

1980

Midwest China Oral History Interviews

William Overholt

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.luthersem.edu/china_histories

Recommended Citation

Overholt, William, "Midwest China Oral History Interviews" (1980). *China Oral Histories*. Book 98.
http://digitalcommons.luthersem.edu/china_histories/98

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Archives & Special Collections at Digital Commons @ Luther Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in China Oral Histories by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Luther Seminary. For more information, please contact akeck001@luthersem.edu.

WILLIAM OVERHOLT
ORAL NARRATIVE ABSTRACT

BORN: May 10, 1892, in Havelock, Iowa.

EARLY LIFE: family background; education; called by Methodist Board of Missions to teach science at the Anglo-Chinese College (ACC), Fukien.

CHINA EXPERIENCES: trip to China; Chinese language studies; Confucian spring sacrifices in Fukien, 1925; student demonstrations in Fukien, 1925; memories of Kuliang; 1926 military disturbances and evacuation to Philippines; Chinese and foreign attitudes toward indigenous institutions; new responsibilities after 1927 disturbances; return to ACC, 1930; response to Laymen Missionary Movement's Fact Finding Commission; people in agricultural studies in Fukien; brief history of missions in Yenping; description of climate and geography of Yenping; native vegetation in Fukien; Chinese farming methods in Fukien; agricultural experiments and other work at Yenping; diary accounts of travel on the Yen River; travels through rural Fukien; general description of responsibilities at Fukien Christian University (FCU) after WWII; describes project involving importation of a herd of Holstein cattle from America; political unrest among students at FCU; inflation in post-war China; FCU under the Communists; decision to leave China after the beginning of the Korean War; the journey out of China; experiences in Sarawak, 1950s.

William Overholt, p. 2

INTERVIEWER: Questions were submitted by Jane Baker Koons. Independent taping was then done in Black Mountain, North Carolina. After the initial taping was done, additional responses and clarifying comments were elicited.

DATE: 3-14-80

PLACE: Black Mountain, North Carolina

NUMBER OF PAGES: 179

NARRATIVE

INTERVIEWER: Would you begin by giving us something of your family background and your own education?

OVERHOLT: The name "Overholt" comes from the Pennsylvania Dutch German name "Oberholser." A family of that name migrated from Alsace Province to Bucks County, Pennsylvania about the year of 1710. The family drifted west from there into Medina County, Ohio, where there are still many Overholts living. Grandfather Jonas Overholt moved to Jones County, Iowa, in the 1850s, where my father, Joseph Owen, was born in 1860. The whole family history is of German - Mennonite Dunkard connections. My father spoke only German until he went to school. He went in school as far as two years of high school and worked with his father until he was 21 years old. He was then given a team of horses and a wagon loaded with farm equipment. He drove 200 miles northwest in Iowa to join his brother Frank in Humboldt County. He began farming in Pocahontas County. With his education he was able to teach in the winter terms of school and work on the farm the rest of the time.

My inheritance on the other side of the family was through a George Goodchild, a shoemaker in England, and his wife of English-Scottish ancestry. They migrated to New York City along in the 1850s and lived near Oyster Bay

of Long Island, where my mother, Ursula, was born in 1862. With the end of the Civil War and the passage of the Homestead Act, Grandfather Goodchild decided to move to Iowa and take advantage of the act and prove a claim on a homestead.

It was rather foolhardy as he had no experience whatsoever in farming. But there was a son almost 21 years old whom they counted on to be of great help in farming. In looking for a homestead they lived in Fort Dodge, Iowa, found land in Pocahontas County, and filed their claim for that land. But in the spring while they were getting ready to move to that farm, this oldest son went to visit the farm. Coming back to Fort Dodge, a distance of about 40 miles, he slept beside a haystack, caught pneumonia, and died. The family, nevertheless, moved onto the farm, and my mother used to tell of the numerous hardships they had: prairie fires and grasshoppers and the ignorance of her father in cultivating the land. My mother was only able to attend the country schools, but apparently she got enough education that she was able to secure a teacher's certificate and also began teaching.

So it was these two young teachers met, fell in love, and were married in 1883. Twin children, Inez and Ira, were born the following year. My father bought an 80 acre farm just a half mile down the road from Grandfather Goodchild's place and they began farming on this little

farm. My next older brother, Sigel, was born two years before me and I was born on May 10, 1892, on that little farm.

Then came the hard times of 1893. My father was unable to meet the payment on the farm, so he made a deal with the banker to turn the farm back and get in exchange a 160 acres of mostly unimproved land in Emmet County about 45 miles northwest from their home. The price was \$17.50 an acre. In the spring of 1896 plans were made to move to this new farm. My father and the twins, then 12 years old, went ahead with most of the equipment and the cattle which they drove to the new farm.

My mother and Sigel and I followed a few days later with a one-horse buggy, good old Stella to the buggy, and we drove the 40 miles all in one day through that damp, chilly March weather. I quite well remember arriving at our new home. Pocahontas County was flat and level. Emmet County, where my father's farm lay, was in the bluffs of the Des Moines River and there were quite a few hills. I so well remember rolling down the little hill that our house stood on. I say house, but it really was only a shack--a little frame house 14' x 24' with no lining and only a straw stable. Most of the farm was still in raw prairie sod; only a few acres had been plowed.

I remember that spring my father plowing the long rows of prairie sod with his breaking plow and I playing out

on the hillside while he was plowing. There were many hardships in those first years. In that first summer Father worked very hard to prepare the house for winter occupancy, putting on tar paper siding, and shiplap over, and lining the house on the inside with many layers of newspaper. That fall my little sister Florence was born in November, and so it was the family of the five children and parents lived in this little shanty. Not only the family, but I remember for one year that we even took in the schoolmarm to board with us.

The first or second year on the farm I very distinctly remember a hailstorm that piled hailstones six inches deep by our little house and completely ruined my father's crop of wheat. Also, in those early years I remember the hog cholera striking our herd of hogs and Father losing his entire herd of hogs. He went to town on a very mysterious errand, and I remember his getting back from town and my mother whispering to him: "Did you get it?" The "it" was a loan. In those days it was a disgrace, really, to have a loan; no one admitted it. And, of course, the relief to be carried along by the county board of supervisors was an even greater disgrace. So we were a stage above that level.

Our farm was situated as far from the little district school as it could be. The system there, of course, was

the laying out of four square miles, and a school district in the center of that two mile square. We were on the farthest corner from that district school, so when we cut across the fields on the diagonal, it was still a mile and three-quarters to school. We walked that distance in snow or rain to get our education. The only high school in this county was in the county seat town of Estherville, nine miles away. With the transportation we had, the only way to attend high school was to go into town for school. All five of us children attended high school working for our board in various homes to attend high school. One year Sigel and I rented a room and did our own cooking with generous supplies from Mother. For two years I worked as a lawn mower and walk shoveler for a widow lady, and my last year as assistant to the janitor of the school sweeping out the school.

I graduated from high school in the year 1911 (I had to repeat the eighth grade to get into high school) and took the teacher's examination that summer to secure a certificate to teach school. I passed the examination and began to teach our own local district school. Four of the children that were in my classes were children I had gone to school with. My salary was \$25.00 a month, but living at home, of course, saved most of that money. In the fall of 1912 I entered Iowa State College.

It seemed to me that the course provided by the Animal Husbandry course, as we called it then (today it's Animal Science), gave the best foundation for farming, for it was my plan to follow my father's footsteps and be a farmer. Of course, I had to work to earn my way. My first job was working for one of the doctors in Ames, currying his horse, milking his cow, and scrubbing his office twice a week. Later on I was able to get a job working as a waiter in a sorority house. Thus I was able to do two years of schooling on just \$400, and then I was out of money.

I went back and taught country school for another year, returned to Ames, and graduated with the class of 1917. That, of course, was the year World War I was declared, and in April a great change came in my plans. I had been negotiating with an Illinois dentist to take over the management of a dairy farm of 180 acres which he owned. Of course, with the beginning of war, that plan went out the window. In my junior year one of the faculty members that I put great faith in called me aside and told me I wasn't getting enough out of school life. I should have more social life and he advised me that I should get into a fraternity. I was then waiting tables for a fraternity house. It just happened that they were looking for someone who could play the piano to take the place of the boy they had

who played the piano and was graduating. Also, this fraternity was seeking a national chapter of Sigma Chi. They were looking for someone who had better grades than average, which mine were, and so I was bid for this fraternity and joined.

A number of boys in the fraternity, as soon as war was declared, went to Des Moines and enlisted. I tried to talk them out of it because I was sure the war would end that year and they would simply be wasting their time. I therefore was not interested in war service. To fill in the year I took a job as superintendent of schools in Riverside, Iowa, a little town of about 750 people, and taught through the year there. As winter came and the war wasn't ended, I began to feel uneasy because I wasn't in the service. I carried on, however, with my job until May and enlisted in the Marine Corps and went back to Riverside to close out my work.

I took the final physical examination for the Marine Corps when they discovered that I had a slight heart murmur and turned me down. I was greatly disappointed, went back to Emmet County and found out I was to be called in the June draft, so sought no further release and decided to enter the Army with the draft. I was sworn into the Army on June 23rd, 1918, and sent to Camp Dodge where the 88th Division was all ready for overseas except to fill some

of the blank spaces in the rear ranks. I was assigned to the 88th Division. Seven weeks to the day I was landed in France.

We were called the lucky 88th Division and our emblem was a Four-Leaf Clover. We were the last division that went overseas which was kept together as a unit. We had three weeks in the lines in a very quiet sector in Alsace Province which was in sight of Mülhausen, where my ancestors originally came from. We were due to replace the 29th Division in the final drive for the city of Metz, and on November 10th we were packed and ready to move into the lines. But that night no trucks came to pick us up. We waited for call until 1:00 in the morning when we were told to go back and make ourselves comfortable. Then in the morning, of course, the armistice was signed; the war was over. Certainly we were lucky!

I: What contact, if any, did you have with the Chinese who were serving in France at this time?

OVERHOLT: We had no contact with the Chinese Labor Battalion in France other than to have seen gangs working by the roadside breaking up and spreading rocks on the roads.

Before I was mustered out, I spent that winter teaching in our battalion school about 36 illiterates that were being taught to read and to write. Quite an interesting

experience! In March 1919 I was sent to enter A.E.F. University in Beaune but was called back to rejoin the 88th Division for returning home. On June 15, 1919, I was mustered out. There was no other plan except to teach, so I went to summer school in Ames for the second half of the summer and took a position to teach manual training and science in Humboldt, Iowa, High School where I taught for two years.

I: How do you think serving in World War I affected your perspectives and world vision?

OVERHOLT: Of course, this was the experience of many in the war; that if we could go to war to make the world safe for democracy at the point of a gun, there were better ways of making the world safe. With this in my thinking, I began to study my future. During evangelistic meetings in the spring of 1920 when an altar call came, I went down from the choir loft and dedicated my life for foreign service in missions. The Northwest Iowa Annual Conference was held in Humboldt in that fall of 1920. During conference I contacted Bishop Stuntz with my problem of entering mission service. I began correspondence with the Board of Missions of the Methodist Church and arrangements were made for me to meet the candidate committee during the Thanksgiving vacation that fall of 1920.

The headquarters of the board then were at 740 Rush Street in Chicago. I arrived into Chicago early on Friday morning following Thanksgiving Day. I went out to the board offices. There I met the secretary for the office and also waiting there was a young woman, a candidate for China, also to meet the candidate committee. I was introduced to Olive Probasco. I should have said that during the summer of 1920 I attended the summer school at the University of Iowa. There I had a girl classmate who had finished a pre-med course planning to study medicine and was interested in China. With our common interest in China, it was natural we saw a great deal of each other. We became engaged in August of that year. Our plans were that I would do one term on the mission field while she got her M.D. and we would then be married.

I: Why did you choose China?

OVERHOLT: I don't know. It seemed like it was a large and mysterious country I'd studied about in my grade school geography. But, in the dark, I chose China. I've always been glad I did because it seems to me the work in China was with a class of people so much easier to work with than in other nations where there are missions.

I went back to finish my year of teaching in Humboldt. I got the notice that I was accepted as a candidate if I

would do a year of graduate study. So in the fall of 1921 I went in to register in Garrett Biblical Institute and also study in Northwestern University.

I: How did you happen to choose the history of religions for your major emphasis at this time?

OVERHOLT: It seemed to me that would provide the best background for understanding the other religions--the religions of China. Also, there was a very noted teacher in that department, a Dr. Edmund Soper, under whom I planned to major. I went into Evanston in early October. On the first Monday morning I went into the Garrett Administration Building. The first person I met in the hall was this Olive Probasco, who had met the candidate committee with me and was registered in the same department. We were in most classes together, and because we had the common interest of China, we were together a great deal in doing our studying.

To help in finances I took work in the Italian Settlement in South Chicago near the Hull House as supervisor of the boys' work in an Italian church which was the home missions project of First Church in Evanston. I was hired at a salary of \$50 a month to supervise the boys' work in this church. It was necessary almost every day to commute to Chicago to work with the Boys' Clubs there. Miss Probasco

also was a volunteer worker from First Church-Evanston because she was securing loans from that church for her work.

I did not plan to take a master's degree in that first year as there were other courses that I thought could be more useful in the politics of the Far East and registered in a seminar and put in quite a little time in studying the political situation in China. Olive was working for her master's degree in that first year and completed her work, got her master's degree in the summer of 1922 and went back to Iowa.

Meanwhile, things hadn't been going well with my fiancée in St. Louis. She was teaching in the East St. Louis schools planning to enter medical school in the next fall. Her father was entirely opposed to her going to the mission field. He was a doctor and, I suppose, thought a doctor ought to make better use of his education. I stayed on at Northwestern in the summer of 1922 and tried to get my fiancée to come to Evanston to do some summer school work. But she refused because of her father's objections. I gave up then and we broke our engagement.

At the end of the summer term I went back to Iowa to Fayette where Olive Probasco was living and we became engaged, planning to go to the field together. I went back to school in Evanston that fall, and Olive came in to work

as assistant editor of the Epworth League Quarterly. It soon became evident that we might as well be living and working together. We went back to Iowa for a weekend November 4th, 1922; we were married in the Probasco home. We got back to Evanston with just \$1.57 in my bank account. Rented a room in a boarding house and went out to our meals. I worked in a restaurant to earn my board and Olive commuted back and forth for her work at 740 Rush Street.

The very first month Olive became pregnant, and the trips back and forth to the city became very difficult. We rented an apartment and set up housekeeping together. I went on to complete the requirements for my master's degree. For my thesis I chose the topic: "The Confucian Idea of the Superior Man," and based my study on James Legge's translation of the Chinese classics. The only available translation of the classics was in the Newberry Library on North Clark Street in Chicago, and I had to do all my notetaking from the Newberry Library. Olive did her part by copying my thesis during that year.

I secured my master's degree in June of 1923. Of course, with Olive's pregnancy we were unable to go to the field. We went back to Humboldt and I taught another year. It was on my very birthday in 1924 we received the official appointments from the Methodist Board of Missions

to go to Foochow as a teacher in the Anglo-Chinese College.

One thing I omitted, during the summer of 1923, on July 28th, our baby was born--a boy. To honor Dr. Soper, whom we thought so much of, we named the boy Edmund Soper. Also in regard to our appointment to Anglo-Chinese College, I should have said my appointment was to teach science; Olive also had an appointment to be a history and English teacher.

I: Would you describe your journey enroute to China for us?

OVERHOLT: We sailed from San Francisco on August 30th on the President Van Buren and landed in Shanghai on September 23rd. Olive's sister, Abby Probasco, was principal of Nanking Academy, which was a middle school training candidates for the ministry. She met us in Shanghai and the following day we took a boat up the river to Nanking because the railroad was closed by fighting between General Sun Chuang Feng against northern warlords. We spent a week in Nanking before going back to Shanghai, which we sailed from on Thursday, October 2nd, on the China Merchants steamer Ninghisn for the two day trip to Foochow. On Friday a typhoon was threatening and the sea was getting quite rough. Olive was seasick in the cabin. I

was reading on deck with little Ned, the 15-month-old, swinging in a spring swing. Suddenly I heard gunshots. Five or six men ran past me and began shooting on the bridge just ahead. Then a man swung around the corner and brought his gun down on me, motioning me forward to the captain's cabin where several European passengers were playing cards. One of these was an employee of the American Oriental Bank who said the pirates were after a shipment of \$120,000 in silver sycee the bank was transferring to Foochow. One of the men at the wheel was killed and another seriously wounded. Of course, there was great confusion. All the Chinese passengers were robbed, and the deck passengers herded below into the first class dining room and companionway. We men were kept in the captain's cabin about three hours. By that time little Ned was badly in need of a change of diapers, and the captain's boy made our guard understand what was needed. One of the pirates escorted me back to the skylight looking down into our cabin where I looked down to ask for the diapers. Of course, Olive had been very frightened and was greatly relieved to see me. Chinese people are greatly attracted to children and our guard played up to our baby. He reached into his pocket and pulled out a handful of coins to offer them to Ned, but I pushed his hand back. He threw the coins--three bright silver dollars--

on the deck, which I gathered up to keep as a souvenir. When our story got to the American press, the headline in the Chicago Daily News was "Baby's Smile Saves American Family."

About 7:00 o'clock in the evening we were escorted back to our cabins. Saturday morning the typhoon was on us with driving rain and heavy seas. We sailed right on past Foochow and headed down the coast. As typhoons go, it wasn't a bad typhoon, but the Ninghisn was a river boat built with bumpers 18" by 10" and about 4 feet above the water line for bumping into the riverside docks. In the heavy seas we would mount up on the waves. Coming down, the bumpers hit the water with a loud splash and the boat would shimmy sideways. You would wonder how many such blows the ship would take. The passengers had to remain below, crowded around our door. We had no private bath and to go to the toilet we would have to scramble over seasick passengers.

By Sunday the storm had abated. We kept on sailing until late afternoon when we rounded a point and pulled into the famous Bias Bay, which was the famous pirate hide-out. The boat whistle blew three blasts and sampans loaded with men broke out from all sides converging on the ship. That was when I was really frightened. I had pictures of those hordes swarming over the ship. That was not the case, however, for the pirates placed guards with pistols

all along the ship's rail, to keep people from boarding. After about an hour the pirates had removed their loot and waved us goodbye on their sampans as they pulled away from the ship. I took pictures of these events from behind our window curtain.

Our ship lay overnight at the mouth of the bay. Monday morning at daylight we started out for the 400 mile trip back to Foochow. It took us till the next Sunday to get back to our destination. What with another typhoon blowing in and turning back to Amoy for more coal when we were within a day of Foochow, it was on the day Columbus discovered America we landed in our new home on October 12th, on the other side of the world.

I: What were your initial impressions of China? What misconceptions or misrepresentations did you find you had?

OVERHOLT: I feel that with our two years of preparation under Dr. Soper and reading about China and its problems, we had quite accurate preconceptions. In fact, on our first morning, looking out our porthole on the Huang Po to see a sampan rowing past, I had almost the feeling of having been there before.

I was impressed with the crowds that engulfed us as we were driven through the streets of Shanghai and the crowds that swarmed the dock as our steamer made its

stops up the Yangtze on the way to Nanking. And, of course, on the Ninghisn the poor people that were herded into our dining room and companionway; it seemed they were so helpless in the face of the bandits. It certainly was a mark of the old day that we Europeans were protected by the pirates. It might have been very easy for them to have held the American Oriental Bank man for ransom, but they protected us from the hordes that came out from the village.

Our introduction to Chinese life was made easy by our being taken into the home of Louise Ankeny and Helen Eaton, also teachers in Anglo-Chinese College. They had full responsibility for the housekeeping while we studied language. They also made it easy for contacts with their friends, with the shops, and the shopkeepers on the street.

Our first year was to be spent in language study. There was no language school. It was simply a matter of sitting down face to face with the teacher to learn the language. The language we were to learn was the Foochow dialect, spoken only by the people of the Lower Min River Valley and along a coast some 40 miles on either side of its estuary. The dialect was as different from the national language as Dutch is from German.

Missionaries had devised a system of printing the Bible and other literature using conventional characters as far as possible and phonetic characters where the Foochow

idiom did not fit. For example, where the national language said "lai" for "come," Foochow people said "li," which sounds like their word for pear. So the character used in this phonetic language was the character for pear. Where in the national language they said "wo-men," in Foochow we said "nu-gauk-n[̂]ng." Characters were devised for those sounds. The Bible and literature was also devised in what we called "Romanized," using the letters of the English alphabet to spell out the sounds and putting tone marks to show the inflection or tone of the word.

When the character was written in the Romanized, the tone was marked above the word. The "first tone" was high and even. It was indicated by the mark we use for a short vowel tone. If the word was marked with a dash as we use for a long vowel, it was the "second tone"--a low, even tone. So it was that if the word "sǎng" was written with a short mark, it meant a high tone "sǎng". If it were with a long mark, it had a low even tone "sāng." The trouble is that so many of the Chinese words have the same sound. The word "sang" might mean a mountain, or three, or to produce. If it were written with a long mark "sāng," it would mean an umbrella. The only way you could tell the meaning was by context. The other markings are too difficult to explain. The "third tone" was given with a rising inflection; the "fourth tone" also with a rising inflection, but the sound was cut short at the end. The

"fifth tone" was given as we say "don't," with a falling inflection. The "sixth tone" was a rolling tone, as we would say "Ooh!" when we understand something, and the "seventh tone" was a high note cut short.

Our first year, of course, was to be devoted entirely to language study. There was no language school and we learned our language with an individual teacher, old Ceng Si-nang, who like Mark Hopkins sat on one end of a log and his pupil on the other, we had Ceng Si-nang on one side of the desk and we on the other. We started out by learning to pronounce these tones. We spent endless hours going over those seven tones following the accent of our teacher. Of course, the language study was based largely on the Bible. We studied the book of Mark. Our goal was to learn to read the first six chapters in the colloquial character. The rest of the gospel we would learn to read in the Romanized. There was a great difference of opinion among the missionaries as to which was the best method. Many of the missionaries claimed that the Romanized was the best system as it was most easily learned. I was intrigued by the formation of the Chinese characters. So when it came to studying the characters, I went on to get as much as I could. I was criticized by the language committee in spending too much time on the study of character. If I got to read in the Romanized, that would be sufficient.

Once a week an English-speaking Chinese student or teacher would come in to help us and ask us what difficulties we were having. At the end of the year, we were given an examination. If we would pass the examination, we were given a vote in the mission meeting and considered full missionaries.

I: What adjustments did you have to make when you first arrived in China?

OVERHOLT: I think probably the most difficult was in our relation to servants when we'd always been so self-reliant. With Olive studying language full time, it was necessary to put all daytime care of our baby in the hands of an amah. There was a long experienced old amah (Esö) in the house who helped locate possible candidates for the job. All the girls brought in were utterly ignorant of what to do, so old Eso would try to teach them. I suspect much of the time she was overbearing with them. By the second year when we moved into our own home, we took over an experienced amah from a family that had gone on furlough and hired our own cook and houseboy for Olive to teach how to do the necessary work.

I think two events of that first year should be recorded as they have great influence in the shaping of history of China and marking the changes that were taking

place. One was that we were permitted to see the last Confucian spring sacrifices held in Fukien. Foochow was the capital of Fukien Province. As the capital it had the school for the training of officials. All Chinese officials in the past had come up largely through training in Confucianism. Therefore, Foochow had its large temple where sacrifices were held as they were held in Peking on a national scale. There was a large Confucian temple just inside the city wall. In this temple was also a school for the training of scholars and future officials. The spring sacrifices were to be held in that temple. Frank Cartwright, who later was to become the secretary for the board in China, was then a missionary in China and offered to take us to see the sacrifices. So early on that bright spring morning we made our way to the temple.

The ceremonies had already begun. Sacrifices were laid out in the porches of the temple. A half of an ox and dishes of food were laid out marked with bright red color. Also on these porches were the instruments that were to provide the music that formed a large part of the sacrifices. Large gongs were tuned to the notes of the scale, but most interesting were L-shaped pieces of hard resonant stone hung on a rack which would be struck as you would use a xylophone and gave off a deep, ringing tone. There were the stringed zithers, large harp-like instruments that were used in the ceremonies.

As the ceremonies began, about 100 students dressed in long blue gowns and little black melon-skin caps filed into the courtyard carrying peacock feather fans. Then the ceremonies began. The bells and the gongs were struck to sound the chord for the chant. This music, I think, was the most impressive music of any I ever heard in China. I'm glad to say that when the United Church of China in 1936 published their Hymns of Universal Praise, one of those Confucian chants was made the tune for a hymn in our Christian hymnal.

The other event of that first year was the student demonstration following the slaying of rioting students in Shanghai. I was impressed with the interest the students of China had in politics and their influence on public opinion. The political thought of the people was largely shaped by the actions the students took. For example, during that first year there was a boycott against Japanese goods in which the students took a lead, going around to the shops and looking for the Japanese goods and destroying them.

It was in the year of 1925 that the students really began to make their influence felt. On May 30th there occurred a riot in Shanghai. Demonstrating students had been arrested by the police and brought to prison. The student mob forced their way into the prison and the

sikh policemen who were hired to keep order in Shanghai fired on the mob killing a number of students. A demonstration was planned for Foochow. The American Consulate advised all Americans to stay in our houses. A parade was organized. As the students were passing our house, we were watching from a verandah and also taking pictures. One of the students, probably not more than 12 years old, looked up and shouted something at us which we couldn't understand. The servants translated for us: "That's all right; you can laugh at us today, but tomorrow your heads will hang on the big bridge!" That story got home to our Des Moines papers through an American teacher in the Anglo-Chinese College and was turned over to the Des Moines paper. The Des Moines Register came out with the headline: "Former Iowan Threatened by a Chinese Mob."

But all through the years our experience was that the students were the ones most interested in politics. And, of course, in the final years before the coming of the Communists, they were the ones who were demonstrating against the Nationalist Government and the injustices that were occurring.

Shortly after this parade we moved to our summer home on Kuliang. Before the days of refrigerators and air-conditioning, summer homes were developed near Peking at Peitaho. In Central China there was Kuling, and in Foochow

there was Kuliang. It is interesting that Kuling is "Bull Ridge" and our Foochow Kuliang (in national language also Kuling) was "Drum Ridge." Kuliang was a community of over 100 homes built of stone chopped out of the southwest sides of the mountains. Since these mountains were exposed to typhoons blowing in from the northeast, surplus stones were built into a wall up above to the northeast as a windbreak. The elevation was about 2500 feet and 10 degrees cooler than the plains.

We continued our language study on the mountain and passed our language examinations in time to take our place in the summer mission meeting. We rotated our meetings around in missionary homes on the porches, looking down into the heat of the Foochow plain. In these meetings the whole administration of the church programs, its schools and its hospitals was worked out by the missionaries. The district superintendents were named as were the principals of the schools and the doctors for the hospitals. Occasionally Chinese were brought in for consultation in making some of the decisions. But the decisions were entirely missionary. What a change it was from what we saw by the end of our days in China!

It was during that meeting that Everett Stowe, who was the principal of the elementary school in Kutien about 50 miles to the interior from Foochow, proposed

that I come to Kutien to work with him. The school had a large tract of ground in which the students could make gardens. I could supervise the garden work and make contact with the Chinese farmers about. The idea appealed to us. I went to see Bishop Brown to propose the idea. His immediate answer was: "We can't teach the Chinese anything about agriculture." Bishop Wallace Brown was elected in 1924 by the General Conference in the days when bishops around the world were all elected in that one conference. Bishop Brown being the last elected was assigned to China. He had had two long ministries in city churches--Syracuse and Ithaca, N.Y. He had done his homework, however, before coming to China. He had read Bishop James Bashford's book, then recently published, China: An Interpretation. It was an excellent book describing conditions in China and had a long chapter on agriculture.

Bishop Bashford was not, however, a trained agriculturist. He secured his material largely from a book written by a Professor King of Wisconsin University--Farmers of Forty Centuries. Professor King had seen how fast American farmers were ruining their land, whereas Chinese farmers had tilled their soil for over 4,000 years. So he went to China with his conclusions already made: the Chinese farmers knew more about farming than American farmers. It is an excellent description of Chinese farming,

but it is only based on the ability of the Chinese farmers keeping up fertility in their soils--an excellent system which amounted almost to a system of hydroponics. They would simply pour the fertilizers on the soil. The soil was only a place for the plant to live. Its fertility was all fed to it as it grew. In other matters of soil management, the Chinese farmers were very poor. They had no idea of the place of organic matter in keeping up soil tilth. The farmers had their rice fields terraced along the hillsides and for irrigation. But, on land that could not be terraced, the hills of sweet potatoes were planted in rows up and down the hills and the soil was washed away in one or two summers. Dr. King and Bishop Bashford, therefore, did a great disservice to Chinese agriculture. It took a long time for the church to see the place of agriculture in the program of the church.

I went back to Anglo-Chinese College that fall of 1925 to fulfill my contract of teaching science until the end of our first term in 1929. We set up housekeeping on our own that fall as we moved down from Kuliang into a house next door to Tieng Ang Dong, which translated is "heavenly peace church." The house was noted for the fact that Dr. Sun Yat-Sen had been entertained there a few years before. We hired our servants and outfitted our home. The big event during our summer of 1926 on Kuliang was the birth

of a daughter, Mary Jo, in the little sanitarium on August 5th. We had only to teach half time and had half time for language study in our second year. I taught two classes in general science and a course in physics that year.

I: What did you find was the response of your students to western science?

OVERHOLT: Perhaps it was my teaching, but I couldn't see much difference from that of American students. They had the things to learn and they learned them. Later on, however, I want to tell you how wonderfully Professor Claude Kellogg, biology teacher in Fukien Christian University, used his students in biology courses to carry out projects for rural improvement.

In the fall of 1926 the senior middle school moved into three new buildings on a new campus with spacious laboratories for chemistry, physics, and a now-added department of biology which was more in my field. It was very satisfying to set up the biology laboratory and to get courses started. The summer of 1926, however, was when the Kuomintang and Chiang Kai-shek started their drive to the north. By the end of November they were approaching Foochow. Foochow had always been the headquarters of the Navy and the Navy had been very much independent from the Army. During the revolution of 1911, it was the Navy which de-

cided the shape of the revolution. So it was in 1926 that as the Kuomintang army approached, the city was put into the hands of Navy administration.

There was quite heavy fighting about 15 miles south of Foochow and several villages were burned. We made up a party of about a dozen missionaries to go out to these villages with the Red Cross to see what could be done for the wounded and to help to restore the villages to order.

It was the day after getting back from that excursion that tragedy struck for us. Our little Ned, then three years and three months old, was wetting the bed. Olive went to the missionary doctor to see what could be done. He made up a prescription which contained strychnine and turned the prescription over to the nurse-pharmacist to make up. By mistake she used the stock solution instead of a diluted solution they used in making up the prescription. We learned later, however, that it was the doctor who had indicated the bottle to be used. Olive gave Ned the dose before dinner. He soon began to choke. We called the doctor and a neighbor, Fern Barrett, who was a trained nurse, but in spite of all they could do, Ned was dead by 3:00. It was a terrific blow to us and to the entire mission.

By the middle of January the Navy was turning over to the Kuomintang. There was much disorder in the city

where the American Board compound was. The compound of the Union Kindergarten Training School was broken into and looted. The American Consul called a meeting of the Americans to discuss the situation. It was decided that women and children should be evacuated to the Philippines. Because of our recent grief I chose to go. Two other men in schoolwork, with school closed and no other work to do, went with us.

So on Wednesday, the 19th, in the early morning we boarded a launch to take us the 20 miles down to Pagoda Anchorage to board the destroyer Pillsbury.

I: Up to this time what had been your response and the response of your mission to extraterritoriality and gun-boat policies? At this point you are going on the destroyer Pillsbury.

OVERHOLT: In theory I believe all missionaries were against the policy of extraterritoriality and recognized its injustices, but in practice, we accepted and took advantage of its benefits. We were very glad that the pirates respected our "rights" when they didn't rob us as they did all the Chinese passengers.

Before we reached the Pillsbury, there were many delays; it was late afternoon before we reached the ship. The sailors had prepared a meal of good American roast

pork and mince pie. We were all terrifically hungry and ate a tremendous meal. Just before dark we pulled down the last 10 miles to sea and struck out diagonally across the Formosa Channel at about 30 knots. The sea on the Chinese coast is very heavy in the winter. The little destroyer went just like a corkscrew with the fantail awash. What a seasick group! The crew had turned over their bunks to us--I don't know where they slept. Olive was so sick she couldn't stay in a bunk. She was moved to an officer's cabin which had sideboards. I took care of little Mary Jo in her little basket crib.

By midmorning the next day we got into the lee of Luzon Island and what a relief it was. We arrived in Manila a little after noon to find two reception committees. One from the Army that had been notified by the American Consul and had worked hard to prepare quarters for us and had ambulances waiting to take us to the military installation. The other committee was the missionaries who had been informed by Bishop Brown. We went with the missionaries. We couldn't stay in Manila and there were summer cottages in Baguio that were standing vacant and it was planned for us to go to occupy these cottages. Meanwhile, the mission treasurer went to the railway officials to ask for free transportation for us. The Manila papers got a hold of this story and wrote an editorial: "United States

advertises to join the Army and see the world at Uncle Sam's expense. It is better to be a missionary and see the world at anybody's expense."

Baguio, at 4500 feet, was a delightful place. The missionary cottages were surrounded by beautiful pine woods and I enjoyed six weeks there with the group. But on March 5th, we received word from Ralph Ward, who had been named acting principal of Anglo-Chinese College, that school was opening, and I went back to my work. These were filling days in the history of the Church of China, for one of the requirements of the Kuomintang was that all church institutions be turned over to Chinese control.

Most of our missionary leaders had been working for just that through the years, but had been unable to persuade Chinese to take the responsibility. There was a heady atmosphere as we opened school for the spring term of 1927.

I: Why had they been unable to persuade the Chinese to take the responsibility before this time?

OVERHOLT: Long before the take over of government by the Kuomintang, Chinese leaders had been urged to take more responsibility and they had declined. I think their

main reason was that they didn't want to, as they said in the Foochow dialect, 'Cò ngai n'ng'(play the bad man). Perhaps it was the Chinese sense of humility or it may have been they didn't want to play "the running dog" of the foreigners. I think, however, it was largely they didn't want to be the bad man.

With the turnover to the Nationalist government, it became their patriotic duty to step forward and take the positions which the new policies required them to fill.

I: When the change in leadership actually occurred, how did most missionaries handle this? How did they feel their roles would be changed?

OVERHOLT: I can't think of a single instance where missionaries were against the change to Chinese leadership. In some cases there were misgivings as to how well the Chinese might handle situations, but I believe everyone was of the mind to "let them give it a try."

In Fukien Christian University, Anglo-Chinese College and Foochow College, the change was greatly welcomed as there were leaders ready who long before had been urged to take the responsibility of leadership.

There were probably as many misgivings among the Chinese as to how well their colleagues might handle administration, and, in some cases, it became the cause of

friction in faculties when one was selected to be over them.

Here is one interesting story of the problems that were faced in the turnover of the control. One of the patriotic rites of the Kuomintang was a memorial service to Dr. Sun Yat-sen which was held in all of the official headquarters and was to be made a part of the school exercise. The memorial service was conducted in a hall with a picture of Dr. Sun Yat-sen at the center front, the flags of the Kuomintang on either side, and underneath the picture was the will of Dr. Sun printed in large characters. The service consisted in first making three ceremonial bows to the picture of Dr. Sun. Then a period of two minutes of meditation, and then all recited together the will of Dr. Sun that was hung under the picture. There was considerable discussion among church groups whether that was a religious service to be permitted in our Christian institutions or not.

Dr. Ward got the rumor that the students were planning to put that rite into the morning chapel and, in anticipation of that, had one of the Chinese teachers go out to secure the necessary picture and flags and make a copy of the will and find one of our teachers who was a member of the Kuomintang. The service could only be led by a member of the Kuomintang. When the chapel opened for the Monday morning chapel, it was

amusing to see the faces of the students as they came through the door of the chapel and saw the picture of Dr. Sun and the service ready to begin. It was a great blow to them for they had anticipated to make so much of this agitation.

By coincidence March 24th, when there was so much violence in Nanking and missionaries killed, a demonstration was also planned in Foochow to force five Christian leaders to parade through the streets in dunce caps. The planners were only successful in taking one, the leader of the Anglican church. The pastor of Tieng Ang Dong next door was then W.Y. Chen, later to become the well-known Bishop W.Y. Chen of West China. His study was built with the window looking out into our missionary compound. He heard the students coming and jumped out of the window into our compound, ran up the hill to another missionary residence and hid in the basement. The students broke into the parsonage, got into his study, saw the window opened and guessed what had happened. One of the students had a gun. I was standing in the compound below the window and warned him: "This is American property. You can't come in here."

This was a time of much soul-searching among missionaries, whether to go or to stay. The Christian Century at that time came out with an editorial praising the

missionary heroes who stayed but not seeing the other side of what might have happened to China if these heroes who stayed were to become martyrs. Some missionaries couldn't trust the new leadership. Some were disgusted at the time lost and all the difficulties they faced in doing their work. Seeing family responsibilities as more important than trying to work under these difficulties, many, therefore, returned to America.

I: What were your responsibilities after 1927 when so many were evacuating?

OVERHOLT: With this turnover in personnel, there were many changes to be made. I'd already taken the job as secretary of the Primary School Board of Education. The board coordinated the work in the primary school. This committee planned the curricula in the schools, set up a system of uniform examinations, made out questions, conducted the examinations and corrected papers. It was my job to plan these questions and to plan the ways of getting the papers from the schools graded and the grades reported to the schools. Later on, this committee named an executive committee of three Chinese and two missionaries, Arthur Billing and myself, to work out the plans of the primary and elementary schools under the new

administration. One of the Chinese served as Executive Secretary.

Another job I inherited from Walter Lacey, who had been in charge of the mission bookstore. Early in the history of the mission, a press had been set up. A printer, Wesley Bissonnet, had been brought out from America to supervise the printing. A regular publishing house had been set up. Walter Lacey's father had been the superintendent of the production of the Bible and biblical literature. Through the years they had added the sale of English books and then office supplies. Eventually it became almost a dimestore that provided missionaries with many of the little knick-knacks which could not be found in the shops of Foochow. Walter had not finished balancing his books when he left to return home. He took them with him to Shanghai planning to finish the books and send them back to Foochow.

I thought the best way to learn the stock was to take a complete inventory. So in my first days I worked with the clerks in the bookstore to make a complete inventory. It was fortunate, for we never received the accounts. They had been given to a messenger in Shanghai to mail; the messenger had pocketed the money and, we surmise, had thrown the books into the river. Fortunately, at the end of the following year, the mission finance commit-

tee voted to close the bookstore. We sold the stock to the man who had been the chief clerk for several years.

Another responsibility that was much to my liking was the teaching of Botany in the Hwa Nan Women's College. Dorothy Keeny, the daughter of Bishop Keeny, had had to go home to take care of her father who was seriously ill. I was the person most nearly fitted to take over the work. I was not trained in botany, but had had two courses. I took over the work and worked out my courses as we went along. I taught two courses--one in general botany and one in systematic botany for the next two years. It was a very enjoyable experience.

In the fall of 1928 came the opportunity to get into rural work after our furlough in 1929. The Yenping Conference had set up a program in rural work. A Yenping native, Mr. L.C. Lin, had been educated in Iowa State College and also secured his master's degree in Horticulture. He had made contact in the States and raised money to buy quite a little equipment. I don't remember now why it was he gave up the work, but he had given it up and this equipment was not being used. It was decided I would take over after our return from furlough in 1930.

To get started on plans for the work I traveled, in the fall of 1928, with Bishop Birney upriver to attend the

Yenping Annual Conference, meet some of the conference people, and look over the ground and the equipment. Our furlough was due in the spring of 1929. We sailed from Shanghai on the Empress of Russia and on June 29th landed in Seattle. We bought a 1923 Dodge Sedan in Tacoma and drove back to Iowa to study again in Iowa State College-- now, of course, Iowa State University. Because of the work I had done in Hwa Nan in Botany and the observations I had made of the problems of agriculture in Fukien, it seemed best that I follow a course in Plant Pathology.

Our deputation work was mostly on weekends except for two full weeks on a team in Colorado. I got in a very good year of study. During that time I accumulated about 1200 agricultural bulletins from the state experiment stations which I thought could be used in connection with the work in China. Also, I secured a number of good reference books. Our little three-year-old Mary Jo probably profited the most from that year, for we were able to get her into the college nursery school, both the morning and afternoon sessions. It was good preparation for her schooling which would have to be entirely under Olive's teaching.

We planned our trip back to the field so as to have stopovers in Hawaii and Japan to pick up information on agriculture and make contacts which perhaps might be

worthwhile in the future. We spent three days in Honolulu visiting the government experiment station and the laboratory and experimental work of the Hawaii Sugar Planters Association. One day was spent on a trip around the island with a chance to see the sugar cane fields and pineapple growing. We spent a week in Japan between boats on the Dollar Line. But I was disappointed in that I had not made proper arrangements in advance and had contact with only a few agricultural workers. An afternoon spent in the plant disease laboratory with a Japanese worker was very interesting. Outside of that interesting afternoon, most of our time was spent almost as ordinary tourists visiting the mission schools in Tokyo. We took a train across from Tokyo to Kobe, spending a day in Kyoto and a stop in Nara on the way.

We landed in Shanghai on September 23rd, just six years to the day from our first landing. I took a train that afternoon for Nanking where I'd made arrangements with Professor J. Lossing Buck to visit the Agricultural College of Nanking University.

In 1930 there were only two schools of college grade for agriculture in China. There was Lingnan College of Agriculture which had been started in Canton about the time of World War I. I know they have publications as far back as 1916. I believe the College of Agriculture

of Nanking University was established sometime in the early 20s and Professor J. Lossing Buck had been with the college faculty from the beginning.

J. Lossing Buck was an economist. At the time I visited him, his book Chinese Farm Economy was on the press. This was a survey of 2866 farms in 17 localities in China made by the students of the College of Agriculture, and some other workers capable of making an agricultural survey. Later when I was able to secure the book, I found it was very helpful in understanding the problems of the Chinese farmers. Professor Buck was very helpful in arranging my talks with other staff members and entertained me in their home. Mrs. Pearl Buck was a very gracious hostess. Her father, Reverend Seidenstricker, "The Fighting Angel," was living with them but came down only at supper. He seemed to me a very gentle and unassuming old man.

I: Why was Pearl Buck's father called "The Fighting Angel"?

OVERHOLT: I use that term as it is the title Mrs. Buck gave to the very interesting book she wrote of the life of her father--a very conscientious disciplinarian and a very effective missionary.

The following morning after being with the Bucks, I took the train back to Shanghai. I had just a day back in

Shanghai with Olive seeing to necessary errands, and we sailed for Foochow the following day. Two interesting incidents on this trip: Just as we were about to sail, several policemen came aboard, walked into the dining room right up to a cupboard and took out the books, removed a panel from the back and took out a half dozen bags of opium. I would say about two-pound bags. I didn't see that they made any arrests. Also, our shipmate for the trip was Edgar Snow. He had been working for a Shanghai newspaper and was cutting loose to become a free lance writer. He spent all the time on the voyage pounding a typewriter in his cabin, and we only had a chance to visit with him at meals.

I: Can you recall topics of discussion that you had with Edgar Snow during your mealtimes?

OVERHOLT: After Mr. Snow later made his name as an author, we wished we had tried to get better acquainted.

Several friends met us at Pagoda Anchorage and on the 20 mile trip back up river to Foochow they told us what had been happening. We learned it would be impossible for us to get to Yenping because of the danger of Communist raids across the border from Kiangsi Province, which had become the headquarters of the Communist government.

I: Exactly what was happening in these raids?

OVERHOLT: We believed that most of these raids were for the purpose of securing supplies, and for that reason, they were greatly feared in the localities that were to be raided. Rice, of course, was the main thing sought and rice bins were emptied.

There was never any attempt to set up government in the territories invaded. As soon as they got their supplies, they returned to base; but some time would pass before it was considered safe for the missionaries to return.

In the case of Yenping, I don't believe they ever seriously attempted to scale the walls and take the town.

We were assigned part of a duplex house in Foochow and I went back to teaching in the Anglo-Chinese College part time. The church in Yenping was made up largely of Foochow speaking traders, but the natives spoke a very altered form of Mandarin. We hired a teacher who could teach us Mandarin. With the fine biology laboratory I had available, I set up equipment for collecting and studying plant diseases. Also, I had the 1200 agricultural bulletins that I brought back with me to catalog and index, so the material could be used more readily.

One event of that year deserves special mention. That is, the visit of the "Fact Finding Commission" in March

of 1931. In the Methodist Church, "The Centenary Movement" promoted in the General Conference of 1920 had not produced the great results that they had hoped for.

I: What kind of results were they hoping for? Can you give some details along this line?

OVERHOLT: The Centenary Movement was launched at the General Conference of 1920. It was part of the spirit abroad voiced by John R. Mott to the Student Volunteers "to save the world in the present generation."

There was total solicitation within the Methodist Church for the support of the program. Since these were the days of post-WWI prosperity, there was very generous response, but when the financial boom tapered off, many of the pledges were not kept.

There was a very thorough and highly organized program set up. One of the most interesting pictures of the missions of that day was assembled in a hard cover, well-illustrated book that was used in the publicity. The "Re-Thinking Missions" group were trying to find why that program had failed and to find better ways to present the mission program to the church.

Also, with the turnover in China to the Kuomintang government, it was necessary to get an overall picture of the adjustments the church would have to make in their

programs to meet the needs of the new days. An inter-denominational commission of laymen was organized to visit China to study the missionary programs of the churches and to work out ways programs and methods might be improved. The results of this survey and programs recommended were later published in a weighty volume entitled Rethinking Missions.

One member of the commission who visited Foochow was Dr. Paul Douglas, sociologist from the University of Chicago, later to become the United States senator. The agricultural representative on the team was a Dr. Anderson from Cornell University. Guy Thielen, American Board teacher of agriculture in Union High School, and I were given the responsibility of assisting Dr. Anderson in the survey. I don't remember exactly what he said in his report, but the general tenor of the Rethinking Missions was a greater emphasis on the social and vocational direction of the missionary program. I remember the medical program was particularly criticized for its stress on the gospel and perhaps poor medical practice. I don't think they were exactly right in their report.

Having mentioned Guy Thielen, I believe I should take the space to mention the agriculturally trained men who were then working in Fukien. The Union High School, which I spoke of, was a joint project of the Methodist

and the American Board Missions and was founded as a normal school, but in 1924 or 1925 they moved to a new site where more land was available, and more emphasis was placed on agriculture. It was a self-help institution where they planted gardens to produce foreign vegetables and fruits not grown in China which they peddled in the foreign compounds. They also made jams and jellies, ground wheat and corn and parched grains to make a very good imitation of Postum. Arthur Billing was our Methodist representative in Union High School. He was not trained in agriculture, but he was a very practical and devoted man. It was he who worked out the cereal coffee and the milling of the grains and the canning. Guy Thielen, who taught agriculture, was a graduate of South Dakota State, with graduate work in Amherst. Like me, he was a dirt farmer and through the years we had many pleasant associations.

The American Board also had a trained agriculturist at Shaowu in northwest Fukien who worked there only one term and then became a teacher of agricultural engineering in Nanking University. In 1920 the Methodist Church sent out Fred Rossiter, a graduate of Iowa State a year or two behind me. He was sent to the field without the introductory training recommended for me. The Methodist Church had a tract of tide lands several hundred acres between

the county seat town of Hinghwa and the sea. The missionary work was begun in Hinghwa about the same time as the work in Foochow. They had a well-developed program of evangelism education and the hospital. There was an orphanage on this tide land and the Rossiters were given the responsibility of managing it. That work took so much time that the agricultural end of the program suffered. Fred said he spent his time wiping noses when he should have been in the field. They didn't return to the field after their first furlough. Fred had a very successful career with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, first in connection with the work with agriculture in China, then for many years as agricultural attaché in the Canadian embassy.

The conflict of interest in our work also was more or less true for me. In Yenping I was the missionary advisor for the middle school and was involved in many of the problems of administration. I regularly taught two classes in English for the sake of having the language taught by the direct method by an English speaking teacher.

Before taking up the account of my actual work in agriculture, I should quote two paragraphs describing the setting of the work: one in regard to the mission and one in regard to the climate, topography, and agricultural resources. Yenping was a walled county seat town of about

20,000 people situated at the confluence of two rivers flowing down from Shaowu and Kiening to the north, and Chungan from the south about 160 miles from Foochow. Nathan Sites, doing pioneer work in Kutien made an exploratory trip to Yenping because many Kutien people were in business there. He was attacked and beaten on the streets, rescued by his Kutien friends who quickly got him out of town. I don't know when the first missionary was permitted to live in Yenping nor when the schools and the two churches were built. The mission newspaper, The Pagoda Herald, of January, 1919 shows an architect's drawing of the hospital being built. The Pagoda Herald for June, 1924 lists the names of 11 missionary couples, 11 evangelistic missionaries, two doctors, a teacher, an engineer, and two single ladies working for the Methodist Board of Missions. Seven ladies working under the Methodist Woman's Foreign Missionary Society also worked in the mission, making 30 missionaries in all. With the turnover to the Kuomintang government and constant banditry in the whole upriver countryside, most of these missionaries did not return to Yenping. There remained only two missionary couples in 1931 and four ladies.

I want to take the space to describe the two couples remaining because they were so much help and so much in-

spiration to us. Reverend Frederick and Laura Bankhardt were from the German Church in U.S.A. "F.B.", as we called him, was almost a workaholic, rising at 4:00 a.m. for devotions (he was a very devout man) and work before breakfast. He had developed a large constituency in the States and raised money not only for the evangelistic work, but for the school, hospital and agricultural work as well. I tried to help him in his correspondence as much as I could.

Dr. and Mrs. J.E. Skinner were in their last term before retirement. Dr. Skinner had brought the hospital to the place that I have described before, with its fine building. He trained young men to a point where they could set up clinics through the countryside somewhat like the paramedics of today. In the eyes of the villager, they were doctors. One of them practicing in Yenping was a quite competent doctor. Dr. Skinner amputated the arm of a young boy who, when well, became apprenticed to the mission engineer. He learned enough electricity that he could set up our missionary light plant and in the neighboring town built a generator powered from the flume of a rice mill. He was also quite a competent supervisor of construction.

Dr. Skinner whittled out artificial limbs for his amputees. It was his planning that brought running water

into our mission compound. A Chinese convert one time said, "Jesus must have been like Dr. Skinner."

Now as to the conditions for agricultural work. Foochow lies at the same latitude as Miami, Florida, so has a subtropical climate and quite a regular cycle of seasons. Beginning in January, some days were very fine. When the sun shone, the temperature would sometimes rise to 80 degrees, but cold, dry winds would blow in from the north. We would have two or three nights of freezing during the winter, sometimes snow or ice on the mountains. I would say more than half of the days would be cloudy and sometimes have constant drizzle of rain at temperatures in the 40s and low 50s. None of the Chinese homes had heat outside of the charcoal pots they would carry around to set at their feet. Schools and churches had no heat. It was impossible to put on enough clothes to keep warm, so we would be thoroughly chilled after 3 or 4 hours in the classroom. We would have a heated room in our homes and heat in our bathroom when bath time came. Then what chilblains we had!

March, April and May saw rising temperatures and increasing rainfall, and by early June often floods. Late June and July were usually dry and hot before the typhoon season began and that was the critical period in growing crops. In late July to October was the typhoon season,

and tropical depressions traveling across the Pacific would swing in with gusty winds and driving, heavy rains. Sometimes they would last only for a few hours, but usually two or three days. Between typhoons the weather was oppressively hot, sometimes getting to 95 degrees but with an average humidity around 80 or above. Usually we got a good sea breeze in Foochow making it more comfortable, but in Yenping and inland it was oppressively hot. Nights would cool very little. I have seen whole weeks when the temperature would never fall below 80 degrees. By October the weather would begin to cool, and rain become very infrequent through November and December. Those were the days when it was a joy to live in Fukien.

Foochow people described the topography of their province with just six characters: sang sang lek hai ek tien-- which are the ideographs for three, mountain, six, sea and one field. For my deputation work I made the meaning of these characters into a jingle: "Three parts mountains, six parts sea, one part only fields can be." That would make the land one fourth fields, but that was far from the case. If you would lump the sea and mountains together to make nine parts, you would have one-tenth for fields. I doubt even then that 10 percent of Fukien Province is tillable crop land.

Rice, of course, was the basic food and the basic

crop. In the mountain land where a trickle of water could be caught, the land below was terraced for rice paddies and the water guided down from one terrace to another. The first European explorer to travel up the Min River wrote that looking up from the river it seemed that the Chinese were able to make the water flow uphill to these terraces. The hillsides with good soil where running water was not available were planted to sweet potatoes, peanuts and vegetables. Of course, at higher elevations in many places there were large areas planted to tea. These hillsides were not terraced and the erosion was terrific. In a few years the fields would have to be abandoned. Nature was kind to these abandoned areas for the ground would soon be covered with the tropical Imperata grass with fast spreading rhizomes that held the soil. Many species of legumes, some of the Lespedezas that are grown in America, now were native to these hillsides. When these bushes and grass were grown high by late summer, villages cut them and bound them in bundles carried home to their villages for their winter's fuel. Along these bushes was a beautiful bright red azalea that could only grow a foot high under this treatment. When they bloomed in the spring, whole hillsides were a bright red, so the Chinese called this azalea "the whole mountain red."

I might say, in passing, that also along with the azaleas were the big white Cherokee roses. The mountain valleys also in late summer would be filled with beautiful purplish-white Easter lilies. These half-used hillsides of grass and shrubs seemed a great waste to me, so I made the main goal for rural improvement: "better utilization of hill lands." Mountains farther from villages and population centers had a better chance to produce more naturally.

The main exports from Foochow were lumber and other mountain products. The main lumber produced was "Foochow fir" (*Cunninghamia lanceolata*), a beautiful dark green tree with triangular, glossy, sharp needles. They made fine Christmas trees if you could get by the needles to hang the decorations. Unlike most conifers, the stump would sprout again, and with one sprout selected to grow would make an 8-inch tree in about 10 years. These "Foochow poles" were rafted down the river to Foochow at great peril to other navigation. There they were loaded on sailing junks for other ports of China. Huge bundles of 10 to 12 feet in diameter bound with bamboo cables were counter-balanced on either side of the junk. The red pine (*Pinus massoniana*) was a rapid growing pine used for fuel. It was worked up into bundles of stove-length wood and loaded on boats to float downriver.

There were many, many species of bamboo produced and used in countless ways. (The China Journal of Science and Arts listed 450 such uses.) Sprouts as they emerged from the ground were cut for food. One of our main sources of income for Yenping was huge bamboo sprouts, six to eight inches in diameter and 18 inches long. They were split in two, soaked in limewater, dried and smoked for preservation. Coarse brown paper was made by chopping up the stems, soaking, and grinding the material to pulp. The split bamboo had countless uses in making mattings and tables. Later, engineers used it even for the concrete reinforcement. Bamboo was also rafted downriver like the Foochow poles.

There were also some valuable hardwood trees. The banyan was a beautiful shaped tree spreading over temples and courtyards. A nickname for Foochow was "The Banyan City." The wood was of little value. There were also beautiful camphor trees, used mainly for making chests. I never saw any place where camphor was being distilled. Another very valuable wood was the flower wood, from a leguminous tree. It was a very hard wood with a beautiful grain that would take a good polish. It was used in furniture and picture frames. In all the mountains back of Yenping grew many fine oak trees. One interesting use for them was the growing of mushrooms. Big trees

would be cut down, the bark would be hacked full of holes and water with mushroom spores sprinkled over them. The following year the bark would be covered with mushrooms, which were gathered, dried and sold for export. The main and very important use for these hardwoods was the burning of charcoal which was shipped downriver by the boat load.

It was in the management of the tenth of the land that could be fields that the Chinese showed their mastery of production through knowledge handed down from father to son for 4,000 years. Fields would be out of production only a few days in a year. The big secret of this production was inter-cropping. The summers were so short in north Fukien that two consecutive crops of rice could not be planted, as in south Fukien. Seed beds of early rice would be prepared in late March and the seedlings transplanted to the fields about the first of May, spaced about 18 inches apart. Meanwhile, beds of seedlings for late rice were planted. About the middle of June these seedlings were planted between the hills of early rice which was then about 18 inches high. The early rice was ripe by the end of July and harvested. The field was again doused with night soil and the late rice which had been planted between the hills of early rice grew very rapidly then and was ripe by late October. As soon as

the late rice was harvested, the straw was stacked by the villagers. The crowns of the hills were dug and piled, next mixed with a little more soil, and the whole pile was ignited. The pile would smolder for several days. I don't know just what the chemistry was, but the crumbly soil coming from the burning made an excellent fertilizer when mixed with night soil and applied to the hills of vegetables.

Winter was the time for growing temperate zone vegetables: many varieties of mustard and Chinese cabbage and the largest heads of cauliflower. Villages below Foochow had learned to grow Irish potatoes and shipped them to Shanghai and Hong Kong. Carrots were also an introduced crop. Peas were quite commonly grown. The mustard, cabbage and cauliflower seedlings were already grown and ready for transplanting. In a week or 10 days, what was a rice field was a flourishing vegetable garden. Areas further from the cities sowed quite a little wheat as a winter crop.

Our summer of 1931 was spent on Kuliang as usual. Our second son Martin was born on July 11. The bandit situation had cooled down and we made our plans to move to Yenping.

I: What was the response of the citizens of Yenping to the Chinese Communists?

OVERHOLT: As I have indicated in my remarks about the Communist raids, the citizens were very much afraid of the new government, and with good reason, because they collected "back taxes" from everyone who could pay.

One of our best students in Yenping, whose father ran a brewery and wine shop, had just finished his studies and became a doctor. When the Communists made exorbitant demands on his father, the young doctor asked me for a loan and I gave him \$1,500,000JMP (about U.S. \$50.00). There was terrific pressure on anyone from whom they could extort money.

I: Please continue with your journey to Yenping.

OVERHOLT: Travel on the river to Yenping was in wood bottom boats, 70 to 80 feet long, 16 to 18 feet wide, powered by two diesel engines with sometimes a third engine as a spare. Because of the danger from bandits, the boats were armored with eighth inch thick steel plates all around from the 18 inch plank flange that served as a walkway around the boat, up about two to three feet from the water. Freight was loaded in 6 foot compartments in the bottom of the boat. Planks were laid down to serve as a floor. More freight was piled on either side of the passageway up to boards which were laid down in the com-

partments to form bunks 4 feet wide for the passengers. Steel sliding doors could be opened for ventilation and light. There was about 4 feet of headroom to the fixed upper deck which was covered by arched bamboo mattings. This space on top could be used by passengers or for light freight.

The trip upriver usually required two overnight stops, sleeping on the launch. In times of low water with unloading cargo into small boats and loading again at rapids, it could be three or four days. The downriver trip was usually made in a day. It was our misfortune that when we came to make our move to Yenping in October with our household goods, we knocked the bottom of our boat out on a rock. The boatmen were able to make a sandbank, however, without sinking. Olive and the two children and Bishop John Gowdy, who was traveling with us, were able to get on another launch and go on, but I spent two days before an empty boat could be brought upriver to carry the freight on.

I believe a description of the setting of our work in Yenping is worthy of record. It was mentioned before that the city is located on the inside of a Y formed by the flowing together of the two branches of the Min River. A city wall, following along either arm of the Y and at each end built back over a hill probably 300 feet high, was built to

meet at the back of the city. The wall was built of large brick, everywhere over 20 feet high. There were five gates which were closed at night in times of danger, and the wall was considered sufficient protection against bandit or Communist raids. As I said before, the hospital was built on a central hill and a residence for the missionary doctor was next to the hospital.

As you look upriver, the hill begins to rise at the left with the city wall rising with it. The mission property was located on that hill with five mission houses and three school buildings built on the wider part of the hill. A narrow neck with the city wall at the back extended across to the widening of another hill which was occupied by the Women's Foreign Missionary Society (as it then was called) property, with a large residence and two school buildings. The valley between these two hills was filled with Cunninghamia trees.

We were assigned to a very roomy three-bedroom home with a wonderful view looking down on the junction of the two rivers flowing together to form the Min. Pagodas were built on the high hills at either side framing the stream which at low water was punctuated by many large rocks. The sunrise view from our bedroom window was the water glistening between these rocks and the two pagodas framing the picture in the morning mist.

There was not much to be done in actual work in agriculture that first winter. We planted a good vegetable garden for ourselves and helped get a student garden established. There was a large tile-roofed shed that had been used to store construction materials to be made over into a barn with living quarters for a farmer. We built a pig pen in this barn and later pens for the goats. The engineer who had worked with the mission had an office with two workrooms, one of which I divided into a library for my 1200 bulletins and a laboratory in which also I ran an incubator. I got a chicken house built with netting runway near our house. I bought a dozen leghorn hens and a cockrel from a Seventh Day Adventist missionary in Foochow. During the winter I measured and studied our terraced rice fields that were in the valley outside the city wall.

A leprosarium with about twenty men lepers was built across the valley. Most of the men were able to work and were glad to help in whatever labor we could provide them. During the threat of Communist invasion the winter before, trenches had been dug through the gardens and lawns of the compound. I don't know why, for they were just inside the city walls. Filling these trenches provided the students with a chance to earn some money. I also sowed some temperate zone crops: sudan grass which didn't do well, both the white bi-annual sweet clover and the annual hubam sweet clover, vetch, and mung beans which I found also was a

summer crop and soon was infected with root rot.

I made two hatches from the 100-egg incubator to get a flock of leghorns started. Before the first hatching was three months old an infection of Newcastle disease--a very highly infectious virus that kills a fowl in three days--somehow got into our flock. I isolated the sick birds as fast as they could be picked out. I've never known whether an inoculation I tried worked or not. I made a vaccine by simmering the livers of the birds that died for three hours, mashing them, and filtering out the serum that I injected into the breasts of all the birds. Over a dozen survived, but I kept no check of uninoculated fowls, so perhaps those would have survived anyway.

I made contact with a British firm selling Brunnermond fertilizers. They sent a man up from Foochow to work out plans for experiments with their products, and I secured the promise of free fertilizers. With the coming of spring, we took over the rice fields that had been rented out and made the interplanting of early and late rice as I had described above. We got together several local varieties of rice for comparative tests. Speaking of variety tests, I should describe one grand failure.

Quite a little wheat was grown in the winter and I saw it was terribly mixed. I went out into the fields that spring and gathered a hundred heads of as many different types

as possible--some tall and bearded or beardless to some very short and beardless. I sowed these in a head row test in the fall of 1932. In the spring of '33 I collected ten heads from the rows that showed promise for planting the next year. Weevils are very bad in that climate in stored grain, so I treated these heads with carbon bisulfide and sunned them till I thought there was no odor of the carbon bisulfide. I put them in tightly sealed tins. When it came to planting in the fall of '34, not a single head had germinated.

My relations as advisor to the middle school were a real headache. There was jealousy between the principal and the dean with the principal resigning, retracting, and then leaving suddenly for Foochow. There was a complaint and a short strike by the students over the demand for the return of their matriculation fee. There was the athletic director who got away with some of the equipment. I had great help, however, with the advice of our next door neighbor, Rev. Su I-cing, who was trained in America and our mission treasurer. Also, Rev. Bankhardt, "F.B.", who understood better than I what was going on and had the confidence of the Board of Managers for the school. Eventually, a plan was worked out with the girls' school to become coeducational, and their woman principal put in charge--a very capable young lady. In many places on the mission field there has been great conflict between the

Methodist women's division and the board of missions, but we had splendid cooperation, not only in education but in the evangelistic program which they planned together.

And now a paragraph about the citrus trees. They had been planted and propagated in the mission compound. Another of Dr. Skinner's arts was the grafting of trees! Orange, lemon, grapefruit, and pomelo were grown in the compound. Dr. Skinner gave me lessons in budding, but I never could make my buds stick like he did. Some vegetables were grown between the orange trees, but I sowed legumes for green manure under the trees and worked them in. Scale insects and citrus borers from a beautiful black beetle with white-marked antennae like water buffalo horns gave them the name in Chinese, "water buffalo beetle," and they were a plaything for children. Their larvae before maturity could be as large as my little finger and wreaked havoc on the insides, particularly of pomelo and grapefruit trees. A grapefruit tree 15 feet tall was growing on the bank by our garden. The roots were washed almost bare, and one side of the trunk rotted through to the core from borer infection. I had read that paradichlorobenzene was used for peach borers, so I made a kerosene solution. I had injected the trunk by boring one-fourth inch holes through the cambium and filling the hole with the solution. It made a perfect kill. We then built a wall around the

tree, about a ten-foot circle, and filled it with earth. I chiseled out rotting wood, drove spikes in the wood for reinforcement, and filled the cavity with concrete. The next fall we harvested 420 grapefruit from that tree.

The lemons also were very coarse and stayed always a dark green. The mission had had a couple drums of calcium carbide to be used for acetylene lamps. Acetylene gas is a good bleach for citrus fruit. I fixed a bin so I could release a gas into it, and the lemons came out as a lemon should be. They also seemed a better flavor. I wish I could say we were able to pass these methods on. But, our work was so much interrupted, that outside of the few neighbors and friends who saw the work, we never got into an extension program.

I worked out plans for fertilizer tests on both rice and sweet potatoes. The rice fields were in such irregular terraces that a scientific test with controls could not be worked out. We did have a half-acre level plot in the compound where we could lay out regular beds and really check our results. So these beds were replicated with three combinations of nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium--one bed with vetch dug in as a green manure and a check five treatments. We carried this experiment through for three years, but with our transfer to the university in 1936 we never were able to get the results put into practice.

I found interesting jobs for two of our senior boys. Dr. Franklin Metcalf, who had taught botany in Fukien Christian University, made an extensive collection of plants and herbarium at the university supported by the Arnold Arboretum. He had been transferred to Lingnan University in Canton. He wanted to continue his Fukien work, so we made arrangements to find a collector who would press the plants and send them to Lingnan. An entomologist at Lingnan also wanted a collector, so I hired another senior for him. Working with these boys and supervising them was a fine hobby and brought them a nice income.

It turned out that I was to spend the summer in Yenping with no missionary company. Frederick Bankhardt had been elected as a general conference delegate and he and Laura went on furlough in February. Dr. and Mrs. Skinner retired that year but later came back to work at Haitan down on the Fukien coast. This was not as serious as it sounds. Reverend Su, the mission treasurer, had worked for years at that job and could handle church problems. Mamie Glassburner, who had worked with "F.B." in evangelistic work, carried on that work. The Dr. Lesley Chen, whom I mentioned above as a competent doctor trained by Dr. Skinner, took charge of the hospital. We had already received word in the spring that Dr. Gerald and Maureen Downie were to come to the hospital in the fall.

Olive and the two children went to Foochow the first of June. I stayed on till school closed and I could carry on the field work. I went down to Foochow for three weeks at the end of June to help them move to Kuliang and then back to Yenping.

Just before I planned to go back to Foochow to bring the family home I was sick, but not sick enough to see the doctor, so started on my trip. I usually walked up the mountain, but felt so miserable I hired a chair and rode shivering in the hot sun. When I got to the house I found my temperature was 105.5--malaria. I had to fight it the rest of the time I was in Yenping.

There will be a correction in the paragraph above where I said I came to Foochow to move the family, as Olive was not to return to Yenping then for we were expecting a baby about the middle of October. I returned to Yenping alone and left Olive and the children to move down from Kuliang and stay in Foochow till the baby was born.

I will describe my trip back to Yenping by quoting from my diary: "August 30th--Tuesday--Loaf around in the morning, early dinner, and get on the boat at noon. Stay at Sang-bö" all afternoon." Sang-bö" is a little island of about 10 acres in the middle of the Min River directly below the new buildings at Anglo-Chinese College. Filled with houses and crowded with narrow streets, it was usually surrounded by log rafts, sampans, and upriver launches.

The National Geographic in 1923 published this view.

"August 31st--Wednesday--Pulled to the upper bridge in early morning. Held at Likin till noon, get to Cuikau at 9:00 PM." The upper bridge was about six miles above Sang-bō near the Union High School. Likin is the internal taxes collected by the warlords in moving goods from one district to another. In our trips upriver there were three such stations where examiners would come on the boat, examine the cargo, and then often would follow long haggling over the amount of duty to be paid.

"Thursday--September 1st--Late start in the morning because of Likin inspection. Stop a long while at Yu-kā-kau and spend the night at Taibiang. Write letters all day." I took my typewriter with me to use in writing letters and think it was a great curiosity to the crowds on the boat. The stop at Yu-ka-kau, of course, was also a Likin inspection.

"Friday--September 2nd--Start in early morning, get to Yenping at 1:00. Late dinner after bath and cleanup. Rest in P.M." The accommodations as we travel may be well recorded. To sleep at night one would have to contrive a way to hang a mosquito net. Traveling alone I would always have a man with me in the 4 by 4 by 6 foot compartment. Our boards would be covered with cotton mattress pads that we carried with us. Meals for passengers were cooked in a stove at the back of the passen-

ger compartments and an earthen stove with fire built under a 30-inch-round bottom pan. The main meal would be usually a dish of pork or fish with red wine sauce over it, a greasy quick-fried vegetable, usually coarse stems and leaves of a floating sweet potato vine, and a soup. This was usually brought in a tray and eight passengers would gather around the tray with a bowl of rice and dip in the common food. I always enjoyed the morning meal of soft rice, pickled bean curd, and a crisp fried stick something like a doughnut dipped in soy sauce. Toilet facilities were two 3 by 3 foot boxes with slit floors and walls about 4 feet high suspended over the propellers. Running hot water was always available when the launch was running from the water pumps that cooled the engines and ejected hot water from the pipes on either side of the launch.

In contrast to the upriver trip, I will quote my diary for going downriver, when on September 15th I went downriver to meet our newly arriving Dr. Gerald Downie and wife Maureen. It reads: "Mid-autumn Festival. Trudy and I go to Foochow, start at 6:30 and in Foochow by 6:00." The Trudy mentioned was a young Swiss missionary who had just arrived for her first year in Fukien. You can see the trip downriver was less than 12 hours. There was always interesting scenery on the river with the mountains rising above you, sometimes with rice terraces, sometimes

with grassy, shrubby slopes, and often deep valleys filled with dark green Cunninghamia trees. Going upriver you had plenty of time to enjoy the scenery. Going downriver, it was a racing panorama.

Five days later from this downriver trip, on September 20th, the Downies and I started the trip back upriver. It was good to have the Downies for company and interesting helping them get started. "Doc," as we always called him, is a very outgoing man, and unlike me, not timid in using his language and he learned it very fast. They did not have a chance to study in language school, and Doc went to work immediately with Dr. Lesley Chen in the hospital. We were only to have a short time in Yenping. I went back to Foochow on October 10 to be with Olive when the new baby was expected to arrive. The Bankhardts arrived back from America and General Conference was on the 24th, but, before they could get started upriver, there came news of another invasion approaching Yenping. On the last day of the month, Downies and the women missionaries came downriver.

The next day, November 1st, daughter Abbie was born, named for her aunt whom we had visited in Nanking as we came out, but who had stayed in America after her first term. One privilege we had during that time was a visit by Dr. Stanley Jones from India, who came to conduct an ashram for pastors and Christian leaders. The invasion

toward Yenping was of short duration. General Tsai Dien Kai, hero of the repelling of the Japanese from Shanghai in early 1932, was put in charge of the military in Fukien and his 19th Route Army came with him. From December, 1932 until fall of 1933 we had a very peaceful time in Yenping.

I: What were your impressions of General Tsai Dien Kai? Did you have some personal contact with him?

OVERHOLT: Although we lived next door to Gen. Tsai on Kuliang, we had no personal contacts with him. Most contacts with the military were left to the senior missionary who in Yenping was Rev. Bankhardt. As a private in WWI, I was conditioned against any great awe of the military and avoided as much as I could any contact with "the brass."

We did have an interesting contact with Gen. Wei Li-huang, who was in charge of the up river district after Gen. Tsai's revolt was quashed. Gen. Wei was later the general in charge at the time of the seige of Mukden and received considerable publicity when he turned the city over. His wife was a Wellesley graduate and they had two small children. They rented a house in the compound and lived next door to us. Mrs. Wei was a volunteer English teacher in the middle school and their children played with our children with great language difficulty as their children could not speak Foochow.

Going back to Yenping, we started upriver with our family, now of three children, and the Downies, getting back to Yenping on December 22nd, just in time for Christmas. The students went out collecting greenery and red berries and decorated our house for us. The rest of that school year went quietly and nothing eventful was done in agricultural work.

In March I made a trip to Hong Kong and Canton to get milk goats and to visit agricultural work at Lingnan University. There was a large population of Indian people in Hong Kong who kept many goats of the Jumnapari breed noted for their milk production. They are much like the Anglo-Nubian breed of England and America with Roman noses and long, floppy ears. I took a preliminary trip out to the Indian settlement to see what stock was available the day I arrived. I took the train that evening out to Canton where I was entertained by Dr. and Mrs. Metcalf whom we had known in Foochow and for whom we had collected plants. I spent five days visiting with the dean of agriculture, Dean Groff and Professor Hoffman, looking over the garden and rice work.

It was a coincidence that the assistant in horticulture was a graduate of F.C.U., supervising the gardens. He showed me the work in the gardens. When we got back to F.C.U. after WW II, the dean of the College of Agri-

culture was Dr. Li Lai-yung, who was the young man that had shown us around, now with his Ph.D. in horticulture from Penn State. I collected quite a few seeds of crops and some plants they were working with. One that proved very useful was called "sunn hemp" (Crotalaria juncea) which is a very rapid-growing legume much used in India. I used it to feed all the livestock, even chopped up for the chickens. I took a night trip by boat back to Hong Kong and proceeded to buy three goat kids, two does, and a buck, and took the boat back to Foochow with stops in Swatow and Amoy. In Swatow I got a dozen young trees of the "Swatow orange," a very superior tangerine orange.

When I got back to Foochow, Guy Thielen, agriculture teacher at Union High School, went with me to Yenping, and we had a good opportunity to share our experiences. That spring I bought four native goats, little does that would weigh less than 50 pounds at maturity, for breeding to "Big Turk"--the billy I had bought. Our children were much taken with the three new pets. Mary Jo was very fond of the story Heidi. The two does got Swiss names "Schwamli" and "Berli;" and the buck "Big Turk." Future kids also got Heidi names.

The first hybrid to be born was a pair of kids, male and female. The little buck was a very well marked white kid with a black collar and black stockings. He was named

"Thistlefinch." I castrated him and he became the children's pet, growing to 96 pounds when his mother weighed just 45 pounds.

That spring I had sent for several varieties of Philippine upland rice. The Chinese grew unirrigated rice, but they always planted some of it where it could be irrigated if the going got tough. My observation was that every year, in the break between the spring rains and the typhoon rains of summer, there would be a dry spell of three weeks or more. There was a good even hilltop above our rice fields that I could make into experimental plots, which I laid out to make comparative tests. The first two years only a few plants would survive that dry period, but by the third year there were the native rice and two Philippine varieties that would come through the drought. In 1936, however, I left Yenping, and the work with this upland rice was not carried on. Those months of early 1933 until September were full of optimism. General Chiang Kai-shek had launched the New Life Movement which was to regenerate China morally, politically, and economically. Under this program China was to have a new lease of life; society would be reformed; government would bring justice and security to the people, and there would be plenty for all. It probably didn't reach down to the common people, but the students, teachers, and Christian leaders were greatly inspired. When time came for President Chiang's 50th

birthday, the students put on plays to raise money to buy him an airplane. When he was captured in 1936 and held by Chang Hsueh-liang, there was great consternation, and great rejoicing when he was released on Christmas Day.

In June of this year of 1933, I hired one of the graduates, Ding Puo-hui, who had shown himself a good worker and leader in the school garden work. He was a farm boy and a good student. My plan was to train him individually, improving his English enough that he would read the references in agriculture I had and in the basic theories of scientific agriculture. We spent an hour or two each morning studying while dew was drying off. He made good progress. By this time also, the farmer, who had been with me almost from the beginning, knew the routine of chores in the care of the chickens, goats, and the hog I fed each year for butchering.

I'd had frequent bouts of malaria and gotten anemic, so that Doc Downie advised me to spend the whole summer on Kuliang. In late August, Yenping was again threatened and missionaries had to leave Yenping. We moved down to Foochow from Kuliang. Since it seemed conditions would not improve, and there was need for English teaching in Anglo-Chinese College, I began teaching again. I did take two weeks off for an agricultural excursion to For-

mosa, as we then called Taiwan. Circumstances were this: The Electric Light Co. of Foochow was owned by a very wealthy Lau family. Mr. Lau was much interested in agriculture and had sent a nephew to Japan to study agriculture. When the nephew returned, he was to be put in charge of a rural life improvement project financed by the Lau's starting from scratch. The family had very close ties with Japan. In fact, during the Japanese war, Mr. Lau started home one night in his private ricksha and was never seen again. He wanted the nephew to go to Formosa to buy livestock and plants and observe work being done by the Japanese in agriculture. He asked Guy Thielen and me to go along with the nephew to help him select livestock and make our observations and recommendations for the program.

We spent a week visiting experiment stations and farms, only getting halfway down the island from Taipei to Hsinchu where there was an excellent animal husbandry farm. We brought back Berkshire pigs, Rhode Island Red and Leghorn chickens. When we got back to Foochow, we visited the two communities where the project was to be launched, and Guy and I each made reports as to what we had seen and what possibly might be attempted in the two communities.

General Tsai Dien Kai, with his 19th Route Army, had been given the job in 1933 of bringing order to

Fukien. He conspired with two Cantonese generals to rebel against the Nationalist Government. We believe the plot was hatched in August when General Tsai had a house next door to us on Kuliang, for we remembered later how we looked out one Sunday afternoon to see soldiers on our lawn guarding the house. There was great coming and going of sedan chairs carrying officers. The rebellion was launched the middle of November, but the two Cantonese generals failed to support General Tsai and he was forced to surrender on January 15th, '34. During this rebellion all mission property, mission houses as well, in Yenping were occupied by soldiers. Foochow military targets were frequently bombed by Nationalist planes. As soon as the rebellion was quashed, F.B. and I went to the military to find out when it would be safe to return to Yenping. On the day after Chinese New Year, February 16th, we started back for Yenping.

In telling about river travel before I didn't mention the danger possible also of having the military commandeer your boat. On this trip upriver the Nationalist Army was moving upriver to replace the defeated 19th Route Army. So it was that our boatman learned from a downriver boat that Cuikau was full of soldiers. We anchored in the river a couple miles below the town to spend the night. Early next morning we pulled past Cuikau without incident.

We were warned to keep our steel doors closed. When we came to the next large village, the boat was signalled to stop, but the engines put on full power to pass the landing. The soldiers fired on us a hail of bullets against our armor plate. When we got out from under fire, we found that two passengers under the matting on top the boat were seriously injured, and a sleeping man had been shot through the head. This was not discovered until they found blood was running out from under his bed. We reached Yenping without further trouble.

F.B.'s house had not been occupied, we found, because the Bible woman had been living in the house. The soldiers moved out of our house the next morning and left a filthy mess. A hole had been burned in the living room floor. Soldiers stayed on in the other two houses until the Downies were to come back and occupy their house. F.B. and I were alone for a month. The W.F.M.S. women came back in April and Doc Downie, without Maureen, moved in with me. Maureen with a little baby born in February '33, and Olive with our three children stayed on in Foochow. My work went on with the usual round of farm work and classes in school proceeded without further incident.

One big accomplishment by the government was made that year. When F.B. and I were coming back to Yenping, we were told a road was to be built from Yenping connecting to the railway in Kiangsi Province. We weren't im-

pressed, but my diary for August 10 has the notation: "First bus runs to Kienyang." The road, following the river 50 miles with many rocky hillsides to blast out, had been built in less than six months without one piece of heavy machinery, just heavy hoes with earth baskets, carrying poles and carts. Each village along the way had been assigned a section and they did it.

I made two trips down to Foochow, first in June to help Olive move to Kuliang. I had two weeks with the family in Foochow and two weeks on the mountain. Upon returning to Yenping from this trip, I hired students to help me get the house in shape for the family to finish cleaning up the mess after the soldiers. The tung oil on the floor had softened and was filled with filth. The woodwork was grimy also. The first step was to soak off all the accumulation of dirt and varnish with caustic soda, rinse it off with many rinsings, get it dry, and then paint the walls, woodwork and floors. The furniture was refinished as well.

With this work done, I made my second trip back to Foochow in late August to get the family. We arrived back in Yenping as a family into a newly finished home on September 14th. This was to be an uninterrupted year of peace and togetherness until the next year, June 23rd, 1935, when Olive and the children left for Foochow and

Kuliang. I would have to attend a meeting in Iongkau to work on plans for combining the programs of the schools in Yenping, Iongkau and Kienning, but nothing came of our planning.

I've always wondered what happened to my helper, Ding Puo-hui. I thought we were getting along fine. We had kept working together and he was doing very well. Quite a little of the work was laying out plots, figuring and weighing fertilizer, and the study we were making of our wheat and rice varieties. One morning in June when he came for his study, he, to use the navy expression, "blew his top." He told me I'd been taking advantage of him, working him like a coolie, when every task I had worked together with him. One of the things I had enjoyed in the work was working with the men in whatever task, weeding rice or whatnot. He said he wanted to go home and wanted his pay. I tried to reason with him, reminding him what I had told him of our plans in the beginning and the possibility of his going on in school, but he wouldn't listen and left. Some years later I had a letter from him with humble apology for what he had done.

When I went down to Foochow in early July, I had planned to get back in a couple weeks, but I had to have an appendectomy and returned to Yenping in early September with Olive and the children. Our faithful Au Giu, the farmer, had carried on and the field work and stock were

in very good shape.

That summer of 1935 I was brought into the planning for College of Agriculture at Fukien Christian University. Fukien Christian University had been founded in 1916 as a joint institution with art and science courses by the American Board, the Reformed Church, the Anglicans, and the Methodists. Professor Claude Kellogg, head of the zoology department, was a very practical man and had always connected his teaching with practical projects, such as organizing a campaign to eradicate the stink bugs that sucked the juices from developing litchis. He found that the bugs hibernated in the trees and on the cold days couldn't fly. With his students he organized the villagers to go out and beat the trees during the coldest days, pick up the bugs as they fell, and burn them. It was a cheap and effective control. He made it possible for the Hawaii Sugar Planters Association to send a man to the university and helped him hire village boys to collect rice borer larvae. The borers were kept in the biology laboratory to pupate. From a large number of these pupae a small wasp parasite would emerge instead of a moth. These wasps, less than a quarter inch long, were shipped to Hawaii where they would parasitize the sugar cane borer. With such a practical program at the university I was much interested.

In the turnover to Chinese control in 1927, Dr. John Gowdy, later Bishop Gowdy, turned over the presidency to Dr. C.J. Lin, who became a very successful administrator. He was a country boy and very much interested in agriculture. He approached me and asked me if I would be interested in helping. I told him I was and kept it in my thinking from then on. It was decided in the summer of 1935 that we would not go home on furlough in the summer of '36 as we could have done after a six-year second term. We wanted to see what would be worked out at Fukien Christian University. We returned to Yenping in September for an uninterrupted year of work. The fertilizer experiments on wheat and sweet potatoes were carried on, and the upland rice harvest that fall showed we were getting some good selections.

My diary shows we distributed seeds ordered from America for pastors to hand out in their parishes. Two purebred billy goats were sold. One important improvement that fall was the building of a better chicken house from the bricks on hand that had been bought for a new school building. It had a good incubator room and a room for a student to stay in. We'd been trapnesting the hens for two years, so with the flock we then had keeping the records was quite a chore. That winter I butchered two hogs and cured the meat for experience I might put to future use.

The feeding of our goats, chickens and pigs was quite different from what I had learned on the farm and at Iowa State. First the goats--they were herded two hours in the morning and three hours each afternoon, usually by one of the lepers. Some of the boys did well on the herding. Several good grasses were native: centipede, Bermuda grass and Miscanthus grass of the sorghum family were most common. The goats wouldn't touch the Imperata grass, which I have said, was such a good soil builder. Cattle, when forced to, would eat it. Kudzu vine, which was imported to America from Japan and did so much for agriculture in the South, grew everywhere. The herdsman would pull it off the city wall or from the trees when the goats couldn't reach it. There were three species of Lespedeza that grew everywhere. One perennial species (Lespedeza sericea) has been imported to the United States and is grown everywhere here in North Carolina to hold the road banks. Those were summer legumes. Vetches and oats were grown in the winter. We saved all the sweet potato vines, for they were the favorite forage for the goats. I tried making silage from the vines but didn't succeed.

For feed concentrates we had the rice by-products--bran and the small broken kernels screened out in milling. The best source of protein was the soybean cakes imported from Manchuria--big discs from the oil presses two feet in

diameter and five to six inches thick, very hard and dry, and had to be either chipped off with a knife or soaked till soft. It was the best source of protein for all the livestock. For pigs and chickens, we had broken, dried shrimp as a by-product from the coast; it was very salty, so we had to be very careful how much we mixed in a ration. We also dried sweet potatoes for feeding stock in the winter. Most of the poor farmers in Fukien used dried sweet potatoes for their carbohydrates instead of rice. Tubers were either grated to make "sweet potato rice" or sliced to make "sweet potato money."

One of my reasons for keeping pigs was to test two theories the Chinese had about hog-raising. One theory was that all slop for pigs had to be cooked. Perhaps there was a reason for that in the sterilizing the feed which prevented disease, but it took a lot of time and fuel. I fed my pigs uncooked food, and with my better balanced rations, grew pigs much faster than the Chinese. I never did try to figure out the cost as compared to the Chinese method. The other theory was that gilts had to be spayed to make proper flavor for the meat. Every street vendor in China has a particular signal for his trade, and the pig castrator/spayer went through the streets of the village blowing a shrill whistle like a boatswain's pipe.

We could make very good mash for the chickens from the ingredients I have described. We could buy oyster shells from the shops which we pounded up and ground in our home mill. We could buy bone meal also in the shops.

We moved to Foochow before Christmas, 1936, so I could start a class in animal husbandry and could make plans how to best use our furlough time when we came back to the university. There was much planning to be done for the general work of the College of Agriculture. The work at Yenping was to be closed, and I was to take the chickens and the goats to be transferred to the university. We took the chickens with us as we moved, but we left the goats until we could get a goat barn built.

There was no place for us to live on the campus, and we were assigned a house in the mission compound in Foochow. I commuted the 10 miles back and forth to the university. By this time, there was quite reliable bus service. I started just one class in general animal husbandry with plans for a FCU graduate who had studied some animal husbandry to take over the class after we went on furlough in April. I also moved the bulletin library I had been using and turned it over to the university library.

One very worthwhile project of this spring was a survey made in cooperation with the Provincial Agricultural Department and supported by the government. There were

eight of us in the party: four from the university-- Dr. Francis Chen, head of the Economics Department, who was just then transferring to government service to administer their program of rural improvement; Claude Kellogg, whom I mentioned before as head of the Biology Department; Ling Ching, the man who was to take my place when I went on furlough and myself from the university. Guy Thielen from Union High School was also a member of the party. Three government representatives: one, Paul Lee, who was a returned student graduate of the Yale School of Forestry who had taught with us in Anglo-Chinese College, but now working with the government. There was a Mr. Cheng that studied agronomy in France, and a Mr. Wong who had studied soils in Japan as government representatives with the party. I believe the account of this expedition can best be covered by a report that I wrote for the Foochow News (our mission news sheet) for March, 1937.

"Futsing was the first county to be studied. Lunch the first day was eaten in the spotlessly clean Yamen of the magistrate. We were told by our missionaries that this place up until last year had been a wreck of bare mud walls and broken tiles. Space does not permit the description of the jail which we were shown. Crowded, it is true, but clean and with several workrooms in which prisoners were polishing rice, making cane furniture, straw shoes and so forth. The wastelands of Futsing County

are mainly tidal flats formed where the sinking coast cannot keep up with the deposition of sediment from the drainage of interior lands. These lands present a problem in diking and drainage, freeing from salt and adapting crops that are salt tolerant. Such lands at present grow a heavy crop of grass, which might graze large herds of cattle to provide an abundant supply of beef once the superstitious prejudice against eating beef is overcome. Only these grasslands now represent the greatest source of fuel for the area. Forests must be established on surrounding hill land, and the new roads must be used for carrying in fuel to the locality before these lands can be released for more efficient production either as fields or grazing lands.

"The most promising area seen, however, in this county was a five-mile wide shallow bowl which at present is a no-mans-land in a clan war between the Yu and the Wang families. For years this land has been entered only at the peril of life to the entrant. Villages in this region are entirely clan villages. The school role posted in the hall of the primary school in which the party was quartered showed 90 students, all but three of whom were Wangs. On the other side of a low ridge running down to the sea lived the Yus and between the two clans is eternal war and a valley which under proper management might sup-

port many of these quarreling villagers in ease and abundance.

"In the next county visited another type of problem was found. Hweian County is on a peninsula that runs far enough out into the sea to be swept by constant monsoons-- from the northeast in the winter with as piercing a cold as blows across the midwestern prairies in March; and from the southeast in the spring and summer with driving rain that softens and carries away whatever soil is left on the denuded land by the dry winds of winter. Here we found thousands of acres of red soil swept as hard and smooth as a tennis court. Struggling hedges of acacias were trying to stand out against the sweeping winds, but wood hungry villagers turned the tide of battle against them so that only in deep washed arroyos are they able to put forth their tops, trying to break the force of the winds and protect the fields of their enemies, the farmers."

"The forenoon of the second day at Hweian was spent on an excursion to the interior where the mountains only recently, as earth history goes, had been cut clean of forests. First the soil went; then the soft granite that characterizes the mountain of Fukien coast was broken down. And last the coarse sand and gravel was swept down to silt up the streams to heights above surrounding fields so that

any time the tiny rivulets present a flood menace by any summer shower. The fields were flooded for several days after every heavy shower and a layer of gravel added to the field hastening the day when these fields will be abandoned. Now the hills stand washed down to bare granite tops with rocks of the harder substrate standing in grotesque forms.

"In Tungan a third type of land was seen. Here we found an area running 10 miles along the new motor highway, five to six miles wide between the mountains and the sea. It was on this narrow plain in 1918 that the Fukien warlord governor met the Cantonese warlord, and the prosperous villages were left in ruin. The battle fought there marked the beginning of a period of banditry which has been brought to an end only within the past year. Here we found fertile riceland grown to grass, mango trees untrimmed and about to die, and villages so overgrown with sword grass and briars that it was impossible to enter and find what they once might have been. It was only 12 miles across a narrow bay to the city of Amoy and the three populous cities with a population of one and a half million to be supplied from these fields."

I want to make two comments: First is, God moves in mysterious ways. Because of the banditry, clan wars and oppression of warlords, people who had occupied these villages had fled to the South Seas and made the develop-

ment and trade of Malaya and Indonesia possible. A speculation, too, of what might have been done if at the beginning of the New Life Movement, the United States could have stepped in with financial aid, a tenth of what we spent after WW II and provided experts as we did in the Point Four Program, what a difference it might have made.

We returned to the States on the President Hoover in May, 1937, with a week's stay in Los Angeles to contact some churches in that area that had helped our work. We visited Ames to attend my 20th class reunion and make plans for furlough studies. We were entertained in the home of Dr. Ivan Melhus, head of the Botany Department. When I told him I felt I should go back to study Animal Science, he proposed I should combine the two in taking up a study Swift Packing Company was wanting done in research on molds of meat in storage. Iowa State then had a very famous professor of Animal Breeding, Dr. Jay Lush. I talked with him and decided he could give me more help with the work we had planned at FCU, so I made plans to start working with him in July. We rented a house, and I had a very interesting year of study in Genetics, Animal Physiology and Statistics and Experimental Methods. My specific project was to study the college herd of 50 Holsteins and figure the amount of inbreeding in the herd, working back from the pedigrees for the last five generations.

By the spring of 1938, it was evident we would not be able to return to China, partly because of the war, but also due to the fact that the Methodist Church was committed only for two missionaries in the university, and they already had Drs. Clement Sites and Everett Stowe.

I: Why was the Methodist Church committed for only two missionaries at the university? How did you feel about not being able to return to China at this time?

OVERHOLT: Fukien Christian University was a cooperative project with the Methodist, Anglican and Dutch Reformed Churches and the American Board of the Congregational Church. In the organization the contributions of personnel and finances were set. The Rockefeller Foundation, and I believe other foundations, were part of the agreement. The Methodist Church agreed to provide two missionaries as did the American Board. The Anglican and the Reformed Church each provided one missionary.

Of course, we were disappointed in not being able to return immediately after our furlough, but I have always been able to accept conditions as they come. The Farm Security Administration was then expanding its program of farm rehabilitation, so I went to the State Director. When he learned I was a missionary, he said, "This is right down your alley," and I was hired. I was assigned to Van Buren County, one of Iowa's poorest

counties, with the title, Rural Rehabilitation Supervisor. We moved to Keosauqua, the county seat, the middle of August. About 140 families were helped in the next two years with loans to set up farming. After the home management supervisor and I had helped set up management plans for the farm and home, a loan was made to set up the program worked out. We consulted with the family as the year went along as we had opportunity. We also made loans in 1941 for the purchase of eight farms. After four years, things went sour. I was not enough of a respecter of red tape and was inclined to see the farmers' side of many questions. I was given an inefficiency rating which meant dismissal.

The Red Cross was then looking for Field Directors to work in the Armed Forces; I applied for a position and was hired. Because it was uncertain where I might be assigned, Olive and I decided to move the family to Indianola, Iowa, where my parents lived. We rented a house on the Simpson College Campus and as soon as the move was made, I reported in to Washington, D.C. for two weeks of training; then was assigned to Great Lakes Naval Training Station north of Chicago. Olive will tell I'm sure what a hard year that was for the family. I have often wondered if I made a wise decision when I declined an offer from Dr. Lush of a job to go back to Iowa State as his assistant in overseeing a swine-breeding project. I did not think

it fair, however, to have just been trained and outfitted by the Red Cross to leave them for another job. I was very fortunate in securing just the house we needed in Lake Bluff just two miles from the station the following spring. The family moved in just as soon as school was out in Indianola. We were very happy in that home until the spring of 1946 and the way opened for us to return to FCU. In one way, this eight year interlude was a great advantage for our family, for Martin and Abbie by then had had all their elementary education while Mary Jo, whom Olive had taught all of her elementary work, was halfway through Iowa State.

The first conference for furloughed Methodist missionaries which Olive and I attended was held in June at Albion College, Michigan. We went back to Lake Bluff to dispose of the furniture and things we had accumulated and began to pack for China. After a nice send off from the Lake Bluff church, we went back to Iowa on July 14th. With the war just ended, and no regular shipping to China, the problem of transportation was solved by the joint mission boards' chartering a troop transport--the Marine Lynx. It was hoped to be arranged for early August, but postponed until September 11. With that extra time, I went back to Ames and spent two weeks looking up material that I thought would be useful. We left Mary Jo to con-

tinue her studies in Iowa State and with Martin and Abbie, we drove out to San Francisco, arriving there on September 5th only to find there was a shipping strike and the sailing delayed. The churches of San Francisco had planned a big sendoff for the first shipload of missionaries returning to China with a program in the Opera House. Dr. Henry Luce was the main speaker; the Chinese ambassador also spoke. This was on the evening of September 10th.

By our delay, we were able to meet Dr. C.J. Lin and his family coming to the States for a sabbatical leave after 10 strenuous years of administration with the university operating upriver in Shaowu during the war. Also waiting in San Francisco to go out on the Marine Lynx was former FCU dean, Dr. Teddy (Hsi-en) Chen, now teaching in the University of Southern California. He had secured a sabbatical year to be acting president of the university in "C.J.'s" absence. Also waiting for the Marine Lynx were Eva Asher, University Treasurer and Assistant to the President, Dr. Yang Hsin-pao to head the Department of Economics, and Wen Hsiao-ehr also for the Economics Department. We all met together in a Chinese restaurant for an evening of planning.

We finally sailed on Sunday, September 29th. A non-converted transport meant three steel bunks in a tier with women and small children down one hatch and men

down the other. Our passenger list was more than missionaries. There were about 250 Chinese students returning to China. Meals were served cafeteria style on Navy trays. We FCU people had frequent opportunities to be together. We landed in Shanghai on October 15th. Handling our baggage was a terrific chore with no regular customs warehouse, and all the trunks and boxes piled hit or miss. We got Abbie and Martin's baggage sorted out and left it and them at the Shanghai American School which they were to attend. We went on to Foochow, arriving on the campus at FCU at noon on the 22nd.

The three beautiful fireproof buildings of the university and the other faculty houses and dormitories built of brick had all been stripped of the copper and metals of their plumbing and wiring; glass from the windows was gone and much of the woodwork and flooring carried away. The university in Shaowu had built temporary buildings of Foochow fir. These were carefully marked and torn down for reconstruction. Rafts of logs ready to go down river were bought, and the lumber from these buildings along with furniture and equipment were put on these rafts to be floated down to the campus. Thus the university had a plentiful supply of building material. By the time we arrived, the Shaowu buildings had been reconstructed. We were assigned an upstairs apartment in what had been the

infirmary. The raft on which all window glass had been placed was wrecked, and the window glass lost. Each of our windows had one 10 by 12 inch pane of glass, wood substituted for the other seven panes. The university had very clever mechanics who contrived a wood-burning stove from an oil drum. Our freight with all the house-ware didn't come until February--the beds we had ordered not until May. Olive and the cook improvised their cooking out of pans and tins they could assemble. We were able to locate a three-fourths width mattress for our bed. Abbie and Martin when they came home at Christmas slept on rice straw mattresses.

The agriculture college was fortunate in having as dean and head of the Horticulture Department, Dr. Li Lai-yung, whom I mentioned having been at Lingnan University. Dr. Yang Hsin-pao, who came out with us, became head of the Rural Economics Department. I was made head of the Department of Agronomy and supervisor of the experimental farm. There were four men trained in agriculture from the National University in Nanking. One of these men, very skillful in plant breeding, had made 2500 crosses of native and various varieties of wheat. He had left the university that year, but I had his material to build on. Another man was very well educated in theoretical genetics.

He wrote very technical articles for genetic magazines in English but could hardly pass the time of day in English. I taught him conversational English as we had time and would smooth the English of the articles he wrote.

The university had about 80 acres of land with about 20 acres of level flood plain by the river on which was an athletic field and the rest was experimental gardens. Even before I went home in 1937, they had planted about three acres with a number of varieties of oranges and tangerines. The agriculture building was in the middle of this level land. All other buildings and houses were built on the hillsides. Several graves still remain between the buildings for this had once been a prized gravesite with graves looking out over the valley for good "feng shui."

I taught three classes that first term: Genetics which was in the Biology Department, but open to ag students, Field Crops and Field Technique. I did my teaching in English and our textbooks were in English. I was handicapped in the university in that the National Language was used and I spoke only Foochow. As time went on, I got a better understanding of the spoken National Language. The farm foreman, a very capable young graduate of Union High School, and all the field hands were Foochows, so I could manage where it was really needed. The students needed to practice their English, and it was good for them

to have to speak it to me. In examinations I gave them the option of answering either in English or Chinese. I had my assistant correct the Chinese papers, usually about a fourth of them. I could figure out the characters well enough so I could check on his work.

Speaking of our relation to the students, I believe it is the best time to bring in the religious work among students. There was an organized campus church with services every Sunday--sometimes with outside speakers. We had student chapel (I believe it was every day except Monday) which was the Sun Yat-sen Memorial Service. So work among the students was done through fellowships organized largely by departments. Olive and I had a group of about 20 students from the Western Language and Agronomy Departments who would meet an evening a week, sometimes for trips. We would hold discussion sessions with a time for prayer. Our group called themselves "The Seekers."

The field work that fall was harvesting of the rice and the sowing of the head row wheat crosses already made by Professor Wong. The Field Technique students collected rice head samples for laboratory study and were taken in on the plotting and planting of the head row tests of the wheat. There was just one agronomy senior that fall who had worked very closely with Professor Wong. He was very much help in the planting and measurements of the

wheat that we would have to make. There was an Experiment Station Committee to clear work between the departments. We made a study of all the land of the university and how it could be used for pasture or hill crops. There were about two acres above the buildings planted in tea oil plants--a plant of the tea family, whose seeds were crushed for oil used in lamps. There were a few tung oil trees below them. The other side of the hill on which the main building stood had larger terraces that were set aside for me to use for the main project I was to work in on "soil-improving crops." This was just what had been my goal from the beginning for the better utilization of hill lands. I gathered as many of the native legume seeds as I could to be planted, and hired a student to help in collecting them.

One project I will report on from the beginning to the end is the introduction of a herd of Holstein cattle from America. It was in this time of recovery from WWII that "Heifers Incorporated" was formed. I believe it was the Church of the Brethern that originated the idea. UNRRA (United National Relief and Rehabilitation Administration) was to arrange for the distribution of the cattle. The university was offered the opportunity of making an application for them through the UNRRA office in Foochow that had a large staff of workers. A shipload of cattle was

landed in Shanghai in early January of '47. The animals there were to be inoculated against anthrax and distributed to all parts of China. It was not until early March that they were able to get an LST (landing ship tank) to bring 129 head to Fukien. Arthur Billing of Union High School had gone up to Shanghai to come back with the cattle. The UNRRA agricultural representative and I took men from a government experiment station and the university to go down to Pagoda Anchorage to oversee the unloading of the cattle. The UNRRA man was Art Grove, who had grown up on a Minnesota dairy farm and was very well fitted for this job. I always enjoyed working with him.

The heifers had all been bred before turning over to Heifers, Incorporated. With all the delays en route, some of them had begun to calve. Mr. Billing said that one of them had started to calf the night before landing. Art Grove knew it was a breech presentation, rolled up his sleeve to the shoulder and went to work to turn the calf around. That was a tiring operation, and I had to take my turn with all the coolies and deckhands as spectators. Eventually we got the calf turned around and delivered. This cow was one assigned to FCU and was one of our best producers. Mr. Grove had had a large crate made for unloading cattle from the ship to a lighter that

ferried them to a temple courtyard where they could be sorted. The university had originally asked for only six head of cattle, but when our application showed we had 80 acres of land, we were assigned 15 head. Fortunately we had built our barn large enough to house them. We had also to keep six head of cattle for a Hingwa orphanage for about six weeks until shipment down the coast could be arranged.

There was one great mistake in the planning of this program. They had not taken the presence of tick fever into consideration. Animals that grow up in tick fever country develop an immunity to the disease as they grow. Animals from the north when introduced to the south are very susceptible to the disease. There was then, if there is now, no inoculation against the disease. In just three weeks we learned that the Union High School had lost five head of their cattle from tick fever. UNRRA had a veterinarian for China who was flown down to Foochow to see what could be done. He tried a process of immunization by injecting serum from sick cows into well cows. When the injected cows began to run a fever, they were injected with heavy doses of Acaprin. Our cattle began to get sick later and we lost several head from the tick fever.

At the time the veterinarian was working with the tick fever, one of our cows was off feed, and he doctored her.

She got better and I turned her out to pasture. One day she died very suddenly. I skinned her to sell the hide. A few days later I had a lesion on my hand which I cleared up with ointment. Then one morning when I had just gotten back to the house from milking, the herdsman came running to tell me that one of the calves was in convulsions. I went back to the barn, and the calf died in a couple of hours. I opened the calf for a post mortem and found the viscera full of blood. We'd been feeding headed barley, so I said the beards had perforated the intestine and told the workers to take the meat. In a few days, I developed another lesion on my wrist which ointment didn't touch. My arm began to swell and develop a heavy scab on my wrist. We went to the hospital in Foochow where the doctors told me I had anthrax, and they began to fill me with penicillin--eight big shots a day. I was quite sick for a couple of days. The immunization against anthrax in Shanghai apparently didn't take and we later lost several head with the disease. I had a great feeling of empathy for these cattle from the Midwest farms to stumble around over those terraced hillsides for their forage. It was all new to them. I felt for them in the heat of the summer when they would stand or lie in the shade of the banyans panting. By the summer of '49 we had only six head left which by then were well acclimatized, but with the uncer-

tainties of the times, we sold them to a Foochow dairy.

We suffered a great loss in January in the death of Dr. C.J. Lin, our president, in New York City. He was very worn and tired when we saw him in San Francisco, but we thought rest was all he needed. When it came to physical examinations, it was discovered that he had cancer of the liver, and he failed very rapidly. Dr. Teddy Chen gave a very capable administration that year with the many problems that he had to deal with rehabilitation of the buildings, inflation and student unrest which he was very tactful in dealing with--perhaps only because conditions had not yet become so bad.

I: Before it got so bad, what kind of student unrest were you experiencing?

OVERHOLT: From the first visit of John Dewey to China shortly after WWI when he told them: "The students shape the future of China," there was a great deal of unrest in, not only mission schools, but probably more in government schools where teachers used the students to forward their personal ends. The unrest in the late '40s was the same with public demonstrations, distribution of posters, and strikes from classes were the same. In this post WWII period there were more reasons for grievance and more organized resistance to the Nationalist Government.

I: What happened, then, with Dr. Chen?

OVERHOLT: Everyone urged Dr. Chen and his wife to stay on, but he was on leave of absence for only one year from the University of Southern California and felt he had to return to his job. His health was not good and it probably is well that he did return. Dr. C.T. Yang, who had been president of Union High School, was elected to the presidency. Dr. Yang, however, didn't have the ability to handle people and was not a man of firm decision. Even before the Chens left the campus, students dissatisfied over the price of rice voted a strike. On June 1st, the Kuomintang police raided the campus, arrested and took to jail a number of the rebellious students. The students a few days later came back to class and we were able to finish the term's work.

I: How did the arrest of the rebellious students affect the student body and faculty?

OVERHOLT: The effects were as might be suspected. For us who were trying to keep order, and as far as possible loyalty to the Nationalist Government, we were glad to see the show of force and interest in protection of the school. For the students and faculty against the KMT it was just one more grievance. The Dean of Students was blamed by the radical students for pointing out the stu-

dents to be arrested and was greatly worried that something violent would be done to him.

We were assigned one of the regular faculty residences the end of June and were able to move in before the family went to Kuliang for the summer. Abbie and Martin were home from Shanghai American School for the summer. I had to spend most of my time on the campus looking after the farm work and the cattle. In the fall of 1947, we received a nice assignment of laboratory equipment from the British Science Council. A mill for grinding soil and food samples, laboratory glassware and three of the very best Leitz compound microscopes. Also from America we were given a six horse power Graveley garden tractor with a rotary plow and a sickle bar which we put to good use. We plowed the wheat head row tests in November, I don't remember how many selections, but there was at least an acre of rows a foot apart, six feet long for each head. Winter green manures, three varieties of vetch, crimson clover and red clover were sown.

The biggest accomplishment that year was in the Horticulture Department in the growing of cabbage and cauliflower seed. The cabbage was made to flower more heavily by cutting off the leaves and leaving the core with a quarter inch of the base of the leaves. These leaves were a by-product, were given to the people and the rest were fed to the cattle. Dr. Li harvested, I remember, 57

pounds of cabbage seed. Cauliflower heads were also trimmed to produce better flowers. I don't know how much cauliflower seed was harvested; this was very important for at that time no seeds were being brought in from England or America. Dr. Li was also doing good work with the orange orchard and the Horticulture Department always had a very showy flower garden. They also began using what Dr. Li, as a student assistant in Lingnan, had shown me--the process of composting rice straw with earth in long piles, planting mushroom spores which grew big, grey mushrooms for several months and when spent, there was a fine supply of compost for the garden. Another project which wasn't exactly horticultural was the malting of rice and using the malt to make soybean sauce. Dr. Li also planted a sedge which was braided for mattings and hats and had classes of village women to learn to braid the straw.

We went through the fall with no student trouble until the fifth of January when the students ordered a strike because of higher fees due, of course, to inflation. I probably should have noted this problem as an observation when we first arrived in Shanghai in 1946 when exchange, which had been 3 to 1 when we left in 1937, was over 3,700 to 1. I've often told this story to show what a terrific loss exchange had caused. While we were getting our baggage through customs, we took time out to go to lunch at

the YMCA. We ordered our dinner, I forget how much it cost, and ordered pie for dessert at \$1500 for a piece. While the order was coming, I remembered how before we went home we had sent \$1,000 (about \$300 U.S.) to a Shanghai investment firm for the higher interest. This money, we hoped, would buy us a used car when we went on furlough. The investment company had failed, and we lost our money. When the pie came, I said to Olive, "Look. All these years we have talked about the thousand dollars we lost; that wasn't even a piece of pie." The rate steadily worsened. People, as soon as they got any money, would rush out to buy anything--bolts of cloth, cases of canned goods--just so they didn't have the cash.

Once in the course of transfer of missionary funds from Shanghai to Foochow, the rate doubled and half the value was lost in transit. In May or June, 1948, a new currency was instituted at a fixed rate of four and a half dollars to one dollar, American. This lasted until October. When the bubble burst, the rate went to over 8,000,000 to 1 by January, 1949. By March, people stopped using money, and all business was done by barter in rice or gold bars. The university paid salaries with orders for rice at a rice mill near the campus. When we would go to Foochow, we would take a cloth bag of rice. The boatman would take so many cups; the ricksha man would dip his fare over into

his bag. For bigger deals, the gold shops would cut up the bars and weigh them out.

The Shanghai American School had closed the end of April, and we wanted to send the children home to America to school. The only transport out was by air. When it came time to buy their tickets, the airline would only accept the old Yuan Shih-kai silver dollars which for a long time had been banned from circulation. Our university business manager bought the dollars we needed for us. When delivered, they were tarnished and wrapped in worm-eaten paper. I forgot the rate of exchange; it was something like 80 American dollars for 50 of these silver dollars which once had been three silver dollars to one American dollar. We heard afterward that the shop man who was handling the money was executed.

I mentioned the classes I taught in my first term: Genetics, Field Crops and Field Technique. In later terms I regularly taught Plant Pathology which was open to biology students and Field Crops in the Agricultural College, and Genetics, Systematic Botany and Plant Morphology in the Biology Department. The head of the Biology Department took a much better job in Peking, and for a time, I was made the acting head of the department until a man whom they had hired would be able to take over. In China, even today, much of the public information is posted on

bulletin boards. The students had a board about 5 by 20 feet which served as a student newspaper and for all announcements and airing of grievances. They posted a very clever cartoon of me with one foot in the Agronomy Department boat and the other in the Biology Department boat, and a look of consternation on my face.

I: How did you respond to that?

OVERHOLT: The purpose of the cartoon, of course, was to ridicule me, a foreigner. I thought it was a very clever cartoon. It was aimed too at the administration for not coming up with some Chinese to take the place.

I: What work did you continue from this point on?

OVERHOLT: In the spring of 1948, we secured a number of varieties of sugar cane for testing. Two students who would graduate the next year took over the growing of the cane. We also had a fibercrop project growing jute, Abutilon, hemp, which is marijuana, (I don't believe anyone ever thought then of using it as a narcotic), and a native Sida. We had the summer green manure legumes all gotten together for planting in the spring of 1948: 20 species of native and 13 species of introduced legumes. Of the native legumes, some of the valued crops in America were introduced. The Kudzu and the perennial Lespedeza and two species of annual Lespedeza. I had high hopes

that farmers could be taught to use these crops that grew as weeds on the hillsides for the improvement of their soils.

The school year of '48-'49 was very turbulent. Dr. C.T. Yang had resigned and a commission of six was put in charge--five Chinese and one missionary, Tom Wilkinson, a Chaplain of the university, an Anglican. There was also an Academic Relations Committee composed of the department heads. There were several strikes and much infighting between supporters of the Kuomintang and the Communist students. You never knew who was on what side.

I: Could you be more specific about the infighting between supporters of the Kuomintang and the Communist students?

OVERHOLT: I can't describe the details of the in-fighting, except to say that there was a very definite cleavage between the two factions in many of the student affairs. I am sure they were much more aware of it than were we.

I mentioned our Christian fellowship group before. The president of our fellowship one year was a Central China boy, Chen Kao, one of the best students in the Agronomy Department. He stayed out of school one term. When he sent us a Christmas card, he wrote: "Don't tell anyone where I am." We thought that was strange. We had a sys-

tem in the agricultural college of taking on graduates to be an assistant to work a year or two sort of as a graduate student in that department. I wanted Chen Kao to be my assistant, but he was to graduate mid-year and the then assistant had until the end of the year to serve. I went to the principal of Anglo-Chinese Middle School to see if they could use Chen Kao in a rural project they had. The principal said, "I hear he is a Communist." I said that couldn't be. We couldn't plan for Chen Kao, and he went back to Central China to take a job in a Presbyterian mission. I later heard from that mission that as soon as the Communists came in, Chen Kao had gone over. He told the mission that the church was too slow in its work. I am sure, however, from the things he said and the prayers he made, he was a sincere Christian. I would like to talk to him today.

With the children settled in America and conditions so unsettled, we did not go to Kuliang. It was very convenient to be right there with the farm work. I did make one trip to Kuliang. I had had Irish potatoes sent to me from America and grown during the winter. I found they were rotting so took them up to where they could be planted in the cool soil. They still rotted and I lost them. We gave entrance exams in Foochow as usual in July--about 10 applications for one admission. We helped

with the grading of the papers and the admissions committee met on August 16th to select the students to be admitted. Olive and I were sleeping on an open veranda outside our bedroom. At 3:00 that morning we heard firing down river towards Pagoda Anchorage; we were between Pagoda Anchorage and Foochow. I have said before that the university was built on a ridge running out to a promontory on the river. The Kuomintang soldiers had dug trenches down the ridge to the edge of the campus. We began to wonder when troops would occupy them and what would happen to us on the ridge with the auto road running right around the nose of that ridge. Nevertheless, we went ahead with the meeting of the admissions committee. Shortly after dinner, there was firing only a mile or so below us. I don't know why, for we never saw a KMT soldier. Things quieted down, however, and we went to bed still wondering what was going to happen.

When we woke up the next morning, the 17th, Communist soldiers were pouring past us on the road toward Foochow. That afternoon Pearce Hayes and the staff of the mission office, which overlooks the bridge crossing from the city to Nantai where the mission compound was, saw how the turnover came about. The bridge is in two sections with an island filled with shops and boat landings below the bridge. From this height, they watched the Communist sol-

diers cross the bridge with heavy machine gun fire from the island and not a casualty. From our veranda at the university that afternoon we could see the KMT troops retreating south across the plain on the other side of the river. They must have set fire to the gasoline stored at the airfield for there was a big fire there. So it was that what had been South Street, the main street through the city to Nantai, became "**Eight** Seventeen Street."

The auditorium and the dormitories were occupied by troops and from that time on, we had some soldiers billeted on the campus. They were very orderly and made no one any trouble. One thing we noticed, many of them were wearing fine, American GI shoes. KMT planes often came over bombing in and around Foochow. On November 1 they bombed and strafed a police inspection boat anchored at the university pier. The bomb missed the boat and burst in the middle of the road. Most of the window glass in the three university buildings above were broken out of that side. Our house 300 yards away didn't have any windows broken.

The university administrative committee went right ahead with plans for opening school. The new government sent a delegation of speakers down to speak all one morning to the faculty outlining their purposes and saying they expected us to go on as usual. Later when the students came, they sent two student advisors who told the students that

their time of troublemaking was over--they were liberated now and they should go ahead with their studies. There was a mass meeting for all middle school and college teachers in Foochow where again we were rallied to the support of a new government. I wrote a general letter to our constituency in October high in the praise of the new regime. Classwork was a pleasure that fall when we knew that every class would meet. Farmwork went on as usual with the harvesting of rice, sweet potatoes and the green manure seeds. The wheat variety test plantings were made. The horticulture gardens were flourishing.

There were two changes in student life that were quite amusing. One was that with the Communist government closely related to Russia in those days, everyone wanted to learn Russian and no Russian teachers were available. Finally one was found--a man who had worked in the Russian embassy, I believe it was in Kalgan. He had a regular government job so could only come on Saturday mornings. He taught an auditorium full of students for four straight hours. Most students didn't learn much more than the Russian alphabet. The other change was in the thinking in biology. Those were the days of Michurin and Lysenko who had brought out an old theory long disclaimed in the West--the theory of the inheritance of acquired characters. We were given two books in English. One with beautiful colored illustrations

showing the work done to prove the new genetics. There was a report of the Proceedings of the Genetic Society of Russia where references to the chromosome theory would have "after laughter." The biology club organized a Michurin Club, and they had long discussions on new theories. I don't know what went on in Dr. Li's mind or that of the other biology teachers as they sat in on those discussions. Of course, we know now, that Lysenko's theories were entirely discredited and disowned with the downfall of Stalinism.

There was a great change in the curriculum with the spring term of 1950 to permit all students to have complete "re-education." Seniors with only one term to go had their curriculum cut down to let them be completely "re-educated." Western language seniors were only offered three hours of their major and the electives were largely political subjects. Faculty, students and workmen were all organized in discussion groups of "Hsueh Sik" which means "learn" and "practice." In these groups they studied the principles of Communism and criticized themselves and each other in the light of what they were learning. Even down to primary school pupils were taught their first duty was to these principles, rather than to their parents. My classes went on as usual though often cancelled for some sort of public meeting.

I: What was the foreigner faculty's involvement in the re-education and the self-criticism?

OVERHOLT: The foreign faculty had no part whatsoever in the re-education and self-criticism. I tried to stay away as far as I could from any of the discussion groups in the Agricultural College.

At this time public service projects were organized. One I remember in early summer was sending out all students to look for rice borers in the field. They were organized so as to provide competition with prizes for the group which had collected the most.

It was in May of 1950 that the "Christian Manifesto" was proposed by W.T. Wu of the YMCA. By this manifesto all Christians were asked to sign a promise that they would be independent of the western church. We called the pledges the "Three-Selfs"--self-propagating, self-administering and self-supporting. The Manifesto was presented in student chapel and as students and faculty filed out, they signed the declaration.

I: How did the foreign faculty respond to this?

OVERHOLT: The response here was like that in 1927 with the turning over of administration to the Chinese. We viewed it in general as a very necessary step in the development of the church. On the other hand, however, it

was an indication that our presence and help might not be desirable to the church and Chinese leaders--sort of like saying, "Here's your hat--what's your hurry?"

Then there was great agitation in June when the war in Korea was announced. Streets were filled with posters denouncing the United States as the enemy. It was interesting that with all this propaganda against America, we Americans never saw any sign of personal animosity. We were, however, under strict observation. While we were free for contacts with the Chinese on the campus, any contact with other Chinese was suspect. For example, a tailor who came with his work to one of the American homes was called up for long questioning by the police.

Our Chinese friends were greatly worried that someday the ill feeling might be turned on us. One of us perhaps might make some mistake that would get us in trouble. They knew they would be powerless to help us under those circumstances. It was very evident that the thing for us to do was to get out of the way of any possible trouble. We all decided the thing for us to do was to leave China.

I: How was this decision actually reached? Did all of you foreign faculty members meet together and struggle with the question?

OVERHOLT: There was never any formal discussion as to our decision to leave. The decision was a matter of per-

sonal choice. Don MacInnis and John Pilley, who had worked with the OSS during the war, realized that their past might be held against them and left in the spring of 1949. It was well they did for they were asked for as soon as the Communist Government took over. For the rest there were some with family problems or furlough almost due that left early. The decision then was just a matter of consensus of opinion.

I: Since you were involved in agriculture, was the response from the Communists different for you than for other missionaries?

OVERHOLT: At one time Dr. Li Lai-yung suggested to me that since I was in technical work it might be possible for me to carry on. That was just a "passing fancy." I am sure the Communist leaders would never have accepted that I could do anything they couldn't do. Their attitude toward the social programs of the church was one of resentment, and I am sure, a lot of derision.

I: What did you anticipate would happen at the university and to your agricultural work after you left?

OVERHOLT: We all hoped, especially we in the agricultural faculty, that the work could go right on and it did remain an agricultural school. Dr. Li Lai-yung was made a mem-

ber of the National Agricultural Planning Board. We have heard that. FCU alumni who recently visited Foochow reported that they were unable to get on the campus.

Since we had decided to leave, none of the foreign faculty took any classes for the fall of 1950. We got releases from teaching from the school commission, and on September 5th, we all went to the police office in Foochow to file application for exit visa. We were told our names would be published three times in the papers and if no claims were filed against us, we would be permitted to leave.

I had worked very hard on our wheat selections all summer. An article in the Journal of Agricultural Research had shown a system of description for variety studies with all the significant characters for classification such as hairiness or smoothness, shape of glumes, ligules, awns and so forth assigned a code number, and the description a series of numbers from which similar traits could be found. I worked out a plan for a little head thresher and had it built by our university physics laboratory mechanic.

I: Would you describe the head thresher and how it worked a little more specifically?

OVERHOLT: The thresher was simply a miniature grain separator with a hard wood cylinder with little half inch nails working against nails in a stationary bar, a fan, and a sieve so single heads of wheat could be fed into the cylinder and the kernels of that head collected in a pan beneath the machine to be packaged separately. It was powered by a small motor.

We got all the selections catalogued and the kernels packaged and numbered ready for the fall planting. I was glad to be able to oversee the planting before we left in November. With no classes in the fall, I set out to write up the green manure crops we had been growing for publication in the quarterly Fukien Agricultural Journal. I wanted this work gotten on record. I hardly thought it would be published in English. I wrote four chapters with winter crops in two sections, native and introduced, and two sections on summer crops, native and introduced.

The only communication we ever received direct from China after we came home was the March, 1951 number of the Journal. The articles were published in English just as I had written and with Chinese summaries. The 50 reprints that were promised with the article were also sent to me. I don't know whether the other chapters were ever published.

We watched the Foochow paper everyday to see when our names were published. We went about packing what

things we were to take home and disposing of the rest. Our names were published twice in a short time; then we waited for the last printing, which finally came on November 14. The next day we were told to get our baggage into the police for inspection. The purpose of the inspection was twofold: that we wouldn't take out any information useful to the foreign military or derogatory to China and that we didn't take out any art objects. We had been tipped off on the ban on pictures and written materials and learned that a branch post office in Foochow would accept such material for mailing. Postal and customs employees didn't have much love for the new government as they had been forced to give up their fat salaries that they had enjoyed and work for a small salary. We mailed all such material long before the inspection. The official Nan Yang Travel Company was to handle all of our baggage and travel. Our effects were trucked into the police godown. The next day we went into open baggage for inspection. The inspectors seemed to be ordinary soldiers with no idea of what was art. We had beautiful line drawn water colors from the China Journal of Science and Art that we had in lacquer frames. Printed in English at the bottom was the name of the journal. The inspector picked one out as being a curio. We pointed out the English printing to him, but he said he would have to show it to his supervisor to pass on it. We never did get it back. One of the ladies

had a vase well done in Chinese style which she had made in a ceramics class. It wasn't passed and she was greatly flattered. We never did get all our goods inspected. When it began to get dark, inspection was stopped, and we had to leave a whole drum of cloisonne and porcelains behind. There were only two cities of exit for people leaving China then: Tientsin at the north and Canton in the south. To get from Foochow or even Amoy, 120 miles south of Foochow to Canton, we all would have to go by launch up river to Yenping, 160 miles; then three days by truck overland north to Shanjao to the railroad to travel by train to Canton.

An interesting story of a breakdown in the system is a story of a Reformed Church missionary teaching in a boys' school in the Amoy area. He and his wife got permission to leave on this long trek, but someone filed charges against the man at the last minute and his exit was denied. His wife was refused her request to stay with him so she had to leave with her party. The man was fortunately tried almost immediately, found guilty of oppression and sentenced to deportation on the first boat. He met his wife at the train station in Kowloon when her party got in from their overland trip.

We left the campus on Thanksgiving morning, the 23rd. A large group of students escorted the Van Wyks and us to

the jetty firing firecrackers in good Chinese style to see us off.

I: How were your final talks and meetings with the Chinese students and faculty? What kinds of things were you discussing?

OVERHOLT: There were quite a few farewell teas and ceremonies held at the end of the spring term in 1950 and during the summer with the departures of Dean Roderick Scott and Mrs. Scott and Miss Eunice Thomas. The agricultural faculty presented me with a beautiful silk scroll with an embroidered Chinese design and the signatures of the entire staff embroidered into the silk. Our Student Fellowship gave us a very nice party. At the end, however, very little was done. We were very surprised that when the Van Wyks and we, the last foreigners to leave the campus, were given the send-off that we were given.

Apparently the send-off angered the police on duty at the jetty and they demanded to inspect our baggage, and wouldn't listen to us when we said it would be inspected in Foochow. They held us up at least a half hour while the students stood by the jetty singing hymns. We made the final travel contract that afternoon and we had a fine Thanksgiving supper with the Foochow mission that evening. The next day we got our official exit visas,

got inoculations and passed quarantine.

Our launch started that evening at 5:00. We made the fastest trip ever on that old familiar route getting into Yenping in less than 24 hours. When we arrived in Yenping, we were met by a bus that transported us to what was to me a new hotel at the foot of the hill below our old mission compound. It was dark and we didn't have a chance to go out and look around. Several of our old friends learned we were in town and called on us at the hotel that evening and saw us off on our truck the next morning. Our baggage was loaded into the truck with a canvas cover and plank seats were placed on top of the baggage. It rained off and on during the first day. The road was badly rutted, making for a very rough ride. We had only glimpses of the scenery as we went along looking out the front or back of the canvas cover. We reached Kienou in good season and again had a fairly comfortable hotel. The next morning police demanded to search our baggage which had been sealed with an official seal on paper pasted over the openings of the baggage in Foochow. We were delayed over two hours. The trip this second day took us into the famous Bohea hills, famous for their tea. I was reminded of the line in "Yankee Doodle": "Whether Hysson or Bohea, I never heard it stated." We were all lodged in a temple in Chungan our second night. Our

room had holes in the plank floor and very grimy mosquito nets. They had tea for sale and we stocked up. The third day we made the run over the divide onto Shanjao just making it in time to catch the last ferry across the river. There was no hotel in the town, and we were billeted in various places. Olive and I were assigned a room back of a shop with broken mud walls open at the top and rats running along the top of the wall, trying to smell out food in our baggage.

We lined up the next morning at the station for the one train a day that would take us south through Kiangsi and on to Canton. When the police demanded an inspection of our baggage, our travel escort declared we had no contraband, but he agreed to a spot check. Unfortunately, the first piece the police opened had some books and they demanded a full examination. While they were working, our train came and went. We were obliged to go back to our hovel for another miserable, cold, rainy day. There was one break for us--one of our ladies had hoarded a tin of American coffee. I don't know why she was taking it out, but she sacrificed it for the occasion. She got a big tin kettle and made coffee for us all.

We got the train the next morning at the same time. On the train we were put three passengers to a double seat for the 45 hours it took us to get to Canton. After the

rain the weather had turned cold, and there was snow on the mountains. There was no heat on the train, but all of us had blankets in our bedding rolls. We arrived in Canton at 9:00 A.M. on Saturday, December 2. Getting in early, we were all taken to a large hotel and were ready for interviews with the police in the afternoon. I should have said that one of the requirements for exit was the writing of a biography of what we had done in China and so forth. The examiners read them and then questioned us. There was nothing else for us to do Sunday morning. We all had to report to the railway station in the afternoon to open our baggage for inspection. Those inspectors knew their job. One couple had a very rare curio in a pair of jade rings that were placed over the eyes of the dead. The rings were just the size of a napkin ring and they had placed napkins in the ring. An inspector spotted the rings on the other side of the pile and pounced on them.

We went back to the hotel and waited for final transport to Hong Kong on Monday. We were divided into three groups; our train left at 10:00 and we arrived at the border a little before 3:00. Here our baggage was given its final sixth inspection and we were free to walk across the bridge into British territory. We got a 5:00 train into Kowloon and were taken to the Grand Hotel, which was accommodating most of the missionaries. How luxurious it

seemed. The supper was delicious. We planned to go to bed immediately after supper. I took a luxurious shower and went to sleep at once, but after sleeping perhaps 20 minutes, I woke up in a cold sweat and then lay awake for hours, just too nervous to sleep after 12 days of continuous travel for a trip which could have been made in three days.

Another tension we were under these days was our son Martin in the Marine Corps in Korea. He had entered Adrian College in the fall of 1949, but in February we were much surprised to receive a letter from the Marine Corps congratulating us that our son was in the best branch of military service. He had done his boot training at Paris Island but was just in time to be sent to Korea, instead of language school he had hoped to make. His company had gone into Korea on the Inchon Landing. Before we left the university, we were getting reports of his regiment being cut off at the Chanjin reservoir and their retreat. As soon as we got to Hong Kong, we learned of an American banker working with the Red Cross who could make inquiry for us. All we found out was that Martin was not listed among the casualties.

We were held up in Hong Kong for almost three weeks until we were able to get passage on the Norwegian freighter Tudor to San Francisco via Japan. We sailed from Hong Kong

on the 20th and arrived in Kobe on Christmas morning. An MP who boarded the ship in place of customs said Kobe was full of Marines out of Korea and we had high hopes. We failed to locate Martin but through the Red Cross, located him in Korea and got a message to him from Tokyo.

We had a very restful voyage home. We got to Iowa as soon as we could as Olive's mother was seriously ill. My father had died in 1949, and my mother was living alone and had become very deaf. We visited Mary Jo whose husband had finished medical school and was interning in the Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis. In April, we rented an apartment in Ames. Our daughter Abbie was a freshman in Iowa State, where I could work in the library but I didn't take any course work. Martin got out of Korea in November and spent a month furlough with us.

The problem then was our future. Several Fukien missionaries had gone to Sarawak directly from China. The Chinese church in Sarawak had been made up of Foochow speaking Christians who had migrated there beginning there with three shiploads that had landed in Sibu in 1902 just after the Boxer Rebellion. We felt that should be the place for us. We drove into New York City in January, 1952, to plan for our future. There was an opening for an agriculturist in northern Luzon. The Board Secretary for the Philippines urged us strongly to go there. We didn't fancy learning

another language when there was a place where we could still use our knowledge of Foochow. We were granted our request and assigned to Sarawak. We had timed the trip, so we could go on to Washington D.C. to attend a week's seminar for the rural missionary workers staged each year by the United States Department of Agriculture. We were glad to meet Guy Thielen there. The Thielens were going to southern Mindanao in the Philippines for an American Board project. We had a very fine week there together.

From Washington we went south to spend a day with Martin at his base in Yorktown and on to Florida to visit agricultural work. There was a project at Frostproof where a farm of about 400 acres was being developed as an agricultural missionary training center and as an exchange for plant materials and livestock. I had sent a number of varieties of vegetable and green manure seeds there. We were very disappointed in the setup and in a few years the project folded. We went on to visit the subtropical experiment station at Homestead and the big collection of tropical fruit being assembled by the University of Miami. As we traveled north, we visited the University of Florida at Gainesville and Live Oak, where the forage crop work was being supervised by Professor George Ritchie, formerly of Nanking University. We went on to the Coastal Plain

Station of Georgia, where Dr. Glen Burton has developed so many strains of Bermuda grass; the Auburn University Experiment Station, and Tuskegee Institute.

We had two months in Ames to get ready for our return to Sarawak. On May 8, we left Ames for New York City. I celebrated my 60th birthday as we stopped off in Detroit to visit my sister. We had reservations on a Dutch freighter, The Zeeland, sailing May 18th. Martin came up from Yorktown to spend three days with us and to see us off. Our voyage was over a month of rest and quiet sailing through the Mediterranean and the Suez Canal.

We arrived in Singapore on June 21. The voyage across to Sibuluan, leaving Singapore on July 5th, was a terrific introduction to tropical heat. The boat reeked with the odor of a cargo of dried shrimp and a shipment of Bali cattle on deck just outside the dining room. In Sibuluan, we were assigned to a large wooden house built on eight foot stilts as all houses were built. The mission bought the house and 17 acres of land with an abandoned orchard. It was rumored that the house was haunted and the place had been bought at a bargain. There was a large living room which the mission divided down the middle by an eight foot partition to make a living room and three bedrooms on either side of the house to make a duplex. We took one side and the Douglas Cooles lived on the other side until a house

could be built for them. The other side then became the start of a Bible school and dormitory for five men students--four Chinese and an Iban. Through this all, we and they could hear all that was said or done on the other side with the roof above as a sounding board.

I have said above how Chinese Christians had settled around Sibü. They asked for a missionary to be sent to them and Rev. and Mrs. James Hoover were sent to them around 1903. A plan was made for a rural training school for which the mission was made a grant from the government of 384 acres of land in 1912. This was a prized location, 12 miles by water down river from Sibü (six miles as a crow flies). I say prized location, for half the land is on low lying hills when most of the Rajang River delta is swampland. The name of the place, Bukit Lan. Bukit-hill; Lan-leper--"Leper Hill." Bishop Oldham was very much interested in the project. Mr. and Mrs. Charles Davis from Kansas were recruited to start the work. They built a large belian wood residence on a hill overlooking the bend in the river and began work. Mrs. Davis' health soon failed and they were obliged to return home. The church went ahead and planted rubber which was made a source of income for the conference. During the Japanese occupation, many families fled from the towns, built temporary houses and grew subsistence crops on the hill land. When the war

was over, they moved back to their old homes, leaving the hills badly eroded and covered with lallang grass, which is the Malay name for the Imperata grass I have described in China. The rubber plantings were much neglected. Income from the plantation was used in conference work and little set aside for maintenance, so the trees became much diseased and could not be tapped. The undergrowth made tapping difficult and more infection on the trees easy. One interesting experiment had been started in the planting of about three acres of the jungle jelutong tree which exuded a latex that could be made into chewing gum. The project was financed by an American chicle company.

Olive began to teach English in the middle school immediately, and I began to look over the ground as to how best begin my work. The house which Davis' had built at Bukit Lan had become the parsonage for the Chinese pastor. There was no church building, so church services were held in the assembly room of the large primary school. The pastor set aside a bedroom for me where I could stay, and the family was very kind in letting me eat with them when I was to spend time on the farm. This was just the time before annual conference, so the District Missionary and District Superintendent were making the rounds visiting the churches for quarterly conference. I attached myself to the party and traveled with them for these conferences.

That is where I received a blow. I found there were two great differences between the Chinese in Foochow and in Sarawak. The first in language: the people who had come down were country people with their country brogues of 50 years ago which hadn't changed like the language in Foochow. Worse, they had adopted Malay words. When I asked for bread, which in Foochow was "mien bau" no one understood. When I saw some bread and pointed to it, the clerk said, "On loti." The Malay word for bread is "roti." I was so discouraged to listen to these country people talk and understood scarcely a word of what they said. The second disappointment was in the quality of the church members. The first people coming down were probably good Christians and built a church which became the center of community life. Later as more Chinese came in, they joined the church as one joins a country club with only the vaguest idea of what Christian life involves. Then, too, there was no way to train a ministry. The backbone of the church in Sarawak was about a dozen pastors in their middle ages who had been educated in the Foochow Theological School, but there were many lay preachers with little training for the ministry.

I have mentioned that some of the missionaries had transferred directly to Sarawak. What was much more important for the church community was that many of the outstanding Christian Chinese leaders had been marked by

the Communists and had fled China to Sarawak. One was Ivy Chou, who had been the principal of the Hwa Nan Middle School. She had her doctorate in religious education and became the head of the Bible School when it was formed. The superintendent of nurses in the Yenping Hospital, Pearl Li, also traveled with us for these quarterly conferences and became a leader in public health programs, later the Superintendent of Nurses in the Kapit Hospital. There were three middle school teachers who brought new blood to the middle school in Sibuluan and took part in many of the church activities of the community.

These first contacts from the churches were very interesting. I found not only the difference as I had mentioned above in language and Christian nurture, the character of the people was different. They were a self-selected group of aggressive, enterprising immigrants. They were the people who made the whole colonization of Southeast Asia possible serving as middle men between the European business men and the Malays and aborigines who were easy going and improvident farmers and fishermen. The Chinese came in ready to buy whatever the land produced and were anxious to sell the wares which the colonizers wanted to market. The industrious, sharp-thinking and fundamentally honest Chinese were the ideal middlemen. The common saying among the European businessmen was: "A Chinese can buy from a Jew and sell to a Scotchman and

get rich in the process." There was a different air from the humility of China. The newly rich Chinese were quite cocky and inclined when you proposed a new idea to find some flaw in it.

Since I came from the land of big farming, they proposed that they should take up machine farming, when there weren't more than 20 miles of road in the whole Rajang Delta that a tractor could be run on. One amusing idea--pepper was selling at about five times the usual market price because of shortages that had been created by World War II. I was asked in confidence if pepper wasn't being used in making munitions.

I always remember my first trip to Bukit Lan to look over the ground. Walking down through the rubber groves with undergrowth as high as my head across the stream to open land, I pushed through a tangle of high grass and sedge to see what the lowland, which was to become rice and pasture land, was like. I sank to my knees in bubbling mire. The hill land had been left rough from the sweet potato and cassava beds and was covered with lallang grass, a thorny sensitive plant and Latana.

My first efforts were to be devoted to the clearing up of the land "Journey's End," as the property we were living on was called. The open land was covered with lallang four feet high, and the orchard of rambutan pome- loes and Malay apples was overgrown with rubber seedlings

and other weed trees. We hired a gang of Malays to cut and burn the grass and clear out and trim the orchard. I had brought out green manure seeds which I had picked up on our Florida trip and wanted to get them started-- 23 varieties. My only connection with Bukit Lan that fall and winter was to take over the accounts of rubber production and to learn from Ing-tai, the very helpful foreman who had managed the rubber tapping for a long time.

One of the hopes people had in me was that I would be a "go-between" to help them get more suitable land for farming from the government. A few families had already settled among the Malay fishermen at the seacoast, 50 miles northwest of Sibul. There was a belt of good soil a couple of miles wide where the sea had pushed good soil back against the peat swamps that would make good farmland. Two of the pastors, whose sons were opening land there, offered to take me on a trip to look over the land. The trip by launch gave me a chance to see the forests along the way and see the possibilities of the land. This land by the sea was under control of Malays and was used only for pasture for herds of almost wild cattle. We never were able to get any of this land because the colony of Sarawak was zoned for native people and mixed zones were where the Chinese could live.

In January of 1953, we hired a farmer to start farm work at Bukit Lan and had a house built for him at the edge

of the open land to be developed as a farm. I wanted to get a herd of goats started and set out to find what could be grown for forage for them. There is a tropical kudzu which looked like the kudzu of China that I wanted to get started. There were several varieties of grass that were good forage. As soon as the land was open, we moved all the legumes that I was growing in Sibuh to Bukit Lan. We didn't try to work on rice at first, but planted papayas which in six months would begin to bear fruit. We planted bananas also which took about a year and a half. Ginger was probably the most profitable crop. Of course, pepper was the big crop grown by the Chinese and we could have rented all of the hill land to neighboring farmers for pepper. But pepper as it was planted caused terrific erosion with the ground clear tilled under the vines and rose straight up the hillside. We planted about a half acre of pepper laying out the rows on contours and planting a native creeping Desmodium vine for ground cover. There were three root crops: sweet potatoes; cassava with big white tubers three inches thick and eight inches long much used during the war for carbohydrate, but not as tasty as potatoes; and "degua," which in Chinese means earth melon, a legume that, if you kept the vines trimmed back, would form a very sweet turnip-like root.

Olive and I made our vacation in June, 1953, a trip

to Malaya and Java to visit experiment stations. In Serdang, Malaya, we visited the government experiment station and the work of the Rubber Research Institute. In Java, there was a large experiment station at Bogor where Point Four men were cooperating. They had very good work and all kinds of tropical crops. The man who was most helpful to us was the University of Illinois man working on hybrid corn. He gave us several varieties of seed corn. Bogor is the site of a big botanical garden planted in early Dutch days, and we did enjoy our day in the garden.

We started an interesting project in the fall of 1953, in what we called "Opportunity Schools" in two centers. The schools were aimed at reaching young people who had finished primary school and had not been able to go on to middle school and were working at home. There were classes in Bible, hygiene, agriculture, games and current events. We chose two places where the pastor would teach Bible from a textbook selected by the committee and where a nurse was available to teach hygiene. I went to each of these schools to teach agriculture. A primary school teacher gave the current events. I was disappointed in that only two or three boys attended in each school, but there were about 20 girls in each school.

Another idea we worked out with this same committee

was the collecting of circulating libraries. Chinese books are usually paper bound and small. A common piece of baggage was a five gallon kerosene tin made over by a tinner to have a lid on one side. Such a tin would hold about 15 of these books. We made up four sets of these books that were sent for a month to a church for circulation.

Now to go back a little in my story. After World War II, the Yenping Conference planned to reopen agricultural work. Tom and Jenny Harris, Negro missionaries from Florida, were recruited. Tom had been an agricultural extension worker before going abroad. They finished language school in Peking and came to Yenping just a few months before the Communist takeover.

I: How had the Harrises been received by the Chinese?

OVERHOLT: The Harrises seemed to be well-received by their Chinese co-workers. I have heard, though, that the Communists were quite hard on Tom. I suppose because by their theories blacks were second class citizens in America and they didn't like to see him working there as an equal. We weren't closely associated with the Harrises in China, however. They had gone directly from Yenping to Sarawak where they developed an Iban Rural Center and primary school at Nanga Mujong--20 miles about Kapit. They were

due to go on furlough in 1955. We were asked to fill in for them while they were on furlough. There was a good Chinese primary school teacher who had some agricultural training and seemed a practical man. We judged he would be capable of carrying on the work at Bukit Lan. With him to supervise that work we made our plans to take over at Nanga Mujong in August of '55. Tom had pigs and poultry and did quite a bit of extension work in helping long house communities plant gardens and so forth. Of course, I couldn't speak Iban, but we found Lau Gung-song, a young man who had lived among Ibans during the war and had been active with the Chinese youth fellowship doing evangelistic work among the Ibans. He was hired to be farm foreman to manage the Iban workers. There was an Iban teacher who had finished the government teacher training school course who could speak English and would supervise the school work of the boys. The school was just a four year primary for boys only who varied in age from 7 to 16. Olive and I both taught English. She had the beginning students, and she made remarkable progress with her direct method. In a very short time, the boys could understand us. Classes were held under the house and on the veranda. All of the boys had to work an hour a day in the garden where they grew their own vegetables, or work on the grounds. They did their own cooking, and we handed out the makings once a day for their three meals.

What was the most outstanding outcome of that year was in health work. One proviso we made in taking over at Nanga Mujong was that we could have a school nurse to care for the students and to deal with the many people who had been coming to the Harrises asking for medicine. We were delighted when the ex-superintendent of the Yenping Hospital, Pearl Li, whom we have spoken of, agreed to go with us. She had been a newly graduated nurse in the hospital in Foochow and had taken care of Olive when our Abbie was born. She and a lovely young Chinese nurse volunteer over from Malaya for three months' work lived with us. As soon as people learned we had this help available, they poured in from all directions and from long distances. They would have to be taken into the boys' dormitory to sleep. Our next door neighbor was a very helpful young Iban chief running a little shop. He saw some provision would have to be made to care for these people and he rounded up a gang of workers to built an attap "rumahsakit" which means sick house, with two large rooms and a kitchen at the rear. All built from native material except we got floorboards from the sawmill and for sanitation, corrugated roofing for the side walls. Many of the things Pearl did, like making skin grafts over a huge carbuncle sore, would do a doctor proud. This chief then gave land adjoining

our house on which a regular dispensary could be built. This was erected soon after the Harrises returned. There has been this dispensary and nurse in residence ever since.

My main accomplishment that year was in starting a rubber nursery in cooperation with the Government Agricultural Department. A great deal should be said for the British government in the way the colonial officers worked in all the branches of government to prepare people for independence. I used to say there was a small difference between a good colonial officer and a good missionary. The agricultural officer was working to get Ibans started to planting rubber. The chief next door wanted them also to get started and we told him if he would set aside five acres of land, we would try to interest the government in helping. I should explain what a rubber nursery is. All good rubber comes from budding. A bud from a high producing tree is budded on seedlings and when this bud grows to form a sprout 1 to 1½ inches in diameter and four to five feet long, it is cut. The buds from this sprout are removed for budding into seedlings in the field. I told the chief we would plan to leave trees at the proper spacing of 8 by 18 feet so he would have five acres of producing rubber when the rest of the bad wood was taken out.

The agricultural officer was delighted with the offer. He said they would pay the salary of one man, provide all

fertilizers and send a budding crew to do the budding when the time came. The way it worked out, we didn't have just one man to do the work. When work was necessary in the nursery, we turned over the three or four workers we had to do the job and used the money to hire an extra man. The students did a lot of the weeding. A crew of Malay budders came and budded the 1300 or so seedlings in a couple of days. By the time Tom got back, we had a nice grove of trees from which budding could be distributed to future Iban rubber growers. One thing that didn't carry through, however, was that I promised the chief that the trees would be properly spaced and left for his rubber grove. It wasn't done; I don't know why he didn't protect his rights.

Even if this is to be a record of our work with the Chinese, I want to mention some of the events of that year. The Christmas house party we staged for about 120 people who came in from all around to see the Christmas play the boys staged, to play games on the playground the boys had cleared, and to worship the newborn King. Most of the people stayed two nights sleeping in the attap roofed church. In May, the boys' dormitory, also of attap, burned, and we had to turn the church over to them. We held worship services in our living room.

The Harrises were delayed until October in getting back, so we had to open school for a second year before we

returned to Sibü. As soon as the Harrisés returned, they took up a serious building program and in a couple of years built substantial frame buildings, one for a dormitory-classroom, a church and a clinic. I believe that year we spent along with the Ibans was the most enjoyable of any year of our missionary lives. We lived in such close contact with our fellow workers and the people. The people, too, were so open-hearted and appreciative. We have so many happy memories of them all.

Meanwhile work had not gone well at Bukit Lan. The man whom we had expected to take charge had to take over the principalship of a primary school. The substitute he recommended was neither as well trained nor as capable as he. I averaged about a trip each month back to Sibü and Bukit Lan which is a 100 miles and a full day by launch from Kapit to Sibü and a full day for a visit to Bukit Lan. We were due to go on furlough in early 1957, so there was short time left to get back in step on the Bukit Lan work. One thing I wanted to get started was the planting of rubber. Much of the old rubber had been planted on swamp land which should never have been planted. We planned to plant about half of the grassy hill land to rubber and replant all of the old groves that stood on high land. In December we opened terraces on one ridge of about five acres of grass land. Instead of starting the seedlings from seed, we went

out under the rubber trees and gathered seedlings which were growing everywhere. By February, these seedlings were well established and I made arrangements with the agricultural officer that their man would bud the trees when they were ready.

We left Sibuluan on February 17th for furlough by boat to Singapore and then by air to Europe where we spent two weeks sightseeing. By this time our three children had all finished college and were married. We were never able to attend the weddings of our children nor the funerals of our parents. We divided our time between Waterloo, Iowa, making Olive's sister's home our headquarters and Columbus, Ohio, where we rented an apartment to be near Mary Jo whose husband was doing a residency at Ohio State University Hospital in internal medicine. We spent as much time as we could itinerating. I was 65 and could have retired, but I still was in very good shape, and with Olive seven years younger, it seemed we should work longer. Our first term in Sarawak had been so frustrating partly because of difficult situations with some of our fellow missionaries, but mostly because I had made so little progress in the work that I saw was to be done.

I've always been so happy that we made that decision to return. We secured a sailing on the Norwegian Freighter, Oakland, to sail from Los Angeles on January 27th, 1958. We found a letter from the board awaiting us at the ship

telling us that Leighton and Dorothy Wiant were being sent for agricultural work with us. Leighton's uncle Paul had been in the Mission Construction Bureau in Foochow; his father Bliss had been a music teacher in Yenching University, so Leighton had grown up in Peking. He was a graduate from Ohio State University in agriculture and had been on the Marine Lynx with us in 1946, going out under the Church of the Brethren to operate tractors in North China. His wife is a graduate in Home Economics, I believe from Cornell. That surely was an answer to our prayers.

While we were on furlough, the Mission had bought a Chinese style house on the outskirts of Binatang, a county seat town about 15 miles downriver from Bukit Lan. We were assigned to live in that house and remodel it to make it a mission home with western-style kitchen, bedrooms with closets and baths. The first step in remodeling was to raise the house 30 inches and fill under the house to a level above the highest spring tides. Coming from Singapore, our baggage was unloaded at Binatang and we moved in. All the time the house was being lifted and anchored on footings, we lived in the house. The whole front of the living room open to the road was torn out and we were exposed to public view for a week. It was over six months before the job was finished.

Besides the encouragement that came with the Wiants, the British Methodist Church had sent three splendid young couples and two single ladies. One couple was assigned to live in a community near Binatang, with all their language to learn, and we were much help to them and they were much inspiration to us with their devotion and courage. Besides these young Britishers, the three-year-term young Americans ("B-3's" we called them) were making their mark. We started our last term with much more hope than we had had when we went home.

Another hope was realized on our return: that was activation of a plan to build a new missionary residence at Bukit Lan. Right along with our plans for the Binatang house were plans for our new home at Bukit Lan. The former house built by the Davises in 1912 was still structurally sound, though very weather beaten, had been built with a sweeping view upriver towards Sibiu. We cleared out a building site in the rubber grove 200 yards back of that building with a view down to the river and across to the rubber groves and Chinese homes to the south. We began construction of a brick home with reinforced concrete frame two storeys with three bedroom home upstairs and an office and servants' quarters downstairs. Construction was begun in November of 1958 and during the long Christmas vacation when most of the concrete was to be poured, Olive and I lived in one room of the parsonage. The house wasn't

ready for occupancy until August of '59 when we moved in--
Wiants, with their little Rebecca a year old in the up-
stairs, and we in the servants quarters downstairs. At
last our dream was realized.

While on the subject of building, I should go on
to tell of the other building done to make Bukit Lan a
true rural center. The Women's Division built a large
house for the two British ladies with a clinic downstairs
for the nurse to operate. From this center, Miss Doris
Webb, the evangelistic worker, and Miss Hilda Shepherd,
the nurse, traveled out to hold meetings in churches in a
long boat powered with an outboard motor. I should have
said in the beginning of our work in Sarawak that then
almost all travel was either by public launch or by pri-
vate boat, usually Iban-style long boats of a long hollowed
log with board sides and an attap or tin roof. The boats
were driven by 10 to 40 hp outboard motors. For a time in
our first term, I had my own little boat with a 10 hp
motor which I drove to commute between Sibuan and Bukit Lan,
but I found it too strenuous dodging floating debris in
the wakes of the launches. Another building in 1960 was
a new concrete and brick church on the point running down
to the river from the parsonage. A former Yenping mission-
ary, Karl Scheuffler, who didn't return to China after 1927,
was pastor of First Church in Columbus, Ohio, while we were

living there in 1957. His wife died shortly after 1957 and the congregation paid for half of this church as a memorial to Mrs. Scheuffler. That nice little church standing out as a landmark on the bend of the river was a beautiful memorial. Another improvement in buildings was to line the whole of the old parsonage with wallboard, rebuild the kitchen and make it more fit for the pastor to live in.

Leighton and I made a very good team. He had not grown up on a farm as I had and in many ways didn't have the feel for the little details that I had, but with his experience driving tractors for the Church of the Brethren in China, he was a top mechanic for the tractors we were to get. The Chinese said he spoke better "Kuo yu" (National Language) than they did, which was true. His national language wasn't very well understood by the farmers, but he learned Foochow very rapidly. Another way we supplemented each other was in his love of conversation. He would rather talk than eat, so he was very able to make people feel at home. I had raised money to buy a small tractor while at home, but at that time the small tractors, so popular now, weren't being made. I wanted the caterpillar tread which wasn't made in America. While on vacation in the summer of '59 in Malay, I found what I wanted in Penang, a little 8 hp tractor with caterpillar tread. It had right and

left hand plows mounted on a hydraulic lift so we could plow back and forth in the same furrow on the contour. I also got a disc harrow and a spike harrow. The tractor came just as we were moving in to Bukit Lan. We also fell heir to a little 3 and $\frac{1}{2}$ horse garden tractor the Japanese had given to the paramount Iban chief when he had been taken on a tour of Japan. He gave up trying to use it and had turned it over to Tom Harris. Tom gave it to us; Leighton put it to very good use.

We accomplished a great deal that first year in planting rubber. We opened up a hill with about eight acres of grassland by burning the grass and laying out contours 30 feet apart for the rubber seedlings, then plowing the land between the contours for crops of peanuts, soybeans, cassava and some upland rice. We killed the old rubber trees on the hill by painting a band around the trunk with 2-4-5-T, commonly used here to kill brush. For ten days the trees would produce three or four times the usual amount of latex bleeding to death. The secretion would then fall off and in three weeks the trees were dead. Planting lanes between the dead trees could then be opened and new seedlings put in. People who wanted the old trees for firewood were allowed to come in and cut them; the other trees soon rotted away. Meanwhile the rubber we had planted in '57 was coming along. We planted kudzu vines

which had spread out to cover the ground and smother out the lallang grass. Every two weeks we would have to go through and pull down vines from the trees and five feet back from the base of each tree. As soon as the trees were big enough to form a canopy of shade, the lallang would be killed.

At the same time, we were opening up the swampland for rice fields and pasture. This land at the highest tides would be flooded with fresh water. There was such a heavy plant growth, mostly grass and sedge and ferns, that the water didn't drain back. A gang of mowers armed with 15 inch knives that would weigh a couple of pounds waded in and cut the grass. With the oily ferns, it made a terrific fire when it dried. They then opened up ditches to the deep creek that flowed across the farm. The land was then ready for working. On the first swale next to the farm building, we built banks to form the rice paddies. In the other valley, we planted Guinea grass and a native *Ischaemum* grass that makes very good forage. We were experimenting with several other grasses the government had provided us with. We also planted about an acre and a half of bananas on the good land at the foot of the hill below our house. By the farmstead we planted an orchard about 50 each of Malay apples and cashew seedlings. We kept the goatherd at about 20 head, using all the hybrid males for

meat. Workmen began digging a fish pond to be stocked with tilapa, a fast growing tropical fish. This was soon finished and has long been in production. Leighton also bought several head of Bali cattle to use the pasture we had developed.

The large breezeway under our house was used for meetings of the Methodist Youth Fellowship and the women of the church. There was a new interest in the church with a suitable place for worship after so many years of meeting in a dingy primary school assembly hall. The last two years of working with the Wiants and the British ladies next door were very enjoyable. Being able to live right where our work was instead of spending so much time traveling back and forth and worrying over what might be happening in our absence from the farm was a great relief.

We made our plans to leave for home in September. After the usual round of farewell parties, we sailed from Sibuh at daylight on September 23, 1961. Our boat would pass downriver past Bukit Lan and the communities where we had been working. Wiants had told people when we would be passing by so that people along by the riverside could wave to us as we passed by. The memory of those people by their jetties and the Wiants waving from the veranda of the house we had built on the hill is a very fond memory.

A post-script should be added in regard to what has

happened since we left. Leighton soon hired a Chinese farm manager to work with him who has been in charge of the farm work ever since. They were joined by another young American couple, the Pearsons. The Wiants had furlough and went back for their second term. After their return, a gang of terrorists awakened Leighton in the night to tell him he would have to pay a fine for a speech he had made over radio praising the government. They demanded some three or four thousand dollars. Leighton had some ready money to pay them and said he would see what could be done. It was decided the best thing was for the Wiants to leave immediately and the Pearsons were left in their place. The Pearsons stayed only one term and they were replaced by another young couple, the Heaths, who served a four year term and came back to Bukit Lan after furlough. During the past 10 years, there has been a great revival of Islam and the Malay government put in effect a rule that would permit Christian missionaries to only 15 years of service. For some reason, after only a year back at Bukit Lan, the government would not renew the Heath visa and they had to leave for service in the New Hebrides Islands. Bukit Lan then for three years had been managed by the foreman Leighton had hired in 1962 and he is doing an excellent job. The rural center has training schools for students of the Theological Seminary in Singapore and the Sibü

Bible School. They are doing good extension work among the churches. They have hired an Iban assistant manager who helps in contact with the Iban churches. The big difficulty in turning all Christian missions work to native hands is in the cultivation of the churches in the United States. Mr. Kong has not had much education in English, so his publicity has rather quaint wording, but shows good progress in the work. I am happy with the way the work is being carried on for I feel it is in good hands.

I: Let me ask a few final questions. How prepared were the missionaries for the events of 1949?

OVERHOLT: I believe the missionaries were well-prepared for the turn over to the Communist Government. We had watched the steady deterioration of conditions and could see there could only be one outcome. After living in confusion and uncertainty and seeing the collapse of the whole economic system, we were--perhaps I should say "I" was--rather relieved to know there might be a change.

We were not prepared in having any program to deal with the new situation for no one knew what that situation might be. We could only pray for guidance and wait.

I: How was your lifestyle affected after 1949?

OVERHOLT: Our lifestyle was greatly changed for we were

under what amounted to "house arrest" on the campus. When there was notice that aliens in Foochow were to be registered with the government, we didn't realize that we were not residents of Foochow and we went into the city to find we were considered residents of a rural district. When we tried to get on a public launch in Nantai to return to the University, a guard wouldn't let us get on the launch, so we went up to the mission compound to spend the night. The next morning we hired a sampan to take us down river. We told the boat man we would have to stop at the inspection boat, but first thing we knew, he had us far below the inspection boat.

When we were finally permitted to register, it was the middle of January in 1950. We were directed to go to the district headquarters in a village temple across the river and the island. We foreign faculty members went in the university truck and the university business manager went along to help. It is fortunate he did for the clerks there were entirely ignorant of the requirements or the use of the registration forms he had. Mr. Wang did all of the paper work for him.

There was no change in the day to day routine of our homes. In fact, things we needed for the household were probably more accessible. Bus service to the city was soon established which was a great convenience, once we were permitted to go into the city.

I: What other foreigners remained in your region from 1949 and on?

OVERHOLT: If you mean from 1949, with the exception of MacInnis and Pilley and those who went on early furlough, all of the foreigners remained until the time of the general exodus in late 1950. Two Union Hospital nurses remained on into 1951, but I believe they did not stay past the middle of the year. No Americans remained after that date. There was a German doctor who remained to practice and there may have been some other Europeans.

I: How did you respond at the time to what the new regime was doing in the area of agriculture and rural work?

OVERHOLT: Of course, we were pleased to see the landlord system broken up and people had great hopes of gaining possession of the fields. The cook whom Olive had trained from the start, quit his job and came back to his native village near Foochow to be in on the division in Yenping. I don't know that he ever got any land, and I don't know how much land in Fukien eventually was organized in communes. Programs to help the farmers were just beginning to get started--for example, the rice borer campaign I have mentioned.

I: What do you believe was the value of agricultural mission work in China?

OVERHOLT: As I reported in the beginning of my narrative, agricultural missions, until the last 10 years we were in China, worked under much difficulty, but considering the difficulties, they were the beginnings of an understanding by the Chinese of the need for agricultural improvement and they started many of the programs that were to be adopted in China.

It was hard to leave the work when we were so well set up in the university to really reach out to the farmers. It had immense possibilities. Had the church been able to go on with its programs, I believe the rural work might have had a great impact on the life of China.