

249 West 103rd Street,
New York City
Oct. 1st, 1918

Dear Mr. Church:-

Thank you ever so much for your kind reply to my former note regarding draft registration. I have just written to Mr. Richardson as you suggested.

My citizenship is rather peculiar, instead of being "a man without a country," as we have heard of, I seem to be a man with two countries. I applied for and obtained citizenship in China, but my papers were handed to me after America entered the war. According to a rider or clause in an Act of Congress passed in 1907, an American citizen cannot give up his citizenship when America is at war. China cannot, of course, recognize an act of American Congress as binding on her, and America has no means of enforcing her law as long as I stay out of the country, but, if Uncle Sam insists upon thrusting his privileges upon me when I travel to this land and offers me an American passport, why, I'll take all that's coming, and say, "I hope to do as much for some day, Uncle."

Double citizenship is not at all uncommon, - not in the German sense, of course, but by some freaks of law as happens in my case, where there is no international law to cover the situation. It doesn't hurt me, America or China, and America will grant my release as soon as the war is over.

The American Legation at Peking and the Chinese Board of Foreign Affairs had a little exchange of notes on my case, but I believe the Chinese Board of the Interior put some kind of stop to it and so far as I know, each country may claim me within its own borders, but neither against the other in the other's country, but in a third country I may claim protection of either or both. But for all practical purposes, now that I am in America I am an American citizen with all the privileges and duties pertaining thereon. I'll see what China has done with me when I go back.

Fine news these days; looks to me as the Turkey will be out of it soon and perhaps Austria, and the Germans out of France and back from the Belgian Coast at least before winter settles down. Thanksgiving will have something of the old fervor this year, I reckon.

Sincerely Yours
Percy B. Tripp

Source: Mary Riley Styles Library
History Room
"Tripp, Percy B."-hanging file