

**Supplementary Documents, The Church Missionary Society in Hangzhou,
1937-1938**

Uploaded May 8, 2019

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The Church Missionary Society (Anglican) in Britain maintained a mission station and a large hospital in Hangzhou at the time of the Sino-Japanese war. Bishop John Curtis presided over all evangelical and educational work in Zhejiang (Chekiang) Province and Dr. Stephen Douglas Sturton ran a medical complex of 500 beds, which in the mid-1920s had 18 doctors together with nurses and supporting staff and maintained a medical college with over 60 students. Both men were in the city during the events of the fall and winter of 1937-38 chronicled by McMullen in his weekly letters. We consulted the archives of the CMS at the Cadbury Library of the University of Birmingham to see how others in Hangzhou reported these same events.

First-hand records for the CMS Hangzhou mission in this single year are few and far between, found in two principal locations. The most extensive and detailed information can be gleaned from the Annual Reports of individuals doing evangelical, educational, and medical mission work. These were submitted each year to the home office in London and were filed alphabetically by last name. (CMS Archives, Section 1, East Asian Missions, Part 20, Reels 440-442). We confronted three problems in trying to extract material about wartime conditions from these reports. First, they were typically written in the summer of each year, looking back over the previous twelve months. Thus reports for 1937, composed in July, did not capture the war around Shanghai in the late summer or the Japanese military advance in the fall or the occupation of Hangzhou at the end of the year; by the time missionaries got around to writing reports for the next year, their accounts of events were cast in the past tense and displayed little inclination to dwell on what had now already happened. Second, most of these reports were quite narrow narratives about people coming and going, local activities and the stuff of missionary life (Bible study, congregational meetings, hospital work, facilities and costs) – accounts which tended to swallow up broader description and reflections. Finally, these records were often handwritten and then preserved on microfilm, making them devilishly difficult to decipher, let alone reproduce digitally. We post here two of these annual reports from the summer of 1938, one composed by Bishop Curtis, the other by Rev. W.R.O. Taylor, who was the acting secretary of the mission for that year.

More helpful were documents archived in a file entitled “Sino-Japanese Relations, 1937-38” (CHgP1). These were reports from all over China about wartime conditions and included a few contemporaneous accounts of events in Hangzhou from the fall and winter of 1937-38. We found three letters from Taylor, the first in September upon his arrival in Hangzhou and two others written in November. No further correspondence from him was found in this file, but there is a letter from Bishop Curtis, composed in February 1938, describing events in the city reaching back into December.

None of these documents – which we reproduce here in chronological order – convey the urgency of the situation or the complexity of activity that are to be found in McMullen’s regular missives. But while they lack the richness of his description, they do carry echoes of McMullen’s accounts. Certain familiar themes in McMullen’s letters rebound through the material in the CMS archives: the isolation felt by those in Hangzhou; the lack of information, whether via radio or letters; the challenges posed by daily Japanese bombing raids; the efforts in the fall to keep schools and hospitals running; the new perplexities in winter about how to deal

with the occupation authorities; and a persistent tendency in writing about wartime events to play down the horrors of looting and raping that they witnessed – whether to avoid giving offense to the Japanese, or to reassure those back home, or in recognition that conditions in Hangzhou were not as dire as elsewhere (clear reports about what happened in Nanjing were available to them by February of 1938).

Letter from Rev. W.R.O. Taylor, September 7, 1937

W.R.O. Taylor was the acting secretary for the CMS mission in Hangzhou during 1937-38, replacing John Bird who went on furlough in August 1937. He arrived from Chefoo in the first week of September, two days before McMullen landed in Shanghai on his return from furlough, and he composed his first report to the CMS Secretary, J. Gurney Barclay, in London on September 7th, two days before McMullen's first letter home.

Source: CMS Archives CHg P1 "Sino-Japanese Relations."

CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY
Hangchow
SHAOSHING, CHEKIANG.

REF. No. 735

RECD 13 OCT 1937

September 7th, 1937

Miss Duggan
Please return copy

J. Gurney Barclay, Esq.
C.M.S. Secretary.

Dear Mr Barclay,

I got home safely on Friday night from Chefoo, travelling with Mr Thompson of the C.I.M. We went to Tsingtau by boat, then by train via Tsinan, Nanking, and from there to Hangchow by a loop line from Soochow to Kashing, which avoids Shanghai. We came through quite easily travelling third class, but left our wives behind, as when we left we felt quite uncertain what obstructions we might meet on the road. There are a number of people staying in Chefoo, who think it better to wait for Shanghai boats to run again. There is some suggestion of certain boats running, but consular advice is against women and children returning to Shanghai "till the military situation becomes stabilized." And it's not at all easy to get out of Shanghai when once there; so I am counselling Mrs Taylor to stay patiently at Chefoo for a bit and see what happens.

The bishop tells me that two cables have been sent to you saying we are all well. I thought I had better write and tell you how people are, and something of how the conditions affect our work just now. I am sending a copy of this letter in a week's time, in case this gets lost. The second copy enclosed will you kindly forward to Mr Bird? You will of course hear over the radio and through the papers the "war news," so I need not say anything about that generally. The serious fighting in Shanghai began on August 14th. The bishop was not able to go to Shanghai that week-end, and has not been since - much to everyone's relief. Communication with Mr Ottewell was cut off for a number of days. But in time he made arrangements with the Bishop and Dr Sturton for supply of money, and I believe there is no anxiety on that score. As regards our missionaries, I am not sure if the Gaunts are back in Nanking. Miss Churchill is probably remaining in Foochow pro tem. Dr Sergeant was evacuated to Hongkong, and Mrs Sergeant is going there from Chefoo. Dr S. I believe wrote offering to come back and resume hospital work if needed, but was persuaded to go to Hongkong to complete his treatment, which seems to have been doing him a lot of good. All the rest of our missionaries are either here or at Mokansan, and are all well, - though Miss Varley had some fever during the summer, so is at present in hospital for treatment. She is much better however. During the crisis, both Dr Sturton and the Bishop have been on hand. Dr Sturton had his short holiday, which he was badly needing, and since has been keeping very well. The Bishop, everyone says, has been the very greatest help all the time, keeping things going along cheerfully. He has of course had no holiday at all, as is his wont, and I am sorry to say, that though he is not ill in the sense of being put to bed, he has been by no means well with some digestive trouble, I hear. He is getting over it, but it is unusual to see the bishop looking white and thin. I should say that his presence with us at this time has been invaluable to our work, the missionaries and the Church, and one hopes that as the cooler weather comes, he will quite recover and yet will not lay himself up by overdoing it.

As regards work, which usually starts with a swing about now, it seems as if everything is going on as well as it can under the discouraging conditions. Dr Sturton told me that up to Saturday no less than 22 air-raid alarms had been given. Since then I have heard two more. It seems that the planes do not drop bombs over the city, though they have

Two Letters from Rev. W.R.O. Taylor, November 6 and 20, 1937

After a long delay, two more letters from November give some updates on the war situation and news about individuals.

Source: CMS Archives CHg P1 “Sino-Japanese Relations.”

J. Gurney Barclay, Esq.
Secretary, C. M. S.

Dear Mr Barclay,

A
REF. No. 735
Saturday, November 6th, 1937
RECD - 3 DEC 1937

I regret very much, and apologise, for not having written for so long, - not (I think) since the middle of September. I am prompted to do so at once by receipt of copies of letters, etc. from you, sent on by Mr Carpenter from Hongkong. I must confess that the originals, in nearly every case (I think) duly reached me, - some no doubt delayed. My not writing has been due, not so much to being busy, as to a good deal of preoccupation, due to these peculiar war conditions. Even as I am typing, an air raid alarm is going (sirens), and follows an "all clear" signal given only half an hour ago, - 10 a.m. It is also a dull day, inclined to rain, when we hope for respite from these things! The most recent news is, that the Japanese have made a landing at Chapu, on the north side of Hangchow Bay, and are said to be moving on the railway at Kashing. I expect there's some truth in it, though Kashing is a long way from the coast. However, I do not want to get side-tracked on to war news, which you will be getting in a much more balanced way than we do.

I think it is quite right to say that all our work is going on normally, - church, schools and hospital, though affected and handicapped by the war. Letters from home are arriving, sometimes with hardly any delay. They seem to come from Shanghai direct, by train or post office vans. People still travel to Shanghai by train, bus or private cars, though all are liable to attack. Normal communication with Shanghai just now however is by Ningpo. British and Italian steamers run from there frequently and there is a good deal of coming and going.

I think I had better make this letter a short one, to acknowledge your communications, and to give you personal news. Next week I will try to give special detailed attention to a number of ~~stixix~~ matters that seem to have been held up, and then write you again. Bishop Curtis seems much better than when I wrote you last, and continues to be a very great help to us all. Mrs Curtis and the doctors have of course been working under considerable strain. The severely wounded men in the hospital have been recovering, and should now be moving out to make room for others. This problem of wounded is a very anxious one for those concerned. The general feeling is that arrangements for treating them are most inadequate. And it is difficult to move in the matter. Dr Sturton has a heavy responsibility and has not been too well, though not seriously ill, I am glad to say. He has just had a bad attack of flu. The latest news of the sergeants is very good. I understand that Dr Sergeant would be allowed to come back to work, if it were thought advisable. I hear he is anxious to come, but has been advised to wait at least till the end of this month. I suppose it is purely a matter for the doctors to decide; but he does seem to be very much better. Miss Bargrove has had to go through a course of treatment for some weeks, necessitating her lying down most of the time. I believe she is much better and is allowed to get up and do a little work. But she is difficult to restrain where work is concerned! I understand Mr Murray is a great acquisition at the Hospital. The Bishop also helps in the financial side of the work.

CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY

-SHAOHING, CHEKIANG.

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Miss North postponed her furlough for a month, owing to Miss Largrove not being well, but she now expects to leave Hongkong about the 3rd of December. She may leave here for Shanghai about the 20th inst. We hope she will be able to go by private car with Dr and Mrs Robert Fitch. (Mrs Fitch, as you will remember, was Miss May Robson.) This is only proposed; all will depend on circumstances at the time. If necessary, Mr Murray has kindly offered to take her to Ningpo, and put her safely on the British ship there for Shanghai, where she will be met by Mr Ottewell.

Miss Churchill seems to be well and happy in Foochow, but writes she will be glad to come back as soon as she is sent for. My wife is still at Chefoo. Until quite recently the consul would not allow the shipping company to sell tickets to foreign women for Shanghai; and the Nanking railway route seemed too risky. But as time has gone by we have had to think about the Children's long winter holiday. Normally this is two months, - December and January; and unless the children are C.I.M. they are not allowed to remain at school during those months. Also we felt, and everyone agrees with us, that if possible, we should not have them back in Hangchow this winter while war is on. So my wife and I thought that she had better stay on in Chefoo till the holidays are over, and perhaps take a small house, or board somewhere with the children. The C.I.M. have made things easier for everybody by arranging to have only one month's holiday this Xmas, and then lengthening the Easter hols. from two weeks to six, with the hope the war will be over and the children may get home. However, this month has to be provided for and my wife has written of several possibilities, - there seem to be houses vacant that are only occupied during the summer. The C.I.M. San is also full, with parents and others who have not been permitted to return to stations. The Missionary Home is closed. Boarding possibilities are few, except at the summer hotels, who are glad to keep open even with few guests, if only to keep soldiers out. I hope you will pardon me mentioning these details; but I do so because the Bishop has kindly offered to write to you to ask if the C.M.S. would consider giving us a special rent allowance during the six months or so that my wife is compelled to stay on in Chefoo. You will realize that by living alone here, ^{in Chefoo} our expenses are quite a bit higher than they would usually be. I need not say that we would greatly appreciate some help towards this; but the Bishop is writing to you. I think the Bishop will also be mentioning the Sergeants in this connexion; and as I know their expenses must be considerably above the normal, I would heartily support a grant on their behalf. Chefoo continues to be considered safe by the consul; I haven't heard a suggestion of any evacuation from there.

I am glad to say Miss Varley is much better and is at present at her station, Tunglu, with Miss Batchelor. We do not propose that Miss Varley should be left alone at Tunglu, so after a few weeks she will probably be coming in to Hangchow for a time. I hear that the Gaunts are in Hongkong, where they flew from Hankow. When their luggage arrives they expect to go to Yunnan to work, and Mr Gaunt says he has written home to you to be transferred to that Mission. As the C.T.S. opening in Nanking now is out of the question, I should think it excellent that Mr Gaunt's services can be used elsewhere.

I shall be writing again soon and apologise again for this long delay.

CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY

SHAUGHING, CHEKIANG. CHINA.
Hangchow,

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Saturday, November 20th, 1937.

J. Gurney Barclay, Esq.
C.M.S. Secretary.
6 Salisbury Square,
London, E.C.4.

Dear Mr Barclay,

It is a week since I wrote you the letter of which I enclose a copy. I quite hope it slipped through the war barrier between us and Shanghai and got through on the way to you, and that it will be the same with this. We are told however that letters can't get beyond Ningpo at present; though we hope a way will be found of getting round the boom in the river and so to Shanghai. The land route is quite closed because of the fighting line now running from the coast about a place called Chapu, through Kashing, Soochow, North to the Yangtse. The London broadcast at 1.30 comes here through Hongkong at 9.30, and it seems to me that your news is as clear and full as ours here. We are getting newspapers and depend on the radio. But we have of course all the rumours, and during this week the population of this city has reacted to them by clearing out to the country and southern towns just as fast as it has been possible to get vehicles. It is said that 7 out of 10 people have gone, and that many are staying simply because it was impossible to get near the river, or to get boats even for very high sums of money.

We have been free from air raid alarms for a week, during which it has rained heavily. And we are grateful to the clouds for covering up the full moon for some nights! But last Monday the rumour was that "the Japanese were coming quickly," hence the stampede; but they have not turned up yet. There is no word of Hangchow on the radio. The plan seems to be to get through the Tai Hu (Lake), or round the south of it, so as to be able to use the main motor road that runs from here to Nanking. But imagination runs even more quickly than the Japanese advance and the fighting line still seems to run half way from us to Shanghai. However we shall probably have them here fairly soon, as they will hardly leave open this back door to their rear.

When writing to my wife yesterday, though doubtful if letters can get through to Chefoo, I asked her to write to you and say two or three things, in case this letter is delayed. First, we in this Mission are all well and safe. Two days ago we thought it well to wire Miss Curtis at Chuki and Misses Varley and Batchelor at Tunglu, and ask them to phone the Bishop at the Hospital. Miss Varley replied on Friday, saying they were well and quiet at Tunglu, that no boats or busses were available for travelling just now, and that the Pastor was not worried about their safety. Our suggestion was they they should come in to Hangchow if they could and thought it necessary; but they did not seem to think it was. Miss Curtis, who has been in the country, has not yet phoned in, - probably because not yet back in the city. She will, however, probably come in to Hangchow, to help with the nursing, as soon as convenient for her. The Taichow ladies are further away, and there seems no special point in urging them to come to Hangchow, or to Ningpo - now that there is no communication with Shanghai. Taichow is not on the line of retreat, or attack, as some other places may be; also there are three C.I.M. missionaries there, or near, with whom to consult.

THE NEXT THING IS THAT NO WORD OR HINT HAS COME FROM THE CONSUL TO EVACUATE. Also, without one exception that I know of, every member of the Mission feels it right to stay by our work. I understand that this policy will be consistently followed by the Hospital, which has now, this week, been offered and accepted the whole responsibility for the care of the seriously wounded in all the Hangchow area. I mentioned the wounded that were sent in weeks ago; but now, all those have left and have been replaced by recent serious cases. In addition to this, the mayor asked Dr Sturton to take charge of hundreds of cases, - up to 1000, as some of the hospital units that were looking after them, might have to evacuate the city. Dr Sturton and the Bishop rose to the occasion magnificently, together with Dr Chang Sin-pei (one of Dr Main's old students, and the Hangchow Health Officer), and hundreds of men are now housed in buildings next door to the Hospital, into which special entrances have been made, so that it is not necessary to go out into the street to communicate with them. Some of the Red Cross staff is working with these men under Dr Sturton, and the mayor handed the sum of Fifty thousand dollars to the Hospital, to be accounted for in the care of these wounded. This ready money, of course, is a great help at this difficult time in the running of the Hospital.

Dr Sturton has had several British and Red Cross flags put up on the buildings and at Song Moh Dzang; also some half dozen huge tin Union Jacks have been painted and are laid flat on the roofs for the edification of airmen. A telegram has also been sent to Mr Ottewell, asking him through the consulate to have the Japanese informed in case of hospitalities. As you know, we have some six other houses, including Mary Vaughan School, our house here, Miss Leathers' house and the one where Miss Woods is now working, also Miss Moule's. I have had Union Jacks put on all those; and have also prepared a notice to put on the doors when the Japanese entry seems imminent, to the effect that they are C.M.S. property, occupied by Christians only, and not sheltering military or political people, and asking anyone concerned to send for me to answer questions. I will leave my card with the gatekeepers, and hope that this notice - in English and Chinese - will be respected. My experience of Japanese courtesy, when I was there for seven months in 1927, makes me think that they will not act unreasonably towards our properties and people, if their attention is properly called to them.

I must tell you also that Mary Vaughan School has closed, though Miss Woods and the new principal have organized a sort of unofficial school for various children who are at home during these days with nothing to do. Various people are very pleased about this. However, the main building is left empty as a school; but the pastor conceived the idea of approaching the Bishop for permission to use it as a sort of place of refuge for our Christians who have been unable to get away. Some of the very poor will probably take advantage of it; also some better off ones have already moved in. There will not be many, as most have gone, but some are very glad to come under whatever protection our flag, and one's presence is expected to secure. We are of course insisting on bona fide Christians only coming in and strictly non-combatants. The pastor has laid in some rice, and the people will probably remain in during the few days of greatest crisis, when and however it comes. There is unfortunately great fear, of several things: that the city might be burnt before the enemy arrive, the possible bombs and shelling, the military press-gangs combing the street for every available coolie, retreating soldiers - wounded or other - out of control and looting, and not least the presence of the Japanese themselves. Obviously no protection can be guaranteed, but it is believed that God will protect His Own.

Circular to Friends of the Chekiang Mission, February 2, 1938

While there are no further letters from Taylor in this file, but there is indication that Barclay and others at CMS headquarters in London were hungry for news and had only scant information once the Japanese occupied Hangzhou on Christmas Eve, 1937. One circular memo to “Friends of the Chekiang Mission” in February summarizes what little was known.

Source: CMS Archives CHg P1 “Sino-Japanese Relations.”

General Secretary:
Rev. Prof. W. WILSON GARRI, D.D.

CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY
6, SALISBURY SQUARE, LONDON, E.C. 4.

2nd February 1938.

MEMO. TO FRIENDS OF THE CHEKIANG MISSION

HANGCHOW. - You may like to know that Miss Bargrove wrote on January 2nd:-

"The staff is working loyally and it has been wonderful to be with them through these days to try and encourage and help them. Hospital is as full as ever it can be - stores are under rations, but we are managing very well". She also said that they had been completely cut off since December 21st, and even radio news ceased on the 23rd.

Dr. Sturton wrote on January 10th to Dr. Cook as follows:-

"I am permitted to send you these few lines by the courtesy of the Japanese military authorities. There is no Post Office yet, but they are kindly sending out some personal letters for us by aeroplane. Hangchow was occupied about 9 a.m. on Christmas Eve, and I am glad to report to you that all in the Hospital are well, and that we are treated courteously. We have been frantically busy, as you might expect, but the spirit of all our missionary staff has been splendid, and I believe that we have been able to relieve many patients. My wife is now recovering from what proved to be a severe attack of bronchitis and may soon be able to go downstairs. Must close with profoundest thanksgiving for God's preserving mercies".

J. GURNEY BARCLAY,

Secretary.

Letter from Bishop John Curtis, February 19, 1937

Some two weeks later, Bishop Curtis wrote a long letter giving a retrospective report on the situation in Hangzhou since the Japanese occupation of the city. Dated February 19, 1938 it was not received in London until late March.

Source: CMS Archives CHg P1 “Sino-Japanese Relations.”

Letter to Bishop Norris:
to (and) not to put on me to you.
F. L. N. J.

| |
|---------------------|
| REF. No. <u>735</u> |
| Hangchow, China |
| REC'D 28 MAR 1938 |
| Feb. 19th. 1938. |

Letter from Bishop Curtis

missionaries

We have had no personal trouble or serious danger here,

~~missionaries~~ Air raids before the occupation were all on railways etc. and all outside occupied areas though there were a few casualties, but speaking generally there was no danger here before the occupation. With reference to the occupation we had in conference with the local Chinese Chamber of Commerce through our three (British American French) Consuls-general appealed to both armies to spare Hangchow on account of its cultural (?) associations etc. ^{from} (1) aerial and artillery bombing, (2) street fighting (3) incendiarism. We could of course only give vague assurances that the Chinese forces would really assist, but all was somehow so arranged, and we were spared all these things and the Chinese retired round the city and to the other side of the river and Hangchow was occupied without any sign of resistance. Our hope was that this would mean a peaceful occupation and a continuance of normal living after a day or so: ~~but~~ weeks after the occupation we foreigners were necessary factors in safe-guarding in Red Cross Refuges numbers of women and children, which now 2 months after are still about ~~2000~~ ²⁰⁰⁰ or ~~1000~~ ⁸⁰⁰⁰ in number. For weeks we had over 20,000 although far the bigger half of our population had evacuated before the occupation. It just was a fact that only in these places could these refugees live. We had a certain amount of trouble but not a very great deal in protecting these refugees. They were all in foreign property protected by Red

Cross, Foreign flags, Consular notices, Military Police notices etc. etc. and the people inside were kept safe. We foreigners were looked after though there were three cases of assault by drunken or other soldiery, and at any time for a few weeks there was danger from drunken or other soldiers uncontrolled all over the town:- not one house or shop was left untouched in the whole town, so that even now, when order prevails over a large portion of the town, no shops can be open as there are no stocks, and many people have only the walls of their houses, and owing to very many large but not necessarily intentional fires many have not even walls - and many quarters of the city are only safe for men. We were taking a risk when we decided that the Hospital would try to live through whatever came, a bigger risk than we knew beforehand for our Chinese nurses etc. etc. but by the good hand of our God upon us we have been the one spot of ordered life in a distracted city and all this refugee work etc. under God largely depended on the fact that our C.M.S. Hospital gave a foothold of security to the city - our city father lived with us through the occupation. The A.P.C. men and Postal Commissioner are still with us, and the Red Cross meetings are all held here. Our Chinese nurses were splendid - some of course were taken away by rightly nervous parents, a few left of their own fear, but the big majority dug in and carried on splendidly, and when we took on (at the Provincial Government's request when they had to leave) a few hundred seriously wounded Chinese soldiers, (with a staff to look after them which faded before the occupation,) we were reinforced by the evacuated staff of the Meth. Epis. (South) Hospital from Huchow 70 miles north of us, which came as a fairly complete unit and took over. The Provisional authorities also provided cash for this Hospital for three months, and

that has been our salvation! so that we are all full of thankfulness to God for His care over us during what might have been a dreadful time. Now as occupied territory we have many pinpricks but nothing serious. No post, no papers since Dec. 17th, but we hear the news (only a gap of 11 days when we had no current). I am quite cut off from the Diocese, three fourths of it is across the river I am with Reuben Gad and half Manasseh, and don't know how even they are, as they have been fought over back and forth, (i.e. the three parishes this side of the river.) ~~But~~ ^{In} the city the residue of our S.K.H. people made a Christian village of one of our schools (Mary Vaughan) and lived there in comparative peace under Taylor. Miss Woods had another peaceful set of communities under her care: Miss Moule's house, our city Church, her own premises and another foreign house all nearly adjacent made up another ordered place with kindergarten, primary and junior middle school classes all the time: and women's classes too! ~~Off~~ ^{Off} with the chapeau! I have done all sorts of odd jobs - banker, treasurer, escorter of bands of women and children from homes to refuges: escort on truck or ambulance or car for coal, wood rice, patients etc. from place to place: night-watchman when necessary: deliverer of milk and daily visitor of our other ~~key~~ centres - Miss Woods' and Taylor's - when times were bad, to see that all was well there as it always was!

Hospital busy, especially as the women in refugee camps came in for babies - never so many in the history of the Hospital, eighty women in where we generally had 10 or 12! and a demand ^{for} ~~of~~ baby clothes etc. etc. but all our wants have been supplied and now we feel we are over the worst. Some Americans have been allowed to go to Shanghai, but British shares are low ~~pro~~tem. I hope to try for release for Easter

for Shanghai, and then visit the rest of the diocese but pro/tem I am more useful here I think. We think continually of you all, so many of our dioceses are directly affected. N. China, Shantung, Honan, Kiangsu, Chekiang, Anking and others partly Shensi, Hongkong, Hankow, Kwangsi-Hunan, and Fukien a little only. Szechuan really out of it and raids go there, and after Hankow will do so increasingly, and the end is not yet.

Well that is something of what happened. Chekiang & Ningpo has been mostly evacuated of its inhabitants but the Church work goes on for the remnant. Our ladies from there and Taichow have been working hard in Shanghai refugee camps since mid November - having been very reluctantly evacuated (on their part) on the advice of the local people. We were cut off and could only leave them to act with the other local missionaries and they sent all women to Shanghai.

I hope we may hear of all the dioceses sometime but so far we have had no papers since Dec. 17th. A couple of Shanghai Newsletters came by hand with your letter ^{and} a return~~ing~~ of ^Eman from Shanghai.

Best wishes to all friends in N. China. We go on in hope of a better day.

Yours very sincerely,

John Curtis

Bishop.

Annual Report from Bishop John Curtis, July 26, 1938 and Acknowledgement, October 31, 1938

We then reproduce two annual reports from the summer of 1938. The first, from Bishop Curtis, is poorly copied and difficult to read. It passes over the harsh realities of occupation with references to “the lion’s den” and the “burning fiery furnace” and focuses instead on how conditions had improved with the “restoration of order” and how the work of the mission – both its hospital and its congregations - was “wonderfully preserved” from “the many dangers of the occupied time, especially the first two months”. The tone of this report elicited an arch acknowledgement from Barclay in late October, noting that Curtis, along with others on the spot, preferred not to talk about “the bad side of things.”

Source: CMS Archives Section 1: East Asian Missions, Part 20/Reel 440.

REA Group I

No. 472/q ✓

Name John Curtis

Hangchow Station

ANNUAL LETTER

(Bishop)
25/10/38

July 26 1938

Please post your Annual Letter (dealing with the year ending June 30) not later than August 31.

We depend on the Annual Letter to give such an account of the individual missionary's work, and such a general view of the Mission and of the conditions in which the work is carried on, as shall supply the information needed for the Society's "Story of the Year," the General Review, the official historical record, and for articles and paragraphs in our magazines and in the Church press.

When any of the work referred to in the course of your letter is new, please state the fact plainly, and in the case of a new station or out-station indicate where it is situated.

All native names should be written in English block capitals. Please mark clearly any part of your letter which is not for publication.

John Curtis, Bp of Ankang

~~Dear Preliminary Cash.~~

See page 10 of the report of the year

It's just over seven months since we were occupied and Hangchow is still almost a dead city. We thank God that thro' the many dangers of the occupied time especially the first two months we were wonderfully preserved both here in the Hospital and in the city. The Hospital was a rallying place for the forces of order and did much to make possible the measure of safety that Hangchow as a whole enjoyed, and Miss Woods' work in the city, ably helped by Miss Moore, Mr. Taylor and many Chinese helpers was something to thank God for. We saw them day by day in the "lions' den" and the "burning fiery furnace" but the mouths of the lions were shut and the furnace had no power to harm them and their proteges. There is no other explanation of their continued safety right in the midst of all kinds of danger but "the good hand of your God upon us". Right thro' first, in emergency, merely providing safety then instruction and an ordered life this has been an oasis of peace and safety, in a dreadfully disaster-stricken city, and including the refugees in the church cared for largely under Miss Woods' supervision there must have been about 600-700 women and children kept safe, fed and in time most of them sent going back to their homes: while still some 300 were and

under regular instruction secular and religious.
The work has moved its centre to the Mary Vaughan School
and its more commodious buildings but all the houses
are still occupied with those still being looked after.
These are 1) the Mary Vaughan School premises and next
door house 2) Miss Leather's Home (Quarter of a mile away)
3) Miss Myles Home & School 4) The Ma Duong Home
2.34 all close to one another round the city-church.
The women and children are now able to pass from
one place to another in safety. Mr. Taylor lives
next door to the Mary Vaughan premises and
helps a lot in all this work.

The Hospital has been able to carry on its work all this
the trouble, aided for some months by the staff of
the Huchon General Hospital (The Methodist Episcopal
Church South (U.S.A.) under Dr. Margaret and
Miss Norton which carried ^{out a good deal of} the special work
amongst wounded soldiers has led over to us
by the Mayor of Haiphong towards the end of
November.

It was a greater risk than we ^{had anticipated} ~~realized~~ keeping our Chinese
nurses at work thro' the occupation but we were merci-
fully preserved from all harm.

Hospital finances have been kept in good order
despite the drop in receipts from about 10000 to 500
gradually mounting to between 2000 and 3000
by grants from British Relief Fund, a regular grant
of 2000 per month & a special grant from the American
Advisory Committee.

^{of special grants from} Masonic lodge funds, ^{and a number of special} donations from home. But the foundation of
our finances was the same the Mayor put at
our disposal for the wounded Soldiers' Hospital.
This which was hoped to be enough to carry on that
work for three months, has carried it on now
for over eight and has enough for another couple
of months but being "cash in hand" it really
financed all Hospital operations during the times
when emergency action had to be taken re food,
supplies etc. It is hard to see how we could
have carried on without this ready money.

There is no particular point in dwelling on the atrocities perpetrated by the Japanese Army - tho they should be remembered for guidance in the future. They surpassed in horror anything we had imagined and Hanyehow like all occupied cities in East China was a city of terror for a couple of months, where no woman and no woman's relatives were safe from outrage or death. However on foreign occupied premises acting mostly as Refugee Camps were not interfered with, that is no women were taken away from them but it was only by constant vigilance and the continued assistance of armed neutral unarméd foreigners and insistence on their going out and ^{by} the cooperation of the very small force of Japanese Military, Police and above all the blessing of God that safety was ensured.

The Church within the city has of course been very much interrupted, most of the Christians are refugees in other places. We have only two clergy here and they have helped greatly in the city with catechizing around Miss Wood's. Services were held in the City Church all times tho in a few weeks only those on the premises or next door could attend. These services were held in the other centres until it was possible to arrange for the assembling of ourselves by the other two city-churches were closed, one is still closed, the other by the lake has been open now on Sundays for about a month. The neighborhood is in a district where practically nobody has returned and those still just taken soldiers' billets were thick.

Nothing can be done outside the city, and we cannot tell when freedom of movement will be possible again along from Hanyehow - part of the ^{Fu Siao} (Fu Siao) parish further up the Chien Tang River suffered so severely. The pastor is a refugee tho still somewhat in the parish and some of our Christian people were killed but we have no reliable details - it was only a few weeks ago we got in touch with the pastor.

The Tung ^{TUNG} ^{FCN} parish further up the river suffered little but of course people slipped out of all these places in expectation of "occupation" ^{Fu Siao} ^{Half Tung}

was occupied but as far as I know none of Tung-fen. A little to the north the (Yu Tsang) parish has been in great danger but so far has not been occupied - the pastor was able to evacuate his family but is himself at his post with his people.

We have had no postal service since occupation now over seven months. When any missionary goes to Shanghai - a most uncomfortable journey - letters may be sent and on his return (she doesn't go!) letters are brought - but these trips are not numerous and at present for over three weeks we have had no communication with the outer world. (We live in ^{isolation} ~~isolation~~)

The rest of the diocese - ^{apart from} ~~at~~ the Shanghai parish and the three mentioned above - has continued outside the war zone except for air raids. Refugees from Ningpo and Ningpo have been numerous and there has been much mortal expectation but the clergy and catechists are all at their posts and work goes on more or less as usual - minus the members of the flock who could afford to become refugees (and these most likely? These who help most substantially? the finances of the parishes!) Unfortunates, our workers from Ningpo and teachers were stampeded into refugeeing at Shanghai for a couple of months. We had to leave them to their own devices and to take advice from their fellow missionaries as we could not get in touch with them and all missionaries were ordered to Shanghai. Moreover they found plenty of work in Shanghai among the refugees but when I could get in touch with them again we were able to get them all back to the diocese in April, except Miss Curtis who is still in Shanghai. We are thankful that all have been kept safe and well during these months of anxiety. We look forward to being able to visit the diocese over the river after the summer and as long as the birds return from Peking will ~~make~~ ^{stay} ~~and~~ ^{and} remain continually there. Mr. Taylor and Miss Curtis will visit ~~in the next few weeks~~ - I have never in any time in China been continuously in one place and unable to

SHAO-HING
NINGPO

472/9

31st October 1938

Dear Bishop Curtis,

I have received your letter of the 14th inst about Mrs. Goodwin and children sailing for Shanghai, and am bringing this matter before the Far East Committee to-morrow.

May I take this opportunity of acknowledging, and thanking you for, your very interesting Annual Letter. It is wonderful what God has enabled all of you good people in Hangchow to stand up to, and to carry through, for Him. Truly the Good Hand of God has been upon you. I notice, not for the first time, that you prefer not to tell of the bad side of things. It is curious how we have heard such a lot in missionary circles of what happened in Nanking; but nobody in Hangchow has described the bad side of things. Perhaps it is as well for us not to know, and I daresay well for you not to have let out the facts. And yet, as an old friend of Japan, I do sometimes feel that I should like to know the worst. Perhaps if we see you in England after the Madras Conference we shall be able to talk it all over face to face.

Yours very sincerely,

Secretary.

The Rt. Rev. Bishop Curtis,
International Missionary Conference,

Annual Report from Rev. W.R.O. Taylor, August 17, 1938

W.R.O. Taylor composed his annual report in August, happily on a typewriter and thus legible. Aside from personal information about his family and travels, the bulk of the letter focuses on activities in the fall of 1937 – efforts to carry on in spite of the war and then preparations for the occupation, which came “peacefully”. But about what followed the Japanese arrival – “a great trial to us all” – he says little – “I haven’t left room, and it would not be advisable to go into details” – thus bearing out Barclay’s comment about the tendency to avoid the ugly bits.

CMS Archives Section 1: East Asian Missions, Part 20/Reel 442.

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Name Rev. W. R. O. Taylor.

HANGCHOW, CHEKIANG.
Hangchow, Cho. Station

ANNUAL LETTER

August 17th, 1938.

Please post your Annual Letter (dealing with the year ending June 30) not later than August 31.

We depend on the Annual Letter to give such an account of the individual missionary's work, and such a general view of the Mission and of the conditions in which the work is carried on, as shall supply the information needed for the Society's "Story of the Year," the General Review, the official historical record, and for articles and paragraphs in our magazines and in the Church press.

When any of the work referred to in the course of your letter is new, please state the fact plainly, and in the case of a new station or out-station indicate where it is situated.

All native names should be written in English block capitals. Please mark clearly any part of your letter which is not for publication.

Taylor, Rev. W. R. O., Hangchow.

CHEFOO, N. China.

During the past year one's mind has been taken entirely up with this most regrettable war of Japan on China. When it started near Peking on the 7th July, 1937, it seemed far off and as if it would not affect us in Chekiang. But events moved swiftly and war came again to Shanghai on August 13th. We were on holiday at Chefoo and it became evident that I could not return to Hangchow easily, and only by avoiding Shanghai. I eventually travelled with Mr Thompson of the C.I.M. in Taichow district. We left here on Aug. 30 by ship to Tsingtau, then train to Tainan, where we changed to the Pukow-Nanking train. There we spent a night and took train next day via Soochow and Kashing to Hangchow, having spent five days on the way + having had no war experiences beyond inconveniences, such as shortage of food, lights off, etc. My wife was to remain in Chefoo, the two children going to school as usual, and to come back home via Shanghai "as soon as possible." We little thought she would be here the whole year! I was very glad to be back safely and without more delay, as I had been appointed Acting Secretary during Mr Bird's absence on furlough, and naturally felt I ought to be back "in the Mission."

Going back a little, I would like to mention one or two things that happened before I went on holiday. St. Faith's School, in charge of our dear Miss J. F. Moulo, closed very happily on July 1st. Also Mary Vaughan School and the parish Primary School, also called St. Faith's. This was before hostilities had broken out, though on the night of July 6th. the Chinese staged a mock night raid over the city. The "Vary light" illuminations were particularly beautiful, and I thought one such light shown on Christmas Eve would be an appropriate setting for Xmas! Later on, when we had Japanese raids throughout the autumn, no such lights were shown, though there were moonlight raids. (I wish particularly to state that in Hangchow the civilian parts of the city were NOT bombed.)

An July 10th a Chinese lady, Miss Helen Chong, arrived with some friends from Foochow, to be the new Principal of Mary Vaughan School. A Welcome for her took place in our garden, and we were hardly depressed with the war-clouds that had gathered up north. But when the new term began it became obvious that she would have to face continual discouragement, such as all schools, government and private, faced last autumn. The girls had to scatter during November and Miss Chong and others left for Foochow on the 23rd. Our Hangchow Schools as they existed up till then, have not been re-opened; but we have been enabled - under Miss Woods' inspiring leadership - to continue work for children and young people throughout the year and right on into the summer.

We also welcomed back from Peking Mr S. D. Wu of the YMCA and farewelled Mr D. K. Dong, its General Secretary, who was to go to America. These men are both valuable members of our Church. On July 5th I paid my last preaching visit to the prison, in company with some Chinese workers and Mr Millin of the C.I.M. This work was not permitted in the autumn, and the prisoners have since scattered.

I have mentioned our holiday in CHEFOO. On August 17, after the Shanghai war had begun, I received a telegram from Bishop Curtis saying "Advise remain." I took this to mean that I should not try to return via Shanghai. After some days however, I was able to arrange the journey which I have mentioned. Reaching Hangchow on Sep. 3rd, the very next day we met a large party of some 70 people, who had been on holiday at HOKANSAN, and whom the Government - Chinese - had arranged transport for, to go to Shanghai via Ningpo, travelling there by bus and steamer. They arrived Ningpo late that night, but one of the busses overturned after dark. Fortunately no one was hurt with one exception; Mr Fairclough - a very active and loved senior C.I.M. missionary - had his shoulder dislocated. It was set in Ningpo and after a short time he was running round on his cycle little the worse!

Schools were running as well as they could, and on Sep. 14th a class of Nurses graduated at the Hospital. The Nursing School has continued its work ever since under its Chinese Principal. Early in September, evidence of the war came to us when a large number of wounded soldiers were sent in and took up practically all the men's accommodation. Though many were badly wounded, others were comparatively slight, and after a few weeks most of them were well enough to be sent to the WOHU war area. It was a great opportunity for us all, and by Dr Sturton's invitation, I and the pastor and others did personal work among them and found their hearts wonderfully prepared to receive the Message. We believe that many believed in Christ, though they did not stay long enough to be taken into Church membership in the usual way. Miss Woods' children also visited the wards, and the soldiers' hearts were touched at the little ones' efforts to cheer them. They did this "for their country," and with a Christ-like spirit of love and service.

From this time on every day (and all we did) was "coloured" by some aspect of the war. Soon after getting home I heard my first air-raid alarms. Hooters (sirens) going first to announce planes coming, next - overhead, and last - all clear! As weeks went by we expected these almost daily (when fine, though were spared on wet days) and sometimes two or three times a day. Sometimes the planes did not arrive but went elsewhere. After a week or so, I thought it was evident that the Japanese had no intention of bombing the city. It was easy to see from my house, which is very near its centre, that the objectives were the air-field, five miles to the north; the railway works, about the same to the south; and as was "natural" the station, at least a mile from me; and occasionally other places with some sort of "military significance." The populated parts of the city were spared bombs, though we heard of bullets and shrapnel bits falling on to various roofs. Nothing of the kind however fell near any of our Mission houses. Any inconveniences we felt were due to the warnings. The children had to take to dug-outs, or go home. I was preaching in church one Sunday morning while a raid was on, and found the utmost difficulty in going on with the sermon! One Sunday night I was to preach at the Hospital, but a raid came and lights were turned off just before the sermon, and all filed out to their wards, etc.

The city police issued instructions to all house-holders, schools, etc. that all whitewashed walls were to be darkened! Besides being an additional expense, we felt this was a depressing measure, though we were allowed to exercise our artistic discretion as to shades of grey! Dug-outs, lightly covered, were also to be made, so that people could sit below the level of the ground. They were in no sense bomb-proof, but people seemed to feel safer in them, and classes in schools with their teachers sometimes spent hours a day in them. I went in once for these dug-outs. We used all that could be spared and cut down some trees. A good deal of my time was taken up looking after these things. A more practical measure was the order from our consulate to supply maps of the city with our places marked, which was carefully done. Maps of the province were also similarly supplied with stations marked and churches indicated. Mr Murray, the Hospital Business Manager, also had a number of large

flags made, Union Jacks and Red Cross. Also some large tin flags (painted) which were placed on roofs facing the sky, and could no doubt be seen by planes. We also laid in piles of sand as protection against fire.

As December drew near, there were signs that the invading army might come in our direction. The possibility of evacuation was considered before exits were blocked; necessary provision for refugees, women and children especially, was planned; some schools moved en bloc up country. Mary Vaughan thought at one time of moving to HANGHWA WANG-DZA, but this was not done. A Chinese school, moving to Donglu, asked to borrow, or rent, our mission house there. We agreed to this under conditions, but it was never so used. News came that the Chinese had given up Chapel (round Shanghai). Kowloon (half way from Shanghai) fell on Nov. 17. There was much moving of traffic at night. Shops were closing and moving away. Rumours that the "Japanese were near" caused much anxiety. A sure sign that fighting was coming nearer was the coming in of a large number of wounded men, only the severest cases being sent to our hospital this time. (This story has been told by Bishop Curtis in the Record.) It was a most solemn thing to see these ~~many~~ poor men lying in rows, swathed in bandages and without a movement and hardly a groan. Passing round a ward, for days one felt it was hardly possible to say a word to many - they were too ill. But it is wonderful how they, many of them, slowly responded to love and skilled treatment. Work has been done among them with much encouragement, and in May and June, the Chinese Hospital chaplain was preparing for baptism some 60 of them.

On November 23rd Miss Purchan and Miss North left for New Zealand by one of the last trains leaving Hangchow for Ningpo, crossing the great new bridge only open for traffic on October 10th. With them were a large number of refugees, including many of our ladies, - not Hospital patients - whom it was thought should evacuate. On the 29th a Committee was organized representing various local institutions, Christian and other, to be the local branch of the International Red Cross. During the following days we were all busy at our local centres arranging promises to take in refugees, when the time should come for this. Apart from this Committee some prominent members of the community had approached the two opposing authorities, and an understanding was reached which was to save the city from shelling, street-fighting and fire. Meanwhile a number of our church families had been moving south of the river, into territory which it was hoped would remain under Chinese control. Our two local clergy had taken their families away, but much to our joy the two men themselves returned to Hangchow on Dec. 9th, and their presence has meant a great deal to us all from that time on.

Mail continued somehow to come in batches. Spasmodic raids continued. On the 14th it was thought the Japanese would be here "in five days." There was anxiety because the numbers of foreigners had been reduced, "so there would not be enough to go round the various refugees." It was understood that only women and children could be admitted. I don't think I have mentioned that a number of our own Church people had been given refuge in the Mary Vaughan school building and some of our other houses. This had been arranged by the Pastor and the Bishop; and turned out to be an advantage both to the people and the C.M.S., as none of our buildings were left empty. On the 17th we met to make Christmas arrangements! Next day heavy guns were heard and during the following days. Some big explosions were heard early in the morning of the 23rd, one being the electricity works. From then till Jan. 3rd we burned candles and used oil, - not such a long wait considering! Looting by the Chinese took place those two days. But on Christmas Eve, the Bishop and Mr Fairclough kindly called to tell us that the Japanese had at last arrived, and the city had been peacefully taken over!

This was a very great relief, though our troubles were not to end yet. The last week of the year was very critical and a great trial to us all. I haven't left room, and it would not be advisable to go into details. These may be gathered elsewhere. Suffice it to say that with hardly an exception, our Christian families suffered loss and damage to their property, carried out by both Chinese and Japanese. I am sure they have learnt very much of GOD'S ways, and of His will and purpose for them each one, and for His Church.

Pastor Swen,

The aged and retired Hospital Chaplain, over 70, died on December 31st after a short illness, thankful that he had been spared the fiery trial just ahead. Soldiers were billeted in our quarter of the city, in many of the houses for some weeks, but there was a movement to other quarters before mid-January, and later, I am thankful to say, our streets became much quieter and the people began to take the situation calmly and settle down to such work as they could do, and earn their bread as best they might, sometimes in undesirable ways, - though one could hardly blame them. In the Mary Vaughan Compound we had at first some 300 refugees. 200 of these went home at Chinese New Year at the end of January. Our own Christian people were not given a fixed time to leave, but were encouraged to go as soon as they could make arrangements. When I left last month to come to Chefoo, there were still about 20 people left, but they were all arranging to go home by the end of this month.

As with the wounded soldiers, having refugees on our hands was a marvellous opportunity to give them the Gospel, both by word and deed. We prayed much for ourselves and the people with us, and though much of the seed has fallen on unprepared ground, we have been rewarded by much that has borne fruit. We had a daily meeting, family prayers really, and were fortunate in having several pastors, elders and evangelists of our own and other Churches with us, so that the outsiders found the presentation of the Message always fresh. Those interested were enrolled as enquirers and specially taught, and on Palm Sunday the Pastor (after careful testing) admitted 40 as catechumens. On Easter Sunday, some who were leaving for Shanghai were baptised and confirmed the same day; but 24 were baptised in the middle of May and confirmed on this Sunday. Laus Deo!

Our Church work has continued with real blessing, the Church being very full, largely it is true with women and girls in charge of Miss Woods, while perhaps most of our Christians had gone in good time to the country and are scattered in different places. A few found their way back to Hangchow after considerable suffering, but they have a wonderful story of God's presence and delivering power.

It is only fair to say that the above conditions and events have quite monopolised my attention and time, to the grave ignoring and perhaps neglect of important duties that I should have attended to as Acting Secretary. I am indeed very sorry for this. As I have been through my diary in preparation for this letter, I can see that it has been a year of great strain. There are many things that I cannot tell in a letter like this, which have taken up one's time and strength, and seemed to leave little inclination or reserve energy to give to the wider needs and problems of the Mission as a whole. Things have had attention as they have come up, but I have failed gravely to live up to my good intentions of a year ago, especially in the matter of correspondence.

Last autumn I was able to visit Shaohsing, and make two visits to Chuki, but not - as I had hoped - to Donglu. When the Japanese came in to Hangchow, three of our ladies were settled into Wangdza. As we learned later, they spent some time there in comparative peace, before being evacuated to Shanghai, ^{now} ~~Wenchow~~. I felt the need of visiting and helping them; and the Bishop was anxious to send me south of our river to take his greetings to the parishes. But it was a great grief and humiliation to me that I was unable to secure a pass to do this from the authorities. As time went on, we looked forward to Mr Bird's return, realizing that he would be able to go to Ningpo from Shanghai; and thus keep in touch with our work south of the river. I am now in Chefoo and leave in two days for Shanghai where the Bishop's instructions await me, whether to return at once to Hangchow, or go to Ningpo or perhaps wait in Shanghai till Mr Bird returns. I am thankful to say my wife and child are well here. We have discussed the situation and have decided that she had better stay here till the end of this autumn term, then come to Shanghai with the children. After the long holidays, at the end of January, they can then return to Chefoo and my wife come back to Hangchow, D.V.

W. R. O. Taylor