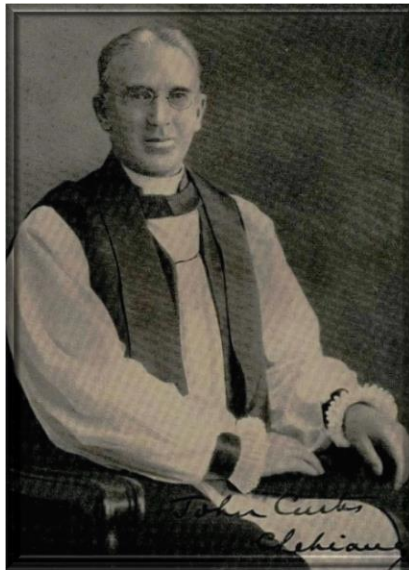


Hangchow Rotarian John Curtis a Bishop in faith and football

By Herbert K. Lau (劉敬恒) (Rotary China Historian)

1 May 2014



Bishop John Curtis, an Irish missionary bishop in China



John Curtis was the big bloke with the moustache and his arms folded in the back row standing left 1.

The Right Reverend Bishop John Curtis, D.D. (邱約翰主教/高德斯主教) (1880--1962) was one of the 24 charter members (*Classification: Religion - Protestant Churches*) of Hangchow Rotary Club (杭州扶輪社) which was admitted to Rotary International on 23 June 1932 with Charter #3525. The Club was the first Mandarin speaking Club in history, located in Hangchow (*Hangzhou*), capital city of Chekiang (*Zhejiang*) Province of the Republic of China (中華民國浙江省省會杭州市). (Note) Name in Chinese: (1) 邱約翰 is officially in the Anglican Church archives; (2) 高德斯 is commonly used in Chinese literatures.

In July 1937, the Imperial Japan launched full scale aggression to China, and Hangchow was soon captured and occupied by the Japanese forces. Rotary Club was not able to survive but to be terminated on 31 December 1943. After the War Victory in 1945, John joined the former and new members to re-organize the Club which was admitted to Rotary International again on 22 April 1947. Regrettably, the Club was ultimately terminated on 21 December 1950 due to unfavourable social and political environment under the regime of the Communist Party (中國共產黨) to the newly established socialist People's Republic of China (中華人民共和國).

John Curtis was the fourth or the last Irish bishop associated from Church Missionary Society (CMS) and Dublin University Far East Mission (DUFEM) to work in China. His career was the stuff of schoolboy adventure stories and comic strips: he was once an Irish soccer international; when the Imperial Japan invaded China at the start of World War II, he became a prisoner of war in Shanghai; and he stayed on in China as a missionary bishop after the Communist revolution, living in Hangchow until he was forced to leave in 1950. His vision of a Church in China that was truly independent and truly Chinese was advanced for his day, and prefigured much of the thinking in contemporary Chinese theology.



It could happen to a Bishop -- in faith and football

John Curtis was the eldest son of Thomas Hewson Curtis and Margaret Curtis in Dublin, Ireland. Thomas was a clerk and later a manager in the corn exchange near to Christchurch Cathedral but as a youngster John lived with his family on Montpellier Hill its steep incline rising to the North Circular Road gate of the Phoenix Park where Bohemian Football Club would be founded in 1890 by a group of men only a few years senior to young John. By that time the growing Curtis family had moved the short distance to Blackhall Street, residing in a house next to the Law Society buildings at Blackhall Place which were then occupied by the King's Hospital school. Eventually the family moved to Hollybrook Road in Clontarf as Thomas' career continued to progress. The young John was educated not in King's Hospital but at Benson's Grammar School in Rathmines which was founded by Rev. Charles William Benson on the lower Rathmines Road, the school also educated the likes of George Russell (AE) and members of the Bewley family. John then graduated to study in Trinity College Dublin.

It was around this time that a teenage John Curtis first made an appearance for Bohemians. He appears in the first team in the 1897-1898 season. He played most of his games for the club at inside-left, and in that first season his partner at outside-left was none other than Oliver St. John Gogarty. The pair starred together as Bohemians won the 1897-98 Leinster Senior Cup final, defeating Shelbourne 3-1 while also progressing to the semi-finals of the Irish Cup.

The following season showed a similar pattern, another Leinster Senior Cup win and another lost Irish Cup semi-final (this time to Linfield) for the Bohs and John Curtis. Though not yet 20 John was already a star player, in the 18 games he played that season he scored an astonishing 21 goals. Bohemians wouldn't join the Irish league until the 1902-1903 season so Cup competitions such as the Leinster Senior Cup and the Irish Cup, as well as the Leinster Senior League, would have taken precedent at the time and Bohemians were clearly the strongest side outside of Ulster at that juncture.

The 1899-1900 season saw further progress in the Irish Cup, this time Bohs got all the way to the final. John Curtis was instrumental in getting them there, scoring a vital equalizing goal in the semi-final against Belfast Celtic before Herbert Pratt scored the winner in a match played in the Jones Road sports ground, now better known as Croke Park. John lined out against Cliftonville in the final in Grosvenor Park in Belfast in front of 5,500 spectators. Alas it didn't turn out to be a first cup win for Bohemians.

Bohs had made it to the cup final once before in 1895 when they were hammered 10-1 by Linfield, but the 1900 final was to be a much closer affair with Bohs being defeated 2-1 with George Sheehan getting the goal for the Dublin side. The newspaper reports described a tight game with Bohs deemed to have been highly unlucky to lose, indeed many observers thought that Cliftonville's second goal was a clear offside. Matters weren't helped by four Bohemian players picking up knocks during the course of the match.

On a personal note for John Curtis it seemed that just a week prior to the Irish Cup final he might be honored with an international cap. A first ever international game was to be staged in Dublin's Lansdowne Road and Andrew Gara, the Roscommon born, Preston North End forward was earmarked for a spot in the Irish attack, however just days before the game Gara was injured and the Irish Independent reported that his place was to be awarded to John Curtis. This didn't come to pass however, the sole Dubliner in the line-up was John's team-mate George Sheehan who was given the honour of captaining Ireland in a 2-0 defeat to England. The closest John would come to an international cap would be representing Leinster in an inter-provincial game that season against an Ulster selection.

While John Curtis would continue to line out for Bohemians his appearances were reduced in number over the coming years, he had sporting commitments with Trinity College as well, representing them in as a footballer in the Irish Cup while also enjoying games of Rugby.

He features in a team photo from the 1902 Leinster Senior Cup winning photo but lined out for the club less frequently, he did appear in a couple of prestigious friendly matches in the early years of the century however, when Bohemians were keen to invite the cream of British football to their new home in Dalymount Park. John played against Celtic in 1901 and against Bolton Wanderers the following year.

By 1903 John had finished his studies in Trinity College and was ordained as a Reverend, his first parish being that of Leeson Park in Ballsbridge. By this stage his two younger brothers Edward (Ned) and Harry were both playing for Bohemians, though with less distinction than their older brother.

While his footballing life might have been coming to somewhat of an early close the even more remarkable parts of John Curtis' story were only beginning. After only three years in his

Dublin parish John Curtis was setting sail for missionary work in the Ch'ing Empire (大清國) and embarking on a whole new chapter in his life.

The 44 Years of Religious Service in China

John Curtis was born in Dublin, Ireland, on 15 March 1880, educated at Trinity College, Dublin (Trinity Master of Arts) and ordained in 1904. Following a curacy at Christ Church, Leeson Park, John opted to work in the Ch'ing Empire which was later the Republic of China (中華民國) since 1 January 1912. He left Ireland in 1906, working first in Fukien (*Fujian*) Diocese (福建教區) until 1928.

John was an army chaplain with the allied forces in Thessaloniki, including the Royal Dublin Fusiliers during the First World War of 1914-1918. He was Bishop of Chekiang (*Zhejiang*) Diocese (浙江教區), Chung Hua Sheng Kung Hui (中華聖公會) (CHSKH), from 1928 to 1950, during which period the Nationalist, Communist and Japanese armies fought over the country. "Chung Hua Sheng Kung Hui", literally meaning "the Holy Catholic Church in China" or "Anglican-Episcopal Province of China", was the name of the Anglican Church in China from 1912 until about 1958.



Map of the Anglican Church Dioceses in China in 1925

The first Protestant missionaries had only begun working in the Ch'ing Empire in 1807 and among the early missionaries was another Irishman, William Armstrong Russell (祿賜) who

arrived in the Ch'ing Empire in the 1840s. Despite these earlier arrivals John's journey was still very much a leap into the unknown and certainly a long way from leafy south Dublin parish work.

John arrived in Fukien in 1906 and later, while working there met fellow missionary Eda Stanley Bryan-Brown, she had been born the daughter of a clergyman in Australia, and in 1914 they were married. In 1916, John returned to Europe in the midst of the First World War. This meant separation from his wife and his missionary work. John Curtis joined the British Army Chaplains and shared the dangers of the combat troops in trenches and on battlefields. He spent time in Greece and also would have ministered to members of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers during his service. As one journalist who knew John well observed of his character: **"one cannot picture him holding back from that cataclysm"**. Indeed despite his obvious religious devotion most descriptions of John Curtis focus strongly on his energy and fearlessness, whether on the sports ground, or the battlefield or in his missionary work.

Luckily John survived the War and in 1919 received the Victory Medal, however he swiftly returned to his work in the newly established Republican China. Since arriving in the Ch'ing Empire in 1906 John had witnessed crowning of the child emperor Henry Puyi (溥儀) in 1908 as well as his forced abdication, the end of the Ch'ing Empire, and the founding of the Republic of China just a few years later. His post-war return witnessed further upheaval.

By this stage John and Eda had become parents to a son, John Guy Curtis in 1919, Arthur Bryan Curtis in 1924 and followed by a sister, Joan. It was a restless time to have a new family but there was further change. At one stage, John wrote with insight from Fu Ning (撫寧): **"The situation out here politically is more and more perplexing. It seems as if we are drifting nearer and nearer to some sort of a "Red China"**. Undaunted, he stayed on in the region until 1926. The Diocese of Chekiang became vacant with Bishop Herbert James Molony's (麥樂義主教) retirement, and John was elected its new bishop. When John was consecrated in 1929 at Christ Church Pro-Cathedral, Ningpo (寧波基督代主教座堂), he was the first foreign bishop of the CHSKH to be consecrated in China, and his consecrating bishops included his predecessor, Molony, and the Chinese-born Assistant Bishop of Chekiang, T. S. Sing (沈載琛).

In 1927 John and his missionaries would no doubt have been aware of the first major engagements of the Chinese Civil War between the Kuomintang (or KMT, the major political party of the Republic) (中國國民黨) and the Red Army of the Chinese Communist Party (中國共產黨). There was a major battle for control of the city Nanchang (南昌) in the neighbouring province of Kiangsi (*Jiangxi*) (江西) which ultimately saw the Communist forces flee in defeat, many of their surviving troops marched hundreds of miles to take refuge in Fukien, the province where John and his family were living.

This meant that John and Eda moved to the beautiful city of Hangchow, referred to by some at the time as the "Venice of the east" due to its location on the Grand Canal of China and sections of the Yangtze River (長江) delta. By this stage Eda had brought the children to England in 1927 to live with one of her brothers though both parents visited every year up until the outbreak of the Second World War. In their young lives the children had witnessed a great deal of violence. Joan recalled as a four year old hearing "soldier and their cannon" from the missionary school. On another occasion in 1922 Eda and her two young children were obliged to undertake a long journey up river, during the course of which her oldest son John by then only three years old at

the time developed laryngeal diphtheria. When it looked like he might succumb to his illness she was forced to perform a tracheotomy, her only instruments being a pen-knife and some hair-pins. It was perhaps not surprising that the calm of rural England would seem a better place for the children to grow up.

As Bishop of Chekiang, John lived in Hangchow, once described by Marco Polo as “the City of Heaven, the most beautiful and magnificent in the world.” The Diocese covered 36,680 square miles, and by 1950 had a population of 23 million, of whom 11,574 were Anglicans. The Diocese was divided into three areas: Ningpo (*Ningbo*) (寧波), Taichow (台州) (today Linhai 寧海) and Hangchow, where he lived. In addition, a special commission from the Archbishop of Canterbury extended Bishop John Curtis’s jurisdiction to the 3,000 Anglicans in the so-called “English congregations in Shanghai, including Holy Trinity Cathedral, Shanghai.”

In his first years in office, John worked on bravely despite banditry, civil war and famine throughout his Diocese. “In his long journeys about his diocese, mainly on foot, he was a hard man to follow,” the Dean of Holy Trinity Cathedral, Shanghai, later recalled. “In a New Year’s sermon in the cathedral, with an unconscious Irishness, he urged us to ‘advance in all directions’.”

During his time, there was real growth in Sunday schools and in the work of women missionaries. After 25 years of separate existence, the Chinese CMS was incorporated into the Chekiang diocesan board of missions in 1930, making mission an integral part of the life and work of the Diocese.

Drama and upheaval followed the Curtis family to this new setting of Hangchow and as Christmas 1937 approached so too did the forces of Imperial Japan. In July 1937, the Imperial Japan launched full scale aggression to China. With the advance of the Japanese invading forces, large areas of the Diocese came under Japanese control, all CMS secondary schools were closed, and ordination candidates were sent out of the Diocese to Nanking (*Nanjing*) (南京) for training. On Christmas Day 1937, 90,000 Japanese troops entered Hangchow after fierce fighting. A week earlier the Japanese had advised all foreign consuls to evacuate any of their citizens from the area due to the danger of the fighting, in all there were only 31 foreigners in Hangchow in 1937 and John Curtis was the only Irishman.

As living conditions deteriorated in the city, John constantly visited the hospitals, medical camps and refugees, his overcoat pockets bulging with bottles of milk for the children. On what he called his “milk rounds,” he also shepherded large numbers of frightened women and children to the safety of the refugee camps.

By June 1938, only three districts of the Diocese remained outside Japanese control. But John spent six weeks touring the whole Diocese that autumn. By 1940, the number of baptized Anglicans in the Diocese of Chekiang was 12,000---more than double the number in 1920. However, in September 1942 all the missionaries were called in for questioning.

Journalist and Church of Ireland priest, Patrick Comerford notes that “living conditions deteriorated in the city, Curtis constantly visited the hospitals, medical camps and refugees, his overcoat pockets bulging with bottles of milk for the children. On what he called his ‘milk rounds,’ he also shepherded large numbers of frightened women and children to the safety of the refugee camps.”

John continued to administer to his Church's followers throughout his vast Diocese despite the restrictions caused by the Japanese invasion, and the subsequent outbreak of the Pacific War. By September 1942 more than nine months after the Japanese attack at Pearl Harbour in Hawaii many missionaries were called in for questioning. John Curtis was arrested in November and taken to the Haiphong Road Camp (海防路集中營) in Shanghai (上海) and then held in Stanley Internment Camp (赤柱拘留營) in the British Crown Colony Hong Kong (英國殖民地香港). Comerford wrote that on one occasion, "the Japanese threatened to shoot him if he continued to criticize their treatment of his fellow prisoners, but it was said that in internment he was a great asset to the morale of the camp."

The Curtis's would remain in prison of war camps for the remainder of the War, it was in such a camp that they would learn of the death of their oldest son John, in January 1943. John, whose life Eda had saved as a toddler, was only 23 when he died in a flying accident while on service as a Royal Air Force pilot. When finally released from the camp at the end of the War both John and Eda were in their 60's and had suffered cruelly during their captivity. Eda had continued her medical work, helping other prisoners inside the camp and her thoughts were about returning to Hangchow to continue her work at the mission hospital, which they managed to do with support from the Red Cross.

After the War Victory in 1945, more missionaries did come out to China from Ireland and Britain missionaries began to return to China, but Curtis reported: "We are further away from self-help now than when I came here 17 years ago." At the end of his career, he appeared depressed about the prospects of the Chinese church surviving on its own. Yet he agreed it could be said "we are passing from mission relationships to Church relationships."

However their work was made increasingly difficult under the regime of Communist Party of China to a new socialist country since 1 October 1949. Eventually in 1950 John at the age of 70 and Eda were forced to leave the People's Republic of China for the last time and returned to England.

John became a vicar in the small village of Wilden, northeast of Stourport-on-Severn in Worcestershire before he eventually retired to Leamington in 1957 at the age of 77. Although struggling with arthritis it was noted that he remained in good spirits when in conversation with his old friends, and he kept in contact with his many old acquaintances and was eager for news from Dublin, indeed he had continued to visit Dublin regularly even while working in China. John was highly thought of as a missionary and often during his returns to Dublin he was asked to speak about his work and travels. And despite the passing of time his reputation as one of the best Irish footballers of his generation lived on for decades as well.

Rotarian John Curtis passed away suddenly in 1962, aged 82, and RotaryAnn Eda died just 18 months later. They had truly lived full, dramatic and difficult lives. In an obituary in the 《Church Times》, the former Dean of Holy Trinity Cathedral, Shanghai, wrote of him: "He was a faithful father in God, a wise counsellor and a sympathetic friend ... memories of him we shall treasure, and lives shaped by his influence and example will carry on God's work which he loved and made so attractive by his own life and ministry." A CMS missionary in China at the time, W. R. O. Taylor, recalled John Curtis as a bishop with "distinctively Irish gifts" that were valued in non-Anglican ecumenical circles which had little use for bishops. Taylor was the acting secretary for the CMS mission in Hangchow during 1937-1938.

In Chekiang Today

John Curtis

1 November 1939

Like China as a whole and like Gaul of old the Chekiang Diocese is divided into three parts. We have an "occupied" area---much less "inhabited" than previously---round about Hangchow, we have a "war" area which begins anywhere outside Hangchow and runs across the Fuyang Hsien northwest towards Anhui, and we have the "free" area which includes all the right bank of the Chien T'ang River and all the left bank as well beyond the "line" which runs through Fuyang.

We of the Sheng Kung Hui have no work in the "occupied" area except in Hangchow and with regard to our work there all through the period of occupation we have had very much to be thankful for. None of our foreign missionaries were evacuated and none were directly interfered with. We were able to keep all our missionaries---men and women---four men, ten women, one retired woman-worker and one independent but partly attached woman missionary; of these, two men and eight women were in the Hospital, one woman and one man in the Branch Hospital (Lepers etc.) outside the city proper and the rest were in the heart of the city. We were fortunate in being able to keep all our Chinese hospital staff except a couple of "internes" and a few nurses who would not face Japanese occupation or whose parents insisted on taking them away, but it was a well-staffed efficiently-working hospital that went through the bad times and proved such a source of help and stability in the afflicted city. We also had our two Chinese clergy in the city and one in each of the Hospitals. We were much better off than the other missions who were each represented by one foreign man and rather a smaller number of Chinese clergy.

The matter that finally cleared away any hesitation there may have been about remaining was the request in November 1937 from the Provincial Governor and Mayor that we should take over from them the inmates of a hospital they had been running with between three hundred and four hundred seriously wounded Chinese soldiers whom they could make no provision for. They put them in a school next door, provided all necessary equipment and money, also a staff which vanished just in time to make room for the staff of the Huchow (Methodist Episcopal South) Mission Hospital under Dr. Manget and Miss Morton to take over. These latter had evacuated to us a body and were moving back hoping to find work. They reached us at the psychological moment and took charge of the wounded soldiers next door, and though we got most of the credit they did most of the work! We had already quite a number of wounded soldiers in our own Hospital and there was a busy time before the Japanese came, preparing all who could be moved for evacuation "across the river"; during the month that was left we evacuated about three hundred and we left with just over two hundred when the city was occupied. May it be said to the credit of the Japanese that they never interfered with these men in any way except that after seven months one hundred convalescent were taken away and put under more careful guard but not in any way ill-treated, and after another seven months the remainder were allowed to go free without any restrictions. This whole piece of work reflected

credit on all concerned, our hospital staff, the Huchow Hospital staff, the Chinese Central Government who paid for all those who came to our Hospital, the Chekiang Government who paid for those whom they handed over to us and the Japanese for their scrupulous "non-interference."

The Leper and T. B. Hospital outside the city was also kept going in an efficient way, (we evacuated the orthopaedic children to the city hospital) and not interfered with though we had many alarms and excitements such as finding free Japanese cavalry men mounted on top of the hospital hill one day---the walls were not intact and these men were scouting!

Our local Red Cross Committee with headquarters in the Hospital also did a notable work--we concentrated about 3,000 women and children in our various mission Y.M.C.A. and some other compounds and we just had enough foreign men (and two women!) to help the very efficient Chinese workers we had in the oversight of all these places and again we have to record a very successful piece of work. It needed constant care, day and night, (for Hangchow was much the same during the first three months of occupation as all other East China cities) to prevent soldiers from coming in, to persuade those who had got in to go out, to get the Military Police in specially difficult cases, but again the work was successfully carried through without any of the regrettable incidents reported from Nanking and elsewhere, largely due to the fact that our refugees were all collected into compounds that could be kept closed and that we had in most cases a resident foreigner as the last line of defence or at any rate continual visits from a responsible person. The Japanese Military Police also helped us in a great measure but at first they were very few in number.

It took several months before our refugees were all evacuated but at last only on which still has nearly 1,000 villagers from burnt out areas was left.

All this work led on to the resumption by degrees of our regular church work---some of the clergy have never returned but all our churches have long been back at work mostly with congregations of whom more than half are "new" people met during the great tribulation. In our own Sheng Kung Hi there were 50 adults baptized at Christmas 1938 and 79 at Whitsuntide 1939; these numbers are quite exceptionable in our work in Hangchow and are directly due to work in "the bad times" and our experience is common with the other churches in Hangchow ---"much people was added unto the Lord".

Most Christian community evacuated before the Japanese came---generally speaking only the poor remained---and financial matters are difficult on this account. All the churches combined in relief efforts last winter. They made clothes, they contributed money, they distributed rice provided by N.C.C. and Red Cross Funds and they are beginning to lay their plans for next winter already. The church members led by their responsible leaders are getting out into community service in a new way to response to the dreadful need evident in the city and although a lot of old leaders are absent, the church is giving a very good account of itself in poor present day half dead, half populated Hangchow.

Schools "of sorts" are being carried on. Only the Roman Mission so far has registered a school with the present authorities, and as yet we have no plans for the future. We go on from day to day "in hope", but there is probably much more effective evangelistic work going on in Hangchow city now than ever before in its history. We usually have a big Sunday work radiating out from our Young People's Institute in Hangchow and there was a Teachers' Institute with about 60 young people present in July for a fortnight---and any Sunday afternoon there are over forty classes being held in the institute.

Now for the area No.2---the war area. Here we have little to report, only one of our parishes is affected and it only in about half its area---but many of our people suffered in the original fighting and many more had their homes burnt out and quite a number were killed. I was close by a time in April of this year coming from the "free" side and was able to hold services in a couple of places where the catechists are carrying on---one of them is close touch with the Chinese soldiers in the neighbourhood and at a service when I was there we had a Brigade Commander, his director of medical services, some other officers and some of the rank and file present, some of them Christians from other parts of China, some of them learning what Christianity means. The N.C.C. gave a grant of \$500 to help the people of this area and two of our Chinese pastors spent some time there in July to administer this money in various ways and to strengthen these suffering Christians with the sympathy and help that came through them and the N.C.C. from all over the world. We know little of the area just inside the Japanese side of the line---it is still a "front line area" and visitors are not welcomed.

In area No.3---"Free China"---our Sheng Kung Hui work radiates out from Ningpo, Shaohing and Taichow and there is also what used to be worked from Hangchow along the Chien T'ang River and along the highway to Anhui. I was able to visit these areas in October-November 1938 on my way to Madras. In these days we could not get passes from Hangchow for a long enough time to visit the districts across a few of our Chinese leaders and the one foreign man we have there for a few days consultation each time. All the workers there are at their posts and the work (of all missions and churches) on the whole goes on under nearly normal conditions except that instead of our good highways we are back to our canal boats of every sort---all our advance in communications made in the last ten years has been lost, roads and railways dug up and destroyed as far as possible; there is no difficulty getting about but it is slower. School work has been carried on under difficulties as air raids have at times been frequent. After various interruptions the Ningpo schools have all gone to the villages and in Shaohing they have early morning and later afternoon sessions, and the pupils are encouraged to spend the rest of the day in the country outside. In the large towns a good deal of help to passing refugees has been given and regular work has gone on, Sunday services in Ningpo at 6 a.m. and 5 p.m. I held a confirmation service there on Whitsunday at 6 a.m. followed immediately by the ordination of four deacons. Conditions in Ningpo have varied---raids nearly eighteen months ago nearly emptied the city for a couple of months and then conditions gradually got back to normal till in April 1939 eight raids in quick succession inflicting much damage and many casualties on the civilian population once more emptied the city and after that business was all carried on early in the morning and late in the afternoon. Shaohing has

been much less seriously bombed but quite enough to make the population very careful though business there has been much less interfered with. There is a large number of refugees in Shaohing from the areas across the river and the churches are busy in relief work. Chuki, a flourishing hsien city in the Shaohing district on the Chekiang-Kiangsi Railway, was badly bombed and the greater part of the business area burned out---but it works away in makeshift premises seemingly as busy as ever. Up the Chien T'ang River, Tung Lu has also been largely burnt out by air raids but it mostly remains in its ruins as nearly all the river trade has stopped now, as there is no access to Hangchow. Most other towns have been bombed but not so seriously and the people with the help of air raid warnings carry on.

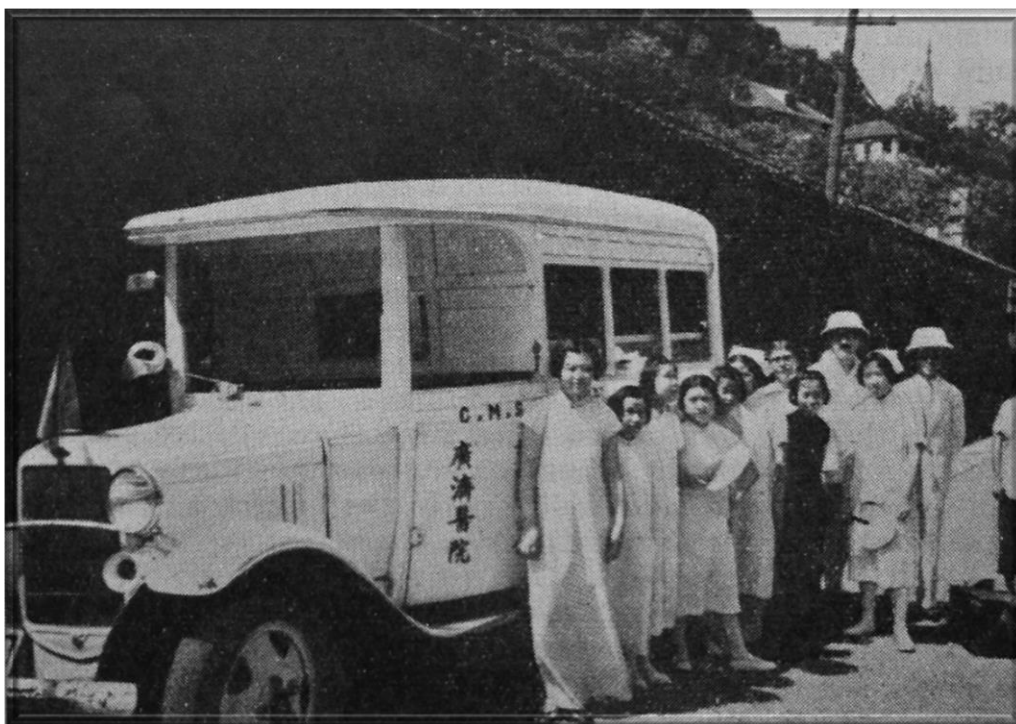
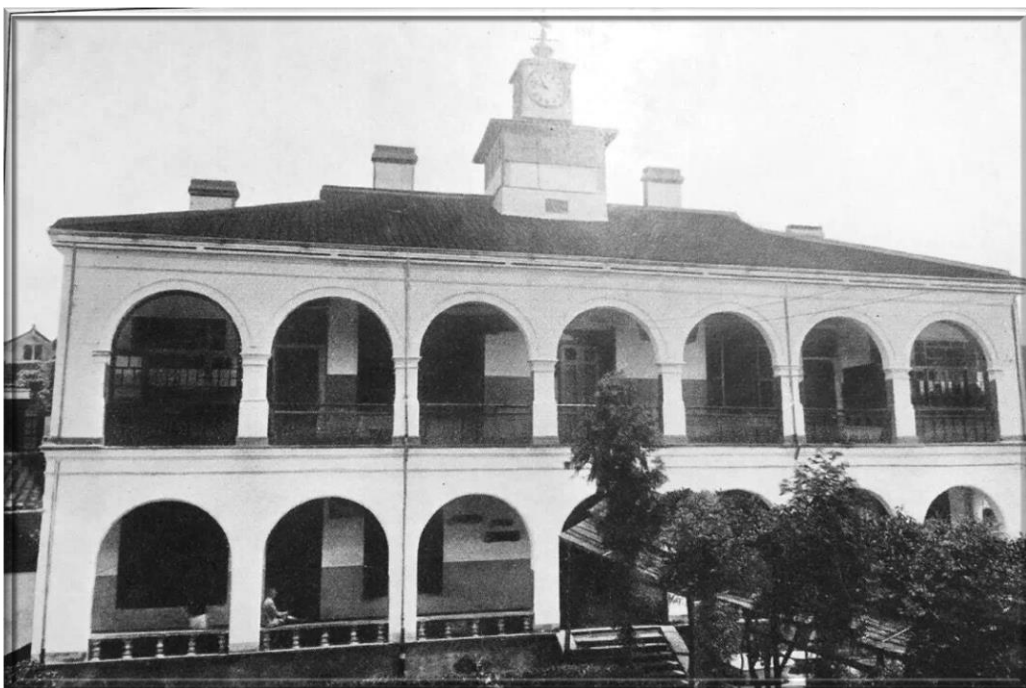
Taichow, though farther from the Hangchow occupied area, is near the coast and had a useful little port at Haimen. Now Haimen is closed and often bombed and the towns inland, Huang Yen and Lin Hai (Taichow), are constantly bombed especially the latter where the people mostly live "out". Our women missionaries here as in Ningpo have able to carry on but it is nerve racking work and holidays could not be arranged this summer as travelling is very difficult. But as I said earlier on---all workers are at their posts and the work goes on in most ways nearly normal.

I was able to visit all these districts during my two tours and hold confirmation services as usual. The people are able to get together as usual on Sundays, the clergy and other workers can move freely amongst their people and carry on their work and the people feel they are still Chinese and are expected and if necessary compelled to supply men for the army, so that everywhere there are recruits being gathered together and drilled. At the back of the line labour corps are at work and there are plentiful indications that although the enemy is near, the war is not ended. Everywhere the price of food seemed dearer than usual, many refugees, many soldiers, poor communications, etc., etc. The effect of the war is evident everywhere but in most places at a short distance from the fighting area it is a case for the agriculture population of "business as usual!" The big towns are most affected by disruption of communications and stoppage of trade but if only the war could be brought to an end, one feels that conditions would very soon be normal in "free" China and though in occupied China a longer time would be necessary as much material damage has been done, yet even there free communications would soon bring very much more normal conditions.

So there we are, (1) in Hangchow useful work with the new constituency and much community service, (2) a dead zone where the fighting line runs and where machine guns and sometimes artillery come to live at any time and then (3) "free" China with almost normal life in the villages and war conditions for business in the big towns---"We are troubled on every side yet not distressed, we are perplexed but not in despair, persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroyed."

We have no special plans, but just at present "carry on". I hope to have most of September, October and November "across the river" and we hope to have all the workers of each area gathered together somewhere in Ningpo, Taichow and Shaohing districts for a few days special

meetings---the rest of the time I hope to spend visiting the various parishes and holding confirmation services and having fellowship with the Christians in all these places so that we shall mutually strengthen on another's hands in God.



Group photo of the CMS Hangchow Hospital staff in front of the ambulance