

Chapter 4

“I WALK THIS LONESOME VALLEY”

William Moore and Nina Palmer Hardy

Of the missionaries who took part in this work of bringing the Gospel to Tibet, some cast a long shadow down the valley. Dr. William Moore Hardy was certainly one and his wife, Nina, was his equal. At that time women went as single missionaries, or as wives, and then rarely receiving much public recognition as missionaries. Nor, were they expected to take part in mission work as wives. But Nina Palmer went out as a single women missionary and, after her marriage, continued to make her life and work count. She was immeasurably valuable in her own right. She supported her husband, cared well for their children, and kept the family strong. She was skillful in the work she was assigned heading the Women's and Children's work and she took up on her own assisting Dr. Hardy in the hospital. Her achievements reached out to the native Christians. She also reached out to the families, both native and colleagues. In the beginning, though, she had gone out alone as a missionary teacher before she ever met Will Hardy. *She was one spunky woman.*

Born 4-26-1884 in Clark, S.D., Nina reported that G.L. Wharton and Dr. Susie Rijnhart were the inspirations sending her to the mission field. She graduated from Drake University of Des Moines, Iowa, in 1911 with a Ph.B. and a B.Ed. She did Christian Endeavour work, college YWCA work, was a Student Volunteer, and for three years was State Supt. of Junior Work in S.D. She earned her way through college by teaching, work scholarships, and housework. Then, pridefully, she went out to China, not under the Christian Women's Board of Missions, but under the FCMS, in 1912. "Before my marriage I taught in the Carrie Loos William Girl's School at Nankin."²⁴

Will Hardy, born 11-1-1883 in Slaughterville, Ky., attended South Kentucky College, West Kentucky College, and graduated from Culver-Stockton (then Christian University), Canton, Mo., with an AS degree, 1901. He received his M.D. from the Medical Dept., University of Tennessee in June 1910. Dr. Hardy set sail on the SS Korea and his

²⁴ Report by Nina Hardy to FCMS, 1916.

father, J.W. Hardy wrote, "You go far into the dark that you may make known Jesus the Light. This promise 'Lo I am with you always even to the end of the world' you will find true and precious. Be strong in the Lord..."²⁵ His father was always a great support to him. J.W. Hardy spent his working life raising funds for Transylvania University, Ky. He did so well that at one time he was offered the presidency of Texas Christian University, which he refused, "I appreciated the honor, but...know self-limitations...I declined. If they ever offer the place (Pres.) Wilson occupies I may not refuse!" (2-15-16 letter to son, Bill).

1911: Jim Ogden and Bill Hardy made an itinerating trip to Derge, Chambdo, Draya, and Gartok, temporarily under Chinese overrule. Bill would hold a dispensary wherever they stopped and Jim would distribute tracts of the New Testament and talk with the people of the Good News.

Sun Yat Sen's Revolution: This peaceful trip was not repeated as China was being thrown into turmoil by the earnest efforts of an educated group of Chinese surrounding Sun-yat-sen. They were trying to persuade the Manchu government to get rid of the corruption of its entrenched officials. But the nobles surrounding the Manchu Empress adamantly refused to lose their privileges which meant power and wealth to them. The idealistic revolutionaries, who were working to overcome the social system of centuries which now only served those corrupt and inefficient officials, inflamed those who were just waiting to take advantage of any unrest to advance their own interests and wealth. Warlords became brigands and inevitably rebellion broke out and spread where there were the dissatisfied, particularly to this far western edge of China among the Tibetans. Sun-yat-sen's revolutionaries were among the first to start fighting for a Brave New World. It was 1912.

Tatienlu missionaries fled to Batang as riots broke out in that city, but the Civil Official in Ba knew that he could not protect all these foreigners so he was glad to lend them money to flee China by the southeastern Yunnan route. The CIM missionaries started but seeing that conditions were not as bad as first seemed they turned back to Tat. It was time for the Ogdens to go on their furlough anyway so they continued out to take ship for America. Dr. Hardy was caught up in the desperate need of the wounded and the fleeing refugees so upon reaching Shanghai stayed there (12-23-11) with Hwang Swen-ting, his cook, remaining as his language teacher. Jan. 1912 he took up work with the Red Cross along the Tient-sing-Pulow RR line. The FCMS, not knowing where to send it, sent his salary \$50 (minus \$12.50 to his

²⁵ Steamer letter: JW Hardy to son Dr. Wm. Hardy, 1910.

father and \$12.50 to the FCMS to pay debts he owed) to the Shanghai Mission Treasurer for China. They wrote "We were greatly alarmed over your condition, not knowing your whereabouts. May the Lord bless you and protect you." His father also wrote that a cablegram from Bro. Ogden was their first intimation of his danger. He said the Associated Press had " 'many translations'(!)...but I never lost hope." He also mentioned that the FCMS Board had written many times "about your power to write a good interesting letter."

Dr. Hardy wrote a suggestion that they send the Bakers of his acquaintance to Tibet and the FCMS felt it "worthy of consideration". Minnie Ogden wrote that Jim had had a nervous breakdown; furlough is much harder than being on the mission field because expectations are so high for speaking engagements. Their new baby, Walter Harold, is fine but Ruth has forgotten all her Tibetan

The Sheltons, on furlough, were very busy with some personal concerns: Flora Shelton was seeing to the publication of her first book²⁶ and on the editing and publication of the diary that Dr. Loftis left behind. Dr. Shelton was very involved with an interest of his in the artifacts he had collected in Western China and Tibet. By pure chance, an Edward Crane was on the SS Mongolia with them returning to America, and in talking to Dr. Shelton learned of these artifacts and that the Dr. wanted to place them with a reputable museum. Mr. Crane was associated with the work of starting a museum in his hometown of Newark, NJ and immediately saw the possibility that he may be able to get the collection for it.

So Mr. Crane first asked if they could see his collection and present it in an exhibition to see how interested the public would be. This is the first indication of a long and mutually profitable association of Dr. Shelton with the Newark Museum. At this time Dr. Shelton had approximately 150 objects of Tibetan paintings, images, household paraphernalia, and books, including the Tanjur, 14 volumes of the sayings of Buddha with pearls and other gems encrusted on the title page. The script is painted in gold and silver on a background of black. These volumes were part of the dowry of the Princess of Batang and upon her return from Lhasa exile her family were destitute. Dr. Shelton had finally persuaded her to sell the volumes to him.

When the collection was put on exhibit the response was fantastic due to its exotic nature- "From Feb to June 1911 - 17,724 people visited the display room. The matter of purchase was settled, in

²⁶ Flora Beale Shelton, Sunshine and Shadow on the Tibetan Border, Cincinnati: Foreign Christian Missionary Society, 1912. Also Dr. Zenas S. Loftis, A Message from Batang. 1911.

the end, when Mr. Crane died suddenly the summer of 1911.” His wife and brother purchased it in his memory and donated the collection to the Museum. Dr. Shelton had suggested a purchase price of \$1500, stating emphatically that he had no desire to go into “this business about the curios in any commercial spirit whatever.” He only needed reimbursement on his costs. He was too busy a man and at that time he was having an operation at Dr. Kellogg’s Sanitarium in Battle Creek, Mich. He asked that a reply be sent there.

Before his death in April, Mr. Crane had contacted the Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, the Directors of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the American Assn. of Natural History, both of New York and the Library of Congress - all agreed that Dr. Lauffer of the Field Museum was the expert.

The Field Museum at that time had spent \$50,000,000 in its researches in Western China and Tibet. Considering the high cost of obtaining such a collection the price Dr. Shelton asked was not exaggerated, according to Dr. Lauffer.

²⁷ “Why should the Newark Museum, just organized and still ‘in lodgings’ not its own (should exhibit) artifacts from a little-known, isolated people in Central Asia? Two principles: In art, religious customs, in folk-tales, and in many customs they show us inheritances from our common ancestors of the distant past and parallels to the doings of our recent ancestors of feudal times, these people are closely allied to the Oriental races whom we must understand if we are to keep a hand upon the reins which shall guide the ‘Great Civilization’ that is to be. (*Is this arrogant of ‘us’? This is an expression of the ‘American Dream of Manifest Destiny’ of that time.*) They are Buddhists and know and show the habits of the Oriental Mind. From China they have many political and artistic traditions; from India their philosophy and aspirations. Moreover they present facts from our ancient histories and of our own American Indians, give us an outline from which our young people may get rudiments of the knowledge which Pope referred to when he told us ‘The proper study of mankind is man.’ The boys and girls of Newark would become more intelligent voters because Newark’s future museum will have a permanent display of daily life under Lamaism on the Plateau of Tibet.” *Regardless, it is an excellent display of the beauty and richness of Tibet.*

Dr. Shelton had obtained these items from the natives of Batang; from the Living Buddha of Batang (a reincarnation of Buddha or perhaps Ju Lama) considered the Most Exalted Personage among the

²⁷ Papers from the Dr. Shelton Collection from the Archives of the Newark Museum, Newark, NJ. Unpublished.

Tibetans of Eastern Tibet; from priests at the Lamasery of Batang; and from the half-breed interpreter resident in Batang. Also some came in payment for medical care and some Shelton bought.

Dr. Shelton had always been interested in the Tibetan culture and artifacts. He admired the quality of their metalwork and their use of gems. Tibetans were considered exotic and their religion esoteric. The Sheltons continued contact with the Museum long after the good Dr.'s death. Upon his return to Batang the Museum commissioned Dr. Shelton to continue his collecting. They asked him to get more of the high-quality items, but also the ordinary, everyday items so they could have on exhibit entire lifestyle displays. Mrs. Shelton asked if they would be interested in any of her stories of Tibetans or would they offer them to Houghton Mifflin Co. for publication. This never worked out.

When it was time for Sheltons to return from furlough they had to wait until Sun Yat Sen's Revolution was over. Chao Erh-feng had conquered the robber Tibetans in the 'Bad Lands' (SangChen) northwest of Batang. Chao went to Chungking and was beheaded Dec. 1911.

The Dr. returned ahead of his family in order to accompany James Ware, seriously ill with cancer, who wanted to return 'home' to his family to die in China.

Dr. Hardy had found medical work to do (Apr to Nov, 1912) at Yenching, Ku. for the Presbyterians, with Hwang Swen-ting as assistant. In June 1912 Harold and Mrs. Baker appointed by the FCMS to Tibet arrived in Nanking staying there through the rest of the year. Then they spent 1913-14 in Chuchow. Meanwhile, Dr. Hardy had met a young missionary teacher in Nanking, Ku., Nina Palmer.

No Longer Lonesome -²⁸ At first, Dr. Hardy, with great care, tried to convince Nina Palmer that she perhaps should take care in developing his acquaintance. He, in that delicate Victorian manner, stated his "liking - yes, my love - for you...I did not want to obstruct your happiness by having forced my company when you were a stranger and lonesome...The very fact that I do like you makes me want you to have the greatest possible happiness, and, knowing myself and what I can offer, the conditions I live in, and the hardships you may be called upon to endure, knowing all the circumstances much better than any other can, I do want you to be careful. I am selfish in a number of ways but to win in such a game and cause another a life of unhappiness is worse than if I were to fail, but by that failure, let the

²⁸ Love Letters- William (Will, Willie, Bill) Hardy, MD to Nina Palmer, 6-13-12, 3-29-12, 4-8-12, 5-30-12, 6-9-12, 6-19-12, marriage in Nanking, Kuming, China 1-1-13.

other be happy.” *This was a gentle man.*

Dr. Hardy was grateful for the trust Nina placed in him, “...that alone, would bring out the best I have, but the best judge of character often fail to detect the flaws in men...I insist. Do be careful. If I did not love you, Nina, I could not say this, and if I did not know you care. Your Will.” *There was a lot of gossip going on about their relationship, but like a true Victorian novel, this romantic story unfolds. There was probably chagrin that a talented teacher so recently a new missionary was being beguiled away to another mission station and one so far out!*

“I suppose every lover finds difficulty in trying to say what he feels, for the words are badly worn, almost completely worn out. I am completely governed by a love that cannot die. Goodnight, Dear. I am, with an ever-increasing love. Your Billy”.

“Yes, Dearest, I was awfully blue when I did not get letters from you...Anyway; blue has been my natural complexion so long that I very easily assume it. Now I do care about something so the blue part of my program cannot be omitted.” Will indicated that Nina had gone to Kuling for a vacation in the cooler mountains. He was managing to do some Chinese study finishing Lessons 9 and 10 and took an exam. “Say, but didn’t our plans at secrecy fizzle out gloriously? I had to tell Papa, just because I could not keep my great happiness from him.”

The good Dr. tells of participating with the Presbyterian missionaries in the Lord’s Supper, mentioning that “Our weekly custom, while best and most like the old church, has the weakness of becoming a matter of too little thought.” He was even asked to assist. “I don’t believe I ever was present when I felt more like the Master Himself was there. I attributed this to (to many other reasons as well) that of the great love that has been brought into my life by you. You know, Dearest Darling, that I love you and will never stop thanking God for bringing you into my life. May He make you happy and may I be his co-worker in so doing...With an eternal love...Will”.

With a whimsical humor: “No, there is not the least bit of use in my telling I love you. I think I will stop.” He goes on to describe fantasy dreams of his and continuing. ..“tell her I love her with all my heart and that every day, every hour I think of her and every thought makes me love her more - With all my love, I am Always your Billy.” In that one year he wrote more than 100 letters. They were married by a Presbyterian service and the wedding announcements were white, rather than cream, so that no one would think they were yellow and indicate his nature, and other “foolishness” which universally lovers exchange. *It is heartening and special for this little Mission that the missionaries made this kind of love match.* Billy and Nina were married

1-1-13. So ends the match and begins the saga.

During the summer of 1912 China lost control of the frontier districts. They burned the large monastery at Chambdo. The soldiers mutinied and looted. Yin Ch'ang-heng, who had Chao Erh-feng beheaded, was sent to retrieve the Border. He retrieved Batang. The Chinese had been gradually encroaching further into Free Tibetan territory so that the unrest, robberies, and skirmishes continued.

According to the news and other reports the unrest was too great for the consulate to agree that the missionaries could return to Batang. 8-27-13: Dr. Hardy wrote to the American Consul that Dr. and Mrs. Shelton and his girls as well as himself and his wife intended to leave for Tachienlu. Since little was really being gained from conflicting reports "our experience has been that we can learn nothing as long as we are in this part of China. Dr. Shelton has served one term on the Tibetan Border and is able to judge what will be the best for us when he knows exactly what the facts are. He is not the kind to disregard advice and we assure you that we will not oppose his judgment. We know that we can work successfully only when cooperating with you. As Tachienlu has been occupied ever since the Revolution and has recently been reinforced, we feel we can go that far and wait for the way to open up to Ba. If there are any reasons for our not coming as far as we now plan, a letter to us at Wuhu will be appreciated." *Dr. H- knew his way as a diplomat. Strong, they go unhindered.*

"With Best Wishes of Dr. and Mrs. A. L. Shelton.

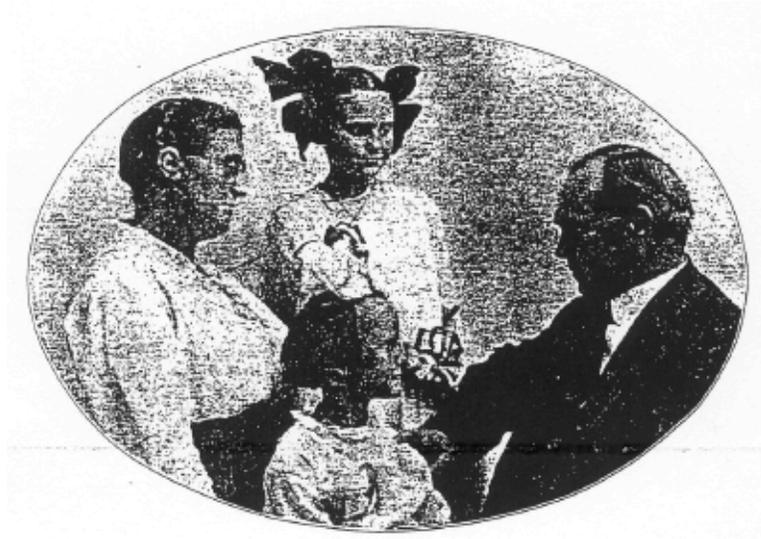
Dorris and Dorothy

Home Address 'till July 30th, Anthony, Kansas.

Address in Field - Baking, Tibet Via Tachienlu, W. China

We sail Aug. 30th, 1913 per S.S. Siberia (from San Francisco, Calif.).

Dear Friends: - So many of you in this beautiful home land of America. Will you think of this as a personal letter to each of you bringing many thanks for your deeds of kindness to us? You made this furlough a pleasant, happy time and the next term easier - for material things, for not forgetting to remember us in your prayers. As we go through perils oft perhaps not knowing they are near it may be often that prayers of those at home have kept us safe and will keep us until our service is done. Again, with many, many thanks for all you have done we send with grateful heart this little letter, Dr. and Mrs. Shelton, Dorris and Dorothy."



With Best Wishes of Dr. and Mrs. A. L. Shelton, Dorris and Dorothy

**Home Address 'till July 30th, Anthony, Kansas
Address in field- Batang Tibet Via Tachienlu W. China.**