

9 January 1979

Dear Harold and Lil:

Because of your interest, I've been sending all clips like the enclosed first class whenever there appeared to be enough for a shipment. Thanks for saving them for Dave; I still think there's a lot behind the Jonestown story which only can be guessed at.

I must thank you for the article on the therapeutic value of alcohol; it's useful to have it spelled out, but as you say our grandparents were anything but unaware of the principle involved. I sometimes wonder, considering the effects of hard likker on our frontiersmen ancestors, whether the history of this country and the temper of its people would have been considerably different had we taken the time to develop a wine-using society instead of the hard-drinking imperialists who conquered the country and went too far, bringing on the likes of Carrie Nation and prohibition.

I had a great Christmas season, thanks to a series of parties with old and new friends, and hope yours was equally enjoyable. A day or so after Christmas, Guth called up. He and his lovely wife, Katie, were in town for a convention of historians, and I was able to go in, take them to lunch and do a bit of the town with them in the few hours we had.

Today there arrived from Stevens Point a very nice thank-you package of cheeses, airmailed there only YESTERDAY. How this was accomplished is hard to imagine, but a covering letter from DeLloyd said they were having dinner tonight with the Wrones to celebrate final publication arrangements for their bibliography. So I called the Wrones, inviting myself briefly to their party, so to speak, and talked a bit with all four. Everyone was properly astounded at the postal system's feat. The postman actually delivered the package shortly after 9 a.m. today, and DeLloyd said he had mailed it only yesterday morning, so 24-hour service between Stevens Point and Mill Valley seems pretty good.

Hospice volunteer work continues, the latest job being to ghost an article for a specialized academic newsletter. Another week-long seminar for pros from all across the country is coming up next week, so there'll be the usual ferrying of seminarians from and to the air terminal, not to mention the evening they spend with cancer family survivors. All this, and other things, keep me quite busy and occupied with the things that really interest. And I had envisioned a life of relative idleness in retirement. Ha.

Please convey my compliments to the Miaos, whom I think of often. If you want to please Mike and Mrs. Miao when Chinese New Year comes round, be sure and wish them "Kung Hsi Fa Ts'ai," for prosperity in the new year. Be sure and pronounce it in Mandarin, "goong shee fah tseye," as the usual transliteration from the Cantonese is kung hsi fat choy, which sounds pretty silly. Mike will beam when you hit him with the real thing.

If you have weight problems, try experimenting with some Chinese dishes. They take only a fraction of the meat and are ideal for keeping weight down. Ask Elaine (and Katie too, now) the next time you see one of them. Both are using woks.

Keep well, and best to you both, jdw