

AYERS FAMILY PAPERS

WRITINGS (SANFORD EMMETT AYERS)

ITEM NUMBER

13

4902 Cordelia Ave., Baltimore.

July 22, 1940.

Dr. Sanford E. Ayers
Ridgecrest, N.C.

Dear Dr. Ayers:

Your gracious letter of June 24th, with inclosure "Medical Work At Laichow", was received a long time ago.

As the days have passed, I have felt "My face" growing less and less as I would remember my neglect in not replying, - not even acknowledging receipt of your favor! I do not deserve it, but you will pardon, even tho you do not excuse my negligence.

The suggestion that I write the chapter on North China has failed to "Come to a boil", although I have permitted it to "Simmer" during this period!

In my opinion, your father can do it better than any one else, and I believe he would enjoy doing it in conjunction with you and Mrs. Ayers. I have enjoyed re-reading "Healing and Missions", and you will have to "Scratch" to equal it in readability and information given. Considering the circumstances under which it was written, I think your father did a splendid piece of work.

Considering the present status of our medical work in China, I am not certain that it is the time to record the unvarnished facts-- as to accomplishments. What we should do, - is a bigger story.

The picture of the Pingtu Hospital appearing in "Healing and Missions" is the best picture we have, I think. Due largely to having the row of native style buildings in the foreground, we have not been able to get a satisfactory picture of the entire building. We have been rather weak along the photo line, however, if you mention pictures of special type desired, we shall send you what we may have.

Have you had recent word from Chengchow? In our last letter from Dr. Vance, he stated that folks from the Interior Mission told him in Tsingtao, where they-he and Mrs. V. were awaiting a new "Advance", (We have just heard that it is a boy, the third), that Dr. Humphrey was closing the hospital. Dr. Vance gave no particulars, but I suppose it has been more difficult to secure supplies at Chengchow.

Dr. Beall's furlough is due next Spring. She is urging Dr. Vance to be in Laichow during her absence.

Miss Jones is back in Pingtu, and Miss Bradley is supposed to be on her way to Georgia.

I will inclose a sheet giving a few corrections or suggestions on the Pingtu article in "Healing and Missions".

I am also returning "Medical Work At Laichow" which I have enjoyed reading very much.

Am hoping to see you in Ridgecrest before the end of Summer, but plans are not perfected as yet.

Very sincerely yours,

Suggestions for Corrections, = = "Healing and Missions"

Page 78. Line 15" = "'but in 1915", should be "1914"

Line 17- (Upon return from furlough in 1915,
moved from Pingtu to **Laiyang**)

Line 21 = In the autumn of 1914, Dr. & Mrs. A. W. Yeom
of Baltimore, Maryland

Line 26 - Dr. George N. Herring "' Pingtu Hospital
force in 1921. (Language School in 1920)
Returned to America 1926.

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During the Judson Centennial Campaign,
Dr. T. W. Ayers visited the Immanuel Baptist
Church, Nashville, Tenn., Dr. Rufus Weaver
pastor, and as a result of Dr. Ayers'
presentation of the need for a hospital
for women at Pingtu, Mr. Alexander, a deacon
of the church, pledged \$3000. for the erection
of a hospital as a memorial to his late wife,
Mrs. Lovella Roach Alexander.

(This was previous to May 1914, but due to
unexpected financial reverses, the pledge
was not redeemed until 1920, or later. In the
mean time, the Seventy Five Million Dollar
Campaign provided funds for the erection of
a new combined- hospital for men and women,
and the new building was dedicated as the
Oxner-Alexander Memorial Hospital)

The original plan was to name the hospital
for women, **The Lovella Roach Alexander Memorial**,
And the hospital for men, **The Oxner Memorial**
Hospital, but that was just too much for me
to write, so we combined the names.

The \$3000. mentioned above was combined with
\$25,000 from Seventy Five Million Campaign
in the erection and equipment of the new
building.

A contribution from Texas in 1909, as a
memorial to Dr. Oxner, of \$3000., was used to
purchase the land and erect the original
Oxner Memorial Hospital building. This was
done by Dr. Hearn in 1910.

This building was altered in 1923, and has
since been used for out patient clinic,
hotel, and dormitories for hospital employees.

I favor changing the name of the hospital to-
The Pingtu Baptist Hospital.

Medical Work at Laichow

In 1902 when the horrors of the Boxer War were still heavy upon the hearts of missionaries in North China Rev. and Mrs John W. Lowe, with faith un-faltering, opened Laichow as a mission station of the Southern Baptist Convention. Mr. Lowe, traveling from Hwanghsien to Pingtu, ^{donkey-back,} came upon this beautiful walled city and coveted it for his God. The way soon opened for the location of Mr. Lowe and family here, with the addition of Miss Mary D. Willeford for evangelistic work.

Mr. Lowe had taken some medical training together with his theological studies, and at Pingtu had begun a good dispensary work/ before the Boxer trouble. He now continued this at Laichow, his loving heart and ready sympathy making many friends for the gospel which was so new to the people of this place. His hope and prayer was always for a fully trained medical man to take up this part of the work and great was his joy in 1904 to welcome Dr. and Mrs. E. M. Huckaby of Texas. These fine young people had been in Laichow only a year when the health of both began to fail. When there seemed no hope of recovery in China they returned to the United States, whence they were soon called to the Heavenly Home.

Miss Cynthia A. Miller came out in 1905 as the first trained nurse for Laichow. During her first term of service Miss Miller did a great work not only as nurse, but as doctor, bridging the vacancy made by Dr. Huckaby's leaving and the arrival of a new doctor. ^{for} Leaving her first furlough it was her sad task to take with her Miss Lottie Moon, then broken in health and dying. Tenderly Miss Miller cared for the aged missionary till release came on the beautiful shores of Japan, nor was her task finished till the precious ashes were entrusted to loving hands and hearts in Virginia.

After her first furlough Miss Miller gave her time more fully to evangelistic and educational work. Soul-saving was her passion, and many are the Chinese who owe to her the winsome appeal, ^{and} the careful teaching which make them the strong Christian characters they now are.

to China

When Miss Miller returned from her third furlough she ~~she~~ resumed at once her strenuous duties in connection with the Girls' School and other station activities, but in the following spring her health failed, and a year later she very reluctantly returned to the United States. Her health improved and she was able to care for her aged mother till that loved task was finished. Three months after the passing of her mother she too was laid to rest, one of the most consecrated and valuable missionaries that Southern Baptists have ever had.

When the health of the Huckabys failed appeal was made for a physician to take up the work they had only begun in Laichow. At this time Dr. James McFadden Gaston was practicing medicine in Atlanta, Georgia. He felt the urgency of the need in Laichow and applied to the Foreign Mission Board for appointment. In 1908 Dr. and Mrs. Gaston were appointed to service in Laichow and sailed Sept. 15. Miss Florence Jones, R.N., from Hwanghsien supplied at Laichow during Miss Miller's first furlough.

Through the influence of Mr. Lowe two earnest Christian doctors in St. Louis, Drs. Mayfield and Tyzzer, were led to give the money for the building of a hospital in Laichow. It was built in 1909 and bears the name of the donors. Before Dr. Gaston left Richmond he had asked Dr. Willingham how much could be furnished for equipment. The matter was taken under consideration and the next day Dr. Willingham replied that the Board could allow one hundred dollars for equipment! Needless to say that hundred dollars had to be greatly stretched to cover even a few of the needs of equipping a hospital.

This first unit was planned for men patients, the medical dispensary built by Dr. Huckaby serving ten years for women patients.

In 1913 the W. M. U. of Alabama pledged funds for a Womans' Hospital to be called the Kathleen Mallory Hospital. Dr. T. W. Ayers, in his "Healing and Missions" gives a graphic account of the occasion and circumstance of the gift.

At the meeting of the state convention of the W.M.U. of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, the women of the convention felt that in some way they wanted to express their love for their great secretary, who was just then giving up her work in Alabama to become the head of the Baptist women of the South. They had done me the honor of inviting me to deliver the missionary address at that convention, and I reached Tuscaloosa just before I was to speak, and knew nothing of the desire to honor Miss Mallory. At the close of my talk that day I suggested that it would be a beautiful act if the Alabama women would build a woman's hospital in North China, where three were greatly needed. My dear friend, Mrs. Charles A. Stakely, was president of the convention and introduced me that day. When I suggested the building of a hospital, I noticed that she, with a smile, began to nod her head to the women in front of her, but I had no idea what this meant. As soon as I finished my talk, she arose and said:

"Friends, you know how we have been racking our brains to know what we can do to show our appreciation of our retiring secretary, Kathleen Mallory, whom we love as probably no state has ever loved a state leader, and now God has sent this dear friend, whom Dr. Stakely and I have loved for so many years to tell us just what to do. Is it not wonderful? It seems almost as if God had dropped him down out of the clouds to tell us what to do. I believe we will do just what he has asked us to do, and that we will name the hospital "The Kathleen Mallory Hospital". What do you say, sisters?" And from all over the house came the answer, "We'll do it." It was then and there settled. So there is now over yonder in Laichow, Shantung, China, ten thousand miles away, a beautiful little woman's hospital known as "The Kathleen Mallory Hospital."

Though the funds for the Kathleen Mallory Hospital were pledged in 1913 and the promise fulfilled in a reasonable time, the vicissitudes of war in Europe, the invasion of Shantung by the Japanese, and constant unrest because of the warring of rival Chinese factions, the building was not finished and ready for use till 1922. Fortunately, by this time Dr. Jeannette Beall of Missouri, and Miss Alda Grayson, R.N., of North Carolina had had their ~~per~~ periods of language study and were ready to take over the medical work for women. To the first unit had been added kitchens, laundry, nurses' dormitories, admission quarters and physicians' residence, and the plant was well adapted to the needs of the place. After the Gastons' return from second furlough in 1924 the two hospitals were administered jointly by Drs. Gaston and Beall, Miss Grayson superintending the training of nurses in both.

There is no other hospital within a radius of thirty miles. The Chinese of this county are very conservative and prone to continue in the methods of antiquity, but gradually the hospital won its way to their confidence, as shown by the steady increase of patients during this period. The aim of the hospital has always been for honestly good work rather than for numbers. Every effort has been made to adapt the institution to the needs of the people, and the advice of wise Chinese has molded every policy of the administration. Hence it is hoped and believed that, despite the many changes now taking place in China, the institution may continue to develop along lines of the greatest usefulness to the Chinese people and to the glory of God.

The years that followed the Board's allotment of a hundred dollars to equip the Laichow hospital were lean ones so far as hospital supplies were concerned, but faithful friends often remembered the needs. One dear servant of the Lord sent fifty dollars for fuel so that the doctor's hands might not be stiff with cold when operating. A Sunday School class sent two wheel chairs which are still rolling though much the worse for wear, and

the same dear girls furnished an autoclave and sterilizing outfit which made sterilizing operations possible. It was a memorable year when an American-Japanese Red Cross expedition was called off and supplies originally intended for Siberia were donated to American hospitals in the Orient. Greatest of all help has ^{been} that of the White Cross work of the W. M. M. of the South.

When the Gastons were on their third furlough in 1932 the city of Laichow was under siege by a Chinese warlord for three months. Destruction in the city and suburbs was distressing and looting of the hospital and other mission property was complete. However the courage of both missionaries and Chinese rose to the emergency and repair and re-equipment soon enabled the workers to resume their service of healing.

The year 1933 brought Dr. Gaston to retiring age but he continued to serve the hospital two years longer, doing some of the best surgery of his life during that period.

In 1934 Dr. J. H. Humphrey of Oklahoma was appointed to succeed Dr. Gaston at Laichow, but by the time he had ^{completed} his period of language study exigencies of war made it necessary to divert his service to the interior Mission. Dr. Beall, with help from Dr. Bryan of Hwanghsien, has carried on heroically but her third furlough is due, Miss Grayson is "panning" alone the Laiyang station and Laichow is indeed in dire need of help.

During the early years of Christian work in Laichow the progress seemed most encouraging in the out-lying rural districts. The hospital, situated just outside of the city gate has proved a bridge upon which the conservative city people are being reached, and gospel work in the city is now as encouraging as that in the country. The hospitals are well known throughout the province for their Christian teaching and influence, and many have here found health for their souls as well as for their bodies. Only young men and young women of high Christian character are taken for hospital training. The religious services and bedside teaching is done largely by these. Their personal influence and their kindly ministry

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preach more impressively than the most eloquent sermon the love of Him who came "not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." A learned old teacher who had held out long against Christianity, found it necessary to come to the hospital for treatment of his foot. Some time afterward he said, "I know it is a true religion that would lead one to wash my feet as did the nurse at the hospital."

One of our most experienced evangelists who preached in the waiting room ^{there} who came for daily treatment, declared it to be the best opportunity he found for reaching the non-Christian.

A few incidents that brighten the daily routine of the hospital may be of interest.

Here is a young man who has waited long for the healing of an incision. With a bright smile he says, "I am not impatient; when I get very tired I pray the Heavenly Father to help me to wait. I understand how Jesus helps." Of each of the gospels and tracts given him he says, "I understand." He had not known Christ before he came to the hospital.

A little boy who had taken the gospel as a thirsty bird takes water, ^{he} said, when asked what ^{he} would do if his family should persecute him, "I will gently plead with them". Another little fellow, a charity patient, when lying down upon the operating table said, "I will sing my little hymn first," "Jesus loves me this I know."

An old man for whom we were trying to make the last days of cancer a little more bearable said, "I heard this gospel from the first missionary who came here twenty years ago-- I have always believed it true, and somehow the Heavenly Father gives me peace in here"--laying his hand upon his breast.

A woman whose little boy had been treated for some weeks but still needed occasional dressings, was asked not to come on Sunday, because the doctors and nurses needed to rest as much as possible on that day. "But I want to come on Sunday," she said, "so that I can go to church, but we will stay over night and take the treatment on Monday". Mrs Wang who had been treated some weeks for cancer said, "Whether or not I am to get well I shall still go on loving Jesus."