

Route 2, Box 282 E.,
Stockton, August 18, 1934.

Dear Mrs. Warner,

I am ashamed not to have answered your air mail letter before this. I have been sort of hoping Harold would drop the proceedings before the required month elapsed. It seems he has not. I have told no Eugene person about this development except you. Even to Mrs. Sheldon I have written no more than that I am studying in the East for the coming year and that Harold is supplying the funds. I think it is Harold's place to break the news as he sees fit. I believe also that you are right about the unnecessary torture that Eugene would be to me for the next year. If Harold should transfer to some other place at the end of that time it might still be better for me to be somewhere else.

However, I do have the Warner museum pretty well memorized, and every once in a while something turns up that bears on what you have there. In the course of my six weeks notes (all four hours a day were compulsory) I have occasionally written in the margin the shorthand character for "Warner". This marks the lie of various addenda and corrigenda which are to be gathered up and sent to be filed along with the notes I've gathered for you.

I've had a bad time getting my Hirakana inscriptions deciphered. Kuno is impossible to get when you want him, even if you have an appointment, but is always under foot if one hasn't one's materials along. Two Japanese students who were waiting for him on the day of my ill-fated appointment, tried to translate the first inscription for me, but made absolutely no headway. They say it is an obsolete style of Hirakana. Obata himself had no luck with it, and Miss Walne who taught us Japanese, said if he couldn't figure it out she had little hope it could be done in the bay region. After all, a poorly traced pencil copy doesn't do justice to the original. Perhaps some time when Setido the painter is down again from Portland, he might be allowed to try and read the inscriptions from the original. Obata was inclined to discredit their attribution to Tosa Mitsuoki because he found in the photographs a quality of brush stroke which shows definite

Kano influence. I didn't have my notes on him from Morrisson at the time, or I could have countered with the latter's statement that "much of his work shows Kano influence". Oh how I would like to track that problem to the ground and either prove or disprove something!

The biggest thing I think I got from the Seminar was a sense of the number of colleagues I have in Oriental Studies on the West coast. Three of the best friends I made in the six weeks are returning to the Northwest: Schultheis who lives in Seattle, Jonasson from Linfield College, and Pritchard who is just appointed this fall to Reed. Others are dotted all around the Bay region and south, and East: Ann Arbor, Ithaca, Cleveland, Washington. I feel as if one could coop oneself up for the rest of one's life in a good museum or library and still be able to draw on friends all over the country for assistance in that work. The two quietest people at the seminar were the librarians of Orientalia from Cornell and the Library of Congress. Yet they knew more of the people in the field personally than all the rest of us put together. It occurred to me that Miss Yoder should have been in the Seminar too.

I wonder whether I should change my name back to Garden, or keep the dignity of the title of Mrs. and all the wide contacts I have acquired under the name of Noble. What would you advise? I suppose I could keep my friends informed if I changed back, by having a card printed saying that "On account of her recent divorce, Mrs. Frances Garden Noble will resume the use of her maiden name", or words to that effect. Awkward if Harold wasn't telling his friends yet that he is divorced! How is such a thing done? Do you think the simplicity of being a Miss is worth all the trouble it would take to inform my friends what I was doing? I worry chiefly, not about my near and dear friends, but those who have met me and would perhaps be interested enough to stand by if I didn't just drop out of their knowledge by entering on a new avatar without notice of any sort. I do feel that the kind of people I might want to marry wouldn't be the least bit interested in a divorcee of a Mrs. of any sort! Dear me, I do need advice!

There seems to be more to San Francisco than I had realized in the previous three years we spent here. Gump's and Marsh's and the Family Houses, Mandarin Theater, Fisherman's wharf, dozens of new eating places. The girls in charge of the Institute of Pacific Relations and of the Japan

Society of America were also members of the Seminar, and showed me their offices and gave me the benefit of a complimentary ticket to one of Alfred Hertz' symphonies. We had Sukiaki on board the Tatsuta Maru one night when the general strike was on, and while we were on board the taxi drivers decided to join the street-car men, and we were badly stranded at Pier 37 for quite a few minutes until private cars were brought out to take us a few at a time back to the ferry building. I ate the Sukiaki in the most approved fashion, with chopsticks and sitting bow-legged on my feet. That was quite the longest ceremonial sitting I've ever done, but I was in good trim for it, because there weren't enough tables in the Seminar room and I had been sitting on the floor using a piano-bench for table. After about three weeks when a woman took over charge of International House, she had the bright idea of letting us hold classes in the Men's lounge, where there were tables and davenports enough for everybody.

It's been a great joy to me to find that my shorthand hasn't rusted a bit! Taking verbatim notes for four hours at a stretch and leaving them seven weeks before I had time to transpose them, I still get back every word as they were spoken; Far from feeling that nothing was accomplished in those six weeks, most of the seminar people felt that we had got such a vision of the enormity of the subject that we'd never be quite the same again. Fortunately, for that feeling, Dr. Hummel's lectures were almost concentrated book reviews on what is written in English and in Chinese and what must be translated, and what waits to be indexed. It is a bibliography which makes one look at his grey hairs and realize in it a life-time's reading.

All this vision, and all that it means in opportunity for my future, I feel that I owe largely to you. Had you not trusted me with your museum work and released me early for the seminar, I wouldn't have realized what fascinating work there is that I am eminently fitted to throw all my energies into for the rest of my life. Twice before I've undertaken graduate work and given it up because I hadn't found the thing I wanted to specialize in. Here at the crucial moment in my life, it is pointed out to me. Thanks to you!

Please give my regards to Mabel. I think of you both with the warmest affection and gratitude.

Sincerely,

Frances.
I shall be here till September 17

