

The End of a GREAT INNINGS

A Little Aussie Battler heads for the Pavilion

Charles Bliss, the largely unsung inventor of Semantography, a system of symbol writing whose time is still to come, died on 13th July 1985 in Prince of Wales Hospital, Randwick after a short illness.

At the suggestion of Rev Ted Noffs, a memorial service is to be held for him at the Wayside Chapel, 29 Hughes Street, Potts Point on Saturday, 1st February at 10:00am.

At the service, the documentary film **MR SYMBOL MAN**, produced by the Film Board of Canada and Film Australia, will be shown and members of the congregation will be invited to share stories about their association with Charles.

Semantography

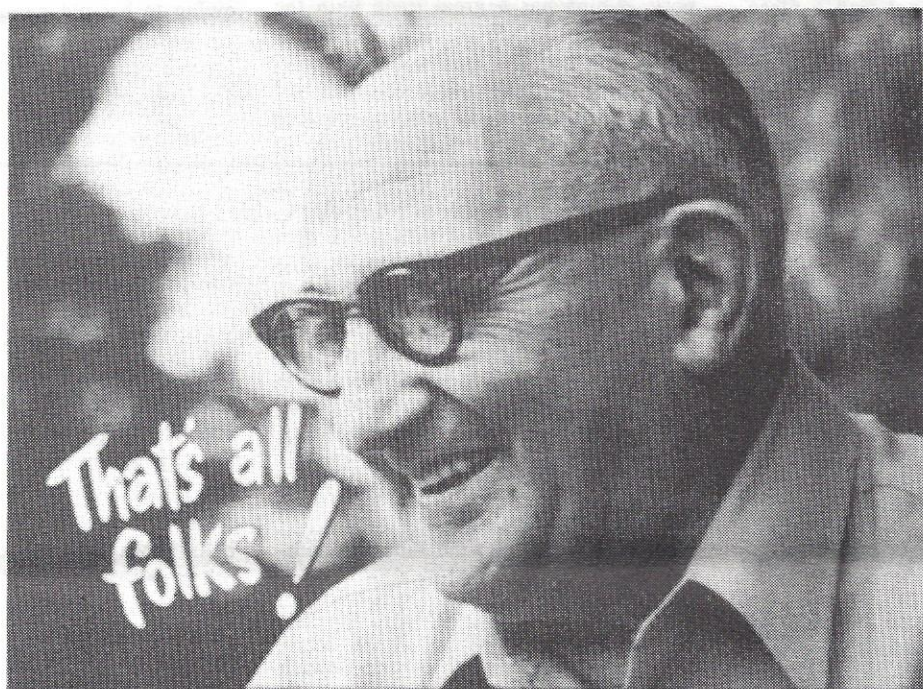
Blissymbolics

Newsletter

After this part of the service, the congregation will move to Coojee beach where Charles' wishes concerning the disposal of his ashes and those of his beloved Claire will be carried out.

Negotiations are proceeding with Film Australia in the hope they will be able to attend to record the Epilogue to the remarkable Charles Bliss story.

The trustees of the Semantography Trust Fund and those who were working closely with Charles hope that a large number of people will be able to attend these ceremonies to reminisce and to give Charles and his work some of the recognition missing during his lifetime.



Not quite Charles, it's our turn now...see page 8

Published by: **SEMANTOGRAPHY TRUST FUND**
13 Warrington Avenue Epping NSW 2121 AUSTRALIA Tel: (02) 868 3778
Apple LaserPrint by City Personal Computers 55 York Street Sydney

In the days before Semantography

Many of us are familiar with Charles Bliss published works. But what occupied his mind before he received the vision of his logical writing for an illogical world? How did Charles Bliss the author and publisher differ from Charles Bliss the fugitive refugee? What was life in Shanghai like in 1940?

The following is the surviving part of a letter, a carbon copy of which was amongst Charles' papers. It was written to an unknown addressee within weeks of his arrival in Shanghai. As he could only write a little in the evenings, he took three weeks to write it.

DATELINE: Shanghai, October 1940

"Of course, the very first question every refugee is putting before himself is: am I here safe at last? And looking round in all those millions of strange Chinese faces, one can't help feeling to be a foreigner and at the mercy of these people. But if we look around the whole world, we will not find a place, where we could not be afraid to be persecuted as Jews except in the British Empire, but unfortunately here we are considered as "enemy" aliens and in Great Britain, all are already interned, although this is a measure which we have to understand.

The anti-semitism in the United States is going in high waves, not to speak about South America, where the German influence is doing its bit. But here in China, we are not the persecuted Jewish people. I am already acquainted with a Chinese student, a very fine fellow, and yesterday he asked me the question: "Please, what is this, a Jew?" He had not the slightest idea and it was not easy to make clear to him. And this is the case with the whole Chinese nation.

We are here white men but even better of them the British who have done a lot in the past in humiliations, as they admit themselves. Remember the opium wars, the Boxer upheavals etc. Not until recent years posters have been affixed on the public gardens: "Chinese and dogs are not admitted". They know we are refugees and they know what this means refugees as there are always refugees in China, refugees from the war, from floods, from famine etc. Moreover the Chinese people involved in a great

struggle know that they can count on the help of white men, especially the United States. So their feeling against the white men has now completely changed.

Furthermore, Shanghai is the undeclared capital of China and its greatest port. China has a great trade with the other world, a trade which is increasing every year and if China wants to trade, with other nations, representatives of the other nations have to be at least in

one spot in China and this is Shanghai, and if the other white men will be allowed to stay here, we Jewish refugees will be allowed to stay too.

We Jewish refugees have to see the problem from another angle. 25 years back, nobody would believe that it is possible that we would be driven out from Central Europe, the heart of the culture. But it happened. And as we are facing the same danger all over the world, because it seems to become a worldwide fashion to prosecute the Jew, perhaps we will be safer here in China, a nation which is extremely peaceful, owing to her old culture. And after all, we have not much of another chance. So this group of 20,000 Jewish refugees are carrying on and in a remarkable way.

A visit to Hongkew Camp

"The word 'camp' means something dreadful for us"

I have continued this page after a few days, because I am running the whole day, after the business opportunities and today, I have been in Hongkew. This is the former part of the International Settlement now controlled by the Japanese.

I have to say that the Japanese authorities are not molesting the Jewish refugees in any way. They can do there what they want. Here in Hongkew is living the greater part of the Jewish refugees. There are a few camps and I expressed my desire to see one of those camps and where the conditions are the worst. So I was led by a friend to the camp in Ward Road.

The word "camp" means something dreadful for us, but here I saw a couple of houses around a courtyard. The courtyard itself was a beautiful garden with masses of flowers. The largest house

has a verandah, where some washing was hanging as usual. In the courtyard were many people sitting on benches and chatting. I looked in the great kitchen, where the meals are prepared and I looked in the rooms.

Here I saw an unusual sight. Many beds, always two beds one above the other but with ample space between them, and everything very clean. All people were neatly dressed in clean clothes. I could not see any dreadful sight. I saw many workshops, tailors, shoemakers, electricians, mechanics where many people were working and they looked satisfied with their work. Of course, it is dreadful to be compelled to live with two other families in one room, but they have their rooms and they get their meals and they are not hungry and they are in a free country and they are not molested in any way

and I think this is the point. Otherwise people would not get such dreadful letters from their relations in Europe begging them to take them to Shanghai.

I was told that the other camps are much better and much nicer. Hongkew itself was nearly completely destroyed in the war in 1937 and is now a little warring town nearly completely re-built. Many streets are rebuilt by the Jews themselves and it is a curious experience when you walk through these streets. The names and descriptions over the shops are German. There are refugees selling the "Abendblatt" and the "Shanghai Jewish Chronicle", which is also written in German. There are many thousands of Jews who have not any opportunity to speak with an Englishman. And the same happened as in

in Hampstead.

They speak their language, they know German. I saw a shop "Wiener Konditorei" and I couldn't resist the temptation. I went in and I found all famous delicacies, doboschtorte and cremeschnitten and nusstorte and pischingertorte big pieces only 25 cents: that means a little more than a US cent and excellently made.

Sitting there, I looked out from the window and saw another shop opposite the street "Herr Hutmacher" and underneath "Ehemaliger Hutmacher des Wiener Burg und Operntheaters" and you can find other shops in the same style.

Then you realise that this Jewish group has built up here a little town of their own and they did it in a remarkable way.

neon lights at the Paris Boulevards and Piccadilly Circus and Berlin Kurfürstendamm, but I must say that Shanghai at night is much more beautiful and exciting, with all colours and those thrilling Chinese characters of the Chinese writing.

The daily turnover at the Shanghai Stock Exchange amounts to about 1M shares according to the newspapers. If the "China incident" will be settled and the whole country one economic unit, the commercial possibilities are not calculable. There are 400 millions of people who begin to awake.

The Chinese have already here in Shanghai in many houses their radio receiver (believe it or not there are exactly 42 radio stations here and they broadcast each evening and the whole day, like any other broadcasting station, each newspaper, each nation, the Americans, the Germans, the British etc. all missionary stations and above all many Chinese stations).

The Chinese are hungry for all those things which modern technique can give. They learn it with a tremendous speed and the factories are growing. Already now half of the exports of China goes through the Shanghai port and the port of Shanghai is the fifth biggest port in the world.

And now friends, comes one thing which is exciting, although it belongs only to the Settlement, there are no taxes here the only one tax is including in the rent of the house or the flat. Could you imagine a spot in the world without any tax officer, without any income tax, without any "Fatierung" at the end of March? This is Shanghai!

But now you will ask: "What does it look like?" I enclose a photo which is very bad indeed but it gives a good indication about this vast city. In the background not clearly to be seen are the skyscrapers of the BUND which is the Broadway of Shanghai. Here are the prominent banks, the newspapers and the most prominent firms.

The streets are very wide and excellently asphalted and paved. They are perfectly clean every time. Many streets have fine trees planted and are looking like an alley. The most beautiful part of the town is the western part of the French Concession which looks like the Cottage of Vienna or Hampstead in London. The streets in the city are a bit narrow, as they represent the

The Shanghai economy

"I was astonished with so much cleverness..."

In fact, I hear around a lot and I saw a lot and I spoke with many people and they all said that they had built up a shop with such a little money. "We wouldn't be able to do this in any other country," they say and I must confirm this because I already have a fine office with very nice steel tube easy chairs, steel tube divan, a wonderful writing desk with a turnable chair a carpet, two fine working desks with many drawers and I paid for all this exactly SSH350 or about US17. I have a telephone and I pay for this exactly SSH10 a month including 150 telephone calls, which means about US 50¢ a month and each call over 150 calls will be charged with SH3¢ which is nearly incalculable in US cents.

I forgot to say that I bought the abovementioned furniture brand new and not secondhand. This leads us to the commercial situation in Shanghai.

Shanghai is now cut off from the hinterland of 400 millions of inhabitants but nevertheless its export is tremendous. A friend told me that the monthly export of Shanghai figures about SH\$900M which is about US \$45M. There are here about 3,000 factories and the telephone directory a thick book, gives you a little indication about the enormous industrial centre.

There are here no less than 25 electric lamp manufacturers; there are 8 glass

factories. (We had in Austria about 5 electric lamp factories and only two glass factories.) There are here over 120 chemical factories; 20 ice factories; 50 paper factories; not to speak about the enormous cotton mills and the hundreds of weavers. There are many pages in the classified telephone directory only weavers.

I saw pianos built by Chinese craftsmen; I saw bicycles very good made and only SSH120 retail price which means about \$US6, including free service during one year. I saw the carpenters, the radio mechanics, the watch makers, the silversmiths, and I was astonished with so much cleverness and fine craftsmanship.

Take for instance the neon light signs. An advertisement of four or five words for instance "Barcelona Restaurant Wine and Beers" would have cost in Vienna a few thousand schillings. Here you can hire it for exactly SSH10 a month; that is less than US\$50 if you make an agreement for three years. I saw those young boys making the neon glass tubes. How quick, how intelligent. Boys of about 14 years of age.

This incredible cheapness of neon signs makes Shanghai a beautiful city at night. The Chinese are like children. They like everything which looks nice in colours and in light. I have seen the

old part of the town. They are always overcrowded with passers-by. Here are the finest shops, chiefly run by Chinese. The shops are very elegant and the displayed goods of excellent quality.

But now what about all those reports

about barbed wire, barricades, armed cars etc. Of course, they are here but nobody cares about. The difference between the International Settlement and the French Town regarding those things is amusing.

where in China this is the same as if you have read in a Viennese newspapers that there is cholera somewhere in Turkey.

Although there is great poorness among many thousands of the Chinese, as many of them are themselves refugees, they keep themselves very clean, except for a few cases, of course. They are dressed mostly in white or light colours and you will find no dirty spots on their white shirts. You know the Chinese are the born laundry people and you see them always washing.

The Chinese ladies are well dressed and many of them like little porcelain figures, really very nice. The Portuguese girls (this is the meaning of a mongrel) are charming. Many women are dressed in long very simple robes, which are not only nice, but cheap and easy to make. All Chinese are very thankful if you treat them like one of yourself. If I stand up in the bus, trolley bus or tram to offer my seat to a Chinese woman, the whole car is brightened with delight and everybody seems to thank me for my attitude.

I have started to learn Chinese, sitting in the bus, and immediately the other passengers sitting near you being aware, that you are learning their language, are immediately delighted to help you. A businessman, who lived for many years in Shanghai, told me, you can trust a Chinese businessman, they are mostly honest, but be on your watch against a European man.

The houses are well built, will all conveniences. There are here marvelous flat houses, like in London, but really skyscrapers with 156 storeys and more, with everything you want. Electric refrigerators, and airconditioning, and lifts, house telephones, in brief, these houses could be in London or in New York and they would be also there exclusive.

Security arrangements Chinese style

"They show great activity on account of some high officer..."

In the International Settlement, which is controlled by American soldiers chiefly, and after the withdrawal of the British troops by the volunteer corps and a small part by Italian marines, you will see nothing. You will see a policeman, only regulating the traffic. Once in three weeks, I saw a patrol of six soldiers going through the streets, but it looks as if they have been bored and went out for a walk.

The defence sector B is, according to newspaper reports which I read in Canada, to be controlled after the withdrawal of the British troops by Americans and Japanese but I haven't seen any Japanese soldier patrolling. In fact, there is nothing to patrol.

The population is extremely peaceful. Sometimes, some robbery occurs or some political kid-napping or murder. But first there is war going on and second this is a town with 5 millions of inhabitants and I am sure that the criminal statistic will be much better than for instance Chicago.

After all, have you been troubled by Messerstechereien in Ottakring or in the Prater or have you seen one of those things? The same is here. If you wouldn't read the newspapers or the Court rubric you wouldn't know it. You cannot see anything of this kind in the street.

Contrary to the complete absence of any police or soldiers in the International Settlement, the police in the French town is amusing. They have many streets completely barricaded with barbed wire, but through the streets nearby many hundreds of thousands of people are passing quietly. On some spots there are standing about 8 policemen with bren guns, other automatic pistols, guns and revolvers and the finger right on the trigger, you don't know against whom because ten thousand are passing through them, without being

molested in any way. Only once I saw them searching in the Chinese passers-by for arms, but they did it apparently only because some high officer was approaching. Or you see sometimes and armoured car of the French police rushing through the streets and a man standing behind the machine gun and again the finger on the trigger.

Another day everything is disappeared. The barricades are removed and placed in another street and you see hardly one policeman. I couldn't get the right information about this rushing. People believe that they show only great activity on account of some high officer, who want them keeping active.

It will be of interest to know that about 90% of the police in the Settlement and the French town are Chinese, tall, strong and handsome looking fellows the others are Russians or Sikhs marvelous tall Indians with turbans and beards and only a few are English or French officers.

The Health Department does excellent work. There are no diseases here at least not more than in any other European town. You know that in Vienna, there were always a few cases of typhoid in the hospital and this is the same here. There is no cholera or anything else and if you read in the newspaper that there are cases of Cholera some-

Climatic influences

"I would be already united with my wife"

Now you will ask what about this terrible climate. You have heard a lot. After all, Shanghai is situated on the same degree of latitude as the Sahara Desert. I must confess I myself was frightened about the climate as I am

afraid of heat, making me tired and slow. I have read letters about this terrible heat, and in my imagination, I believed that Shanghai must look like south Italy, Calabria or Malta, with sunburned hills without any trace of

grass, without any trees, only some palms or so.

I was much surprised when passing the banks of the river in our boat to see beautiful meadows, with long fat grass, and marvellous fresh green trees of any king although it was the end of August, when we arrived. But astonishingly there was no terrible heat. On the contrary, a fresh cool breeze was blowing from the Pacific and you have not the tired feeling of sweating in the damp.

I had in mind all those terrible letters about the terrible heat and I was much surprised. Expressing my feeling, my friends said "Oh, you are lucky, but fourteen days ago, it was not bearable." "Alright," I said and went through the streets, happy that I escaped the hottest time.

My friends want me to show something of Shanghai's night life. So we went to a Russian dance bar. It was very elegant, we saw interesting performance like "Blauer Vogel", a marvellous jazz band and extremely cheap. We took an ice cream cost SH\$1.5 (is about US7¢). We sat in a nice garden. At 11 o'clock, a friend rose and said he must go home because he is "half erforen". Half an hour later, the ladies of our party said they have "eisgekühlte Füß" and this in spite of they have danced the whole time. So, I said: "Listen boys, what are you talking about this terrible heat? There is no heat at all. It is wonderful cool here and it was not hotter than in Vienna to-day in the streets." "Oh," they said, "you are lucky, you have escaped the most terrible time."

Then I made inquiries and now I learned the truth. There are only two extremely hot months in the year. July and August, but the other time is a very fine weather and in winter you have to heat the stove and close all the windows in order to keep you warm. The advertisements in the newspaper are already giving good advice: "Get your coal now!"

My dear friends, I must confess, I finish this letter on the 2nd of October, already in my new home. I wrote each evening a little, running at daytime all over the places, I am sure you will excuse this. But I have to say that already I experience the cool weather. I must close all the windows at night and take a second blanket, to feel warm in bed, and today the sun is shining, but it is

wonderful fresh and cool.

This is the truth about Shanghai and I am very sorry about all the lies and exaggerations I heard. Of course, refugees who are compelled to go to Shanghai when others have been able to go to France, the Holland, to Belgium, to England have pitied themselves that they poors had no other way as to go to this terrible place. I saw a letter from Gildemester stating "Ich bin gegen jede Emigration nach Shanghai, weil ich es für Wahnsinn halte, Wenschen in den Tod zu schicken."

If only one man had told me the truth one year ago. I would be already united with my wife, with my mother and brothers and sisters who are now in Cernauti under Russia and I do not know if I will see them in my life. I am angry about anybody I spoke in the past

about Shanghai and who did not tell me the truth.

As I said at the beginning of this letter it is a bad quality of human beings not to see the good things or to minimise them, but exaggerate the bad things and above all to want to be pitied. Otherwise, I couldn't understand all those terrible letters I heard about and read, dealing with the terrible conditions in Shanghai.

I am quite sure, my dear friends, that you have experienced the same, and I am sure, you will be astonished about my report. Believe me, I do not exaggerate. This is not my habit. Being well acquainted with many towns in Europe, I am able to judge and this is my impression, which is shared by many other people, who think impersonal.

The departure from England

"It was a betrayal, nothing else and a terrible setback"

I came here with a friend of mine with which I made in London an agreement. Although himself a chemist and the owner of a factory in Vienna, (even inherited from his father) he suffered from an inferiority complex, exaggerated by his little knowledge of the English language, which made him quite helpless, when dealing with any firm or with any authority. He had some money, but was quite unable to find any job in London.

He was aware that internment will be inflicted upon all refugees in the end and he was excited about my idea to go to Shanghai as there was no other possibility and to start some business. He felt himself quite unable to start anything as having always been the boss and therefore knows only a little about the job which the master and foreman did in his factory.

So he said he will lend me some money for the landing money and will also make a deposit of landing money in order to obtain a permit for Claire. My duty is to clear all his affairs in London, which have been very difficult as they have been mostly banking transactions and you know how difficult it was to get your money out from England in this time. Furthermore, he promised to give some money so that we can start some business in Shanghai,

using my knowledge of many technical things.

I fulfilled the first part of our agreement. I run with him to the Bank of England and to the other banks, to the travel bureaux, to the Passport Office, to the Exit Permit Officer, to the Canadian Pacific, to the steamship company, to the forwarding agent and so on. For many weeks I had no lunch sitting always in the bus and running everywhere.

The Bank opposed the whole transfer of the money and there were many other difficulties. But in the end, I managed everything and I brought him over to Shanghai, just in time that he got letters from his friends stating that they are all interned and many of them just the next day we left Liverpool.

I forgot to tell that he wanted that our agreement of common work should be made for a period of ten years. But after arrival in Shanghai, he cancelled suddenly all his promises. It was a betrayal, nothing else and a terrible setback. If I wouldn't have the money for the landing money for Claire which a very generous Englishman lent me, without asking for any receipt, I would be the unhappiest man. But thanks to the generosity of this fine Englishman, I was able to make all arrangements for Claire's coming. I have made some

memorandums in London for firms and I got some money, so I was not without any money, which would have been disastrous. If you have not any money

here, you are lost, as everywhere.

So I was not discouraged by his betrayal, but went ahead and looked out for some business. I saw four possibilities.

Tinker, tailor, soldier, sailor, rich man...

"This seems crazy, but first I am perfectly moviecrazy"

First I could go as a musician to a Jazz band. They are well paid. But then I saw their work, playing the whole night, I found out that there is always time for me to do this job, if everything else failed. I bought in London an excellent banjo, with a marvelous tone, with which I would be able to find immediately a position.

Second, I could go as an engineer in a factory, but they are very bad paid, as the Chinese are learning very quick, the whole job and they are satisfied with very little. Furthermore you do not get any contract and you are always at the mercy of your employer. I worked 18 years in factories and I am fed up with being an employee and always on the kick.

The third possibility was to interest some capitalist in any factory business and to build up the factory. Again, I heard from other refugees that this is very difficult. The uncertain situation first, then any Englishman or American do not trust you so much. If he wants to start any factory he buys the whole equipment in the United States. And to get acquainted with any Chinese capitalist is very difficult, especially if you are only a few weeks in Shanghai and know nobody here.

Being nearly without money, I had now the only chance, to start something of my own which does not need much money. I could be for instance a consulting engineer, working for electric lamp factories, etc.

But I have heard that this is a very bad job. The Chinese factory owners are paying very little and they give you perhaps once a year a job and they want to pay only if the problem is completely solved and they have ways to get out your knowledge from you and then say that they are not satisfied. Besides, I hate to wait for work.

So I had the idea, which I sponsored already in London, namely to go to the film business.

But here again, the difficulties are great. First there is here a film production and a quite considerable one, but completely Chinese. They make Chinese films and it would be completely unthinkable to get here a better paid job as I do not understand the language and moreover have not the slightest idea about the Chinese mentality and their art.

So, dear friends, I have started a film business of my own, being my own producer, my own director, cameraman, scriptgirl, cutter and distributor. This seems crazy, but first I am perfectly movie crazy and second...now listen.

First I had to get rid of this comparatively expensive boarding house. (Expensive, if you do not earn any money!) I was in need of an office whether for my film business or as a consulting engineer or anything else. And I looked out for an office, with perhaps a little living room behind. So I would spare to pay double rent, I had to give notice on the boarding house on 15th September.

So I had to run and look. It is very difficult to get an office, or a shop, or even a room. But I run and I found it in

the end. It is in the most finest business quarters and near the big hotels and much better close to the big clubs, the Racing Club, the British Country Club, the Americans Women Club, the American Navy Club etc.

To go to the banking quarters means an 8 minute ride by bus or tram. It is situated on the first floor, in a new house. There is an entrance through a stamp shop (for collectors) run by a Viennese refugee, and I have not only all facilities, but also a little shop window for me, to display what I want. I am thinking about a neon sign, as it is very cheap here.

On the first floor, I have a big room, with two great windows, and very well looking. The other room has a good basin with running water, a power electric meter with a stand for an electric kitchen. Both rooms are divided through a thick wall, made of wood, which represents nothing else than built-in wardrobes, right up to the ceiling.

I have so much space, that after putting in all my belongings, the wardrobes look half empty. The painter, the decorator, the joiner did good work, according to my ideas. I bought very nice and incredible cheap furniture, as told in a foregoing page, and now I have an office, which is also quite big enough to make indoor filmshots and exclusive enough, to receive the best and exclusive members of the Society of Shanghai. And this is the idea, because I could only deal with those people who receive their salary in Sterling or US dollars.

A journalist in slow motion

"I do not know who Charles K. Bliss is..."

Now let me tell you, the results I have achieved since I hired the office, that means within the last three weeks. I have shown already part of my film "Sehnsucht nach dem Süden" with English titles to members of the American Colony, and others. I have already access to the Rotary Club of Shanghai, as you know the most exclusive industrialist Club.

There was there a special film performance about the new slow motion film and after the performance I sat

down and wrote a report about.

Being afraid of having made many errors, I went to the wife of the Director of the American School, who I know already, and I was astonished to so, that I made only very few mistakes. But my astonishment grew as my report was immediately accepted for publication by the most prominent and leading English newspaper in the Far East, the "North China Daily News".

I enclose a cutting of this rather long article, which fills a whole column, and

I must say, that I am terribly proud, that I was able to publish an article not only in English, but in this exclusive newspaper and exactly four weeks after my arrival.

The article found wide appreciation. I approached the Professor for Photography on the Henry Lister Institute for Medical Research, and the leader of the Shanghai Camera and Film Club, with a special print, which I got from the Editor. He was very pleased to make my acquaintance and I was pleased to hear from him, that he has already cut out the article from the newspaper for his library.

The Director's wife of the American School, wrote to me a letter and invited me to have dinner with her family and she added: "The article is fine!! I have already heard a compliment for you from someone who did not know we were

friends."

Then I heard that it was nobody else than Mr Hager the President and Director of the Asia Theatres Inc. which include the most prominent and leading Cinemas of Shanghai, the Grand Nanking, Cathay, Metropole and American Corporation. And this Mr Hager wrote a letter to the editor, which I saw too. I will put here the last paragraph:

"I was very much interested to see in your paper this morning a splendid account of this exhibition of slow motion film. I did not know who Charles K. Bliss is, but I must congratulate you on having an exceptionally fine report."

So with this article I have established at once my reputation as a film expert not only in the Society, but also in the real big film business. And now I found open doors at the Eastman Kodak Co. and this means real business.

Charles becomes an agent for Kodak

"I will be silent for a while in order to build up my business"

Yesterday the important conversation took place and it was a full success. The Eastman Kodak Co. is ready to give me the whole Film-Service for Film-Amateurs, which means a lot as there are many requests from incoming tourists and members of the Society to have their film spools titled, edited etc.

The Kodak Co had not the right man at hand, who knows this job and they will therefore gladly accept any incoming orders and forward it to me. Already there are customers interested in my service although I haven't yet started.

The Kodak Co. agreed that my letter paper should bear the sentence **Film-Service for the EASTMAN KODAK CO.** and they have asked me for an estimate, as I made a very interesting and unusual design and they are inclined to pay the cost of my letter paper.

Furthermore they have agreed that all my circular letters to incoming tourists at the Hotels, and the residents of Shanghai should be printed free of charge on their own Gestetner machine.

Perhaps, my dear friends, you will still not be able to guess what my real business is, or will be, so I enclose the drafts of the two circular letters which will be sent to people in Shanghai within the next weeks. They are not yet corrected, as I wrote them simply

down, but a director of Kodak has already undertaken the task to translate them in good English, but preserve "the enthusiasm in it" as he said.

I wrote a letter to the President of the big Cinemas of Shanghai, thanking him for his appreciation of my article, telling him about my new business and then continuing: *"My aim is to interest greater circles in Shanghai in film and found a Society of Friends of Film-art. I think that people must be taught, to appreciate the beauty of a scene and the great work, which is accumulated in a grand film play..."*

I hope he will "catch fire" and help me in founding the Society in question.

The manager of Kodak has the idea that I should film the China Golf Championship which will take place in Shanghai in two weeks. He will speak with the members of the Committee and I hope to get the job. If this would be really the case and I would be able to make a good and humorous film, the possibilities are great. Then I will be at once amidst the finest Society of Shanghai and I will not only acquire new customers, but I hope to sell many copies of this film. Let's hope the best.

Today the first Customer, an American has fixed up with me, to come next

days and bring his films along. Meanwhile I earn already a little money, enough to cover my meals, in giving lessons about Electricity and Chemistry to an American.

And with this I will finish my long report, which I hope will satisfy you. My only wish is to get over Claire as soon as possible to me, and then get good news from my mother and my brothers and sister. All telegrams I sent to Cernauti, came back, with the remark, "Communications interrupted". But I hope wholeheartedly that they are safe and sound and that I will be able to bring them over to me one day.

And now my dear friends, you will excuse me if I will be silent for a while, in order to build up my business. It is now up to you to answer my letter, but I am quite satisfied with one page, and you are not obliged to answer like I, for Heavens sake no.

I am sending you my kind regards and all the best for the coming New Year. Let us hope that a victorious peace will come next year."

Charles breaks the news Blitz becomes Bliss

But now I had to make a little confession. I had the difficulty with my name in England and now again here. Each time I present myself to anybody and I mention my name "Blitz" the other said with a smile "Aha, Blitzkreig!" Most of them said "Blitzkreig!" This was a nuisance and a great handicap, as there is not any other word, more odd in these times as this. So I made a little change and my official business name is Charles K. Bliss.

All my English and American friends have approved my idea. I went to the legal authorities, the Municipal Council and told them about my intention. They told me, you can do what you like, if you want you can go to the German Consulate to ask for a registration, but it is not necessary. I tried to translate "Ich habe keine Sehnsucht" and went away. So dear friends, please accept my new name. Besides as you know the translation of bliss means "Seligkeit", "Wonne" Not so bad and a common English name according to the Directory.

Reflections

Charles the human being; his last weeks; the future

As Charles leaves us for the Great Green Room where performers go after the show, his friends and co-workers are left with a great responsibility. As he intended, Charles died a pauper having progressively given such assets as came his way to the Semantography Trust Fund established under the will of his beloved Claire for the purpose of propagating the Blissymbols concept.

Another great inventor once said that mankind's great achievements are 10% inspiration and 90% perspiration. In the case of Blissymbols, they are probably about the right proportions; but to that should be added another 50% for frustration.

While reflecting on the limited use of Blissymbols in Australia, we must acknowledge a debt to Charles' Canadian friends for finding an application for his symbols. Without them and their obviously professional approach, it is very likely Charles' work would have remained in obscurity and his final years would have been both shorter, sadder and less productive.

It has been said that the Lord must have liked poor people because he made so many of them. The same can be said of Charles Bliss when it came to fighting - it kept him alive even if it was hard on the people who recognised his genius in their own way and wanted to help.

Charles has been called a "secular saint" and I believe this to be an apt description. I say that not because Charles could do no wrong for, as his executor with access to the files of a person going deaf and with a penchant for writing everything down, I know otherwise. Nor do I say it just because his work has helped crippled children. I say it because whatever Charles' failings were, he had a special ability to bring out the best in others.

In the brief time I have been Charles' executor, it has been a rare privilege to be the recipient of much kindness, co-operation and understanding from unexpected quarters, from people who would rather not be named and in some cases from people whom Charles gave the hardest time. Only Charles'

immediate co-workers can know of the extent to which he bullied and badgered some of these people. Yet it is obvious to me they were doing not only their best but what may well prove to be the best for Blissymbolics itself.

Some readers may be interested to learn of Charles' last days. A fortnight before his admission to hospital, he invited my family and me to lunch. When we met, I saw as I had on several previous occasions, most noticeably since completion of the printing of the Blissymbols Picture Book, that he was slowing down; his deafness seemed worse. But remarkably, as soon as we gathered around him and he had an audience again, he livened up and started to perform, singing and joking. He ate well and kept the conversation running all the time.

Unfortunately for much of the fortnight Charles was in hospital he was unable to recognise visitors, although there were moments in the first week when his orders to his office assistants, Pinky and Anne flowed unabated.

What next? Under the terms of an agreement with the BCI in 1982, Charles granted the BCI an exclusive, perpetual licence (excluding Australia) to disseminate information about Blissymbols for persons having learning difficulties. Within Australia, the same licence is non-exclusive.

Some of Charles' more outspoken Australian friends will no doubt say he was forced to part with the right to deal with his symbols in their most appropriate application because his work continued to remain unrecognised here for so long. Another possible interpretation is that Charles the inventor was not destined to be the propagator.

Clearly, our interests co-incide so the trustees have made it one of our earliest priorities to make known to the BCI our hope that we can work co-operatively rather than competitively.

Speaking for myself, I have been lucky enough to receive a copy of some of the material distributed by the BCI and, as a layman, I am particularly impressed by the care, dedication and expertise which are evident in their production. We look forward to a long, happy and productive association with all the many friends Charles made and Blissymbols' realisation of its full potential.

Richard Ure

Explanations and tributes

Because of Charles' wishes concerning the disposal of his ashes and the size of the task of coming to understand the present scope of his work and contacts, I have delayed a widespread notification of his death until the publication of this newsletter.

I hope Charles' friends will not be offended by this delay or if any of them do not receive a personally addressed copy of this newsletter. The address list was compiled from the substantial files in the "Paper Shop" in the garage at the rear of 2 Vicar Street, hence the inevitability of omissions. My thanks to the BCI for its announcement in issue COMMUNICATING TOGETHER.

Included amongst the tributes received:

From the BCI

"His contribution to the field of augmentative communication will always

be valued by those who use, teach and develop Blissymbols. His original work provided the foundation upon which we all can build.

Those of us who knew him will long remember his creative genius, his tireless energy, his total dedication to Semantography Blissymbolics."

From Mr Brian Stride

"My wife and I join you and all of Charles' many helpers and friends in mourning the death of this great man."

From Mr Art Tobin

"I am sure Charlie would not be offended in any way because I had a Mass offered for the repose of his lovable soul."

From the NSW Director General of Education (unaware of Charles' death)

"I congratulate you on your work and wish you every success with it."