

1. Elsie + Chang
2. Mrs. Peter Skibo-Yunnan
3. Home
4. Egie G. Chang
5. Ranch.
6. Short

Embassy - seen

COPY

7. Corson ✓
 Johnson ✓
 Moncrieff ✓
 Tsing Hsiang-heng ✓

3 Ping Tsang Hsiang,
 Nanking,
 April 17, 1938

✓ Luther Dappert
 ✓ Tsing Chung - seen
 ✓ Tso Ping - ✓
 ✓ Abbott
 ✓ C.E.S.
 ✓ Ling
 ✓ Han Van Dyke

To the Members
 of the Nanking Station
 Shanghai and Elsewhere.

Dear Friends:

While the memory of it is still fresh with me, I want to write to you about our Easter Service this morning. It was held at ten o'clock in the chapel at Ming Deh. I have told you before that about three fourths of our church members left the city before the outbreak of hostilities here. A few have come back, but after all not many as yet.

It seemed to me that it would be a good plan to bring together into one service today the little groups that have been meeting at our four places of worship within the city. I felt that if they all could meet together in one fairly large congregation, they would not seem so isolated as they must now feel as they meet Sunday by Sunday in their own separate groups. The united meeting, I thought would be good for "morale".

I suggested the idea to Mr. Gao Kwah-Hung, Mr. Yang Yu-Chih, and Mr. Wang Ya-Ling, the three men who are substituting for the regular absent pastors. They responded heartily to the suggestion and announcement was made in all four places that we would have a united service this morning. I did not know whether, considering the distance from the other centers to Hansimen, we would have only a chosen few at the service or not, but as it turned out the chapel was well filled half-an-hour before the service.

Things have been rather bare and drab in life here lately, so we made a special effort to have flowers on the platform, and to have the place look as nice as possible. The servants, and perhaps others, exerted themselves - I don't know exactly who was responsible - but anyway Lao Chang whispered to me proudly before the service commenced "It's hao-kan!"

Miss Djang, the Hubugiai organist played for us. There was no special choir, for all the choirs that formerly existed in our churches have disappeared, but nevertheless the people sang very well, showing that they had had pretty good training in congregational singing in "the old days before the war."

To the great pleasure of all of us Pastor Bao unexpectedly returned last night and presided at this morning's service. Mr. Yang Yu-Chih preached - a simple sermon, but one with real relevance to the needs and conditions of the hour. After the service the youngest daughter of Mr. Tsing Hsiang-Heng (Mr. Tsing is the language teacher of some of you) was baptized and received into church membership. We then had the celebration of the Communion which Mr. Bao and I administered. I think

that every one present felt the inspiration of the service, and the increased sense of fellowship that came from having the larger company together.

Plan
As I sat on the platform, and looked at the people, and shared in the service, somehow Easter took on a fresh meaning to me. Those who were present had doubtless all suffered in one way or another from the war, and the city of Nanking itself had undergone a real crucifixion just a few short weeks ago, and yet the service seemed to hold a promise of something indestructible, something that even war at its worst was unable to destroy, the spirit of faith and hope and love. It was manifest in the very presence and attitude of the people themselves in the service.

Moreover I felt that through the years something has been built up in our work in Nanking which will survive the test of the present hour. Much has been shaken, and part has even been destroyed, but part still stands, and that which remains can well give us hope and confidence for the future. From Good Friday we can truly pass with a real measure of rejoicing to Easter!

With kindest regards to all of you,

Cordially yours,

(Signed) W. P. Mills