

To Sara

Keep up the good work in
College and ~~do~~ not tell anyone
about your fame as a go-go dancer.

Love you

Granddad

Stacy

July 30, 03.

My Dear;

Years ago now great, great, great grandmother, Ida Staggs, took her pen in hand and wrote this letter to her only son, Richard, who was thousands of miles away. You are the sixth generation to read this letter. Lets me two friends sit here and live in the past by way of her letter and the others too.

The Characters

The writer: Ida Staggs

Papa: Her husband, Hudson

Richard: Her only son, my Dad.

Mamie and Edith: Her daughters

Claud: Mamies husband

Look in the Staggs section in your Staggs family tree and you will find a picture of Ida, Edith and Richard taken just before he left China, and a few months before this letter was written.

Now in the letter - see how concerned she is with fires. (You could read in your "Tree" how she acted when our house burned down in Roseburg, Or.) She is so worried that she begs her son (20 yr. old) to "be a fine boy and save your self" (if the house burns down).

Now, old pal, must go you old people are smart enough to

figure out what to do if the house gets on fire but not we Stagg people, if ~~some~~ one has told us to save ourselves we just sit and wonder "What the heck do I do now?"

My beloved Mother, knowing the Stagg weakness, had all five of us boys get the words "In case of fire - run like hell" tattooed on our upper arm. I wish I could show you mine, it's got three explanation points behind it each of a different color - very beautiful. You should ask your Mom about getting one also. And knowing you as I do - hurry!!!

Now - as to her and Edith going to Santa Cruz.

Hudson (remember him? the twoper in the 14th Mo. Cavalry - Grand Army of the Republic - Civil War -) he had asked Claud to invest some of his (as Ida called it) idle money and Claud had (of all things to get a million) used Hudson's money to buy an apricot orchard. Later, when Hudson came back to the U.S., took one look at it and sold it. Later he and my Dad got the mill in Roseburg, Or.

Next - I da asked Richard how Charles was killed. The police report was - he had just left a pool hall in St Louis when a man made an attempt to rob him. Charles resisted - the robber shot him. The killer was never found. Charles was Hudson's half brother and full brother to William Stagg of the confederate army.

Regarding to I da's concern over the lack of clothing in summer. This good church woman told us all about how they dress when she compares them with Adam and Eve. I da mentioned his school. The reason that Richard left China was to attend "Valpo" University in "Valpo" Ind. He attended this Christian school in order to become a "preacher man". But he met Ma and they ended up with Hudson and I da in Roseburg, Or. with their flour mill.

It was here that one of the most important events of this generation took place. - I was born!

Streets all over the world were flooded by cheering mobs thanking God for this, his latest blessing on the world.

People started naming their sons, Harold. In some large

families they named all of their sons
Harold. This caused so much confusion
that it became necessary for some
countries to pass laws governing the
use of this noble name. My mother
told me this time after time as she
rocked me to sleep.

Now, as you would expect - Brothers
Bill and Dick would tell me that
all of the story was just foolish -
but you and I know better - Shame
shame on them! We are so
disappointed in them!

Now back to the letter.
Ida had not received a letter
from her mother. Her mother had
not wanted Ida and the girl goes
because she was sure that they
would be in great danger.

As for little Susie she was
only 5 - so very very sad.

Let's remember our ancestors -
their lives were so interesting.

Love you -

Granddad
Stoggo

Shanghai Nov ¹⁹⁰⁹

Mr. R. L. Stagg

My Dear Boy I wrote you a short letter Sunday and sent it the day we received your two letters. We were so anxious to hear from you and know that you are going to do. I am glad you are in school and I do hope you will make good progress in your studies. I can't help from having fear and being uneasy about you. There is so many students and such a large school. Now Richard you know how foolish I am about fires be careful if there should be a fire. To be a fine boy and save yourself and have it in your mind and plan a way if such a thing should happen for we never know. You must write often and tell us all about your self and Graus and about the folks in Springfield. Poor Mame and Claud. Sure (their daughter) drowned in Liand La Creek. We don't know yet about going back. Papa thinks that best for us to go and he will go in the spring then we can come back in the ~~spring~~ fall and Edith don't want to go. But she is out of

school and if we go now
 she can go this winter and next
 summer and be ready to come
 back (to China) next fall and Papa
 can invest some of his idle
 money in some paying business
 and see after the business there
 if we go we will leave here on
 the Royal Mail Steamship
 Montezuma. It goes to Hancock
 but we can take a train from
 there to Santa Cruz so Edith
 could go to school and Marnie
 will feel more contented. But
 they may be so discouraged they
 may go back to Mo. We
 will get a mail the 13 or 15 and
 then on the 18 and we will know
 before the 21 what they will do if
 they will go back. We will stay
 until May for Papa will go back
 then on a visit in June. Mr.
 Frasier came over yesterday and
 he said he would be happy when
 they discharge him, he is tired,
 the last summer was hard on
 him. He didn't want to spend
 another summer here. Everything
 is the same here as when you
 left. Only the Chines are wearing
 more cloth. In the summer not
 much more than when Adam and

and Eve after they committed the sin
 the small - - - - went naked -
 well thats chinees fashion and if
 we dont like it we can get out.

When you write tell us about
 the folks in Pa. and how Charle
 was killed and all the news.
 Jessie said that Ida and Ella
 came home with you. How long
 did they visit them. I was
 surprised that Mother was sore
 about me comming to China.

She has not written to me
 since November. Do take good
 care of yourself and learn
 all you can and write often.
 With much ~~and~~ love to you
 and write often. With
 much love from your Anjous
 and aff. Mother.

Mrs. W. R. Stagg
 Shianghie China

Aug. 2, 03

My Dear:

Another from the past. As Christmas approached, your Great-great-great-granddad Hudson was all alone in China, his family had returned to the states.

In this letter he tells his son, Richard, how the gifts from his Chinese friends made him feel "kinda at home even in this heathen land".

But his deep feeling of loneliness becomes too much for him to bear so he flees from it and for a short time lives again in his "happy times", his childhood.

Would you like to go to a log cabin school, sit on a plank (not a chair) get spanked if you whisper, go barefoot, tussle with your nanna, and jump out of your school window?

I think you will say: "Surely you jest - lead me to it!!" There by proving that you are indeed my ~~great~~ grandkid - a little nuts! But I love you!

~~Great~~ granddad Harold

P.S. A few days after I signed this letter, I was trying to see, in my mind, Hudson's boy-head home -

his "happy time". So, with the help of this census report, let this old farm boy help you see it with him.

For Philip Staggs.

1850 Agriculture Census Rec. # 313 Family # 99

Children: Samuel, James, Hudson.

Farm: Improved acres 20 - unimproved 140.

cash value \$ 3,200 - horses 3 - mules 1 -

milk cows 2 - Sheep 30 - swine 4 - value

of live stock \$ 265. On hand - corn

90 lbs., oats 40 lb., wool 90 lbs., hay

1 ton. Value of house \$ 40.

So what do you and I "see"? This is a very poor farm, it could be a "new land" farm just starting up. Why do I say that? He's cleared only 20 acres!

He has fenced it - a poor farm so wooden fence - snake and rider - why fenced? Must be because he is grazing his stock. His crop is for cash - that was corn and oats and wool and not much of that from 20 acres. The barn is just a log shed - only two milk cows to house. Transportation - his work team and the farm wagon.

Now the house - its value is appraised at \$ 40! So what can Philip build? a one room log cabin with hard-tamped dirt floor. It has a loft for the kids to sleep in and a big fireplace to keep them warm in winter,

Now the house - its value is appraised at \$ 40! So what can Philip build? a one room log cabin with hard-tamped dirt floor. It has a loft for the kids to sleep in and a big fireplace to keep them warm in winter,

Did the house windows? Not more than one with glass - it would cost too much.

Now I remember - you are a city kid and you can't see the size of an acre. Well, old pal, Gramps will educate! Look at a foot ball field, now (in your mind) make it about five yards wider - and presto, its an acre.

Now put twenty of them together and thats what your Great great great great granddad had to tend all by himself - a darn hard job for him - to plow, disk, harrow, plant and harvest - all by himself.

Now the mothers garden - about 3/4th of an acre. Corn, potatoes, beans, tomatoes, cabbage, carrots, beets and don't forget parsnip its nice and fresh up to frost. These I've listed were the vegetables I've listed are the ones we see on the farms I went to in the Ozarks.

Remember how, in your Stegg book, the store of how my Dad would hunt our winter meat.

Except for pork all other meat except for chickens came from the wild at Hudsons house.

When Hudsons tells of how he would like to drink fram

the spring again and be in the pool - I got a real lovely feeling too, Indian creek ran through our farm at Stella and on it was a cool spring that we would drink from when we were hot from working in the fields and when work was done we dove in to the pool in our creek with "dops" no swim suits. Happy days!

Love you

Grandpa

Shanghai Dec, 09

Mr R. L. Stagg's Esq.
Valparaiso, Ind.

Dear Son

As I am alone and a long way off and Christmas will soon be here and as I will get many more and more valuable presents from these Chineses than from my own people if in America, therefore have decided to write you a letter. Have already had good evidence that Christmas is near at hand, as the usual gifts are coming in. Received yesterday from my Chinese grocery man, one nice basket of ~~egg~~ oranges, a small tub of fine-sugared dates and a nice cake. And to day my #1 miller -- at Si T'ah sent me a fine turkey, a large basket of oranges and a fine large Christmas cake worth all told to date about fifteen dollars Mex. I expect to get by Christmas day, cigars, champagne, beer, apples, bananas, duck, geese and turkeys galore. I appreciate these gifts very highly not only on account of their culinary value but also because they make me kinda at home even in this far off heathen land. Many a Christmas of childhood days do I remember at school for it was the custom in those primitive

primitive ways of long ago of
log schools houses to either thrash
or duck the school master on Christmas
day in order to make him shell out a
few rotten, wormy apples and nuts.

On one of these occasions, the snow
was deep and the weather very cold.

We had a desperate struggle with the
teacher but finally overpowered him and
when he saw we were in earnest
and determined to put him in the
water, he surrendered and agreed
to treat, and did so, but, about all that
the writer got out of it was a swim.

however those were sorry times even
the children had worms. My first
day at school was like Rip van Winkle's
I never got there. The distance was
about three miles and we, my older
brother and I, only got about half way
there. Our youthful curiosity led us
to one side to "look see" one old
hemp-house and we found it to be the
best place in all the world to have
fun in. The soft hemp bales were
piled up just right for all kinds
of tumbling, and we "tumbled." Yes
we tumbled all day, ate our dinner there
and never got home till sundown. I
learned many things at school that
were not in the books.

I learned to chew tobacco there and the impudence to go into the school room with my first chew in my mouth. The master noticed something, something wrong and asked me what I had in my mouth. I had passed the point of rafts and gave no answer but he insisted that I "open up" and I did so and he was very sorry of it for he caught nearly all of the chew and its copious supply of juice on the starched bosom of his shirt, the only one of that kind in the district.

He was the maddest school master I have ever saw and he ~~was~~ and went out in the papaw bushes and changed that shirt back side in front and came in with the back part raised up under his whiskers and he gave me the hardest whipping I ever got at school. I was quite young and small and felt so and felt it so keenly that I remember it well, though it all happened more than fifty years ago. Some time after that I had some more very unpleasant experience at school out in Kansas, and just because we were from "Missouri" the Kansas school marm treated us badly. She had paddled the palms of my brothers hands to a blister and punished my elder brother shamefully and I had fully decided that our family had received about all it was entitled to

under that hand. So at last, for it was the last day we were there and the last day that the school marm was there, as for us I knew she undertook to punish me under the head of whispering because I had asked one of the big girls about my lesson which was no violation of any rule that she had made. I objected to any such punishment and the fight was on to a finish. The school room was small and crowded with benches and tables and barefooted "Sawhawker" children. The school marm was also small and for about ten minutes there was something going. There was hurrying to and fro, and gathering tears and trembling of distress and cheeks all pale, which but an hour before blushed at the praise of their own levelness. The writer was there in his early "teens" but he mixed it thoroughly all over the room, with that school marm and in such a manner that none of the lookers on could tell which one of us the Calico belonged to and the only way of to reestablish our identify was to get apart and we did so. The writer went out the front window and the school marm out at the back door. I saw the roiling prairie in front and the light of day still hanging high in the western

sky, I went humming "home sweet home" bare headed and bare footed and never looked back. A neighbor boy came down in a day or so with my books, and straw hat and a note from the little school marm stating that she had decided to go on a vacation. I remember very well when a small boy we had a old deaf school master; his name was Smith. He used a large horn to hear with and when that horn was not in action or Smith was out of the room or taking his usual evening smooch there was sure to be something going at times. One end of the long slab we set on would suddenly rise up and we would all tumble down in a heap on the floor. There was always some one on the alert for Smith. I will never forget that horn; it answered a double purpose for Smith to hear through and crack the crusts of school children. Those were happy days but the viciousness of more that half a century are now between the writer and them. O how I am I would feel young again if I could visit the scene of my childhood days and look once more at the swimming pool and the playground at school which furnished the innocent sports and past times of childhood days. I would love to lie down at the cool spring

and drunk my fill as I did many times
when a boy. The earth was our
play ground. every day was a joy -
the sun made a jewel of light - so
was the moon and the bright stars
watched over us as sentinel in the
far off city of our God. So I sit
here in far away China alone and look
back to the Eden of childhood's brightest
days. The poet who wrote "Twenty
Years Ago" expressed my sentiments
and feelings exactly. but in my case
the time should be fifty instead
of twenty years and no trace of any-
thing save the hills and hollows, the
cool spring and murmuring brooks
between and the same moon and
stars above. And the voices I
listen to there are silent and cheer
me no more and the spirits of those
who were fair are gone to a far
brighter shore. How glad I will be
when I see them up there where
love is our ? for death and its
grave cannot keep them in silence
for ever from Heaven.

It is now 11 PM and I must bid you
good night.

Your affectionate
Father

H. B. Steggs

My Dear

Aug. 12, 03

In 1910 our Hudson wrote this letter to your great great granddad Richard, my Dad. In it Hudson tells Richard that he is sending him his honorable discharge papers from the Shanghai Volunteer Corps.

Let's talk about that long gone fighting unit. Richard, in its uniform is pictured, in uniform, in your copy of our tree.

In 1900 a secret society, called the "Boxers" attempted to drive foreigners out of China and force native converts to renounce Christianity. The foreigners in Shanghai knew that this uprising was coming and so each embassy formed a company that together formed the Corps.

Richard was a member of the American company.

When the uprising took place, this outfit protected the foreigners until marine and army units from France, England, The U.S. and other countries came in and took over the job.

During Hudson's army service he said that his outfit looked for bushwhackers and weed men.

Hudson, 14th Cavalry served in southwest Mo and Northeast Ok.

Now, the bushwackers: In all of our states were confederate sympathizers. These border states, Mo. was one, had more of them than you could shake a stick at!

Now lets stop right here so dont you get any smartaleky ideas in your head about stick shaking. Let the record show: I'm now and ever was against the shaking of sticks but in this one case - I approve. However, let this be the last time you perform this disgusting display.

Now back to the bushwackers - Some of the sympathizers would carry on their own private war by sniping at union troops from hiding. Working from behind bushes - ambush - The 14th Cav. by their patrolling, helped hold down this activity.

As for his "looking for red men" if you ever read about the battle of Pea Ridge (Pea Ridge is just a few miles south in Ark. below south west Mo.) you will find out that there the Confederate Army had there at Pea Ridge a mounted regiment of Cherokees. These red men's reservation was in north east Ok. just across the line from south west Mo.

The presence of the 14th in that area had a very calming effect on the confederate Cherokees. They were less than 50 miles away.

To give you an idea as to the number of proconfederates in this neck of the woods - Neosho was the confederate capital of Mo. and its located about 30 miles from the S.W. corner of the state.

Isn't it nice to have the old ones talk to you through these letters? I enjoy -

Love you
Great granddad. Harold.

Shanghai, Jan 17-10

R. L. Stagg Esq
Valparaiso Ind.

Dear Son: Your very welcome letter of Dec. 11th, longer than usual and therefore more interesting came to hand in due time.

I was greatly pleased to note you held your grades up so well on first examination and hope you will continue to show the same good record in all those yet to come. I also note with deep interest your somewhat lengthy comment on the subject of sympathy as it relates to your Mother's return to Santa Cruz, and although I do not exactly agree with all your counsel on your Mother's return to Santa Cruz yet sufficiently endorse them to refrain from any argument on that subject.

There is no question but that Claudio has a large capacity to take on sympathy and help too but he says that he has the ranch house in great shape and I have written them to sell it and hope they will do so by the time I am through here in China. Now in regard to a longer stay here, I have this to state - Each Co. here is very anxious for me make contract for one more year and give me a lay off with pay for three or four months from May. This would enable

me to return here in the fall with
Mama and Edith too if she not take
up school and give us about two
thousand clear for the years work.

Let me know in your answer to this
what you think of this plan - it will
reach me in time to decide. It will
give me great pleasure to include in
this letter your "Honorable Discharge"
from the Co. here of the Shanghai
Volunteers. You will be very proud of
it no doubt and take good care of it
for years to come as a good reminder
of the soldier life you had in far off

China and also of the many comrades
and friends you left here in Shanghai
when you sailed for native land.

Your father was discharged from the U.S.
army before he was of age. Having lost
my discharge but not the recollection
of incidence inspiration and hardship of
that soldier life. Our regiment was
"mounted infantry" but your father
never could ride a horse and every
time he tried to ride one it was a
question whether he would ride the
horse or the horse would ride him
with the chances largely in favor of
the horse. I was really too young and
inexperianced to know how to load
a gun and shoot it with any degree
of danger to the enemy or safety to
to myself or the gun. So as good

such would have it; the old captain gave me the bugle to blow and I can hear the echo of these calls come back to me at night clear and well defined as when I blew them forty five years ago. We scoured the hills of southwest Mo. for bushwackers after that took a long search for the red man of the west but all in vain we never met the enemy one or fired a single gun at a foe and I am glad to state that at the end of our service we mustered out and back into citizenship and industrial life, exactly the same number as that we mustered out as at the beginning. That was the only successful regiment in the war or that I ever heard of or read of in history. When we returned there were no father fond mothers to mourn, no widows to weep and no sweet hearts to bleach and we left no bones of comrades behind to "bleach upon the sands of Georgia". All well that ends well" and better was the end than the beginning. Such being the case, who can estimate or describe the horrors of war. Therefore in the language of Gen. Grant who was a man of duty, not ambition, "Let us have peace" though it may seem plausible to many and even

right to a few, to justify war; however
the and desolation and death
are there all the same, and all its paltry
honors are built upon human wreck
and ruin. War is hell and every man
in it is a sort of fiend turned loose
to destroy and lay waste and ruin.
In this life we have two principles or
motives, one is to live, the other is
hate. The former created the universe
and all there is in it, but the latter
exists only to pervert and destroy. How
clearly these two are defined, as
light and darkness, good and evil,
straight and crooked, health and disease,
right and wrong, happiness and
misery and in the end heaven or hell.
This is the great problem of life
which has addressed its self to men
every age of the world. Law, divine
law, natural law all sufficient
and universal is every where and
in every thing to reward the good
and punish the evil, love to God
is above the law and raises the
man to heaven, hatred is beneath
it and gives its possessor over to
torment and there are no exceptions
to this rule in human. So
the real and most important laws
of life are not to be found upon
the they meet us face to face
in real life, there be divine

P.S. Will send you the
Henry Poole bank bill by next
mail and keeps the other on
deposits.

5

appointment the same yesterday,
today and forever. Therefore let us
not be deceived, God is not cannot
be mocked. Whatsoever a man
soweth that shall he also reap.

Cæsar was a wonderful man and
had he lived in the present age might
have a good man. The night before
his assassination he was much
warrid over the refuted ill omen
of Carphurnas — "Be it so then"
said he "if I'm to die tomorrow that
is what I am to do tomorrow. It
will not because I am willing it
should be there nor shall I escape
it because I am unwilling. It is
God's when but in myself how I
shall die, if these omens are from
the Gods their adminition is not
to prepare me to escape but to meet
it. What is there that Cæsar has
not done with as much honor as
ancient heroes Cæsar has not yet
died but Cæsar is ready to die.
so was Socrates, John Brown and
many others. Your affection Father

Good Night.

H. R. Steegs