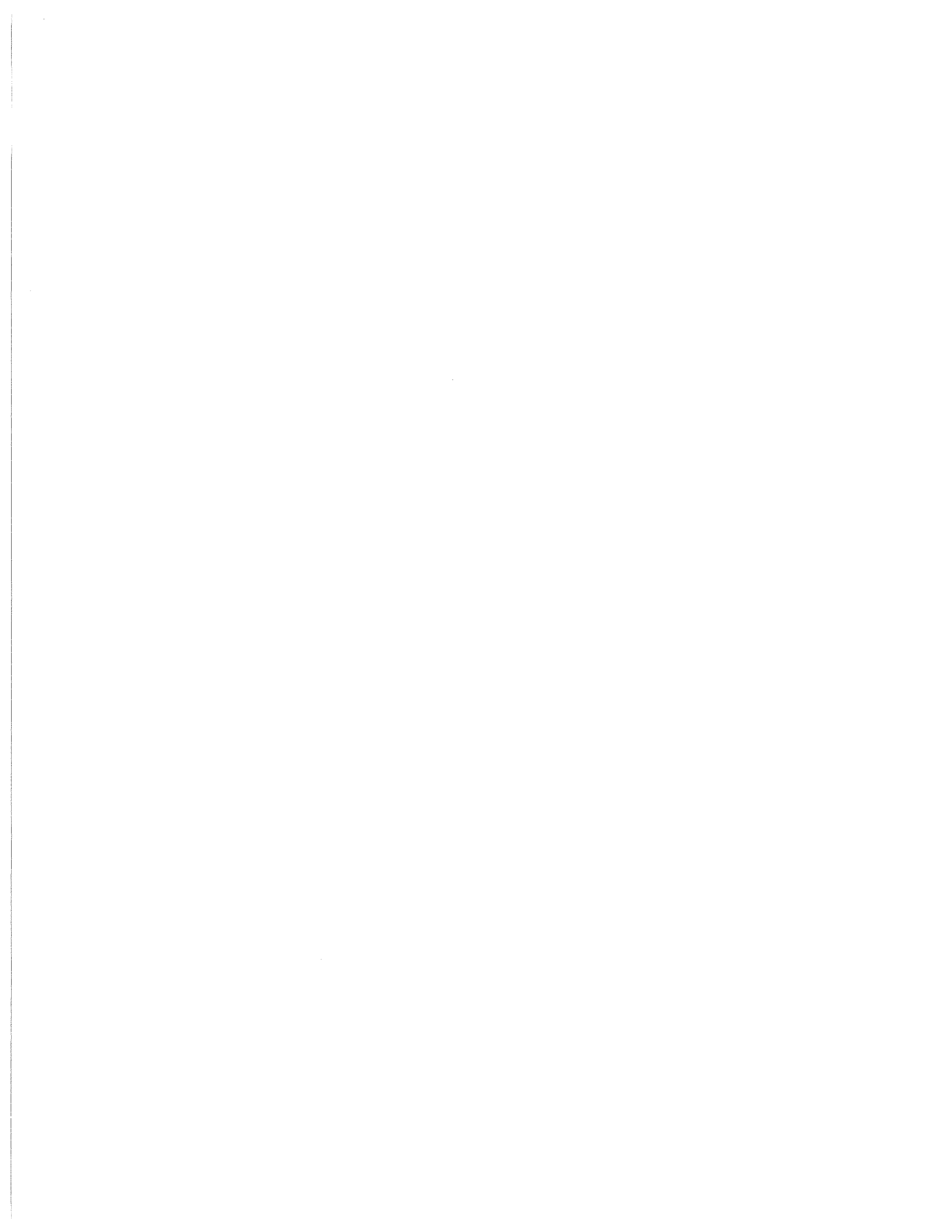


David Parsons  
CH3031 Modern Christianity  
Professor James F. Korthals  
December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2007  
Wait and See  
A Biography of Herman Klein



# 等看

## WAIT AND SEE



A Biography of Herman Klein

Rewritten, researched, and edited by David Parsons

## **PROLOGUE**

This document is the culmination of extensive historical research and from a book, Rev. Herman Klein first wrote for his family entitled, “**The Sixty Year Diary of a Gillette Razor**”. Rev. Klein and his second wife Ruth originally prepared this work and presented it to their children at a family reunion in 1978. Since then, Richard and Irene Klein retyped the original manuscript to include various family photographs and maps.

For many years, this book was in circulation within the Klein family and for years, there was talk of reworking the manuscript. Very early on, Anita Marie Parsons (Klein) hoped to compose a version of this manuscript that the public could read. Anita (Nicki) Parsons had begun to rewrite the story but never finished. I have now picked up my mother’s dream of preparing this amazing story for the public.

The original manuscript has gone through many revisions but remains intact throughout this story. The author has added or changed dates, additional details, historical inaccuracies, and grammatical structure where needed. Rev. Klein wrote this story over many months and simply wrote down his thoughts without a complete sense of order. This new revision attempts to piece together sections that my grandfather wrote out of order and places them back into a chronological order. The biggest change from the original is reworking the story into the first person. Rev. Klein wrote the original diary in the first person, yet in order to be humorous he wrote the entire account from the perspective of his trusty Gillette razor. For this reason, the original document refers to Rev. Klein as “my master.” Other details about the razor’s feelings, emotions, and perspectives were also included to give life to the razor. Although this format adds a comical touch, it makes the story cumbersome at times.

The original manuscript began as follows:

“I was born in a noisy plant, where the silence was broken by whirling machinery. I was not the only razor born in that plant. We were a radical conversion from the generally accepted straight razor. We were simply made to hold a small steel inch and a half plate with two extremely sharp edges. Two holes were stamped in these sharp plates called “blades.” By twisting the handle of the razor, the blades were clamped tightly between two plates attached to the handle. The blade was so planned that the sharp edges protruded slightly beyond the edges of the razor plate. Now, the combination of the razor blades resembled a miniature hoe. The idea was to scrape the bearded face as you would use a hoe to scrape weeds out of a garden. We thus avoided slashing the face as did the old straight razor. We gained the name “safety razor.

The Gillette Company soon had us for sale and in use throughout the land. I happened to be shipped to Independence, Kansas. This was in the year 1915. To make me more attractive to the purchasing public, I was placed in a beautiful jeweled box lined with velvet. In this box a rather odd-shaped metal contraption called a “blade-sharpener” plus a package of six blades was laid beside me. The store was so pleased with the appearance of this jeweled box and its contents that I soon found myself stared at by all the window shoppers, as I lay exposed in the display window. Boy! If I had had a chest, it would have expanded because of the praise bestowed on me.” [sic]

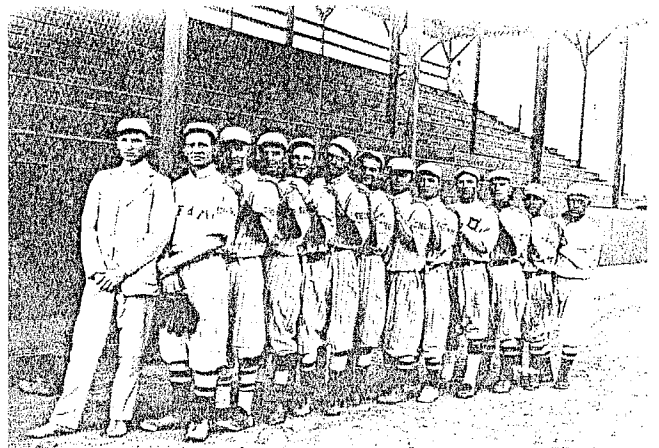
**Editor’s note:** This project has been an amazing journey as I studied the past and the challenges that faced our early missionaries in China. I hope that you enjoy this amazing story of the life of Reverend Herman Klein.

## **CHAPTER 1 - THE BEGINNING**

The year was 1915 and things were taking off in America. The turn of the century had brought with it new and exciting times. As World War One raged on in the trenches of Europe, an old and very gracious woman named Kate Baden went Christmas shopping in Independence, Kansas. She was a devout Christian, who never tired of helping any poor student who was on the road to becoming a preacher of God's Word. Mrs. Baden, a spinster of thirty some years, had gone into town to pick out a new Gillette safety razor to give to a seminary student whom she was sponsoring. That year, the school assigned Kate a young man named Herman Klein. Herman had no idea where his life would take him and his razor. Carefully, Mrs. Baden wrapped up the gift and presented it to Herman for Christmas. Herman rejoiced as he unwrapped the gift. The young student wanted a new razor as he was just old enough to gather a few fuzzy hairs on his face. Like many young men, he thought in order to be a real man he needed to start shaving. Now some 50 years later, I, Herman Klein have the opportunity to reflect back on my life. This is my story, the true story of God's amazing grace and care as I spread the gospel to the ends of the world and back again.

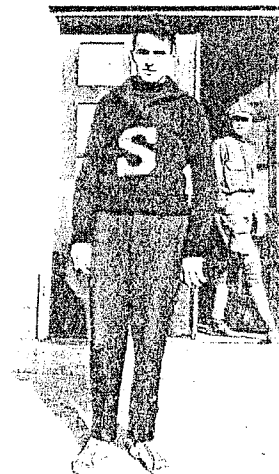
### **AT ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE**

Before I even got to the seminary, I spent five years at St. John's College in Winfield, Kansas. However, the time flew by as I kept busy in my studies and the extracurricular activities offered by the school. I tried to keep myself as active as possible in athletics. I was the pitcher for the baseball team



in the spring and played forward on the basketball team in the fall. For my efforts on the court and on the baseball diamond, I won several medals. Besides my daily homework, I even served as the manager/captain of the baseball, track, and basketball teams.

My exploits were not only limited to athletics as I became an active member of the Demosthenian Literary Society for public speaking. At one point, I even won first prize with our debate team in the oratorical and declamatory contests. Unfortunately, the same zeal and enthusiasm for public speaking and athletics can't be said of my scholastic standings. My grades were nothing to brag home about. Perhaps, it was because I was concerned more about my health than about good grades. The fear of tuberculosis was an ever present threat in my mind. My father had contracted T.B. right before I was born and for the first two years of my life, I lay in the same sick room with my father. In those days, isolation from T.B. patients was seldom practiced and sanitary conditions were at a minimum. Unfortunately, at the age of 39, when I was only two years old, my father lost his battle to this debilitating disease and died. T.B. was not gone ravaging my family for several years later, my sister Louise died of T.B. at the age of 18. When I turned eight, the disease took its final blow on my family when my brother Harry died of T.B. at the age of 15.



I was convinced that this dreaded disease would soon afflict me. So in an effort to stay clear of T.B. I conceived the idea that by staying active in all sorts of outdoor exercises I could overcome the heritage of this disease. With this theory in place, I participated in as many of the various sports offered at college as I could. In the meantime, I simply skated by as a marginal student when it came to the books. One day, during a student body assembly

in the chapel, Professor Graeber delivered a speech eulogizing the student whom he felt was the most outstanding and valuable of the entire student body. It nearly floored me when at the end of the speech Professor Graeber said, "The student who deserves this award is... Herman Klein."

In 1917, I managed to graduate from St. John's and was ready to move on to St. Louis to attend Concordia Lutheran Seminary. In the past five years, I had made numerous trips to Pueblo, Colorado where my mother was living and had spent the summers working various jobs. Many of those summers, I spent in the Kansas wheat fields where I earned a fair and honest wage working as a threshing hand. Again, I had other motives in mind for tackling such hard labor. First, as a college athlete, I wished to strengthen my muscles for the school year and to keep them conditioned. Secondly, the pay was good and I needed money to support myself at school. So, for a couple of summers I agreed to go with one of my college friends, Carl Shaaf, to work on his family's farm in Deerfield, Kansas.

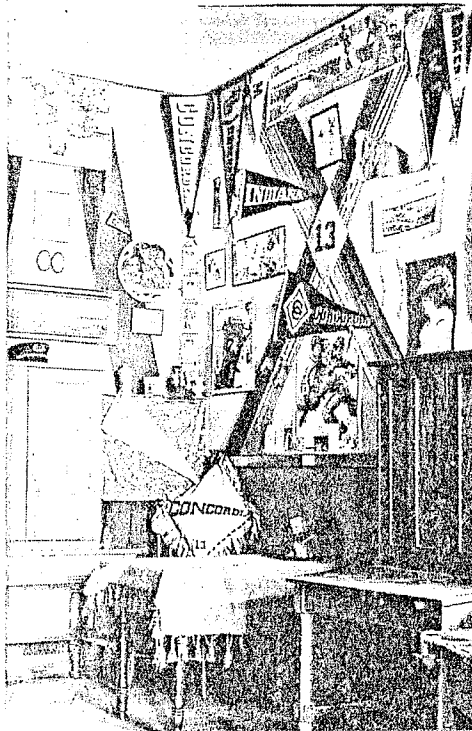
This first summer I was quite a greenhorn when it came to working on a farm. In order to cover up my ignorance and to learn about the various farm machines I sunk out early in the morning to tinker around with the farm gadgets. In that way, I could cover up my ignorance when asked to go out and use the machinery. Confident in my early morning trial and error sessions, I felt I was ready to work. Secretly, I still really didn't know a lot about the use of the implements. Yet with Carl's help, I soon learned the correct way to harness the horses and how to milk the cows. During those summer months, I enjoyed the life of a farmer as I milked five or six cows by hand and spent countless hours mowing field after field of ripe alfalfa.



When it was time for the wheat harvest, I really felt my inadequacies when competing against husky farmers in the header barges. Two men sat on the header barges to gather the wheat stalks. One man sat driving the horses or mules while other gathered the cut heads of grain as fast as possible. The other farmers all weighed well over 180 pounds while I came in at a mere 106 pounds. After 12 hours of this arduous work, I found myself dreaming all night long that I was driving a team of horses around the walls of my bedroom.

Everything that I made during the summers from my various jobs went to paying for school. In order to save money I found that I could be quite economical with my money if I spent as little of it as possible. One way that I figured I could save money was to sharpen my worn out razor blades by swishing the blade back and forth on the base of my palm. This sort of economy and ingenuity served me well later in life.

## CHAPTER 2 - ST. LOUIS SEMINARY LIFE



Life in a way began anew at Concordia where I once again spent time engaged in study and extracurricular activities. Seminary enabled me the privilege to play forward on the basketball team. One year our team made it all the way to the national championships held in Kansas City. I remember crying on the way back to St. Louis because of losing the game by only one point. The sad faces of all on the bus spoke volumes when we returned to St. Louis. On the other hand, the Athletic Club Team of Los Angeles celebrated

their narrow victory over us on their trip home.

My sorrow over the championship could not last too long as there were far greater things to accomplish while at the Seminary. While the seminary forbade students from marrying while still students, the seminary almost expected that before you received your first call you had found a bride. I took up this task as I set my sights on finding a girl who was willing to marry a future pastor. As God saw to it, I did not have to wait long. One of my classmates happened to see me one night sitting around the dorms with nothing to do. Sensing my loneliness, my friend invited me to go with him to a picnic in Corondalette, a suburb of St. Louis. At first, I was reluctant to go to a picnic as I was a self-proclaimed loner who felt awkward around so many other couples.

Finally, my friend convinced me and we traveled to the picnic by streetcar and boy was I glad I decided to go. At the party, I was introduced to a pretty girl named Edna Schussler. I immediately became interested in her and learned that she and her sister Clara and come to the party escorted by their cousin. With all my might, I attempted to woo Edna by becoming the jester of the party. In my lovesickness, I foolishly demonstrated my athletic skill by riding an old cow in the pasture. To round off the night, I also chased down a little bunny rabbit and presented it to Edna as a gift. After many hours of indulging ourselves on ice cream, candy, and other sweets the party began to break up. Feeling that this was my chance, I built up just enough courage to ask Edna's cousin if I could join him in escorting the two young women to their home.

Thankfully, the cousin agreed and let me escort Edna home while he took her sister Clara. Boarding a streetcar, we headed north of the party. I didn't realize it before, but my duties meant that we had to take that streetcar to the extreme north end of St. Louis.

Because of the variety of food that I had eaten at the picnic and the swaying and jarring of the streetcar, I became extremely sick. This was not to be the last time that motion sickness plagued me.

I vaguely remember that we made it back to the girls' apartment and after a few goodbyes, their cousin and I again boarded the streetcar for home. I had been able to contain my stomach the entire trip there but the ride back to the seminary was too much for me. A few blocks before the seminary, I stuck my head out the window to rid myself of the stomach churning sweets. Not exactly what one might call the perfect first date but thoughts of Edna stuck in my mind. A silly streetcar was not going to get the best of me. Several weeks later on a Sunday afternoon, I got up the nerve to go back across town to see Edna. This time I took along my other friend Robert Kruse to see if we could locate the apartment house where I had dropped of Edna and her sister.

When we came to the house which I thought was the correct one, we found no one at home. So taking out a piece of paper, I wrote this simple note. "If you are the girl I took home a few weeks ago, and this is your house, please call me at the seminary. I would like to see you again." With all my courage and prayers, I stuck the note under the door and left. For the next two weeks, I waited and then I received a phone call from Edna acknowledging the note and her desire to see me again.

### **CHAPTER 3 - PROFESSOR AND ATHLETIC DIRECTOR AT ST. JOHN'S**

#### **COLLEGE - 1918**

After my first year at the seminary, I returned to my old alma mater at Winfield, Kansas as a coach and assistant professor. In those days, seminary students served as vicars

after their first year at seminary. The seminary assigned some to churches while assigning others like me to teach at colleges. During this time, I was able to save enough money to take a summer course at the University of Chicago. In order to make ends meet at the university, I also took a job as assistant chef in the women's dormitory. I also tried out for the University of Chicago's football team under their famous coach, Mr. Stagg. Many consider Coach Stagg as one of the greatest innovators in the development of college football. Among his innovations were the tackling dummy, the huddle, the reverse, the man in motion play, the lateral pass, uniform numbers, and introduced awarding varsity letters.<sup>1</sup> By the time I finished the first day of tryouts though, I was bruised and in such pain that I decided I was done with football forever.

Going to a secular school brought with it another look at how the world views the Holy Scriptures. I often went on a rampage against the professors who belittled the gospel of Jesus Christ. Perhaps, God heard my rants, for one day one of the heretical professors had to give up teaching because of a painful boil on his face. It was my opinion that that hand of God stopped his ridicule of the gospel. Before I left the University of Chicago, I was obliged to write a thesis paper. I chose the topic The Plebeian Uprising in the Days of Luther. Although I was given an A on the thesis, these words were written across the top in red letters, "I am sorry to see that you have too much theological dust sprinkled in your eyes."

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://athletics.uchicago.edu/history/history-stagg.htm>

## CHAPTER 4 - FINAL YEARS AT CONCORDIA SEMINARY

I was glad when that summer ended and was able to get out the windy city of Chicago and back to St. Louis to finish my last two years at the seminary. Those last two years were very busy for me as my mother was too poor to send money for any of my expenses. In order to pay for school, I found myself jostled all over the territory in Missouri and Illinois in an old dilapidated jalopy. I took on a business partner who helped me buy the old car for around \$400.00. Unfortunately, the car also had a habit of breaking down all the time. We had set up a business selling Milwaukee dustless brushes and spot removers. Business was very good for us and I made a little extra on top of selling brushes by pitching baseball for a minor league team on Sunday afternoons. My business partner and I also made extra cash by preaching at various churches around Missouri and Illinois. After that year, we made enough money to pay for our last year of seminary. I also had enough money to pay for my future wedding.

Things had been going very well in my courtship of Edna. I had even gone up to visit her and her parents in Ruma, Illinois over some of the longer weekends. Over my final seminary Christmas break, I made the trip again to spend time with Edna's family. Edna's father was the pastor at a country church and I had gone with engagement ring in hand to give Edna. Man-oh-man was I ever happy when Edna accepted my proposal for marriage when I had finished at the seminary.

My last year at the seminary proved to be just as busy as past years. The student body kept me busy as they elected me chairman of the student body. I also became coach of the seminary basketball team. The seminary was a wonderful place and I cannot begin to remember all the superb things that happened to me there. Yet, it was time to move on with

my life. Instead of attending my graduation, I traveled back to Ruma to spend time with Edna. We had very little time to prepare for our wedding day which was set to take place about twenty days after graduation. We set June 20<sup>th</sup>, 1921 as our wedding date.

Before the wedding day took place, the shock of our lives took place at the call service held at the seminary. The foreign mission board had assigned me to serve as a missionary to China! Although I was excited for this chance to spread the gospel message, I was still a little rattled and fearful of what lay ahead for us. Edna's family also shared in my apprehension about spending time in such a far away land. Fear and apprehension, however, did not deter me as I had dedicated myself to serve in any place where the Lord needed me. Nevertheless, after a visit to Dr. Fuerbringer my call was almost halted. During my medical examination, the doctor had found signs of T.B. scars on my lungs. Dr. Fuerbringer told me the bad news with the caution, "China is a country filled with T.B." The good doctor believed that it was too dangerous for me to accept my call. I boldly asked the doctor, "Do people die in China? Do people die in the U.S.A.?" The honorable Dr. Fuerbringer replied, "Yes." "Well", I said, "what's the difference whether I die here in the U.S.A. or in China?" The doctor thoughtful responded, "Do you really feel that way," to which I exclaimed, "Yes!" "Good," said Dr. Fuerbringer, "You go to China."

Now that the doctor had ratified my call to China, it was time to get on with my wedding. On June 20<sup>th</sup>, I took some extra time to carefully shave my face and then put on a blue serge suit made by my old friend Carl Schmid, who worked as a tailor. Carl served as my best man while Edna's father conducted the wedding ceremony. Edna's mother, her brothers, Tom and Jack, and her sister, Clara and her husband, and her other sister Vera (also called Babe) were the only ones in attendance. Right after the wedding ceremony, the

day almost turned into a tragedy. Just about dinnertime, a vicious tornado headed straight towards the parsonage. Edna became extremely terrified of the approaching storm. While I comforted her in my arms, I almost put out her eye with the cigar I was smoking. Fortunately, the tornado bypassed the parsonage and the red-hot cigar did not damage Edna's eye. In spite of all this, the day was a huge success and the end of my days of bachelorhood.

### **CHAPTER 5 - DEPARTING FOR CHINA**

The next day was a sad one for Edna's family as we packed her trunks and suitcases. Leaving her family's home, we headed for Pueblo, Colorado where I was to commission for service in China. In Pueblo, Pastor Zchiegner, Pastor Scholts and his wife, and Miss Olive Gruen joined us as they were also going to China as missionaries.

While in Pueblo, we were able to visit my mother before going to China and I performed my first pastoral act there. My brother Walter was also getting married and I performed the ceremony for him and his fiancée Georgia Wier. After they were married, Edna and I drove out to California with them in my old car. This served as both couples' honeymoon trip! We made it to Los Angeles after five days of bad roads and tire trouble.

Reaching L.A. we traveled up to San Francisco to meet with Rev. Theiss, who assigned us to spend four days with the Studt family who lived in Oakland, California. Emma Studt was very interested in the mission program and was curious why I wanted to go with my new wife to such a far-off land as China. I answered the best I could, "Well, Emma, to tell the truth all through my college days I fought the idea of becoming a preacher. My mother and I had many arguments over this issue and every summer the fight continued.

It seemed that every summer someone offered me a very good job. For example, I answered a want ad to be a soda jerk at the once famous Ellington's Confectionary on Main Street in Pueblo, Colorado. I did so well behind the soda fountain that my boss offered me a partnership if I quit school and worked with him. This was quite a temptation of course for a young fellow looking for a good financial future. Of course, Mother, and I had quite an argument about my decision to quit school. I guess her prayers were more potent than my reasonable arguments, for the good Lord stepped into the picture and gave me a jolt. Soon after that, I became sick from working indoors and perhaps from eating too many sweets. Tears of joy came to my mother's eyes when I reported to her that the Lord had changed my mind and I returned to college.

Yet the next summer after my graduation from St. John's, I had to go through the same tormenting decision. Again, two great temptations to quit my preparations for the ministry came to me. That summer, Mr. Martin Baden gave me a complete set of law books with the promise to pay all of my expenses if I became a law student. On top of this, I received a proposition from a book company with a salary of \$300.00 plus commission a month to train other salesmen. I had sold books for this company a few years before. Now these offers seemed fabulous to me in comparison to the meager salary of a preacher. Because of this, my head turned from spiritual to material things. Again, my mother and I had a stormy session. I loved my mother more than any other human being. She was a god to me. When I saw the tears flow because of my insistence to giving up the ministry, I weakened and finally said to her, 'Mother, quit crying. I'll make this my final word on the matter – I'll go to the seminary just one year. If I then have a change of heart, I'll become a



pastor. It not, I'll go into the business world and make my fortune.' My mother had to agree to this."

So finally, I said to Mrs. Studt, "Emma, now I'll answer your question." I then told her that God works in sometimes strange but wonderful ways. I poured my heart out to her as I confessed that until I went to the seminary I really had a vague idea of Christianity. What's more, I hardly knew what it meant to be a Christian, a follower of Christ. But when I began to engross myself in the study of the Holy Scriptures, I learned truly and sincerely what Christ meant to me in my life. From my spiritual awakening at the seminary, I made up my mind that wherever the Lord needed me I was ready to go there. Since I had received this call to China there was never any doubt in my mind that it was the will of the Lord. With this confidence, I told Emma, "So here I am, ready to take the ship to China."

### **THE FIRST TRIP TO CHINA - 1921**

After our brief stay in Oakland, we traveled to San Francisco to set sail aboard the old coast liner, The Nanking. It still terrified me to board that small steamer and the thought of spending the next twenty-one days on the Pacific Ocean was not pleasant either. My brother Walter, his wife, and other friends stood on the docks to wish our small missionary group God Speed. There was not a dry eye among those on the shore and those on the ship as we pulled away from the docks. I even pulled out my handkerchief and

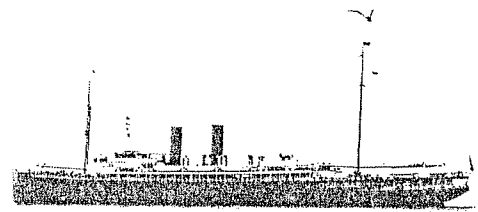


waved it in symbolic fashion at my brother and his wife.

It was just about teatime on board the ship when we left the dock, so Edna and I went into the dining room to have some tea and cake. Suddenly someone shouted out, “We’re passing through the Golden Gate.” I immediately jumped up to run to the porthole to see the Golden Gate Bridge. Yet that was my downfall and the just the beginning of my seasickness as I lost my tea and cake. From that moment on, seasickness laid hold of me. For the next four days of the journey, I managed only to eat an apple or a cooked potato until we made a stop over in Hawaii for a couple of days. Even then, the apples and potatoes I ate while on board usually became fish food a few minutes later.

Our layover in Honolulu, Hawaii was a welcomed chance for me to enjoy some real food while also giving us a chance to see the sights of Hawaii. One day we visited Mount Pali where the wind was so fierce it nearly blew me off a cliff. At Waikiki Beach, we enjoyed swimming in the warm Pacific waters and later spent some time touring an aquarium there. My eyes bulged at the sight of the variety of fish which I had never seen before. I couldn’t take my eyes off their various shapes and beautiful colors.

When it was time to return to the ship, I came back on board well refreshed. However, I dreaded the thought of the next eleven days and the seasickness that came before we finally reached Japan. Because of my seasickness, I did not dare shave because standing before a mirror seemed to intensify my seasickness. Day after day, I sat quietly wrapped in a blanket on deck secretly wishing that one of the waves would wash me overboard. This dangerous thought occurred to me as I felt awful and wanted nothing more than to be off that rocking ship.



## IN JAPAN

Eleven days after leaving Hawaii, we finally reached Japan and docked at Yokohama. There I could take out my trusty razor to shave again as I wanted to make a good impression on all the Japanese girls who we saw dressed in rich-colored kimonos. The Japanese women's grace and beauty greatly impressed us as we visited various sights in Tokyo and Kamakura. Edna and I went around with the other missionaries and stopped in various temples and the shopping areas in those cities. After the three day stopover in Yokohama, we set sail once again for Shanghai, China. Standing on the edge of the unknown, I never would have guessed that this was only the beginning of an amazing 21 year adventure into the heart of China.

## CHAPTER 6- CHINA- THE FIRST TIME

It was certainly exciting to be starting our lives and work in a foreign country, especially in an Oriental one like China. Life was so strange and different from what I had experienced back in the states. Immediately, upon arrival in Shanghai the sounds and smells struck my nose with certain disgust. Yet the smells and sounds were the least of our worries as we unloaded our goods from the ship. We did not have to wait long for our first cultural experience with the Chinese people. As we were unloading the ship, a Chinese porter attempted to grab my satchel out of my hands. I told him that I was able to carry it myself but told him that he could carry the large trunks and cases if the price was right. At that time, most called these unskilled Chinese laborers *coolies*. That term has now become a derogatory term and so I will refrain from using it in reference to these workers. Instead, I will use the term porters or day laborers when referring to them. This was not our last

experience with porters and day laborers as our family consistently hired these workers during our years in China. These strong and advantageous souls became a valuable part of my ministry and daily life in China.

Yet, back to our first encounter with Chinese day laborers. As I struggled to speak with this Chinese worker in English, a Lutheran couple living in Shanghai came aboard to meet our group. The man immediately took charge of our baggage since he could barter with the workers in their own language. The sheer strength of these porters amazed me as we paid four of the strongest ones to carry our luggage. An example of their strength came when they placed one of our crates, which must have weighed at least 400 pounds, upon the back of one of the workers. This mighty man let out a short grunt and then trotted down the gangplank into the customs' warehouse. Finally, after we had transferred all the baggage to the wharf, I marched off the steamer with my satchel clutched in my hands. Once on shore, we found a number of rickshaws waiting for us which our new Shanghai friends had ordered.

What a thrill it was travel by rickshaw as my rickshaw runner threaded his way through the noisy and crowded streets of Shanghai to the Lutheran couple's house. I couldn't keep my eyes and ears off the sights and sounds of the streets. My mind was racing almost as fast as the rickshaw and I tried to later describe my first impression of China in a poem I entitled "Shanghai Streets".

**A Shanghai Street**

What is there so poetical  
To stir up a responsive strain  
As hearing the daily refrain  
Of venders calling out goods they haul?

There's a certain rhythm in the sound  
Characteristic of the mind

Of Orientals, which inclines  
The Occidentals to astound.

There are peddlers with their ware  
The bamboo weaver, the brass man,  
The sellers of cloth and tin pans,  
Street cooks bellowing the bill-of-fare.

The paper boy, the candy girl,  
Mingle their cries to harmonize.  
While advertising merchandise  
With a confused yet rhythmic whirl.

And coolies pulling light rickshaws,  
Trotting men, sweating from the strain  
Of hauling loads in sun and rain,  
Struck and cursed by men of law.

The buses, the trams, the taxi,  
The rickshaw and one-wheeled barrow  
With its varied cargoes in tow,  
Ranging in kind from A to Z.

Automobiles of many lands,  
Horse-drawn buggies and motorcycles,  
Ox-carts, fish-carts, and bicycles,  
Manned by sweaty, hardened hands.

Honking horns and clanging bells,  
Squeaking brakes and rattling chains,  
Pattering feet join the refrain,  
Of coolie songs and children's yells.

All these noises one can compare  
With that of a night carnival  
In full blast that has no rival  
In boisterous voice and trumpet's blare.

More terrific become the sounds  
As they thunder down the canyon  
Of streets, lined with signs of neon,  
From which they many times rebound.

And to this add the nervous strain  
Of seething traffic speeding fast,  
As mauling compact masses, wiggle past

And shop-spewed crowds their exits gain

Each seeks his own course as it seems  
 Unaware of the dancers there,  
 And also of the vision rare  
 That rises in this human stream.

What if the nations are at war  
 And people in the fighting lands  
 Prepare irrational demands  
 To "save their face" as men of yore?

This matters not in Shanghai's street,  
 Where Frenchmen, Germans, Jews, Chinese,  
 Italians, Swedes, Japanese,  
 Americans and Russians meet.

Where Indians and Negroes greet  
 Britishers, Danes, and Koreans.  
 In short, peoples of all nations  
 Tread the same sidewalk, feet to feet.

"International" is the name  
 Spelt by the confusion displayed  
 In dress, speech, shops, signs, and grade  
 Of this mixed national bedlam.

Nations with their trade barriers  
 And quotas for immigration  
 Realize not the relation  
 Of Man's nature the world over.

Each seeks a happiness in life,  
 Drawn from nature's sources at hand;  
 Though for a time he takes no stand  
 To gain his rights by waging strife.

Yet when enlightenment does come,  
 With opened eyes seeing some hold  
 What should be universal gold,  
 He rises in strife to gain some.

This strife develops into wars  
 Of nations, which have and have not,  
 Until both inherit the miserable lot  
 Depicted in ancient and modern lore.

Oh, Nations, learn from Shanghai's street,  
 Where your nationals with others blend,  
 So that all war's scares have an end,  
 And all in equality can meet.

Besides our quick ride through the street of Shanghai, we did not get to see much else. Our new friends had already made reservations for us aboard a train to Peking for the next day. When we arrived at the house of our friends, they told us to take along extra food as the food on the train was poor and many times not fit to eat. Early the next morning, we went out and purchased a supply of fruit, cookies, and candy for our train ride. Yet once on board, our stomachs were not as big as our hearts. At each station along the route, there were groups of beggars some naked and as skinny as skeletons waiting. Each held out their hands with pleading eyes. We had not gone very far before all of our purchased supplies found their way into the stomachs of these starving beggars. It was worth it though, knowing that these beggars had something to eat at our expense.

After about 36 hours on the train, we arrived in Peking. As we disembarked, we heard a shout, "Welcome to China!" The shout came from Rev. Meyer who had come all the way from Hankow<sup>2</sup>, China to meet us and to get us settled into living quarters in Peking. He had also come to arrange for our language schooling there. Rev. Meyer functioned as one of the Missouri Synod missionaries in Hankow. Boy was I ever glad to have someone who knew the ropes there to help get us settled.

Edna and I were fortunate enough to be assigned to the home of a missionary by the name of Cross. Mr. Cross represented the Congregational Church of America in Peking. The locals assigned the rest of the missionary group to live together in a Chinese house. The Cross home was a large, foreign style house which was more or less secluded within the

---

<sup>2</sup> Hankow together with Wuchang and Hanyang, now make up the city of Wuhan, the capital of the Hubei province.

walls of a large compound from the noisy city outside. The walls of the compound enclosed a school, church and other foreign built houses.

The Cross family were such pleasant people and my wife and I were glad to have them introduce us to the hazards of living in China. They were careful to instruct us on developing healthy habits when it came to the careless handling of food and water by the Chinese merchants. These habits proved to be of great benefit in keeping my wife and me well for much of our stay in China. Mr. Cross told me that many missionaries had died or had to return to the States because they became careless in their dress, had eaten contaminated foods, or drank impure drinks.

For the next year, we were very busy in Peking with our studies. Every day from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm, we attended language school. There we learned the difficult Chinese language, the strange customs, and the various religious backgrounds of the Chinese people. Day after day, Edna and I practiced speaking with each other as we went over the words we had learned for the day. Words like *Wa-ni-ta*, *wa-ti*, *ni-ti*, and *ta-ti*. These words mean “mine” and “yours”.

During this time, we also had a chance to explore parts of China around Peking and Beijing. On the weekends, we made trips to the Great Wall of China, the Ming Tombs, the Summer and Winter palaces of the great emperors of China, the Temple of Heaven, and the Altar of Heaven. On these weekend trips, we also tried out our Chinese on the merchants while shopping. Unfortunately, we were often the butt of many jokes and ended up paid more than we should have for the trinkets we bought.



Although we had plenty to laugh about in Peking, things were not always so jolly. One day, Mr. Cross informed me that the army of Wu Pei Fu<sup>3</sup> was approaching the city to drive out Chang Tso-lin<sup>4</sup>, the warlord governing the area around Peking. He told me the Chinese government had requested that foreigners guard their mission schools, hospitals, churches, and orphanages from the attacks. At this time, the prestige of the foreigners was still strong enough under some old agreements that an invading army respected the property of foreigners.

Being a bit naïve and wanting to see the battle between the two forces, I decided to watch it from the high walls surrounding the city. What I saw was a gruesome battle. The forces of Wu Pei Fu first attempted to break open the barricaded gates through which the trains entered the city. The local military forces blasted away at the train and the troops from the top of the city wall. Dead soldiers fell everywhere. Some fell on the tracks and when the engine backed up again to slam into the barricades; it cut the men in two. . . Fortunately, the barricades held out long enough that Wu Pei Fu's army retired from the battlefield. The battle lasted a few days and only a few weeks before we were to leave Peking for Hankow, China.

Since there seemed to be a lull in the fighting, we decided to make a break for Hankow. Hankow was then a part of Wu Pei Fu's territory. The lull in the fighting resulted after Warlord Fang Yu Shang failed to keep his word to Wu Pei Fu. Yu Shang had promised to come to Wu Pei Fu's assistance when he attacked Peking. Because of this breach of promise, General Wu had to retire to his territories to wait for another chance to carry on his attacks. As a result, our train to Hankow was able to leave Peking undeterred.

---

<sup>3</sup> Wu Pei Fu was known as the "Jade Marshal"

<sup>4</sup> Also known as Zhāng Zuòlín

As we arrived in Hankow, we were greeted again by a number of voices calling out, "Welcome to Hankow". Gathered at the train stations were Rev. Reidel, Rev. Meyer, Rev. Gebhardt, and Rev. Lillegard. These four missionaries had gathered there as they prepared to go on their annual summer trip to a resort in Kuling, in the province of Chiang Hsi. It was tradition that every summer most of the missionaries in the Yangtze River basin spent the summer in Kuling, a cool mountain resort. There the missionaries had time to recuperate from the arduous work of the year and to meet for conferences.

Edna and I also went along to spend the summer in Kuling after our long year of language study. The boat ride down the Yangtze was not too hard on me as we watched the water buffalo lying in the shallows. It was also interesting to watch the fishing techniques of the natives. The natives had built little fishing huts along the shore. Near the huts, a tall bamboo pole was stuck into the ground. Another pole stuck near river had a rope tied to its top which wrapped around the first pole near the hut. From the pole near the water, another rope dangled into the water attached to a large net. The fishermen placed bait into the nets and lowered them into the water. Every now and then, the fishermen sitting in the hut pulled on the ropes to see if any fish had entered the net. I thought it looked like a comfortable way to fish and imagined fishing that way someday if we ever settled down.

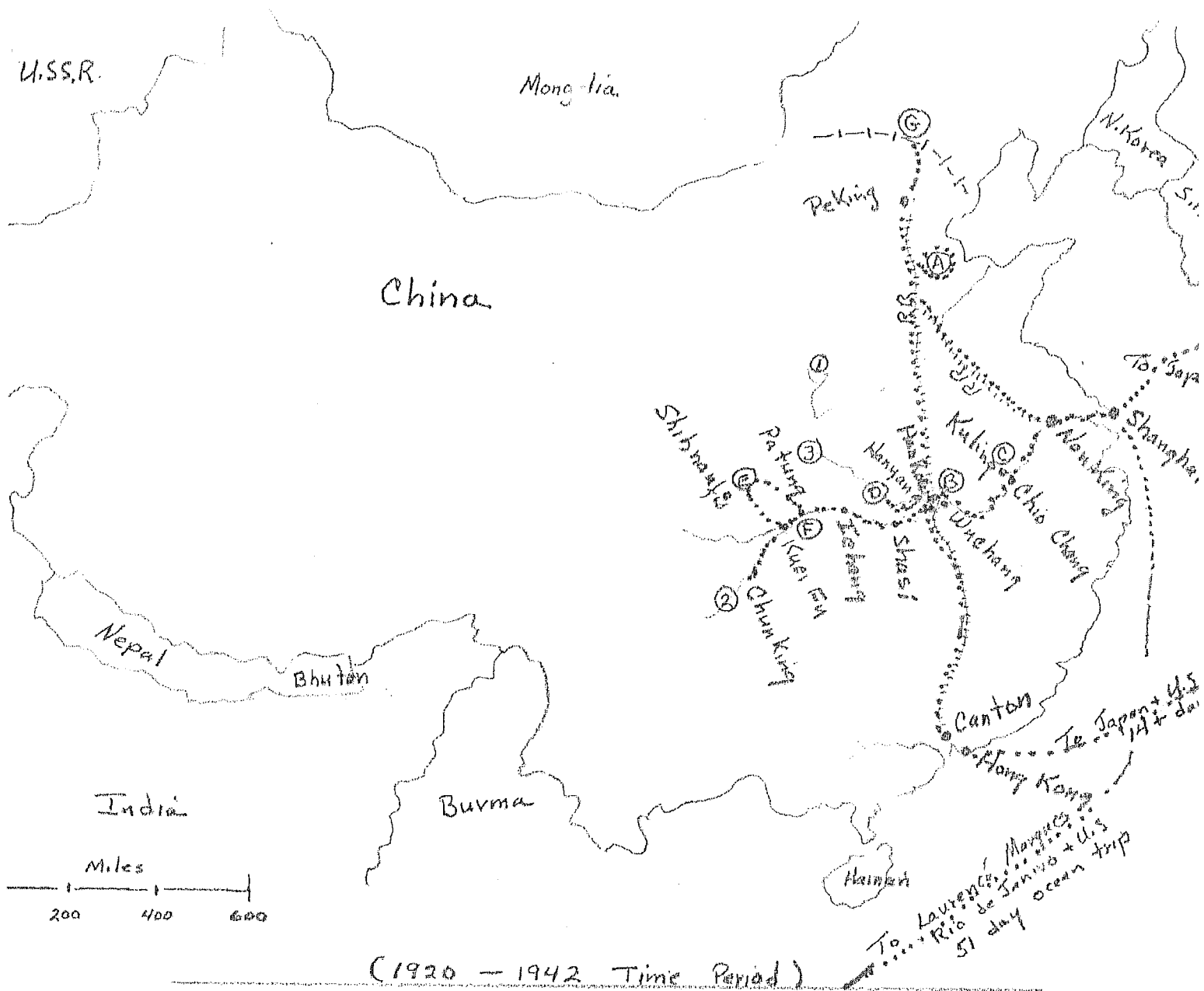
When our boat landed at Chio Chiang we were in for a 20 mile bumpy ride in an old dilapidated bus which took us to the base of the mountain. Much to my surprise, left the bus behind and were carried the rest of the way in sedan chairs hosted on the backs of four Chinese workers. I was scared stiff as the porters wound their way up thousands of steps cut out of the cliffs. These mountain trails often overlooked a valley thousands of feet below. It was hair-raising whenever we made sharp right-angle turns. The two porters in the back

were left on one side of the angle while the sedan chair and its occupant dangled over the cliff. But the skill and strength of the porters brought us safely into Kuling without incident.

## **CHAPTER 7 - KULING**

In the astonishingly beautiful valley below us, we first caught a glimpse of Kuling cradled amid the great mountains. I immediately forgot my terror from the hazardous trip up the mountain. At the resort, there were plenty of chances for me to use the tennis courts and the baseball field whenever I was not attending the daily conference sessions. At the same time, I was apprehensive about where the conference would send me. Edna and I were also anxious to settle down from all our traveling. As the summer months ended, the mission board decided to send me to Shihnanfu. Edna immediately burst out in tears began saying to herself over and over again, "I won't go. I won't go." She said this because of many negative reports we had heard about the area. She continued crying, "Shihnanfu is too far from civilization. It's too dangerous to travel up that way with bandits constantly running wild, killing burning, and looting people."

The negative reports which Edna had heard came from Rev. Gebhardt. Gebhardt early told us that bandit group had stormed the mission at Shihnanfu and had killed his servant when he innocently went to open the gate. Rev. Gebhardt also reported that the government troops had not been able to gain control over the wild bandits in that section of the country. It took some real persuasion by me to convince my wife I had to accept the assignment. On top of this, we were not alone for the mission board assigned our friends Miss Olive Gruen, Rev. Lillegard, and Mrs. Lillegard to go to this city deep in the Chinese interior.



Notes

Birth places

- Robert - Ichang
- Richard - Shihnanfu
- William - Shihnanfu
- Thomas - Pueblo, Colo
- Dorothy - St. Louis, Mo
- Raymond - Han Kow
- Ruth - Kuling
- James - Han Kow
- Lors - Han Kow
- Anita - Provo, Utah

Missions

- Peking
- Hankow
- Hanyang
- Wuchang
- Shasi
- Ichang
- Patung
- Kuei Fu
- Shihnanfu

Comments.

- ① Yellow River
- ② Yangtze River
- ③ Han River
- Ⓐ 3 Mission Stations
- Ⓑ Han Kow Seminary
- Ⓒ Kuling Summer Home
- Ⓓ Black Hill Refugee Camp
- Ⓔ Shihnanfu - 5 day trip from river
- Ⓕ Dangerous Yangtze Gorge
- Ⓖ Great Wall of China.

## GOING TO SHIHNAFU

The summer in Kuling passed too quickly for me as we began packing up for a most fascinating journey. We set out knowing that dangers lurked at almost every stop of the journey. We suspected that even more dangers awaited us in Shihnanfu. Traveling down the mountains from Kuling, we again rode in the sedan chairs to the Yangtze River. After a night's trip on the Yangtze, we were once again in Hankow for a brief stopover. In Hankow, I went out to buy supplies that had to last us for the next nine months. I bought mostly canned food, dry milk, clothing, and various other supplies including enough razor blades to last me for the long months ahead.

Once everything was in order, we boarded ship and after about four days, we landed at Ichang. Rev. Schwartkopf, an LC-MS missionary living there met us at the shore. We spent a few days with him as we awaited the gorge steamer to take us up the Three Gorges. That was my term for the vessel as a "gorge steamer" was much smaller and more powerful than the lower river steamers. It had to plough its way up 90 miles of very dangerous rapids which lay between the confines of the narrow gorges.

The river as it wound its way through the gorges in places rose several hundred feet in a short time only to fall the same distance just as fast. In order to navigate through some of the rapids it was necessary for hundreds of trekkers to haul on ropes attached to the ship. Inch by inch they walked along the rocky shore until the ship finally reached smoother waters above the rapids.

I was wild with excitement as I ran back and forth on the boat to see which end would first hit the rocks. Rock formations not only extended from the shore but also protruded out of the middle of the river. Thankfully, our pilot knew how to navigate

through the rocks as through experience he had learned where rocks lay just beneath the surface. On some of the rocks, crews had painted numbers to show how many feet the rocks were above and below the water. When talking with the captain, I found out that as many as 20 or more ships had hit rocks and sank in one area alone. He told me that other times the swift receding waters had left ships stranded 50 or more feet on top of an island of rocks. At one point, I spotted one of these doomed and derelict ships high and dry perched on the rocks above.

The walls of this 90 mile gorge rose often two to three thousand feet straight up into the air. At certain points, the Chinese had hewn footpath out of the stony walls. These paths served as the only means of travel up into the secluded cities along the river. The gorge caused the river to be over 1000 feet deep in some places only to sink to only a few hundred feet. Foolishly, I wished to be up on the rocky paths than to sink with the ship 1000 feet to my death. What amazed me was that companies were willing to run such huge risks of losing their ships in the gorge. Wondering this, I asked the captain of the steamer why they ran the risk. He told me, "The reason is this. One shipload of tungyu<sup>5</sup> can sell in Shanghai for more than what can compensate for the loss of a ship."

Although the adventure was thrilling it was a great relief to come out of the gorge at Kuei Fu. Because of the narrow 100 foot wide gorge, the river backed up at Kuei Fu and spread to a width of about two miles at this point. Along the banks of this much calmer body of water rested the walled city of Kuei Fu on a bluff about 200 feet above the river during its normal flow. When the water was high enough, crews simply tied their boats to the top of the wall of Kuei Fu. As a result, there were no docks because of the constant

---

<sup>5</sup> Oil from the tung tree

change in water levels of the river. In order to get off the steamer we boarded small sampans and their crews rowed us ashore.

When we made it to land, Rev. Lillegard, who spoke Chinese fluently, soon engaged a large longboat with eight oarsmen and a pilot for the rest of our trip. He loaded our equipment into this boat to take us back down the gorge about 11 miles to the village of Pa Tung. I couldn't believe my ears when I realized had to return to the turbulent waters of the gorge once again. Besides the rapids and the depth, I had spotted numerous whirlpools that frightened me. What was more unnerving was our trip back was in a small human powered boat. But Rev. George Lillegard was insistent as he said, "There is no other way."

So we packed up our fears and filled up the longboat with all our supplies and equipment to row back down the gorge. As we were heading to the entrance of the gorge, I noticed a pagoda built high up on the mountaintop overlooking the river. I asked our pilot about it and he pointed to a 100 foot tall stack of rocks standing at the center of the river right in the way of the approach to the gorge. The pilot then explained, "Before the pagoda was erected, many junks and sampans hit those rocks and sank. Now, because of that pagoda, few hit the rocks and sink."

Even with this bit of news, it did not make me any more comfortable as our boat headed straight for the towering rock pile. My heart nearly stopped when it seemed the pagoda's charm had not worked as we came within a few feet of crashing into the rocks. Right before impact the pilot gave the signal to his crew and with a "Hi ho, hi ho," the eight boatmen put their strong arms to work and veered the boat off to the side of the rocks. It was remarkable how those boatmen with the sheer strength of their arms and oars avoided rock after rock pile down the gorge. Whenever it seemed like we were about to hit a rock,

the oarsmen with a “Hi ho, hi ho,” heaved on their oars in unison and pulled us away only seconds before we hit the rocks.

When we finally reached shore, I let out a sigh of relief that we were done with our boat trip. I believe Edna was too petrified to say anything. Had I only known what was awaiting us I might not have been so quick to leave the relative safety of the boat. As we stood on shore, I wondered what was going to happen next.

I didn't have to wonder long because George was already in the process of negotiating for mules, sedan chairs, and about 200 porters. After the workers had agreed on their price, most of them, picked up two cases of luggage with their shoulder poles and away they trotted. Each of the 200 or so porters carried our supplies from the river's banks up thousands of carved stone steps on their way to Shihnanfu. Someone told me that the trip usually took around four days because it crossed three separate mountain ranges. From the looks of it, our journey was going to be a jarring ride all the way for the next four or five days.

After the negotiations, George got the women of the group settled into their sedan chairs. Four husky porters, two in the front and two in the rear, took each chair. Two long bamboo poles supported the chair itself. To equalize the weight on their shoulders they attached a leather thong from the long poles to a shorter shoulder pole. These smaller poles rested on each of the shoulders of the sedan bearers.

As we were getting the women ready, I couldn't help but notice that George did not assign the two of us sedan chairs and so I asked, “What about us?” George pointed to two pack mules standing by and said, “There's our transportation.” With that, George who weighed about 200 pounds got astride his mule and I followed suit. I couldn't help but



laugh as we came to the uneven stone steps leading straight up the mountain as I sat on my small mule. I laughed even harder at the sight of George's excess fat hanging over the sides and the tail of the donkey. Laughing aside, it proved to be a tremendous undertaking as the steps were so steep in some places that the donkeys had to stop for a breathe almost every 10 steps.

It was nearly nightfall when arrived at the halfway point on the mountain. Earlier several hundred soldiers had delayed us as they came down the trail. The soldiers were out scouring the mountains for bandits. Unfortunately, this also meant that soldiers occupied all the inns along the way. On our first night, we did not have lodging so we placed the sedan chairs as a barricade around a section of an old courtyard we had found. Inside this makeshift barricade, we set up some cots. After the cook, whom we had brought with us, had satisfied our hunger, I heard the cots creak as our traveling party fell sound asleep under the stars.

We were all too tired to worry about what the soldiers might do to us. We had packed several hundred silver dollars in a few of the cases which we knew the porters wouldn't touch. I wasn't so sure about the soldiers. George had insisted that we bring the silver dollars along because there were no banks in Shihnanfu. In Shihnanfu, the individual business concerns issued and printed their own currency. Unfortunately, if a business went broke, its currency then became useless. Since much of this useless currency was still in circulation, it was necessary to have legal silver money on hand.

Before I fell asleep that night, I spoke with George and said, "Say, that cook of yours is a genius. In the midst of all the confusion of the soldiers and the other workers, he was able to unload some of our provisions and build a charcoal fire to prepare the meal." George

replied, "That's not all," he remarked, "just watch how he gets started long before all of us tomorrow morning. By the next meal stop, he will have it ready for us whenever we get there." Rolling over to fall asleep, I made note of this for I had learned an important lesson that day about Chinese cooks. A good Chinese cook is a jewel of precious value.

Early the next morning, we packed up and set out for a second day of travel over the mountain ranges. I couldn't help but marvel at the way the Chinese had managed to build such good trails over the hundreds of different mountain passes in China. Most of the trails were only five or six feet wide in most places and the square stones they used made for firm footing. These mountain trails shortened the distance by going straight over the top of mountain ranges instead of circumventing around them. Thousands upon thousands of cut steps formed the trails over these mountains. Only in a few places where rain had washed out the steps did we have to follow a narrow dirt trail.

After a while, I asked one of the porters how far it was to the next village. The porter responded, "Ten miles and a run." With a puzzled look I asked, "Ten miles and a run?" "Well, he said, "While the surveyors were measuring the distance between the two villages, a terrible rainstorm arose when they reached the ten mile mark. From there they ran for shelter in the next village. So instead of finishing the surveying work they simply recorded the distance as 'ten miles and a run.'"

On the second day, we soon made it over the top of the first mountain range. The descent on those narrow steps seemed to be more hazardous than going up. It was not the least bit funny for me when my pack mule trod to the outer edge of the steps overlooking a hundred or more foot drop off. George explained the mule's actions to me in this way, "You see these pack mules are accustomed to having crates strapped on both sides of their backs.

In order not to catch on the inside wall and jutting rocks, the donkeys have learned that it's best to take the outer edge of the steps." His explanation did little to calm my fears as I shouted back, "Well, it doesn't make me feel too safe to look down hundreds of feet from the edge of a cliff while sitting on this donkey."

Finally, it was too much for me to risk my life on the back of that mule. I felt it was safer for me and for the donkey if I simply walked while leading the donkey down the steps. I had noticed that my donkey had particularly weak front knees. His knees had already given out three times. Each time the mule slipped, I had slid off over his head and landed the seat of my pants on the hard steps. I thought to myself, "I'll be hanged if I trust that beast on the downhill grade. I'll just walk."

Our party could only travel about 60 Chinese "Li" or about 20 miles a day. All day long, the porters carried on with a melodic harmony of "Hi-ho-hi-ho." Hearing their voices chanting on each step was music in those desolate areas. Their chanting also broke up the monotony of just watching each uneasy step the donkey took.

Regrettably, it was not always easy to wake up the workers every morning. Because of the strain on the bodies and sweating profusely throughout the day's work, they had the nasty habit of hitting the opium den before retiring for the night. The opium left its effects on them well into the morning when they rose in a stupor. But unlike the idle rich who smoked opium throughout China, these porters sweated out the poisonous opium by their strenuous work. On the other hand, many of the wealthier Chinese opium smokers soon became walking skeletons because of the build up of opium in their systems.

On our second night in the mountains, George and I pitched our cots on a raised platform in front of a vacant store building facing the trail. The women set up their cots

inside a vacant room of the store. Doing this, enabled George and me to guard the camp and to ward off anything should happen during the night. On the third night, George found our expedition party shelter in a cow barn. The cows were turned out of the barn to forage for themselves and the cots were set up inside. Although, the smell of the cow barn was tolerable, the smell that came from the adjoining pig sty was terrible.

About noon the forth day, we had our first view of Shihnanfu. There below us in a very broad valley lay the walled city of some 35,000 inhabitants. The setting was even more beautiful by the expanse of mile after mile of beautiful red and white flowers. I asked George, "Why there were so many flowers?"

George replied, "Those flowers are the curse of China. Those huge fields are full of poppy flowers. Workers harvest tons of opium from these poppies every year and they are the chief income for these people. When the petal drops off the flower, a small pod remains. Each day, the workers go out into the fields to scratch the pod a few times. The juice that oozes out, they scrap off and put into a container until they have extracted all the juice. The workers will then lay the juice out in the sun where it dries into what resembles a lump of black tar. You will see that in most every house they will have an opium den. The natives will offer you an opium pipe as readily as an American might offer you a cigarette." I exclaimed, "Man alive, we do have a big mission to perform here!"

The city of Shihnanfu itself lay within a wall about 20 feet high and about 10 feet wide. As we approached the city gates, we heard a shout from a man standing at the gates. Rev. Gebhardt was there waiting to meet us at the entrance gate. Gebhardt had served as a missionary in Shihnanfu for a couple of years. Because of this, he immediately took charge of the porters we had hired for the trip. He led us into the city to a two story Chinese

building with large gates opening on a central courtyard. All around this courtyard were various buildings. A veranda on the second floor encircled the entire courtyard so that each room on the second floor was accessible by the veranda. He assigned quarters to our mission staff on the upper floor while the servants and supplies occupied the ground floor. Across the narrow stone cobbled street was another house that the mission had rented to serve as a chapel.

What a joy it was finally to unpack and settle down for at least another year. Of course, my joy in having a permanent home had its difficulties. One of the first difficulties we discovered was that our apartment was located above the large front doors of the courtyard which overlooked the street. The constant noise, day and night, on the street below at first made it difficult to sleep. Yet, strange as it might seem, we soon became accustomed to the bells, drums, cursing, and traffic on the street below. One thing that I never grew accustomed to was the smell from the street. The front gate below us had a wide flat entrance porch and steps which the workers used every morning as a resting place as they hauled their "honey buckets". Unlike the sweet name that they bore, "honey buckets" had nothing sweet about them. These "honey buckets" were actually full of human waste which the servants had collected every night. The servants carried these buckets from the houses and took them outside the city to use as fertilizer in the outlying fields. Unfortunately, Edna and I awoke every morning to the smell of the honey buckets left at our front gate.

Yet, things were considerably better in Shihnanfu than we had first imagined. Contrary to all the terrible tales of banditry in and around Shihnanfu, we had a very peaceful first year. Rev. Gebhardt and Rev. Lillegard took over most of the preaching for my first

full year there. I devoted most of my time learning the Chinese language. My teacher was supposed to come to our compound every morning at 8:00 am. Unfortunately, almost every morning I went to his house to drag him from his bed. My teacher had the nasty habit of spending the evenings smoking opium and so it was difficult for him to get up on his own.

Besides my daily studies, the mission staff assigned Miss Olive Gruen and me to care for the sick and wounded that came to the makeshift mission dispensary. People came from all over with burns; wounds inflicted from bayonets or swords of soldiers; and even a few bullet wounds. We also had our share of people with common ailments and conditions that sought out attention. Neither Miss Gruen nor I had really had any medical training. Instead, we did our best with our limited knowledge and supplies. We also came up with some of our own home made remedies to treat our patients. While in the dispensary, we took the opportunity to pass out Christian tracts that told the people about Jesus and his love.

I was delighted with my growing skill as a makeshift doctor and was amazed at what we were able to accomplish with our limited supplies and knowledge. One time after caring for an older woman she returned crying, "Hao La! Hao La!" which means, "I'm better, I'm better!" The previous month she had come to the mission with one of her fingers half-decayed from infectious gangrene. I had applied some Ichthyol and had given her some to continue using at home. Miracle of miracles, it worked and it cured her finger.

Another time, a Chinese man came in from a neighboring village some 20 miles away. A bandit had shot this man in the stomach and the bullet left through his back side. I remember thinking that there was no way I could help the man. I was extremely worried about what I could do besides ease his pain. Putting those thoughts aside, I put him on a cot in the orphanage, and thought up my treatment plan. After thinking for a few minutes, I

cleaned up the areas around the bullet holes with diluted Lysol. Then taking a chopstick, I rammed a clean strip of gauze into the hole through the man's body. For about one month, I daily withdrew the sticky, stinky, and blood covered gauze and replace it with clean gauze. Once again, miracle of miracles, my treatment worked and after he had fully recovered, he took some of our Christian literature back with him to his native village. There he proudly and thankfully proclaimed what God's missionaries had done for him.

After our first year in Shihnanfu, it was time once again to travel to Kuling for the summer. Our journey there took over three weeks as we first had to travel across the mountains to Pa Dung and down to Ichang. From there we made a stop in Hankow, then on to Chio Chang, and finally we arrived in Kuling. Like our trip to Shihnanfu, we had to hire porters for the sedan chairs and for the boats. Then were the mules and whatever else we might need along the way that all had to be either bought or rented. A trip to Kuling took a lot of planning in those days, as one had to take cots, bedding, mosquito nets, food, medicines, and plenty of clothing. On such trips, one dared not sleep in the straw bunks provided at the various inns along the way. Bedbugs, other insects, and the occasional vermin had the habit of infesting these beds. Even sleeping on your own cot was not entirely safe from the mosquitoes and bedbugs. Many mornings we woke up and could not see daylight because the bedbugs had completely covered the mosquito netting around the cots.

On this second trip to Kuling, we stopped at Hankow for me to take medicine to rid myself of intestinal worms. These worms were sometimes as long as night crawlers and almost everyone in China was afflicted with diarrhea caused by these worms. The problem with intestinal worms was the result of poor sanitation and handling of raw foods. The

Chinese merchants often washed the vegetables in the filthy water of the street gutters, in their attempt to freshen the vegetables sold on the street. We had to be careful as well when it came to drinking water. If you did not boil the water properly for at least 20 minutes, it too had the potential to produce worm eggs. While we lived in Shihnanfu, we hauled most of our drinking water from the muddy river. We then poured this water into a large jar with a hole in its bottom. The water passed through the hole into a sand filled container below where the mud filtered out of it. Finally, we boiled the filtered water to kill all of the germs before storing the water in bottles for later use.

Eventually when we arrived in Kuling, the mission board informed me that they wanted to open a new mission in Kuei Fu. This was the city perched on the bluffs above the Yangtze River just at the mouth of the Yangtze Gorges. The conference at Kuling decided that I was the logical missionary to open up this new mission station. We spent the remainder of the summer in Kuling and then left once again on a new adventure. The mission in Kuei Fu was a tough assignment for any missionary and especially for a novice missionary. With only two years experience in the language and customs of China, I was still green. What made it even more difficult was the fact that Edna was pregnant with our first child. We decided that it was too big of a risk for Edna to go with me to Kuei Fu because there were no medical facilities there. The closest doctor and hospital were in Ichang. The entire treacherous Yangtze Gorge separated Ichang from Kuei Fu. Edna was due in December which we both knew was a terrible time to travel down the Yangtze. During the winter season, boats traveling between Kuei Fu and Ichang were scarce because of the low waters and treacherous rocks. With all these considerations, Edna and our future



baby decided to stay in Ichang with the Swartzkopf family while I traveled without her to Kuei Fu. I planed to return to Ichang in December when the baby was due.

Before I could leave for Kuei Fu, it was necessary to purchase all the materials I needed for the new mission. It was quite a chore to arrange for all the materials I required. I had to buy nails, screws, hinges, and other equipment I needed to remodel a Chinese house we planned to rent for a chapel and for a home. Luckily, Rev. Gebhardt agreed to help me find a place in Kuei Fu to rent since he spoke better Chinese than I did. When Gebhardt and I had prepared all the supplies, we boarded a steamer ship to travel down the Yangtze once again. It was a tearful day when I said goodbye to my wife as I promised to see her again in December. After I left Edna stayed in Hankow for a few more weeks before sailing on to Ichang.

Travel down the Yangtze is always exciting and this trip up the gorges was no different. Reverend Gebhardt and I sat on the roof of the pilot house of the boat. Along the way, we admired the scenery and took some pictures. Suddenly, we noticed that our ship was making a beeline for the some rocky cliffs jutting out on the opposite bank. We knew by our speed and direction that a crash was inevitable. Gebhardt and I held on to the ship's railing with all of our might as the ship hit some rocks and slid up onto the rocky shore. Just as the ship hit the bank, I leapt from the ship to a cliff just beyond where I had been sitting. I helped Gebhardt off the ship to stand with me on the cliff. Luckily, everyone was safe and so while we waited, I took the opportunity to take a picture of the scene and the disaster that we had just averted. Not until we saw the ship made fast to the shore did we jump back onto the ship. Yet, I was still fearful that the ship was going to sink with me on it into a watery grave a few hundred feet below.

As we waited the captain reported to us what had caused the ship to go on a collision course for the cliffs. Apparently, someone had thrown a monkey wrench into the steering gear. The resulting impact had gashed a large hole in the bow of the ship. We watched as some of the crew members fixed the hole by covered it with temporary boards and canvas. The captain told us that the canvas would not hold against the force of the current going upstream but would hold going downstream. Because of this, the captain decided to head back downriver to Ichang. When we had safely arrived in Ichang, Rev. Gebhardt and I managed to transfer to another steamer heading for Kuei Fu.

Our second trip through the gorges was uneventful until we reached the city of Kuei Fu. Immediately we sensed a feeling of hostility as we entered the city to seek lodging. As we approached, we saw parents dragging their children off the streets. We also heard them yelling at their children telling them to beware of foreign devils. Thankfully, not everyone was hostile to our arrival. After some investigating, we learned that a former member of the imperial family was willing to rent out a section of his dilapidated palace. Ever since the overthrow of the Grand Empress Dowager<sup>6</sup> Long Yu by Sun Yat Sen in the 1911 revolution<sup>7</sup>, the imperial family had been destitute. For this reason, this prince of the imperial family was anxious to earn some extra money by renting out a section of his palace.

The palace itself covered about one-half block of land. After we negotiated the price, we signed a contract to occupy one side of the palace. Yet almost immediately, we began to have trouble with our landlord when I wanted to make a new entrance to my section of the palace. The palace had only one entrance which was not practical for both the

---

<sup>6</sup> China had dowager empresses. A Dowager Empress could exist at the same time as a Grand Empress Dowager from a previous generation.

<sup>7</sup> Sun Yat-sen. Political leader known as the "father of modern China." Sun was instrumental in the overthrow of the Qing Dynasty in 1911.

mission and for the prince. Unfortunately, the ex-prince didn't see it that way and was firmly against us making another entrance. He told me that before he made such a drastic change to his palace we had to wait until the New Year. I didn't understand his stance and asked, "Why must I wait six months to open my chapel and mission to the public?"

The prince replied, "If you cut a new opening in this walled courtyard, the next child born in my family will have two mouths. I will not permit this to happen." That settled the matter for I had already learned how difficult it was to change Chinese superstitions and customs. Besides, I also knew that it would take almost six months to clean out the foot-deep accumulation of filth from the building. As we waited for the prince to cut a new entrance, I set to work cleaning everything.

Throughout the dilapidated palace, we laid down simple wooden floors over the old dirt floors. We also erected partitions for bedrooms, bathrooms, a living room, and a kitchen. All of the windows had to have their old tissue paper removed and replaced with new tissue paper. We even built a chimney to accommodate our foreign cooking stove and heating stove. To get all this done we hired many local carpenters, masons, and unskilled laborers. Because much of the work was foreign to them, we spent a great deal of time instructing them in their various duties. During those six months, we hired almost 20 different men for this Herculean task of converting the palace into our mission compound. Besides supervising and instructing the men in the work, I was extremely busy preparing my first Chinese sermon which I planned to give for the opening service of the Kuei Fu mission.

Our construction progressed very well over the next few months. The only minor problem with living in the same building as the prince was the mistake I made when placing my bedroom adjacent to the guest room of the prince. The prince often had guests playing

Mah Jong for several days and nights at a time. Occasionally the guests poked their fingers through the paper windows to see what I was doing. It was most embarrassing to have my privacy invaded in that way.

Time passed quickly in Kuei Fu, and I suddenly realized that my wife's due date was quickly approaching. I had only three days left before the due date and I needed to make my way to Ichang. What worried me was whether steamers were still traveling down the Yangtze Gorge at that time of the year. Very few steamer captains wanted to take the chance of hitting exposed rocks in the winter because of the shallow water. What made matters worse was that it was now the middle of December.

So as not to miss my chance of catching a ride on a steamer, I packed my satchel and sat on the bank waiting. Finally, after waiting for three days fortune smiled upon me as I spotted a small steamer coming down from Chung King. I hurriedly summoned a sampan and rowed out to meet the steamer. I was bursting with joy as I boarded the steamer. It had been over four months since I had last seen my wife. Again, it was a thrilling trip down through the gorge with the added danger of the shallow waters. I marveled how the pilot carefully steered the steamer to miss one rock island or rocky point protruding from the shore after another. In some places, we missed a certain collision by only a few yards. I gave a sigh of relief when we finally docked at Ichang around 5:00 pm on December 6<sup>th</sup>, 1924.

My dear Edna it seems had held off her delivery as long as she could. Early the next morning after my arrival, she began labor. Wishing to be near my wife while she was in labor, I took a room in the hospital next to Edna. A U.S. sailor who had contracted hook worm also occupied the room the hospital gave me. He had contracted the worms after he

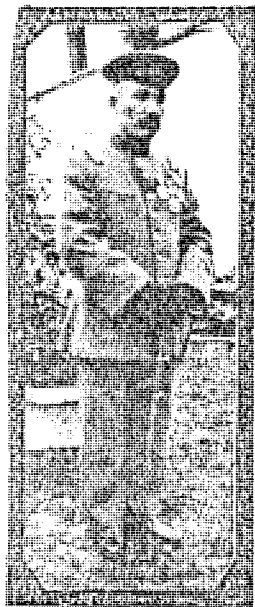
and some of his fellow soldiers swam in the Yangtze River. The soldier became so delirious because of his high fever that several sailors had to be present to hold the sick sailor in bed. The struggle between them was so furious and noisy that I did not get much sleep. After almost 22 hours of labor, Edna had our first son. It was about 2:00 am the 8<sup>th</sup> of December when the doctor came to wake me up to report the birth of our son Robert. At first all I could say was, "Is it a boy?" and then fell back asleep. From the activities of the last few days, I was too tired even to go to see my wife and the baby boy. Later I had a guilty conscious and had to spend some time explaining to Edna about my seemingly indifferent attitude to this great event.

Robert, our little miracle from God appeared to be in good health and Edna had no ill effects. After ten days of hospitalization for Edna and after little Robert had received his small pox inoculations, we packed up again for the trip back up the river to Kuei Fu. Because of the low water on the way back, our steamer dropped us off about five miles downstream from Kuei Fu. We hired a sampan crew to take us the final five miles. The five miles by sampan was extremely cold and worst of all Robert broke out with small pox spots, the after effects of the inoculation. In spite of this, we arrived safely at the mission in Kuei Fu.

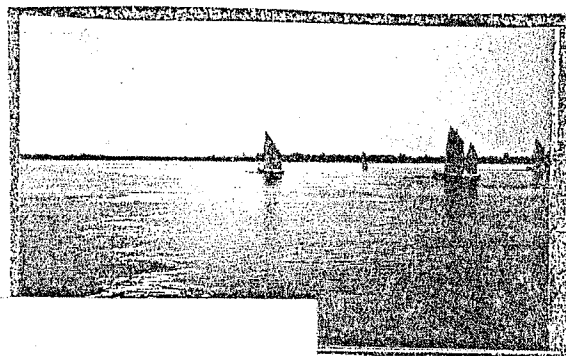
Sadly, the next six months did not prove to be as easy as my first six months in Kuei Fu. I later referred to this time as the black period in my life. We were fortunate that the Australian born Reverend Nagel and his wife arrived to help us in Kuei Fu. I say it was fortunate because of our son Robert demanded almost 24/7 care. Almost immediately, Robert began to suffer the six month colic. Every night at 11:00 pm, he screamed in pain until early morning. Then, I took Robert and cuddled him during the night. With all the

work and no sleep, it finally hit me with a huge bang. I was up one night holding Robert when I felt a strange sensation and quickly passed Robert to Rev. Nagel. Turning from him, I collapsed from the fatigue with terrible pains coming from my appendix. When I regained consciousness, I still felt pain in my stomach and knew it was serious. To go back to Ichang though for surgery was now out of the question. The steamers had stopped running and the only way to reach Ichang was by longboat. Such a trip was out of the question with an appendix that was ready to burst. Robert also had become so sick that we needed to get him some medical attention as well.

The early years in  
the upper  
Yangtze ---



Jichang  
Wanshen  
Shinan



## **CHAPTER 8 - APPENDICITIS**

After assessing the situation, I remembered hearing of an old Danish medical missionary living the life of a recluse in an old dilapidated temple in the city. His eccentricities were well known to the Chinese people. One story told about him was how he had saved his own life during the Box War. He did this by messing up his hair and waving his Bible around in the air, screaming like a madman. The Chinese soldiers were superstitious enough that they dared not kill a crazy man. Another story was that he had thrown out all of his surgical equipment into a well and now practiced his own brand of remedies. One of these was what he called the “water cure”. Whatever his eccentricities might have been, I felt I had no other option at the time and decided to call him in for whatever medical advice he might give.

Reverend Nagel agreed to go to the temple to ask the Danish doctor for his help. After a short search, Nagel was able to locate the doctor and bring him back to the mission. When they arrived, Nagel told me about the conditions in which the doctor was living. He recounted, “I entered the temple and found the room in which the doctor lived. I noticed chalked circles all over the floor. When I asked the doctor what they were for, he told me to be careful where I stepped. He warned me that I should be sure to only step on the spaces circle by circle for the rest of the floor was eroded by termites.” Nagel laughed and continued, “I certainly stepped gingerly on the chalked circles because I did not want to crash through the floor.” In spite of the seriousness of the situation and my pain, we all had a good laugh at his narrative.

I later found out more about this eccentric missionary. It seems that in his mission days, the doctor had little faith in the Chinese. Whenever they wanted a Bible, he held the



Bible behind his back until they gave him money for it. He was afraid all they wanted the Bible for was for making their shoes. He also said that he had baptized only two Chinese people and he was sorry that he had done that.

Nevertheless, he was our only hope at the time and he quickly diagnosed my condition as an appendix infection. He agreed that it was foolhardy to attempt a trip to the hospital in Ichang. After his diagnosis, the Danish doctor kneeled quietly besides me for about five minutes in serious prayer. When he finished his prayer he said, "With God's help, I'll try to cure Rev. Klein."

For the next nine days and nights, that somewhat crazy but benevolent man stayed by my bedside. He alternately applied hot and cold water packs to the infected area. At the same time, he gave me a tablespoon full of cold water every half hour. I had to laugh in spite of the pain for whenever the doctor removed one of the water packs to wring out the water and exclaim, "*Doity Joims!*" [sic] Repeatedly, he said in his broken English, "*Those doity, doity joims!*" What he was trying to convey to me was "Those dirty germs."

When after nine days he was satisfied with my bowel movements he beamed with pride over his cure. Then, for a week or so later, he tortured my body by pouring ice water over sections of my body. This was all part of his alternative approach to medicine which he called the "Water cure". The treatment came in various stages. The first day he poured the ice water over my ankles, the next day over my knees, and the third day over my tailbone. The follow day he poured water over the back of my neck and then poured water over my entire body. Without drying me, the doctor wrapped me into a sheet and tucked me back into bed. Suddenly a warm glow appeared all over my body as the chill left it and the full flow of clean blood permeated my body.

Following his care, he instructed me to jump into a tub of cold water once a day for many months to follow. I was full of praise for the doctor for his treatment and told others that, "My blood stream is so sensitive that when a drop of cold water strikes my body it flushes red all over."

Besides this water treatment, he gave me a tablespoon full of strained oatmeal several times a day as nourishment. Thankfully, I made it through this first attack with the help of the eccentric doctor. Several years later, while I was on a lecture tour in St. Louis, Missouri I experienced another attack. Following an operation at the Lutheran Hospital in St. Louis, the doctor informed me that my first attack in China was extremely severe. The doctor told me I had heavy scar tissue surrounded my appendix.

### **TO HANKOW FOR MEDICAL AID FOR ROBERT**

During this time, it became necessary for me to turn over the care of Kuei Fu to Rev. Nagel because of my illness. We also needed desperately to take care of Robert. When spring arrived, we traveled to Hankow for medical aid. In Hankow, we saw a doctor who had recently come from Germany as part of a mission team. He examined Robert and suggested that we have Robert circumcised and that we give him raw carrot juice to drink. The suggestions were followed and they seemed to do the job of healing little Robert. From then on Robert received the nickname "Bob" or "Bobby".

### **CHAPTER 9 - ANOTHER ASSIGNMENT**

After our first eventful year in Kuei Fu, it was time to go to Kuling for another summer conference. Rev. Gebhardt arrived from Shihnanfu a very sick man and later a

doctor diagnosed his ailment as tuberculosis. For this reason, the mission board needed a replacement to take over the Shihnanfu mission. Since I had already spent one year there, the members of the conference decided that I should take over the post. The conference also decided to send a nurse along with us as Edna was again pregnant. Having a nurse with us eliminated the need to travel to Hankow for medical emergencies. They assigned Marie Oelshlaeger as our nurse and she became an invaluable member of the mission team. The mission board also assigned Marie's sister Frieda to teach in Shihnanfu. Both of these women helped assist me in the orphanage and mission school in Shihnanfu. Once again, we left for the treacherous journey back to Shihnanfu with great excitement. The trip took us about three weeks but we arrived safely at our new home there.

Our work was uneventful for the first few months and almost too peaceful considering what was happening in other parts of China at the time. The only real excitement came in January when Edna went into labor. Marie the nurse was not overly concerned about the delivery of my second child. At least from her outward appearances Marie looked completely calm and ready to assist with the delivery. Her composure went a long way to help calm my emotions and helped calm Edna's worries. On the 5<sup>th</sup> of January, 1925, I once again offered a prayer of thanksgiving to God of the safe arrival of my second son, Herman Richard. Mother and child had excellent care under Marie. My prestige was soon elevated among the natives when they learned I had a second son. The Chinese put a high value on having male heirs.

Another excitement came into our lives when one day a band of undisciplined soldiers made an attack on the city. I quickly gathered my small family together and hid them behind a brick wall at the rear of the courtyard. This band of soldiers scoured the city

for loot and randomly shot through doors and gates along the streets. After occupying the city for a few months and demanding large sums of money from the business men, the soldiers finally moved on to raid other villages and cities. As they left, these wild soldiers used their bayonets and rifles to force the Chinese males, who had not fled the city, to carry their loot. Unfortunately, if any of these men appeared to grow weak or tired along the way, the soldiers were not entirely convinced they were disabled. As a result, the bandit soldiers went around stabbing and harassing the people when they refused to work for them. Consequently, Marie and I kept busy treating bayonet stabs and other injuries suffered at the hands of these vicious bandits.

These roving bands of wild soldiers still respected us as foreigners for the most part. Many Chinese males attempted to escape servitude by taking refuge in the mission shelter and surrounding courtyard. The scourge of these undisciplined soldiers however became so severe that finally several hundred farmers around Shihnanfu came to me one day. The delegation of farmers was so fearful of the soldiers that they begged me, "Please come out to our area and do mission work. We will", they told me, "build you a big chapel. We will all join your mission." Although they were earnest in their request to have me work among them, their real intention was to secure a haven of refuge from the soldiers. Because I feared the soldiers might eventually attack foreign missionaries, I respectfully declined the farmers' magnanimous offer.

While working in Shihnanfu, I was finally able to develop some hobbies for relaxation. One hobby was carpentry work and I began by making a "cedar" chest and dressing table for my wife out of two mahogany trees. The lumber for this project came

from some trees that I managed to cut down on in our compound and had seasoned so that they were usable.

Another hobby I took up was raising two hogs. When the hogs were full grown, I called in several butchers to slaughter the pigs. To my surprise, when I went out to watch them kill the hogs, I found two dead and bloated pigs lying on the table. At first, I thought the butchers had substituted my good healthy hogs for two bloated hogs taken from the river. My anger and surprise soon turned to laughter as they told me what had happened to my hogs. The butchers had cut the skin of the hog just above the hoof of each hind leg. Then the butchers blew until their own faces turned red into the openings they had made in the hind legs of the hogs. All at once, the skin of the hog separated from the flesh and all the wrinkles and grooves of the hog disappeared. As the hogs lay on the table, they looked like giant inflated footballs. Then after inflating the hogs, the butchers shaved off the bristles with ease. Finally, when the butchers were finished with their work, I smoked a number of hams and slabs of bacon. To preserve the rest of the pork, I placed it in over 60 pounds of the clean, white lard from the hogs.

Besides my regular routine in Shihnanfu with the mission, I also supervised the building of two missionary residences on the hill overlooking the city. We built these houses out of local stone and lumber and the buildings were finished before leaving for another summer conference in Kuling.

## **CHAPTER 10 - THE DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY**

However, when we returned from the conference in Kuling our hearts sickened when we saw the condition of our compound in Shihnanfu. Some unruly soldiers had broken into

my house and had stolen all the hams, bacon, and lard we had stored up for the coming year. They had used their bayonets to damage the furniture, including the “cedar” chest and dressing table I had made for Edna. The soldiers had either stolen or ruined virtually all our household goods in their wake. We took this minor calamities in stride, reminding ourselves of the poor Chinese civilians who were constantly plagued by the marauding bandits. Ironically, time after time when a new batch of soldiers approached the city the population greeted them with white flags. The white flags indicated the Chinese slogan, “From darkness into light.” Unfortunately, the expected light turned almost immediately into darkness when the bandit soldiers began to pillage the city.

Our dealings with the soldiers did not stop with their pillaging and destruction of property. One day the Chinese army called our nurse to the soldier barracks to save one of the soldiers from dying. He had swallowed a large amount of raw opium in order to commit suicide. I was not about to let Marie go alone into the barracks so I went with her. When we arrived, the soldier refused to open his mouth for us to pump his stomach in order to save his life. We tried everything to pry open his mouth to no avail. Finally, I took out my pocket knife and broke out the dying man’s two front teeth so that the nurse could push the tube down his throat to pump his stomach. The soldier survived his attempted suicide but never came back to thank us for our aid.

Besides dealing with the wounded from the attacks of the soldiers, we kept busy treating people with congested lungs. Night and day, I dashed up the filthy cobble streets of Shihnanfu with a bottle of eucalyptus oil and a kettle of steaming water. The eucalyptus steam had helped quite a number of patients by loosening their congestion. One of my patients though bothered me a great deal. One evening, I went to the house of a young child

who was suffering from congested lung. Unfortunately, before I had arrived his parents had tried a cure of their own by blowing opium smoke into the child's lungs. As I sat there with my makeshift steamer attempting to help the child, he died in my arms. I was furious at what the parents had done to their child by administering this fatal drug.

But I was also amazed at the stamina of the Chinese people in overcoming bodily ailments. After visiting a farmer one day, I saw a woman nursing a baby on one breast while her husband with a straw in his hand poked it into the other breast. This primitive cure enabled him to drain out an infection. The sight dumbfounded me as I assumed that it was a cancerous breast. I begged her husband to allow her to go to a hospital to have the pus-filled breast removed. They refused my pleas but when I returned a month or so later, lo and behold, the child was nursing on both breasts and the breasts showed no signs of infection.

At the following summer conference, the board assigned Rev. Zeigler, his wife, and three children to Shihnanfu to help in the ever expanding mission field. Boy was I ever glad to receive more help. For the next year, we enjoyed some relative peace in the area. Because of this, the next summer only Rev. Zeigler and I decided to go to conference. The long trip to Kuling had become too hard on our smaller children. On top of this, the new houses on the mountainside were ready and they provided better relief from the summer heat. The heat of the summers was what usually forced us to go on vacation. Before we left, I contacted General Yu Hsiu Chung, a friend of mine, to look after our families. The general assured me that he along with his 3000 soldiers would see to it that no harm came to the women and children we left behind.

General Yu became a dear friend of ours in those days. Earlier I had even attempted to teach him to play tennis. It was quite an experience to teach him as he had eight

bodyguards surrounding him at all times. During our tennis games the bodyguards often interfered with play by helping the general hold the ball, pick up his tennis racket, or by chasing the ball all over the court. It was also important that whenever we had the general over for dinner we had to set a table for his eight bodyguards as well.

## **CHAPTER II - CHIANG KAI-SHEK AND THE COMMUNIST**

### **ARMIES**

Having been in China now for a number of years, I had found that the unexpected just seemed always to happen in China. While at conference, Dr. Brandt, the LC-MS mission director from St. Louis, had come to inspect the missions. He wanted to go to Shihnanfu with me following the Kuling conference. As much as I wanted him to see our work there, I received the sad word that a war had cut us off from our families and Shihnanfu. Dr. Brant asked, "How is that?" With great turmoil in my heart I said, "Chiang Kai-shek in cooperation with the communist armies of Mao Tze Tsung and Chu Te came up from Shanghai and the south to overthrow Wu Beh Fu, the warlord governing Hu Peh Province. The battle is currently raging between Hankow and Ichang. Because of that, the river route has been cut off so that all ships have stopped going upriver."

However, I was determined to leave Kuling as quickly as possible after we heard more reports of the battle. I wanted desperately to get to Hankow and on to Shihnanfu to get my family out safely. In spite of my warnings to Dr. Brandt about the dangers, he insisted on going to Shihnanfu. So within a few days, Dr. Brant, Rev. Zeigler, and I quickly traveled to Hankow. In Hankow, I contacted the American Consulate and presented my case to them. The Consulate replied and said that they were working up a plan. In a few days, to



my great joy and relief, the Consulate contacted me. The Consulate told me that both warring factors had agreed to permit one British steamer and the British gunboat *Scarab* to take three Americans through the firing lines. The ships did not permit a single Chinese passenger on board.

With fear and uncertainty, we watched all night as the hundreds of sampans and junks loaded with soldiers floated past us heading for Hankow. The gunboat *Scarab* played its searchlight all night on the passing junks loaded with soldiers. It seemed as though we were passing through the thick of the battle lines. One morning after a night of vigil on deck, I was resting on a deckchair. Rev. Zeigler and Dr. Brandt were in the salon writing letters. All of a sudden, I noticed an American oil tanker coming down the river. Reluctantly, because of my night spent awake I got up from my deckchair to fulfill the custom of waving a salute to the passing ship. Just as I took a step or two from the deckchair, a volley of bullets shattered the deckchair into pieces around me.

Fortunately, the first volley did not hit me and I dashed into the salon yelling for Dr. Brandt and Rev. Zeigler. We ran from the salon to the pilot deck and crouched behind some large steel plates. All steamers during this dangerous time carried these steel plates to help protect the captains from gunfire coming from onshore. Unscrupulous soldiers had shot and killed many captains before they installed these plates. So there we sat, or should I say lay, twisted behind the steel plates to avoid the gunfire. We twisted our bodies to avoid the many rivet holes in the plates where a bullet might penetrate. As we looked out, we saw at least 200 soldiers on shore, blazing away at the American oil tanker. Foolishly, during the attack Dr. Brandt stuck his head above the steel plates to get a better view of the enemy and received a cursing out by the captain of the ship. The captain went into a profanity laced

tirade against the doctor and shouted, "This is not your war. Get down behind those steel plates."

When the *Scarab* saw our dilemma, it steamed up full power to our ship as fast as it was able. With deadly aim, the gunboat soon silenced the enemy soldiers on shore. To the best of my knowledge, no newspaper ever recorded this incident, nor did I ever learn how many on shore died. Later we learned that a bullet hit one man in the calf of his leg on the American tanker. Following the attack, I went around the ship and gather a good handful of spent bullets off the deck. After our exciting trip from Hankow we arrived safely but definitely shaken up in Shihnanfu. It was a glorious and happy day as we reunited with our families and friends. Throughout the time we were gone, General Yu had fulfilled his promise to protect the women and children.

Dr. Brandt spent about a week in Shihnanfu before returning to Hankow. Word had come that Chiang Kai-shek had defeated the army of Wu Peh Fu and was now in control of the province of Hu Peh. This afforded opportunity for Dr. Brandt to leave and Rev. Zeigler escorted him as far as Pa Dung. From there he made it safely back to the States. Consequently, after General Chiang defeated Wu Peh Fu, he broke his relationship with the communist forces and General Chu Te.

### **THE REAL TROUBLE BEGINS**

Meanwhile, the Chinese army drove General Mao and his cutthroat communist forces westward towards the Shihnanfu area. When my dear friend, General Yu heard of the communist armies approaching the area, he and his troops fled. In their haste they threw away all of their guns. To make matters worse the warlord whom General Yu had served under was also defeated and had dispersed his troops. Most fled back to their homes leaving

our mission and the other foreigners in Shihnanfu at the mercy of about 5,000 communists soldiers who quickly took over the city. The leader of the communist army publicly announced that foreigners were no longer under the old protection laws.

While all this was happening in Shihnanfu, General Chiang, by a force of arms and bribery, took over control of most of the areas once controlled by the various Chinese warlords. This was not an easy task for him as many of the soldiers of the warlords either joined the fleeing forces of Mao and Chu Te or eventually joined General Chiang's forces. Consequently, fighting and unrest spread across China like gangrene. The country was in such terrible turmoil that it became increasingly dangerous for foreigners to remain in China.

Soon we received orders from the American Consulate, Embassy, and Admiralty to come out of Shihnanfu immediately. The orders came in February, which was the worst possible time to traverse the mountain passes. Because of the snow and freezing weather on the mountains, it was almost impossible to break free. To add to our dilemma, Rev. Zeigler was suffering from yellow jaundice and his wife was expecting another baby any day. One bright spot in our lives occurred during this time of waiting with the birth of our third son, William Arthur. William, whom we called Bill, was born under the care of two nurses. Not long after that, Edna conceived again. Her pregnancy added to my dilemma of attempting an escape. I contacted the Consulate in Hankow regarding our situation and asked for more time before risking our lives on such a hazardous journey over the mountains. In spite of my request, the Consulate's demands became even more numerous and urgent for us to leave.

We were in a quandary what to do when suddenly Mrs. Zeigler went into labor. Sadly, she gave birth to a stillborn child. Following this tragedy, we allowed her ten days to recuperate while we engaged, with difficulty, about 100 sedan porters and baggage carriers. Yet, the next day I learned that the army had taken over the porters we had hired. I went to the army major of the city and demanded the return of the porters. Luckily, the major and I were on friendly terms and he agreed to relinquish the porters into our service. Finally, when everything was ready I brought all the porters to the mission compound the night before our escape. That night I carefully locked us all into the mission courtyard so that the army did not commandeer the workers again.

## **CHAPTER 12 - THE ESCAPE**

Our escape took place on February 7, 1927 as we woke up early the next morning. Quickly and quietly, I tucked the six children, ranging in age from one to three years old in three children sized sedan chairs. Each sedan chair held two infants as they faced each other over a small wicker table. We packed the children into the chairs surrounded by warm blankets and a canvas canopy enclosed the whole sedan to protect them from the wind, rain, and snow. These sedan chairs only took two workers to carry them. Each of the adults in our group had their own well-padded sedan chairs. The remaining porters we had hired took turns carrying the chairs and the rest of the luggage. We had packed enough food to last for the six-day journey over the mountains. When everything was ready, our large caravan left Shihnanfu like thieves in the night before anyone else was awake. Even though it was still very early in the morning, most of the orphans in the mission orphanage appeared to escort

our caravan for several miles before wishing us God speed as they stood sadly waving goodbye.

We had gone about half a day's journey from Shihnanfu, when a messenger overtook us. The Catholic priest who was still living in Shihnanfu sent him. The message warned us not to proceed to Pa Tung because it had fallen into the hands of the communist army. He also reported that some bandit soldiers had sacked and burned the Catholic mission in Pa Tung. This was a heavy blow to our caravan as all of the heavy baggage had already gone on ahead. There was nothing to do but to wait and see, trusting in God's protection us as we traveled.

As our escape progressed, another difficulty arose because of an ancient Chinese superstition and custom. Through the gossip grapevine, the news carried before us that Mrs. Zeigler had just delivered a stillborn child. Upon hearing this, the inn-keepers along the way refused us lodging because they believed Mrs. Zeigler had not yet cleansed herself of the unclean spirit. The Chinese believed that unclean spirits infected a woman whose child had died in birth. They believed that it took one whole month for the unclean woman to rid herself of the unclean spirits. For this reason, it became extremely difficult for us to find an inn or an old temple in which to spend the night. Even after we managed to find a place to rest for the night, the ordeal of changing the many wet diapers of the children became quite a trick. We held our children over a smoking fire located in the center of a smoke filled room and then attempted to change the diaper. We managed somehow or another by stooping low enough in order to protect our eyes from the irritating smoke. Then holding the child in one hand over the warmth of the fire and manipulating the pins with the other hand we changed the diapers.

The trip took its toll on Edna. Because Edna was pregnant, there was the real fear that she might go into premature delivery caused by the constant crash of her sedan chair with the ground. Each time her porters had slipped her chair crashed down upon the snow packed and slippery stone steps. Luckily, no one was injured. On the third day of our journey, I faced a very difficult decision after viewing what lay ahead of us. As I led the caravan down a steep mountainside into a small village where we intended to stop for lunch, I saw a group of soldiers blocking the entrance to the village. We figured they had to be renegade communist bandits and a flurry of thoughts went through my head. I even thought, "Might they accept me as a hostage and permit the rest to go on their way?" As I contemplated our options, I got out of my sedan chair to approach the troops on foot.

May God be praised! To my surprise, I recognized the officer in charge of the troops. He was an old friend of mine I had met back in Kuei Fu. The officer grinned as he recognized me and soon my own face beamed. I asked him, "What are you doing way over here so far from Kuei Fu?" The officer turned and pointed to twenty or more renegade soldiers who were bound hand and foot and said to me, "We chased these bandits over here and are in the process of rounding up the rest. You cannot stop here but I'll give you an escort through this dangerous spot. Just don't stop – keep going." Those with me marveled at our good fortune as I said, "God must be praised for it was him who cleared the way for our safety."

After two more days of traversing the mountains, our caravan finally arrived at the village of Pa Tung on the banks of the Yangtze River. The soldiers had indeed burned the Catholic mission to the ground and so we had to seek lodging elsewhere. Yet there was good news, for after the communist soldiers had finished looting the village they had

completely abandoned it. We located the Catholic priest and asked him what had transpired. The priest gave this report of the attack, "About 500 communist bandits raided Pa Tung. They burned the entire Catholic mission building and then placed soldiers on both sides of the Yangtze River to commandeer any ships that came by. Any ship that refused to stop, they immediately fired upon from both banks. Then when they had finally looted the entire city they escaped on board a commandeered ship." After he had finished telling of the attack, I asked him if any steam ships were still running the gauntlet. The priest told us that all shipping on the Yangtze had come to a stop because of the fighting and threat of the bandits.

Rev. Zeigler was still suffering greatly from the yellow jaundice and we needed to get the children to somewhere safe. I asked the priest if there was any way for us to get to Ichang. He suggested to me, "You can engage a longboat to take you through the gorge to Ichang." So I went out and hired a longboat for our party. However, after conferring with Rev. Zeigler on the matter we decided that we should wait a few days. Rev. Zeigler in the meantime had written multiple letters to the Admiralty and the Consulate for help and he was hoping that they would respond. We all prayed that they might send a gunboat up to Pa Tung to rescue us. With this in mind, we decided to delay our departure for a couple of days to see if they sent help. Fortunately, God answered the letters and our prayers but in a different way than we expected. The longboats which we had hired set off one day taking some rich Chinese businessmen to safety. Along the way, bandits intercepted the longboat and held them for ransom.

So we waited as we thanked God for his protection. Meanwhile Marie, the nurse and I went around Pa Tung looking for a place to stay. After some searching, we managed to get

a room in a two-story inn overlooking the river. We had just put the children and the sick to bed, when around midnight we heard a loud knock on the door. I opened the door to find a very excited Chinese man bringing news that a steamer had anchored a few miles above Pa Tung. We were a little suspicious of this report and feared that it might be a hoax to get us outside the village in order to kidnap us. I asked the man why the boat had anchored outside the village. He replied, "The captain heard that steamers were in danger of being commandeered near here. The captain is planning to speed by Pa Tung early in the morning."

This sounded like a reasonable explanation. So I asked the man if he might carry a message back to the captain of the steamer for me. "Can do, Can do," he excitedly replied in Chinese. After writing a quick note, I handed it to the man with a couple of dollars. The note read as follows:

Captain,  
There are six little children, five adults, (two are sick) stranded here in Pa Tung. All are Americans. Pa Tung is now free from all soldiers. You need not fear an attack on your ship. I will have my group waiting in sampans early in the morning. Please slow down and pick us up. Urgent.  
Sincerely Yours,  
Rev. H. Klein.

As the man left, I immediately roused the entire group out of their beds. Within minutes, we had everyone dressed warmly and we headed down to the river shore. Because it was winter, the water level had dropped about one hundred feet. In its wake, the river had left a slimy, slippery slope which we slipped and fell down to the shoreline. We had placed Edna in an old Chinese sedan chair to carry her down the slope. Almost immediately, she broke through the dilapidated chair and floundered in the mud. The Chinese men that were carrying her were very considerate and asked her to try again. But Edna full of rage was not



about to get back in the chair and in English yelled, "Go to dickens. I'll slide down the bank."

When we had all made it down the bank we spent the rest of the night huddled around a charcoal fire pan waiting for dawn. Just before daylight, we boarded some sampans I hired and moved upstream a couple of hundred yards to meet the steamer in the quieter waters above the village. When we had reached the quieter waters, we once again tied up to shore to wait. As we waited in silence, I began to hear a thumping noise on the side of the boat. My stomach almost turned upside down when I realized where the sound originated. As I peered into the water, I made out the form of several bloated bodies tied to another boat. This horrific scene had become all too common in those days. Bandits were killing many people and throwing their bodies into the river. Local boatmen had taken on the grim task of hauling the bodies ashore to get a few dollars from their grieving relatives.

Finally, someone cried out in the early morning, "Here comes the steamer." The boatmen soon readied our boat to meet the steamer in midstream. The current in the river was so strong that it was impossible for the steamer to anchor. When we neared the steamer, they threw a rope down to the boatmen. Soon our sampan was gliding alongside the steamer, held fast by the tow ropes. We hastily boarded the ship so as not to be in the process of offloading when both boats reached the rapids. I handed the children one by one to a variety of people on board the steamer. Then I ran up on deck and hung over the railing by hooking one leg over each side of it to help unload the luggage from our sampan. As soon as I had paid the brave men in the sampan, we cut them loose and they headed for shore.

Once things had settled down, we began to gather the contents of our provisions and luggage which lay all over the deck. Looking up from picking up a basket of our supplies, I encountered the gaze the American captain. "Thank you, captain," I said as I noticed his huge grin. The captain, still grinning, replied, "You are lucky I stopped for you. When I saw that beard of yours, I thought you were a Jew." I suppose I must have looked rather rough after the last ten days of not shaving as we made our escape.

Later I asked the captain why he was still running down the river with all the bandits looking for ships to commandeer. "Well," the captain said, "this ship belongs to the Chinese. They hire me, because I am an American, so that the ship can fly the American flag. This gives the ship some security from the bandit armies taking it over. This worked well for a time but later the general of the army found out about this deception and he ordered the manager of this company to bring this ship down from Chungking to Ichang or he would cut off his head. That is why I am here at this time." I simply responded, "I am certain that God had something to do with this happy hour."

The rest of the voyage went uneventful until we arrived in Ichang. As soon as we arrived, some bandit soldiers boarded the ship on one side while we scrambled off the ship on the other side into some waiting sampans. The sampans then moved us to a large British steamer anchored at Ichang. Because of a lack of fuel, the ship had become stranded there. On board the British steamer were about 90 other foreigners, mostly British citizens who were waiting to sail home. The Chinese government had already decided to boycott the British. There was also little food on board the steamer, so I went ashore to buy food for everyone. As soon as I touched ground, a crowd of Chinese pickets met me. Only after they

had seen my American passport did they allow me to buy enough food for my own family and friends.

### **CHAPTER 13 - HEADING FOR HANKOW**

After about one week aboard the stranded British steamer, they finally managed to get some fuel to get under way. How they obtained the fuel still remains a mystery to me. Nevertheless, we were underway once again. The steamer was relatively small and had only four cabins which housed eight passengers. The rest of the refugees spread their bedding or cots, if they had one, all over the deck. I surveyed the deck to find the best place to settle our group. Looking around a bit, I located a steel plate about ten feet square that covered the engine room. The heat from the engine room kept the steel plate nice and warm. Using some the tarps which protected our baggage in our journey from Shihnanfu, we erected a tent to protect ourselves from the cool river breezes. Once everything was set up, we spread the blankets over the steel plate and settled in for the night. The biggest inconvenience during the night was when someone needed to use the restroom. Whenever we needed the restroom, we had to carefully step over all the sleeping passengers who were scattered over the ship's deck.

It was not exactly comfortable on deck but it was better than being down in the hold of the ship below the waterline. Every time our ship drew near a Chinese fort built on the banks of the river, the crew herded us down into the hold of the ship. This was the safest place for us. Often during anti-foreign uprisings, the Chinese had a habit of firing upon foreign ships. Down in the stuffy hold we sat on all kinds of cargo for an hour or more until we were out of the range of the rifles. It was also a very nerve racking experience as we sat

there not knowing what was happening outside. Fortunately, our ship did not meet too much rifle fire for a few days before foreign gunboats had put most of these forts out of commission with their cannons.

Two days later, our ship docked at Hankow. Rev. Zeigler decided that because of his illness he would continue on the ship to Shanghai. Edna and I decided to stay in Hankow, as we hoped conditions would improve in China and that it would once again be safe for foreigners. Marie Oelshlaeger and her sister also decided to stay in Hankow with us. We had heard that Miss Olive Gruen was still conducting a girls' school a few miles from the river beyond Hankow. Along with the Oelshlaeger girls, we traveled to the girls' school and took up residence with Olive.

Waiting once again, I found amusement in an incident that involved the Oelshlaeger girls. One day they were on their way back from the city, three Chinese soldiers attacked them. Both the sisters were at least six to eight inches taller than their attackers and the sisters proved to be excellent defenders. Both girls immediately began to clobber the soldiers with their heavy leather handbags which caused the soldiers to run away in fear. When they finished telling us their story, their courage simply amazed me. Yet at the same time, I sensed the danger for foreigners was only growing in China. My uneasiness grew when a report came from Nanking that the communist army had massacred a number of foreigners there. By the grace of God, some survived due to the quick action of the British cruiser, the *Emerald*. As the ship came near the city, it made a barrage of shellfire around a group of foreigners who moved into the safety range of the cruiser. When this report came to us, I immediately moved my growing family into one of the mission houses in the French

Concession of the city. This shelter was much closer to the river and to the foreign gunboats.

We lived there for a time as we patiently waited. One day I had to go to the dentist's office, who just happened to be an American. During my visit, we were discussing the antiforeigner mentality that was becoming very serious and I said jokingly to the dentist, "I'll bet I'll beat you to the rescue ship." I said this because I knew it would take me much longer to round up my family and to cart them the eight blocks to the pier. The dentist's only had a one block trek. At this time, a large steamer lay anchored at the pier. The ship was ready to evacuate the foreigners living in Hankow if the situation grew any worse. The dentist confidently turned to me and said, "Never. I'll be on board before you can ever get your family there." "We will see," I told him as I left and walked home for lunch. When I arrived home, our cook had already placed the soup and sandwiches on the table. Just as I had finished asking God's blessing on the food, a messenger arrived and called out to us, "Get to the boat immediately. The communists are coming. This is a direct order from the Consulate." We didn't need a second invitation and immediately jumped up from lunch and left the food untouched. Luckily, Edna had a couple suitcases packed already and our group quickly rounding up other items to pack. While this was taking place, I ran the eight blocks to the steamer to make reservations for my household. Arriving at the pier, the captain of the British steamer, the *Lungwo*, told me that there were no reservations. He told me, "No. First come, first served."

With this news, I ran back to get my family. By the time we had all made it to the pier, all the first and second class cabins were already full. Luckily, there was still room on board for my family in the lower sections of the ship. The ship normally gave these third

class sections to Chinese passengers. Just as I had gotten the family settled in their quarters, I saw the dentist arrive on board with a big smile. He knew he had been beaten and smirked, "Well, pastor, I see you won the race." After about an hour of loading, the ship pulled up anchor with about 360 foreign evacuees on board and we headed down river to Shanghai. Joining us on board were the Riedels and their six children, Eddie and Mrs. E.L. Arndt, and the Zieglers with their three children.

On the first night of the journey, we made it to Nanking and set anchor there next to the British cruiser, the *HMS Emerald*. For extra protection, I placed our suitcases along the shore side of the ship as the child slept in their bunks. It might not have seemed like much, but if the bullets started flying again, the suitcases might have stopped a bullet from hitting the children.

My fears were not in vain, for about 2:00 AM the next morning came the sound of terrific gunfire from the shore. Men and women rushed here and there looking for a safe place to hide. It amused me somewhat when I saw the naïve evacuees crouched on all four sides of large trunks and boxes. Didn't it occur to them that at least one side of the box was not safe? Thankfully, no one was hurt in the attack but the captain decided immediately to lift anchor and head for Shanghai.

When we eventually arrived in Shanghai, we were acutely aware of how serious the situation had become in China. Gunboats, cruisers, and battleships from numerous foreign countries already had lined up facing the city with their guns ready to assault the city. On the docks, barbed wire fences and sandbag bunkers sectioned off the foreign ships. The soldiers cautioned us that there were many snipers looking to shoot foreigners who happened to walk past their perches on rooftops. Yet, whenever the military discovered one

of these snipers, the soldiers immediately shot him on sight. Because of this, each time a tire blew out or when someone shot off a firecracker, everyone seemed to jump a foot into the air.

Throughout Shanghai, numerous refugees from all over China had crowded together. Because of the overcrowding, it was nearly impossible to find adequate lodging. Finally, a White Russian couple, who had fled during Stalin's purge of all anti-Communists, offered my family a place to stay. Their apartment was located in the French Concession. This section of Shanghai most considered the least protected part of the city at that time.

Yet it was the best place we found and room and board came at a most reasonable price. The Russian couple with whom we lived continued to make their living by singing, dancing, and playing music at a cabaret. As a result, every night around 2:00 am I heard them coming down the street singing and dancing as they made their way home from work. The vodka that they had consumed most likely caused their cheerful demeanor during this troubling time. On the other hand, the very fact that they still sang and danced in the streets assured me that relative peace still reigned in the area.

Suddenly one night, that peace was broken as the entire city shook alive from its sleep by a barrage of rifle and cannon fire. Immediately, the city burst into a state of confusion as the shots continued to ring out. I hurriedly jumped from my bed, dressed, and ran out onto the street to see what was happening. A policeman standing on the street calmly told me there was nothing to fear when I asked him about all the cannon fire. "Oh," the policeman said, "about one block from here the local gendarmes are blasting the headquarters of a communist stronghold." From this information, I could tell the war was moving closer to us and wondered what was going to happen next. Unfortunately, there was

nothing left for me to do but to go back to bed knowing that the army had destroyed at least one more communist stronghold that evening.

For the next three weeks, we waited in Shanghai while becoming more and more nervous about the deteriorating atmosphere that pervaded the city. It saddened us to hear that during this waiting period, the Zieglers had both been taken to the hospital because of typhoid fever. It came as some relief to me though knowing that the Zieglers had not stopped their flight in Hankow.

So as we waited we finally sought passage to America. Because of the unsettling conditions existing in China, the American government and the mission board had both decided to evacuate all missionaries and their families to America. Finally, we left the fears of communist outrages behind as we boarded a Japanese steamer back to America. Once again, I faced 21 days of severe seasickness as we made our journey across the vast Pacific Ocean. When we reached the States, we made our way across country to Pueblo, Colorado and arrived there towards the end of March 1927. Three months later, Edna gave birth to our fourth son whom we named Thomas. Thomas was certainly a little miracle as he had been through a harrowing ordeal even before he was born. I was thrilled to have another son whom we quickly began to call Tom. Nicknames were something of a novelty to me. God had blessed Edna and me with a growing family consisting of our own Bob, Dick, Bill, and Tom.

Once again, we waited to see what the Lord had in store for us. Thankfully, we did not have to wait long for a place to live as the mission board provided us with housing in St. Louis. They had given us an old professor's residence near the old seminary building. This house served as a furlough house for returning missionaries. Soon after little Tom's arrival,



our family headed for St. Louis. For this trip I purchased an old Flivver (a used Ford car) once owned by Rev. Hoyer, the pastor at Emmaus church in Denver. It was an old car and it shook us up and down as we bumped along the roads to St. Louis. Paved highways were scarce in those days and most roads were nothing more than rutty and dusty roads. These roads often became mud bogs when it rained. The kids on the other hand, got a big kick out of the bumpy ride in that old jalopy.

While some might have viewed that bumpy trip with disdain, it was a pleasant change compared to the severe trials we had undergone in the previous months. Comparatively, driving across America was much easier as rather than seeking out an old temple on the mountain face in which to sleep, we found slightly better accommodations along the highway. For a couple of the nights, we were able to rent small cabins which consisted of an old wood stove, a bare bunk bed, a table, and a chair or two. Although others might have thought twice about renting such places, these cabins suited us well and were a nice luxury. The cost to rent one of these cabins wasn't bad either, only \$0.50. Because of the roads, our journey from Colorado to St. Louis took about four days.

Now came another period of waiting to see what was going to happen next. The conflict between Chiang Kai-shek and the Communist forces of Mao Tse Tung raged on in China for more than a year. Finally, Chiang Kai-shek was able to stabilize the area where most of our missions were located. During this forced year of furlough, I remained busy as I again enrolled at Concordia Seminary for a postgraduate course. I also took to the road on many lecture tours to Kansas, Missouri, Illinois, Ohio, Iowa, New York, Tennessee, and Arkansas. During one of my lecture tours in Kansas, I fell ill with appendicitis. Immediately, I rushed back to St. Louis in terrible pain aboard a night train. The next day, I

was on the operating table at the Lutheran Hospital in St. Louis. After the successful surgery, the doctor told me that I had certainly had a serious attack before. The doctor found old and very severe scar tissue around the appendix. I gave thanks to God for providing that old Danish medical missionary in Kuei Fu, China for his splendid water cure.

Meanwhile, Edna had her hands full taking care of our four boys. Her hands became even fuller when on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1928 Edna gave birth to our fifth child. Our faithful nurse, Marie Oelshlaeger, who single-handedly delivered Dick and Bill in far-off Shihnanfu, was again present in St. Louis to deliver our first daughter. Without the aid of a hospital, Marie came to our home to deliver into the world our first daughter. We named her "Dorothy" as she was truly another precious gift from God.

In the summer of 1928, St. Louis suffered a most devastating cyclone. The cyclone swept through the north section of St. Louis and killed about 200 people and destroyed thousands of homes and businesses. Right around the time of the clean up, I also received word that my dear old mother was seriously ill. I immediately took passage on a train bound for Pueblo, Colorado to be with my mother. My mother was suffering from a serious case of gall stones but refused to go to the hospital for an operation. So, one night as my sister Caroline and I sat vigil over my mother, we heard her last breath depart around 2:00 am. Although greatly saddened by my mother's passing I rejoiced knowing that she was now resting with her Savior whom she had for so long adored and served. After the funeral in Pueblo, I returned to St. Louis. As I reflect back on my mother I can still recall the beautiful German Christian prayers my mother had taught me when I was a child.

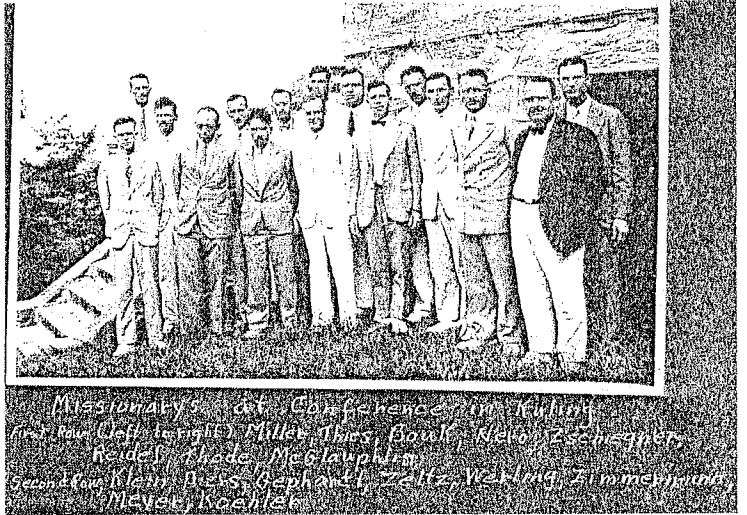
## **CHAPTER 14 - BACK TO CHINA AGAIN**

Barely a month after my operation for appendicitis, we booked passage on the *S.S. Siberia Maru* for China. I could hardly walk upright because the incision, which had broken open during a siege of severe vomiting after the operation. The wound was in the process of healing as we set sail on November 7<sup>th</sup>, 1928. The 20 plus days of seasickness coupled with my appendicitis surgery plagued me as we made our way to Honolulu, Japan, and finally on to China. Nevertheless, God was looking after me and we safely made it back to Shanghai several weeks later.

Unlike our first encounter with China, I was now proficient in dealing with the Chinese in their language. For that reason, our trip from Shanghai up the Yangtze to Hankow did not provide as much excitement. Yet, China was certainly a different place than when we had left her a year ago. By the time of our arrival, Chiang Kai-shek had the Yangtze River valley pretty well under control and had driven the communist army to the far northwestern province.

With sadness in our hearts, we returned sorely understaffed. The war had severely reduced our mission team. For this reason, the mission board assigned me to take over the supervision of all the mission schools and four of the congregations in and around Hankow. We took up residence at Milan Terrace in the French Concession. Along with my family, four native evangelists and about 21 native school teachers assisted me there. The other missionaries located in Hankow served as instructors at the seminary and college. For the past year, the schools had closed because of the war. Almost immediately upon our return, we reopened the schools to begin preparing native ministers.

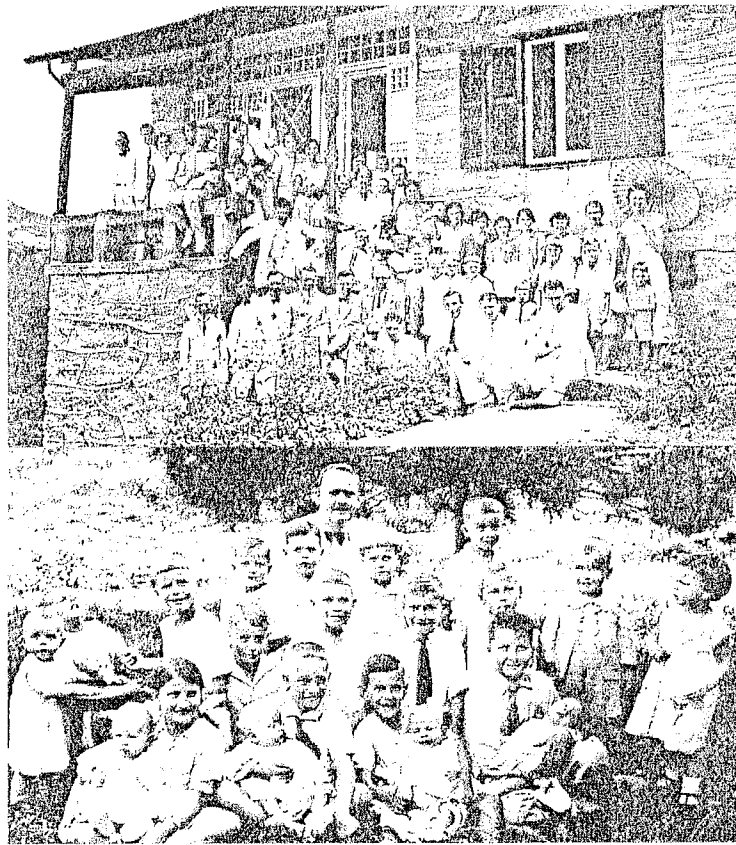
Part of the shortage of missionaries came the following summer because of a controversy involving various Chinese missionaries. The controversy centered over what Chinese term we should use for “God”. For over 100 years, missionaries used the term “*shang ti*” meaning “supreme ruler” for



“God” in the translation of the Bible. My own mission staff used this term whenever we referred to God to the Chinese people. By using this Chinese term, the missionaries were able to express the concept of God. The Chinese people had learned to accept this term as depicting the triune God of the Bible.

However, this term could also apply to the supreme god of the Chinese, the god to whom the emperor was required to sacrifice a bull on the altar of heaven once a year. For this reason, some missionaries objected to using *shang ti* (上帝). These missionaries believed that they should use the generic term for god *shun* (神). The common Chinese people used *shun* to describe all of the inferior gods or even good and evil spirits in a general way. Rev. Lillegard prepared a paper on this terminology question for the summer conference at Kuling. After delivering his paper, Lillegard convinced a number of returning missionaries that it was a sin to use the term *shang ti* for God. The controversy became so heated after this, that the mission board requested any missionary who used the term *shun* should resign from the ministry.

In my mind, it was a ridiculous controversy which caused great misery to the work among the Chinese. Rev. Lillegard, of all people, was at the very heart of this controversy. It was Lillegard who when I had first arrived in China told me, "Do not let anyone tell you to use the term *shun* for God. The only proper Chinese term for God should be the term *shang ti*." Now Rev. Lillegard was one of the biggest propionates of the term



*shun*. Just what brought about the change in Lillegard's stance remains a mystery to me. It certainly played havoc on the Chinese mission staff which had to pick up the extra work when these missionaries resigned.

In spite of the extra work, life resumed in China and I became accustomed to appearing before public audiences more and more. I was teaching religious classes two hours each day in one school. Besides my daily preaching, I was preparing sermons to preach every Sunday at one or the other chapels in Hankow. In the evenings, I was also holding religious classes almost every night of the week at various chapels around Hankow. These classes usually lasted about an hour or two depending on how many came and how soon they left. Fortunately, I was not alone in my nightly classes as a 70 year old Chinese Christian scholar named Mr. Feng assisted me.

Mr. Feng was a wonderful help to the mission and helped me a great deal in expressing God's Word to the people in a unique way. At one of our evening classes, he

told the students of the temptations of money and of gambling. Gambling had become a huge weakness for the Chinese people. One of the main heathen prayers that they prayed was for the gods to grant them riches. So Mr. Feng thought it proper to tell them the following incident to drive home the danger of gambling and seeking after riches

“I had a good friend,” he began. “He was poor in this world’s eyes. One day, he bought a lottery ticket for a few dollars. To his surprise and joy, he won \$10,000. His joy was so great that when he arrived home he jumped high into the air in his excitement. When he jumped, he lost his balance and fell to the floor and broke his leg. Later because of his good fortune in winning the lottery, many of his so-called friends who had shunned him when he was poor now came and patted him on the back. They even offered drinks to him to show their friendliness.

So in turn, this man returned their kindness by throwing huge banquets and other entertainment for his money grabbing friends. He finally became a drunkard and squandered the \$10,000 in no time at all. As a result, his wife divorced him and he became destitute because all his “friends” deserted him. One day soon after that, his body was found floating in the river after he had committed suicide. This,” he said, “will happen to all of you who seek riches by false ware or dealing.” Mr. Feng’s dramatic story certainly drove home the point to the members.

With the help of the other mission staff, I conducted Sunday services in our three chapels across Hankow. Besides conducting the worship services, Bible studies, and meetings, I was busy continuing with a language teacher. The mission board also gave me the task of preparing religious tracts and materials in the Chinese language. Finally, I took on the role of supervisor for the construction of six missionary residences. Crews set to

work to build these houses on the newly-purchased compound about two miles north of the city of Hankow.

In order to keep myself physically fit for such a demanding schedule, I played a lot of tennis and volleyball with my children and Edna. We also enjoyed taking long hikes out into the countryside. Often on our walks, we watched the fishermen along the trails using cormorants to catch fish. The fishermen went out in long narrow canoes in the lakes and canals that spotted the countryside. In their canoes, these fishermen carried several cormorants which had metal rings placed around their necks. When they thought they were in the right spot to start fishing, the fishermen released the cormorants into the water. These intelligent birds immediately dove straight down into the water and usually came back with a fish caught in their beaks. However, because of the rings, they weren't able to swallow the fish. When the birds returned to the boats, the fishermen took the fish from their beaks until their boats filled with fish. After the boat was finally full, they gave the birds some smaller fish to swallow.



I also kept in shape by riding my bicycle between the various chapels. If the weather was warm, I took my bike. Whenever the weather was too cold, I traveled by rickshaw. When the weather became bitter cold, I heated up bricks to stand on in the rickshaw and while I was preaching from the pulpit to keep my feet warm. I guess I must have looked even taller in the pulpit as I stood there on the bricks. My appearance was exaggerated also because my cassock covered a large overcoat. There in those chapels I preached balking the cold with a hat and earmuffs on my head. The only heat available in the chapels came from the charcoal braziers that the members brought with them. The smell in those chapels was another matter. In the winter, as the wet and dirty cloth and paper slippers of the Chinese dried out on top of their charcoal braziers, they caused a terrible odor.

## **CHAPTER 15 - THE NEW COMPOUND**

The first two years we stayed in Hankow, the mission rented homes in the French Concession to house the missionaries. The seminary and college used a complex of old Chinese homes for their classrooms. We also decided to lease about three acres about 2 miles out in the country beyond the Jardine Estates to erect a seminary. Plans were in the works to construct four professor/missionary residences and one duplex house. It was not until the summer of 1931 that we finished the houses. In the meantime, as we waited for the new houses to be finished we were also waiting for the arrival of our sixth child. One day while taking a walk with Edna, Marie Oelshlaeger, and Olive Gruen, the birthing pains suddenly hit my wife. We quickly ran to Olive Gruen's apartment to serve as the delivery room. Marie once again was on hand to deliver another one of our children. Olive's



apartment at that time was above an egg factory in Hankow which Otto Klein (no relation) operated. Quickly we transported my wife to the apartment with just enough time for the Marie to remove her street coat before little Raymond arrived. Because he was born above the egg factory, we referred to him as the "egg factory baby." Nurse Oelshlaeger again proved her competence in delivering our sixth child without the use of a hospital or the help of any doctor. Raymond was the fourth of our children that Marie had delivered. Our new son Raymond arrived into this world as a wonderful Christmas present on December 25<sup>th</sup>, 1929.

1930 passed quickly by and the homes that were under construction were finally finished. Before going to the summer resort and conference at Kuling, we moved our furniture, my library, and other equipment into our new and spacious house. We dreamed about getting back from the conference and finally taking up residence in a clean, beautiful, and airy home out in the countryside. This new home would be very different from our residence in the French Concession which was very cramped and noisy.

While we enjoyed our vacation in Kuling in 1931, God blessed us with the arrival of our seventh child. Nurse Oelshlaeger was once more on hand and had the honor of delivering our newest daughter. We named the newest addition our family Ruth Elizabeth. God had certainly been good to us. So far, all of our children had been born normally and in good health and Edna had suffered no ill effects from these births. We welcomed Ruth into our lives on July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1931 in a rented house in Kuling. After the conference that summer, the entire Hankow mission staff dreamed about our new homes back in Hankow and the work that we had to do there. But some cold water dashed all our dreams.

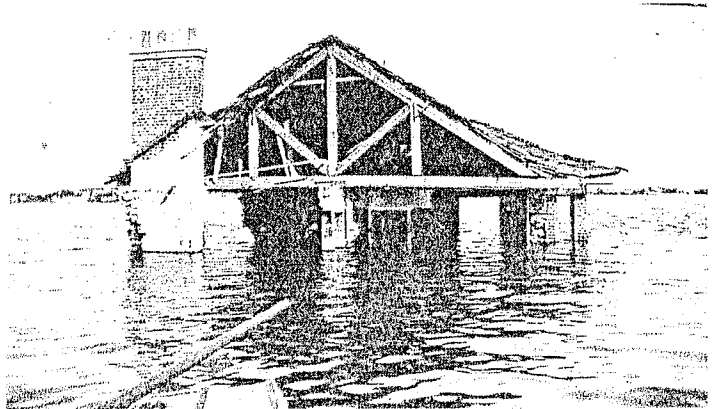
## CHAPTER 16 - THE FLOOD - 1931

One day during the conference in Kuling, word arrived that the Yangtze River rose to such heights that the dike protecting the city of Hankow had broken. As a result, the mighty Yangtze had inundated the entire city. Immediately, the conference was broken up and some of us traveled to Hankow to assess the damages. The extent of the flood was enormous as we arrived in



Hankow. I looked in every direction and saw the flood waters extending about 30 miles on each side of the river channel. Long before the flood, they had built the city of Hankow and the area behind the dike about 13 feet below the normal water level. Now that the waters had breached the dikes, all the buildings of Hankow were at least half-submerged. The only practical mode of travel in and around the city was now by sampan. Floating debris, caskets that were unearthed, and the bodies of dead humans and animals filled the streets. Initial estimates were that more than one million men, women, and children died in the flood.

Our small team set out for our brand new mission compound and found it in just as bad of shape as the rest of Hankow. The waters had submerged the new missionary houses and other buildings up to their roofs. As we toured the news houses by sampan, I wanted to see about my furniture and library. I had little hope of finding anything that the water hadn't destroyed or drenched.



The water was so high that I stepped from the sampan onto the second story roof of our house. Not only had the water submerged the residences but also the huge waves had knocked down flat two of the residences. The other buildings had large sections of the walls smashed in by the waves. The waves also smashed to bits all our furniture. Thankfully, someone had tried to save my library by stacking the books on planks against the ceiling of the second floor. Ironically, this was the second time I had lost all of my household furniture in China but at least someone had saved my library. For years after, I remembered that terrible flood whenever I took out one of my books as the water stained the lower half of many of my books.

### **BLACK HILL REFUGE CAMP**

Because of the expansive flood waters and the displacement of thousands of people, the refugees began to flock to the city from the outlying farms and villages. Many of these refugees set up temporary shelters on the remaining dikes of Hankow. About 100,000 found flimsy shelters on *Heisan* (Black Hill) a small plateau about 15 miles up the Han River. The Han River flowed from there and emptied into the Yangtze. This river separated the city of Hankow from Hanyang.

Within days, a local doctor and I took a motor boat out to the refuge camp to see what these refugees needed. As we pulled up to the hill, it immediately became apparent that we had entered a death zone. In almost every shelter, there were the telltale signs of starvation, typhus, small pox, cholera, dysentery, and hypothermia, and many other diseases. These ailments were now killing off those who had survived the initial floodwaters. The shelters that had been set up were nothing more than a piece of cloth stretched over four poles stuck in the ground. Consequently, these shelters did little to protect the people from

the elements. These tents did little as a few months later several inches of snow covered the land not submerged by water.

Walking around the camp, the smell of death was everywhere. Some of the refugees were already collecting the dead and burying them in large trenches. In some of these trenches, they wrapped the dead in nothing more than bamboo matting and stacked them layer upon layer. Between each layer, the grim workers spread a thick layer of lime. Accordingly, the works buried the males and females separately. After a short time, they had formed two stacks of corpses to the height of about 30 feet. Then they encased each stack with a thick cement covering. Some estimate that they buried about 16,000 bodies in this location alone.

The doctor who had arrived with me saw two things that we needed to do immediately. Number one, we needed to set up a temporary hospital to take care of the sick and dying. Soon the doctor had constructed a temporary thatched building to serve as a hospital. Secondly, we needed to do something for the abandoned and hungry children. With the help of the native mission staff, who returned with me to the camp, we conducted a quick survey to see how many children needed food. We counted about 10,000 children from the ages of one to fourteen who needed food. After we had made the count, we gave each child a food punch card. This card entitled each child to one large rice bun a day. This might seem like a small amount of food but it all the mission treasury could afford at the time.

Still, it was a challenge to come up with 10,000 rice buns. Every night, the native mission staff scoured the city for rice buns. Many of the bakers, who were still in operation, had to bake on the second floor of their bakeries. Many of the bakeries still had water filling

their first floors. When the buns were ready, the mission staff collected them in gunny sacks and brought the buns to the launch the government loaned us. Early each morning for the first ten days, our staff distributed the buns to the children who held the punch cards. Amazingly, not once did any of the starving masses disturb us as we handed out this inadequate relief to the children. After the first ten days, the government and World Relief Organization finally stepped in to provide aid to all of the 100,000 refugees residing on Black Hill.

Another thing that immediately became apparent on Black Hill was the lack of schooling for these displaced people. I knew we needed to provide spiritual aid as well. Soon we had five large thatched buildings erected in different sections of the camp. These buildings served as schools and preaching centers as long as the camp existed. In these schools, over 1,800 children teachers began teaching reading, writing, arithmetic, and religion. At the end of each month, we gave one dollar to the children to buy fuel to cook the rice that the relief organizations provided. Miraculously, on an almost daily basis, the camp was flooded not by water but with the children singing religious songs.

Christmas Day of 1931 arrived at Black Hill and what a glorious sight and sound it was to hear several thousand children and many adult Christians sing the praises of our Savior. Many of these Christians had come from Hankow for a special Christmas service at Black Hill. The mission staff conducted the service in the open on a peninsula formed by a lake lying in the center of the camp. Because of its location, the hundred thousand refugees lining the shore around the lake also witnessed the service. The mission staff gave me the honor of preaching a sermon there on Black Hill. It was an amazing sight as I brought the message of Christ's miraculous birth to the thousands of Chinese refugees and guests who

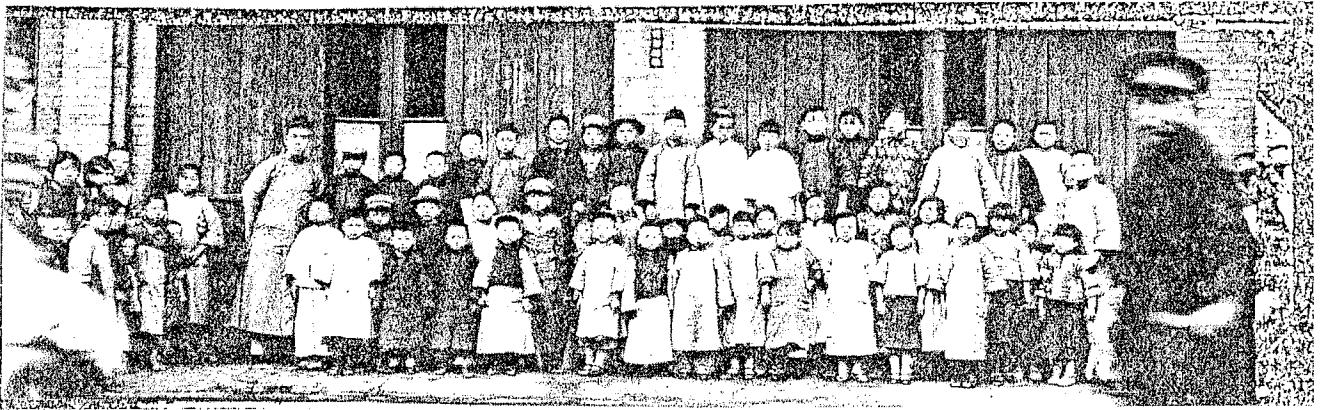
stood around the lake. Many told us that they especially enjoyed hearing the children sing their Christmas songs.

For six long months, I made the daily early morning trip out to the refugee camp until February of 1932. Seldom, did I return from the camp until late evening. During this time, I took up residence in the Hankow YMCA which had two floors above the flood waters. On one of my trips by launch out to the refugee camp, I noticed an unusual sight. A cruiser anchored in the Yangtze River was in the process of hauling a plane up out of the water with its heavy crane. Someone told me plane belonged to Charles Lindbergh. They told me mistakenly that it was the Spirit of Saint Louis. The plane did belong to Lindbergh but it was actually his Lockheed 8 Sirius floatplane. Lindbergh had come to China with his wife Anne on a world tour. Along the way, Charles and his wife did some of the first aerial photography of a natural disaster. Apparently, the Lindberghs had used the British cruiser, the *Hermes*, to transport their plane up the Yangtze. Unfortunately, when they attempted to lower it into the water a cable snapped and flipped it upside down into the water. I had to comment to those around me joking, "Well, the Spirit of Saint Louis sure got a good baptism in China's muddy, flooding Yangtze River."

After about six months, the flood waters finally receded enough so that the soldiers began to disperse the refugees and send them back to their homes. One day before the camp completely dissolved, I held a baptismal service for all of those who had been preparing for baptism during the past six months. With the aid of Rev. Werling, who was a new missionary in our China mission, we baptized over four hundred children and adults before they left for their homes in the neighboring villages. Rev. Werling kept busy emptying and

refilling the baptismal vessel of the water that became dirty because of the many heads who we baptized that day.

Because of the relief effort and my time at the camp, it severely disrupted the mission work in the city of Hankow. Most of the foreign seminary and teaching staff had transferred to or had remained at the summer resort in Kuling. Not until after the flood waters receded did the entire mission staff return to Hankow. My family also stayed in Kuling until they finally joined me in Hankow in the spring of 1932. Once the flood waters had completely subsided, the tremendous task of cleaning up the Hankow residences and the rebuilding of the mission homes occupied much of my time. I was able to find an available house in the old German Concession to serve as our home until we moved back into our new home on the mission compound beyond the Jardine Estates.



Hankow Mission

## **CHAPTER 17 - THE SCHOOL BATTLE**

Ever since I began my mission activities in Hankow, I had a battle on my hands to keep the mission schools open. The People's Republic of China (Kuo Min Tang) wanted all mission schools to register under the Republic of China. This meant that the mission still

needed to pay the costs involved with running a school but the government determined the subjects. The government also demanded that it alone had the right to hire teachers. Even worse was that the government's program eliminated and excluded religious instruction entirely. At that time, other Christian denominations were making it very difficult for us to conduct schools because they sold their birthright for a pot of red porridge so to speak. These other mission schools had already given up stressing the religious phase of their activities as they were more into the social aspect of mission work. I firmly believed our mission's prime objective in opening schools was to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to the people.

Therefore, our staff refused with all our might to register the schools under these "Prussian" ideas that the children belonged to the states and not to the parents. The semi-communist ideals of the People's Republic of China had already officially adopted this Prussia idea. For the next ten years, my battle with the government raged on over this issue. In vain, I attempted to preserve our autonomy as a school. I even wrote newspaper articles, sent letters to Chiang Kai-shek, and to other high officials in the hopes that they might alter this decree. Sadly, the battle was lost and our struggle ended as the Chinese government sent the police in one day and forcefully closed our schools. The police drove the children out of the schools and stationed guards at the doors. This final action of the government ended our mission's educational work in China.

### **BATTLE WITH MALARIA**

Things got back to normal in Hankow as we picked up where we had left off before the flood. It was summer again and this time it was my turn to remain in town during the summer months to look after the work there. The rest of the mission staff left and attended

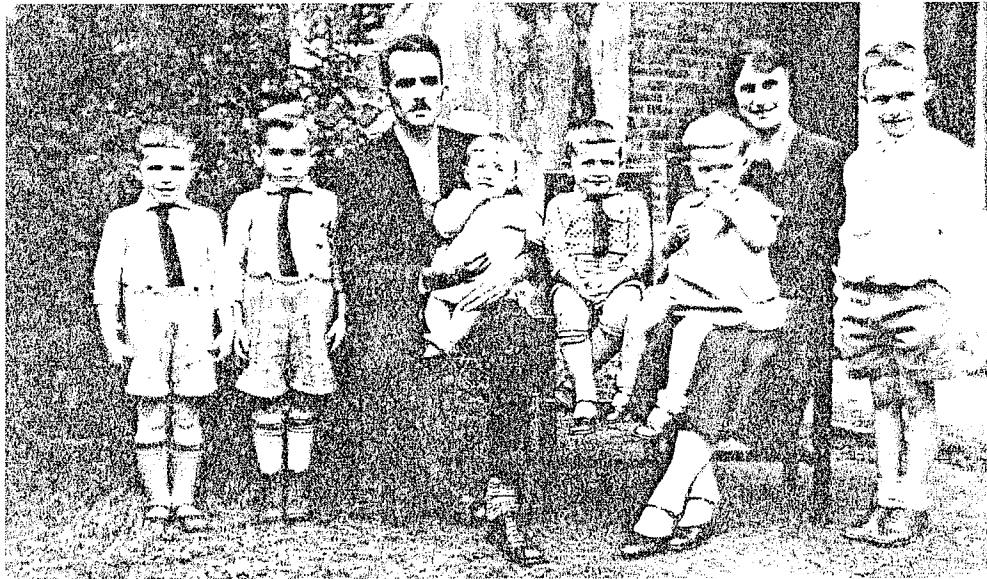


the conference in Kuling. One day while Edna and I were busy making pear jam, I felt a bit hotter than the terrible heat of the day warranted. After taking my temperature, I was almost scared out of my wits. The thermometer read 105 degrees. I called Rev. Zschiegner, who happened to be in Hankow at the time to verify my findings. Rev. Zschiegner took my temperature again and said, "Yup, you've got a fever of 105 degrees." With that, he loaded me into the station wagon and drove me to the hospital. When I reached the hospital, they immediately admitted me. The doctors quickly diagnosed me with the beginning stages of a malarial infection.

At the hospital, my doctor name Schneider, tried every known medicine to combat the Malaria. It was a life and death struggle for me as the quinine they gave me to fight the infection caused me to collapse. Quinine was one of the only known ways to beat Malaria but it was also slowly poisoning my heart. On the day of my collapse, the doctor and nurse fought for seven long hours to save my life. The outcome looked so grim that they called Edna and children to the hospital. Someone also called Rev. Zschiegner to administer the pastoral last rites to me. But God had other plans for my life. After seven agonizing hours of treatment against the poison, the crisis was past.

However, I was not out of the woods yet. For about twenty more days, I remained in critical condition and the hospital only allowed my dear wife to visit me. Edna remained at my bedside night and day sleeping on a bamboo chair. Throughout the twenty days, hardly anyone spoke to me except when the doctor came in to check on my condition. The sleeping pills that they gave me had little effect and so I lay awake counting the beats of my heart. I remember fearing that if I stopped counting, my heart would stop beating forever. After those twenty days in the hospital, I was finally well enough to go home.

My battle with Malaria haunted me for another two years and after suffering occasional attacks of Malaria, my doctors finally tried some pills which the French had used for their troops in Africa. The cure however was worse than the illness itself. The first night on the new medication my two mattresses were soaked with my sweat. The next night I became a cold, stiff, corpse like body. Edna, not knowing what to do, called the doctor in a panic in the middle of the night. All the good doctor said over the phone was, "Give him some more whiskey and hot tea." The doctor had prescribed me 84 of these pills which I was to take four each day. After taking about six of the pills I had enough with them and said, "I'd rather die than continue with that cure." Stopping my medicine must have worked as for the first time in two years I was finally cured of my malarial infection.



Bill, Dick, Herman, Ray, Tom, Dorothy, Edna, and Bob Klein (1932)

## **CHAPTER 18 - TRIP TO NORTHERN MISSION FIELD**

For the two years while I battled malaria, I curtailed much of my mission work because of my weakened condition. The doctor had also prescribed heart medicine to me

and told me to refrain from any kind of excitement. The doctor feared that my entire nervous system was out of kilter at that time. During this time, it became necessary for one of the missionaries to visit the mission stations up north near Pau Tiang Fu. The only missionary who had the time to make such a trip happened to be me. The mission board eventually decided that Rev. Paul Frillman, a newcomer to China, and I need to make the trip up to Pau Tiang Fu.

The trip by train up there was pleasant enough though it lasted over thirty plus hours. However, once we arrived in Pau Tiang Fu my trials began. First, the hotel in which Paul and I spent the night was located in the center of a railroad yard. The noise of the whistles, the grinding of the trains, and the crashing of the switch trains interfered with our sleep the entire night. Groggily, the next day we started on next leg of the trip by bus. At 9:00 am, Paul and I stared with amazement at what constituted our bus. It was an old Chevy chassis with an elongated superstructure built on it. It looked like an old sow with a full litter in her stomach dragging on the ground. On top of the bus, they had tied all sorts of luggage and even a young man holding a bicycle sat perched on top of the luggage. Inside the bus was no better as two eight inch wide planks lined the side walls to serve as seats. In the middle aisle, baggage, chicken crates, and everything else was stacked up to the ceiling. About twenty passengers already sat on the benches. Paul managed to find a vacant seat and I found a seat sitting alongside the driver. This choice of seats turned out to be a great mistake.

The driver's seat consisted only of a hard plank. The floorboards under it were missing. I could see the rear section of the engine and the brakes from the looks of them were nonexistent. Because of this, all the fumes and dust from the unpaved roads came up

full-blast into my face. I had to apologize to Rev. Frillman later because I had earlier criticized him for spending a dime for a foreign newspaper. Now this newspaper became a lifesaver. Taking the newspaper from Frillman, I shaped it into a funnel and stuck one end to my nose and other end outside the window so that I was able to breathe in better air. As the driver made his way through the city streets there was a man outside the bus running ahead to push people out of the way so that our bus without brakes did not run them over.

The road itself was another matter as it was just about as dangerous as a faulty roller coaster. It ran along the top of an old railroad dike. Because of this, it was about twenty feet higher than the rest of the countryside below. Every couple of miles the dike sank down to the level of the land. In these low places, they had dug six by two feet long trenches in the center of the roadway. At the bottom of these trenches, another they made another cut to allow oxcarts to pass from one side of the dike to the other. The big trenches were in place to prevent the oxcarts from entering the auto road on top of the dike. The cut was too narrow for the cart to weave to the one side or the other, but was also too deep for the ox to pass over it. I must admit this was quite an ingenious way to keep the oxcarts off the dike road but it made for one bumpy ride.

Whenever the bus reached one of these cuts in the dike, it dashed madly down one side, straddle the trench, and bounce over the rutted cart path in the bottom. Then with a grunt and snort, the bus pulled up the other side of the cut. Each time we crossed the rutted oxcart in made our teeth rattle. Yet, the oxcarts were not the only hazard on the road. All of a sudden, I noticed two Chinese women crossing the dike road in one of those cuts. One of the women was holding a baby and dragging her five year old child by the hand. The group had just reached the cut when our bus hurled down upon them. I quickly envisioned the

impact of the bus with these women and children when the two women and the baby jumped forward to avoid the bus. Meanwhile the small child flopped down inside the trench as the bus passed over it. Our bus driver did not even stop to see if anyone was hurt but as I looked back, I saw the child emerge from the trench unharmed.

Later that day, we nearly hit a couple of military officers on bicycles in another cut. Seeing the bus coming down the edge of the slope, the officers threw themselves against the opposite side of the slope to get out of our way. Our bus did manage to crush the wheels of their bicycles as it passed the officers and barely missed cutting of their legs. The driver again sped on his way, not stopping to survey the damage. I yelled to the driver to stop but he yelled back saying, "Can no do. They kill me if I stop." [sic]

Finally, another one of the cuts in the dike almost became the end of the bus. As we dashed down one side and were halfway up the opposite slope, the engine died. With no brakes, it began to roll down the slope and go backwards up the opposite slope. But as we rolled backwards, the bus hit the other slope at an angle and teetered on only two wheel undecided which way to fall. Sensing this, I quickly jumped out and with all the might I could muster, I pushed on the side of the bus to bring it back onto all four wheels. When the bus righted itself, all the passengers got out of the bus and the driver restarted the bus and drove it back onto the road. Covered with dust, grime, and shaken from head to toe, we arrived at dusk in the village where Pastor Pi P'ei-yin, a native Chinese pastor, and four of his workers waited for us.

After meeting with Pastor Pi, they gave Paul and me a room on the second floor of a building that overlooked a narrow, smelly, and noisy street. For beds, we had two long tables on which they had spread a thin blanket. We were so tired from the trip that we did

not even eat the food they offered us. Immediately, we went to bed with the hope of catching some much needed shuteye. Yet this was not to be, as on the street below a vendor walked up and down the street all night ringing his bell to announce his presence. We heard the bell as it grew fainter and fainter as he went down the street. "Ah," I sighed, "the vendor is gone." But just as I said this, the vendor turned around and the clanging of the bell grew louder as he approached. The march of the noisy vendor went on like this all night long. After the past two nights of little sleep and the terrible bus ride neither of us saw the humor in this and it did nothing to elevate our spirits. Plus I was also still taking my heart pills for my potentially dangerous Malaria pills. Paul turned to me and yelled, "Klein, if you die, I'll kill you!" Paul must have told me this a hundred times during that trip.

The next morning, they scheduled us to make a bicycle trip for the next ten mile leg of our trip. Five men with seven bicycles sat downstairs waiting for us to finish breakfast. The bike trail ran on a foot wide ridge of a dike that separated the rice paddies from the dust filled oxcart road. Every now and then, one of us lost his balance and flopped down into about a foot of powdery dust. Our bicycle group, weary and sore eventually arrived at the first mission station late that evening. This mission was located inside a walled area covering several acres. This walled city contained a great number of buildings and was the home of one Chinese clan that numbered about 300 family members.

That night they held a magnificent Chinese feast in our honor and we held a meeting with them following the meal. The clan only permitted the male members of the clan to attend the meeting. The custom of this area prohibited males and females to gather for public meetings. After our initial meeting, I concluded it with an hour long sermon. There is no

doubt in my mind that the women listened to the meeting and sermon as they sat on the other side of a thin wall separating us.

Finally, we were ready for bed and Paul and I were showed a small room with a huge *kang* which served as my bed. A *kang* is a brick shelf that runs the length of the room which is about five feet wide. Built in the bottom of the *kang* is a fire box which they light in the winter to warm the entire *kang*. Usually the whole family slept together on the *kang* to keep warm through the cold winter nights.

Although it was much quieter that night, I still did not get very restful sleep. All night long, I lay there on a thin blanket on top of the brick *kang*. The bricks made me feel like a slab of beef on a butcher's block. By the end of the night, it seemed like all of my flesh had separated from my bones and had flatten out on the hard brick bed while my skeleton protruded above my flesh. After our night of rest, the next two days were repeats of the first day of cycling, meetings, and preaching. When we finally returned to the village where the bus had stopped, we decided to bypass the bus this time. Instead, Paul and I managed to find a Chinese man who had an old Ford touring car and so the trip back to Pa Tung Fu was much more pleasant.

When we returned to Hankow, I commented to Paul about the trip saying, "Paul, I don't know whether we accomplished much on this trip. But it accomplished much for me, for if that trip did not knock my heart out, nothing will." Paul jokingly replied, "I'm glad I didn't have to kill you for dying on that trip." Not only did I know my heart could take it but it also allowed me to regain my confidence in facing and tackling any task that might lie ahead. Over the next two years in Hankow, Edna and I kept busy raising our seven children. For a while, Edna taught the older children at home until we found a British school for them

to attend. Then on June 21, 1933 and a year later on September 11, 1934 we were blessed by having two more children. We welcomed to our already large family, James and Lois. Both James and Lois were born in the Catholic run hospital in Hankow. What a blessing our children had become to us yet we did not know of the trouble that was brewing out of control just over the horizon.

## **CHAPTER 19 - JAPANESE INVASION**

“Oh no, not again,” I exclaimed as I heard the report that tranquility had once again fallen apart in China. It was not a flood or a bandit attack which disturbed the peace of China in 1937 but the conflict between Chiang Kai-shek and the Japanese government. The Japanese had managed to invade China with its highly mechanized army. As a result, the coastal cities along the China Sea had already fallen before the Japanese forces. The Japanese had driven Chiang Kai-shek’s forces inland with terrible losses of life. The city of Hankow now became the next target of the Japanese invasion. The Japanese forces through their contact with the American Consulate demanded that Americans with children to evacuate the city within twenty-four hours. Because of my large family, we were one of the first families to receive the order for evacuation. That night the entire mission staff assisted us in packing and getting our house into order before boarding the train for Canton. The Chinese had already blocked the river route to Shanghai by sinking some steamers in the river to prevent the Japanese army from advancing.

The American Consulate assured us that the train to Canton was safe from Japanese air attacks for those twenty-four hours. With this in mind and with only an hour to spare



before the train left for Canton, ninety some refugees and my family crossed the Yangtze River by sampan to Wuchang to board the train.

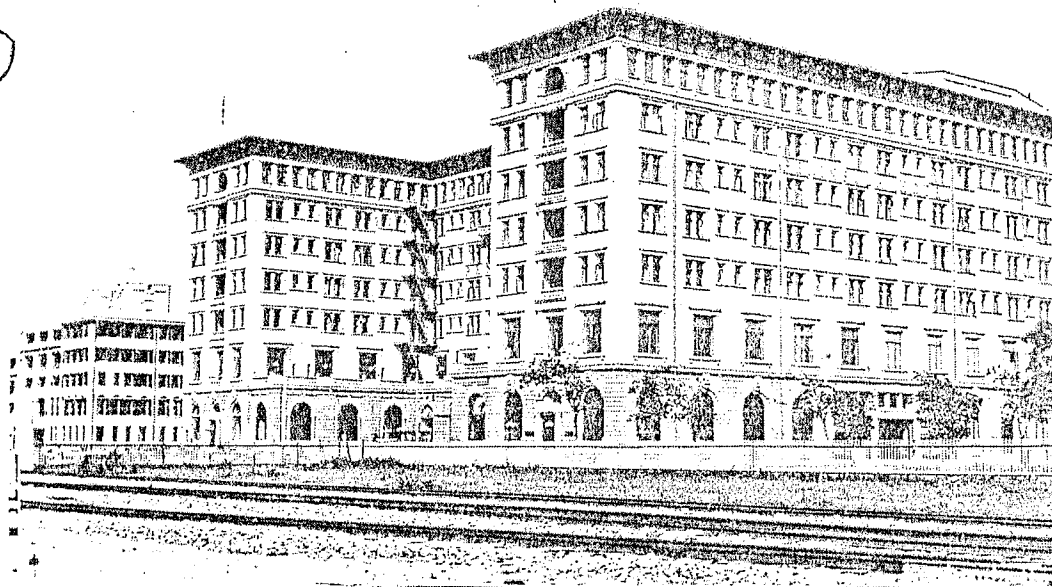
Normally, the trip to Canton from Hankow took less than the twenty-four hour time limit the Japanese forces had given. However, our train was delayed a number of times along the way to permit troop trains to pass. Because of this, our train was more than twelve hours late in getting to Canton. Food and drinking water had run out and so we stood in line just to get the one cup of tea they offered to the passengers. It was pitch dark when the train arrived at Canton as the government declared a blackout to protect the city against Japanese air attacks. Officials from the various foreign consulates were present at the railroad station with every available automobile in the city. They had brought the cars to transport the refugees to a waiting British steamer lying in wait on the Pearl River.

I hastily loaded half of my family into one of the waiting cars and my wife and the remaining children in another. Without headlights, we dashed through the narrow streets to the British steamer. When I arrived at the steamer, I knew it was safe from any Japanese attack because it was a British ship. Yet, the ship eerily lay in total darkness. After a few minutes, however, I became slightly concerned for my wife and the other half of my family when they did not arrive at the ship with our group. About 30 minutes later, they finally pulled up to the dock. As Edna reached me, she was a bit mad at me for not remaining close to her automobile. Apparently, her car had broken down on the way and another car had to push her car through the streets without headlights. Nevertheless, we were all there safely and when we finally made our way on board, we all ate some sandwiches we received by candlelight.

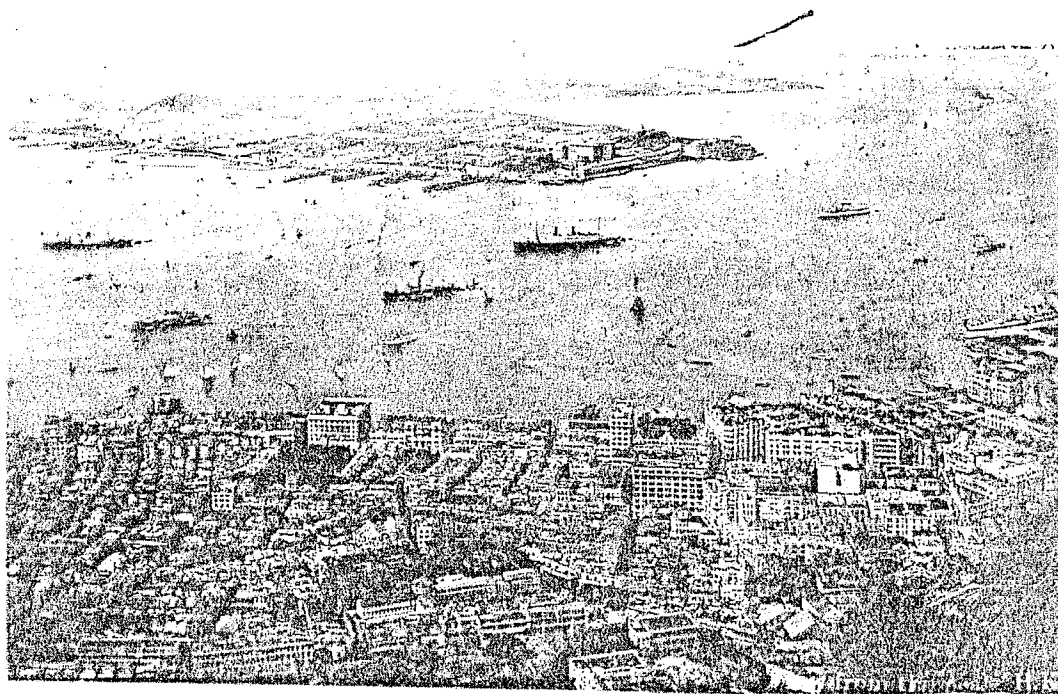
About 2:00 am that night, I was sleeping soundly in the salon of the ship when I heard what I thought was a terrific windstorm striking the area. However, it was not a windstorm but rather a squadron of Japanese bombers. The bombers passed overhead and proceeded to bomb the very railroad station that we had been at a few hours earlier. Ironically, although many of the bags of the refugees were still in the baggage car at the station, the car miraculously survived the attack. On the other hand, the attack had demolished the rest of the station. As I heard the noise of the attack, I ran out on deck in only my shorts to looking for my trousers which I had given to a steward to clean and press. Finally, I located a cabin boy who found my trousers lying between two mattresses which the steward had used to press my pants.

The next morning, our band of refugees decided that since I had the largest family I should go to Hong Kong immediately while the rest of the men volunteered to stay behind to recover the baggage. Later we found out that it took the men over a week to get the baggage from the bombed out train station. They had to dash back and forth many time in between air raids to collect all the refugees' baggage. As the rest of us made our way down the Pearl River to Hong Kong, it was a thrilling yet frightening experience. The steamer had to wind its way through a mine field in the river and pass a flotilla of Japanese battleships going up river. God was certainly with our ship as we arrived safely in Hong Kong. From there, all they took us to the Imperial Hotel in the Kowloon across the bay from Hong Kong. In the hotel, the hotel divided their large dinning room up with blankets and sheets so that each family had a little privacy and makeshift sleeping quarters. The hotel was kind enough to furnish cots and blankets for us as well.

Peninsula Hotel  
Hong Kong (Kowloon)

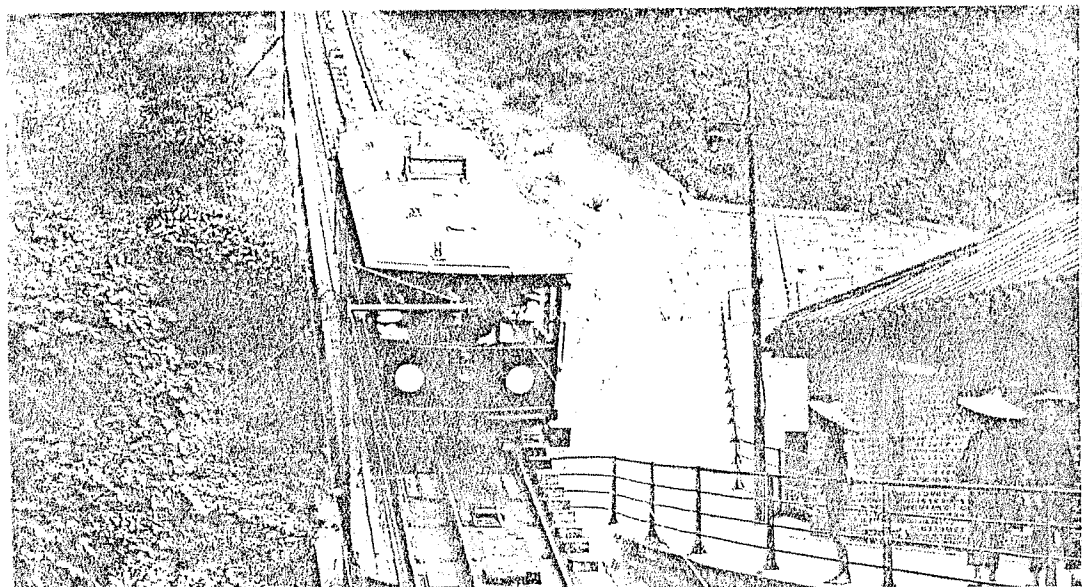


Hong Kong Harbor,  
looking from  
Hong Kong across  
to Kowloon



(x Here in 1937  
we toured one  
of the first  
Pan Am Clipper  
ships to fly the  
Pacific - a seaplane)

Hong Kong  
Peak Tramway.



## CHAPTER 20 - BACK TO THE U.S.A.-1937

Initially, we sought passage for America on an American ship. Unfortunately, our ship a Chinese or Japanese bomb accidentally hit the ship and it docked in Manila for repairs. Then after they had repaired the ship, a terrible typhoon buffeted the ship as it passed through an uncharted stretch of water on its way to Japan. This ship ended up crashing on some rocks and sank. Learning of this tragedy, I transferred our booking to another American steamer the *S.S. President Jefferson*, which planned to leave in about a week. After a week of living in the Imperial Hotel dining room, we finally boarded the steamer for Nagoya, Japan.

When we reached Nagoya, the steamer docked there to load up with Christmas toys bound for America. Since we had a couple of hours to spare, I took Bob and Dick with me on a tramcar into the city for a sightseeing tour. The dock was located about ten miles from the main business section of the town. While on the tram, we witnessed some Japanese women sitting around stitching a small good luck symbol on some army uniforms. I asked them what the symbol meant and they told me that bullets could not kill a soldier who wore the symbol.

After visiting some of the many sights of Nagoya, it was time to get back to the steamer. Unfortunately, along the way I had gotten lost in the process. Not able to speak or read Japanese, I searched intensely for someone who could direct us back to the proper tram to take us back to the docks. After a frantic search, I managed to find a post office. There I found a sign for the Chinese character for ship. Using the sign and hand motions, the postmaster eventually understood what I needed. The postmaster then ordered a very courteous Japanese man to run with me a few blocks away to get us on the right tram for the

docks. When we reached the end of the tram, we were still about a mile away on the opposite side of the bay. Almost as soon as we got out of the tram, I heard the steamer blow its departing signal in the distance. I noticed they had already taken up the gangplank. Standing besides Bob, Dick, and I was another stranded couple who also watched helplessly as the ship got under way. Thankfully, a small motor boat was standing by for hire. Jumping on board the small boat and with a great deal of yelling and waving of handkerchiefs the couple and I managed to attract the attention of the captain of the steamer. Finally, we saw that the crew lowering the gangplank to allow us to come onboard. Once on board, I not only got a strong balling out by the captain by also from Edna who was greatly perturbed by my tardiness.

Although we were safely aboard the ship, the journey across the Pacific wretched havoc on my insides again. Throughout the trip, I suffered my usual seasickness. My queasiness had some relief when we made a short stopover in Hawaii. Finally, we made port in Vancouver, Canada where my brother Walter met us. Walt had driven up from Los Angeles in his wife's new Cadillac. Walter took the seven oldest children and me in the car while Edna took the youngest two children by train down to L.A. For the next three weeks, we lived in L.A. in an apartment near the restaurant that Walter and his wife owned.

During those weeks in California, I managed to find an almost new chauffer driven Cadillac in Pasadena. Thankfully, I was able to purchase it for \$130.00. Train tickets for my entire family would have cost about the same amount of money to get back to Pueblo, Colorado. Packing my family of eleven in the Cadillac and all of our hand baggage, we set out for Pueblo. After a short stop in Pueblo to visit family and friends, we drove on to St. Louis, Missouri where a mission furlough house was once again available. While in St.

Louis, the mission board kept my extremely busy as they scheduled me to lecture across the United States. On one occasion, I loaded up the entire family in the Cadillac and took them along on an eastern lecture tour. Along the way, we stopped in Zanesville, Ohio to see my birthplace and friends before going to see my brother in Pennsylvania. From there we traveled to Niagara Falls and up through parts of Canada before returning to our temporary home in St. Louis.

## **CHAPTER 21 - BACK TO CHINA ALONE - 1939**

The war in China had more or less come to stalemate between the Japanese forces and the Chinese government. The Japanese had taken control of all of all the provinces from the coast as far as the mountains in the west. The remaining mission staff in Hankow had transferred the seminary and all its work to Chungking, which was still under the control of Chiang Kai-shek. Many of places where I had served were now firmly under the control of the Japanese except for Kuei Fu and Shihnanfu. Rev. Paul Frillman and a few native evangelists in Hankow continued to carry on the work there. The mission board felt it was time for someone to return from the States to carry on the work in the Hankow mission area. I had heard the mission board had already allowed other mission families to return to Japanese occupied areas and thought it was safe for my family to return as well.

The mission director, however, was of a different opinion. At a mission board meeting in St. Louis the remaining five or six Chinese missionaries got into a tremendous confrontation with the director of the mission board. Dr. Brandt, the director of the mission board, insisted that the women and children stay in the U.S. and that only the men return to China at this time. He even claimed that the State Department did not issue passports to

women and children to travel to China at this time. This was only a bluff as I had already obtained passports for my entire family. When I showed them to Dr. Brandt, he blew his top. He stood up and delivered a scathing attack on those who insisted upon taking their wives and children back to China. He then proceeded to praise the courage of the wives who were willing to remain in the States while their husbands left for China. Brandt was also quick to praise the missionaries who volunteered to go alone. I knew he was directing a great deal of his threats at me.

I was just about ready to offer my counterattack when my heart beat for joy as a pastor from Kirkwood, also a board member, stood up. Calmly and in unmistakable words, he proceeded to praise the courage of the wives who were willing to face the dangers of mission work alongside their husbands. His speech was in direct opposition to Dr. Brandt and so I refrained myself from any further remarks.

My battle with Dr. Brandt did not end there. The following day I received another shock. Dr. Brandt had flown to Washington D.C. that morning and had insisted that the State Department remove my entire family from the passport they had already issued. I was furious over this underhanded tactic of Dr. Brandt. I confided to Edna that I could not bear to leave her alone with nine children in America. Adding to my uneasiness was the fact that Edna was again pregnant with our tenth child. In my mind, there was only one thing left for me to do. I needed to resign from the mission staff.

Thankfully, my courageous and levelheaded wife pleaded with me not to resign. She said to me, "Darling, you know that your heart is in the mission work in China. You go ahead, and I will follow with the children as soon as you cable us that it is safe." I eventually agreed providing that Dr. Brandt agreed to the plan. Finally, after I had reached

an agreement with Dr. Brandt, I packed my bags again and said a tearful goodbye to my wife and children in March of 1939. Boarding another transpacific ship, I set out for another lonely and seasick trip back to China.

Upon my arrival in Shanghai, I found peace prevailing in China. Already many mission families were back in China from other religious institutions. Relying on the Japanese government, I arranged travel up the Yangtze River on one of their military transport ships going to Hankow. Japanese army also promised to permit safe travel for my wife and children when they arrived. I also made medical arrangements in case my family needed any medical attention when they arrived in Shanghai.

Arriving in Hankow a few days later, Rev. Frillman met me at the docks. Frillman was the only missionary still working in Hankow. He reported that the entire province was under Japanese control but that a number of missionaries from other religious affiliations had returned to Hankow. After some further investigations, I was convinced that conditions in Hankow were safe enough for my family. Then I cabled the mission board in St. Louis to send my family.

A month went by and I still had not received word of the arrival of my family. I was not sure what to do when a cable arrived from Clarence Guenther, my nephew by marriage, reporting that Edna had undergone an emergency appendectomy. The cable went on to say that, my tenth child Joseph was born shortly after the operation. They had Joseph baptized immediately because of the situation. However, eight days later the news only got worse as a second cablegram came. Dr. Schneider of Hankow brought the cable message to me as the senders of the cable were concerned how I would take the news. They felt it best that Dr. Schneider relay the message on to me. The second cable reported that the surgery and birth



were too much for the mother and child. Sadly, Joseph died after living for about six days. Edna held on for about eight days before she too entered her eternal rest with her heavenly Father.

The news was too much to bear as I had not only lost my dear and faithful wife, but also the mother of my nine remaining children. Dazed and confused I took my Bible in hand and began searching. I paged through my Bible looking for every comforting passage that spoke to my sorrow. As I searched, I felt the strength of God and my mind and heart were somewhat comforted. Friends of mine in Hankow saw to it that I did not brood and mourn alone. They sent a young missionary and his wife to keep me company until I could get passage for my trip back to America. Throughout this entire ordeal, I waited for Dr. Brandt to send word. Finally, about eight days after I had received the news of my wife's death I received a reply from Dr. Brandt. Dr. Brandt finally gave me permission to return to the U.S. to look after my nine children.

## **CHAPTER 22 - GHOSTS FROM AMERICA**

Before I set sail for America, I received a letter that Edna had written several weeks before she had passed away. Her letter left a very bad taste in my mouth in regards to Dr. Brandt. In the letter, Edna revealed again the treachery of Dr. Brandt concerning the plan for her and the children to join me in China. Dr. Brandt met with her one day and told her that as long as China was at war with Japan she could not go. This news made Edna very frightened about my safety. Later on, I learned from her relatives that they believed her worry was likely the cause of her appendicitis.

Finally, after about three weeks of searching for passage to America, I gained passage aboard Japanese military transport ship back to Shanghai. In Shanghai, my good friend Mr. Titus met me and helped me book passage on a British steamer bound for Vancouver, Canada. About three days before our steamer was to pull up anchor and sail, we heard during dinner that Japan had declared war on Great Britain. This was grave news for Great Britain as they were already engaged in war with Germany.

I now had to make the decision whether it was still safe to sail on a British ship. Since Japan and England were now enemies, the Japanese who patrolled the Pacific, might torpedo my ship. I had the option of waiting a few more weeks for an American ship but the thought of my nine children needing their father won out my decision. With that, I put my life in the hands of God and boarded the British steamer. Once on board, they required all the passengers to make out their wills in case the Japanese torpedoed the ship. We waited on board for three days before leaving the docks. Finally, the steamer left the docks of Shanghai under complete darkness and escorted by a couple of British cruisers. These cruisers accompanied us until we had passed far south of Japanese controlled waters. From our first night on board until we arrived safely at the docks in Hawaii, we sailed silently under the cover of darkness.

When we reached Hawaii, news met us that had the potential to delay our trip even further. A report reached us telling us that German submarines sat lurking off the Canadian shores. These U-boats were there waiting to sink any British steamer headed for Vancouver. The question was whether to proceed on this steamer for Vancouver or should I transfer to an American ship heading to American ports? I eventually decided to look for another way home. For the next couple of days, I dashed all over from one American steamship to the

next looking for passage. Unfortunately, all the ships were already full as hundreds of other passengers also wanted to transfer from their British carriers to American ships. In desperation, I finally told one ticket agency of my concern for my nine children and my need to get back to them as soon as possible. The agent told me that only one cabin was available which an Indian national occupied. The ticket agent told me that according to company policy he could not book any two people of different ethnic backgrounds in one cabin. I exploded with rage shouting, "I don't care if a Negro, a Mexican, or a Chinese man is my roommate. I'll take berth in that cabin." To this the agent replied, "O.K. fine, please sign these papers to wave all responsibility of the company." When I had signed the papers, the agent booked me on the *S.S. Matsonia* bound for Los Angeles.

I had about twelve hours until the *Matsonia* pulled anchor and so I dashed back and forth from the British steamer to get my baggage transferred. I was in for another four days of seasickness. Because we were taking a more southern route, the seas were much calmer and my seasickness was not as severe. As was my usual custom, I found a quiet, sheltered spot on deck near the center of the ship. There on the deck, I spread out my blanket for a bed. I seldom went back into the stuffy cabin I was supposed to share for fear of increasing my nausea.

It was on the last night, before docking at Los Angeles, I was talking with the ship's captain, who was telling me his old ship had sank from a torpedo attack. Out of the corner of my eyes, I noticed an apparition in the doorway of the salon. This apparition moved towards the captain and me and I for a moment I thought I saw was the spitting image of my late wife. My hair stood on end and a chill went up my back as I thought I was seeing a ghost. As the "ghost" drew nearer, I realized that it was actually a woman dressed in her

white evening dress as she way her way towards the dining room. She approached us and stopped before where the captain and I were sitting. The captain introduced me to the young woman named Miss Zimmerman. After our short introductions, Miss Zimmerman continued on her way to the dinning room. She intrigued me but I dared not follow her into the dinning room. As with very few exceptions, anything that I ate usually ended up going over the railing into the sea.

Yet my mysterious introduction to this woman could not leave my mind. A little later, she returned from the dinning room I had my change to speak with her. I had a number of very close friends named Zimmerman living in the States and I was curious if she was related to them. When she returned to chat with the captain, I inquired of her, "Where do you live in the States, Miss Zimmerman?" The woman answered, "My name is not really Zimmerman, but Liesman, the captain was mistaken."

I had to laugh at my mistake and jokingly said, "Liesman is also a good German name. I'll bet you're a member of the German Lutheran Church?" "No," she replied, "but my grandfather was a pastor in the Lutheran church." From these few words, we began a five or six hour conversation about religion and our experiences. Miss Liesman, for the same reasons, had switched from a British steamer in Honolulu to the American steamer. She was on a tour of Hawaii with her sorority group. Because of the time change, I was not in the least bit tired and although it was approaching midnight, it felt like 4:00 pm China time to me. Miss Ruth Liesman and I sat talking on the deck until about 1:00 am. During our conversation, I told her of the passing of my wife and how anxious I was to get back to the U.S.A. to look after my nine children. Her sincere sympathy was profound and when

she finally retired to her cabin, I stretched myself out on my blanket on the deck to get some sleep.

Early the next morning, the pilot boat came out to the ship with mail. On board the pilot ship was a railroad agent whom I met with to make reservations for the most direct route to Pueblo, Colorado. I also received a stack of mail from friends and relatives expressing their sympathy at the loss of Edna. Later that day, we arrived in Los Angeles and as I stood waiting for the boat to pull up to the harbor and dock, Miss Liesman came up to say goodbye. After our conversation the night before I assumed she might think I was telling her a lie about my life. So I pointed to the stack of letters in my hand to prove to her that what I said was true. I even let her read a few excerpts from some of the letters and again her sympathy impressed me when tears began to roll down her cheeks.

When we finally reached the docks, my brother Walter was standing at the bottom of the gangplank waiting to take me to his home. Miss Liesman had followed me down the gangplank just as Walter greeted me. I made the necessary introductions to my brother and told Ruth that since she was a stranger to L.A., we'd gladly help her in whatever she needed. She had already told me she needed to get her railroad ticket exchanged to one from L.A. since she now had a useless ticket for her return trip from Vancouver. Miss Liesman thanked us for our help but said that she had an uncle in L.A. With that, she turned and walked away.

A funny thought came to me as she walked away and so I turned to Walter and mused, "There goes my future wife." Of course my brother shrugged it off saying, "You're nuts!" In spite of my brother's remark, later that evening I met up with Miss Liesman and

we went to a movie. After the movie, Walter offered to take her to the railroad agency to transfer her ticket to Des Moines.

Incidentally, Miss Liesman transferred her ticket to the same train as I had booked. I couldn't resist the opportunity to do some mission work and so we spent much of the trip deep in conversations about religion. Desperately, I tried to convince her to become a member of the church body of which her grandfather was once a pastor. By the time the train reached Denver, Colorado where I had to change trains, Miss Liesman had just about memorized Luther's Small Catechism. She had also more or less promised to attend the Lutheran church in Des Moines.

When I finally arrived in Pueblo, a joyous reunion took place between my nine children and me. My relatives related the details of my late wife's operation, the childbirth, and the peritonitis. They also told me they had buried Edna and little Joseph at Mountainview Cemetery in Pueblo. The wound in my heart immediately reopened as it had been almost two months since I first received the cable in China that my wife and child had died.

However, there were even more pressing matters to deal with as my nine children ranging in age from five to fifteen needed their father. My niece Esther who was only sixteen years old had been looking after the children for the past two months. Now as I took over the everyday duties of both parents, life slowly began again for my family. While the older children were at school, Lois the youngest assisted me in preparing the daily meals for the family. Admittedly, it was hard work and there were times that I even felt that it was too much for me to handle. Yet with the help of my brothers and sisters, who were living in Pueblo, we somehow managed to keep our suffering family together.

After a short time in Pueblo, it became necessary for me to go to St. Louis to meet the mission board and to visit my in-laws. This was one trip I really did not want to make. I had heard that Edna's brothers and sisters blamed me for her death. One of her brothers had even threatened to kill me if I showed up at the family's home. The only one in the family that understood my plight was my mother-in-law. Because of a stroke, she was unable to talk or walk but was able to communicate to me that she did not want me to farm out the children to various relatives. She also made it very clear that she did not want a housekeeper taking care of her grandchildren but insisted that I find a new wife to take care of the children.

### **CHAPTER 23 - TO FIND A WIFE AND MOTHER**

After my meeting with my mother-in-law, I became even more restless about my role as housekeeper for my nine children. Then I traveled Des Moines to see Miss Liesman. She had written to me that she had not yet contacted Rev. Vogel in Des Moines to set up confirmation and baptismal instruction. I hoped that by stopping, I could convince her to enroll in the classes. When I arrived, I took Miss Liesman to meet Rev. Vogel and with great joy in my heart, I succeeded to in getting her to enroll in his Bible instruction class.

From Des Moines, I traveled to St. Louis and met with a number of influential men in the synod. With the exception of Dr. Brandt, they saw that the only course I could follow was to find a good wife and mother to look after my nine children. When I first suggested this idea to Dr. Brandt, he solemnly told me, "If you get married so soon after your wife's death, you will jeopardize your life as a preacher and as a missionary." Not missing a beat, I looked across the table at Dr. Brandt's daughter who was acting as his secretary and said to

him, "Fine then. Will your daughter take charge of my nine children so I can go and continue my mission work?" With this remark, I left knowing that Dr. Brandt was of no help in my present situation.

I returned to Pueblo and set to work in my new calling as housekeeper for my children. Life continued in Pueblo like this for a while but I looked forward to fulfilling a promise I had made to Miss Liesman the last time I had seen her. I had promised to come to witness her baptism and confirmation. Before leaving Pueblo, however, I had a very serious conversation with the children. I said, "Children, if it pleases God I will try to provide you with a mother and myself with a helpmate. I know this action is a little premature so soon after your mother's death. But you can see that my hands are tied as I can't do the work to which I have been called as a pastor." Bob, my oldest son said, "Dad, do what you think is best. You've always done your best for us." With the blessing of my children and their fond farewells, I boarded a train for Des Moines. On the 29<sup>th</sup> of October, I witnessed the baptism of Miss Ruth Liesman in the Lutheran church of Des Moines.

After the confirmation and baptism, it was now time to ask Miss Liesman a rather difficult question. I was there to ask her to be my wife and the mother of my nine children. I felt confident in my request after receiving letters earlier that week from two dear friends in St. Louis. One was from Dr. Arndt my old professor at Concordia Seminary who wrote, "Herman, if Miss Liesman will take over the difficult position of mothering you nine children, get married, and God bless you." The other letter was from my old friend, Dr. Hanser who wrote similar thoughts to Dr. Arndt, only he had enclosed a check for \$50.00 saying, "I think you will need a little financial assistance to back up your efforts."



As soon as I had asked Miss Liesman, I mentioned these two letters as a part of my persuasion. She trembled at the thought of assuming such a huge responsibility and feared that I might jeopardize my missionary career by getting married so soon after Edna's death. Of course, her own siblings were not overly enthusiastic about seeing their 32 year old sister get married to a man ten years her senior. They also balked at the thought of their sister Ruth getting married to a man who already had nine children.

I also told her that my position as a missionary was not in jeopardy and assured her that Dr. Brandt had said that in order to scare me. My arguments must have worked as Ruth agreed to marry me and on the following Sunday, November 5<sup>th</sup>, 1939. Rev. Vogel with the Liesman family as witnesses performed the wedding ceremony at Trinity Lutheran Church. To this day Ruth's sister blames Hitler, the maniac of Germany, for bringing Ruth and me together on that ship traveling from Hawaii. Thus, my struggle against many odds ended in finding a good, honest, Christian wife and mother for my very large family.

When we arrived back in Pueblo, the difficult task still awaited us as I introduced my new wife, Ruth, to the children. Building a harmonious relationship between nine children, who had strong attachments to their biological mother, to their new mother became quite a task. It was also difficult to face the severe opposition and criticism by some of my close relatives who were not in favor of such a quick marriage. Time would tell as Ruth and I waited to see how our new family grew. Ruth for her part deserves a gold medal for mothering if they gave one. She took to her responsibilities as a mother to my children with all her might. Her mothering responsibilities only grew when about eight years after we were married, she gave birth to her own child by Caesarian section in Provo, Utah. But that is a story I will tell later.

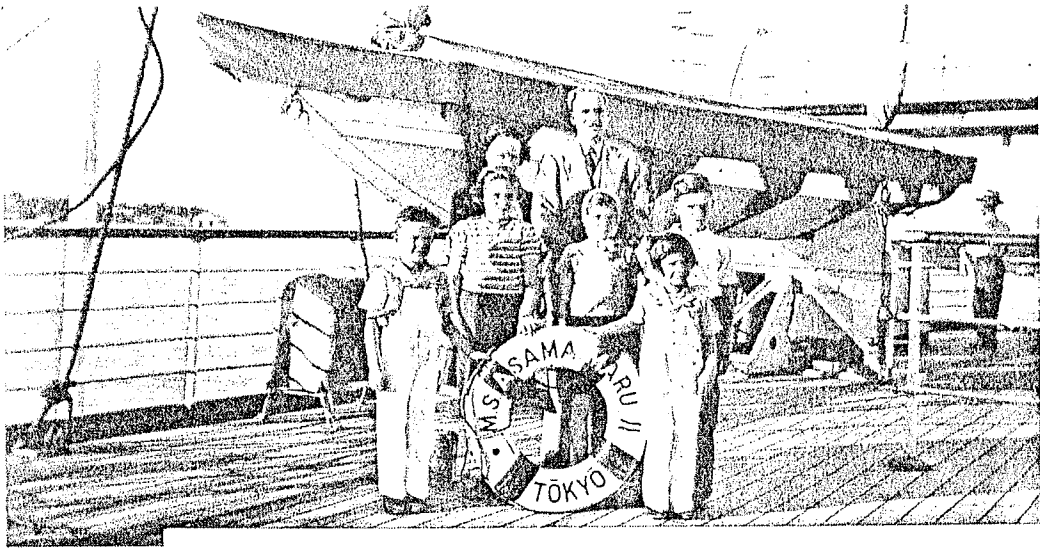
## **CHAPTER 24 - CHINA BOUND AGAIN - 1940**

After getting used to having a new wife and mother for my children, it was time for us to get ready for a return to China. Dr. Brandt still did not seem to be in a big hurry to order my return. One day, while I packed for the expected order to return to China, a wire finally came from Dr. Brandt which sent cold chills up by spine. My colleague and friend, Max Zschiegner, who went to China with me on my first journey, had suddenly died there. The mission board sent him to China to carry on his work without his wife and children. They had put Max in charge of driving a truck loaded with medical supplies over the Burma Road to Chungking, which was under the control of Chiang Kai-shek. At this time, the Japanese were still at war with the Chinese government and Max had received orders to travel to Kuei Fu to take over my old mission there. After delivering the supplies, he boarded a ship to head down to Kuei Fu. Once on board though, Max suddenly had a severe attack of angina pectoris and before he could set foot on shore, he was dead.

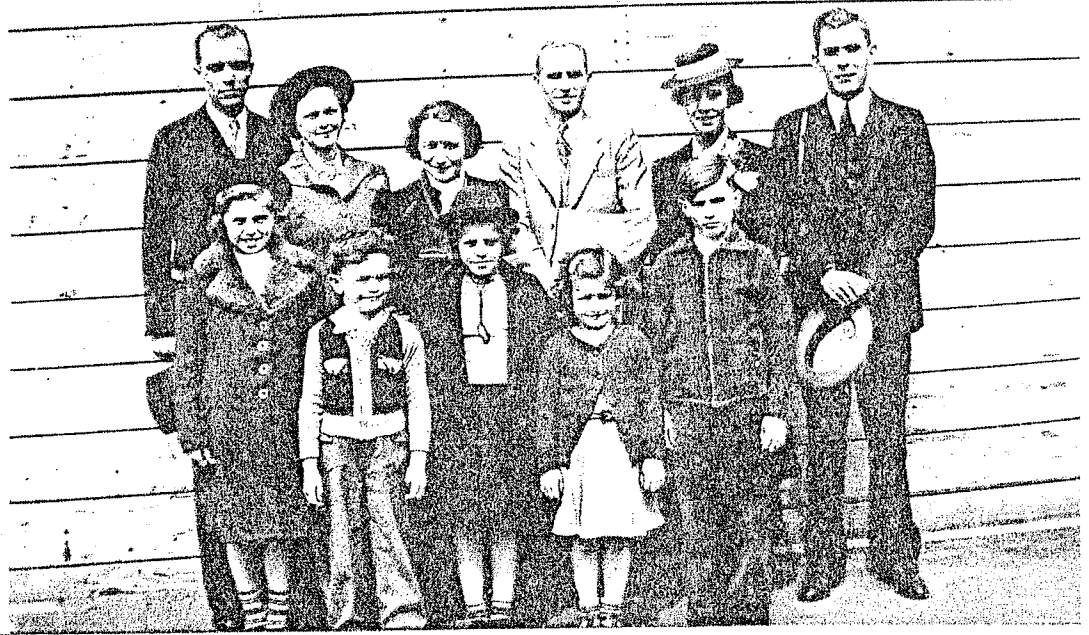
This sudden death of Rev. Zschiegner brought quick action from Dr. Brandt as he ordered me to get ready for a return to China. However, I was unsure whether my family was going with me or not. Finally, after some harsh words, we reached a compromise and he agreed that I could take my wife and the five youngest children, Dorothy, Raymond, Ruth, James, and Lois. The four older boys, Bob, Dick, Bill, and Tom were to remain in the U.S. We sent Dick and Bill to attend my old alma mater St. John's College in Winfield, Kansas. Bob ended up staying with Edna and Clarence Guenther, my niece and her husband. Finally, we sent Tom to stay with my sister Rose, and her husband, Elmer McBee.

So, after five months of waiting for orders to return to China, my shrunken family left for China aboard the Japanese steamer the *Asama Maru* in March of 1940. Dr. Otto Schmidt, Rev. Dohrman, and his wife Annette also set sail with us. For the voyage, I nestled myself on the deck and suffered from seasickness all the way to Japan. Arriving in Japan, I took the family on a sightseeing tour of Tokyo and other points of interest. When we first arrived in Tokyo we were greeted by a Japanese gentlemen who quickly said in broken English, "I show you sights in Tokyo. You teach me American slang. I go America some say. No save slang. I no understand American people." [sic]

We got a big kick out of the offer and his reason for taking time to show us Tokyo. It was too good of an offer to refuse so we agreed for him to show us Tokyo. Full of smiles and happy to be of service to us, the man led us to many interesting temples, parks, and stores around Tokyo as he talked with us. After our tour, the Japanese gentleman took us to the right train station to get back to Yokohama. As we waited for the train, a funny thing happened. The man produced a card and handed it to me saying, "Please write on my card that you were with me all day and sign your name." I asked him why I needed to do this for him. He answered with a grin, "My wife velly jealous. She think I be out with another woman." [sic] All of us had to laugh over the predicament of this delightful Japanese gentleman.



2nd China  
bound trip  
1940



We then took the train from Yokohama to Kobe, where we caught up with our steamer, the *M.S. Asama Maru*. Crossing the Yellow Sea from Japan, suddenly Raymond and Lois became very ill with a high fever. The Japanese doctor on board diagnosed their illness as the simple flu with a throat infection. However, upon arrival in Shanghai, a British doctor diagnosed Lois with diphtheria. I am guessing that the Japanese doctor knew this as well but feared that the government might quarantine the ship and all its passengers in Shanghai for a long time.

Because of Lois's illness, there was nothing for us to do but arrange for at least a nine week stay in Shanghai until the diphtheria left her. It was heartbreaking for the whole family when the hospital placed Lois in an isolation room for those nine weeks. While we waited, we enrolled the other children in the private boarding school called Asbury Academy in Shanghai. Ruth and I found temporary residence in a Japanese hotel which was much cheaper than the Chinese hotels of Shanghai. Since we had time on our hands, I arranged two Chinese teachers for Ruth to learn some Chinese while I began to study Japanese under a Japanese teacher.

Nine weeks later our wait was over and the Japanese army agreed to take us up to Hankow even though little Lois was still a carrier of diphtheria. Once on board the transport ship, the crew forced little Lois into isolation in a cabin for the five day trip up the river. Arriving in Hankow, we settled into one of the six mission residences of the compound there. After several months of living in Hankow, Dr. Schneider came and finally said that Lois was no longer a carrier of diphtheria.

For the next year and a half, I carried on in Hankow as the only missionary from the Missouri Synod. Hankow had fallen to the Japanese and was under their constant vigilance.

The native evangelists in Hankow helped me conduct services in five different chapels. One night as I was returning from one of these chapels, a Japanese soldier detained me. He stopped me and told me that they had declared martial law in Hankow. Apparently, some Chinese fanatic had cast a hand grenade into a group of Japanese soldiers at one of their military posts and had killed them. This was not the first time for martial law as this had happened. Every time there was a disturbance, the Japanese soldiers tightened their jurisdiction over the town. Sometimes they cordoned off a smaller section of Hankow and everyone on the streets had to remain in place until the soldiers finished their search. It seemed that my luck had finally run out this time.

Silently, I stood there watching the Japanese soldier who had detained me as he pushed back the crowd. He did this by taking out his bayoneted gun and made lunges at the crowd. Suddenly, he lunged in my direction and the bayonet came within a few inches of my stomach. Then the soldier stopped just in time as he realized I was a foreigner. This incident was not the last time the Japanese detained me. Often as I made my rounds between the various chapels either late at night or early in the morning, they detained me. To avoid detention I made sure to weave my way around the sections of Hankow that Japanese military patrolled the most. Ruth became extremely nervous and frightened by the events that were taking place. We all noticed that the mood of the city was definitely changing. Many nights, as I conducted chapel services by the time I gave the blessing at the end of service I had mostly empty benches to bless. Word traveled through the grapevine that another enforcement of martial law was going into effect. As soon as the members heard of this, they slipped out of the chapel to avoid detention.

The problems with the Japanese were not only limited to their frequent declarations of martial law but also their overly sensitive concern about cholera epidemics. In order to stem an outbreak, the Japanese soldiers had established sanitation stations at certain points in the city. At these stations, anyone who passed through them had to walk over a broad pan filled with disinfectant. A soldier stood there and sprayed each passerby all over with disinfectant. I have to give credit to the Japanese for their sanitary precautions as it seemed to work. Another tactic they had was to intercept the rickshaw workers and inject them with a cholera injection. In order to prevent multiple injections the Japanese had given each of the workers a card showing they had received an injection. However, some of the workers, who wanted to make some extra money, sold their cards to others who feared the Japanese and their needles. Sometimes the Japanese caught the ones that had already received the injections and injected them all over. I often wonder what effect the multiple shots had on these workers.

As I carried the work in Hankow, I had the privilege to make friends with the many Japanese living in Hankow. Many of these friendships developed because I depended on the military police to transfer funds up to the other missionaries by river in Shasi and Ichang. I was the treasurer of the funds sent by the world missionary board and my friendships which developed from this work paid off in the future.

## **CHAPTER 25 - WORLD WAR**

We lived day to day not knowing what was going to happen next. Luckily, one of the new items that I had brought from America was a short-wave radio. Every night we listened to the reports from America on the progress of the war between Germany and Great

Britain. We were comforted slightly one night when we heard President Roosevelt assure the American people that the U.S. was, "Still at peace and was prepared for any eventuality." The only thing that bothered me was that Roosevelt had made slighting remarks about the emperor of Japan. I knew that the Japanese people did not tolerate such insults of their god-emperor much longer. Later, I learned the warlike psychology of the military forces of Japan and the numerous insults of President Roosevelt did not go unnoticed or un-avenged by the Shoguns of Japan. I had a feeling that Japan and the U.S. were destined for war. I cabled Dr. Brandt for permission to leave Occupied China and to move into Free China. Free China was still under the control of Chiang Kai-shek and it seemed like the best place to continue my work. I prayed to God that the Japanese would not place us into concentration camps if the U.S. declared war on Japan. Dr. Brandt cabled me back with this reply, "Stay where you are."

Because Dr. Brant denied my request, I took matters into my own hands as I expected a break in the Japanese and United States relations at any time. Because I was treasurer of our funds, I decided to go to the bank and withdraw all the money we had. With some of the money, I went and purchased a large supply of canned goods, quinine pills, and other emergency supplies from the U.S. Navy warehouse. When I went to the warehouse, it seemed like the Navy had the same premonition. The warehouse buzzed with activity as soldiers loaded as much as they were able from the warehouse onto the gunboat called the *Panay*. What they did not load onboard they offered for sale to American civilians who still lived in Hankow. While I was at the warehouse, I chidingly remarked to the officer in charge, "Why are you loading all these supplies on the gunboat? You will never get it out of China in time."



From the Navy warehouse, we managed to buy about one ton of rice to use against the soaring prices which might come due to wartime inflation. Our mission staff planned to sell the rice to the poor members of church at the original price instead of from the local markets. We transported this rice from the warehouse and ended up storing it in one of the classrooms of the seminary.

Two weeks after we purchased the rice, I tuned into the short-wave radio and went to bed with a sign of relief after I heard President Roosevelt speak to the nation. It was December 6<sup>th</sup> in America and the President concluded his broadcast by again saying that all was well and that America was prepared for all eventualities. I had no idea that anything had happened until the next morning while we were eating breakfast, the cook came running into the dining room all excited crying, "You go jail. You go Jail!" [sic] The cook had hardly uttered these words when two Japanese military officers came into the houses. One of the soldiers spoke to me in English saying, "Japan is at war with the U.S.A. You will appear at ten o'clock at the military headquarters for instructions as prisoners of war." With these words, the two soldiers left.

At 10:00, I went willingly with all the other British and American citizens to the Japanese military headquarters in Hankow. There the general of the occupying force stood stiffly before us and spoke through an interpreter. "You are now prisoners of the Japanese army. You will follow all orders pertaining to prisoners. As long as you obey the orders, you will be treated well. We have already destroyed the American fleet at Pearl Harbor. We have already taken the Philippine Islands and we are attacking the western coast of the U.S.A. You will return to your homes and remain there. Destroy nothing. Later you will be

given a written list of what you are to do and not to do. This is all for now. Return to your homes.”

I wanted to take notes of what the general said so as not to miss anything but they ordered me not to take any notes. The general then left the assembly and we began to discuss the news with each other. Many of us viewed the victories of the Japanese fleet and air force with suspicion. Days later, I found out the report about Pearl Harbor was accurate. I also heard news that Japanese forces had already sunk the Navy gunboat the *Paney* in the Port of Shanghai.

## **CHAPTER 26 - THE INTERNMENT**

When I came home, I was very glad we had made such careful preparations in the storing up of food and provisions for the mission. It was clear that the Japanese were not going to leave us alone and that one day they would certainly come to search our homes. I knew they wanted the money I had withdrawn from the bank. Taking the money, I hid the remaining money in the attic of a duplex that we had rented to a German man. I figured it was safe there from Japanese searches as long as the German flag and Nazi flag always flew about his duplex.

I also feared that the Japanese might confiscate the rice we had stored up in the seminary. We immediately sent word to all the poor Chinese families in the neighborhood to come to get the rice. Within an hour, there was not one grain of rice in the classroom. To provide for my own family, I filled a trunk or two with this precious grain. I predicated that the cooler temperatures of the winter months would cause a fuel shortage. To conserve our own fuel usage, we moved into the duplex of the German man where I had hidden the

money. This house was much smaller and easier to keep warm. This building was right next door to our old house. Carefully, I maintained our old home so that it looked like we were still living there.

There were six other residences and seminary buildings on the compound. One of the other residences we had already rented to a German woman who worked as a school teacher. One night, as this woman was walking down the street, the Japanese proclaimed martial law in that area. Thinking that martial law did not apply to Germans because they were allies of the Japanese, she bravely tried to pass by the Japanese soldiers to cross the street. When she tried to cross the street, one of the soldiers slapped her in the face. The slap did not faze her and so she turned to spit into his face. I'm not sure how she managed to survive that altercation. She informed me later that the Japanese had granted her a permit to go to Germany via Diaran and through Russia. However, we heard that when she reached Diaran, the army blocked her from further progress through Russia and became stranded there for many months.

We now lived as prisoners in our own home from that point forward. It became a daily routine for us to welcome different groups of Japanese officers into the mission. They came looking for a place to spend the night. Usually, we saw the soldiers approaching at some distance down the road as they marched up from the city. The cook, who they allowed us to keep, always kept a watchful eye for approaching Japanese soldiers. As soon as he spotted some soldiers, he came and reported them to me. Quickly I ran to enter our old home through the back door. Then as the soldiers arrived, I walked out the front door and greeted them on the path leading up to the house. Because of these tactics, the officers naturally assumed that my family still lived in our old house.

For some reason, the officers always wanted to see was the seminary building first. So I marched them down the shaded path to the seminary to show them all the rooms in the building. Only those rooms which had anything in them at the time remained unlocked. This was another tactic of mine as the soldiers always wanted to see what was in the rooms that I had locked. Whenever they found a locked door, they demand the key from me. I pretended that I was reluctant to go to the office on the first floor for the keys. So, instead of going for a key I often grabbed one of the officers by the seat of his pants and lifted him up to look through the transom above the door. To their surprise, the locked rooms were completely empty. My antics worked and many times the officers burst out laughing when I hosted one of their companions into the air. By these methods, I was able to keep our supplies "hidden" while showing them what was behind the locked doors.

Usually after inspecting the seminary building, the officers wanted to commandeer one of the houses on the compound. The first house I always showed them was the one in which the German woman was living. I pointed to the house and say, "Deutsch." The officers knew not to commandeer a building occupied by their supposed German allies. The next two houses that I showed them were empty. However, these houses were in ruins because of the severe bombing of a nearby Japanese barracks and the repercussion of the anti-air artillery. The water pipes in these two houses had broken. Water had leaked out of the pipes to cause green slime to grow all over the walls and floors. After showing them the buildings, I told them that they were available. When they finished inspecting these houses, they always turned up their noses in disgust.

Next, I showed them my house which was really just a front. I made sure to point to the servant hanging clothes in the backyard as proof my family lived there. The Chinese

servants became experts in aiding to my deception. Finally, I pointed to the duplex but the officers never inspected it to find out that it was actually a duplex. They usually noticed the German flag flying above it or I when I told them it was a German house, they moved on their way. However, the Japanese army was persistent and every day another group of officers came out and started over with their inspection of the compound. This routine lasted for almost two months with almost my daily tours of the seminary for the Japanese army.

In spite of orders from the Japanese general that we were not to alter or remove anything, I took some liberty in that department. Around the mission compound stood hundreds of willow trees. Because there was already shortage of fuel, I hired some Chinese men to cut down some of these trees during the night. Once they had felled the trees, they cut them up into firewood and tossed the wood over the back wall of the compound. Our compound was in the country and some distance from the city. Since the Japanese feared Chinese guerilla attacks, they did not venture much beyond the compound at night. So, I figured the firewood was quite safe from their prying eyes on the outside wall of the compound.

Besides our illegal nighttime lumberjacking, I with some Chinese helpers went out at night to the other mission homes on the compound. From these houses, we rescued the more valuable household goods that the missionaries who had already fled to Free China had left behind. Soon we had filled our two residences with extra rugs, pianos, stoves, ice-boxes, sewing machines, and whatever we could carry.

Now the Japanese were very tight about providing adequate funds for their prisoners and so they expected their prisoners to sell their household goods in order to support

themselves. At this time, I was not only supporting my family's seven hungry mouths but also about 21 Chinese teachers and evangelists that were still with us. The Japanese government had allowed foreigners to put up household items for sale at public auctions in the city. However, I was in no hurry of putting anything up for sale since I had the money withdrawn from the bank and the supplies that I had obtained from the Navy warehouse. We also made due by some fortunate events that took place.

One day Ruth wanted some paper to cover her cupboard shelves. I knew that the seminary staff had purchased about \$2000.00 worth of printing paper before they had fled to Free China. The seminary staff printed its own catechism, hymn books, and other religious tracts in those days. This paper was still stored in the seminary building. Because I had picked up a few words of Japanese over the past year and a half, I went up to one of the Japanese guards they had left to guard the seminary. I told him that I wished to get some paper for my wife's cupboards. The guard looked at his watch and said, "The officer in charge will be here in about 15 minutes. Take what you need."

With his permission, I immediately called as many Chinese servants, teachers, and caretakers I could find. Within the 15 minutes, we transferred all the printing paper into our home. The guard stood there watching us the entire time and never said a word. Within a couple of days, I had sold the entire lot of paper to a local Chinese printer for \$2000.00.

The other source of financial aid came from an unexpected source. A few days before the war broke out between Japan and America, I had given 1000 yen to the military police to transfer the missionary funds to the missionaries residing in Shasi. The military police had been transporting the funds for me for the last year and a half before the war. A few months after our internment, a member of the Japanese Consulate who was a friend of

mine, came out to the compound. He sat down next to me and said, "Would you like to have the thousand yen you gave to the military police for their services." I hastily replied, "I sure would." The Japanese man then told me to request a pass to see the dentist and then go to the bank in Hankow. I was to tell the bank that the Japanese had sent me. So a few days later, I managed to obtain a pass and obtained the money. Later I found out that this man and some others in the Consulate did not agree with what the Japanese forces were doing in China and that they felt sorry for the foreigners left there.

The attitude that this generous member of the Consulate had shown me was not atypical. Even many of the soldiers showed great generosity and kindness to their prisoners. From my own experience, I can honestly say many of the soldiers were simply following their orders. We had daily contact with the soldiers as a Japanese guard house sat just across a bridge over the canal that surrounded our mission compound. The guards daily saw my children playing in the yard and the guards took a keen interest in them. One of the guards almost every day placed a toy, a package of cookies, or some other gift in my yard for the children to find.

One Sunday, as I was about to open a short religious service for my family, the guard who had given my children gifts, came stomping through the backdoor. He stood there looking at my family for a second. Under his arms, he carried eight cans of Bartlett pears which were each worth about \$5.00 in Chinese money. Then without a word, he walked around to each of us and presented us with a can of pears. When he came to little six-year-old Lois, he said, "Two for you." He then flopped down in a chair and with his arms folded and told me, "Now go on." After I had finished the short service for my family, the Japanese soldiers attempted to carry on a conversation with the children. He spoke a little

English and managed to write out a note saying to Lois and Jim, "I hope your happiness, my pretty boy and girl. The child is an angel. I am a faithful friend, and you are my good comrade. The child is a poet. R.O." [sic] We still have this note and Ruth will often take it out to remind her that some Japanese had kindness in their hearts even towards their wartime enemies.

A few days later, this same Japanese guard came to my backdoor for a social call but another officer spotted him who was already there. I could not make out what the officer was saying, but I could tell from the red and wrinkled face of the guard that the officer reprimanded him most severely. From that day on, I did not see the kind guard at his post.

Ruth began to teach the five children and supervise their household chores during the internment. She also kept busy learning Chinese and going on walks with me the length of the compound. I told her that our daily walks reminded me of a poor lion in his cage in a zoo. It also reminded me of a movie I had once seen of Laurel and Hardy, who in a WWI movie, received orders to march back and forth as guards. In the movie because they did not realize the war was over months before, they kept on marching back and forth. Eventually, all you could see was the upper half of their bodies because of the deep footpath they had worn away.

We also kept entertained by the Japanese forces in a large open field that stretched for several blocks up from the dirty canal. The Japanese forces were now using this field for military maneuvers. It was interesting to watch them, group after group, jump up from invisible positions on the ground and then to dash forward screaming. Then they fell flat on their stomachs and waited for another group of soldiers to dash up to their position. At first, it was a bit frightening to watch about 20 or 30 groups of soldiers approaching the mission



compound as though the compound was their objective. However, when we got used to their maneuvers they were somewhat amusing to watch. Rain or shine, the soldiers kept practicing this maneuver. One day when the entire squadron of Japanese soldiers came screaming and running close to the compound, one of the soldier lost his balance when he did not stop fast enough before the canal. This soldier wobbled a bit before falling headlong into the dirty and slimy water. The terrifying screams of the soldiers changed into an outburst of hilarious laughter at the expense of the filth covered soldier.

After a few months of house internment, our caretaker came in to report that someone had left a small baby at the rear gate of the compound. The entire family when out to see the newborn baby who was left lying in a basket. She wore good clothes and someone had wrapped her in a small blanket. Pinned to her chest was a \$5.00 bill. She had a string of hemp tied around her neck which was a Chinese sign of mourning for her dead parents. The group of farmers and those dwelling on the compound crowded around us to see what we would do. None of them seemed to know who had brought the baby to the compound. Because the baby was a girl, none of them wanted her. Chinese considered girls as too expensive to keep. Had the baby been a boy, one of those standing there might have been glad to adopt the child.

Ruth turned to me and said, "Let me take care of the child. We can adopt her." I weakened to her request and said, "O.K." I then asked if any of the farmers or workers knew of a wet nurse in the neighborhood. They told me that there was a woman living in the neighborhood who had just lost her child soon after it had been born. So I had one of the farmers go to hire her to take care of the newest addition to the Klein family. Ruth wanted to have the little baby girl named after her mother. After conducting the following Sunday

services at my chapel, we baptized the child and named her *Lai Ma-li-ya*, which is Chinese for Mary Klein.

With our newest addition, we kept busy during the house internment which made it less depressing. Of course, the thought of being prisoners for the duration of the war never left our minds. Besides taking care of the daily snooping Japanese officers, I continued to meet secretly with the native mission staff. I wanted to make sure that the mission work continued even if we left. In the meetings, I carefully outlined various ways to carry on the work in my absence. The native mission staff came one at a time to the house so as not to arouse suspicion among the Japanese guards just across the canal.

Things were not always so peaceful even within the walls of our compound. Sometimes fights arose between the Chinese families that were living in one section of the compound. Most of these fights arose over who stole the particles of unburned coal raked from my home's ash pile. Cooking and heating fuel was so scarce by this time that even the coal particles became extremely valuable. However, we soldiered on and we again restored peace among our own ranks. Thankfully, I was still able to conduct Sunday services on a regular basis. A number of Chinese members still were willing to come to services. The members had to be careful though and entered the compound through the rear gate so that the Japanese did not see them.

There were other bright spots as well as we waited out the decision of the occupying forces. To pass the time and in order to keep up the spirits of the children, I began to compose a book about my early life. I read a new chapter each night to the children. The children got a big kick out of my childhood pranks and activities. With all that we were doing, time passed by quite rapidly in our internment.

Things were going so well, when all of a sudden in February 1942, a new crisis arose. An officer had given me a pass to appear at the military headquarters. On arriving, the officer in charge told me that the military was now going to take over the entire mission compound and its buildings for military purposes. He told me the army would transfer us to a section of the isolation hospital in Hankow. I forcefully objected to this action as I did not want my family placed in a building which had once housed people with all kinds of contagious diseases. But in spite of my objections, the officer told me that he could provide my family with a worse place, namely a dirty, rat infested Chinese prison. I had no choice but to agree to the isolation hospital. Yet, I still was unsure how we were to get there. Boldly I asked the officer if they were going to provide transportation for my family and my supplies.

The officer who, no doubt, knew about the money I had withdrawn from the bank replied, "You have enough money. You can go out and hire your own truck for the transfer of your household goods." Again, I objected and shouted, "If you want to change my place of confinement, you have to provide the trucks." After we exchanged a barrage of arguments, the Japanese officer finally agreed to provide one truck for my family. The officer also insisted that I make a list of all of the possessions which we planned to transfer. With boiling anger, I left the military headquarters to report the situation to Ruth and the children.

Yet at times like these, I could be stubborn and rebellious and when circumstances demanded it, a bit daring. About 10 miles from our compound there was a British mission where I had heard that a number of British, Russian, and Australian families were interned. "Would it work, would I dare disobey the Japanese officer and transfer my family to the

British compound, instead of going to the isolation hospital in the city?" I mused. After some thought, I decided to try it. Arriving home, I asked the cook to find someone who owned a truck and enough gasoline to move my family to the British compound. The cook grinned and said, "Can do. I know man with truck." [sic] I turned to Ruth and the children and told them that we needed to start packing right away. I told them about the plans of the Japanese officer and said, "We will not wait until the day designated by the Japanese officer. We will travel far out in the country because there will be no Japanese sentinels out there."

As we packed, I took seriously the order of the Japanese officer to make a list of all our household goods. Since we had brought so many articles into the house from the deserted mission houses, it became quite a task to list all of the items. Because we had many items that were similar, I listed them according to types. Here is a sample of some of the items on that list: Pianos: Concert piano, practice piano, children's piano; Ice-boxes: ice-box, deep freeze, Frigidaire; Rugs: Bedroom rugs, living room rungs, summer rugs, winter rugs. I must say that the rugs were quite a problem since we had rugs from the four deserted residences and there were a large number of them. Once I had written this list down, I sent it on to the Japanese headquarters. Since my books were of no value at an auction in China, I transferred my library of about 1,000 volumes to an empty room in the seminary building for safekeeping.

I also made contact with the British compound and they assured me that an empty residence was available when we moved out there. So on February 8<sup>th</sup>, 1942, my birthday, we transferred to the British compound. It was a cold rainy day and a very sad one for my entire family. As we pulled away from the mission compound, I sadly witnessed the destruction of all the contents of the seminary building. The Japanese solders cleared the

seminary of all its equipment, books, and pictures and threw everything out the windows. The soldier threw my books out onto the street and sold the books to the Chinese for about \$5.00 a rickshaw load. The Chinese then used the books' paper to make soles for their shoes. The remaining goods that the Japanese did not confiscate, they heaped into piles and burned. Tears came to my eyes as I left realizing that this was probably the last time I would ever see my beloved mission and home.

In spite of this, I did not leave empty handed. In fact, it took 150 rickshaws and 11 truckloads to move us into the British compound. We were loaded down with a large amount of furniture, supplies, firewood, the trunks filled with rice, children's toys, and anything else that we had removed from our two homes. All seemed to be going well but I had made one mistake. I should have left one truckload of materials behind. A few days later, the Japanese officer sent the promised truck to the old compound expecting to pick up my stuff. When they arrived, they found that I had already flown the coop. The officer was so angry that he took out his sword and threatened to kill the caretaker. The caretaker managed to get away and fled to the greenhouse on the property. Luckily, for him a tunnel connected the greenhouse to the heating plant. The caretaker crawled into the tunnel and hid there for several days until the danger had passed.

I later found out what made the officer so upset. He had planned to confiscate my belongings and the money that I had hidden in the attic of our German neighbor. Thankfully, I had removed the money and had it safely in my possession. When we arrived at the British compound, they welcomed us warmly. These fellow interment prisoners pitched in to get my family settled into the large, empty, but also very cold mission house. After a short time, we had a blazing fire lit in the fireplace in the living room. Because it

had been raining, my exhausted family sat huddled in front of the fire to keep warm and to dry our wet clothing. Because the Japanese wanted to conserve electrical power, they had cut off the electricity at the British compound. We made due with some candles and some wicks that we placed into dishes of oil. One evening, I had to laugh at Ruth when I found her studying Chinese while lying in a bath tub wrapped in a blanket. She lay there to avoid the chilly drafts that penetrated the house. Surprisingly, the Japanese did not reciprocate against us for our direct defiance of their orders. I ascribe our fortune to the friendships we had made with the Japanese civilians and military police before the war. It also helped that the soldiers loved our children and had continued to provide them with gifts and bits of food.

## **CHAPTER 27 - THE BRITISH COMPOUND**

The loneliness and isolation that we had experienced at the Lutheran compound was now at an end. At the British compound, we now shared our plight with about 40 men, women, and children. Even though we were technically prisoners of war, it did not stop us from arranging parties and holding worship services. Since the Japanese forbade us from opening a formal school for the children, we arranged for each house to become a classroom. Since most of the internees were trained teachers, it was very simple to have the children attend their classes scattered among the various houses. It was also a blessing to share medicine, food, and other necessities among the families as the need arose.

In order to break the monotony of “prison” life, I decided to try my hand at writing a book. Each day, I wrote a chapter and then as Ruth and I took our daily walk around the compound we discussed the chapter that I had written. We also talked about what I should write for the next chapter. Each night, by the candlelight, Ruth typed up the chapter I had

written earlier in the day. By the time we finally left China the book was completed. We decided to call the book Vengeance is Mine. I based this first book on the life and adoption of Lai Ma-li-ya. Unfortunately, because of our transfer to the British compound and the uncertainty of our future in China, we had entrusted the care of Ma-li-ya, also called Mollya, to a Chinese Christian family near the old compound. We left sufficient funds with them to take care of Mollya. We were saddened to find out later that little Mollya died from a severe illness. Ruth and I continually remember our little Ma-li-ya and the miraculous way she came into our lives.

Time passed more quickly in the British compound and it was already April, 1942. Then word came that we were to be exchanged for Japanese prisoners who had been imprisoned in the States. When this news came, I immediately took all of the household items we had collect to the auction. The money was easier to dispose of than the furniture. Luckily, I found the last auction of this type held in Hankow. At this time, the Japanese military personnel received their wages in the Chinese yen which was not transferable in Japan. Many of the Japanese soldiers used their worthless yen to buy up any useable objects from the foreigners. These purchased items would then hold more value to them when they returned to Japan. Because of this, I was able to sell all of our possessions whether good or bad, useable or unusable for a very good price of over 100,000 military yen. Since the Japanese permitted foreigners to take only 300 yen out of China, I gave the money to my good German friend, Mr. Titus, who was still living in Hankow. This money was more than sufficient to pay the mission staff salaries for the next four years. The rest of the cash I still had on hand I loaned to several British missions operating in Hankow. These missions had struggled to obtain sufficient money to pay their own mission staffs.

After getting rid of the surplus money, I divided most of our remaining food supplies among the British residents of the compound. We still had about 800 quinine pills from our earlier purchase from the Navy warehouse. It seems that these pills were worth their weight in gold. Since I no longer needed them, I gave them to the British operated hospital in Hankow which was in desperate need of the pills. It is interesting to note that the Japanese allowed the British families to remain in Hankow while the Japanese made sure to round up all the Americans for the prisoner exchange. Packing up what little money and food supplies we had left, we were ready for the exchange in the month of April. But then, lo and behold, they postponed the exchange for a later date.

Because I had already given away all our supplies, we depended on our British friends to help us along with some of the food I had given them. During this time, we were ready to leave at a moment's notice and lived out of our suitcases. I had borrowed some single beds from the hospital to set up for my family. In spite of our new living conditions, I maintained hope that the exchange was coming that that we might finally live in freedom in the U.S.A.

Finally, our orders came in June for us to board a ship for Shanghai. The Japanese told us they only allowed us to have one piece of hand luggage. This was quite a blow to us. We had a large amount of luggage as I had preserved some of the more valuable and prized possessions that I wanted to take along to the States. We had packed seven large trunks and bundles of rugs to take with us. Now we had to decide what to take and what to leave behind. It made little difference to me whether we left these temporal items behind only to be confiscated. On the other hand, if we took the items along, they might confiscate them at the ship. I decided to try my luck and so I sent all seven trunks and the bundles of rugs



down to the ship. Fortune again smiled upon us as the ship's crew loaded all the trunks and bundles aboard the ship without any objection from the Japanese officers who were in charge of our transport ship.

The next day as we were making our final good-byes and getting ready to leave, a Japanese soldier crawled over the wall. As he came approached, I recognized him as the Japanese guard who had given us the gift of pears. It was wonderful to see him again and I am forever thankful for the aid and comfort this guard had shown to my family. We were also thankful that his officers had not shot him for helping us. It still amazes me how he knew the day and hour of our departure from the British compound. With a sad heart, we bade our Chinese and British friend good-bye and boarded the transport. The big question in the mind of all that day was, "How long will the war last? Would the rest of the prisoners be able to survive another four or five years of internment?"

When we arrived at the docks, we met up with Rev. Zimmerman and his family who were interned at Shasi. The Japanese also brought Rev. Thode and his family to Hankow from Ichang where they were prisoners. A reunion took place when we first saw the Zimmermans and Thodes and it gave us all opportunity to share our experiences over the past few months. From Hankow we sailed down the Yangtze until we reached Shanghai.

On arrival, the crew transported all the American prisoners of war to the Columbia Country Club in Shanghai. In that country club, there were already hundreds of other American prisoners. Right before we made it to Shanghai, my wife developed a severe case of diarrhea aboard the ship. The Japanese had taken her from the ship to a hospital in Shanghai. Ruth remained there for one week until she eventually joined us at the country club. Because of her weakened condition, the club gave her a private room and bath. The

country club staff situated all the other prisoners together in the large assembly rooms with access only to the public bathrooms. So it seems that evil winds sometimes do blow good windfalls as well. We were forever grateful for the privacy of our own room and bath. We spent another three weeks there standing for hours in lines waiting to sign various documents or to get into the dinning room. In spite of this, it was relatively pleasant for us in Shanghai. The Japanese guards even allowed the prisoners to go into the city at any time during the day. This gave my family the great opportunity to visit the many sights around Shanghai. We especially enjoyed visiting a restaurant outside the country club as the food in the club was of very low quality.

## **CHAPTER 28 - OUR FINAL RETURN - 1942**

June 30<sup>th</sup>, 1942 the Japanese issued orders that all American prisoners were to board ship for the States. Our evacuation ship was an Italian liner named *The Conte Verde*. For some reason, they once again allowed to take all my baggage onto the ship. However, before boarding the ship I wanted to be sure that I did not suffer from seasickness. I took a few anti-seasickness pills before going on board the cruise liner. Regrettably, I took the pills too soon as the ship was delayed from leaving port for a couple of days. Thus, when the ship finally got under way the pills were ineffective. Once again, I located a sheltered spot in the middle of the ship on the top deck. There I set up a cot



and slept out in the open every night all the way to Mozambique, South Africa. The only stop made by the ship was for 18 hours outside of the minded waters of Singapore. The ship, day and night was lit up like a Christmas tree with a large painted sign informed any enemy plane, submarine, or battleship that it was a prisoner exchange ship.

At Mozambique, South Africa, the *Conte Verde* we met up with the Swedish ship the *Gripsholm* that brought Japanese exchange prisoners from the States. The timing was perfect as all of the prisoners from each ship disembarked and passed each other on the dock. A stack of cargo separated the groups of prisoners. The Japanese prisoners marched from the *Gripsholm* to the *Conte Verde* while at the same time the Americans marched onto the *Gripsholm*. In Mozambique, another steamer the *Asama Maru* arrived with more prisoners that were American from Hong Kong and Japan. These prisoners also boarded the *Gripsholm* with us. There were about 1,500 American passengers now on the *Gripsholm* including about 150 children.

Once on board the ship there was some confusion over the assignment of cabins. When the Japanese gave the name list of American prisoners, they failed to mention the gender of the prisoners. Consequently, the *Gripsholm* officers assigned some cabins to couples or groups of the opposite gender. They assigned some of the single men to cabins with either married or single women and vice versa. To straighten out the confusion the passengers, during the first night, slept wherever was convenient. By the second day, the confusion was untangled and married couples were reunited and the women and men received separate cabins. One other complaint that seems minor in light of the situation was that the Japanese nationals had consumed all the beer on the *Gripsholm*. Therefore, for the rest of our voyage there was a shortage of beer for the returning American passengers.

While we lay docked in Mozambique, we enjoyed the three day lay over the best we could. My family went out and toured the city and visited many of its interesting parks, houses, and native curio shops. I had the bright idea that perhaps some brandy might help alleviate my seasickness. So I bought two quarts of brandy in Mozambique. To test out my theory, I set up my cot in a choice spot on the deck. I was still never able to sleep in the stuffy cabin with my wife. The brandy helped somewhat but I spent the remainder of the trip out on deck until the ship finally reached New York City. Whenever I went below deck to shave or to use the restroom, I fortified myself against the nausea by downing a few swallows from my brandy bottle. I then dashed into the wash room but kept the brandy bottle next to me in case I needed it further.

While we sailed across the Atlantic Ocean, Ruth came out to sit with me and set up a table at the foot of my cot. There on deck, she, with a borrowed typewriter, retyped the novel I had composed while in the British compound. She also composed an article covering her experiences as an exchange prisoner.

The *Gripsholm*, like the *Conte Verde*, was lit up day and night like a Christmas tree. In order to avoid regular shipping routes it took a route several hundred miles south of the Cape of Good Hope. In these waters, the fierce winds and waves of the Roaring Forties buffeted the ship. During one of the terrific storms, the cold wind, rain, and waves dashed all over the deck. I was the only passenger on deck as I snuggled in my blanket while protected by an alcove. All at once, I heard the crash of breaking glass. Looking to see what had crashed I exclaimed with a great sigh, "There goes my seasick remedy!" The brandy bottle had broken open and spilled the liquor all over the deck. Some passengers

came out on deck later and kidded me saying, "The storm chased us indoors but the smell of brandy brought us back out. I guess the power of your brandy was greater than the storm."

After a few days, I had a brief interlude from my seasickness as we arrived in Brazil. Seeing land again was an immediate tonic and again I filled my stomach with some much needed nourishment. Our stop there afforded my family the rare privilege of visiting the sights of Rio de Janeiro and the surrounding area for the next couple of days. One day while in Rio de Janeiro, we spotted the *Queen Mary* under camouflage loaded with American troops heading to the battlefields in Europe.

We were finally on our last leg from Rio to New York City. However, we were not out of danger yet. One day we sailed past an American steamer burning at sea. A German submarine had blasted the pilot deck completely off the ship. The pilot deck was floating some distance away from the rest of the ship. For a short time, the *Gripsholm* circled the burning ship to look for survivors but found none. This unfortunate sight caused a certain degree of nervousness to pervade the passengers on board the *Gripsholm*. For this reason, the captain ordered full steam ahead in order to reach the docks of New York to coincide with *Conte Verde* docking in Japan. Otherwise, the *Gripsholm* was fair game for some irresponsible German or Japanese sub lurking of the shores of the U.S.A.

Finally, after 53 days of travel we reached New York. It was a beautiful sight to see the Statue of Liberty bidding us to safety. A large crowd of relatives and friends of the 1,500 exchange prisoners waved a joyous welcome from the dock. When I had reached dry land, I heard a familiar voice crying out to me, "Your son Robert won a scholarship." An interesting choice of words to welcome us to the United States I thought as I turned and saw my old antagonists, Dr. Brandt.

Before we could leave the docks, every prisoner spent numerous hours passing through customs and being interviewed by the F.B.I. The F.B.I. seemed to know more about me than I could even remember. For example, when they asked me for the date of my marriage to Ruth I gave them the wrong date. The F.B.I. interviewer consulted his paperwork and said with a grin, "Our records show November 5<sup>th</sup>, 1939 not November 10<sup>th</sup>." They also asked me about letters or other correspondences I might be bringing from China. A friend of mine in China had given me a letter of greeting he wanted me to deliver to his cousin in America. I told the F.B.I. about this letter which was packed in one of our crates and they insisted on seeing it. There was nothing for me to do but to look for the letter. We frantically looked in every one of the trunks that were still sitting at the customs' dock. After we searched through six of the trunks, we finally found the letter in the last trunk. Handing the letter over to the F.B.I., they finally allowed us to leave the shipyards.

Dr. Brandt then took all the LC-MS missionaries that had arrived with us to a hotel for the night. Rev. Buuck and his family, the Zimmermans, the Thodes, and Mrs. Zeigler and her family all went with us to the hotel. Altogether 29 men, women and children of the mission of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod returned on the *Gripsholm*. Dr. Brandt gathered the group into one of the social halls of the hotel to deliver a welcome speech and to present instructions for the future activities of the group.

Almost immediately, the old antagonism between Dr. Brandt and me again came to a head. It all started when Dr. Brandt told us that we were to return to our homes. He reported that the mission board was guaranteeing us one month's salary. Rev. Thode immediately jumped up and cried, "What? Only one month's salary?" Dr. Brandt realized his mistake and said, "Oh, this only applies to Rev. Klein, for he has only served two and a

half years of the six years required before a furlough is granted.” I was not about to say anything to this absurd remark. I thought, “Perhaps, Dr. Brandt would have been pleased to have me serve out the full six years of my duty until furlough was granted as a prisoner of the Japanese in Hankow.” Instead, I made only one request of Dr. Brandt and that was for permission to stop over in St. Louis on our way back to Pueblo, Colorado. Dr. Brandt snidely replied, “Even as thin as you are, there is no room for you in St. Louis.” At this time, I weighed only about 136 pounds and Ruth weighed about 98 pounds.

## **CHAPTER 29 - ADJUSTING TO LIFE IN AMERICA**

With Dr. Brandt’s short response, we spent another day or two in New York and then boarded a train for Pueblo. When we arrived, we once again rejoiced to be together with our entire family and close relatives. Bob, Dick, Bill, and Tom, the four boys that we had left behind two and a half years before did not seem to have suffered too much from the separation. In the meantime, I sent out notices to all the district presidents of the Missouri Synod to let them know that I was available for a call in the U.S.A. The only response that I received back was, “The Lord will call you when and where He needs you.” So once again, we were in a state of waiting to see what the Lord had in mind.

For the past couple of years I had sent home \$50 a month from China to take care of the boys’ expenses. Fortunately, the money remained untouched in the hands of Art Stichweh, my brother-in-law. Somehow or other the four boys had earned their keep and were generously taken care of by our relatives in our absence. This accumulated sum of money was an unexpected windfall for our struggling family.

After some time waiting for a call and not receiving one, I had nothing left to do but seek some sort of employment. Finally, I broke down and wrote a letter to Dr. Brandt informing him that the stingy offer of one month's salary was unacceptable. Yet, I didn't expect it to make any difference and instead relied on the Lord to provide as he had already done for me. So I began my search for work and eventually decided to try my hand as a real estate agent. After studying for several weeks for the real estate agent's examination, I applied at a local real estate broker for a job. The real estate broker was amazed at what I was attempting and kindly told me, "Mr. Klein, you and you large family will starve to death if you try to sell real estate. Because of the war, the real estate business is simply dead. I do have a suggestion to make. Over at the Congress Hotel, an insurance supervisor is looking for an insurance salesman. I believe you would do better selling life insurance at this time." With that piece of information, I went over to the hotel and got an interview with the insurance supervisor.

Again, God was looking down on my family as the supervisor offered me as job as a salesman for Kansas City Life Insurance Company. From studying for real estate, I now began to study for my insurance salesman permit. After taking the test a few weeks later, I received my permit and started life over as an insurance salesman. It was rough sailing though for the first five or six months. The first month I earned only \$35.00, the second month \$75.00, and by the third month, I was only making \$150.00. Yet, as my sales gradually increased, my hard work and persistence eventually paid off.

Jack Allen, the manager of Kansas City Life in Denver, saw my potential as an insurance agent and made me supervisor of the business in Southern Colorado. I soon became one of the tops salesmen for K.C.L and made the President's Club in that



organization in my first years as a salesman. From that point on, money was no long a problem. Before I was making the big bucks, we certainly struggled. I had rented two rooms in a rooming house for the seven of us that had returned from China. Because we had no kitchen, we ate all our meals in a family restaurant.

During those first months of selling life insurance, Ruth and I looked at about 40 different houses in our price range. Because of our large family, it was difficult to find someone who wanted to rent us a house. One day while looking at a house with a "For Sale" sign, a kindly old lady came by and asked me if we were looking for a house. I now think that woman was an angel sent by God for when she heard of my dilemma she said, "I have just the house you are looking for." So she took me to 311 E. Evans Avenue in Pueblo and showed me an old two story home. Although the house was old, it had four bedrooms, one bath, a living room, dinning room, and kitchen. She informed me that she had partially furnished the house with old furniture. I immediately fell in love with the house but said, "I am afraid I can't afford it."

"Nonsense," the kind angel said, "what can you afford to pay?" I told her, "I only have \$1,500 and I have nine children to care for." She looked up and asked, "Will \$4,000 be too much? You can make a down payment with the money you have and pay off the balance at the rate of \$35.00 a month. Furthermore, I will charge you only 4% interest." I couldn't believe my ears at this good news. This old woman was not really an angel but the widow of Judge Sabin and a Catholic at that. Aglow with happiness and thankfulness I turned to Mrs. Sabin and whispered, "You are certainly an angel of God. I'll take the house."

A few days later Mrs. Sabin's lawyer friend came to complete the sale without charging me the normal salesman's commissions and fees. Now, I finally had my first house that I could call my very own. After we had moved into the house, the insurance business grew steadily better and my family was no longer struggling just to stay together. However, my mind was still not at ease because I was becoming more and more impatient with the indifference displayed by the synod. They still had not issued me a call for the work I had set my heart on as a preacher of the gospel.

Matters only got worse between Dr. Brandt and me and my patience was wearing thin. In particular, three events took place that made my disdain for the man grow even greater. First, there was considerable difficulty in the matter of settling the property losses suffered by the returning missionaries. At first, Dr. Brandt requested claim statements from each missionary concerning our losses so that the mission board could reimburse us. I sent in what I thought was a reasonable request of only \$1,000 for the cost of my library of about 1,000 volumes. Dr. Brandt, on the other hand thought differently. He sent me three different letters in regards to my claims questioning the values, use, and possible market values of the books.

In disgust, I wrote back a letter chiding him for bickering over the settlement of my claim. Finally, in my last letter I told him I would drop my claim all together to settle the argument. I finished my letter by reminding him that the good Lord had always provided for my needs. A little later on, I eventually received a check for \$500 as reimbursement with a promissory letter for the remaining \$500 to come once the Japanese made reparations at the end of the war. It came as no surprise to me that the promised reimbursement never came.

The second incident with Dr. Brant caused an even deeper rift to develop between us was over another financial deal. When I had sold the household effects at the auction in China, I was sure to keep a careful list of the articles that belonged to each of the missionaries when I rescued their possessions. I also kept an accurate account of the amount each of these articles had brought at the auction in Hankow. Before leaving Hankow, I had used this money to loan it to the British missions who in turn gave me promissory notes to pay the money back someday. The notes totaled to just around \$1,500 dollars in U.S. currency.

About a month after our arrival back in the States, I had received a money order of \$150 from Great Britain to cover the notes given to me in Hankow. This was far from what the British owed and not enough money to pay off the repatriated missionaries for their share in the auction sale. I was very much aware of the destitute conditions the other repatriated missionaries were experiencing and of their need for even the most basic supplies. Most everything they once owned in China from their clothing, shoes, and other essentials were lost in China. I felt that it necessary to take up this matter with Dr. Brandt and showed him the promissory notes. It was my theory that perhaps the British mission office in London had garbled the information that was coming out of China. So instead of sending us \$1500 they had mistakenly sent us \$150.

I pleaded with Dr. Brandt to advance the money due to these destitute families until the rest of the money arrived from the British. The only answer I received back was, "This is your affair, not the affair of the mission board. You take care of it." With his quasi permission, I made photo static copies of the notes and mailed them to London. A month or so later they sent the remaining balance and I immediately sent out personal checks to the

various missionaries. Because Dr. Brandt seemed to be showing so little concern for the missionaries, my patience with him and the synod had finally run out and I sent in my resignation form the China mission staff.

### **CHAPTER 30 - THE NEXT GREAT ADVENTURE - 1943**

In the meantime, I had heard that there was a great need for chaplains in the U.S. Army. So I sent in my application for a position as chaplain. Again, my arch enemy, Dr. Brandt refused to give me the endorsement necessary for a chaplain position. Dr. Brandt sent me a letter refusing to grant this request because he believed the chaplaincy corps required overseas assignments. He suggested that I leave my entire family behind again and return to Free China. He believed that as an experienced missionary I might still carry on a mission in China in spite of the war.

My suspicion that Dr. Brandt was playing me all along only grew when I received a letter from the Army and Navy Chaplain Commission. In the letter, they informed me that they had rejected my application for the chaplaincy program. The letter implied that in order for them to accept me into the program an official of the church needed to sanction it. Hastily I composed a letter of my own to return to them which I sent on May 21, 1943.

Here is a copy of the letter that I wrote back to them:

Brethren:

Your communication of May 8, 1943, informing me that the commission has disapproved of my application for chaplaincy in the U.S. Army, was received yesterday. Your disapproval is according to your letter based solely on the premise that the War Department regulations stipulate that a candidate for chaplain must "be engage in the active ministry as his principal vocation in life." Brethren, it is incomprehensible to me how you arrived at the conclusion that the active ministry is not and has not been my principal vocation in life. It is due to misinformation on your part as to the real situation with respect to my active ministry as my principal

vocation in life. True, I am by no fault of my own, but due to circumstances beyond my control, temporarily removed from the mission field in which I have been active for 21 years. True, it is that temporary status, yet not by my choice, that I have been denied active service as a minister to a definite congregation and have been denied a call to such a position at this time. Yet to say that I am not engaged in active ministry as my principal vocation in life is unfair and rather distasteful to me who has dedicated his life to the ministry of the Word.

Does the fact that I have, by the grace of God, tried faithfully to serve the ministry on foreign fields for 21 years, in fair and foul season, mean anything to you? Does not the fact that I, after being forced by circumstance of war had to conscientiously resign from the foreign ministry to seek employment for the purpose of relieving the mission treasury from paying for an inactive incumbent not mean anything to you? This resignation did not mean in any way that I have given up the active ministry as my principal vocation in life. This is borne out by the fact that my name is entered in the college of district president as one subject to have a definite call. It is furthermore borne out by the fact that I have been assisting the local congregation at all times in administering the Word and Sacraments. It is furthermore borne out by the fact that I have been actively preaching in neighboring city congregations. It is furthermore borne out by the fact that I have been actively engaged in mission work among the unchurched of this city; together with the present secular occupation, I now hold. This occupation I was forced to take in order to support my family because the mission board, for which I had served for 21 years, guaranteed me only sufficient support for one month after repatriation from China. Does it not mean anything to you when you consider the fact that after our church periodicals and our Army and Navy Commission have sent out "Macedonian calls" to help in serving the boys in or armed services by trained ministers, that I would forgo a lucrative position which I now enjoy in order to continue in the active ministry? In spite of the knowledge that a chaplaincy in the Army means untold discomforts and inconveniences? (Confer report of active chaplains published in your own publications) That you as a commission should of yourselves disapprove of my application without placing these circumstances before the War Department for judgment and let it decide whether I am engaged in active ministry as my primary vocation in life does not harmonize with my concept of Christian charity and the principals laid down by Christ in calling laborers into the vineyard of the Lord.

Fraternally Yours,  
Herman Klein [sic]

Months passed since I had sent the letter and I patiently waited for a district president or the Army to send me a call. However, my business as an insurance agent became quite lucrative and I began to fear that the temptation of wealth would dampen my desire to return to the public ministry. One day, I took up the matter with my local pastor and had one big question on my mind, "Why, with so many pastoral vacancies reported in

our church publications, was I being black-balled?" My pastor calmly replied that well worn cliché to me, "Be patient. The Lord will call you when he needs you. Just wait and see."

I was getting tired of this response and I told the pastor that I would only wait until January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1944, when my current contract with Kansas City Life expired. If I had not received a call by then, circumstances would force me to resign permanently and then I would enter the business world fulltime. Yet, God had different plans for me and he often works in marvelous ways. December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1943 arrived and I had not received a call. The mail had already been delivered and we were sitting around the dinner table discussing plans for my new life in the business world. Suddenly, the front door bell rang, and the courier handed me a special delivery letter. The letter was from the Army and Navy Commission reporting that the chaplaincy program had accepted me after all.

As good as the news was it was not the last of our excitement in that eleventh hour of my uncertain career choice. An hour or so later, the phone rang and the person on the other end was calling from Natoma, Kansas. The caller wanted to make sure I had received their call letter which they also had sent by mail. They wanted to know if I was still available to accept their call to Kansas. Two calls in one day, what were the odds? Now I had to make a huge decision as to which way the Lord was calling me. Natoma, Kansas was offering me a salary of \$125 a month and it was a permanent call. On the other hand, the chaplaincy call offered a salary almost twice that of Kansas but it was a temporary call or at least until the end of the war. After the war I might not have a call and hear the same words from the district presidents, "When the Lord needs you, He will call you."

Then there was another consideration to mull over in my mind. My salary from selling insurance was now almost eight times as much as the salary offered by the congregation in Natoma, Kansas. This new found wealth was certainly a huge temptation for me to consider. In the meantime, the government had drafted Bob, Dick, Bill, and Tom for service in the armed forces. Bob was already serving in the Intelligence Department in the Pacific war theatre. Dick was now training for service on a mine sweeper boat and Bill was in the Air Force. Tom was currently serving his country's welfare in the Coast Guard.

Thinking about my sons who were already serving our country had a lot to do with my final decision. One evening, while I was staying in a hotel on a business trip in Trinidad, Colorado I was deep in prayer considering my two calls to ministry. In prayerful struggle, I was trying to figure out which call the Lord wanted me to accept. While meditating over this I heard four drunken soldiers below the window of my hotel room, arguing, swearing, and fighting. Immediately, my thoughts turned to my four sons who lived in such an environment and I said to myself, "I believe the Lord has given me a signal to help the boys in uniform to conduct themselves more Christ like." That was it as I made my decision on the spot. I quickly jumped out of bed and returned the call to Natoma, Kansas and accepted the call to be an Army Chaplain.

Returning from Trinidad the next day, I went to Denver to announce my decision to my boss, Jack Allen. Of course, Mr. Allen thought I was nuts to give up the lucrative insurance business for the hazards of the chaplaincy. I had made up my mind and I turned over the names of my clients to an associate salesman. Going up to Fort Carson in Colorado Springs I took the necessary physical for entry into the chaplaincy program. After passing the physical, I packed my bags and headed to Cambridge, Massachusetts to attend

the training school for chaplains at Harvard. It was a sad parting, as I left my entire family behind knowing that I would not see them for several months.

### **CHAPTER 31 - AT CAMP SHELBY 1943-1945**

After I completed my six weeks of training at Harvard University, the Army assigned me to serve the troops at Camp Shelby, Mississippi. When I arrived, they informed me that my office was in the camp hospital. I had hardly settled into my office when the chief chaplain, a Catholic priest, told me that the hospital assignment was for the Catholic faith. So they transferred me from the hospital post and gave me the duty of working with the German prisoners of war. The Army housed several thousand German prisoners in the stockades adjacent to Camp Shelby at this time. Since I had a fair knowledge of the German language, I was able to conduct services for the German prisoners. The American officers who were in charge of the internment camp were a little leery about their safety among the German prisoners. Because of this, whenever trouble arose within the camp it fell upon me to enter the stockades to settle the disturbance.

Part of my responsibility to the German prisoners was to visit the outlying work camps of prisoners. Whenever I went out to the work camps, it meant a drive of several hundred miles by truck. At the camps, I preached and was in charge of preparing some sort of entertainment for the prisoners. Many times, I brought along films to show to the prisoners. Every time I went out to the camps, two reliable German prisoners accompanied me along with an African American soldier who served as our chauffer.

One of the two Germans that made the rounds with me had been a seminary student in Germany before joining the war. When I found this out, I spent every opportunity to train



this young man in theology so that he might prepare once again for the ministry. After the war, I was overjoyed to learn that my request of the district of presidents of the LC-MS accepted this prisoner into their colloquy program. I later learned that he passed through the seminary with flying colors.

Unfortunately, my days as a chaplain for the German prisoners were numbered. After only six months, the Army terminated my duties rather abruptly because of an interesting episode. One day while visiting one of the work camps, I took some time to inspect their labor in a swampy, mosquito infested area. There in the hot Mississippi swamp, I witnessed the German prisoners stripped to the waist, collecting turpentine from the trees. This work was paramount to the worst slavery conditions imaginable. These prisoners were paid 7 cents a day for this back breaking and potentially life threatening work. The heat of the day was pushing well over 100 degrees. I had a feeling that if the Germans knew how horribly we were treating German prisoners then they might reciprocate with our boys held captive in Europe. That evening when I returned to the camp office, I lodged a formal complaint with the officer in charge. As I looked around the office, I noticed a civilian gentleman sitting there. Not to be intimidated and unabashed I launched into a tirade of accusations and condemned the severe treatment of the German prisoners.

When I had finished and left the office the captain in charge followed me outside and said, "Don't you know who that man is? He is a senator from the South. He is the one who uses these prisoners to collect the turpentine and supplies it to the government. He makes quite a profit from selling turpentine to the government. I fear you have stuck your neck out too far Captain Klein."

The captain was right, for a week or so later, my superiors assigned me to the Special Training Unit. This unit was composed of about 3,000 illiterate hillbillies from Tennessee who the Army taught their ABC's and then trained them for military duty. I am confident that the distinguished southern senator brought about my change of assignment. I took it in stride and began my work with these Tennessee natives.

My time at Camp Shelby did offer some enjoyment as I became quite good friends with General Hollaran, the head of Camp Shelby. We often went fishing together and both of us got a big kick over the hillbillies from Tennessee. One thing that we had noticed was that no matter what we did to train these boys, they could never distinguish a private from an officer. Often the Tennessee soldiers stopped the general in his Jeep and asked, "Pahdner, could ya'll give me a lift in your car to the bus station?" It was not unusual for these hillbillies to ask me or the general in our inspection trips, "Pahdner, can ya'll tell me how to spell "cat" or "dog"?", or some other trivial word.

My friendship was close with General Hollaran until one day we had a sort of falling out. In the officers' club, the general decided to set up a couple of slot machines. The club was operating in the red and so the general thought he might get the club back in the black with these machines. Word came that the Chief of Chaplains, a general in the Army, was coming from Washington to visit the camp. According to military protocol, the general and the Chief of Chaplains in the local camp were suppose to ride together in one car while the lower ranking chaplains followed in another car for their inspection. On the big day, the local chief of chaplains, who had assigned me to the prison camp, received a big slap in the face by the general when Hollaran asked me to ride in his car. I took up the offer as I felt the local chief of chaplains had delayed my promotion. Nevertheless, during the inspection

when we entered the officers' club, someone had removed the slot machines. Noticing this, I brought it up with General Hollaran a few days later and remarked, "General, why did you hide the slot machines? Did you expect God from heaven above to inspect the club?" After my snide remark, the general refused to speak with me. However, about two weeks later, I was sitting in my office when I heard the familiar voice of General Hollaran calling me, "Hey, Chaplain. Let's go fishing." From that day on, we were friends again.

I also must mention the other incident that occurred during our inspection with the Chief of Chaplains in the officer club. Ever since my assignment to the hillbillies, the local chaplain chief had assigned me a small plain chapel to use. It was very plain in comparison to the Catholic chaplain's chapel which had cushioned seats, beautiful altar drapes, and other fixtures which were lacking in all the other chapels. When the general from Washington inspected my barren chapel, he gave orders that all the chapels in the camp should be equipped as nicely as the Catholic chapel. Again, this was a slap in the face of the local chief of chaplains, who was the priest of the beautiful Catholic chapel.

One other incident at the camp caused me to marvel at the ineffectiveness of the military chaplaincy program. Although many in my contingent were illiterate, they were also staunch Baptists. At this time, I shared my chapel with the chaplain of the Jewish faith, the Baptist chaplain, and the Universalists chaplain. One day the Universalists and Baptist chaplain approached me and asked whether we could join our three separate services into one. Because of my upbringing and my ties to the LC-MS, I respectfully refused to join them saying, "You take care of your units. I'll take care of mine."

This did not sit well with the other two chaplains but after they had cooled of a bit the Baptist pastor came back a few weeks later and apologized saying, "I now see why you

did not join us in a single service.” Apparently, the Baptist chaplain had joined with the Universalists preacher for one Sunday service where both had a chance to preach. The Baptist preacher told me that he had gotten up and preached a sermon in which he made it clear that Jesus was true God. Later, in that same service, the Universalists preacher stood up and said that Christ was not God. After that incident, the two ended their fellowship with each other and went back to having separate services.

Unfortunately, I began to irritate the other chaplains that used my chapel because my services tended to take more time than the other services. This was caused because hillbillies are very good churchgoers. At my service, that chapel was so packed inside that I barely was able to walk up to the pulpit. Besides those who packed into the church, we had loudspeakers set in the windows to accommodate the hundreds of Tennessee soldiers who sat on the lawn outside the chapel. When the service was over it was nearly impossible to clear the building during the five minute interval we had before the next service of another faith came to worship. Because of this problem, there was some heated friction between the other chaplains and me. I finally had to rebuke them and haughtily saying, “You should be happy that so many attend services. After all, your contingent is not so interested in religious services. You hardly get an audience of 15 or 20 souls.”

At that time, I used whatever methods necessary to get people into the chapel. On Memorial Day, the camp assigned me to give the main sermon for the entire camp. I knew well that many of the officers planned to be absent from the service. So I came up with the brilliant idea to get the officers to come to the worship service. I went to General Hollaran and buttered him up saying, “General, since this is an important day in the history of the U.S.A., I believe you should say a few words to the assembly.” General Hollaran liked the

idea and agreed to make a brief speech at the service. Because of military protocol, I knew all the officers had to be present whenever the camp general spoke. On Memorial Day, my plan worked perfectly as several thousand soldiers and their officers showed up to attend the service.

After that success, I introduced the practice of posting on each company's bulletin board the attendance of that company. One day a captain of one of the companies remarked to me, "Do you really like to have a good attendance at your service?" It was a bit of an ego booster for me and so I said, "Of course." I did not know why he asked me this question but I found out the answer the next Sunday. As I was welcoming worshipers to the service, the head of the company sauntered up to me followed by his entire company. I noticed immediately that he had his service revolver strapped to his side and so I asked him how he got so many to come to church. To this the captain replied, "Well, I called the company out this morning for roll call. I told them that those wanting to go to church with me should step forward. Those who did not wish to attend church should get into their fatigues and get busy cleaning the latrines. You see, the entire company preferred going to chapel services to cleaning." I had to laugh a little at the captain's tactics, yet I had to reprove him for using such forceful methods and told him that revolvers did not have a place at divine services.

About four months had gone by since I had last seen Ruth and the rest of my family. Then one weekend Ruth came down to Mississippi to visit me without the children. Unfortunately, she had to cut her visit short because we received word that my son Raymond came down with a severe attack of rheumatic fever. With this news, Ruth hastened back to Pueblo to look after our sick son. Before leaving, she made me promise that I would arrange for her and the children to move down to Camp Shelby. She told me

that it was becoming too difficult for her to manage the family on her own. So after a few more weeks of solitude in Mississippi, I received a furlough pass to return to Pueblo to bring Ruth and children back with me to Mississippi.

When I first arrived in Pueblo to pick up the family, I went out to buy a used Chrysler and managed to rent out our home in Pueblo to a major in the Army who needed a house. The major agreed to pay my new rent in Camp Shelby instead of paying to rent my house in Pueblo. Sadly, he was not able to keep up this payment and ended up paying only \$35 a month while we were paying \$95 a month for a dilapidate old house in the country town of Petal, Mississippi.

With the car packed with the five youngest children and our large collie, we set out for Mississippi. My wife and I took the front seat while the children and the dog lay stretched out on the back seat that we had arranged as a bed. As we left, we were all feeling a bit sick. Somehow, we had eaten some contaminated food the previous night and we all were suffering the next day with upset stomachs. Fortunately, after two days of riding in the car, we arrived safely at our new home in Petal completely exhausted.

We lived in that old rented house for a short time as our good fortune came back into play again. After several months of living there, the Army gave me a beautiful house in the officers' area of Camp Shelby. We now had a general living next door on the right and a colonel on the left. Both were very good neighbors to us. One day the general came over with a 20 pound turkey and a large ham that he had received for Christmas. He gave me the turkey for Christmas and so with this unexpected food I invited some other military connected friends over for Christmas dinner. All told, we managed to feed 20 stomachs with our Christmas feast.

As we began to settle into military life, I was also able to spend some much needed time with the children. One day we drove out to a lake not too far from the camp. The children were all excited to go on a real camping trip again where we could enjoy some good outdoor food, fishing, and swimming. On the way home from our camping trip we were just coming into the camp when we reached a stop light. The stoplight had just turned green and just as I began to enter the highway, I saw a car barreling down the highway at a speed of 70 or 80 miles per hour. I immediately knew that the car was going to fast to stop for the red light in time. Yanking the steering wheel to the right I coaxed my car off the highway onto the dirt shoulder. The speeding car came through the red light, weaving from the right to left. Even though I had managed to get onto the shoulder, the speeding car sideswiped our car crushing the rear fender against the wheel. In the meantime, the speeding car's hubcap flew off and the driver without stopping or slowing down continued on his way. Had I not pulled off the highway in time, I am sure my entire family might have either been killed or seriously injured.

For three days, I searched the camp for a car with a missing hubcap but found none. One day while I was shopping in the PX, I happened to mention the incident to one of the lady clerks of my search for the driver. I told her that the driver had not even stopped to see if anyone was hurt. To my surprise, the clerk told me, "I was in that car." She told me that the gasoline attendant in the camp had offered her and six other salesladies a ride home in his car. Not until they were all inside the car did they realize that the attendant was drunk. They had tried to stop him or make him drive more slowly but he just sped up faster. After she told me this story, I went to the military police to report the attendant's reckless behavior. The MP's immediately found the man and forced him to pay for the repair of my

car. I'm not sure what other punishment he received for driving drunk that night but I thank God that no one else was hurt.

Life continued for us at Camp Shelby when one day I was shocked to receive orders to serve as a chaplain for an engineering unit heading in the Pacific war theatre. It was completely devastating news for the entire family that was finally together. However, before the order became officially effective, word came from Washington that counteracted my original orders. Washington informed me that because I was an ex-prisoner of the Japanese I could not serve in a military capacity in the ongoing war with Japan. This was especially good news to the family as it meant we were able to stay together for the remainder of the war.

After serving for about two and a half years in various capacities at Camp Shelby, the world received the welcomed news that Japan had sued for peace. The atomic bombs that dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were too much for the Japanese to continue. The war was finally over! Peace once again had come to the world. Before leaving Camp Shelby as a chaplain, I managed to bring back Bob and Bill to finish out their service at Camp Shelby. Both received honorable discharges from active service in the armed forces.

Praise and thanksgiving were in order for the return of not only Bob and Bill but also of Dick and Tom. Only Bob returned from the war with any severe injuries. It was not until after the war that I finally heard news of Bob's accident. Bob was serving in the intelligence forces and while on a mission, the plane in which he was flying was forced down on an island base other than his own. When the plane came down for landing, it struck the runway so hard that Bob's head struck with against the roof of the plane with great force. When asked by the ambulance attendant if he was all right, Bob told him that he was O.K. But



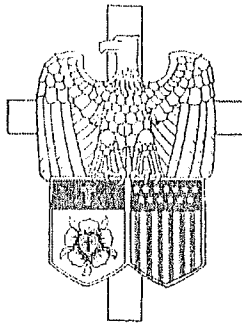
Bob was still in shock and so stunned from the bumpy landing that he walked into the path of an oncoming truck and the collision knocked him unconscious.

As an intelligence officer, Bob carried no identification tags. Consequently, after being unconscious for several months, no one knew who he was or where he had come from. Since he did not report back to his home base for months, his belonging were mailed by his commanding officer to my brother in Pueblo with a letter informing us that Bob was missing in action. Finally, about six months later we received a letter from Bob informing us of the accident and that he was now in the Philippine Islands. Had it not been for the atomic bomb that ended the war with Japan, Bob would likely have been in line for the final attack of the Japanese mainland.



19 . NHP  
Camp Shelby Mississippi - 1944





*In Grateful Recognition  
of Loyal Military Service  
to God and Country*

Rev. H. Klein - Captain  
Chaplain-U.S. Army

R. E. Klein - Cpl.  
U.S. Army - Signal Corp.

H. R. Klein - Ensign  
U. S. Navy

W. E. Klein - Cpl.  
U. S. Army - Air Force

T. E. Klein - Hosp. Corp.  
U. S. Coast Guard

R. W. Klein - Lt.  
U. S. Army

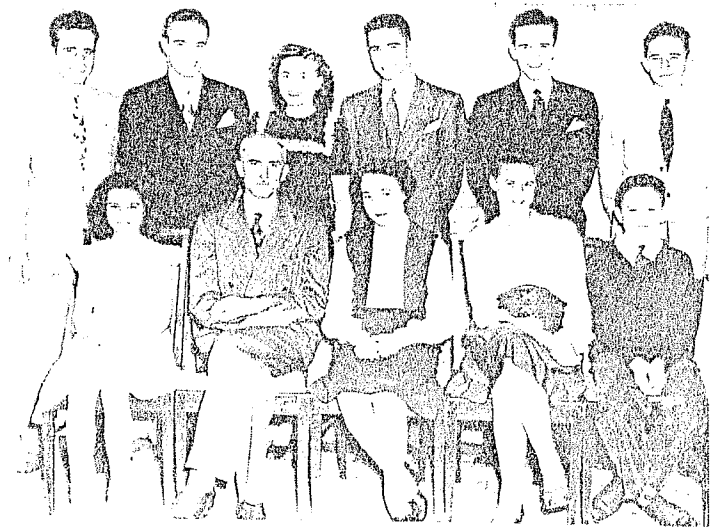
J. A. Klein - Lt.  
U. S. Army

## CHAPTER 32 - BACK TO CIVILIAN LIFE

On April 1945, I also received an honorable discharge from the armed services and the Army transported us back to Pueblo, Colorado. On arriving in Pueblo, I sent out letters to the various district presidents of the LC-MS informing them that I was available for a call. It was no big surprise that I did not receive a call. Yet again, I heard the same words that I had received after our return from China. "Klein, just wait and see what the Lord has planned for you."

Luckily, when Jack Allen, my former boss heard of my return to the area he came to visit me. I met him at the train station and after greeting me he said, "Herman, your old job is open to you." He then handed me a check for over \$600. "What is this for?" I questioned him. "That money is the accumulated renewals from your previous business," Jack replied. "Well Jack," I said, "you know that my heart is set on the ministry. However, I will be glad to sell insurance again until I receive a call into the ministry." With that assurance, Jack handed me a contract and permit to sell insurance again for Kansas City Life.

This old story repeats itself again as I waited for the next nine months to receive a call. The good Lord did not let my family down during this time. Having given all my former clientele to another salesman, I started



out cold selling insurance. But I was good at selling insurance and in the next nine months, I managed to sell over \$100,000 of insurance to new clients. One day, I received a letter from Dr. Friedrich, the president of the Colorado district, informing me that no large congregations were extending calls at the time. Most chaplains, after their service in the Army, expected calls to large congregations which were able to pay the high salaries they had received in their service in the military. Apparently, Dr. Friedrich assumed that I held the same opinion. Yet, it angered me to think that Dr. Friedrich thought I was money hungry. Sitting down to collect my thoughts, I wrote a letter condemning him for his judgment of my desire to be a pastor.

The Lord certainly knew better than Dr. Friedrich of my motivation to serve God's people. For the Lord had in mind a higher calling for me than making sure peoples' earthly needs were met with insurance. Soon after that, one of my old schoolmates from Concordia became president of the Colorado district. Henry Hartner the new district president came to me one day and said, "Herman, there is an opening in Provo, Utah. It is only a small mission station. Will you accept a call to this station?"

Overjoyed at the prospect of another call I replied, "Henry, I don't care if it's a small or large congregation. I am willing to serve wherever the Lord calls me." But Henry replied and told me, "The salary there is only \$150 a month." So I replied, "Henry, I have never really taken living quarters, finances, or other conveniences into consideration when it comes to accepting a call from the Lord. I still believe in the divinity of the call. I'll take it."

Once again, Jack Allen thought I was crazy for giving up a position paying over \$1,000 a month for a position that only paid \$150 a month. I again had to tell Jack, "There

are more blessings in serving the Lord than in serving mammon.” With that, we packed up our belonging and moved to Provo, Utah. For the next six years, I worked mainly among the Mormons living there. Besides my regular Sunday services I delivered a weekly sermon over the radio. During this time, we managed to open a parochial school and increased the membership from a few dozen members to over 150 members. It was my greatest joy to convert at least thirty Mormons to the Christian faith. I made as many calls to Mormon houses as I could. Unfortunately, many of the Mormon doors closed to me because of the Mormon newspaper. In an article, the Mormon Church warned their people that an evil spirit was working among them. Although the paper did not mention any names, I interpreted the warning as referring to my work among the Mormons.

While in Provo, we were overjoyed when my dear wife, Ruth, gave birth to her first and only child and my fourth daughter. We jokingly referred to our newest child as the “roller coaster baby”. Over eight years had passed since I had married Ruth. For almost eight years, she had secretly wept inside because she had no flesh and blood child of her own. We called our newest daughter the “roller coaster baby” because while at an amusement park near Salt Lake City one day, Ruth had the urge to take a ride on a roller coaster. I was not about to go on the ride as it was a contraption that I hated and feared. At any rate, Ruth went with the children on the ride. Whether it was the jarring effect of the ride that changed my wife’s childbearing organs or not we will never know. Shortly after her trip on the roller coaster, Ruth became pregnant. Nine months later in 1949, our first child together was born by Caesarean section and we named her Anita Marie and gave her the nickname Nicki.

Following Nicki's birth, a number of events took place which caused me to resign from the work in Provo, Utah. Both Ruth and I were beginning to look forward to the days of retirement. We had decided to invest in houses because the pension fund that the church and I had contributed to was too meager to support us. Consequently, both of us cashed in our insurance policies and requested that the church return the money I had contributed to my pension fund. By this time, I had only contributed about \$1,300 and the church had put in another \$2,600 for all my long years of service. When the synod informed me that the only way I could get my contributions back from the pension fund was to resign from the ministry we had to rethink my full retirement.

However, a few events in Provo hastened my decision to accept another call. A strike at the Columbia Steel works took place in Provo that year. Many of the members of my congregation were workers or had ties to the plant. This took strike took quite a blow to our congregation as about 90 souls of the congregations moved to California to seek other employment. Because of my age, I thought a younger pastor might be better suited to work in Provo as he would have the energy to rebuild the congregation.

Another factor that weighed heavily on my mind was the difficulty I found in raising my younger children in the Mormon controlled environment. The schools were completely under the control of the Mormon Church and the Mormon religion and customs had contaminated the teachers and social activates. Ruth and I feared the influence would be harmful for our children. One incident involving our son James made us really think hard about the situation. The school gave James a part in a school play and when it came time for the play, I went to see it. To my chagrin and disgust, I witnessed James on the stage dancing with a girl in the play. I was very old fashioned in my Lutheran heritage and was

completely against dancing and never permitted my children to go to a public dance hall. After the play when I asked James where he had learned to dance he answered, "Dad, I was taught it in the play rehearsals." I couldn't believe my ears and asked, "Don't you know that I am against dancing?" James innocently replied, "I told the teacher that you were opposed to such a part in the play for me. But the teacher told me not to tell you." "In other words," I angrily responded, "the teacher is teaching you to lie to your parents!" This incident and other such tactics in the social life of my children in this Mormon community helped me decide it was time to take our family out of Provo.

Later that year while attending a pastor's conference, I met up with the pastor who was serving in Pueblo, Colorado. He and I spent some time discussing the possibility of opening more missions in the growing city of Pueblo. The pastor there lamented the fact that the mission board could not afford to open a new mission there. After speaking with him, I conceived the idea that perhaps I could go there and do some mission work part time at my own expense. I was convinced that I could earn enough money selling insurance on the side to support my family and at the same time support a new mission in Pueblo. In order to make the arrangement legitimate in the eyes of the mission board we thought that the established congregation in Pueblo could pay me \$1.00 a year as salary. That way I still maintained my status as an active pastor and could continue to work for the LCMS. The Pueblo pastor thought this was an excellent idea and agreed to it. Taking all of this into consideration and with the disgust I had over the pension fund hassle, I resigned from the Provo mission and was ready to move to Pueblo, Colorado.

### **CHAPTER 34 - A NEW LIFE**

After arriving in Pueblo though, the local pastor informed me that the mission board had disapproved of the plan to open a new mission in Pueblo. The mission board informed me that it alone had the right to opens is own missions. This was another unexpected blow to me at my old age. So with nothing else to do, I withdrew my pension fund and was without a church to call my own. Living off the money from my pension, I went out and accepted a job as a salesman in my nephew's heating business. My nephew was just expanding his business in a heating firm in Denver and I transferred to Denver to help in that area. Business life was once again good to me but I became disenchanted with the questionable business tactics.

As I was growing weary of the heating business, I heard that the renter who was living in my old home in Pueblo was moving out. Immediately, I quit the heating business and contacted my old friend, Jack Allen, and he rehired me to take over the insurance business near Pueblo. Working hard, I once again built up my clientele in Pueblo as the previous insurance agent for Kansas City Life had died and left all his clients to me. Besides selling insurance, I also assisted the local pastor in serving a group of Lutherans in the town of Rye, Colorado, a small city south of Pueblo. I was conducting Sunday services for a couple of families there and volunteered my time and talents to bring them the gospel message each week. Ruth and our daughter Nicki traveled down to Rye with me where about 30 men, women, and children had gathered in a vacant room behind the fire station. I also prepared Bible Study lessons for each Sunday. The families showed their appreciation for my services by taking turns inviting us over for a sumptuous Sunday dinner. The friendliness and hospitality of these dear souls more than compensated me for being able to serve them.



## URANIUM PROSPECTING

During this time, I also became interested in prospecting for uranium as I liked the idea of taking a year off to roam the open country of the west. Armed with a Geiger counter, I took trips to Utah, California, Texas, and throughout Colorado looking for uranium. The rocks that I collected I placed in our garage and it was not uncommon for Anita and me to go out into the garage to survey the rocks with the Geiger counter. My hobby soon developed into a sort of business and I took on a partner named Mr. Wiener. One day as we were prospecting for uranium near Gardner, Colorado, we found ore which assayed at 3.2 on the Geiger meter. After staking out 48 claims, we frantically searched to find a company which might be interested in developing a mine there. Most companies that we approached refused to buy the uranium ore because they said it was too "hot". Finally, a representative of a group from Texas signed a contract with us to take over the claims for \$10,000 cash and \$50,000 in shares at \$.01 a share. The man from the company assured us that we could sell the stock for \$.05 a share.

With this good news, we all had visions of buying Cadillacs and larger homes. However, this was not to be. Because of some mismanagement of funds, the Texas firm fired the representative who had dealt with us and refused to process with the development of the claims. All told, Mr. Wiener and I only received \$3000 from the deal that had gone sour. This small amount was just about how much we had both spent on working the claims.

Another problem with our claim was we had found it too late. The government stopped buying uranium from private prospectors around this time and so the market ceased. Eventually, a company by the name of "The Big Mo" took over our claims on a percentage

basis, but did nothing to develop the claims. This cooled my uranium fever pitch and my future as a uranium prospector.

While I was roaming the country in my year hiatus, Ruth took a position as a secretary in the office of the Pueblo Forest Service branch. She also worked as a secretary in two law firms. By this time all of our children besides little Anita were away from home. Some were already married while others were away at school. The jobs that Ruth took helped to bolster up our finances while I sought to make a fortune in uranium.

God again had better plans for my family and at the end of another year of waiting for a call, the Colorado Mission Board called me to Steamboat Springs, Colorado. The call included services in Craig, Rangely, and Parshall, Colorado. This meant three services each Sunday and a 300 mile round trip to serve all my congregations. I had officially resigned from the ministry and had already taken out my pension fund. Because of this, I told the mission board that they were jumping the gun. The mission board rectified the situation and presented me with a waiver document to sign that safeguarded the synod from any unlikely demands of my family to another pension or aid from the synod. After signing the document, I was officially back in the synod and accepted the call to Steamboat Springs in the year of 1956.

## **CHAPTER 35 - LIFE AS A PASTOR**

Packing up our belongings once again, Ruth, seven year old Anita, and I set out in March 1956 for our new calling in Steamboat Springs. Around this time, we managed to sell our old home in Pueblo. The trip was quite interesting as the roads were snow packed most of the way. We did not know where the parsonage was but managed to find the house

that belonged to the president of the congregation. We stopped there to let him know that we had arrived and to ask where the parsonage was located. When we arrived at his home, he was not around, but his wife came to the door and merely took out the keys to the parsonage and handed them to me. Pointing her fingers in the general direction of the parsonage she said, "You will find it up that way." She gave us no word of welcome and no invitation to come in. Her cold reception almost equaled the cold weather that greeted us on our first day in Steamboat Springs.

Eventually, we managed to find the parsonage although the depth of the snow almost hid it from view. Thankfully, someone had plowed an opening from the alley to the garage before we had arrived. The driver of the moving van, fearing another storm, hastily dumped all of the household goods in the garage. Once the truck was unloaded, the driver headed back to Pueblo as quickly as he could because he did not want to be marooned in Steamboat Springs. After the moving van had left, Ruth, Anita, and I set to work at moving our furniture into the house. Immediately, we found that the house had also served as the chapel. Because of this, the upstairs, which contained the only bedrooms, was partitioned into small Sunday school rooms. The downstairs rooms were full of lumber. In the midst of the confusion and cold, a local church member arrived to help me tear out some of the Sunday school partition walls so that we could set up some beds. It stunned both Ruth and I to a certain degree to see the cold and unprepared welcome the congregation had thus shown to our family.

However, the cold welcome melted a few hours later as we were finishing moving our furniture into the house. Eventually, the president's wife arrived with a pot of hot venison stew and a chocolate cake. Boy, the smell of that stew and the look of that cake

more or less reduced our hurt feelings brought on by her previous cold reception. Hungry, cold, and tired, we prepared to eat this meal. As we were getting ready for the dinner, I reached up into a cupboard for dishes and I accidentally knocked a glass from the shelf and it crash right to the stew filling it with shattered pieces of glass. I had no doubt that it was God punishing me for my ill feelings towards the congregation. There was nothing left to do than to take my family to a restaurant to satisfy our hunger.

It took several more weeks before we finally got the house in order for comfortable living. At my age, it was not an easy task. On Sunday, we began the services again downstairs. For the next six year I held services in Steamboat and then drove forty miles to Craig where I held services for about 15-20 people. Sometimes I only six or seven people showed up there. We held that service in the old Odd Fellow Lodge. After the service in Craig, I drove another 100 miles or so to Rangely, Colorado where another 10 families had gathered in a rented Catholic Church. Finally, I turned around and got home around 1:00 am. Then on Monday nights, I traveled to an old farm house a few miles from Parshall, Colorado and held service there for several Lutheran families in that area. The Monday evening trip entailed about 130 miles round trip over Rabbit Ears Pass. Whenever, I went out on visits it meant going all over the northwestern slope of the Rocky Mountains of Colorado. My members lived scattered between Winter Park, Grandby, Oak Creek, Yampa, Vernal, Rangely, and Craig. In short, my parish covered a distance of about 300 miles east and west and about 70 miles north and south of Steamboat Springs.

Our first encounter with the snow of Steamboat Springs was not an exception as the average snowfall in Steamboat is about 240 inches a year. At times, it was a struggle to navigate the roads to and from my preaching stations. Caught in many blizzards, I had to

drive very carefully at no more than five miles and hour. Just like the postal service though, snow, hail, or rain, the services had to go on. Some days the snow fall made it necessary for Nicki to climb out the second story window and then dig down to the front door to let me out of the house. Besides digging out the house whenever the snow fell, I took up oil painting. I painted many pictures of the beautiful Colorado scenery and of our days in China and the local newspaper even featured me in an article for my new hobby.

For the next six years, I conducted services on my extended preaching route and managed to build up the congregations in Steamboat Springs and in Craig. The church in Craig had grown to such an extent that it was our plan to build a church there. We also planned to finish building an actual church building in Steamboat Springs before I retired. The group at Rangely, however, turned out to be a disappointment because all the members there except for one family were members of the Masonic Lodge or Elks Lodge. They continually rebelled against me when I insisted that they resign from the anti-Christian lodge connections. After dealing with them on this matter, they eventually refused to have me come to serve them anymore. Around this same time, the Army drafted my sixth son James into service. James had recently gotten married and received orders to serve with the occupations forces in Germany.

Approaching my 65<sup>th</sup> birthday, I began to make serious arrangements for my retirement. It was becoming too difficult for me to continue bucking the snow and freezing cold of Steamboat Springs any longer. I was not ready to retire completely and so I made the offer to the mission board to carry on the work as a temporary fill-in pastor for churches who were without a pastor. After finally resigning from the ministry in Steamboat Springs,

the California Mission Board asked me to serve congregations in Kingman, Arizona and Needles, California, until a permanent pastor arrived there.

Ruth and I had already arranged to retire in Capistrano Beach, California and had already bought a house there. So since Kingman and Needles were on the way, I agreed to serve the congregations for the few months that they needed before moving on to Capistrano Beach. I was very happy with my decision to help at Needles and Kingman congregations. Of the congregations that I had served up to this point, these two churches were by far the most appreciative of my service to them. After serving these two congregations as a vacancy pastor for about six months, Ruth, Anita, and I finally moved and settled into our new home in Capistrano Beach to enjoy my retirement.

Our home in Capistrano overlooked the Pacific Ocean and we lived there for almost six years. During that time, I continued for a time to lecture and preach at several congregations which were about 40 and 70 miles away. Yet, my nerves were not what they used to be and I decided that the terrible traffic was too much for them. Finally, I gave up accepting preaching dates. Instead, I taught some Bible classes at our home congregation in Capistrano Beach.

Unfortunately, trouble arose in our church when the new vicar arrived to preach and teach Bible class. He had relieved me of my job of teaching Bible study and had begun to use the higher critical method of Biblical interpretation that the Missouri Synod seminary now taught. This vicar went so far as to deny that the Book of Jonah was canonical and even believed in evolution and questioned the virgin birth of Christ.

For these reasons, when the congregation was considering calling this vicar as its permanent pastor, I with the aid of the congregational officers stopped the call proceedings.

This vicar became furious at those of us who opposed him and made personal calls to express his distain and disgust with us. We managed to block his call nomination to our congregation but he received another call to the North California-Nevada District that was already a very liberal group.

Our life in California was very simple however as I spent many pleasant days of fishing on the pier at San Clemente. Ruth and I became members of the Adult Recreation Association and enjoyed playing shuffleboard with other couples and continued my dabbling with oil painting the sights of California. Every summer while at Capistrano Beach, I rented out our home for the summer and used the rental income to pay for a trip back to Colorado to rent a cabin at Lake Isabel. We spent about five or six weeks there every summer along with my brother Walter and his children. Much of my family still lived in Colorado and my other brother Charles and his family lived in Pueblo. My daughter Lois and her new family were living in Denver. My oldest son Bob and his family were also living in Denver and William and his family had moved to Colorado Springs.

Because of this, each summer, we managed to hold partial family reunions at the rented cabins in San Isabel. To this day, many of the children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren still hold family reunions every couple of years across the United States. Many still venture up to San Isabel in the summer to enjoy their own retirements with their children and grandchildren.

Because my brother Charles and his wife were suffering from severe illnesses, it prevented them from long trips out to see us in California. My oldest son Bob had also had a severe heart attack which prevented him from traveling long distances. With these considerations, we decided to move back to Colorado so that we could be near my ailing

brother and his wife. So in 1968, I sold our home to my son Dick who was living at the time in Downey, California and moved to Canon City, Colorado. We bought a small house and enjoyed three years there painting, playing cards at the Golden Age Senior Citizens Club, and fishing. During that time, the Lord called my brother Charles and his wife to their eternal rest.

It so happened that the LC-MS church we joined in Canon City was struggling with the issue of the woman's right to vote in the congregation. Based on God's Word, I objected to the decision of the voters to permit the woman the right to speak or vote in the voter's meetings. I felt so strongly about this matter and felt the congregation was living in sin, having voted to reject God's Word. Because of this, I had nothing left to do but to resign our membership from this church.

For some time after this, Ruth and I drove to Pueblo to attend a church of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod which was still conservative in its obedience to the Word of God. Since the distance was forty miles one way and the winter roads could be very hazardous, we decided to sell our house in Canon City and moved to Pueblo. There we purchased a newly constructed home which Ruth and I designed. Because of the move, we were now able to attend the WELS church in Pueblo without the long trip. It also made it more convenient to visit our children who were scattered between Denver, Ft. Collins, and Colorado Springs.

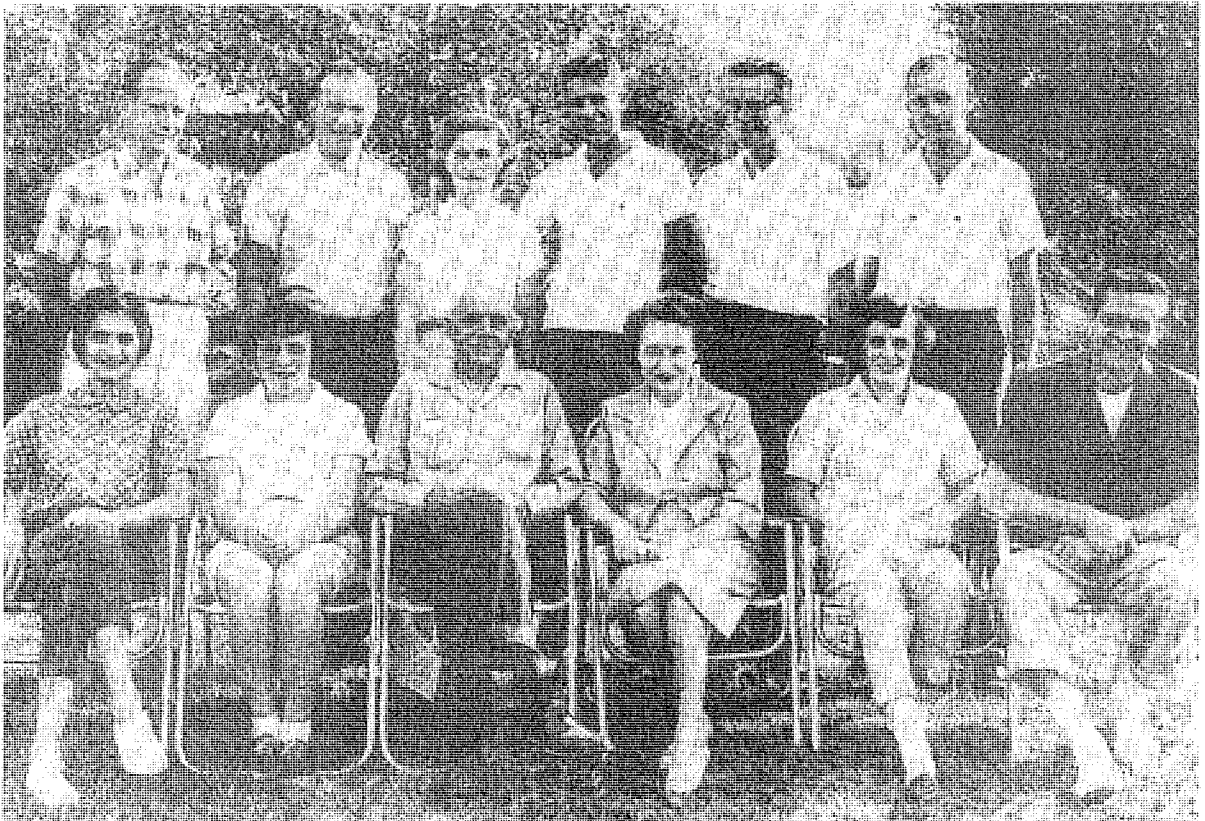
## **CHAPTER 36 - My FINAL TRIP HOME**

At the time of the initial writing of this story, I was living quite happily in Pueblo, taking up bowling and joining a bowling league. I managed to go bowling almost daily for



exercise. I still enjoyed going fishing when the weather permitted and worked on my oil paintings. Ruth and I spent hours playing Scrabble together and taking long walks. As Ruth and I sit down to compose my life's history we entitled my story as the **Diary of a 60 Year Old Gillette Razor**. This diary is now finished.

On February 8<sup>th</sup>, 1973, I celebrated my 76<sup>th</sup> birthday and my thoughts at this age naturally looked to the time when the good Lord will call me home. I instructed my children to bury me in Mountainview Cemetery alongside my first wife Edna, my mother, brothers, and sisters. I also insisted that they bury my faithful Gillette razor with me. Mrs. Baden had given me this faithful razor so long ago. In death, we both could return ashes to ashes, dust to dust. On my tombstone my only request is that it reads, "H.K. called home (date).



Front: Lois, Anita, Herman, Ruth, James  
Back: Richard, Robert, Dorothy, William, Thomas, Raymond

After writing of this diary, I presented it in its original form to members of my family at a family reunion at the Greenhorn Inn, in Colorado City, Colorado on July 30<sup>th</sup>, 1978. This was the last time that the entire original Klein family gathered while Ruth and I were still alive. In November of 1979, Ruth and I were able to attend our daughter Anita's (Nicki) marriage to Gary Parsons in Montrose Colorado. Within months, Ruth began to weaken and on March 7<sup>th</sup>, 1980, my second wife, who had become a dear mother to my children and my constant helpmate and companion, passed from this world into the glories of heaven. She departed this life while staying at the Mary Corwin Hospital in Pueblo and Pastor Found conducted the service at Grace Lutheran.

Now that my wife had passed away, I too was ready to see my Savior and I sensed that my waiting was soon to be over. I was suffering the ravaging effects of stomach cancer. Five months after Ruth's death I visited with my youngest daughter Nicki in August of 1980 when she gave birth to her first son and named him David. I was there to witness the arrival of my 36<sup>th</sup> grandchild as I was staying in the same hospital as my new grandson. This then is my story with the help of my grandson David whom I only met briefly but my story touched his life.

Later that year on December 6<sup>th</sup>, 1980, 83 years since my entrance into this world, my wait ended when my loving creator called me home for the last time. This was my life, however unbelievable as it might seem. A life lived in service to my God which brought me around the world and back again.