before Father died! Now it makes me sad to look at them, for just think how happy and carefree I was when I bought them. Now Mother and I are getting everything black which does look so mournful. Mother insists on my wearing white collars and cuffs.
5-15-1918

Letter from May-ling Soong Chiang, 1918-05-15, Shanghai, China, to Emma Mills

May-ling Soong Chiang

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28th

15 May, 1918

Dear Dada:

I am glad your play has turned out such a success, and that finally you have a little time for rest after Father's illness. Since very few of us had as much time for music, study or typewriting. And since his death of course, I have had no inclination for anything. Father's funeral was very quiet & simple with only his next nearest friends notified. There was no music, band, or anything customary at Chinese funerals. Mother and we children wore very coarse canvas clothes.
When father passed away, we decided not to bury him at West Gate Cemetery, where most of our relatives and mother's side are buried. In spite of the fact that we have land there, as you probably know, our father's people are buried in Canton for reasons, we think, it best to have him buried in Shanghai. Eventually, we learned that a new cemetery called the International Cemetery was just ready. So we went there and found it strongly built and s

As we bought the land — the whole square enough for all our people, father was the very first person to be buried in that cemetery. You know, he liked being the first in any kind of competition; so I knew that if he heard this, he would be awfully pleased.

Since father's death, we have been so busy settling the house and trying to shape it up, we see likelihood, we shall move to our house on Seymour Road, so we bought the land — the whole square enough for all our people, father was the very first person to be buried in that cemetery. You know, he liked being the first in any kind of competition; so I knew that if he heard this, he would be awfully pleased.
When father passed away, we decided not to bury him at West Gate Cemetery where most of our relatives and mother's side are buried. In spite of the fact that we have land there. As you probably know, as father's people are buried in Canton for reasons, we think it best to have him buried in Shanghai. Last, by good luck, we learned that a new cemetery called the International Cemetery was just ready. So we went there and found it friendly and quiet.
as best my sisters are leaving Shanghai. This house is too large for master and me, as T. V. is in the office all day, John at boarding school and Joe off at day school. I wish you knew we the house. The inside is beautifully finished in Teakwood with carved doors, double floor- ing, and a wonderful tiled conservatory and a tiled kitchen! Downstairs, there is a medium sized hall, a lavatory, a
carved Blackwood Chinese parlor set. Our furniture here is too large for the Seymour Road house. I wish you could see the Seymour Road house. The wood work is wonderful, and the windows are of granite. Such is with us; for the people who owned that house are Norwegians and they built the house with the intention of living there all their lives, until this war broke out, and they had to have money to return. Everything about smoking room, a large dining room with panelled cold ceiling carved, the butler's pantry and the kitchen. On the second floor are three bedrooms, a large living room, a large square hall, and a wonderfully spacious bath room. There are also two large closets for clothes, and closets in ladies' room are so rare. On the third floor is the roof garden where we are going to spend our after-
will be the fuel room.

This house is too large for our needs, as it has three floors, and we think of selling every time we turn around and tell you the truth, the ceiling is so high, and the rooms so large that it is impossible to make it cozy. It looks spacious and elegant, but not cozy or "homey." You know what I mean! We are going to sell all our furniture except mother's wedding furniture and our rooms. For a wonder too, the house has a basement with cement flooring. You know this house has no basement.

Then too, by the house is a green house where I and the gardeners are going to cultivate roses for the flower shows. We are going to build the garage three stories high, and the second floor is for the servants' quarters, and the third floor for a truck room. The garden is very large and pretty with a pavilion for palm trees in the winter the conservatory.
will be the formal rooms. This house is too large for our needs, as it has three floors, and we think of filling every room up to the corners. The truth is, the ceiling is so high, and the rooms so large that it is impossible to make it cozy. It looks spacious and elegant, but not cozy or "homey." You know what I mean? We are going to sell all our furniture except the mothers and dining furniture and our

rooms. For a wonder too, the house has a basement with cement flooring. You know this house has no basement, then too, by the house is a green house where I and the gardeners are going to cultivate roses for the flower shows. We are going to build the garage three stories high, as the second floor is for the servants' quarters, and the third floor for a truck room. The garden is very large, and pretty, with a pavilion for palms! In the winter the conservatory
carved Blackwood Chinese parlor set. Our furniture here is too large for the Seymour Road house. I wish you could see the Seymour Road house. The wood work is wonderful, and the windows are exquisite. Such is with us; for the people who owned that house are Norwegians and they built that house with the intention of living there all their lives, until this war broke out, and they had to have money to return. Every little detail smoking room, a large dining room with panelled cell ceiling, carved, the butler's pantry and the kitchen. On the second floor are three bedrooms, a large living room, a large square hall, and a wonderfully spacious bath room. There are also two large closets for clothes and closets in Henry's are so rare. On the third floor is the roof garden where we are going to spend our after-
the house is exquisite, as the couple never had any children, the property is in a beautiful condition, when we move there, I'll let you know. Until then, my sisters away, and their servants and children gone, mother and I should feel lost in this big house. We are by ourselves all day long. The floors in the house are so hard to keep decent, and we need a hand of servants about this place. At the other house, we shall be quite
man of leisure,” as our outreigned family knew, how he stands regarding property.

Mother is bearing up bravely, at first we were all nearly crazy; but we realize that he is much happier than he would have been had he lived in Bright's Disease is very uncomfortable. He has been such a wonderful father to us! And we love him even though he is no longer with

comfortable with a cook, a boy, a cook, a chauffeur, a gardener, and his two awakhs for Mother and myself.

Father left everything in order, and as Mother knew all about his affairs, we have had no trouble. Speculations by people outside as to whether Father died a millionaire or only moderately well. If would be amusing at any other time. As for the past seven years, Father has been ‘a gentl
man of leisure,” as our
outside the family knows
how he stands regarding
property.

Mother is bearing up
bravely; at first we
were all nearly crazy;
but now realize that he
is much happier than
he would have been had
he lived in England.

Disease is very uncomfortable.
He has been such a
wonderful father figure!
And we love him even
though he is no longer with

comfortable with a cook, a boy,
a cookie, a chauffeur, a
gardener and his two
amahs for mother and myself.

Father left everything in
order, and as mother
knew all about his affairs,
we have had no trouble.

Speculations by people
outside as to whether
father died a millionaire
or only moderately well.
If would be amusing at
any other time. As for
the past seven years,
father has been a gentle
Miss Hart is a Hai; but I haven't been to see her although she wrote to me.

With love,

[Signature]

P.S.

I had just gotten my new spring clothes before Father died! How it makes me sad to look at them! I just think how happy and careless I was when I bought them. Now Mother and I are getting everything black which does look so mournful. Mother in coats on my meaning white collars and cuffs.