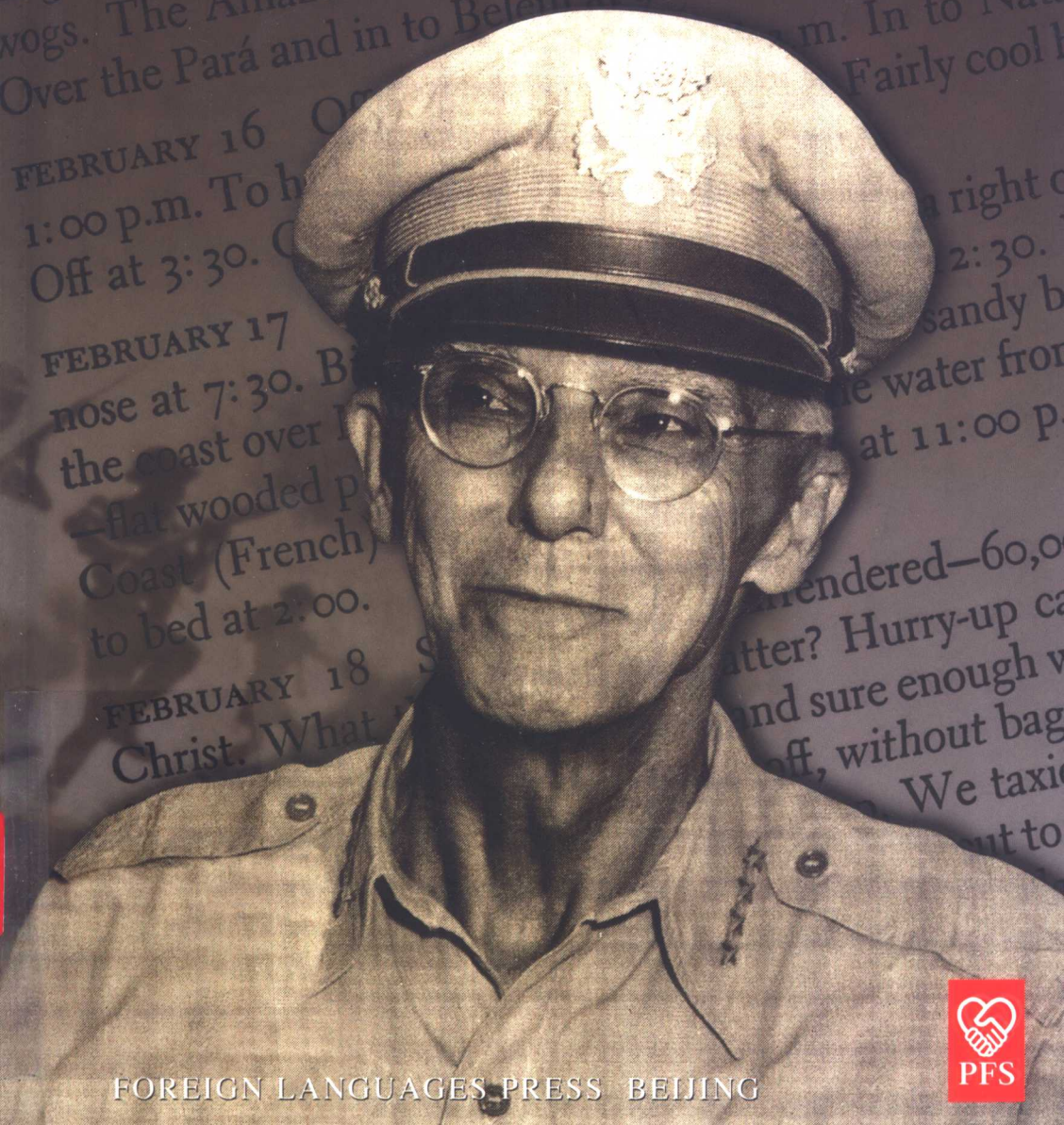


THE STILWELL PAPERS

Joseph W. Stilwell



FOREIGN LANGUAGES PRESS BEIJING



THE STILWELL PAPERS

By JOSEPH W. STILWELL

Arranged and Edited by
THEODORE H. WHITE

Foreign Languages Press

First published by William Sloane Associates, Inc. Publishers,
New York, USA, 1948

Home Page:
<http://www.flp.com.cn>
E-mail Addresses:
info@flp.com.cn
sales@flp.com.cn

ISBN 7-119-03477-4

Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, 2003

Published by Foreign Languages Press
24 Baiwanzhuang Road, Beijing 100037, China

Printed in the People's Republic of China

PREFACE

Huang Hua

It is a great honor for me to write a preface for the new, PFS (China Society for People's Friendship Studies) 50-book series under the general title of *Light on China*. All these books were written in English by journalistic and other eyewitnesses of the events described. I have read many of them over the seven decades since my student days at Yenching University. With some of the outstanding authors in this series I have ties of personal friendship, mutual regard, and warm memories dating from before the Chinese people's Liberation in 1949.

Looking back and forward, I am convinced that China is pursuing the right course in building a strong and prosperous country in a rapidly changing world with its complex and sometimes volatile developments.

The books in this series cover a span of some 150 years, from the mid 19th to the early 21st century. The numerous events in China, the sufferings and struggles of the Chinese people, their history and culture, and their dreams and aspirations were written by

foreign observers animated by the spirit of friendship, equality and cooperation. Owing to copyright matters and other difficulties, not all eligible books have as yet been included.

The founder of the first Chinese republic, Dr. Sun Yat-sen wrote in his Testament in 1925, “For forty years I have devoted myself to the cause of the people’s revolution with but one end in view: the elevation of China to a position of freedom and equality among the nations. My experiences during those forty years have convinced me that to attain this goal we must bring about an awakening of our own people and ally ourselves in common struggle with those people of the world who regard us as equals.”

Chairman Mao Zedong declared, at the triumphal founding of the People’s Republic in 1949, “The Chinese people have stood up.” Today, having passed its 53rd anniversary, we see the vast forward strides that have been taken, and note that many more remain to be made.

Many foreign observers have traced and reported the real historical movement of modern China, that is: from humiliation — through struggle — to victory. Seeking understanding and friendship with the Chinese people, their insight and perspective were in basic harmony with the real developments in China. But there have been others who viewed China and the Chinese people through glasses tinted by hostile prejudice or ignorance and have invariably made irrelevant observations that could not stand the test of time. This needs to be better understood by young people and students, at home and abroad. The PFS series *Light on China* can help them gain an overview of what went before, is happening now, and will

emerge in the future.

Young students in China can additionally benefit from these works by seeing how foreign journalists and authors use fluent English to record and present historical, philosophical, and socio-political issues and choices in China. For millions of students in China, English has become a compulsory second language. These texts will also have many-sided usefulness in conveying knowledge of our country to other peoples.

Students abroad, on their part, may be helped by the example of warm, direct accounts and impressions of China presented by their elders in the language that most readily reaches them.

Above all, this timely and needed series should help build bridges of friendship and mutual understanding. Good books long out of print will be brought back to strengthen the edifice.

My hearty thanks and congratulations go first to ex-Premier Zhu Rongji, who has been an effective supporter of this new, PFS series. They go to all engaged in this worthy project, the Foreign Languages Press, our China Society for People's Friendship Studies, and others who have given their efforts and cooperation.

Chairman Mao Zedong has written: "So many deeds cry out to be done, and always urgently. The world rolls on, time presses. Ten thousand years are too long. Seize the day, seize the hour."

The hour has come for making these books available to young people in China and abroad whose destiny is to build a better world together. Let this series add a small brick to that structure.

Beijing, Autumn 2003

TO MADAME SUN YAT-SEN

FOREWORD

IT IS with deep feeling and pride that I present these words of my husband, General Joseph W. Stilwell. Because of the many controversies concerning his services in the China-Burma-India theater and his recall in November, 1944, and because he was never allowed to present for himself the true facts of the case, I am giving him this opportunity to speak.

General Stilwell was descended from Nicholas Stillwell (sic) who came to New Amsterdam in 1638. Records and family documents carry the name back to 1456. Among those Stilwells who followed Nicholas, there were many who served this country as soldiers, so it was perhaps natural that my husband chose a military career.

General Stilwell's army life began in 1900, when he entered the United States Military Academy at the age of seventeen. After his graduation in 1904, he saw service in the Philippine Islands with the 12th Infantry. Many interesting years followed and during World War I, he became G-2 of the 4th Corps, under General Briant H. Wells. Between the two World Wars, he was stationed in China three times, for a total of ten years.

In 1921, during his first tour of duty in China as an army language student in Peking, he served in Shansi province as construction engineer on a road being built by the American Red Cross for famine relief. In Shansi, he spent months working and living with Chinese laborers and peasants. In 1927, while stationed in Tientsin, he spent several months as an observer with the Chinese armies, then engaged in Civil War. Because of his intense desire for factual information, he moved continuously on foot within the battle areas.

During a later assignment as Military Attaché to the American Embassy in Peking, he learned to know Chinese officials and military leaders of the highest rank. During those years of contact with both the common citizens of China and leaders of wealth and position, General Stilwell developed an intimate understanding of the basic and underlying psychology of China.

Few people realize that General Stilwell, throughout the greatest years of his career, was almost blind. The explosion of an ammunition dump, during World War I at Belrupt, caused a severe injury to the left eye. There was a deformity of the pupil and the growth of a cataract of the lens. The vision of this eye was so impaired that he could not distinguish the fingers on a hand at three feet. The vision of the right eye required heavy correction and constant use of glasses. During the trying days in Chungking, as well as during the jungle campaigns in Burma, where lighting facilities were inadequate, it was often necessary to work by candlelight. His indomitable urge to do his job and do it well forced him to strain the remaining eye. His great hope was that it would last long enough to see him through his mission.

General Stilwell's war journals were written so that he might have a true and factual account of those years. They were put down for his own use. But to me his gallant spirit lives on, encouraging me to bring his journals to publication.

The major problems that confronted General Stilwell during the war are those that essentially confront the representatives of our country in China today. Since a free and great democracy can function successfully only upon the basis of true information, it is my hope that these journals will bring a clearer understanding of the problems America faces in China. We shall then stand much closer to a careful and proper solution.

Winifred A. Stilwell

INTRODUCTION

THE COMMANDER of a war theater of the United States Army is the most important and most lonesome of all men in whatever area he serves. He can have no intimates or friends to share his fears and worries. The pressures and strains that bear upon him are unrelenting; he must resolve them all in the clarity of decisions upon which the lives of men and the security of the Republic depends.

The qualify of introversion that such terrible responsibility brings found its only release in General Stilwell in a series of papers, letters, and journal jottings which were found after his death among his effects. THE STILWELL PAPERS is a collection of these papers covering three years in the history of the last war—from the attack on Pearl Harbor in December, 1941, to the final relief of General Stilwell from command in China in October, 1944.

These papers were written for himself alone—they are presented in this book raw and unformed, torn from the privacy of his emotions. They were written in the sharp, hard language of command and bitterness; they present only one facet of his many-sided character. There is little reflection in them of the generosity, the kindliness, the warmth of love that won him so enduring a loyalty among those who knew him best. It would have been alien to his nature to record those many tendernesses that so naturally complemented his vigor and directness in action.

In this book, his thoughts and reflections are presented as he phrased them in his own words, at whatever penalty the book may surer by peace-

time canons of taste and convention. No change has been made in his text except for certain minor liberties clearly detailed below. Such editorial matter as is added for purposes of background and explanation is clearly marked as such and distinguished from the text proper by this type face.

The papers brought together here come from three sources, each reflecting a lifelong personal habit of General Stilwell.

The first source is his personal command journal, which was kept faithfully throughout the war. The journal entries are usually short, clipped telegraphic entries, serving more as personal symbols of memory than a narrative of events. Frequently they are technical military notes. Only as much of the journals is used in this book as is needed to stitch the sequence of the story together where other sources fail.

The second source consists of longer essays and analyses usually written during periods of reflection when Stilwell, for his own satisfaction, attempted to summarize a situation, sharpen his perception of character, or think through a particularly vexing problem.

The editor has taken the liberty of weaving both diaries and reflective papers together into a single pattern, setting down both diary entry and reflective paper as a single section when they fall under the same date. When the reflective paper is undated, the editor has inserted it where, by the logic of text and events, he believes it properly falls.

The third source of material for this book is General Stilwell's letters to Mrs. Stilwell. These are clearly marked with the name of their recipient.

Wherever the name of a Chinese friend of General Stilwell has appeared, and whenever, in the opinion of the editor or Mrs. Stilwell, such a name exposes that friend to danger or reprisal at the hands of the Chinese government, the name has been deleted. Wherever Stilwell, as commanding general, records the shortcomings of United States officers, Mrs. Stilwell has requested that the names of such officers be deleted unless the history of the war makes it essential that the name be retained. The editor has taken it upon himself to fill out the abbreviations of names, or translations of code that Stilwell frequently used. The parentheses in

the text are those of Stilwell; but whenever a bracket has been used, the bracketed material is an explanation or translation supplied by the editor. Footnotes also are worded by the editor. Occasionally, writing for his own eyes alone, Stilwell used the harsh descriptive expletives of the soldier. Knowing General Stilwell's reluctance to use such language publicly, the editor has at times cut or softened various easily recognized phrases. Less than half of General Stilwell's wartime writings are embodied in this book; but what has been published is Stilwell's alone, and the liberties mentioned above are the only brief alterations of his original script.

*But I remember, when the fight was done,
When I was dry with rage and extreme toil,
Breathless and faint, leaning upon my sword,
Came there a certain lord, neat, trimly dressed,
Fresh as a bridegroom . . .*

*. . . he smiled and talked;
And as the soldiers bore dead bodies by,
He called them untaught knaves, unmannerly,
To bring a slovenly unhandsome corse,
Betwixt the wind and his nobility.
With many holiday and lady terms
He questioned me; among the rest demanded
My prisoners in your majesty's behalf.
I then, all smarting with my wounds being cold,
To be so pestered with a popinjay,
Out of my grief and my impatience,
Answered neglectingly I know not what;
He should, or he should not;—for he made me mad
To see him shine so brisk, and smell so sweet,
And talk so like a waiting-gentlewoman
Of guns, and drums, and wounds,—God save the mark!—*

Hotspur to Henry IV

Henry IV (Part I), Act I, Scene 3

[General Stilwell often declared that this was his
favorite passage in Shakespeare.]

CONTENTS

<i>Foreword by Winifred A. Stilwell</i>	xiii
<i>Introduction by Theodore H. White</i>	xv
<i>CHAPTER 1 The Old Sinking Feeling: December, 1941</i>	1
<i>CHAPTER 2 This Was Washington: January-February, 1942</i>	11
<i>CHAPTER 3 Disaster in Burma: March-May, 1942</i>	37
<i>CHAPTER 4 Let's Go Back to Burma: Summer, 1942</i>	90
<i>CHAPTER 5 As You Were: Autumn, 1942</i>	135
<i>CHAPTER 6 The Battle of the Mud: Spring and Summer, 1943</i>	158
<i>CHAPTER 7 The Ladies Lend a Hand: Autumn, 1943</i>	189

<i>CHAPTER 8</i>	<i>Mr. Roosevelt Clears Things up: Cairo, 1943</i>	<i>205</i>
<i>CHAPTER 9</i>	<i>"Up the River, over the Hogback" Victory in Burma, 1944</i>	<i>226</i>
<i>CHAPTER 10</i>	<i>Chiang K'ai-shek and His Government</i>	<i>266</i>
<i>CHAPTER 11</i>	<i>Relief from Command: October, 1944</i>	<i>273</i>
	<i>Afterword by Winifred A. Stilwell</i>	<i>296</i>

Chapter 1

ON THE DAY the Japanese struck at Pearl Harbor, the United States Army was scattered within along the Pacific Coast of our country. Four Army and one Marine Corps divisions—in all, some 100,000 men—were spread from Puget Sound, south almost two thousand miles to San Diego, responsible for defending the homeland from an enemy whose first assault was expected anywhere, any time, in any force. These units, in various states of organization and confusion, some half trained, all ill equipped, ungirt and scattered on a peaceful Sunday morning, were under the over-all command of Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt, commander of the Fourth Army.

Major General Joseph Warren Stilwell as senior tactical commander in California was directly responsible to DeWitt. Stilwell's command was the Third Corps with headquarters at Monterey—and his responsibility was the defense of the sea frontier of America from San Luis Obispo through Los Angeles to San Diego. This was an area of some five million people, containing more than 75 per cent of the heavy bomber plants of the United States, some of its most significant oil production, a major naval base, and cut off from the rest of the country by desert and mountain.

On the morning of Pearl Harbor Sunday, General and Mrs. Stilwell

were entertaining the officers of the Third Corps staff at their Carmel home. It was the last "at home," the General promised his wife, that she would have to give for his staff. A telephone rang, and Mrs. Stilwell answered it. It was a friend calling—"Turn on your radio," the friend said, "the Japs are attacking Pearl Harbor." Mrs. Stilwell blurted the news to her husband; the party converged on the nearest radio. There was a pause as they listened to the next flash; and then the party dissolved.

Sometime that afternoon or evening, General Stilwell found time to scribble the first entry in his wartime diaries. For the next three weeks his total preoccupation was to be the organization of the defense of the South Pacific Coast. Traveling by plane and road, he inspected the outposts of his command, sorting his units, posting them for action.



DECEMBER 7, 1941 Japs attack Hawaii. [Plan] Rainbow 5 in effect. Three p.m. Goode phoned. Jap fleet 20 miles south, 10 miles out [of Monterey]. Sent Dorn* to [Ft.] Ord to call off show and alert garrison. Phoned Hearn** to start reconnaissance. Phoned Hearn to have Dorn call enlisted men back to camp.

3:30 phoned White at Ord. White to send reconnaissance troop down Highway No. 1. 3:35 Guam being attacked.

DECEMBER 8 Office in a.m. No further news, Rumors begin. Went to San Francisco and saw DeWitt. Disaster at Honolulu.

Phone from Washington about ammunition. Almost a hafful. Sunday night "air raid" at San Francisco. Two blackouts in San Francisco. Second

*Major Frank "Pinky" Dorn, at the time Stilwell's personal aide. Dorn was to follow Stilwell to China, later to become Brigadier General Dorn, and remained throughout the war closer personally to Stilwell than any other individual in the Army.

**Colonel Thomas Hearn chief of staff of III Corps. Hearn accompanied Stilwell to China, and later became Major General Hearn, chief of staff of the CBI theater.