

Chapter 15

1925- Utter Confusion

Annual Meeting (fiscal year changed from April to January): motion passed to recommend that Yengin be accepted as the new station and that a medical family, and an educational family, Morses and Duncans, be assigned to it. This did not cut out W-s and E-s but the Worhleys had already resigned and the Emersons were siding with them so the TCM could not depend upon them.

The TCM approves the plan to enter the Chengtu Union University and suggested that Dr. Hardy be approved to stay there a year before returning on furlough to see if he can fit into the plan.

The Survey Committee #1. considered and turned down the request of Mr. Emerson that there be junior control and senior control in the Mission. #2. Impossible to determine at this time when the new station will be opened. #3 Dr. W's resignation was in the hands of the Board and not in their hands; even beyond W's control at this time. Unfortunately the cable of resignation did not reach the US until 2-2-25 and the reply was only received 5-16-25. In this length of time the situation was mightily aggravated; no efforts of reconciliation succeeded. Mr. Ogden took the brunt of the pressure from both sides - it was a miracle of strength that he managed at all.

Annual Business Letter- 1. Bond for Mr. Emerson as Treasurer; 2. Request to reduce term lengths; 3. Transfer of funds for school building to equipment; 4. Evangelistic increase in budget is for \$100 for itinerating, \$100 for Women's and Children's work, \$100 for literature; 6. Increase in Educational budget due to increase in Kg; estimating need one more missionary; 7. Insurance needed for all Mission buildings; 8. Need to pay an agent a fee of \$600 for handling mail and business in Yunnanfu; 9. Asking \$15,000 for orphanage. Mrs. O- will forward requirements. 10. Estimates for income tax needed; 11. Estimates for W- if his resignation is not accepted. (12-31-24) Dr. Hardy was in a quandary, "You ascertain from the doctor (W-) if he intends to be in the Mission in the future, if his resignation is being reconsidered or, he intends to leave here at an early date, regardless of any actions for the personnel of the new station, which is by no means certain." 12. Estimates for new station and personnel needed including M/M Morse, M/M Duncan. Travel money for Treas. to send for more cash. Requests funds for land, for Library, study books.

Leland Emerson wrote an article⁵⁸ expressing appreciation at being present at the baptismal service conducted Jan. 18, 1925 by Lee Gway Gwang for 24 new Christians in the newly constructed baptistry in the courtyard of the school. “It seems that a time of reaping is beginning here now.” Many were young people without a long background of heathen worship. Included was Lee Gway Gwang’s wife which Leland knew brought happiness to Mr. Lee.

He also tells of Mr. Morse’s problems with the men who were getting the timbers for the new Chapel. He had contracted for them to cut and float them down the river only to discover the logs had been cut short. Others had to be cut.

Then during Yenichang one had gotten drunk and stabbed the contract leader, Ah kay in an argument. Russell was called and saved him from a long prison term, or even execution, if Ah kay had died. But Dr. Hardy was called and he will live. Russell talked to the official to show him the injured man was recovering and forgave his companion. The official was amazed at such forgiveness and agreed to release him under bond to Mr. Morse. He returned his dagger telling him to remember to never use it again. (Possibly these incidents were never reported to the Property Committee until Russell M- had already resolved them which prompted Dr. Hardy’s objections.)

1-22-25 Emerson to Dr. Hardy: Trying to correct Dr. Hardy’s statements about the honesty of Russell M-, in his meticulous way Leland Emerson tore apart statements of his own letter of Dec. 15 trying to show the “purpose of that letter and others which we expect to write soon is not to discredit you or any other member of the Mission, but to secure a Secretary on this field as soon as possible, to the end that we may continue our work with the utmost freedom to all in mutual trust and helpfulness.” *He was not believed, which is sad because it seems that he would have relented and sought to work with the Mission, but no one was listening now. There had been too much criticism.*

One example- “He (Mr. Morse) told him (Dr. Hardy) of the plan to let Dr. W- itinerate outside of Batang and asked and received his hearty approval. Also got his consent for Dr. Worhley to use any drugs necessary from the Mission Drug room.” (This is one of the complaints of Dr. W- even though he had a key.) This information was given to us by Mr. Morse, on his way home from this conference with you. He stopped to tell us then simply because he was so overjoyed with the vindication of you, whom he had been defending earlier in the

⁵⁸ “The Dawn of Reaping Time”, Leland H. Emerson, World Call, July 1925, p. 36.

day, saying that we could see from this that your heart was in the right place." *At this point Russell might have been ready to accept the goodwill of Dr. Hardy.*

The explanation continued showing the twists and turns of misunderstanding, bringing in criticism of Hardy's and Duncan's remarks, of Mrs. Morse's hurt at not being spoken to, of Dr. Hardy's attitude toward Mr. Morse, who was only trying to help and explaining remarks made in the heat of anger during the Mission meetings. *With the straightforwardness of Dr. Hardy; abhorring having to defend himself; misliking subtlety and impatient at the delving into fine points which were the very nature of Mr. Emerson. It is not hard to see how they drew sparks from each other. Consider again the nature of Dr. Hardy- strong in his faith, and the need for Russell M- to introduce what were the rock-bottom of his faith: the need to conciliate through the Love of Christ, the determination which had some rigidity, but also rightness, that faith would prevail, and his deep need to stop the dissension- neither seemed to understand the other. Jim O, missing the presence of his good friend and counselor, Dr. Shelton, was too harassed by his anguish to be the calm and wise guide that was needed and had to conserve what emotional energy he had. The result was that attacks were again being made by each side. The one difference was that the Worthleys no longer attended the monthly meetings - they had no need. The Emersons and the Morses were defending them.*

Leland was equally adamant that Dr. Hardy should stop attacking Russell M-. "We arrived in Batang prejudiced against the Morses and Duncans and in your favor, influenced largely by the letters you folks had written the Ogdens but your actions previous to and in the first Mission meeting were enough to change our sympathies." *Russell had tried to conciliate Dr. Hardy. Marion D- had stood up for Morse, also.*

"We feel also that you are demanding more than you have any right to from Mr. Morse in expecting him to take knock after knock from you and always maintain an absolute silence before others about it. Mr. Morse has tried to maintain this silence and to avoid criticizing, and has succeeded, in the main, in his efforts. It is hardly fair play for you to attack and thwart Mr. Morse at every possible point and then attack him...If Mr. Morse has appeared 'two-faced' it is because he has tried sincerely to be fair to everyone, yourself included. Mr. Morse needs no defense of his honesty, as every fair-minded person will deny your accusation until you prove it." *Enough!*

1-23-25 MH Duncan to Dr. Hardy: With no prompting from anyone he writes that neither Morse nor he, himself, knew of the publishing of "the recent Emerson letter. E- is doing this without

prompting from anyone and against (from this time on) the judgment of at least one member of the Mission. Emerson gathered all his material from conversations with members of the Mission and from the secretary's book to the best of my knowledge and belief." (This shows the astuteness of both Mr. Emerson and of Mr. Duncan, but also the power of gossip.) "This scandal and the half truths in this gossip have not caused me to lose my faith in the integrity of either you or Mr. Morse. I believe both of you are trying to do justice to your conscience." He then said the less said about these or any future letters, the better. "I am going to stay on my former basis as friends to you and to Mr. Morse. I believe you are mutually wronging each other and I do not wish to wrong any man." *This man was a peacemaker although with a certain roughness of character and manner which was a part of him all his life.*

The sensitivity to wrong and the attendant desire to withdraw from the pain had affected Jim O-. Now the Hardys, tired as they both were from the long term without a vacation in five years away from Ba, and Dr. H-, suffering from the pain of his very bad teeth, now both he and Nina were suffering from the constant dissension, with the added threats to their situation and emotional well-being. Dr. Hardy was tired to the core of his spirit. He was known as a reasonable man, but now his reasonableness was severely threatened. Adhering to a moral code of right, he now found it impossible to deal with the obdurate nature of the W-s and E-.

The Worhleys on the other hand were much younger (more immature) than the other new missionaries, they had not attended the College of Missions, so had none of the instruction and counseling as to the forces at work on a mission field, much less insight into the cultural pitfalls for the new person untried by experience. They did need careful handling and no one had the time now nor the patience nor inclination to do so. Morse had tried but he was already in trouble and trying to help both sides he pleased no one. Russell was called to a Godly life and he was able to manifest this much better in his later life and probably did not even realize now that Worhleys were operating under a different agenda. This began to come out in the months ahead.

Now it came out that the Worhleys had had trouble in the Chinese Mission in San Francisco, exactly the nature of it is not known now, but when known to Bro. Corey he was dismayed. Also there had been an incident at the College of Missions when Worhleys were there for the Commencement and Ordination exercises. Here again there is no record found of the exact details, except the mention that it should have alerted Bro. Corey. There is a note by Marion D- that he wondered if there should not be more attention paid to the wives of

missionaries, that he felt that it was one woman's talking that was determining the attitudes of the affected parties. In another context Amanda W- was pointed to as the determining factor. It is true that it was her desire to be a missionary since she was a little child; that she had insisted that Ivan make the same decision. It was she who was reported early on as being notional. (Letter- 9-2-24) *It is an unrealistic expectation that just any person of faith can be a missionary. So a great tangle of circumstances personal and complex brought the Mission to a disastrous and massive problem.*

1-24-25 L. Emerson to Bro. Corey tells how on their arrival there had been talk about whether or not they should have the vote in the Mission early since certain actions such as the new station would be so vital to them. The argument was that they began salary in Hong Kong so the year should be up in Nov. 1924, but although Dr. Hardy presented this and Mr. Peterson supported this, it was not brought to a vote. W-s opposed it! Nothing was said as to whether they could or could not present motions or argue points when Mr. Emerson was asked to present the plans for the new orphanage and discuss it. The same was agreeable in language committee meeting. Leland is still being quite reasonable and said the reason he wrote letters was to give information to Corey that he thought should be available when the TCM did not want to hear it. *He did not know it would come back to haunt him.* But being allowed to discuss points in meetings meant they now entered into the arguments.

Because the Survey demanded that there be a constitution and by-laws, so certain committees of the TCM were struggling to establish these. According to Leland, they did not know the duties or action required. It must have been frustrating for him with his knowledge and experience of Robert's Rules of Order as he kept bringing up legal points; 'nit-picking', others said...

Apparently Marion D- has been trying to bring some peace to the Worhley-Emerson confrontations with the Mission. He said that there should have been some other way of getting a Secretary there other than their writing their charges and request to Bro Corey.(1-23-25) A note is written by Emersons stating they could think of no other way for if they brought up a request in the TCM meetings it would be side-tracked or voted down. They had observed this happen to other motions they thought were good. Therefore, Leland says, he doesn't feel it was either unchristian or dishonorable. *He may have been right. He also says he thought it would be less of a threat- that is not true. It still should have been brought up.*

1-24-25 The cable of resignation arrived this day in St. Louis at the UCMS and the answer went out the same day: "Advise Worhley

at once cannot accept resignation.” A letter also went 2-8-25 but did not arrive until 5-16-25. So the Worhley’s and the TCM knew finally, that something should happen in the TCM.

1-25-25 Leland E- to Bro. Corey: Re: all his reasons for writing letters to him regarding the criticisms and that he would now cease writing since the TCM was signing a request to have a Secretary come from the UCMS. *He felt they now had understood the problems and wanted to resolve them. The big problem here is that it would take six months for a reply to get back. Too much could and did happen in the meantime.*

(2-8-25) A desperate message was sent signed by all the voting members, Ogdens, Hardys, Duncans, Morses - “We are writing this letter not for the purpose of securing the desire or good of any individual but solely for the purpose of furthering the work of Christ in Tibet and the extension of His Kingdom upon this Border. Believing that the presence here of a secretary of the UCMS would aid in the furtherance of God’s Work we wish to submit the following conditions, asking that a Secretary be sent to the field. 1. Adjustment of the new missionaries to the field and that of the older missionaries to the newer has not been satisfactory; 2. When faults or discrepancies in the character of people, which exist no matter how saintly nor consecrated the individual, cause an inability to get along and cause peace and brotherly love to be absent it is wise for an outside person to be sent. A growing distrust and suspicion is a constant menace to peace; 3. The contemplated large expenditure for this Mission justifies a closer connection to the Board, best obtained by a visit from a Secretary. We know the question of sending a Secretary before the growth of the work with its increasing problems demand a reconsideration of the value a Secretary can be to this Mission.” *Perhaps the request was couched in language too “elegant “to be considered serious, but the Board did not hear the dire urgency of this plea,- and were not persuaded. Even at this point it might not have been too late! **Alas! A lack!- too little and too late!***

1-28-25 Another Dr. H- letter to Corey: He was giving points from his reply to the West China Union University Medical Faculty: 1. “until the Board acted nothing can be done; 2. until the Mission stations him there, very little can be done;” 3. some personal matters need to be decided: a. my children’s education- there is a good high school for foreign children in Chengtu - “I can lengthen my missionary work, (I cannot) neglect my children,” b. he was concerned that his general practice in Ba had not qualified him to teach, c. the Board might prefer to send someone qualified, d. he might not care to specialize...the matter has been “hanging fire” for a year.

(2-9-25) Monthly Meeting- Hardy and Peterson are asked to go to Chengtu to get cash, mail, freight and supplies for the orphanage, hospital and others; to give Dr. Hardy a vacation away from the Mission; to give him and Mr. Peterson time to get severe dental problems fixed. Hardy also wanted to check out the situation in person at the Union University on the proposition of his joining the work there. He wanted very much to continue in missionary service for Tibet. Russell M- does not want them to go, but there is the possibility that the situation may calm down in their absence.

Dr. Worhley was asked to take charge of the hospital while they were gone but he refused in a letter taken to the meeting by Mrs. W-, "I feel a great deal of hesitation in taking charge of the medical work during Dr. H-'s absence. I fear that it is not the wish of the head of the medical department that I should have anything to do with the medical work in Batang. Dr. H- has not deemed it wise or necessary to consult me concerning the care of the work in his absence. The rule and precedent of this Mission is that language students can refuse to do any Mission work until they have completed two years of the language course I feel that I really ought to avail myself of my right to refuse this work. It would be impossible for me to do this (work) as I have been given no opportunity to learn the present system." He suggested Miss Young, Mr. Peterson or Mr. Hwang. *From his viewpoint Dr. Worhley was partly right, but oh, so wrong for his participation in the TCM and the respect of all the others in Ba.*

Criticisms continued to fly on both sides. The W's and E's continued writing their letters to Bro. Corey and now W-s began to write to their Living Link churches and to their families. This spreading of their discontent and criticisms to others in the US did not help; only magnified the problem by involving their families and churches.

Leland had been writing to his father from earlier but now the Worhleys began to write her mother. This was because now Mrs. Wing had had the information sent by Bro. Corey of the W-s resignation. Mrs. Wing wired to Bro. Corey: "Greatly shocked at your letter. Contents my first information. No such word from children. Don't blame Worhleys but investigate and remedy conditions. Resignation sometimes requires more courage than to remain. Situation demands you probe real conditions to bottom. Consult immediately Mrs. Shelton, her children and the MacLeods. Make them tell you what they know. Children must not return. You to blame if they do. Corinthians 13 demands you investigate and remedy conditions. Cable Worhleys - mother said they must remain & await solution of problems. Dona Wing." *Now it can be known from where the blind attitude came which prevents full maturity.* Apparently she wrote immediately asking that

her friend, a Mrs. Cason, talk to Mrs. Shelton before she gets a letter from Corey. “Am hoping she will tell you all the things she told A. (Amanda) and I before they left the states.” *So apparently whatever Mrs. Shelton had said was truly significant in the attitude of the Worhleys.*

Apparently Mrs. Cason wrote immediately to Bro Corey and he returns this answer (2-16-25) that he appreciates her not writing to Mrs. Shelton for she has been so long from the field she no longer knows the conditions there. He reassures her that he hopes and thinks the matter can be resolved.

As Pete is writing to MacLeods there is a commotion in town. Soldiers are beating Ho Si Ling’s mother. “Mr. Emerson went up and returned saying the soldiers were upset being out of food or money. Ma Si Ling is planning a trip to collect something for them. Another cause is that the soldiers want a monopoly on the graft from the dragon dance performance for the New Year and the young fellows in town do not want them to have it. When Ma Si Ling goes to Yengin Morse wants Lee Gway Gwang to go itinerating.”

Peterson writes that Morse is very enthusiastic about the new station. “J.C. (Jim Ogden) is very tired of the way some missionaries are acting. We expect something to happen and if J.C. spills over some one may be hurt.” Pete wonders if W’s resignation has been accepted. If he felt as some people do he would certainly pack and leave. “Dissatisfaction with the work and people is the worst thing that can happen. You wrote ‘confidence is the backbone of business’ and this is even more true in missionary work. They remind me of an adolescent who believes the whole world is against them and they are martyrs to a holy cause of right and truth.” (2-5-25)