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7-7-1938

### 1938-7-07, Letter from Charles Roberts to Paul Rood and E.J. Peterson

Charles Roberts

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[Letter written on Hunan Bible Institute letterhead]

July 7, 1938

214a Prince Edward Road,  
Kowloon, Hongkong

The Rev. Paul W. Rood, D.D., President  
Mr. E.J. Peterson, Business Manager,  
The Bible Institute of Los Angeles, Incorporated,  
558 South Hope Street,  
Los Angeles, California, U. S. A.

My dear Brethern:

Your letter dated June 14, 1938 by China Clipper reached me on Sunday afternoon June 26<sup>th</sup>. I was certainly surprised that the Board found it impossible to accept the proposals of Mr. Graham and the Independent Board, and that in turn that the Board had elected me as superintendent of the Hunan Bible Institute. After prayerful consideration I sent you a cable acknowledging your letter and informing you that I was writing concerning plans, and also to defer any publicity. The Lord has so graciously helped me thru the past year both in dealing with certainly ugly problems at Changsha and in giving me fellowship with a goodly company of fine spiritual Chinese of the better class, if one in Christ is allowed to make distinctions, that I looked forward to the reopening of the school with great hope. And I still believe that He who makes no mistakes will continue to lead us step by step. I cabled particularly "Defer publicity" as I wanted to consult my Chinese friends and missionaries in Changsha with regard the possibility of opening this Fall in the light of the new move of the Japanese army to encircle Hankow by three routes, one being by Changsha, to cut the rear of the Chinese army in a retreat from Hankow. It is within the range of possibility that Changsha will now be occupied before Hankow. Large schools like the Yale-in-China and Presbyterian Girls school have completed plans to move to two other large cities in north-west and south-west Hunan. In which case it will be wise for us not to attempt to re-open this Fall. And if the above should at all prove correct then we shall throw open the buildings for a refugee compound for women and children. We shall work in conjunction with the International Red Cross to which Committee I have been recently elected. And may I add that should you read any morning in your paper that Changsha has been occupied you may not hear from me for a long, long time but you will know that I shall be at Changsha seeking to help refugees and local people during the occupation period. There will doubtless be a British or American gunboat standing by as we are a treaty port. Please do not give any printed publicity to the above. I am arranging for the Biola Bands to continue this Fall. Our five Bands will doubtless be sent to western Hunan and well out of the immediate danger line. Also I plan to rehabilitate the work of our Scofield Correspondence department. Unfortunately Mr. C K. Cheng (Schofield Cheng) who has returned to us has suffered a stroke, however we shall plan to carry his work on possibly by a temporary headquarters in Hongkong. More on that later.

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And also in view of what I have already written it might not now be the best time to form a full faculty to open the school, but we are considering making arrangements with a few Chinese Bible teachers of some prominence to have what we might call an Extension Department for the coming year, with temporary headquarters at Hongkong. These brethren who have been looking forward to the work of the future could do Bible teaching and conference work in and around south-west China to excellent advantage and looking forward to the re-opening of the school at the earliest date. This will not entail a great outlay of money and I have sufficient funds on hand to fully care for such activities as I have outlined both for the Correspondence Course and an Extension Department. The funds for the Biola Bands continue to come to the field, and Doctor Keller has very kindly written to various donors to send funds formerly sent to him to be sent to me, and he is also willing to continue to write the few donors personal letters of interest regarding the activities of the Bands. And if the Business department will continue to send us the monthly contributions at Biola based on the budget plan we shall be able to carry on a successful year with the Band work. As a round number for a monthly budget to cover Dr. Keller's present allowance, our own and the operation of the Biola Bands included in one monthly cheque U.S.\$450.00 will be sufficient as from July to December of this year. Regarding Dr. Keller's allowance he has informed me that Dr. Rood wrote him that the Board would only grant him \$50.00 a month upon retiring, but as I had not received any word from either of you and together with the fact that the C.O.D. has been contributing \$75.00 for his support I allow the figure to remain at that. I would be glad for a final word on the subject. I might add that recently Dr. Keller stated to me in the presence of Mrs. Keller that he would be glad to withdraw from the field permanently but could not do so as no provision had been made for his travel to Los Angeles (I expressed the thought that I believed the Board would permit me to advance such travel from my "savings" on the field this year). Then he contended that it would be impossible for him to live in America with Mrs. Keller on \$50.00 a month. He suggested that \$100.00 would make it possible. Of other points such as his own investment in his present residence on the field and a residence or apartment allowance in America I will not burden you as Mrs. Keller thinks that such full travelling allowance and \$100.00 a month would settle the matter, and that other items could be overlooked. Dr. Keller has emphatically stated that not only has he not received any income from Biola annuities for nearly a year, but that he has many months ago written by registered mail on the subject to the Institute and had not received an acknowledgement of his letters. That point however will be known better than I. At present the Kellers expect to remain in Changsha. If you take any specific action you might cable me. Taking the same opportunity as most missionaries in Changsha your representative is now spending a few weeks summer vacation with his family in Hongkong with a reservation to literally fly back to Changsha by plane if the expected advance on Changsha should come sooner than expected. A large map lies on the writer's desk with daily checks of advances made by the Japanese army so as to move at a moment's notice. About a half a dozen of us left Changsha for here and Manila to take advantage of an early holiday. Thanking you very kindly for your letter and trusting in our heavenly Father to guide both the Institute at home and in China with greetings to all of our friends in America and asking special and prevailing prayer for the future, Ever truly yours,

Charles A. Roberts