

Chapter 25

The Petersons Return

Many things had happened since 9-12-29 when last Raymond wrote to Dad Fillmore. They had left with many things undone, with some things for sale not even listed. These should be worth about \$1000. They left Ba Oct. 4 with native Christians escorting them to the hot springs. They stayed at Miliding with the Washi. "Mr. and Mrs. Duncan brought the orphans over in the morning to say goodbye but Duncan himself was the only foreigner to go out the road with them and he only a little way. He said he was sorry that the children had whooping cough and asked Georgia several times if she did not think it best to leave.

Undated Note by Dr. Bare: "I do not think you should go out with Petersons tomorrow morning. I believe to do so would be setting a very poor example to many of the natives. In the eyes of many you would be robbing me of 'face' & giving 'face' to him. But that is a small matter and I am trying to see above that & consider the good of the work - so betrayed by that whited sepulcher. Certainly his sins have been far more injurious to the work than those of Worthleys and Emersons..."

"Just last week I requested Li Gway Gwang to read I Cor. 5:9-13, and...he preached from that subject. Verse 11 says we should not keep company with such. Please pardon me if it seems as though I am meddling in your affairs. That is the last thing I wish to do. Please think the matter over carefully and do what you think best. Fraternaly, NH Bare, Chmn, TCM."

He did not tell Petersons that he and Bares had argued about him going, but Duncan had insisted on going. (*Finally someone had some compassion!*) Looking at the pass Duncan worried at the snow falling, as did Georgia; but it was too much to go back to the Bares' hostility. So they went on and the Washi insisted that they must go on over the pass, as, if any more snow fell they would never make it over the pass at all. "I did not know what to do...to go back or to go on. Georgia said it would be very hard to go back so I put Charles, who was not well, in Georgia's chair and she rode." RAP

The third day we passed over the highest pass @ 16,500' and camped below...got to Litang in 12 days. Here it was that we first noticed that James was swollen - his hands and face and later feet and legs up to his knees. I tried all I could for him but had no heart

medicine such as he evidently needed.”

A portion of Raymond Peterson’s diary (Oct 4, 1929 to Dec. 31, 1929):

“10-23-29 James is swollen - worried.”

They had contracted the men for the trip but not for the number of days it would take. Pete tried to hurry them as such slow travel and high passes was getting the best of James but he could not make them. At Hokeo the official tried to make them promise to get to Tat in 6 days but no use. ‘The day that James died we went over a high pass in an awful snow storm while I was ahead arguing with the men to go down off the top of the pass to camp. When the boys called saying James was back sick and Georgia arrived with him, he was dead then.’”

Another portion:

“10-28-29 Up early to start 7:30 OK but snow coming - up and over pass in storm. Men want to stop. Get down to other side. Mother sends for me.

James is dead - go almost to pieces. Mother is OK. Bad & wet, etc. Just sit in tent. Try to plan. Write to Edgar and Andrews.

10-29-29 Late start, better going to warm valley. Letter from Edgar. Want us in house.”

“Georgia said that he just passed away in the chair sleeping in Mary Ida’s arms. We were both much overcome. We finally left our loads and started off. They finally got to Tat @ 8 PM 10-31-29. I walked. We put James in a little box they had ready and we buried him up behind the house...with Ogdens’ Bertha and a King baby. Mr. Edgar is a friend of mine in the CIM and we stayed on one side of his house.”

“10-31-29 Early start 7:55. All on horses for heavy snow...Mary & Charles on Sparky.

I walk. Edgar and Mrs. Andrews help food & beds, etc. Tired, back sore.”

11-8-29 Raymond found much business needed to be taken care of as Mr. Edgar has not time nor inclination to do it. Mr. Cunningham left without proper leave. He had orders of money to get out of Batang and Duncan had orders for goods “and I have to pay the men - the chair men and the yak men. On the other hand the children are all sick with whooping cough and we do not want to take any more chances with them at all.”

“11-10-29 Letter from Duncan, mean, etc. Counsel about course.

11-13-29 Got Batang list copied. Begin work on travel acct.

11-14-29 Read as quite nervous. Think about James a great deal.”

They had Dr. Andrews over to look at the children and did not

expect to leave until he gave permission. "He is of the Seventh Day Adventist Church and has four children of his own, very nice people." Raymond soon realizes that Duncan has been talking to people but with a reaction that he might not expect. "Edgar seems to have Duncan sized up about right and has been most friendly to us." This eases their sore and bruised hearts. He wrote to Chengtu to get a house, which the Baptist Mission voted to let them have at the Union University grounds. It is like a park, fine for the children.

11-23-29 Georgia to Folks: She tells sadly of James' death of whooping cough and heart trouble. "Mr. Edgar, an Australian, whose wife is not here and Dr. and Mrs. Andrews are most kind and helpful. We will wait until it is safe for the children to travel."

Raymond talked long with Mr. Edgar who advised him to contact others like Standard Oil for a job to keep them here until the furor died down. There he learned that Jim Ogden had committed suicide and wondered what effect that would have. It means the end of the Batang Mission, perhaps rightfully, as Mr. Edgar puts it, "The Blessing of God has not been upon it, because of the very way it was opened." (?) He says to Dad, "I have laid low and not said much. Things will come out in the open. It may take several years. I hope you will live to be proud of us again. We expect to make good." He cabled Marx in Shanghai about the delay due to the children's illness and the work there in Tat needing to be done. "At the request of Mr. Edgar...we expect to do the right thing." He was working on money deals. Duncan gave him only \$1000 which was already used. If he can get some work soon it will be OK. "Please do not worry about us, we are not worth it. We are out of the bad atmosphere of Batang amid friends. With love, Ray."

Ray wrote to Charles Alcon, Att'y at Law (11-19-29) with all the information, his suspicions and anxieties wanting what protection he can find. He told of his decision to stay in China if he can find work. He is fearful of the effect of Ogden's death on the women. Worried about the kind of audit that will be sent in of his books and demands an audit in the US if necessary and gave him the right to handle all such business, including their resignation if he deems wise.

"12-3, 4-29 Took & finished psycho-analysis.

12-6-29 Ray had written to Standard Oil Co (Socono).

12-10-29 Long talk in PM till 10:30 on R. AFFAIR, ETC.

Mr. Edgar asked, 'Have I treated you in a Christian manner? That is the most important thing.'"

Diary: "12-13-29 Dye letter in PM. Not to Chengtu. Blue & don't know what to do. Edgar talks in PM till late, get nothing done. Lv on 12-16-29."

12-27-29 Georgia to Folks from Yachow, Sze. They arrived the 23rd, the trip being good, but cold. Their business had finished, the road peaceful, a good caravan leader in town and it was time for the weather to change for the worse, making it impossible to stay, so they go. Mary Ida had begun to cough harder again, but they all have good appetites and are lively. The baby is small but gets Klim as well as her milk. They will continue for three days on a house-raft down river.

They had a very nice Christmas at Yachow, trees and stockings for the children.

12-29-29 After the house-raft they will transfer to a houseboat to Chungking. From there to Kiating where they will transfer to steamers, and be more comfortable.

⁶⁴KLH Duncan published an article summarizing the year's work. The school has not as large an enrollment but the standards are higher due to having two High School trained young men from the Yachow School who returned to Ba. Four of the six teachers are Christian and the other two attend church regularly. Many former students have gone down to lower China and upon their return should be leaders in the civil and military.

The church has a membership of 75. Eleven were baptized last year. Most members are young people. The church has elected a board of four elders, four deacons and four deaconesses. They have discussed the pastor's salary and collected pledges from church members. The deaconesses planned for a World Day of Prayer observance. No itineration outside of the Batang Valley has been possible due to war conditions and robberies but six Valley villages have been preached in 89 times. Another young man has volunteered to be an evangelist.

Marion Duncan did what he felt he had to do about the Petersons but he gradually realized the full situation and felt the extreme actions were over-reactions.

1929 Annual Report - Marion Duncan: A History of the School-

1926-27:- Teachers- native 12, foreigners 3; four Middle School subjects taught. Teachers incl. Mrs. Duncan and Mrs. Peterson, Della, Liu Ja Dju Tsenden, Lin Tzu Chun, Elan, Hosiling, Bay Shwan, Wun, Lin Tzu Chun, Lha Hsi, Chun Tze Ming, Shay Jeru, Ho Gway Shang, Fu Hong Win, Li Gway Gwang, and Tudebao. Mr. Duncan was principal. Mr. Ogden taught Tibetan to the Mission teachers.

1927-28 Mr. Ogden Principal with 54 orphans and 21 others. Teachers: Sbaygeru, Lee Gway Gwang, Lee Gway Yin, Fu tsong ru

⁶⁴ World Call. "The Signs of the Times in Batang," K. Louise H. Duncan, July, 1930. P. 27.

(Tudebao), Gezong Tsetring, Hla Hsi, Ho Gway Shang, Eu Hong Yin, and Mrs. Peterson in music. Because of new government regulations the school was registered Nov. 30, 1927 with only three classes. Graduates of Higher Primary number 18 plus Lee Gway Gwang and Hosiling all with Mr. Peterson examining and passing them. During MacLeod's principalship were 6, incl. Della, to graduate.

1928-29 (Not noted by Duncan) Mr. Peterson had Lee Gway Gwang as principal and head of the Education Committee. Many changes were made to make the school more acceptable to the Chinese, the building had some remodeling to make it more comfortable. It was more integrated into the community. Shageru acted as native principal with Mr. Peterson principal of the Middle School.

OCCASIONS for enjoyment in the year were the Chinese New Year Festival in Feb., when friends came for tea and new clothes were worn; Easter with an egg hunt; a July picnic was held; Thanksgiving is another feast; and Christmas meaning a feast with a Christmas tree, and presents from Santa Claus. The extra food at these times may be the biggest draw.

WORK is important for them to learn to take care of themselves and each other, but also for the boys to learn to do tasks for the good of all which is different in a culture where women do most of the daily labor.

SICKNESS - there was not much, except the influenza. The regular exams given monthly helped cut down on problems with teeth. Medicine is regularly given for worms. A case of castor bean poisoning was prevented from being fatal. The problem of OLDER CHILDREN is being solved by arranging for marriages or for them to go out to work. There were three robberies but only once was anything gotten away with. Clothing was stolen by one or more of the children from each other. Two children returned to their own homes and were promised they could continue attending church despite their families being Mohammedan. Two orphans were married as Christians, the weddings being in the Duncan home.

INVENTORY showed that each orphan has two sets of cotton clothes and one set of woolen with one pair of shoes. Needles, thread, some wool cloth, 10 bolts of cotton and some foreign cloth and several shears. Food filled all the bins with beans, potatoes, corn, peas, wheat, barley, millet, buckwheat, cabbages, squash, and turnips (provided by Mrs. Peterson), except for meat no other purchases are needed. The biggest need is for mattresses, another building to segregate boys from girls. A family to teach gardening and be with them all the time is necessary.

The goal for 1930 is to train them in character, not to

Americanize them, but to study their own customs to train them to live the very best possible way. Bedwetters were sent to the Hospital to be cured and most returned so. There was one robbery scare in Dec. but the children howled so a gun was fired and the soldiers from the Fort came.

For December Behda ye was given a new suit of clothes. He lives at the Orphanage getting his food, clothes and \$.05 gold for spending money each month. He is a Christian.

Medical Dr. Bare: 24,000 treatments were given in hospital and dispensary. People no longer fear coming to the Hospital and some come traveling many days.