Random Autobiographical Notes
By
Gerald S. Bell

I was born at Longford Mills, Ontario, Canada, on July 27, 1887, the eighth child of Archibald and Ellen Bell. At that time, my father was managing a farm for Thompson Bros. with large scale lumbering operations in that district. Food for the camps and mills and feed for the livestock was supplied by the farm.

When I was six months old my father moved the family to Toronto, Ontario, Canada, where he began building as a stonemason. In the next few years there was quite a building boom in Toronto, much of it centered in the St. George and Bloor St. Area. Father, by 1892 was building houses on his own with considerable success. There was a slight business recession in 1893-1894 during which my father suffered serious losses through mismanagement by his partner who handled the books. By the time the house under construction was completed, father had lost all his equipment along with other assets.

This was a hard blow to father in his mid-40's to have to go back to day labor as a stonemason. Unfortunately, this led to a growing addiction to alcohol and long absences in Buffalo, New York, U.S.A., where he worked at his trade. Sometime in 1898 father returned suddenly from New York under the influence of liquor and quite abusive. This was all so foreign to his old self that the older children told him not to come back until he had become himself. This was a terrible blow to the family, for that separation lasted for almost 25 years.

Here it might be well to give the names of the children. They were:

Elizabeth Annie	born	August 13, 1873	died	June 17, 1960(87)
Martha	"	Sept., 1875	"	1899(24)
William Wilson	"	April 3, 1877	"	June, 1937(60)
Warren Eldridge	"	April 5, 1879	"	1942(63)
Norman Harold	"	Jan., 26, 1881	killed in France Oct., 1916(35)	
Archibald Thomas	"	May 26, 1884	"	1952(68)
Orville Clayton	"	1886	"	at birth (0)
*Gerald Sylvester	"	July 27, 1887	"	May 1979(92)
Ellen Etta	"	Jan. 17, 1892	"	April 26, 1954(62)

I began school in the fall of 1892, just after my fifth birthday, attending Brock Avenue Public School. After the family moved in the summer of 1893 to Ossington Avenue, I transferred to Givins St. Public School. I continued there until I graduated from the Senior Fifth Form, of those days, in the summer of 1901 with what was then called a Junior Leaving Certificate. One of the last items of interest I recall was in January of 1901 when the Principal, Mr. Parkinson received word of Queen Victoria's death. He sent me with a message to all the other classrooms ordering the immediate closing of the school.

The Junior Leaving Certificate examinations for that area were held in Parkdale Collegiate Institute. I recall that the last examination was written on the morning of July 4th, 1901. I walked home for lunch, about 3 miles, and then went out to see if any if my friends were around. A very fine rain was falling and no one was around. I suddenly decided to walk downtown to see if I could find a job. This again was a walk, each way, of over 3 miles. I walked down to Queen St. and then east to York St., down York to King St. Turning east on King St. a few stores I saw a "Boy Wanted" sign in the window. It was a company selling electric fixtures of all kinds. I went in and in a few minutes received instructions to begin work the following morning.

I found that I was to be a messenger boy, and general handyman around the place. The display window evidently had not been touched for moons and the stock room was chaos. However, over the next three weeks I got things into shape.

Then one day, while out on a message, I met a boy, Sam Meredith, who had left school a year earlier than I. In conversation, he told me he worked for Rive Lewis & Sons, wholesale hardware company. He was just completing six months as their messenger boy and would be going inside the following week. He suggested that I apply for his job. I did so before returning to my own work. I got the new job and was told to report the following Monday morning. So, without loss of time, I began work that I always liked and that was to prove a boon to me later on.

I put in six months as messenger boy, picking up items from other wholesalers, that we were short of. In rush orders this often meant carrying heavy loads. Then one day the General Manager met me carrying a very heavy load of brass steam valves. When he returned to the warehouse he reprimanded, very severely, my immediate boss for having a boy carry such a load for over half a mile. Mr. Fisher ordered me to report to his office for work. After some months I asked him to allow me to work in the warehouse and learn the hardware business, as I did not want to do office work. He agreed to this and I was made an order clerk filling orders sent in by customers all over Ontario.

About 1902 my brother, Will, who had become an expert fur cutter and designer moved to Winnipeg, Manitoba, to work for the Hammond Fur Company on Main St., near Portage Avenue. He was not married then. So in the winter of 1903-04 he persuaded my mother to move to Winnipeg. He rented a house and our household effects were shipped ahead. When Will reported all in order, mother, Sister Etta and I left by C.P.R. for Winnipeg. When the train arrived at Rat Portage (now Kenora) on the Ontario-Manitoba border, it was reported that a blizzard was raging in Winnipeg and that passengers for that city would remain in their sleeping cars over night. My brother, Will, was also told this and returned home from the railway station confident we would be all right for the night. But on our arrival we were all ordered off the train. We could not contact Will, so were advised to go to a hotel. That was easier said than done. However, we got onto a Main Street car, with our entire luggage. The streetcar got as far as the City Hall, a few hundred yards, when he became absolutely blocked by the snow. By that time the snow was about two feet deep. The conductor told us the Market Hotel was just 50 yards up from Main Street. Even that distance was almost too much for us with our loads, but we made it and were soon warm in bed.

The following morning it was still storming, and did storm for three more days, when Will started out to find us. Not finding us at the station, he went to Hammond's store. We had already left a telephone message there. This brought him quickly to the Market Hotel. With some difficulty, Will persuaded the driver of a horse-drawn cab to take us to our new home at 646 Toronto St. This was a new street, in fact at that time the last street with graded but not paved road. Our back door opened onto the open prairie.

All went well until we had crossed Sherbrooke St. and were continuing west on Notre Dame Ave. This part of that street was also just a graded road. Suddenly the cab overturned on one side in the ditch tumbling the four of us into a pile, with all our luggage. The crash broke the glass in the door onto which we fell. The driver had difficulty in opening the topside door as it had become jammed. However, with the help of Will and myself we forced it open, and were able to get out to help right the cab. Soon after we reached our new home, somewhat shaken up, but without serious injury. Such was our welcome to the city of Winnipeg in March 1904.

I began to look for work, preferably in the hardware business, and was fortunate to get a job in the wholesale Department of the J.H. Asdown Co. Ltd. On Bannatyne Ave. East. As will be shown later, this was to mean a lot to me in years to come. This was the year of tremendous immigration onto the prairies of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta, although in 1904 the two latter provinces were still part of the North West Territories. Because of this immigration and railway expansion these were real boom days for the hardware business. From early spring until freeze up, scores of carloads of goods were shipped each month to new hardware stores being opened in the new towns along the railway lines. I began as an order clerk filling orders in the shell goods department. Early in 1906 during a shake up in jobs, I, although the youngest on the staff, was made head-checker. It was a matter of great satisfaction to me that only one of the older men ever showed any resentment to this appointment.

To go back to our leaving Toronto, I had been a member of a Sunday school class in roadway Methodist Tabernacle on the northeast corner of College St. and Spadina Ave. On my last Sunday there, my teacher Mr. Wallace Fisher and the class, presented me with a Bible and a letter of introduction to whatever school I attended in Winnipeg. My brother Will was a very active member of Grace Methodist Church and the YMCA. We attended church at Grace Church, which was downtown, but for some reason I did not go to the Sunday school regularly. There was a small, new Methodist Church, Maryland St. Church, just a few blocks from our home. Mother, Etta and I began to attend church there.

Later in 1904 or early 1905 my brothers, Norman and Archie came to Winnipeg. We had come to know some other young men of our age interested in baseball and other sports, and as a group were together a lot after work hours.

One Sunday afternoon seven of us were standing on the veranda of a house across the street from our home. It was a dull day with a light rain falling.

I said to the others, "There is a class for young men at Maryland Church, let us go over and see what it is like."

All agreed and we started off at a trot and walked into the class somewhat out of breath. The teacher, Mr. W.W. Shoup, a theology student at Wesley College, seemed almost stunned as we almost doubled the attendance. That was the beginning of my active connection with this church, which lasted until I went to China in 1915.

Although active in Epworth League I had never consciously committed my life to God. A series of evangelistic services was being held in Central Congregational Church with Dr. W.B. Smith, Executive Secretary of the YMCA in the United States as preacher. One Sunday night I attended the service in company with my friend, Billy Williams. We were both greatly moved by Dr. Smith's message and when the invitation was given we both stood up signifying our desire to commit our lives to God.

That was indeed a pivotal point in my life. I had to declare my change of life to my fellow workers at the warehouse. Those were rough days in the west and while most of the men supported my change, a few tried to make it very uncomfortable. Late that spring, (1906), I had a very serious illness. It was almost a month before I was able to return to work.

In June 1906, Mr. Shoup graduated from Wesley College and was ordained to the ministry of the Methodist Church of Canada. Following his ordination Rev. Willis W. Shoup was appointed as a missionary to the Cree Indians at Nelson House, now in Northern Manitoba, but then part of the North West Territories and 350 miles north of Winnipeg.

At a farewell meeting in Maryland Church for Mr. Shoup, I said to him, "If you can find a job for me, let me know."

This was said purely in fun. But two weeks later I received letters from Mr. Shoup and the Rev. J.A. Lousely, the missionary at Norway House, asking me to come and look after the business side of the big Boarding school for Indian boys and girls, and to work with the boys in outside activities. Norway House was the first fort and trading post established by the Hudson Bay Company in the interior of Canada. It remained the chief distribution center for all their trade into Western Canada for well over 150 years.

These letters posed a real problem for me. I discussed the matter with my family and with Mr.J.B. Pringle, my boss at Ashdown's warehouse. He, for some unknown reason had taken quite an interest in me. As I had not fully recovered from my illness, the idea of not going north for one year was suggested. The result was that I quit my job Aug. 1st, 1906 and on Aug. 10th I sailed on the S.S. Keewatin for Warren's Landing at the head of Lake Winnipeg. This ship was owned by a company with a large fleet of fishing boats in the northern part of the lake. After an overnight stop at Warren's Landing I traveled by a small wood-burning tug some 25 miles up the Nelson River to Norway House. The captain had to stop every few miles to take on more cordwood from piles set up on the riverbank.

About ten miles from Warren's Landing, the Nelson River divides into the East and West branches, separated by a long but somewhat narrow island. These branches come together again to form Playgreen Lake. The Hudson Bay Post was located on the west branch of the river just where it joins the lake. The Mission was located on the eastern shore of Playgreen Lake, about 3 miles from the post. Communication with the outside world was by water in the summer and over the frozen Lake Winnipeg in winter. This meant long periods in the freeze up period in the fall and the break up in the spring when no mail was received. This could be anywhere from six to nine or ten weeks. There was no telegraphic service, much less radio communication.

I found work very interesting and began to learn the Cree language. I discovered that most workers in the Mission depended on interpreters when preaching. That seemed strange to me. At one time I suggested that if I remained in the north that I be appointed to one of the more remote isolated missions where one could get the language more quickly. This did not meet with the approval of the Superintendent of Indian Missions of our Church. By the middle of winter I began to have a desire to have more education, so went to Winnipeg for some High School textbooks. As months passed I decided not to go back to the hardware business, but to complete my high school work and go on to college and full time work in the church.

At that time there lived at the Mission, in retirement, a man who was a link with the earliest days of the Mission. He was the Rev. A. Paupanikis, the first ordained Indian in the west. In his youth he had been a very famous dispatch carrier and guide for the Hudson Bay Company. He was converted by the Rev. James Evans, our first missionary in the north. James Evans was the originator of the Cree Syllabic script which gave the Indians a written form of their language. This is still widely used today. An interesting fact was that James Evans made his first type from the lead linings of tea chests. The house in which Mr. Paupanikis' lived was the same log house in which James Evans did his printing.

On July 4th, 1907 I boarded the S.S. Keewatin at Warren's Landing on its first trip of the season – much delayed by the late break up of the ice in Lake Winnipeg. I had many rich experiences during that year in the north, and consequently many fine memories of travel by dog team, hunting, fishing and of much kindness shown me by Indian people, especially the Joseph Keeper family. They had lost a son about my age just before I arrived there. With my black hair, and still slim body they thought I looked much like their son. Mrs. Keeper kept me supplied during the winter with beautifully embroidered deerskin moccasins, gauntlets and jacket for travelling. In 1958 I met their son, Joseph, one time middle distance runner in Canada, at the meeting of the General Council of the United Church of Canada. Joseph was the lay representative from his Presbytery.

After consultation with my family, I definitely decided to continue my education. My mother, as always through her life encouraged me to take this step, as the first in my desire to undertake full time service in the Church. I then went to see my former boss, Mr. J.B. Pringle, at Ashdown's warehouse. When I told him of my plans, he became very angry and called me many kinds of a fool in rather lurid language.

After a while he said,"If that is your final decision, Bell, go ahead. If there is anything I can do anytime let me know."

I replied, "There is something, I would like a job for the rest of the summer."

I got it and worked until late in September when the Preparatory Department at Wesley College started classes.

This department gave work in the two last years of high school and served young people who had been unable to continue their schooling at an earlier time. Many young people from farm families took advantage of this school to get standing to enter university. My class also contained a score of young probationers for the ministry. These men had been brought to Canada from the British Isles in 1905 to serve in the rapidly growing communities in Western Canada. Those were the years when tens of thousands of immigrants were arriving every year to take up land offered by the Canadian Government at nominal prices. Many of these young probationers later became prominent leaders in the Methodist and later The United Church of Canada. One of them, at one time my roommate, George Dorey, became Moderator of The United Church of Canada after serving for years as Secretary of the Board of Home Missions.

In the spring of 1909 I passed the Matriculation examinations and entered the First Year in Arts at Wesley College that fall. In the spring of 1910 I passed my examinations, winning a Scholarship in Greek. About this time my mother and sister, Etta, had returned to Toronto because of my mother's health condition. It became clear that I would have to drop out of college for a time to make enough money to carry on later. I spoke to Mr. Pringle and was soon back to work. I stayed out of college all of that school year and the fall term of the next year. Part of my time at Ashdown's I oversaw the liquidation of a retail store that had specialized in tools and cutlery. The store became bankrupt and Ashdown's bought the store's stock and through special sales cleared out the stock.

About January 1st, 1912, I started back to classes at the college. During the previous semester I got notes from some of my classmates and so had been able to keep up by night study. I had started with the class of 1913, but now was in the class of 1914. There were the usual college activities. I had early joined the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions and attended both the Conference in Rochester, New York during the Christmas Recess of 1909 and that one in Kansas City, Missouri in the vacation of 1913 – shortly before my graduation.

During all the years 1907 to 1915 I was active in the work at Maryland Methodist Church. There I became acquainted with the family of Mr. and Mrs. John Dunfield who were among the charter members of that church. Thus I got to know one of the daughters, Mary Alice, to whom I became engaged in June 1910.

As I have already stated, this was just the time when I had to make the decision to drop out of college for a while. Alice had taught school some years before, and later started to take nurses training at the Winnipeg General Hospital. She gave that up after one year to stay home and care of a little boy who had been abandoned at the hospital and whom her parents then adopted. After our engagement Alice returned to Normal School to brush up on teaching and then, until we sailed for China in 1915, taught a rural school just a few miles east of Winnipeg.

Alice's sisters, Lena and Florence had been missionaries in China since 1904 and 1906 respectively. Lena was Mrs. R.O. Jolliffe and Florence was the widow of the Rev. Egbert Carson who died of typhus fever in Chungking, West China, in late May 1910. It was this family connection with West China, which sometime earlier had decided me to seek an appointment there when my college work was finished.

During these years in college I was active in track and basketball – particularly the latter. Our Wesley College team won the championship for three successive years 1912 to 1914. Then we had a University of Manitoba team made up of players from the separate colleges. This team won the Manitoba championship for the same three years playing against other colleges and city teams. I also played Senior Amateur baseball during the summers with a city team. I missed only one summer of work at Ashdown's Warehouse. Business was in the doldrums so I found a job that summer in a planning mill carrying lumber to and from the achiness. As I only weighed about 150 pounds then, I had a beautiful pair of raw shoulders that summer. However, it enabled me to stay in college and that was the important thing.

From 1912 I had been in touch with the Board of Foreign Missions (as it was then known) of the Methodist Church seeking an appointment to West China. I took every opportunity to meet Dr. James Endisott, Secretary of the Board for West China, and Dr. Jesse H. Arnup, also of the Board. At the Board meeting in 1913 my application was accepted with a view to appointment on graduation. Many years later at a Board dinner to honor Dr. Arnup's completion of 25 years as Secretary, I was asked to represent the missionaries present in a speech of congratulations.

In his reply Dr. Arnup said, "I would like you to hear about one of the letters of recommendation the Board received when Gerald's request for appointment was received. This letter was from his former boss in Winnipeg. It said, 'I am glad to recommend this young man, but my only fear is that you are going to spoil a damned good hardware man to make a missionary."

This of course, brought gales of laughter from the large group at the dinner.

Then Dr. Arnup added, "The writer need not have any fears for through years as an educational missionary and now for a whole term as Secretary of the Mission in the field, Gerald has proved himself as a first class missionary on whose advice we here in the office, greatly depend."

I graduated "magna cum laude" from Wesley College in 1914. At the annual meeting of the Board of Foreign Missions that spring I was accepted for educational work in West China. The Board suggested that I take a years work in education either at Hartford, Connecticut School of Missions or at the University of Chicago. As Chicago was much closer to Winnipeg I decided to go there. Early in May I began work in Chicago in Educational Theory and Method and also in New Testament studies in the Theological Seminary under Professors Goodspeed and Chase. They were among the leading New Testament scholars of that period.

All went well until the middle of July when I began to have serious eye trouble. I could scarcely stand light on my eyes. A doctor gave me some tablets and advised wearing dark glasses. I did so but had little relief. Then on Aug. 4th Great Britain declared war on Germany – the beginning of the First World War. A moratorium was declared on all bank accounts in the United States and all my funds had been deposited in the Bank at the University. Being unable to study I decided to return to Winnipeg with a view to enlisting. The Bank gave me enough money from my account to get me back to Winnipeg.

I arrived there very early in the morning of Aug. 11th and went directly to the Dunfield home. While eating breakfast I had a sudden attack of acute neuritis, the doctor who was called gave me an injection to relax the neck and shoulder muscles and advised me to stay in bed for some days. I arranged to see an Osteopath who was also a fully trained medical doctor. He discovered that vertebrae had been slightly dislocated in the final game of basketball I had played in March 1914. After snapping it back into place, he gave me several periods of massage. Except for an occasional period of stiffness I have never had any trouble since then.

My efforts, to enlist in the Canadian Expeditionary Forces were not successful. I was turned down both for infantry as well as Medical Corps because of my eyesight and the neck injury. However, I continued to train with a local militia regiment for several months in the evenings. All this necessitated a reconsideration of my plans for the future. After consultation with the Mission Board I entered the Normal School in Winnipeg early in September. My Bachelor of Arts degree enabled me to telescope the work into one term.

I applied for and received the position of Principal of a combined Elementary School at Cartwright in South Western Manitoba. I had grades 9 to 12 in my room. At the Mission Board meeting in March 1915 I was appointed to West China to sail in the fall of that year. I left Cartwright late in June just three days before Alice Dunfield and I were married in Maryland Methodist Church in June 23, 1915. The Rev. Andrew Hamilton, pastor of the Church performed the ceremony. Alice's sister, Clara, was bridesmaid and my brother, Norman, was best man. He was then training to go overseas. He left for England shortly after our wedding, and was among the casualties in the bitter fighting on the Somme River in the fall of 1916. He was killed, by shrapnel on October 31st of that year.

For our honeymoon Alice and I travelled to Toronto where we visited my mother and sister, Etta, and Lill who had a family of five boys and two girls. We also spent a week at Rockwood, Ontario visiting the parents of Orlando Jolliffe, Alice's brother-in-law. Returning to Manitoba we went to stay with Alice's parents on a farm, which Mr. Dunfield had bought near Balmoral about 40 miles north of Winnipeg. Mr. Dunfield had closed down his heating and sheet metal business in Winnipeg when building business slumped after the outbreak of war.

We had been advised, by the Board that we would be sailing, probably in September on one of the Canadian Pacific Empress ships. Late in the summer, however, the Empress boats were all taken over by the Government as transports. As a result the C.P.R. had only one ship left on the Pacific route. This was the S.S. Monteagle, a smaller ship with big freight capacity but limited passenger accommodation. The Monteagle sailed early in October with over 300 passengers and the holds filled and the decks piled high with huge beams of lumber for the new docks at Kobe, Japan.

It was a very rough, stormy voyage and also equally slow. We were almost three weeks in reaching Japan, so that as weather improved in the later stages of the voyage we were able to enjoy life on deck.

In Yokohama, we were met by Rev. W.O. Fryer, one of our missionaries in that land, and also a fellow member of our Maryland Street Church in Winnipeg. He escorted the party to Tokyo, where we had a most pleasant time. We also had a very pleasant and interesting time visiting our Mission in Kobe the day we were docked there.

Finally, we arrived in Shanghai and the country to which we had looked forward to for so long. All the difficulties of the past nine years were forgotten as we realized that at long last we were in the land where we wanted to be. The following days and weeks were exciting and busy ones as we bought supplies and clothing for life in West China. Then came to riverboat journey – first by large ship to Hankow, then by smaller ship to Ichang, and finally by a much smaller power boat, the Shutong, to Chungking in Szechuan province, Our province. The Shutong had a two-deck float for cargo and passengers, fastened to the starboard side of the power vessel. This was the first steam, powered vessel to regularly run the Ichang-Chungking route, and we were among the early passengers. At Chungking, we were met by Rev. Gordon R. Jones, business Agent of our Mission, in that port city. The following were the members of our party:

Rev. W.E. and Mrs. Smith and their, 8 year old son, Douglas
Rev. E.W. and Mrs. Morgan returning for their second term

And the rest of us as new missionaries

Miss Maude Sweetman
Miss Florence F. Jack
Miss Florence Wheeler
Miss Beulah Shepley of the Woman's Missionary Society

And Rev. A.N.C. and Mrs. Pound

And Alice (my wife) from the General Board.

There followed a week or more of very busy days as we prepared for the overland journey to Chengtu – a distance of some 350 miles requiring ten days of travel by sedan chair. Our baggage had to be carried by men, commonly called "coolies" from the Chinese words, "bitter or hard labor." Trunks were tied between two heavy bamboo poles 21/2 to 3 inches in diameter. Food, bedding and other personal items required on the journey were packed in bundles or in bamboo baskets, which had hinged covers. Each person had a sedan chair with three or four carriers depending on their weight. A cotton wadded quilt, known as "pu guy", was used to cushion the seat and back of the chair for comfort.

Finally, all was ready and we got away from Chungking, in a light rain, which did not help matters as the narrow, stone-paved road soon became slick and slippery with mud. An amusing incident highlighted our start and illustrated how green we were with regard to Chinese customs. When Mr. Pound got into his chair he felt too confined with his head almost touching the top of the chair. He shoved the top off its corner posts so that his head protruded from the top. The chair bearers immediately began to shout and put the chair on the ground, refusing to carry. After a few minutes of excited chatter Dr. Smith explained to Mr. Pound that the top of the chair was only removed when the occupant was a criminal being taken out for execution. The top was replaced and the journey got under way.

The first journey over land is or was at that time a real eye opener for the new missionary. Sometimes one felt a bit uncomfortable being carried by other men. I was one of this group and through all my years in China never used a sedan chair except under most unusual circumstances. Many of the ladies also felt this way and walked a great deal each day. The carriers stopped to rest in villages every 6 or 7 miles to drink tea and smoke opium at least once in the morning and once in the afternoon. When a group of foreigners stopped in these places they were soon the center of excited interest by the local inhabitants. This was especially true when we stopped to eat our meal in the inns. These were wide opened to the street and people crowded in to watch the foreigners eat. There was always much comment about the kind of food, the various utensils used, etc. etc.

After covering perhaps 30 to 35 miles during the day we would stop at one of the larger cities where better inns could be found. The word "better" is used in a comparative sense, for the newcomer this was perhaps the most difficult thing to become used to. The better rooms were at the rear of the inns, which were single story buildings, with the room next to the latrines and/or pigpens. The beds were wooden frames with loose straw over a bamboo matting and covered by a reed mat, on which one slept. As these beds were used by all sorts of people, clean and not so clean, washed and unwashed alike, there was always certain insects present. To overcome this we each had a large cotton sheet, which had been thoroughly painted with wood oil. This was not only waterproof, but also kept undesirable insect company underneath.

Fortunately, after the first night or two and being tired by walking and being out in the open all day, we were able to get some restful sleep. Our party, which included some American Baptist missionaries and Miss Lily Grainger returning to be with her parents in Chengtu, was divided into two groups. The Chengtu party was led by Dr. D.S. Dye, Professor of Physics at the West China Union University. The other part was led by Dr. W.E. Smith, who was returning to their station at Junghsein. We were in the latter party as we were going to stay with Alice's sister, Mrs. R.O. Jolliffe, at Tzeliutsing, some 35 miles from Junghsein. We left the Chengtu party at Longchang travelling by a smaller road, while the other party continued to Chengtu on the "Dong Da Lu", the Great East Road, bigger than the other roads only because it connected the big river port of Chungking and Chengtu, the provincial capital.

We stayed in Tzeliutsing for six weeks during which we witnessed all the usual festivities of the Chinese Lunar New Year season. Tzeliutsing is one of the most famous places in China as it is the center of tremendous salt industry. These wells are mostly over 3000 feet deep and until about 1920 were bored by the primitive tools and methods. It required 20 to 30 years to bore a deep well under these old methods. There was natural gas in many places and this was used to evaporate the brine. Coal, found locally, was also used. At New Years I went with Orlando Jolliffe and some of his Chinese workers along the streets selling Gospel portions, Orlando taught me just to call out, "liang go Chien ih ben", that is "two cash (smallest Chinese coin) per copy".

Towards the end of January 1916 Rev. Dr. G.E. Hartwell, one of the pioneer missionaries of our West China Mission, arrived in Tzeliutsing returning from furlough in Canada. As he was on his way to Chengtu he offered to escort us there. On that trip we passed through Jungshien and Jenshow cities where we had missionaries stationed, as well as passing through a number of large market towns where there were mission chapels.

In Chengtu we were graciously invited to stay with Dr. and Mrs. C.W. Service and family until our own quarters at Lao Gwan Miao were available. That was an enclosed compound with four sets of Chinese styled stucco rooms surrounding an open courtyard. Rev. M.P. and Mrs. Smith were just leaving for Penghsein, 30 miles north of Chengtu, to which place they had been appointed for second year language study. On their departure we took over the suite of rooms they had occupied since Lao Gwan Miao was the residence for new language students. There we began our language study in a formal way under the direction of Dr. O.L. Kilborn, another of the pioneer missionaries of our church. Each couple was given a Chinese language teacher with whom we worked several hours each day, repeating over and over after him sentences and phrases from a textbook. We also began under his instruction the study of Chinese written and printed characters, perhaps the most difficult work of all.

Rev. Kenneth J. Beaton and Mrs. Beaton, second year language students remained in Lao Gwan Miao with us and Mr. and Mrs. Pound. They were very helpful in helping us to get across our wants to the cook and house coolie whom we had to employ. It was not easy for new comers to get across their meaning in expressing their wants. But gradually we began to get enough language to get by.

Late that spring of 1916 the Yuan Shih Kai Revolution broke out when Yoan, who had been made President of the Republic in 1913 decided to make himself Emperor of a new Dynasty. His troops in Szechuan province were attacked by local forces, with the result that Chengtu was besieged for a time. Yuan's forces were defeated and forced to withdraw from Szechuan. The armies opposed to him were successful and he was compelled to step down. He died not long afterwards. During the fighting in Chengtu the soldiers frequently commandeered men to carry their equipment and supplies, as there was no wheeled transportation at that time.

One-day soldiers, while seizing men just outside our gate, bayoneted one of the carriers in the thigh. As he was bleeding badly I called two chair bearers from a nearby shop and had this man taken to our Mission hospital in our sedan chair. He was taken care of and kept in hospital for some days.

But as I left the hospital that day a senior missionary said to me, "You should be careful about doing things like this. If the man died, it is almost certain that his family would demand that you pay the funeral expenses."

Such was often the case, so I was told.

I replied, "I think I would do the same thing again under similar circumstances."

During that year there was another somewhat humorous incident. One day Mr. Beaton and I went down to the main shopping district. At the new arcade I bought some gardenias, which looked so lovely, on branches of glossy green leafed shrub. As we walked home it seemed easier to carry the bunch with leaves and flowers pointing to the ground. When more than half way home I looked down and saw only one or two flowers left. When I looked closely I discovered that each flower had a piece of fine wire through it and the end of the wire inserted in the tip of the branch. Another lesson from the Ancient East was learned.

This reminds me of an incident that happened some years later when we lived in the city of Junghsein. Alice wanted to get a Peking duck, a special treat, and told the coolie to go early in the morning to the market to buy a duck. He did so and it looked like a fine, big specimen. When I came over to the house at school recess the coolie said the duck didn't seem well. So we killed it at once and found that the crop had been packed solid with sand – over a pound of it. Thus we learned another trick on the unsuspecting buyer.

Of course, the cook who usually did the buying vented his displeasure on the poor coolie. "If I did not have to stay and get breakfast, this would not have happened."

Nor would he have lost his squeeze on the transaction.

While Chengtu was under siege in 1916 the children from the other Mission Stations who were attending our school in Chengtu were unable to return home at the end of the school year in June. By the beginning of August the situation had improved enough for them to go home. Alice and I were asked to help in escorting the children from Jenshow, Junghsein and Tzeliutsing. We went down by river junk to Pen Shan Hsein, a station of the China Inland Mission. It was just a few hours' trip as the river was at high water then. At Pen Shan Hsien we and eight children were accommodated overnight. Rev. J.R. Earle had come from Jenshow with carriers to take us overland to that city. It was a two-day journey. The first day went off without serious incident although we were rather late in getting started.

But the second day was quite a different tale. It was raining heavily when we left the inn where we had stayed overnight, and continued to pour down heavily. The narrow stone slabs that made the road, soon became slippery and then we came to a mud road that was six or more inches deep with mud and water. The going got slower and slower. By mid-afternoon we reached the town where we should have had lunch. After a brief stop the carriers decided to go on. By nightfall we were miles from any stopping place and so we had to go on. The rain seemed to get worse, if anything. By midnight we arrived at a small roadside inn at the top of the mountain where we could see the lights of Jenshow in the river valley.

We tried to get the innkeeper to open up and let us in. But with all the noise of so many people he feared we were robbers and refused to open the doors. There was nothing to do but go on down the mountainside. I had walked all day behind Alice's chair so that my carriers could change off with her carriers and give them a rest, if carrying my empty chair under such conditions could be called a rest. It must have been a frightening experience for Alice being carried down that slippery, narrow road in the middle of the night. When we got into the main street of the city, we found the river overflowing and I walked in water almost to my knees. But at 2:30 a.m. we arrived at the mission compound – the worst day of travel I ever experienced in China. The last of the carriers arrived t 3:30 a.m. Needless to say we remained in Jenshow for one day to rest up. We got through to Junghsien and Tzeliutsing without further difficulty and remained there with the Jolliffe's for a very happy month.

I shouldn't have said "very happy"; although that was true there was one incident that has always remained with me. There was a good deal of banditry during and following the fighting that summer. The local militia at Tzeliutsing captured a large band of these robbers. After a summary trial they were taken to a sand bar along the river just below Jolliffe's compound and shot while kneeling on the sand. Often these robbers were ex-soldiers who found robbing travellers an easy way to make a living.

In January 1917 the First General Council of the mission was held in Chengtu. Previously the annual meetings, while open to all members of the Mission, had not always been fully attended. After 1917 a representative Council, or rather two – one in the Western and one in the Eastern section of the Mission – to which delegates would be chosen each year by the members of each station. The General Council would meet then every fourth year. At the 1917 council we were appointed to work in the city of Luchow – a city on the Yangtze River some 150 miles above Chungking. The expectation was that I should begin a Junior Middle Boarding school at the close of my second year of languages study.

The summer 1917 we spent at Gao Shih Ti – High Stone Steps – a summer resort owned by our mission on a mountain 3000 feet high, located 10 miles north of Junghsien city. We had a very happy summer there with the two Jolliffe families and a number of other families of our mission and of the American Methodist Mission. Alice and I stayed on for several weeks after the others left and continued our study there. We had just nicely returned to Luchow when civil war broke out again between armies from Yunnan province and Szechuanese forces. The former troops had come into Szechuan in 1916 at the time of the Yuan Shih Kai revolution, and had occupied the very rich and lucrative tax area of Tzeliutsing salt wells. As the Szechuan army attacked the Yunnanese forces retreated south down the small river (a tributary of the Yangtze) to our city of Luchow.

The Yunnanese made their final stand in Luchow City, which was besieged and shelled by the Szechuan forces. We had about 75 badly wounded Yunnan soldiers in our Mission hospital under the care of Dr. Richard Wolfendale. They also had a hospital of their own in the city. Our Mission compounds were full of refugees who were afraid of staying in their own homes. Alice and I spent hours every day at the hospital helping with First Aid work. On the last day of the siege we continued to take in wounded Yunnanese, but insisted on taking their rifles and locking them in a room under the doctor's house. One shell passed over the hospital and burst in the attic of our Women's Missionary Society workers ' home. Bullets were constantly zinging overhead and some striking the hospital walls.

Suddenly there was a cry, "The Szechuan soldiers are coming."

Mrs. Wolfendale, who was a very fluent speaker in Chinese, and I ran out to the main gate of the hospital just as a number of soldiers arrived. They demanded entrance to seize the rifles left with us. Mrs. Wolfendale explained that we had them and that none were in the hospital proper. There was a bounty for every captured rifle so this was the reason for their keenness to get them. We took them down to the room where the rifles were and eight or ten of them rushed in to grab the rifles. Suddenly there was the crack of a rifle going off, but fortunately it went up through the roof. The Yunnanese wounded were wild with fright, as they feared they would all be killed in their beds.

This first year of the Yunnanese troops was not without foundation. Within half an hour we were told that in the military hospital all the wounded, which were unable to get away on their own, had been killed in their beds. There were almost one hundred of them. The following day Rev. J.M. Would of our Mission and I went with a group of local Red Cross workers across the tributary of the Yangtze to a small town where the Yunnanese had made a stand before retreating into Luchow city. By actual count we found the bodies of 374 Yunnanese soldiers who had been killed there. The way the bodies were horribly mutilated was evidence of the frenzy of the Szechuan soldiers during the final assault. Fortunately, as the Szechuanese command took over the city they established order and gave assurance that no harm would come to the Yunnanese in our hospital. Alice and I continue helping to change dressings of the wounded for weeks afterwards.

I should have noted that in Luchow Rev. C.J.P. and Mrs. Jolliffe shared their house with us. We had such a happy year with them. I am reminded of one incident during the days of the siege. The compound gave refuge to over 100 men, women and children who had come for fear of possible looting by the troops of both sides. Alice and I used to walk down a paved walk from the house to the gatehouse – about 150 yards. Their oldest son, Edward liked to walk with us. He was a very bright boy and a great reader. We used to ask him to tell us of a certain period in British history. In the midst of his tale there came the crash of shells coming from across the little river. We turned to run into the shelter of the brick house with Edward just saying the word "and ". The following day he took up his story with the word "and" and continued on. As a man Edward has had a fine career in Canada as a labor lawyer and for some time leader of the CCF party (Socialist) in the Ontario Provincial Parliament. At the time of this writing he has been for several years a sort of Ombudsman for the Canadian Government, acting as arbitrator between Government and Civil Servants who feel they have unsettled problems largely of a personal kind.

Our stay in Luchow lasted but one year. Through previously unforeseen circumstances it was necessary for the 1918 Mission Council to make certain changes in the stationing of personnel. Rev. A.P. Quentin who was going on furlough from Kiating city urged that someone take his place rather than leave that station without a pastoral work. Rev. K.J. Beaton who had been just one year in educational work in Junghsien city was sent to Kiating. We were sent to take over the school in Junghsien. This meant having to carry all our household goods and personal effects five days overland. This required using over 120 carriers. Furniture was tied between two bamboo poles, and everything else put into our home trunks or into covered and locked baskets made of split bamboo. It had been planned that some of the men returning to up country stations from Council would act as sort of escorts for us as our Chinese language was still not of the most fluent kind.

It was not very easy to get that number of carriers and their loads off on scheduled time, consequently the folk who were to travel with us went on ahead, expecting us to catch up. With such a caravan we never did. Alice and I stayed in a small town that night and went on the next day. Some of these towns had been damaged in the fighting in the fall of 1917. At noon of this second day we came to a large village that was entirely deserted. Shops were just empty shells. I walked through to the rear of one shop and looked across the slope of a small valley. As I did so I saw about 30 armed men come out of a grove of trees and then moved along a path that crossed the road we had come over a few moments before. I called our sedan chair carriers and they were only too glad to move on. Fortunately these bandits didn't come into the town, but continued across the main road. I had at least three quarters of our possessions on the road behind us and wondered if they would get by. Fortunately they did. Another day took us to Tzeliutsing where Alice's sister lived. Her husband, Orlando Jolliffe had been among the men who had not waited for us. We had such a good laugh when she told us how she had scolded Orlando for leaving two innocents alone under such travel conditions.

At Junghsien we took over the boys' Boarding School from Mr. Beaton as well as the supervision of the Elementary schools in the district. We had a very happy 4 years there until our furlough in 1922. There was, of course, the usual trials and tribulations as well as the joys and blessings of working in the midst of an Oriental culture, but even in those four years we were able to see some boys begin and progress along the road that led to university degrees and careers as preachers, doctors, dentists, educationists, one an agricultural specialist, etc., etc. Almost every one of these boys became active Christians serving the Church in their various capacities.

In 1922 we returned to Canada on our first furlough. During our time in China we were supported by the giving's of the Howard Park Methodist (later United) Church of Canada, situated in West Toronto. Represented of the church boarded the train at Weston and located us in our car.

At Toronto Union Station they led us into the rotunda where a big group of other members welcomed us with a song, "The Bells are coming."

Naturally, all the members of the Bell family were there to welcome us. We had spent the summer with Alice's family who had settled on a farm and ranch at Meadow Lake in Northern Saskatchewan. What a happy homecoming that was!!! Howard Park folk had arranged for a flat for us a few doors from the Church. We stayed there until January 1923 when we were the first tenants to move into the fine, new missionary double duplex, which the Mission Board had erected.

Kenneth Beaton had written a play called the House of Wang depicting the life of an average middle class family, which had three generations living together. We were asked to put this one on at Howard Park Church to try it out. It required us to get about thirty people, young and old, to play the parts. It was a great success on the three successive nights to full houses.

As I booked to go to Manitoba for six weeks of speaking on Missions, Dr. F.C. Stephenson, Secretary of Missionary Education asked me to do the House of Wang in several places. He shipped all the costumes, etc. in ten big, heavy commercial travellers trunks to Winnipeg. I spent the first two weeks there assembling a cast, rehearsing and then two nights showing. I then concluded it was too big a job for such a trip. So I shipped the trunks back to Toronto and continued on my tour through Southern Manitoba. I met many old friends among the Ministers and members. I had a good reception everywhere. One funny incident occurred in Brandon where a minister introduced me as a missionary of the China Inland Mission. I got back to Toronto just before Christmas.

During the months January to May I continued to do deputation work on the weekends, but tried to get in some studies in New Testament and Church History at Victoria College. But the great event of these months, and one of the most important events in our lives was the adoption of our beloved son, Neil Linton Bell. He was named Neil after a favorite Uncle of Alice's and Linton after the young son of our friends, Aubrey and Maud Love of Howard Park Church. Our cup of joy seemed to be full and overflowing. Looking back over the years I feel that God was indeed good to us in bringing Neil into our lives. He has been a wonderful son, kind, thoughtful and generous. We have loved him deeply. With Jean Wise, his wife, and their children – Lynne, Warren, Joanne and Terry these last 25 years have been times of great joy as the family has grown up.

I should have written about our arrival in Canada in May 1922. Crossing the Pacific on the Empress of Asia, Alice had not been well. So we left Vancouver on the first train to Calgary where we were to stay with my brother, Will, and his family – his wife, Minnie and children Wilfrid, Norma and Stewart. Shortly after our arrival at Will's home Alice was seized with sudden abdominal pains. A doctor who was called rushed her to the hospital for an emergency appendectomy. It was a month before we were able to leave for her parents' home at Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan. This place is just over 100 miles north of North Battleford and at that time connected by a very poor road, a great deal of it through muskeg and swamp over corduroy roads. We travelled from North Battleford northwest to the end of the existing railway at St. Walburg. Father Dunfield met us there with all our baggage with us. He had driven a team and heavy wagon some 50 miles, as he was to take in supplies they needed.

Leaving St. Walburg in mid afternoon we struck across the open prairie and parkland as that area is called. The shaking and jolting of the heavy wagon across the uneven ground was excruciatingly painful to Alice. We camped that night in a small grove of poplar trees. The second night we had passed Midnight Lake and stayed with settler friends of the Dunfields. Alice was in bad shape from the rough travel so one of the sons the following morning drove Alice in a light democrat the rest of the way to Meadow Lake. Father Dunfield and I continued on by wagon. The third night we camped beside a little stream in a Piece of heavily timbered pine and spruce forest.

It was a most delightful spot – until as dusk came on the mosquitoes began to appear in clouds. Knowing of this possibility from my earlier experiences at Norway House, I had packed in a trunk two of our big, cotton-mesh mosquito bed nets which we had used in China. I got one of these out and tied one end to the tail of the wagon and the other end to some forked sticks driven into the ground. Then I spread my bedding roll underneath the net, lit a lantern and settled down to read.

While I was doing all this Father Dunfield had quickly spread his roll on the ground and turned into to sleep. I had invited him to come in under the big double bed net, but he pooh-poohed such a thing. Presently I heard him slapping at mosquitoes, but I said not a word.

After perhaps a half an hour, he suddenly said, "That does look pretty good."

I said, "Come on in, there's lots of room."

He didn't need a second invitation. He was asleep in five minutes. Next morning,

He said, "That's the best nights' sleep I have ever had on the trail."

We arrived at the farm about noon that day. We gave the parents one of the nets, because in those days the house was poorly screened. When leaving we left both nets with the family, and were used each summer until the house was more modernized and screened.

We spent the summer of 1923 at the farm and left there for China in late August. We had much joy in taking Neil along with us. He was then just about 8 months old. He was much in demand by passengers who wanted to take him in his little go-cart as they walked the decks. One hot night we left him in his little bed in the cabin while we went down to dinner. When we got back to our deck we found him, dressed only in a diaper, being carried around the lounge. The Chinese cabin boy said, "The baby was crying and I picked him up and then all the ladies wanted to hold him."

We had been reappointed to Junghsien by the Mission Council. During the year we had been absent Howard J. Veals had carried on the Junghsien schoolwork. He was appointed to Luchow where we had gone in 1917. The school continued to grow and on two occasions our graduation class won the banner of the West China Christian Educational Association for the highest marks in their examinations written by all Christian Schools. I continued to have close relationships with the Government Middle Scholl, teaching English to their two top classes. But it was about this time that we began to feel the first evidence of the student unrest in China that had begun in 1919 with their dissatisfaction with the treaty that closed the First World War, and then in 1922 by the first expression of Communist propaganda through students returning from Russia. The setting up of the Military Academy in Canton in 1921 by Sun Yat Sen with Russian assistance and advisers soon began to make its influence felt as young men flocked to it from all parts of the country. It should be said that Sun Yat Sen, who had been the first President of the Republic after the Revolution of 1911, had first appealed to Great Britain and the United States for help with the Academy before turning to Russia.

As the months passed the propaganda emanating from the Academy and many student centers began to take on certain anti-foreign and later anti-Christian aspects. These were part of the anti-imperialist sentiment aroused by what to these Chinese had been the unequal and unfair treaties of the past 100 years imposed by western powers on China. The extra territorial rights granted to western countries under these treaties were particularly obnoxious and a constant source of irritation and agitation finally came to a head during a student demonstration in the International Settlement in Shanghai, nominally under British control, although many other nationals enjoyed treaty rights within its borders. There was also a French Settlement adjoining the International one.

During the above-mentioned demonstrations, several students were killed by gunfire from Settlement police. The reaction throughout China was instant and violent with students everywhere being in the forefront of the demonstrations. Christian Schools and Churches were the objects of increasing demonstrations, but it remarkable how loyal our students were as well as the Christian community in general to the missionaries and the Faith.

However, our West China Mission did suffer a severe blow in the spring of 1926. The Rev. E.E. Sibley and Mrs. Sibley of our Junghsien group went to Chengtu, the Provincial Capital and center of our mission work, for dental care. One day, as Mrs. Sibley was walking along a street, she was suddenly attacked by a crazed man who with one blow decapitated Mrs. Sibley and threw the head and body in a nearby street latrine. Police were called and the man was overtaken and slain by the police. The shock to the missionary community would be difficult to describe. But the Chinese authorities and people generally were equally disturbed by this tragic event. The Governor made an apology to the British Consul General and issued orders condemning such violence.

When Rev. W.E. Sibley returned to Junghsien he had his meals with Alice and me. Naturally, the conversation frequently turned to Mrs. Sibley as she and Alice had known each other years before when her father was a Methodist minister in Winnipeg. All this and the constant anti-foreign agitation and demonstrations began to have its effects on Alice. By the end of August 1926, the Mission Council Executive decided that it would be wise to reduce the number of missionaries by permitting those whose furloughs were due in the spring of 1927 to proceed on furlough at once. Among this group were the Rev. Hugh D. Taylor and Mrs. Taylor and their two small girls of our station. When they decided to go, I asked the Executive to grant early furlough to Alice and Neil. This was approved and late in September, having received permission to escort Alice and Neil to Shanghai, the Taylors and ourselves left Junghsien. We travelled two days overland to Fushun where we took small junks down the river to Luchow on the Yangtze.

At Luchow we received word that passage had been arranged for the party on a new steamer owned by the Yangtze Rapid Steamship Co. – an American firm. We were fortunate, so it seemed at the time, in getting passage to Chungking on a small steamer that ran only on that upper part of the Yangtze River. It took a day and a half to get to Chungking. The ship, we found, was or had been waiting for us for a couple of hours, so there was much pressure on us to get ourselves and baggage transferred. This was not easy, as the stevedores, under the influence of all the anti-foreign propaganda were most difficult to deal with. Even after a price for transferring the baggage had been agreed upon, I had difficulty in meeting the demands of the head stevedore. He followed me as I turned to climb the stairs to the upper deck, grabbing my jacket and tearing off the buttons. I turned and putting the flat of one foot on his chest & I threw him back onto the lower deck where the crew shoved him back into his sampan. That was, under the existing conditions, a rather hazardous thing to do, but under the pressure of the captain to get aboard and my emotions it seemed the only thing to do.

That night the Yangtze Rapid Steamer got to Wanhsien, an important river port half-way to Ichang, and at the moment the headquarters of General Yang Sen and the center of confrontation between him and Butterfield & Swires, a British shipping firm, and owners of a ship called the Wanhsien. Some days before our arrival at Wanhsien a British gunboat, after being fired on from the city, had fired one shell into the city. The gunboat then proceeded down river to Ichang. In retaliation the General had seized the B & S ship and was holding it for ransom. Talks had been proceeding and an agreement had been reached whereby the Wanhsien would be allowed to proceed to Ichang. It was into this situation that our ship anchored there that night.

We had just finished our dinner when a whole flotilla of sampans (big, flat-bottomed rowboats) loaded with soldiers came out to our ship and boarded it. There was about 250 of them. Their officer demanded passage to Ichang. The captain, through his Chinese purser said it was impossible for his ship with the cargo already on board to sail through the big rapids without sinking. After much talk they left and another smaller group came aboard. They were lying everywhere on the deck, even outside the narrow walk between our cabin doors and the rail. To cap it all, Neil and the two Taylor girls came down with violent dysentery evidently contracted from contaminated drinking water on the upper river vessel.

We were very late in leaving Wanhsien the following morning with instructions to the captain that he was to anchor that afternoon at the city of Kweifu, the first city above the famous Gorges. Instead of doing so, he anchored about two miles above the city and across the river in very fast water. At nights in addition to anchors large steel cables were attached to great rocks along the shore. In spite of repeated signals from the city side, the captain refused to move, as he knew they were planning to put more troops aboard.

The following morning signals were again flashed from Kweifu city ordering the captain to cross and anchor off the city. When he remained at anchor, several large sampans loaded with soldiers crossed to our side and poled up past our ship and then swung out into the current. The current was so fast that their boats were swept past the ship despite their efforts to catch on with pike poles. Eventually, they gave up and the captain was given instructions as to where he was to anchor that night just below the Gorges.

The trip through the Gorges was an exciting one, as the ship was so low in the water that when in the rough water of the many rapids, water actually washed across the open deck, near the stern. It was touch and go more than once. Late that afternoon, the captain pulled into a cove and anchored there. This was not the anchorage he was supposed to use, but as this cove would only accommodate one ship the other vessel had to go further down river to anchor. We wondered what would happen next day when we arrived in Ichang, but nothing happened. The presence of the British gunboat no doubt made a difference.

We went ashore to stay at the China Inland Mission Home. The children by this time were all extremely ill with the dysentery, so it was impossible to proceed at once. Fortunately, Dr.Graham of the Scottish Mission took over the care of the children. We could never be too grateful to him for the care he gave. It is doubtful if the children could have been saved without the professional skill he used. After one week we were able to proceed down the Hankow and then on to Shanghai. After a stay of about 10 days, the Taylors and Alice and Neil were able to get passage on the Empress of Asia to Vancouver, and then on to her parents' home at Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan.

Writing back in her first letter Alice told of an interesting thing that happened as they were travelling up the Fraser Valley. Neil, then four and a half years old, was much interested in all the fallen trees, stumps, branches, etc. lying in the fields.

Finally, he turned to Alice and said, "Mommy, why don't they call the coolies to pick up the wood?"

In China he has often seen men and women raking up leaves, twigs, and little scraps of wood for fuel. He couldn't understand why so much firewood would be lying about.

I was anxious to get back to Junghsien as with all the anti-foreign and anti-Christian propaganda going on, I felt the staff needed my presence. The trip to Chungking was quite uneventful. At Chungking, I bought passage on the little steamer on which we had come down. I was told to go on board at 4 p.m. on a Tuesday, as the ship would sail at daybreak. When I got there I was told that there would be a delay of one day. So back I went to our Mission Agency. When I returned on Wednesday, the little cabin, about 6x7 feet was occupied by a young military officer. The comprador or purser was very apologetic, but said there was nothing he could do in the way of making the officer vacate the cabin.

He said, "I'll put you in the dining room – a room about 10x16 feet."

When we carried my bedding roll, and three bamboo locked baskets containing food and personal effects into the dining room, the only available spot was the top of the table.

Other military men were lying on the benches that were attached to the three walls of the room. I had the baskets put under the table and I spread my bedding on the table and then climbed aboard to occupy at least that much space.

There were about fifty of these young officers aboard. They were recent graduates of the Whampoo Military Academy at Canton of which Chiang Kai Shek was commander at that time. It was a hot bed of anti-imperialism, pro-Communist feeling. I soon became aware of their presence. From early morning until late at night, I was subjected to a barrage of their propaganda – much of it very malicious. I occupied this exalted spot from Wednesday late afternoon until Saturday afternoon when we arrived at Luchow.

As a lone foreigner it was hard to take. But on Saturday morning a fine, clean-looking young man came into the dining room.

In the presence of these military men he said, "I would be glad if you would be my guest for dinner. I can arrange with the ships cook to serve a meal here."

I thanked him, but said that it was not very convenient to eat there.

He replied, "We can roll up your bedding and set the table. I want you to know that all Chinese do not feel the way these men do."

I thanked him and accepted the invitation saying that I knew the Chinese people very well and knew of their kindness and hospitality.

So the dinner was served – steak, vegetables, dessert – a fine western style meal. I found out that he was a student who had been attending university in Shanghai and was on his way back to his home in Suifu, a city at the junction of the Yangtze and Min Rivers. This was the only hot meal I had in those three days. I had just eaten cold food from my basket. I deeply appreciated his courage and kindness and told him so. A few hours later I disembarked at Luchow to go overland, a four-day journey to Junghsien.

I found that the agitation and propaganda in Junghsien had increased a great deal during my absence. I was not asked to teach in the Government Middle School, although their teachers were as cordial to me personally as ever, but the students were becoming more vocal. Several times the Sunday services in our church were interrupted by the entrance of noisy students shouting their slogans. However, our own students remained calm and loyal even under pressure from the others. There were no major incidents until early in December 1926. We had a new, young doctor, Percy Tennet, who had come to work with our experienced Chinese doctor, Liu Yueh Ting. The latter was very efficient and greatly respected in the city. One day Dr. Tennet was performing a major operation on a woman when one of the Chinese nurses kept rubbing up against the instrument tray. Tennet told him several times to keep away from the tray. When the nurse did it again, Tennet using the flat of his shoe pushed the nurse away. Whether the nurse had been deliberately provocative is impossible to say, but immediately he threw off his uniform, ran out of the hospital down to the main street of the city shouting all the while,

"The foreign doctor kicked me."

Immediately the city was in an uproar, students from the government schools and other trouble makers gathered outside the hospital compound demanding the foreign doctor be punished, and shouting all sorts of anti-foreign slogans. Mr. Sibley and I were the only other foreigners in the city, so with Dr. Liu we went to see the City Magistrate (the highest civil official) to explain what had happened and stressing the fact that the patients' life had been endangered by the nurses actions. The official said he understood and would act to lessen the uproar. Many of our friends among the more influential citizens expressed their confidence in us and tried to help in many ways.

However, the agitation to have Dr. Tennet leave the city continued day after day. It seemed wise for him to stop work in the hospital temporarily. But the agitation continued and coincided, as the year drew to a close, with the increasing tempo of the anti-foreign and anti-Christian throughout all China. Since Dr. Tennet could not do any work, we advised the Mission Council that he be permitted to go on furlough. This was granted and he left early in January 1927.

The pressure on Rev. W.E. Sibley and myself continued and it became more and more difficult for my students and our Christian community to give us the support they wanted to give. They had become under attack because of their loyalty to us and the Church. Finally, after long conferences with our church leaders it seemed wise, for their sakes, that we leave the city. So in the last week of January 1927 we said good-bye to our friends, many of who escorted us outside the East Gate of the city and started for Chungking. There were no incidents on the way. Our missionaries at Tzeliutsing and Luchow had left a few days before, so that we were last to go from the Central area of our Mission.

When we arrived in Chungking we found that all the women of our Mission had left for Shanghai under pressure of the British Consul-General. Among these women was Mrs. Nellie Frier, wife of Mr. S.H. Frier who had become our Business Agent in Chungking some months before. As my wife was already in Canada, I suggested that Mr. Frier follow his wife to Shanghai. This he did and then they went on to Canada for furlough. I took over the Agency – mostly as caretaker since there was little or no business. At that time there were, of our Mission in Chungking Rev. M.P. Smith, pastoral worker, and Mr. F.L. Abrey, architect, Rev. W.E. Morgan from Fowchow and Rev. R.O. Jolliffe who had come down from Chengtu with his family. The family had gone on to Shanghai. Dr. Jolliffe and Mr. Morgan were living in a house owned by the Asiatic Petroleum Co. on the south bank of the river at the Lung Men Hao anchorage where the British gunboat was moored. I stayed with them most nights, going into the city for the day. Mr. Smith stayed in his home in the city.

As the days passed the Consul-General continued to press for a reduction in our numbers in Chungking and in Chengtu. Five men had remained in Chengtu when the others were evacuated in January. These were Rev. W.J. Mortimore, Rev. Walter Small, Rev. Frank Dickenson, Dr. E.C. Wilford, and as I can best recall now, Mr. T.E. Plewman at the Mission Press. As the pressure increased finally in February Mr. Morgan and Dr. Jolliffe left for Shanghai. Before they left we had frequent discussions on this subject. One day at dinner we discussed sending a telegram to Chengtu, more in fun than seriously, as we knew the men there were planning to stay regardless. We began to think of possible messages. In those days we used a Missions code for all messages station to station or to the home board.

I said that I had a message that we could put in 10 letter words, which was the usual length of code words, but this would be in plain English. Fred Abrey said he would send it if I would get it typed.

So I typed the following, "Whatinhell iskeeping youfivemen?"

On his way home that day Fred stopped at the telegraph office and the message was accepted. A few days later the office called Fred to say that the message he had sent was not in code and that there was an additional charge for five extra words. Fred called at the office and told them that since the message had been delivered, there was nothing more to pay. That was the end of it.

But in Chengtu, when Dr. Mortimore opened the telegram he didn't get the message at first, until one of the other men laughingly said,

"That's just plain English."

I had already written to Dr. Mortimore explaining why we had sent the message. About this time, too, I received a telegram from Dr. James Endicott, Board Secretary, and Dr. Gunn, Moderator of our United Church. They were in Shanghai at the time and sent this at the request of the British authorities there urging us to leave because of the increasing severity of the situation. However, we decided to stay on.

As March passed the Consul-General in Chungking continued to press us and the few British businessmen there. Finally, he sent me an urgent note asking Mr. Smith and myself to cross the river to the South Bank of the Yangtze River and that the port would be evacuated on the morning of March 31st. The gunboat H.M.S. Widgeon and other British commercial vessels would be leaving. Mr. Abrey, Mr. Smith and I would be accommodated on the S.S. Shutong. This was the little vessel on which we had travelled from Ichang to Chungking in the fall of 1915 on our first trip to China. We went on board on the evening of March 30th and the following morning were part of several small flotillas that followed the Widgeon down the river and wondering when and if we would get back. There were no incidents as we travelled on the Shutong to Hankow where we transferred to a Jardine-Matheson Co. ship, the Kungwo. This was a huge ship that plied between Shanghai and Hankow with big passenger accommodation as well as cargo capacity. Hundreds of British and other foreigners came aboard as the armies from Canton were quite near the city. This was the army, at that time, commanded by General Chiang Kai Shek and with Russian military advisers as the split between Chiang and the Russians had not yet taken place.

The trip from Hankow to Shanghai was for the most part uneventful, except for the opportunity it afforded to observe closely a very motley group of foreigners, of many nationalities, caught in the upheaval of a civil war. Mack Smith was interested in a group of young White Russian women fleeing from Hankow where most of them had been living as prostitutes or mistresses of single men. Mack wanted to find out just what made them tick, as we say. So he took the opportunity to talk with one of them in the huge dinning room being used as a lounge. There were thousands of Russian families who had fled at the close of the First World War from Russia and Siberia into China to escape from the Red Armies. Without funds many of them came to grief in the big cities.

As Mack and this young woman talked she suddenly asked if he would have a cigarette from the package she pulled out.

He said, "No thank you, I don't smoke."

A little later she asked if he would play a game of cards.

To this he replied, "No, thank you, I don't play cards."

Later on, she asked him if he would have a drink.

Again he replied, "No thank you, I don't drink."

Whereupon she rose and walked off saying,

"You no smoke, you no play cards, you no drink, You no damn good."

Fred Abrey and I hearing Mark tell of his sociological research, had a good laugh. The last we saw of her when the ship docked at Shanghai was when a young Englishman came on deck and as he spoke to her, she slapped his face saying,

"Why you no answer my telegram?"

Events in the civil war moved rapidly in the next few weeks. After the capture of Hankow and Wuchang by Chiang Kai Shek's forces, his relations with his Russian political and military advisors deteriorated rapidly. Following the capture of Nanking with much looting and loss of civilians, Chiang broke with the Russians who were sent back to Russia. Not long after Chiang's army defeated those of the Northern Warlords and he took over as Head of State with Kuomintang party in power.

I was kept fairly busy in Shanghai as I was asked to act as secretary to keep in touch with the men in Chengtu and with the Home Board in Toronto. Incidentally, a large shipment of canned foodstuffs which had been ordered earlier for the Business Agency in Chungking arrived in Shanghai from San Francisco. Getting it through customs gave me quite an insight into business practices in a big port city such as Shanghai. Then in July I was knocked out by a serious attack of a bad malaria. I was living in the attic of a house occupied by Orlando and Lena Jolliffe and their family. Thanks to them and Dr. Ed Best of our Mission I came through OK. In spite of the weather temperatures in the high 90's and my body temperature for days on end of 102-103. Thus the summer passed and we began to hear of some businessmen going back to Chungking under British escort. This was the cue for us to ask why missionaries couldn't go back as we didn't want escort. So I went one day to see the British-Consul General.

When I explained my reason for coming to see him, the Consul-General was very emphatic in his opposition to any missionaries going back to Szechuan at that time. There was the usual talk about being unable to give or guarantee protection. I answered that most missionaries in Szechuan and other interior points, hundreds of miles from any port city, did not depend upon such armed protection. Then, I asked why, if it was permissible for British businessmen to go, it was not equally permissible for missionaries to go. There was much more similar arguments on that and other visits to consult with him. Finally, he said that if we were determined to go, he had not the authority to stop us. However, that if we did go, we must call on the Consul-General at Hankow before proceeding further upriver. I said we would not give any affirmative reply to that, but that on arrival at Hankow we would certainly meet the Consul-General and inform him that we were on our way to Chungking.

The next two weeks were very busy ones. Rev. Dr. George E. Hartwell and the Rev. George E. Rackham both expressed a wish to accompany me. We were able to get passage on a Jardine-Matheson (British) boat called the "Siangwo". This ship left Shanghai at 5 a.m. Friday, September 30th 1926. We were glad to be underway for a number of reasons. We had to go on board the evening of the 29th, and spent the night vainly battling the swarms of mosquitoes. The ship arrived at Chinkiang at 8:30 a.m. and unloaded naval stores for the Destroyers and Gunboats stationed there. Remember this was at a time when there was considerable fighting between Chiang's troops and the Northern Warlords, but there didn't seem to be any signs of troop movement there.

There were quite a few native junks tied up on the Chingkiang side of the Yangtze River, and quite a few more were seen later on as we passed the mouth of the Grand Canal. These were probably being held as transports. There was one American Destroyer there and one small Japanese Gunboat. There are two businessmen on board, one going to Nanking and the other an Asiatic Petroleum Co. man from Hankow. The former, Mr. Jack, had a very narrow escape during the capture of Nanking on March 24th. After being picked up on the riverbank by a naval landing party he guided them in rescuing a large party of Americans from the Standard Oil Co. house. His experience made a very thrilling story indeed.

We reached Nanking about 4 p.m. Saturday, October 1st. How different it looked those days. On the pukow side of the river there were absolutely no signs of its former activity. Railway sides were bare of rolling stock, 'godowns' (warehouses) empty, and deserted except for a few Nationalist soldiers, no ferries or junks crossing the river. A similar condition existed on the Nanking side. The British cruiser, Dragon, and a gunboat, the Cockchafer were anchored at the wharf of the International Export Co. A company of the Royal Marine Corps is stationed there to protect the property. The huge packing plant, cold storage, buildings etc., were all shut up.

Farther up, near the regular landing place, we saw large numbers of Nationalist soldiers drilling on the parade ground, but there were no signs whatever of commercial activity. Indeed, there were few signs of traffic along the river, mostly British ships. We did see, however, one China Merchant Co. ships anchored at Nanking, apparently held for transport purposes. Sunday passed without incident save for the inevitable argument re the pros and cons of prohibition. Did any one ever travel up the Yangtze River with out hearing an argument on this subject? Dr. Hartwell and the captain had a go at it last night at dinner. The result was as usual too. Each claimed the honors.

We arrived at Hankow about noon on Tuesday October 4th – 24 hours behind the regular time for the trip. We had scarcely tied u to the dock when a messenger came on board with a letter from Consul-General Blunt reporting that he had been informed from Shanghai that we were planning to go through to Chungking and then on to Chengtu without informing him or consulting with him. He asked us to call. From the general tone of his letter we were looking forward to a rather uncomfortable or unpleasant interview. We were agreeably surprised to receive a very cordial reception on arrival at the consulate.

We had talked the matter over before going and had decided on the general line we would pursue in presenting our case. I was asked by the other men to act as spokesman for the party. I started with a statement of the reasons that led us and the Mission to plan the return to Szechuan at that time. I referred to the general attitude of our Mission during the evacuation period in the winter of 1926-27, and that it had always been the policy of the Mission to work closely in such consultations with the Consular authority, always leaving final decisions with the Mission. I further said that it was not our intention to slip through to Szechuan without informing him, and gave the reasons for the late hour at which the Consul-General in Shanghai had been informed of our leaving.

After I had been talking for some minutes, Mr. Blunt interrupted saying,

"That's all right. I know about You. Mr. Sinton of the China Inland Mission had asked me to telegraph you to return to your Mission Agency in Chungking, but I would not agree at that time. I have no objection to your going now, but I have never heard anything about these other men."

So we tried to show him why we felt it was essential for us to go as soon as possible. Throughout the whole discussion, Mr. Blunt displayed a very sympathetic attitude to our position as missionaries and our desire to get back to our work. He told us that he expected a Jardine-Matheson ship, The Kingwo, would arrive in Hankow about October 15th. He said it was very likely that he would be going through to Chungking on that ship and that he would be very glad to have us go along. He deprecated our going on in advance and especially on anything other than a British ship. He stressed the fact the Kingwo would be escorted all the way. He wanted us to wait in Ichang until he arrived. When he arrived in Chungking, he would, as it were, open the city to occupation, and then he could take up the question of our going beyond that point.

There followed a good deal of verbal fencing as we tried to make clear to Mr. Blunt, without being obstinate or unwilling to co-operate with him, that we wanted to go through to Chungking without delay. Finally, when I felt that we would have to take the risk of changing his friendly attitude by a refusal to give a definite promise I said,

"To be perfectly frank, as we have tried to be throughout this this discussion, it is quite useless for us to think of making such a promise, as we feel we must go on, if there is an opportunity to do so. Therefore, we cannot give you the promise that you ask for."

He asked, "Are you speaking for yourself or for all three?"

We answered."For all three."

At this point too, we took the opportunity to point out to him that from our position as missionaries and for the sake of the possible effect upon our Chinese Christians we did not wish to return to Chungking under the escort of a British or other gunboat. He very frankly said that he understood and appreciated that position. We felt that he had been more sympathetic than many other Consular men might be. As we left the Consulate, Mr. Blunt shook hands and said,

"At any rate, quite unofficially of course, I wish you all a very safe journey."

We left Hankow on the morning of October 7th, 1927 and had no problems on the way to Ichang, except loss of about one day with boiler trouble and delay in unloading cargo at Shasi. At Ichang we saw two Japanese gunboats and one small cruiser, and a British gunboat, The Ladybird. There were quite a number of ships of the Ichang – Chungking in the harbor flying flags of Italy, Japan, France and the United States. Conditions on the river between Ichang and Wanshien were reported as being very chaotic. Each of the above shipping lines is reported as having its own way of getting through to Chungking. The American Company, The Yangtze Rapid Steamship Line, openly barter with the bandits and pay anywhere from $2000 to $3000 to them and to General Yang Sen. Usually the Yangtze people carry representatives of the band with whom they have made all the arrangements. Their chief difficulty has been, as all the others have found, with soldiers who occasionally commandeer the ships for transport or ransom.

Conditions in Ichang city and surrounding area and on the ricer were quite unsettled. Twice Japanese boat captains were held up while going from their ships to the landing. One night martial law was declared in the area and lasted until noon of the following day. A large number of armed men were rounded up. We were in Ichang on October 10th, the Chinese National Holiday, but as it rained most of the day, there was little activity. There were ten new Ford cars on the ship on which we came from Shanghai billed to Chengtu. The freight will surely be heavy as it cost $25.00 to take a bale (300lbs.) of cotton yarn to Chungking.

Mr. Sinton of the China Inland Mission left Ichang for Hankow the night before we arrived in Ichang. He had gone to Chungking with that first party of British businessmen escorted by the Widgeon, the British gunboat. He did not give a very bright report of Chungking, but that nay be due to the fact that he did arrive with that party. On a Sunday the C.I.M. church people in Chungking were not very cordial and did not ask him to take part in the service. This may have been due to the fact that he had returned to Chungking on an escorted ship.

In accordance with our understanding with Mr. Blunt, the Consul-General in Hankow, we kept in touch with the two British shipping companies. We hear that the Jardine-Matheson ship, the Kingwo, was coming, but later heard that it was delayed in leaving Hankow and that their was some uncertainty as to its going through to Chungking. Likewise Butterfielf & Swires were uncertain when their ship would go. When we learned that the Yangtze Rapid ship I'ping, was leaving definitely on the morning of Friday, October 14th, we booked passage on it. Mr. Case, the company's new agent at Chungking was on board going to his new post.

There was the usual amount of racket during the night. We had to go on board that evening, as the ship would leave at daylight or earlier. This noise was largely due to the loading of 'pidgin' cargo by the brew. This cargo cannot be loaded until the legitimate cargo is all on board. Before we went to bed we saw three sampans loaded with cases of coal oil, and three with bales of raw cotton waiting to be loaded. Next day the captain told us that the ship was drawing a foot more water when she sailed than when they finished loading the Company's cargo at 8:30p.m.

He said, "At five tons for every inch that made about 60 tons of 'pidgin' cargo or about one-fifth the amount the Company was carrying as paid freight."

We sailed at 5 a.m. and everything went well until we slowed up at a village called Hsiang Che Kou, about 8 miles above Keichow. This is one of the places where the ship had been paying $200.00 to the local bandits. I ought to say that a Japanese ship passed us below the Hsin Ten Rapids. She was going up to Wanhsien light for a cargo of wood oil. There were Japanese Marines on board, but no passengers Chinese or foreign. Behind us were three more ships – One Chinese, one each French and Italian. When our ship slowed up at Hsiang Che Kou five men came aboard. They told the comprador (purser) that they were bandits and wanted to be put ashore just above the Yeh (wild) Tan Rapids. But the pilot and the captain told them that they could not stop there with safety, but would put them off a mile below the rapids.

As the ship got under way two of the bandits took up positions on the bow and with drawn pistols told the pilots and captain to anchor at the place below the rapids. Their request to be put off in a sampan was only a ruse. For when the captain ordered the crew to signal for a sampan to come out, one of the bandits fired a shot at the bridge to back up his demand that the anchor be dropped. We had all been on the bridge for some time on the captain's orders, and thus were able to see all that went on. The ship was in very fast water, and since there was no recourse, the captain said they would cross to the other side and anchor in quiet water. This suited the bandits as a great number of their comrades were gathered in the village. While the ship was anchoring we could see dozens of men running down the hillside – all armed with automatic pistols and rifles. They were motley looking gang, some with bright red turbans and jackets, and some with bright colored sashes, and one of the leaders wearing a white sun helmet.

Shortly after we had anchored and the bandits were swarming aboard our ship, two of the ships behind us, the Chinese and Italian, came around a bend in the river about one-third of a mile below us. A number of the bandits who were still up on a ledge of rock that served as a lookout ran towards the bend firing as they went, and shouting for the ships to anchor. These ships, seeing we were in the hands of the bandits, must have decided to make a run for it, so kept on at full speed. The bandits in their rage continued firing but both ships got safely away. The French ship came along presently, and having sized up the situation, turned about and made for Ichang receiving a parting salute as she went.

Foiled in their plans of getting four ships at once turned their full attention to our ship. About 30 more bandits came aboard while score remained on the bank. They were very rough with the Chinese passengers, but when they came up on the ship's bridge where we were, they said,

"We are not going to bother you."

The young comprador had begun bargaining with the leaders. Their first demand was for $8000.00. They had already robbed the Chinese passengers of all their money. The comprador has only $500.00 in cash and this was paid to the bandits. This did not begin to satisfy them, as there seemed to be several separate bands among them – each demanding a share. There were about fifteen of them on the bow wrangling with the comprador and through him with the captain. What we all feared was that in their rage at not getting more money they would loot the ship. They were all carrying their pistols in their hands. The one wearing the sun helmet came along and looked in the window of the bridge where we were sitting, and pointed his pistol at us. Wonderful view that!!! Looking at the business end of a gun held by such a rascal.

After a lot more noisy talk, they reduced their demands to $5000.00. They said the captain would have to go ashore with them as security for payment of the money. The captain replied that was impossible, as the ship could not run without him. The bandits then said that the comprador would have to go and that the ship could continue but must pay the $5000.00 on its way back from Chungking, otherwise the comprador would be shot.

Just before that agreement was reached a rather interesting side light on Chinese character was seen. The bandit who had been the first to come on the bridge walked into the cabin. With a big grin he pulled out a big roll of silver dollars. This was no doubt part of the loot taken from the Chinese passengers. He said to Mr. Case, I want to buy the gold ring you were wearing. We had to interpret, as Mr. Case did not speak Chinese.

He replied, "I haven't a ring."

The bandit replied, "Yes, you have, I saw it on your finger a little while ago."

Case said, "No, I haven't. I only have this watch." He pulled out a cheap wristwatch minus the strap. The bandit took it and wanted to know how much Case wanted for it. He said $20.00.

The bandit said, "I'll give you ten."

The bandit then turned to me saying, "You have the ring."

He was difficult to convince but finally turned to Dr. Hartwell. "Dad", as we called him, pulled out his watch, but the fellow waved it away and said he wanted the ring. After considerable talking in which "Dad" told him the ring had been given to him by his wife who was now in the homeland, and by an appeal to Chinese regard for older people, etc. the bandit finely gave up the attempt to get the ring. He then again turned to Mr. Case and asked how much he wanted for the watch. Case just waved his hand and gave the watch to the bandit saying,

"Take it. I don't want it." I expect the gesture was enough for he laughed and said in Chinese,

"Thank you. Thank you." And left the cabin.

A few minutes later we got under way to our great relief. Just before that the no. 1 pilot came to the door where I was standing and said,

"I don't know what the captain intends to do, whether to proceed up river, or return to Ichang. If we start down river, I want to speak to the captain and tell him we must go on up. Otherwise the bandits will surely kill the comprador." However, the captain assured him he had no intention of returning to Ichang. A short time later a sister ship, I'Ling, of the one we were on passed us downward bound. They took word to Ichang that we were proceeding upriver.

We arrived at the city of Patung about 3:30 p.m. What amazed us was that they did not rob us foreigners when they robbed the Chinese passengers and crew. They didn't even go into our cabins. One of the chief negotiators for the bandits was a well-dressed man who got on the ship at Ichang. Although the soldiers at Ichang, searched the ship at 2:00a.m. the morning we sailed, for suspicious characters, they apparently overlooked or did not suspect this man.

When we tied up at Patung, the pilots and other members of the crew immediately began to make plans for the release of the comprador. They maintained that it would be useless to leave Patung without him, as everyone knew it would be difficult to stop a downward-bound ship. They invited several local military men and fed them with our evening dinner. The crew had gathered about $800.00 on shore and $80.00 among themselves. The captain asked me if I had any money. I gave him $200.00 to be repaid in Chungking. That night three of the crew and a staff officer of the local garrison took the $1180.00 down to the village where the comprador was being held.

No word of tem was heard until the following evening when two officers from the military headquarters came to see the captain. As their English was not very fluent and the captain did not understand Chinese, I was asked to act as interpreter. They said they had come to explain why a guard of soldiers had been put on the ship that morning. They said the "holdup" had taken place in a sort of no-man's land between their territory and that of the Ichang troops, but that they felt a responsibility in the matter of obtaining the release of the comprador. They had already sent one of their staff officers down to negotiate with the brigands. If the ship left before these negotiations were completed, they would suffer greatly in loss of reputation, etc. etc. Therefore they were obliged to put a guard on board to prevent her sailing.

The captain pointed out that he was in a very difficult position due to this delay. The company was losing thousands of dollars a day in addition to what was being paid for the comprador's release. They said that if he would wait until they got a reply from the men who had gone to the Yeh Tan (wild rapids) then they would be willing to have the ship proceed even if the reply was unfavorable. Although we all felt that this was so much "eyewash" there was nothing to do but agree.

I was having a siesta about 3p.m. when the steward and the accountant came to ask if I would go with them to explain the crews' attitude to the captain, as they feared he was under some misapprehension. So I went along with them. They said they wanted the captain to know that they recognized the fact that full authority on the ship rested with him, and that the time of sailing, etc. were his to fix. They did not want to appear to be disputing that in any way, or be considered responsible for the delay in sailing. On behalf of the captain, I stated that it was his firm belief that the guard had been put on board at the crews' request to prevent sailing before the comprador's return. The captain said he was just as anxious as they were for Mr. Wang's return, as he realized more than they how essential Wang was in negotiating with bandits and authorities at all the ports. But that it was out of the question to stay here indefinitely pending Wang's release. The crew, however, continued to disclaim all responsibility for the presence of the guard, and insisted that it had bee sent to protect the ship from other bandits.

Shortly afterwards the chief of staff and two other officers came aboard. For a while the accountant acted as go-betweens, but finally we asked them to come up and meet the captain. They said that they wanted to send another officer down to the Yen Tan, and suggested that the captain give them a certain amount of silver and the $5000.00 demanded by the bandits. I explained to them that it was quite impossible to raise another dollar on the ship or in the town. After further long discussion the Chungking agent of the company, (Mr. Case) and the captain agreed that the latter should sign a promissory note for $3320.00 – the balance of the $5000.00.

While these papers were being signed, the boatswain ran into the captain's cabin with word that the comprador was coming. There was great rejoicing on board, but it was short lived. As the sampan drew near, it was seen that only three members of the crew had returned with the officer and two representatives of the bandits. They had taken the cash sent down but demanded the balance of the $5000.00 in ready cash. Then began another long argument with the no.1 pilot and the accountant acting as middleman since the bandits refused to come to the upper deck. They would not accept the note for $3320.00 but demanded $5500.00 in addition to what had been paid already. We then tried to get them to accept two local businessmen as guarantors for these notes. The no. 1 pilot was a resident of Patung and he offered to get two men acting as security for payment of the money on the return trip from Chungking. This was on the assumption that Mr. Wang would be released to accompany the ship to Chungking. They would not accept this suggestion, so the seesaw went on for three hours. At last they said they would go down and take the $5500.00 in notes and talk it over with the rest of the bandits. So the notes were signed and the bandits left just at dark.

The captain is in bad shape nervously. He plans to wire his resignation to take effect on his return to Ichang. He says four months of this I all he can stand. My own head is aching terribly. I suppose it is due to the nervous tension and the long negotiations of the day. Yesterday after the bandits left the ship, the steward called us to 'tiffin' (lunch). He told us the bandits held him up with pistols and demanded money.

He said, "I had no money, so I gave them four cartons of cigarettes that cost me $6.00."

Poor chap, his face was just a livid yellow color. He was so scared he could scarcely talk. As he turned away, he said,

"This is very, very perilous time, but I can't talk, I can just feel."

The no. 1 pilot was 'all in' too last night. This situation is certainly hard on the nerves.

Monday, October 17th and still at Patung. The men returned from the Yeh Tan this morning to report that the bandits would not accept the notes. It seems a strange thing that they can come here and deal directly with the military without fear of being seized.

A long pow-wow took place below decks. About 9:30a.m. the no.1 pilot came to ask if I would interpret for them in their report to the captain. He said that it was quite useless to leave the matter with the military any longer. Because each time they came back from the bandits with higher demands because of the delay. Now they demand a total of $7500.00. He suggested that he would try once more to get the bandits to accept local men as security or guarantors. He would go down alone and negotiate, and the military could come later and agree to the settlement he has made.

He said, "There is no other way and this will 'save face' for the military."

After I had translated this, the captain said that he would sign notes for the additional $2000.00, but that beyond this he would not go. The pilot assured the captain that this plan would be successful and that the comprador would be released and the ship could proceed tomorrow. The guarantor is to receive $1000.00. If this goes through it will mean a total of $ 10,180.00. So the middleman left in another sampan with the two bandit representatives.

About that time word came that the bandits had moved up as far as the Niu Kou Tan (Cow's Mouth Rapid). The reason given was that the Military Commander at Ichang had sent up additional troops to clear the bandits out of the area where this ship was seized.

About 4:00p.m. We were treated (?) to one of the happenings that made us realize we were really back in the interior. A company of soldiers passed down the street with fixed bayonets and bugles blaring away as if it was some joyful occasion. In there midst were two miserable wretches accused of banditry. They were taken down the riverbank just below this ship, then forced to kneel and shot own like dogs. It was all so callous and difficult to understand when the same military have been negotiating with these other bandits for days.

Tuesday, October 18th 6:15p.m. We have just anchored off the city of Wanhsien. From early morning we all eagerly awaited the return of the men who had gone down to the Yeh Tan yesterday. About 9:30a.m. a representative of the military came aboard and announced, so the captain understood, that the ship could sail at 2:00p.m, whether there was word from the bandits or not. This information came through the boatswain whose English is just sufficient for the needs of his job on the ship. The captain received a telegram this morning from Mr. Tessier, the Company's Ichang manager, asking,

"What's the matter?"

I suggested that one word in reply would be sufficient and as elegant as anything he could send. It is "lots" – that is surely expressive enough.

About 10:00a.m. there was a lot of noisy talk at the door leading to the bridge. The accountant was there with two of the passengers who wanted to meet the captain. When they came in they began to speak in English, but soon ran out of vocabulary. As they continued in Chinese, they wanted to know why the captain didn't proceed upriver, and when he intended to sail. They said we have been anchored here for three days, food was running short, the cook couldn't buy meat or vegetables, soon there would be nothing to eat, etc. etc. When I translated this to the captain, he surely blew his stack. This was too much for him. To have gone through what he had, and then to have these guys come along and upbraid him for not sailing was more than he could stand.

When I replied for the captain, I managed to get across some of the things he said, but my Chinese was not equal to translating the purple patches. The accountant then spoke up to say that if the captain wanted to leave at once the military would not object. If he would notify them, they would send down instructions to search the ship for undesirable characters, and then permit the ship to proceed.

The captain jumped at such a proposal and ordered the accountant to notify the military. It was necessary that the ship leave soon as the coal supply was getting low. He also suggested that the military send an escort of 10 men. The pilot thought this a good idea, but it nearly proved our undoing. The accountant was gone almost two hours. When he did return he reported that the military wanted to commandeer the ship to move its Patung garrison to Wushan tomorrow. The reason given was that they would have to retreat because of the approach of hostile troops from Ichang.

It looked as though we were up against it worse than before. The captain was wild. He ordered the accountant to hurry back and tell the commander that unless we got away today, we would not have enough coal left to get the ship to Wushan. He asked that orders be sent down at once to search the ship and remove the armed guard we had had since arriving there, and to withdraw the request for an escort to Wushan. The accountant returned shortly with the instructions to remove the guard after the search was completed. That was about 1:30p.m. and steam was already for a start. Just as the captain gave orders to take in several cables fastened to rocks on the shore, a shout arose that the comprador was returning. Two boats were seen being tracked up the opposite bank, and preparations continued to get under way as soon as the comprador arrived.

The first boat to reach the ship was the one carrying the arbitrator and the bandit's representatives. They called for the no.1 pilot to go ashore with them. There was a short conference on the riverbank. The purpose of it was to get a promissory note for the $7500.00 signed by the pilot's brother. This was agreed to and the pilot returned to the ship just as the second boat arrived bearing the comprador, his agent (more of him later), and the military representatives. The comprador said there were several matters still to be settled that would take an hour. The captain objected vigorously that unless he got underway in half an hour he could not make Wushan before dark. So the final arrangements were rushed, and with great lifting of hearts as well as of anchors we got underway at 2:30p.m. Believe me, we were glad to see that town recede into the distance.

Later I had a long chat with the comprador. He says he is through with this job. He is a graduate of Boone College in Hankow. He had a very unpleasant time while with the bandits. They took him up into the hills several times, but brought him back each night to sleep on a junk at the Yeh Tan. He had had very little to eat. The people in the village just above the rapids as well as the farmers in the surrounding area had all fled and their homes had been looted by these robbers. These men, he said, are disbanded soldiers left behind in the last retreat after fighting at Ichang.

The comprador also said that the bandits were in a very ugly mood just before they took him off the ship. Some of them led by the rascal wearing the sun helmet were shouting,

"Loot the ship! Loot the ship!"

He said that if he had not gone, the whole ship would have been looted in another ten minutes. They were only stopped by a command from their leader. He told them they were taking the comprador as a hostage until the money was paid. They went off grumbling.

This is a good place to speak about the comprador's agent mentioned above. In English he calls him an 'usher'. In response to my question as to what he calls him in Chinese, he said,

"Giai shai ren."

That means an 'introducer' or 'go-between'. He had been in the military and knew many of the bandits as well as their way of dealing. He is employed not by the Company but by the comprador as a buffer. It is his business to act as a middleman at each stopping place, and make terms with the soldier-bandits. No doubt he gets a commission on each deal.

The comprador reports that he was forced to sign a note for another $500.00. Yet another $2000.00 is to be paid to a second robber band who did not get into the first deal. I think it is really to the Patung military. No notes were signed for this amount, and he hopes this amount may be greatly reduced and perhaps eliminated. Expenses for boats, etc. amounted to $400.00. Thus the total amount is as follows:

Cash	$1680.00
Promissory notes	$7500.00
Compradors' note	$500.00
Arbitrators' note	$1000.00
Second Bands	$2000.00
Total	$13,080.00

Thus $11,000.00 has to be paid in Chungking to the bandits' representatives travelling on this ship. What a situation! But the comprador says that the head bandit had telegraphed a General Fan at Changshow, 50 miles below Chungking. General Fan is reported to be in control of all these soldier-bandit gangs along the river. At Wushan representatives of three local robber bands came aboard as soon as we anchored. They were satisfied with their usual rake-off of $200.00 each. (All this has been typed from notes kept during the days we were at Patung).

On arrival at Chungking the Yangtze Rapid Steamship Co. paid the money agreed upon and the bandits returned on that ship to Patung. We were paid back the money we had loaned.

After a few days at Chungking, Dr. Hartwell and Mr. Rackham travelled overland to Chengtu to join the five men who had stayed there. I stayed in Chungking to take over our Business Agency but I lived for a while at the home of Dr. and Mrs. McCartney on the South Bank of the river.

Early in November Rev. W.J. Mortimore, Secretary of the Mission at that time came down to Chungking from Chengtu, the farthest east of our stations on the Yangtze to meet with the Mission staff and inspect the property. The doctor in charge of our hospital, the pastor and the school principal had been able to prevent serious damage to property while occupied by soldiers. We then started back to Chungking, visiting outstations along the river on our way to Fowchow, which had been occupied for months. Our Mission houses had been completely looted and damaged considerably. We remained there for over a week consulting with and encouraging our workers and the Christian community. They had had a very rough time. There was a full eclipse of the moon the last night we were in Fowchow, so about midnight, when the eclipse was full, there was the noise of dogs barking, people beating on drums, cymbals and every other noise-making contraption imaginable. All this was, according to old beliefs, supposed to scare away the dragon and rescue the moon. We had to be down to the riverbank by 4:30 a.m. to get deck passes on a small steamer for Chungking.

There was not much damage done to our property in Chungking during this evacuation period. We had among our church leaders a number of wee-known and respected businessmen who remained on good terms with the authorities. So after some days in Chungking, Dr. Mortimore and I stated overland to visit other stations, which had not got by so well. Our first stop was at the river port of Luchow about 200 miles west of Chungking. There we found that houses, hospitals and church buildings had all been looted and very heavily damaged, but found the Christian community strong and loyal in spite of their difficulties. From Luchow we travelled up a tributary of the Yangtze to the city of Fushun, an outstation of Tzeliutsing. The chapel had been occupied but was in reasonably good shape. We arrived in Tzeliutsin on a Saturday evening and arrangements were already made for the Sunday Service.