

A Short Account of the Life and Murder of Gareth Jones

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Gareth Jones

August 13, 1905 to August 12, 1935

"Mr. Gareth Jones knows Europe thoroughly. From his travels in Soviet Russia, Germany and Poland he brought back valuable information and showed gifts of keen observation.... In conversation he is able to give a vivid picture of what he has seen.

"He is sharp, keen and reliable, and works rapidly with zest and good humour. I notice a spark of venturesomeness in him combined with solid study and the gift of getting on with people. I feel confident in predicting a brilliant future for this young man."

The Rt. Hon. David Lloyd George

Introduction

In the summer of 1985, almost fifty years to the day since my great-uncle, Gareth Jones, had met his death there, I was to travel through Inner Mongolia. To me, it seemed a quiet place. There were no bandits, no voices calling for Mongolian independence, and, certainly, no Japanese soldiers. In 1935, however, one would have found a much different state of affairs. Banditry was endemic, Prince Te Wang and his Mongol brothers were making vigorous efforts to set up a separate Mongol state, and the Japanese army was encroaching further and further into an increasingly chaotic China.

The turbulent changes then taking place in and around Inner Mongolia were to act as a lodestone to which the journalist, Gareth Jones, was irresistibly drawn. Having arrived in Peking, on the latter stages of a journey around the world, he was invited to attend a conference of Mongolian princes. On the return journey from that conference, he was kidnapped by Chinese bandits, and ultimately became a victim of the chaos he was seeking to understand. What follows is a resume of his brief life and of the circumstances, hitherto never satisfactorily explained, that surrounded his death. Also presented are the contents of the last letter he was ever to write.

The Life of Gareth Jones

Gareth Richard Vaughan Jones was born in Barry, on August 13th 1905.

From the ages of eleven to seventeen he received his education at the County School for Boys, in Barry, where his father, Major Edgar Jones, Welsh adviser to the BBC and a leading educationalist of the time, was headmaster. From there he proceeded to study French at the University College of Wales in Aberystwyth, and at Strasbourg University, where he gained the 'Diplome superieur des etudes francaises', eventually graduating with first class honours in 1926. That same year he won an Entrance Exhibition to Trinity College, Cambridge, and it was here that the flowering of his academic potential was to take place. During his three years as an undergraduate at Cambridge, he completed the Medieval and Modern Languages Tripos Parts I and II, gaining first class honours in French, German and Russian, while earning himself distinction in the oral examinations of all three languages. In recognition of such success, he was awarded the coveted position of Senior Scholar and Prizeman of Trinity College. After the completion of his studies he remained at Cambridge for one term, acting as Supervisor of Studies for four colleges, including Trinity, before undertaking post-graduate research on the history of the Soviet press under Sir Bernard Pares and Prince Mirsky of London University.

It was on the recommendation of Sir Bernard Pares, the erstwhile head of the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, that Gareth Jones, at the age of 24, was invited to an interview with Mr. David Lloyd George, at which he was requested to write a brief on the situation in Germany. So impressed was the former Prime Minister, "by his wide knowledge, and his ability to sum up a situation concisely and exactly"¹, that he appointed him to his personal staff

¹ D. Lloyd George - testimonial for Gareth Jones, 4.3.31.

as his Private Secretary for Foreign Affairs. Thus marked a significant break from an academic career to that of a career in active affairs. His new post required him to keep in close daily contact with changes in European affairs and prepare memoranda for all his eminent and demanding employer's speeches and articles on those matters. Having already travelled extensively in earlier years, often working his passage from his Barry home on the ships of various nations, Jones was well equipped to undertake the foreign assignments demanded by his job. In 1930, on behalf of Lloyd George, he paid his second visit to Russia where he met many of the leading politicians and was honoured by an interview with Lenin's widow. The following year he was sent to Germany (a country he had visited at least once each year for the ten years from 1923) and Poland, where, again, by means of introductions, he was able to meet and interview many of the most prominent statesmen. On his return, he accepted one of the many attractive offers that came his way as a result of his spreading reputation. Released by Lloyd George, he went to New York for a year under the auspices of Mr. Ivy Lee and Associates, and worked in the publicity department of the Rockefeller Foundation, thus enlarging his grasp of world affairs to encompass a knowledge of the workings of American business economics. The economic crisis of 1932 (an event he had foreseen and written on) precipitated his return to London and the resumption of his work with Lloyd George, a post he was to retain until April 1933. During this time he was again sent abroad, notably in 1932 to Mussolini's Italy where he reported on the measures used by the regime to relieve unemployment through the draining of the Pontine Marshes, and in early 1933, again to Germany, where he witnessed Adolf Hitler's appointment as Chancellor, and was invited to accompany him on his subsequent aeroplane election campaign.

The following are extracts from "With Hitler Across Germany", an article written in February 1933 by Jones for the Western Mail.

"If this aeroplane should crash, the whole history of Europe would be changed. For a few feet away sits Adolf Hitler, Chancellor of Germany and leader of the most volcanic nationalist awakening which the world has seen.... He does not look impressive...a slight figure in a shapeless, black hat, wearing a light mackintosh, and when he raised his arms flabbily to greet those who had assembled to meet him, I was mystified.

How had this ordinary-looking man succeeded in becoming deified by 14 million people? ...He was more natural and less of a poseur than I had expected; there was something boyish about him as he saw a new motor car and immediately displayed an interest in it.... His hand shake was firm, but his large, outstanding eyes seemed emotionless as he greeted me....

Behind Hitler sits a man who laughs all the time. He has a narrow Iberian head, and brown eyes which twinkle with wit and intelligence. He looks like the dark, small, narrow headed, sharp Welsh type which is so often found in the Glamorgan valleys. This is Dr. Goebbels...the brains of the National Socialists...and its most emotional speaker. His is a name to remember for he will play a big part in the future. To Hitler's left sits a massive fair-haired man, beside whom Hitler looks dwarf-like.. This is Hitler's adjutant.... He (Hitler) looks mild. Can this be the ruthless enemy of Bolshevism? It puzzles me....

We make a smooth landing. Nazi leaders, some in brown, some in black and silver, all with a red swastika arm-band, await their chief. He steps out of the aeroplane. But he is now a man spiritually transformed. His eyes have a certain fixed purpose. Here is a different Hitler. There are two Hitlers - the natural, boyish Hitler, and the Hitler who is inspired by a tremendous national force, a great Hitler. It is the second Hitler who has stirred Germany to an awakening."

Shortly after his brief but illuminating encounter with the nascent Nationalist-Socialist regime in Germany, Jones made his third and final journey to Soviet Russia. Freed from the confines of official supervision, he made his way deep into the Ukraine, where, for many days, he wandered alone through the devastated countryside, sleeping in the huts of peasants, and witnessing at first hand the calamitous results of Stalin's crude attempts at collectivisation. At a time when official Soviet organs spoke only of minor "food shortages", if recognition of a problem was given at all, Jones' inquiring mind produced probably the earliest revelation as to the full extent of the disaster that had befallen the Russian countryside. On his return to England, he was approached by several leading newspapers seeking to publish the material he had gathered, and in a series of articles depicting the scenes of famine and disease he had observed, he helped bring home to the world the tragic scale of suffering that was then to be found in Stalin's Russia.

Thus marked his departure from the offices of Lloyd George and his decision to embark full-time on a career in journalism and later in public lecturing. Having already contributed several articles freelance, to the 'Times', the 'News Chronicle', the 'Manchester Guardian' and the 'Economist', he attached himself to the 'Western Mail' of South Wales, in order to gain experience in the technical work of a journalist. There he remained until October 1934, writing numerous articles on the current international situation as well as providing portraits of a Welsh culture that was all too quickly fading away. The freedom, which success permitted, enabled him to combine his work for the 'Western Mail' with a series of nationwide lecture tours, dealing predominantly with the subject of Bolshevik Russia, which took him from places as far apart as Bournemouth and Belfast, and before audiences as prestigious as those of the 'Royal Institute of International Affairs'. The tour was an unqualified success, as successive audiences were gripped by his subject matter and oratorical skill. "Mr. Gareth Jones held us all entranced. He has a real

actor's gift of presenting his matter in a dramatic and striking form, which stimulates the imagination and makes it impossible to forget his descriptions and criticisms."⁴

Not content with the experiences and knowledge that had already come his way, Jones planned to further increase his understanding of international affairs by means of an extensive world tour - a journey that would be financed in its early stages by another series of lectures that would take him from the Atlantic to the Pacific coasts of America. By so doing, he hoped to become sufficiently versed in the field of foreign journalism as to be able to take up a hoped for position as special correspondent for the Times. He had of late become interested in the volatile situation arising in the Far East, and it was his intention to centre his journey on research for a proposed book examining the influence of an increasingly active Japan in the Pacific region, whilst simultaneously contributing, to various newspapers in London and Berlin, regular freelance articles on the countries through which he would pass. His original plan was to begin lecturing in New England, and work his way through the Middle West to California, from where he would cross by ship, via Honolulu, to Japan. From there he planned to visit the newly formed, and controversial, state of Manchukuo, before moving on to China, Indo-China, Burma, and finally to India, before returning home to Wales. This initial itinerary, which he expected to complete within a few months beyond a year, was to become significantly and fatefully revised as his journey progressed.

And so, in late October 1934, at the age of 29, Gareth Jones took leave of the security of his job with the Western Mail, bade farewell to his family, and set sail for America, at the start of a journey which was to prove to be his last.

* * *

⁴ The Principal, Morley College, London.

Some nine months separated Jones' departure from South Wales and his arrival at the palace of Prince Te Wang, in Inner Mongolia. During that time, his profuse writing allowed those at home to share at a distance in some of the adventures he was to undergo. As well as detailed letters to his family, in warm and vivid accounts for his newspaper audience, he brought to life much of the colour of the East, and provided a degree of insight into the turbulent and confusing state of affairs that was then to be found in Asia.

After a successful round of lectures and radio broadcasts in the United States, he sailed for Japan, spending some five weeks there, interviewing the leading statesmen of the day⁵, and gathering information for the book he intended to write. Before arriving in China, he visited the Philippines, Singapore, the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia), Cambodia (Kampuchea), Siam (Thailand) and Hong Kong. Entering China at Canton, he survived both the rigours of the public transport system, and the catastrophic floods then sweeping much of the country, to make his way northwards, via Changsha, Hankow, and Shanghai, to Peking. His intention, before leaving China for a second trip to Japan, was to visit Manchukuo, the state set up, and sponsored by, Japan in 1932. However, as he relates in his penultimate letter home, after expressing an interest in the Mongol situation, he was to receive an invitation that would make him change his

⁵ Including, among others, Navy Minister, Osumi; War Minister, General Hayashi Senjuro; former War Minister, General Araki Sadao; Foreign Minister, Matsuoka Yosuke; former Foreign Minister, Baron Shidehara Kijuro.

plans. "Then, suddenly, as I am drinking tea near the swimming pool of the club, where I am a temporary member, Baron Von Plessen⁴ comes up and says, 'Would you like to join Dr. Muller⁵ and me in an excursion into Inner Mongolia to visit te Wang at the meeting of the Princes. there will be a car at our disposal'. So, naturally, I jumped at the offer. I shall be away about a week."

⁴ Counsellor to the German Embassy, Peking.

⁵ Correspondent for the Deutsches Nachrichtenburo.

The Situation in Inner Mongolia

In order to understand the situation of the area into which Gareth Jones would be travelling, it is necessary to examine some of the events which preceded his visit, and to look at the history of the man whom he was to interview.

Prince Te Wang and the Japanese Invasion

Te Wang (Mongolian name, Demchukdongrub), by 1932, was already being mentioned in newspapers as the 'Inner Mongolian Nationalist leader'.⁶

Born in 1902, to a prince of the West Sunid Banner of Mongolia, he received his education at a Chinese middle school in Suiyuan province, and later at the Mongolian-Tibetan academy in Peking. At the age of 17 he inherited the principedom of West Sunid from his father and two years later, at the age of 19, he became a deputy chieftain of the Silingol league. At the same time he was also a prominent figure in the nationalist group, the Young Mongols, whose aim was to create a self-determined Inner Mongolian government within the framework of the Chinese Nationalist system. In the main, their aims were peaceful; unlike those of the Inner Mongolian Peoples Revolutionary Party, founded in 1925, who wished to establish self-determination by means of revolution.

Despite promises in Sun Yat Sen's 'Principles for National Construction', that minority peoples would be granted the right of self-government, the Mongols were to benefit little when the National Government was set up at Nanking, in 1928. Instead, the Mongol lands were divided up into four new provinces, Jehol, Chahar, Suiyuan, and Ninghsia, the boundary lines of which cut ruthlessly across the traditional frontiers of Mongol tribes and leagues. Also a policy of

⁶ Mongol Journey, p. 261, Owen Lattimore.

colonization by the Chinese, facilitated by the growth of the railway network, began to steadily dispossess the Mongol herdsmen of their best grazing lands. Anti-Chinese feeling among the Mongols was thus intensified, with Te Wang gaining further respect and influence as a potential saviour for his people. Meanwhile, Japanese imperialists watching from the wings took full note of the dissatisfaction among the Mongol leaders, hoping to utilise their support, when the time came for their march onto the Chinese stage.

In 1931, Japan did invade China, quickly setting up the new state of Manchukuo, centred in Manchuria, but which also included three of the six Mongol leagues of Inner Mongolia. With no resistance offered by the government at Nanking, Te Wang and the Young Mongols were left to make their own preparations for the defence of their territory. In late 1932, Te Wang headed a delegation to Nanking, proposing reforms for the National Government's administration of Inner Mongolia. Just as scant attention had been paid to them by the provincial government in Chahar, headed by the Chinese General Sung Che Yuan, so too were they ignored by the National Government in Nanking. They left in anger. The government, fearing the total alienation of the Mongols, later appointed the Panchen (Tashi) Lama, political exile from Tibet, to the Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission. He was sent to Pailingmiao in Inner Mongolia, with the job of pacifying the Mongols, thereby ensuring their loyalty to Nanking. His true sentiments, however, seemed to fall onto the side of Te Wang and his proposals for self-government.

Meanwhile, the Japanese Kuantung Army, not content with the territory it had already acquired, began moving further westward. In March 1933, it occupied the province of Jehol. It then advanced into Chahar province, occupying Dolonor and moving as far south as Kuyuan and Paoch'ang. An anti-Japanese army raised by General Feng Yu Hsiang managed to push the Japanese back over the Jehol border, but, on orders from Nanking, Feng was forced to disband his army and the Japanese were allowed to reoccupy their lost territory. Eventually moving out

of the Kuyuan area, Japan maintained its control of Dolonor, designating it as a "special district"⁷, to come under the authority of Manchukuo. From its base in Dolonor, and from further north in Peitzeyumiao, the Japanese began making vigorous preparations for their next advance into the Chinese section of Chahar. As well as building roads and airstrips, envoys were regularly sent into Chahar and Suiyuan to try and win the support of the Mongol leaders, support which, initially at least, was not forthcoming. Though collaboration was not at that time an attractive option for Te Wang and the Mongols, relations with the central government were undoubtedly becoming strained. Having done nothing to check Japan's advance, Nanking added insult to injury, by abandoning previously accepted plans, proposed by Te Wang, to enlarge the Mongol military training programme.

Three quarters of the old Mongolia had now been swallowed up by Russia and Japan, and the Mongols of the Silingol League in Northern Chahar lay sandwiched between Manchukuo and the Peoples Republic of Mongolia. In the face of all this, spring 1933 saw Te Wang and his comrades making their first moves towards achieving autonomy. After a series of meetings over the summer, a telegram was sent by the Mongolian princes, to Nanking, declaring their intention to establish an autonomous Mongolia government. With Prince Yun, chief of the Ulanhap league, at its head, and Te Wang as the director of its political affairs bureau, the new government would remain under the guidance of Nanking, but without the interference of Chinese provincial governors, many of whom were warlords over whom Nanking had little control, and whose economic interests directly contravened those of the Mongols. The Mongol standpoint, regarding the autonomy movement, was that it was necessary in order to unite the Mongols against Japanese aggression, but the government at Nanking was not convinced, and sent a delegation to try and put a stop to it. After protracted discussions, concessions were made on both sides, and the delegation returned to

⁷ Japan in China, p.64.

Nanking with a mutually agreed set of proposals. Before enactment however, Nanking significantly modified the agreement, causing much dissatisfaction in Pailingmiao, the result of which was a continued dispute. By this time, however, the Japanese were preparing to enthrone P'u Yi, the deposed emperor of the Qing dynasty, as emperor of Manchukuo, and had been making fresh advances to the Mongol leaders. The Mongols thus threatened Nanking with what was, perhaps, their 'trump card'. If central government did not give its assent to their initial proposal, they would be forced into the unsavoury position of having to align Inner Mongolia, with Manchukuo. Faced with this possibility, Nanking acquiesced. In February, 1934, a new act was passed, this time devoid of the earlier stipulation that central government retain control of foreign and military matters, and, on May 1st, officers of the new Mongolian Local Autonomous Political Council took up their posts.

Still, however, Nanking viewed its creation as little more than an instrument with which to pacify Te. Its effectiveness was limited by the National Government's failure to provide it with either the funds it had been promised, or with arms for the Mongol militia. When the kidnapping and execution by Nanking agents in Peking of Te's chief of staff is added to the aforementioned problems, it is hardly surprising to find that, by the beginning of 1935, the balance of Te Wang's favour was tilting markedly towards the enticements of the Japanese.

The Chin-Doihara Agreement

Before departing for Inner Mongolia, Gareth Jones received a letter from the British Embassy in Peking, which accompanied the visas granted him for travel in the Hopei, Chahar and Suiyuan provinces. It stated, "You should be warned not to proceed to disturbed areas within those provinces - e.g. the eastern borders of Chahar. As conditions are constantly changing, you should consult - and be

guided by - the local Chinese authorities as to the safety of any stages of your route, (Kalgan - Larsen's Ranch - Pailingmiao - Kueihua)". The reasons for this warning can be seen in the events leading up to the Chin-Doihara agreement of June 27th, 1935, which led to a broad area of Eastern Chahar province being designated as a demilitarized zone. From October 1934 until the reaching of the agreement, contingents of the Kuantung army were harassed in a series of incidents involving troops under the direct command of General Sung Che Yuan, governor of Chahar province. The Japanese, however, were to use these incidents to their advantage.

In the first incident, a group of eight Japanese, en route from Kalgan to Dolonor, were detained at the southern gate of Changpei, by soldiers from Sung's 132nd Division, and his Peace Preservation corps. According to the Japanese army, a diplomat in the group was punched, and the others were threatened by rifles and drawn swords. After strong protests from the Japanese Foreign Ministry, General Sung dismissed the officer responsible, apologised to the victims, and guaranteed to the Japanese, free, and unhindered travel through Chahar province. Three months later, Sung's troops were again involved in skirmishes with the Japanese, but this time on a much grander scale. On January 20th, 1935, General Takahashi of the Kuantung Army, having complained about the presence and actions of Sung's troops in Western Jehol, received notification from the Peking Branch Military Council, that they had been removed. Two days later, however, on moving from Tat'an on the Jehol border to the Great Wall, Japanese troops were unexpectedly attacked by the still present troops of Sung. The Japanese, by means of superior force, pushed Sung's troops back beyond the Great Wall, and used the incident to force stringent terms on the Chinese, regarding their future activities in North China.

On June 5th, 1935, a second incident occurred at Changpei. Though relatively trivial in nature, it was to have far-reaching implications. When four members of the Japanese Special Service Agency arrived at the south gate of Changpei,

carrying, whether by accident or design, no passports, they were detained overnight for questioning, by members of Sung's army. Though, on hearing of their detention, the Kalgan authorities ordered an immediate release, the Kuantung Army were quick to take up the incident as a means for pressing home further demands. Their main desire was for the full withdrawal of Sung's troops to a point south of the Yellow River, an act which would both ensure the security of the south western flank of Manchukuo and serve as an aid to Te Wang's campaign for Inner Mongolian independence. Central command in Japan, however, unwilling to over-antagonise Nanking and the foreign powers, urged caution. "If we shun excessive publicity at this time, we should, in view of the present situation, be able to achieve practical results without publicity".⁸ (NB. With publicity being the domain of the journalist, this directive should be borne in mind when considering the arrival of Gareth Jones in Dolonor, one month after its issue.) Tokyo advised that a demand be made for Sung's troops to be moved only as far as the Peking-Hankow railway. Meanwhile, Nanking, fearing excessive demands from the Japanese, voluntarily dismissed Sung Che Yuan, replacing him with a lesser official from the Chahar government, General Chin Te Chun, whom they empowered to reach an agreement over the matter with General Doihara in Peking. On June 27th, the two men met, and, after an apology from Chin for the Changpei incident, formed what was later to become known as the Chin-Doihara agreement. The terms of the agreement included the dissolution of anti-Japanese organs in Chahar, an end to Chinese immigration

⁸ China Quagmire, p.118.

into the province and, most significantly, the withdrawal of Sung's army. Eastern Chahar was demilitarized and its security entrusted to two small peace preservation units, whose power was scarcely sufficient to maintain order in an area of such size.

Such was the situation of the area into which Gareth Jones would soon be travelling.

The Last Letter of Gareth Jones

What follows is the last letter ever written by Gareth Jones, in which he describes his journey from Peking to the Palace of Prince Te Wang, and from there, to Dolonor.

(x. a yurt is the same shape as an Esquimau hut, round, but bigger and made of rough wool on wooden framework.)

In a magnificent yurt, coloured inside red and gold, in the palace of Prince Te Wang, Prince of West Sunnit, direct descendant of Genghis Khan, and leader of the Free Mongols.

Sunday, July 14th, 1935.

My dearest everybody,

I have written my Sunday letters from lots of strange places - from a rubber plantation in Java, from Siam, from the ruins of Angkor, from a horrible Chinese inn, - but this is the strangest of the lot. I am the guest of His Highness Prince Te Wang, the greatest man among all the Mongols, whose forefather, Genghis Khan, formed the huge Mongol Empire which reached to Hungary and nearly overran Europe and whose other forefather, Kubla Khan, Dada used to read about in school (Coleridge). It has been the most colourful day I have ever had - a Mongol feast in honour of the spirit of the mountain, just near, and I also had a good interview with Prince Te Wang who wants to set up an independent Mongol Empire, including the Mongols under Soviet rule in Outer Mongolia and the Mongols under Manchukuo. The splash of colour, with bright silks and gorgeous head-dress and fine horses, Mongol tents, spirit worship and wrestlers, riders, lamas and archers - has been magnificent.

Journey into Inner Mongolia. On Thursday July 11th I got up at 5.30 am, breakfasted, and went by rickshaw from the Legation quarter, Peking, to the station which is very close. There Baron von Plessen, who is the double of Tom Ellis, but a few years older, was waiting for me. He had shorts and I had also bought shorts. We had a first class compartment and soon the train steamed off. At the next station Dr. Herbert Muller, a friend of Wolf entered and we formed a trio. (Dr. Muller and I are left; the Baron had to return to Peking on Mon.). Plessen and Muller were exact opposites. Plessen is tall, sensitive, nervous about catching trains and buses, exact, correct, speaking public school English; Muller is small, pleasantly cynical, philosophical, does not worry about anything, jokes all the time as do all my German friends, when we are almost bumped to pieces in going over a mound he grins; if the lorry nearly tumbles over on one side he roars; he never loses his good humour and is an excellent companion.

Thus the train left Peking with the Three Musketeers. We travelled towards the fine towering mountains about 20-30 miles to the North of Peking, and saw the Great Wall, or rather there are many walls which defended China against the Mongols. The Mongols have been slowly driven back for over 150 miles to the North of the Previous frontier and all the villages we passed through were Chinese. Poor old Mongols! They have a hopeless position and have been losing their land to the Chinese. We went under the Great Wall in a tunnel, came out and saw a magnificent view, a vast plain surrounded by blue mountains, which are full of iron ore and which the Japanese wish to develop.

At 3.30 in the afternoon (after 8 1/2 hours) we came to a huge collection of mud houses, with some stone houses in the middle, surrounded by hills. It was Kalgan, the outpost for trade between Mongolia and China. There two magnificent cars were waiting for us. We were to be the guests of Mr. Purpis, a Latvian, the "King of Kalgan", who is the chief trader in Inner Mongolia and sells about

30,000 horses each year to the Chinese army. Our chauffeur was the former chauffeur of the Panchen Lama, who with the Dalai Lama is the chief Lama of Tibet and Mongolia. He drove us through the dirty town to a kind of mud-wall fortress on the outskirts of the town. It was the Wostwag, the Company for Trading with the Mongols, a German firm. We entered the courtyard, which was full of hides, tobacco, boxes of silks, wool; there were many lorries, which go from Kalgan across part of the Gobi Desert to Urga in (Soviet) Outer Mongolia.

Mr. Purpis, a very live man, very strong and vigorous, in breeches and leather boots, came to welcome us. He gave us a wonderful dinner that night. We had a warning to beware of Mongol dogs which are said to leap at men's throats if the men are afraid. (But I do not have the slightest trouble with Mongol dogs. Either they take a liking to me or they are terrified of me and slink away. They can tell at once that I have no fear of dogs.)

Our caravan (two cars and a lorry) was to start off next morning at 4 o'clock, just about dawn.

Plessen woke Muller and myself, (the Baron was just like an alarm clock) before 4 o'clock, we dressed, drank tea without milk or sugar; the effect of the sunrise over the hills was fine; our caravan rattled out of the fortress.

The evening before a Chinese Foreign Office representative asked us to sign the following:

"We, the undersigned herewith certify that we are going to visit Inner Mongolia on our own risk for any eventualities which may happen during our travelling.

"We carefully considered all warnings of the local Chinese officials who will take no responsibilities should anything happen to the undersigned."

Von Plessen

Herbert Muller

Gareth Jones. Kalgan, 11th July, 1935.

Next to me in my car was a tremendous Cossack; he had a head like a melon - only square, shaved bald; he was terrifically strong and fat; he had bandy legs from being so much in the saddle. We laughed and joked all the time. He was very much of a child. His name was Vishnevitch and after the Revolution he walked 800 miles in winter across Mongolia, from Urga to Kalgan!

When we left the town boundary, the day gradually getting lighter, we had to show our special visas for Chahar and Suiyuan (as the Inner Mongolian province is called) while blue-uniformed soldiers, formerly of General Sung, stood there with fixed bayonets.

And so we rattled along terrible tracks into Inner Mongolia. We left the last Chinese towns behind; gradually cultivated fields disappeared; we entered the steppes and were in real Mongolia by the afternoon.

At 3 o'clock - after we had seen our first yurts and herds of camels and of cattle, we left the main Kalgan-Urga road, or track (see map and draw straight line between Kalgan and Urga; Urga is of course Bolshevik) and came to Larsen's Camp. (See Sven Hedin's "Tents in Mongolia" in Cardiff Library). The scenery was similar to that around Hughesovka; dark green hills and rolling plains. Larsen is a 'Duke' of Mongolia; a Swede, formerly a missionary, who has become a great man in Mongolia. He lives in an old temple on the side of a hill, surrounded by yurts.

The bread and butter there was wonderful; just like Breconshire or Cardiganshire; but before I had eaten two or three pieces, the shout came: "Caravan! Forward!" and off we rattled towards the West, sometimes along a cart track, sometimes over the steppe. We had not seen a single tree for 150 miles, i.e. from Kalgan to Larsen's Camp.

About 4 o'clock we saw a grand sight - over 1000 horses on the plain; a few tents (dark blue) had been pitched. It was Mr. Purpis' Horse Camp, where he had 1250. There we were to camp for the night.

It was just like the Wild West! A number of Mongol horsemen were there and a great performance began. Mr. Purpis was to choose the 25 best horses to bring to Kalgan. Mr. Larsen and he directed the Mongol horsemen to choose one out of the wild horses. The Mongol armed with a long whip, which was also a lasso, would descend on the chosen horse who would fly away. A great race would follow, the Mongol catching up the fugitive horse, throwing the whip-lassoo round his neck and bringing him to a stop. Five or six Mongols on foot - very plucky - would - on the horse being brought back - leap on the horse, hold him by the mane and tail. Then another Mongol would brand the wild horse with "P" for Purpis.

Then supper - soup with big lumps of mutton - cooked by the Russians. We ate it in wooden Mongol bowls. We then slept in tents.

Up early next morning (Sat. July 13) - watched more horses caught by the Mongols. Then one car, with Plessen, Muller and myself left towards the palace of Prince te Wang. "This is puzzling", said Plessen. "When one is invited for a week-end in England, one knows what to expect. But a week-end at the palace of a Mongolian prince! I just can't picture what it is going to be like."

After about 10-15 miles of rushing across the steppes, we went over a hill, and, in a hollow, we saw two collections of strange buildings. The first was of grey stone with brightly coloured roofs in Chinese style and a number of yurts surrounding it. We saw a wall with pictures of big blue birds upon it. That was the palace of Prince Te Wang.

The other collection of buildings was a number of temples about 500 yards away, with their fantastic Chinese gables of dragon designs, rising above a series of mud houses. That was the residence of the Panchen Lama, who, they say, cannot go back to Tibet because he is anti-British and we of course control Tibet.

We drove towards the Prince's palace, when about five Mongol soldiers with pigtails (all Mongols, except Lamas, wear pigtails) rushed out with rifles. One barred our way with his rifle and then grinned. He would not let us go to the Palace, but pointed to a building on the hill with yurts around it. (We learned later that only the Prince and his family could come down the straight way to the Palace and that ordinary mortals should come the side way, although we could leave by the princely way.) The soldier (in blue-grey ragged uniform) jumped on to our side-board and directed us to the building and yurts on the hill. Here a number of Mongols in brilliant, though dirty, red and blue silks bowed to us and led us into a yurt where we sat cross-legged on Mongol carpets (about a yard square). They bought us Mongol tea with mare's milk in it (awful!). We sat there in silence for some time, then wandered about the yurts. After about one hour and a half, word came that the prince was ready to receive us.

We went down the hill, entered a courtyard, and saw the dazzlingly painted entrance with two green statues of lions (but Chinese lions with funny heads). Two soldiers stood with fixed gleaming bayonets. They saluted (presented rifles) us as we passed and we entered another courtyard.

Now to continue the narrative.

We waited in a room in the palace (Sat.) until a big man in a dark blue silk robe, with a black silk skull-cap, on which was a red button, and having a very long pigtail, came in. He had a reddish face, rather cunning and looked about 45-50. He was the Prince. He was accompanied by his counsellor, a dignified

wrinkled man with strange headdress. We bowed and grinned. Muller said we would like to sleep in a yurt. The Prince bade servants take us and we went to a courtyard where there were three yurts. We were taken to the further one (a soldier with fixed bayonet guarded the second, because it contained the Prince's seal).

We entered the tiny door and found ourselves in a brilliantly coloured interior. All round the circular wall there were bright red, shut boxes with golden designs of bats (sign of good luck). There were two big chairs, opposite the door, against the wall, but we were requested not to sit in them because they were for high lamas. Just near the door there was a red and gold open box full of dry horse manure. In the middle under the opening there was a space with a fire place. On the left of the two lamas' chairs was a Tibetan Buddhist altar with pictures. There was room for four of us to sleep on the floor.

The Prince had 50 guests (Chinese officials, British military attaches, Sir Charles Bell, and daughter, an American artist, some people from Peking Embassies, and, mostly, Mongol Princes and lamas) for Sunday was to be the greatest Mongol feast of the year, but there was not a single lavatory in the whole palace! not even for the Prince.

That night there was a great feast at the Palace, 20 kinds of soup, and mare's milk which is horrible.

On Sunday morning I woke to hear the Baron say, "Gentlemen, it is five o'clock". He woke us up much too early! We dressed breakfasted from our own supplies and before 7 we dashed off to a hill about 7 miles away, where the great feast was to be held. Dozens of blue tents had been put up, hundreds of Mongols in silks, reds, blues, princes with peacock feathers in their hats, lamas in yellow silks and also some in purple-red robes - all the cream of this part of Inner Mongolia had come to pay respect to the spirit of the mountain. On top of the hill was a

cairn of stones with a pole. (They call the piles of stones in sacred places here - obos.) In front of the pile about 25 lamas in yellow silk and broad-brimmed hats (like Cardinals) were chanting Tibetan music. Then the Prince (now in red) came riding up the hill with horsemen following. He came and sat down in front of the lamas. They sang, shouted, threw rice. Then they all marched round the obo three times and suddenly started hurling coarse flour at each other. They roared. They threw flour at the mass of stones, then bombarded each other. It was just like an old-fashioned slap-stick comedy where people throw cakes at each other.

Round the obo were numbers of offerings - meat, cheese, cakes, etc.

That religious ceremony over, we all descended the hill. Lambs (sheep) had been brought to be slaughtered and soon we were eating mutton with our fingers.

Then came horse-races, with boy jockeys who had on their yellow shirts the Buddhist prayer wheel. After that there was archery for some hours. (A Japanese aeroplane arrived just about that time.)

Then the Prince summoned me to his presence and gave me an interview in his tent, guarded by two pigtailed Mongol soldiers. He wants to have a great Mongol Empire, uniting the Mongols of Inner Mongolia with those under the Soviets and those under Manchukuo. The Prince who sat cross-legged in his tent had magnificent heavy silks with beautiful dragon designs.

After my interview the Embassy people (especially our military attache) descended upon me to hear the Prince's views.

Then wrestling of Mongols for many, many hours. A lot of political talks went on at the same time, because the future of Mongolia is now in the balance.

About 7 in the evening we returned tired to our yurt. After we had eaten, a Chinese diplomat, knowing that I had heard the Japanese point of view in Peking and the Mongol point of view, came in to impress upon me the Chinese point of view!

Monday (July 15th) was a day of all days. "Gentlemen, it is four o'clock!" shouted the Baron just before dawn. Plessen had decided to go back to Peking because there was practically nobody at the German Embassy. Muller and his 'boy' (servant) Liang (aged 46), who was as superior with the Mongols as an English butler among Hottentots, Anatoli, the Russian chauffeur, and I, decided to cross a big part of Inner Mongolia, almost as far as the Soviet- Manchukuo frontier.

We said goodbye to Plessen and off we went at 5.30 in the morning, when the sun was shining over the palace and hundreds of swallows flying round it. Our destination was a lama's town and temple called Peitzeyumiao, where the second most important Living Buddha in Outer Mongolia was staying.

It was uncharted land. No map contains the features or the roads. The roads were terrible, just ruts here and there. We were nearly bumped to the roof every other minute. The lorry-car nearly tumbled over. It was like being in a tank during the War. We went on for hours and hours. How we stuck it I don't know and how the car still kept together I also don't know. We crossed the southern fringe of the GOBI DESERT. (Did you think a year ago that I would be crossing part of the Gobi Desert?) It was very sandy. We saw very few yurts. We came to some temples where we grinned at a Tibetan monk. Saw eagles, antelopes, etc.

Midnight came. We seemed to have lost our way. Luckily it was the night of the full moon. "I'm afraid", said Anatoli, the Russian chauffeur. "Are we anywhere near the Soviet frontier? If so, we'll be shot." We had earlier been within 30-40 miles from Soviet Outer Mongolia, but now we were 100 miles.

"We'll have to camp out", said Muller. We then passed the skeleton of a camel in the moonlight. "Killed by desert wolves", said Muller. All day long we had passed skeletons of cows and horses killed by desert wolves.

"Let's go on", said Anatoli, "we'll come to Peitzeyumiao". We rattled and bumped on.

At 1.30 am (after 21 hours travelling) we gave a shout. "Hurray!" A town of mud walls and with temples could be seen. We were all dead-beat. Now for a good rest, we thought.

Suddenly we came to a river about 150 yards from the town. It looked like a ford. Our car splashed through and THEN, just as the front wheels had gone on the other bank, the back wheels stuck! The car could not go out. We tried until about 2.30 am, pushing, etc. No use.

Anatoli and I went into the town and shouted. No one came although a lot of dogs barked.

We went to some Mongol yurts half a mile away. The Mongols just grunted from inside. We went further on. No help anywhere. At 3.45 am we came back to the car and decided to stay in the car until dawn.

I slept for nearly 2 hours and when I woke up I was bewildered. There were 2 camels tugging in front and a host of Mongols. No use. I got out of the car. We all pulled at ropes. We got oxen. No use at all. Then a lama in salmon coloured silk robes came down in a car(!) from the temple. About 8 o'clock we decided to go into the town, leave the car. We went to the yamen which was occupied by Japanese who were most hospitable and charming. At 9 o'clock we were given a room by them and then after 29 hours I lay down on the floor in a room and slept!

2. July 19th. Friday Ujumichin 25 miles from Soviet Outer Mongolia and 35-40 miles from the Manchukuo border, in the wedge which Inner Mongolia drives N.E. This is a lama town, where the head Prince of the Sihingol League of Mongols has his residence.

This has been the most exciting week I have ever had in my life, packed with adventures and strange encounters. It has been so full that I have not had a chance of continuing my letters, because when one rattles along for about 20 hours a day in a lorry, over sand-dunes and through rivers, and when one interviews Living Buddhas and Japanese agents and Buriat and Mongol princes, it is hard to find a minute to write beyond the notes of my journey and talks.

Friday Evening July 19th. In a Buriat (Mongol) camp on a hill, in a tent; wonderful view with great herds of cattle, horses and sheep in the distance; also, as I write, a glimpse of blue hills which form the frontier of Manchukuo and Inner Mongolia.

I did not have time to continue the letter this morning, because we decided to return westward and here we are back with the Buriats, who are very hospitable and clean. Soup with mutton is now being prepared by our Russian chauffeur. I have almost forgotten what a bed is like and to sit around a table and not to eat meat with my fingers will be very funny.

Saturday morning. It got too dark to write last night and it was bitterly cold, because Inner Mongolia is nearly 4000 feet high, higher than Snowdon. Prince Otcheroff, our Buriat host, has gone off to catch horses and we are waiting till he comes back before going to call on the Living Buddha (the second most important Living Buddha in Outer Mongolia). The Living Buddha has a motor car and we shall travel together to visit some Mongol princes. So I shall now start the narrative. I am sitting on a box which is covered with a very bright, Mongol small carpet. The nine yurts of the Buriat settlement and our tent and also the tent of some Russian traders (from Kalgan and Tientsin) are behind me. Now we are breaking camp. We shall say goodbye to Prince Otcheroff and off we go to the Living Buddha again.

Sunday, July 21st, 1 o'clock. "On the Track of the Living Buddha" - in a Mongol camp (3 yurts) we have been following the motor car track of the Living Buddha across the steppes but cannot find him. We followed his track last night till dark and then pitched our tent near a spring about a mile from a Mongol camp of about 3 yurts. Now we're off again. I'm afraid we can't find the Living Buddha, so we'll make our way southwards.

6 o'clock. Hurray! We have tracked the Living Buddha like Boy Scouts from one prince's camp to another. We are going to spend the night in the camp (7 yurts, about 20 camels) of the Prince of East Sunnit and we leave early tomorrow morning for Larsen's Camp, the Living Buddha coming with us in his car.

It is dark now and black clouds. If it rains we may be stuck here for days. The Prince of this part has returned and has offered us a yurt. I'm very glad because the tent is cold. It is hot during the day here and very cold at night. So nosda.

Tuesday. Came 150 miles yesterday, Monday, to Larsen's Camp. We've just left Larsen's Camp where we saw Sir Charles Bell and our military attache. We are stuck in the mud. We are going through bandit country to Dolonor. But they are very pleasant bandits and do not attack foreigners. Dr. Muller knows the bandit leader quite well. We may call to see him.

Return to Narrative

After arriving in Beidzemiao where 1000 ignorant lamas live I slept nearly all day and all night. The place was a collection of mud houses with magnificent temples. Next day (Wednesday) the Living Buddha said he wanted to see me and give me an interview. So Dr. Muller and I went past the temples where the lamas were busy praying in yellow robes and came to a small temple-dwelling where the Living Buddha was staying. He is the second most important Living Buddha in Outer Mongolia, from which country he is an exile from the Bolsheviks. He is a reincarnation of Buddha.

I entered the reception room of the Living Buddha. It had a throne and place for about 14 people on bright coloured mats around the wall. The Living Buddha was in a salmon coloured silk robe with a purse of gold. I liked him very much; he had a frank smile and white teeth. We were given Mongolian tea. Then the Living Buddha took some Mongolian butter (whitish) and stuck a lot in my cup of tea. He started speaking in Mongolian to his secretary who translated into Chinese, which Dr. Muller translated into German, which I wrote down in English. It was an appeal for help for refugees from Soviet Outer Mongolia.

Later we motored on and were stuck in a river for 3 hours 20 minutes; and we arrived late at night at Ujumutchin, not far from the Soviet and Manchukuo frontier, where I started page 2 of this letter. We were given a room near the prince's palace, slept well. Next morning we paid a visit to the Japanese representatives of the Kwantung Army; who are very discouraged by the superstition of the people. We found a lot of the lamas very superstitious. I had seen a part of the temple with pictures of laughing skulls and of devils. I returned to photograph it but a lama rushed out terrified and barred the door. A soldier with a rifle came out to stop Dr. M. and me going into a house which was being built.

I made a mistake. From the Living Buddha we went to a Buriat camp, where we had an interesting time. The leader of the camp, a Buriat Mongol and some Russians staying at the camp started drinking vodka and there was nearly a fight. Then there were terrific flashes of lightning and our tents were on a hill very exposed. There was good boiled milk and cream there.

On way to Dolonor. Tuesday 6.45.

We were stuck in the mud for three hours; got stuck again later. Now we are lost in bandit country; very sandy; I don't think there is any danger, because 35 bandits were seen on the road yesterday and they were driven off into the mountains. I'm afraid we'll have to camp out tonight. Dolonor is on the map. But the other places are not.

Wed. morning, 7 o'clock. We drifted on wrong road into the mountains, lost way again, came down on tracks very deep and bumpy to the plain. We were just going to pitch camp near a well, when a Mongol rode up and invited us to stay in a yurt. We expected to be in Dolonor by this time. We are going towards the East in the hope of finding Dolonor. It is raining. We have run out of bread and

biscuits, but we have plenty of tinned stuff. I hope we'll get to Dolonor today. No bandits have come and they're a pretty harmless lot here in any case and would not dare to attack foreigners, because the Japanese would be down upon them at once. The bandit leader whom Dr. M. knows is in another part.

Wed., July 24, 3.30 afternoon. We have been stuck in the mud for many hours and it has been pouring. I have no idea how we shall get out. We have been pushing and pulling and digging for hours. Perhaps we'll have to wait until the land dries which might be a long time. No more bread or biscuits. We had hoped to have a Chinese meal at Dolonor last night. Peking seems a very long way indeed. There is a Mongol village a few miles away and we have sent there for men to push.

Wed. 24 July, 5 o'clock. At last out of the mud after 5 hours here. 20 villagers came and tugged. There was a huge cloudburst here yesterday which brought torrents down; there are masses of hailstones, the biggest I've ever seen, some almost as big as marbles.

7 o'clock. 5 minutes after I wrote that, we got in the mud again and had a terrible time coming out. We are at last out after great efforts of the villagers.

8 o'clock. In the most outlying Chinese village bordering on the Mongol lands; in the most miserable mud hut I have ever seen - only furniture is a mat. People are very poor here. The cloudburst which has caused us so much trouble has wrecked their few crops.

In the last 8 hours we have travelled 4 miles!! Just think of that when you speed on perfect roads in your Lanchester.

This village is quite different from the Mongol places. There are masses of children here - in Mongol places almost none.

We are 50 miles from Dolonor. We may have to wait until there is sun to dry the roads. When I get back to Peking I'm going to the Grand Hotel de Peking to have a really good dinner - although we've had good tinned stuff. We have little food left, because we expected to get to Dolonor in about 6-7 hours; but we've already been 2 days. So we'll be hungry by the time we get to Dolonor. The people here have not much to eat.

Yesterday we passed some mounds just about the region where Kublai Khan had his summer house. Dr. M. believes that the mounds are Xanadu. We went near the place where Marco Polo first came to Kublai Khan.

This is a queer mud hut. We've already travelled over 1100 miles from Kalgan.

Thursday, July 25th. I left home exactly 9 months today and shall be home in something over 3 months. Then it will be fine to have the usual dinner and invite Mr. Davies.

We slept four in a row (Dr.M., self, Liang, and a Mongol guide) on the floor in a very poor Chinese mud hovel - on a mat. The first part of the night the dogs howled everywhere, and donkeys brayed. Dr.M. thinks there were bandits, but here bandits are just horse and cattle thieves and do not kill. Anatoli who slept in the car also had a bad time because all the village came to peep in at him. This part is exceedingly poor but the villagers are having the time of their life watching us. They came to see us get up. They believe that foreigners have webbed feet like ducks and they came to verify it while we were getting up this morning. The roads are very bad after the rains but we are

going to make an attempt to get through to Dolonor. I haven't slept in a bed for a fortnight. We got eggs from the villagers and we solved the problem of bread by mixing eggs with flour and milk and making a kind of hard pancake.

1.20. A very narrow escape! We thought we would be for 4-5 days stuck in the village, because the roads were slipping after the cloud-burst. We had the help of 20-30 villagers and what a relief! We got out of the valley to the drier hills.

First sign of Manchukuo! Hurray, because it shows we are getting near Dolonor which is near the M.frontier. The sign is an ox-waggon with a Japanese flag in front, on the ox, and a Manchukuo flag behind. It is beautiful country, with larks singing everywhere and the meadows covered with wonderful flowers - just like a field at home in June. There are deep blue larkspurs; butterflies; yellow and red flowers, mountains around. What a contrast to the village we nearly stayed for many days in. We are exceedingly happy because we are out of the region where the cloudburst was. I really thought we were going to be there for nearly a week. We are now in the Mongol lands which have been colonised by the Chinese; the Mongols have been driven north and westward. Dr.M. has just come into the car with a bouquet of flowers. When I hear the larks and see the June-early July flowers I can almost imagine that I am coming home to strawberries and cream!

A few days ago we saw a herd of over 1000 antelopes, the hill was brown with them. I write this letter while we stop for the engine to cool.

6 o'clock. Stuck in the mud again this afternoon, and now we are stuck again just near the river which we must cross. While we wait for the oxen and men, I write. It is a lovely evening. Dr.M. has gone off to talk with the villagers. In Mongolia he always wears cufflinks with the letters A.O.F.B. - Ancient Order

of Frothblowers. Today I saw a little Chinese girl with about 1/2 dozen buttons on her dress of which she was very proud. On each button was printed "For Gentlemen!".

(Anatoli is now wading the river with wood to put under the wheels.) Oxen are being tied to the car. Across the river a boy is waving a Manchukuo flag, although this is really China.

10 o'clock at night. Hurray! AT LAST DOLONOR! after a terrific journey across high hills in the dark. We are waiting in a rough inn for supper. In this room a man is boiling opium in a deep frying pan on a wood stove and is fanning the wood stove with a Chinese fan. There is a sickly smell of opium and in the next room there is an opium pipe and bed. The streets here are full of soldiers with fixed bayonets; we passed a geisha girl, showing that the Japanese had arrived. A Manchukuo soldier is in the opium room next door.

Friday morning, July 26. What luck! There are great events here. The streets are full of Japanese and Manchukuo flags. The Japanese have decided to make this Chinese town and region a part of Manchukuo. The town has 15,000 soldiers here. Thousands of Japanese soldiers are assembled here and many have left on the road which we will travel along tomorrow. I am witnessing the change-over of a big district from China to Manchukuo. There are barbed-wire entanglements just outside the hotel. There are two roads to Kalgan where we go back. Over one, 200 Japanese lorries have travelled; the other is infested by bad bandits.

The Murder of Gareth Jones

Jones completes his letter on the morning after his arrival in Dolonor. Later that day, he and Dr. Muller would make some interesting discoveries concerning the status of the town to which they had just arrived.

Muller had visited the town the previous summer and had then been assured by Japanese officials, that despite the heavy Japanese presence, the area was not a part of Manchukuo, and was still officially Chinese territory. What the two travellers observed in late July, 1935 seemed to indicate to them, a quite different state of affairs. The day after their arrival, they found the whole town to be decked out in the flags of Manchukuo and Japan. The populace had been ordered to raise these flags three or four days earlier to salute the arrival of a mechanized brigade of Japanese troops advancing from Weichang in Manchukuo across the border into Chahar, and Dolonor. Throughout their stay, Jones and Muller witnessed the arrival of armoured cars, troops, military lorries and tanks (the crews of which were, in part, made up of emigre "white" Guards from Russia), soon realizing that what they had stumbled upon in Dolonor was the preparations for an important military action in Chahar. They were informed by Tsoi, an old acquaintance of Muller and Manchukuo official in Weichang, that large numbers of troops and armoury had already left Dolonor, for the south. Within the town, apart from the Japanese army, there were also large numbers of troops belonging to General Li Shou Hsin.¹² The previous year, Muller had been informed by Major Ueyama, chief of the Kuantung Army Military Mission in Dolonor, that these troops did not represent Manchukuo, and were acting as nothing more than a local militia. This year, however, they openly wore Manchukuo insignia, and seemed to have merged themselves completely, with the Japanese army.

¹² General Li Shou Hsin - an ex-colonel of the Jehol Provincial Army who had gone over to the side of the Japanese in Manchukuo.

There were other things, too, which indicated to the two journalists that the situation had changed. Since Muller's previous visit, the number of Japanese officials and official organs in Dolonor, had sizeably increased. In addition to the Kuantung Army Special Mission, there now existed a Special Headquarters for staff of the Kuantung Army, a Dolonor Council, a Council for the Ch'eng Te (Jehol City) 5th Army Controlled Area, and a branch of the Imperial Japanese Highways Commission. Also, the Company for the Improvement of Neighbouring Nations, already active in 1934, had, by 1935, been considerably increased in personnel. Jones and Muller were informed by Tsoi that the official annexation of East Chahar by Manchukuo had been proclaimed some days before their arrival. However, perhaps due to the intimidation of the local population, and their consequent reluctance to comment on anything connected with Japanese activities, this was a piece of information that the two journalists were unable to confirm. They were, nevertheless, able to observe, all over the town, numerous posters sporting proclamations by General Li Shou Hsin that he had taken over responsibility for 'peace and quiet' in Eastern Chahar, and which promised the people that they would prosper under the 'kingly principle' (wang tao).

Seeking to clarify their observations, that day, July 26th, Jones and Muller visited the headquarters of the Kuantung Army Special Mission, where they expected to meet Major Ueyama. Finding that the Major was engaged in operations at the front, they were instead received by an Indian nationalist from Travancore, named Nair, who, having once been a member of the Indian National Congress, was now employed as General Secretary of the Pan-Asiatic League.¹³ Nair's terse explanation for the heavy Japanese presence in Dolonor was that it was a necessary measure for the protection of the population. Jones and Muller, whilst at the Mission, also met a young Japanese officer, who on hearing of

¹³ An organisation for the extension of Japanese domination over Asia.

their desire to return to Kalgan, was helpful enough as to present them with a document of recommendation, designed to ensure them considerate treatment from any Japanese military they might encounter on their journey. This document was to come in useful for the two much sooner than they would have anticipated.

In the afternoon, they left the Mission and began making their way towards one of the large lama temples, situated to the west of the town, with the intention of visiting Hashimoto, a Japanese lama whom Muller had met the previous year. Whilst passing through the streets of Dolonor, they took the opportunity to admire some of the large number of military vehicles there, all well equipped to negotiate the rough plains of Inner Mongolia. They also made a stop before the Yamen (office) of Li Shou Hsin, where they noticed a newly affixed sign designating the place as the 'Headquarters of the Autonomous Government of East Chahar'. The significance of the sign caused them to copy out its wording in their notebooks, before continuing on their way. However, shortly after leaving the Yamen, they found themselves being pursued by three irate, rifle-bearing, Japanese soldiers. When the soldiers caught up with Muller and Jones, they began to excitedly address them in Japanese, a language that neither of them understood, and then attempted to subject the two to a personal search. Both men resisted, and, on production of the letter of recommendation they had just received, insisted that they be taken back to the Special Mission. The soldiers acquiesced, and took them back to the office where they had been, earlier in the day. There, they were put under arrest, and held against their will for some three hours, during the course of which, they were cross-examined by several Japanese officers, on suspicion of spying for military secrets. Their interrogation came to an end, only on the arrival of Hashimoto, the Japanese lama, who had meanwhile been summoned for the purposes of identifying Dr. Muller. After being asked about when they intended to leave Dolonor and what their subsequent plans were, the two journalists were informed that they could be released, only on the condition that they return to the inn where they were staying and remain there until the time of their departure. Before they left

the premises of the Special Mission, the Japanese officers imparted to Jones and Muller, advice on which of the three roads to take on their journey back to Kalgan. They were informed that the road which passed through Kuyuan, and which was usually taken by motor traffic, was, owing to bad weather and overuse, out of the question for the purposes of their journey. Similarly, the second road, which passed through Taliangti, was also in bad condition, besides which, there was a definite possibility of running into bandits. Under the circumstances, the only route which could be recommended to them was the relatively unused track which passed over the Shang Tu Ho river, through Habarga and Paoch'ang, and thence to Kalgan.

Jones and Muller returned to their inn, and the next morning, at five o'clock, they gladly took leave of Dolonor, making their way along the road which, on the previous day, they had been advised to take.

* * *

After their gruelling journey through Inner Mongolia, and their ordeal at the Special Mission in Dolonor, Jones and Muller were confident that they would soon complete the 150 mud and bandit free miles, that would return them to the railway line and thus bring them within reach of the relative safety and comfort of Peking. This was not, however, to be the case. On the first morning after leaving Dolonor, and shortly after passing through the small Mongol settlement of Shabu Nor, their car became stuck in deep sand. Help was summoned from the nearby village, but, when the villagers arrived, they first demanded a huge sum of money in return for their services, and then proceeded to prove themselves incapable of removing the car. As night began to fall, accompanied by heavy rain, the villagers departed, promising to return the following day, with more men, oxen, and wooden planks. During the dark, wet night which followed, and whilst Muller and Jones were asleep in their tent, four men on horseback arrived, from the north, at their camp. After lingering a while, three of these

riders returned in the direction from which they had come, whilst the fourth continued along the road that Jones and Muller would take the next day. Late the following morning, the Mongols from the village eventually returned, but without any of the equipment they had, the previous day, promised to bring. Furthermore they refused to give any assistance to the travellers unless they considerably increased the already large sum of money that had been promised to them for their help. However, whilst Muller and Jones were bargaining with the villagers, luck had it that another troop of Mongols turned up, led by a man named Gomboyap, a personal friend of Muller, who, having heard of the stranded motor car, had realized it must be theirs, since he had heard of their expedition. The combined force of Gomboyap's men and the villagers from Shabu Nor was soon able to haul the car out of the sand, and set it onto firm ground. At about noon that day, Muller gave thanks to his friend and bade him farewell before he and Jones started again on their journey southwards.

About an hour after leaving Shabu Nor, the motor wagon in which they were travelling, arrived, in the district of Kuan Ma Kou, at Hochiata-Huofang, a small village lying in a pass between the mountains. As they approached, Jones brought to the attention of Dr. Muller, the presence of a man in Chinese uniform, a not so remarkable observation as they had now, without doubt, left the Japanese zone and were in territory where the presence of the Pao An Tui (Peace Preservation Corps) was to be expected. However, as they were coming to the end of the road that passed through the small village, more men appeared, dressed in the distinctive blue uniform and Kepis of the Chinese gendarmerie, and began shooting at the travellers. The chauffeur pulled up the car immediately, Muller leapt out, and with bullets flying past his head, rushed towards the direction of the firing, shouting as he ran. After some thirty or forty shots, the firing stopped, and a few of the men, in a state of apparent embarrassment, approached Muller, declaring that they had made a terrible mistake. They told him that they were from the Pao An Tui, and had been sent to guard the road against bandits and Japanese, and that they had mistakenly

identified their car as being Japanese. Muller was then invited into a nearby house to drink tea and accept the apologies of their commander, unaware that outside, the other occupants of the car, on climbing out, had been surrounded, and that Jones, and the chauffeur Vishnevitch, were having their hands bound behind their backs.

After some moments of friendly conversation within the house, Muller was surprised by the entrance of his servant Liang, accompanied by one of the men in uniform, bearing part of the luggage from the car. On asking why, he was assured that they merely wished to conduct a formal examination, after which the travellers would be allowed to proceed. However, whilst the search had initially begun in an orderly manner, at the sight of a few silver dollars, one of the men, unable to resist the temptation, snatched up the money, swiftly transferring it to his pocket. Muller's shocked protest was met calmly, almost modestly, with the reply, "Oh, we are not gendarmes at all; we are really only bandits".

Almost simultaneously, Jones was bundled into the room, and the remaining bandits gathered inside, or looked on from the open window. One after another they pointed their rifles and revolvers at the two, threatening to put an end to their lives. Later, while Muller's hands were being bound, Jones related to him how earlier he had been forced to undergo a mock hanging ceremony. When he was first set upon by the bandits, he had flung them off, shouting, "Do not touch me. I am British". Unimpressed and angered the bandits dragged him into one of the village houses, where, after much deliberation, he was forced to stand on a kang¹¹ while the chords with which he was bound were flung over a beam in the roof. Another man entered the room carrying behind him a rope with a noose at one end, and Jones had every reason to believe that very soon, he would be a dead man. After a few minutes, however, he was allowed to step down from the kang, before being taken into the house where he now sat with Muller in front of

¹¹ Kang - a heatable brick bed commonly found in Mongol houses.

the pointed guns of the bandits.

While Muller and Jones were inside the house, outside in the courtyard a ransom demand, for \$100,000 in cash, along with a large quantity of weapons and ammunition, was being dictated to Muller's servant. Both he, and the Russian chauffeur, who by now had been released from his bondage, were instructed to drive to Paoch'ang and present the ransom demand to the authorities there. After they had departed, the bandits, numbering some forty or fifty in total, gathered themselves in preparation to leave the village. The two captives were led out of the house, after their pockets had been emptied and everything, up to and including their handkerchieves and their spectacles, had been removed. To prepare them for their journey and so that, from a distance, they could not be distinguished as foreigners, much of their clothing was also removed, and replaced by rags snatched from the backs of curious peasant onlookers. "Dirty straw hats were torn from no less dirty heads, and rammed on to our brows." Then, mounted on horseback, with their hands still tied behind their backs, their long journey into the mountains began.

* * *

Later that afternoon, Vishnevitch and Liang reached Paoch'ang and reported the incident to the then district magistrate, Chiang Yung Kui. In considering what to do the option for Chiang of using military force, to apply coercion, was straightaway out of the question. Apart from the fact that such a procedure would have endangered the captives' lives, the forces at his disposal were in no way sufficient. The troops which had previously been stationed in Paoch'ang, namely a detachment of Sung Che Yuan's 29th Army, had been withdrawn in June in accordance with the aforementioned demands of the Japanese, in the Chin-Doihara

Agreement. Chiang thus immediately dispatched Lieutenant Chang Yun Chi of the Pao An Tui, along with three other unarmed policemen, to try and contact the bandits and negotiate for the release of the prisoners. Chiang also telegraphed the authorities in Kalgan, who, in turn, informed the British Embassy in Peking, of the incident that had taken place. From there communications were made, by the British Ambassador, to Kalgan, in an effort to intercept the military language attache, Captain Ronald Scott, who, with Sir Charles Bell, was returning from the same conference at Te Wang's palace that Jones and Muller had earlier attended. The assistant British Military Attache in Peking, Lieutenant Miller of the Border Regiment, was also sent to Kalgan with instructions to do all in his power to secure the release of the captives.

Meanwhile, the grim news having filtered back to Jones' horror-stricken family in Wales, his father,, Major Edgar Jones, sought the assistance of Mr. Lloyd George, whose fondness for his former employee caused him to make urgent representations to the Foreign Office. Over the next few weeks, information on the negotiations, and on the whereabouts of the bandits would often be slow in reaching England. Conflicting reports in the press would make the reception of news an agonizing ordeal for the anxious family.

* * *

Back in Chahar, Lieutenant Chang Yun Chi, the emissary sent by the Paooh'ang magistrate, succeeded in locating Muller and Jones and their captors, some two days after the abduction had been made. On approaching the village where the bandits had their camp, the Lieutenant, and his three men, were shot at by sentries posted on the crests of the neighbouring hills. After a white flag had been waved by Chang, the firing ceased, and the four, uninjured, men were taken prisoner, tied up, and brought to the village, where, some hours later they were allowed to negotiate with the bandit chief.

Muller and Jones, incarcerated in a house some distance away, saw nothing of these happenings. It was not until the early evening, whilst stretching their legs outside the house, that they were approached by Chang. He announced that the two men need not be frightened and that he had come to bring about their liberation. Addressing Muller by name, he told the German that the following day he was to accompany him back to Paoch'ang. Chang then returned to the house in which the bandit leader had set up his headquarters. At first astonished by this event, Muller and Jones later became suspicious of their rescuer's sincerity. Some of their captors informed them that Chang had claimed to have been at one time a bandit himself, and also that he knew Muller personally. Muller, however, had no recollection of ever having met the person in question. It was just possible that Muller, instead of being rescued, would merely be passed on to another bandit group, whom their captors had told them about earlier. It was true that Chang and his men were wearing the uniform of the Pao An Tui, but, as they clearly remembered, so had the men who had captured them in the first place. Their suspicions were only increased, when, long after nightfall, Chang and several of the bandit leaders came into their place of confinement. Chang was unable to provide any identity papers, and, more surprisingly, had managed to forget the name of the Paoch'ang magistrate who had dispatched him two days earlier. It was thus with some scepticism that Jones and Muller listened to his account of the negotiations. Although he had been unable to secure the release of both of them, he had managed to persuade the bandits to halve their initial ransom demand and also to relinquish their request for arms and ammunition. If Mexican \$50,000 were paid over to them, in unused and unmarked notes, they were ready to set both men free. To achieve this, they were prepared to allow Muller to return to Paoch'ang and wherever else necessary, in order to help conduct negotiations.

For the rest of that night, Jones and Muller pondered on whether or not to trust their alleged rescuers, eventually deciding that under the circumstances no other avenue of hope for release lay open to them. The next morning, at 3 am, they were awoken, and, after a small meal, made to ride for two miles to a village named Kotir, on the main Paoch'ang road. The village, having been plundered by bandits on the day of their capture, lay deserted, and it was there that Muller was ordered to prepare for his journey. The bandit chief told him that although no value was set on his return, if the remaining captive was to be released alive, the ransom would have to be paid within ten days time. After promising to do his best, Muller took a short, but apparently highly moving farewell from Gareth Jones, a man who in such a short time he had grown to know well, through the medium of so much hardship. He then mounted his horse, a peasant mounting behind him to serve as a shield in case they should be shot at from behind, and proceeded to ride in a southerly direction. A few hours later, the party came within sight of Paoch'ang and Muller was able to renounce the remaining fears he held, that his rescuers were merely bandits of another gang in disguise. Gareth Jones, however, who spoke virtually no Chinese, remained behind in captivity, alone.

* * *

On his return to Paoch'ang, Muller gave his account of the situation to the district magistrate. It was decided that Chang Yun Chi, who had proved himself a skilled negotiator, should return to the bandits camp, and make further attempts to secure the release of Gareth Jones, by either offering them the chance of incorporation into the Chahar army, or, if necessary, by exchanging Jones for Chinese hostages. Meanwhile, Muller would return to Kalgan to try and raise the required ransom money. On his return to Kalgan, Muller was met by Captain Scott and Lieutenant Millar, who, on hearing his story, urged him to

continue immediately to Peking and give a verbal report to the British and German embassies. Before doing so, Dr. Muller and Lieutenant Millar conducted a meeting with representatives of the Chahar Provincial Government where they were informed that instructions would henceforth be sent to Paoch'ang ordering the satisfaction of any ransom demand, within reason, that the bandits might make. In Peking, after reporting to the relevant embassies, Muller was also assured by Wang Ko Min, acting chairman of the Peking Political Council, and representative of the central government in Nanking, that any ransom the case might demand, would unhesitatingly be paid.

Before returning to Kalgan to further help with negotiations, Muller gave a colourful interview to journalists, waiting for news of the incident, in Peking. The picture presented by that interview was a true one, and is worth recounting, but, as will later be shown, many important facts, concerning the kidnapping and kidnapers, were never printed.

"After our capture, we were made to ride with our captors. Although we were prisoners, with our hands tied behind our backs, it was difficult not to feel joyful with the beautiful meadows and ripening corn all around. Jones and I would have burst into song had not the bandits warned us that we must not even talk loudly. The district through which we passed yielded little food - a few hens and pigs in the villages, a few vegetables, and a little bad flour. The bandits apologized for being unable to give us better fare, and offered us cane sugar and cigarettes to make up for it!"

Whereas, during the excitement of the shooting and capture, their treatment, and particularly that of Jones, had been surprisingly harsh, the bandits later became quite friendly. Muller related how, in the evenings, Jones charmed them by singing songs in German, English and Welsh.

"The bandits were particularly impressed when Jones sang 'the Songs of David' in Welsh, the plainsong resembling a Gregorian chant. Repeatedly, they begged him to sing more, and while their pickets watched the surrounding country, the valley resounded with the Welshman's hymns. His personality so impressed the bandits that they abandoned their harshness. One evening, when there was one chicken for thirty men, the bandits cooked the bird and laid it before Jones - whom they described as the 'singing Englishman' - while they themselves ate cornmeal porridge."

From experiences such as these, and noting that a corpse was of little use as a hostage, Muller felt confident in assuring the journalists that Jones would come to no harm. He added, that,

"Jones and I quickly agreed that under such conditions, and in such country, escape could not be thought of, and the only thing was for us to be as friendly as possible to the bandits, and try and win a few friends among them who might take our part if our lives were threatened. I think I may say that we had a rapid success. On the first evening, we joked with our guards who asked us why we wanted to escape, and urged how much better it would be for us to join them in a carefree, open-air bandit's life. It was amusing to see with what unconcern they displayed the articles they had stolen from us. They asked us to explain to them how our cameras, compass, and photometer worked, and brought us our own watches to wind up for them. On the second day they had gained enough confidence in us to ask us to repair their machine gun, the jamming of which had probably saved our lives during the ambush."

Shortly afterwards,

"one of the bandit chiefs launched into a long narrative of the cruel destiny that had led them into the path of banditry, which they could not quit without endangering the lives of their families. He said that we should not think evil of them, and that they were not only good men at heart, but good Chinese as well...".

Having performed his duty as a journalist, Dr. Muller returned to Kalgan. By the time he arrived there, Lieutenant Chang Yun Chi had returned from his second attempt to rescue Jones, but again without success. Whilst in the lair of the bandits, he had, however, noticed that their numbers had increased in strength to something in the region of a hundred men. The bandits had also taken on a new leader, one Pao Wang Fu, to whom, suspiciously, were attached two Japanese advisers, and a second-in-command known as Lo Lao Hao Tse, or 'Old Rat' Lo. Before the Paoch'ang magistrate could make any further move he received note that the bandits, for reasons unknown, had left the area and were now moving in the direction of Kuyuan. Instructions were then sent to the Kuyuan authorities for them to try and contact the bandits and take up negotiations. From that time on however, communications were often to prove difficult as the bandits were to be continually on the move. On the 4th August, the emissary sent by the Kuyuan authorities managed to locate the bandits camp, and, on his return, reported that Jones, though looking thin and pale, was nevertheless in good spirits. The ransom demand was set and Jones' release seemed imminent. However, when the representatives of the Kuyuan authorities returned with the money, the bandits and their captive had gone. They were next reported to have crossed over the Chahar border into the Fengning district of Manchukuo. From Peking, where the Japanese authorities had frequently wished to be seen to be of assistance in the affair, Major Takahashi, the Japanese military attache, dispatched order to Manchukuo for troops to be sent out to try and find the bandits. On 7th August, unconfirmed reports in the press, based on announcements by the Japanese authorities in Jehol, claimed that Jones had either been released or had escaped, and was making his way towards Cheng Te (Jehol City). The family's jubilation in Wales, however, was short-lived, as it was reported the next day that the bandits, still with their captive, and perhaps having being frightened by Japanese troops on their trail, had recrossed the border into Chahar. The authorities in Kuyuan again managed to make

contact, but negotiations were frustrated when the bandits decided to raise their original ransom demand to the original one of \$100,000 plus arms and ammunition. The bandits appeared unsure of what action to take, and, despite earlier efforts to pay the ransom, curiously obdurate to release their prisoner. On 10th August, they split themselves into two bands, one retracing its steps towards the Jehol border, and the other moving north eastwards towards the Paoch'ang area. It was not known which band held Jones. On 11th August, with efforts to procure his release each time proving futile, Major Takahashi flew to Kalgan in an effort to provoke the Chahar authorities into taking more vigorous action. Upon his arrival, he was informed that an exhaustive search for the captive had already been made, to which Takahashi replied that, though that might be the case, they should now try looking in the right place. His insinuation was that, as the bandits who captured Jones had been wearing the uniforms of the Pao An Tui, so the genuine representatives of that organization ought, directly or indirectly, to know where the captive was being held. Following Takahashi's visit, the commander of the Pao An Tui, Chia Tzu Wen, issued a notification to all detachments under his orders, offering a large reward for any man who could rescue the captive. The search continued.

* * *

At about 12 noon on the 12th August, Li Hsiang, a cowherd of Men Chia Ying Tze was tending his cattle, about two miles outside of his village, when he perceived about sixty or seventy armed and mounted men arrive from the north. As they approached to within a few hundred yards from where he was standing, they dismounted and formed a circle. Li Hsiang became afraid and so lay down in the long grass, from where he heard three shots fired in rapid succession. The men then remounted their horses and rode off towards the south. As Li Hsiang was collecting his cows, which had meanwhile strayed, he noticed, lying face upwards

in the grass, the body of a foreigner, with blood flowing from his head and mouth. After fifteen days in captivity, and on the eve of his thirtieth birthday, Gareth Jones had been murdered.

Later that afternoon, a detachment of Pao An Tui cavalry, led by one Chang Hsu T'ien, who had, throughout the day been searching for the bandits, arrived at Li Hsiang's village, and were told by the cowherd of what he had seen. The cavalry immediately set off in pursuit of the bandits, eventually catching up with them outside the Lama temple of Tung Ta Miao. In the ensuing gun battle, four of the bandits were killed and a fifth seriously wounded. Before dying, the injured bandit told Chang Hsu T'ien that, for three or four days Jones had refused to eat any food and had been unable to keep up with the bandits and that, on arrival in Meng Chia Ying Tse, he had refused to mount his horse, and had therefore been shot.

* * *

Around the world, newspapers headlined with the story of the journalist's death. In their Barry home, Jones' parents were shocked and stunned. Having heard twice in the previous weeks, that he had been released, they were now brought the news that their son's life, which had promised so much, had so tragically been brought to an end. At the London home of Lloyd George, the former Prime Minister was awoken early to be brought the news of his former secretary's murder. In a statement made later that day to the Press Association, he said,

"I was struck with horror when the news of poor Gareth Jones was conveyed to me. I was intensely worried ever since I heard that whilst his companion Dr. Muller was released, he had been detained. Knowing him as I did, I felt that, with his passion for finding things out, he had learned too much. The so-called bandits fastened on him as the more dangerous of the two. Gareth was a born scout,

dauntless to a degree. He had a passion for discovering what was happening in foreign lands wherever there was trouble, and, in pursuit of his investigations, he shrank from no risk. I had always been afraid that someday he might take one risk too many. Nothing escaped his observation and he allowed no obstacle to turn him from his course, when he thought that there was some fact which he could obtain. He had an almost unfailing knack of getting at the things that mattered. That part of the world is a cauldron of conflicting intrigue and it is quite likely that he had notes in his possession that would have been of great interest to one or other of the many powers who are interested in Mongolia".

Though there were obviously suspicious circumstances surrounding the case, as indicated by Lloyd George's statement, the general verdict presented to Gareth Jones' family and the public as a whole, was that, having ventured into the lawless regions of North China, Jones had become a victim of common outlaws who had sought, through the abduction of a foreigner, to gain financial advantage. The considerable newspaper coverage was largely given over to the delivery of glowing tributes to the deceased man's brilliant career, and to condemnation of the Chinese government's inability to maintain law and order in territory nominally under its jurisdiction. No mention was made of the events that led up to the kidnap, namely, the observations of the two journalists in Dolonor, and their subsequent arrest for spying. Nor was much significance given over to the fact that it had been the Japanese who had dictated to them their unusual route to Kalgan.

Unsatisfied by the general view of the affair, the offices of Lloyd George, through persistent demands to the Foreign Office for information on particular points concerning the case, were to cause the Foreign Office to request the British authorities in Peking to conduct a deeper investigation. When the subsequent reports were received from Peking, however, much information that

would seem to confirm the suspicions of Lloyd George, was withheld from publication. In its general summary¹⁵ of the case dated the 13th September, 1935, the British Embassy in Peking stated,

"It is clear that this incident was no ordinary case of kidnapping. Repeated hints were given by the Chinese authorities at Kalgan to Lieutenant Millar that the Japanese were suspected to be implicated, and the 'political' character of the case was emphasized by the Action Chairman of the Peking Political Council, Wang K'o Min, on the 3rd August".

Important evidence which would seem to point to Japanese involvement is found in a confidential report¹⁶ submitted by Dr. Muller to the German Embassy, whilst Jones was still in captivity, and which was later obtained by the British Embassy. In the report, Muller gives an account of a declaration made by the bandits into whose hands, he and Jones had fallen. The bandits claimed,

"that they were pure Chinese from the present Manchukuo, had then entered the Japanese service, and had received from a Japanese Authority in Jehol the commission to cross the Chahar and to create as much trouble there as they could. They were, in addition, furnished with uniforms and weapons together with an inconsiderable sum in bullion; to prove this, they showed us brand new notes of the Manchukuo Central Bank, of which they claimed to possess several cases. They had not yet, however, found anyone in Chahar ready to accept this money and would have been compelled even without the Japanese commission, to take to banditry. As for them, they hated the Japanese and thought of themselves as good Chinese, compelled however to obey the Japanese for fear of retaliatory measures being taken against their families in Manchukuo. They had crossed the Jehol boundary between the 20th and 22nd July. Our bandits told us that their first precise commission on Chahar soil was to make an attack on the White Mongol Banner and thus attempt to kill a Mongol militia leader called Mao, who was persona non grata to the Japanese on account of his strong Chinese propensities. \$40 a head had been

¹⁵ From Public Record Office files: Ref. FO 371/19268 p.331.

¹⁶ From Public Record Office files: Ref. FO 371/19268 p.352-354.

promised to the members of the group if they successfully accomplished their mission and brought back Mao's head to the Japanese. Having attempted an attack they were driven back by the considerably stronger Mongol militia, with the loss of two lives. How far the bandits were following their general orders - as far as our capture was concerned - to create trouble, or were acting on special instructions cannot for the moment be known with certainty. In any case, it is very clear that our misfortune occurred on a route recommended to us by the Japanese, and there is a possibility that the rider who passed our camp in Shabu Nor, on the night before our capture, was carrying special orders to the bandits. The manner of our capture makes it appear indubitable, that our visit to Dolonor, coinciding as it did with preparations for important military action in Chahar, was most unwelcome to the Japanese".

Other evidence, brought out by interviews with officials of the Chahar government, and with emissaries who had actually negotiated with the bandits, tended to bear out the story told by Dr. Muller. Among the conclusions drawn by the report, it was stated that, although no definite blame could be attached, "The suspicion that the Japanese authorities had something to do with their (Jones and Muller's) difficulties cannot be lightly dismissed and it may well be that some junior Japanese military officers engineered the plot to have Mr. Jones and Dr. Muller kidnapped as a warning to other journalists to keep out of forbidden territory, and that the situation later got out of the hands of the Japanese concerned. Nor can the possibility be altogether dismissed that the capture of Messrs. Jones and Muller was intended to create another 'incident' in order to provide the Japanese with an excuse for further military action in Chahar".¹⁷

¹⁷ From Public Record Office Files: Ref. FO 371/19268 p.334.

The contents and conclusions of the report would seem to point to the fact that far from being a clear-cut case of common banditry as it was generally assumed to be, there was good reason to believe that the death of the British subject Gareth Jones had been orchestrated by the representatives of a state with whom, at that time, Britain was conducting friendly relations. The most damning evidence found within the covers of the report would not, however, be allowed to leave the files of the Foreign Office. In the comments on the information they had received from Peking, the Foreign Office decided that there was much evidence to support Lloyd George's allegations, but that, "if we were to send the enclosures to this dispatch, Mr. Lloyd George would probably be provided with some useful ammunition for awkward questions in the next Parliament".¹⁸

Why the Foreign Office should have taken this line of action in order to shield the government, it is not clear. Perhaps it was felt that the preservation of good relations with Japan was of more importance than seeking justice for the murder of a single man. Or, perhaps, it was for fear of putting the government in a position where retaliatory action would be expected, but at a time when it's power in the world had become such, that retaliatory moves could not be made.

¹⁸ From Public Record Office files: Ref. FO 371/19268 p.323.

Epilogue

Regardless of the whys and wherefores of his murder, the death of Gareth Jones was as untimely, as it was tragic. Though he was unable to continue with a career that promised so much, in the short life that he was allowed, his achievements were many. In his writings, he attempted to bring down the barriers of ignorance that so often exist between the peoples of the world, and in his desire to thus act as an 'apostle of international understanding', as he was later dubbed, he gave his life. In the worlds of Mr. J. L. Garvin, the then editor of the 'Observer', "Gareth Jones was a journalist who had won every step of his way, by personal force; he has perished on one of the horizons he was always questing".

On the 18th December, 1936, the ashes of Gareth Jones arrived from China aboard the steamship 'Rawalpindi' and from there were taken to his Barry home, where they were finally laid to rest.

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Letter courtesy of Miss G. V. Jones.

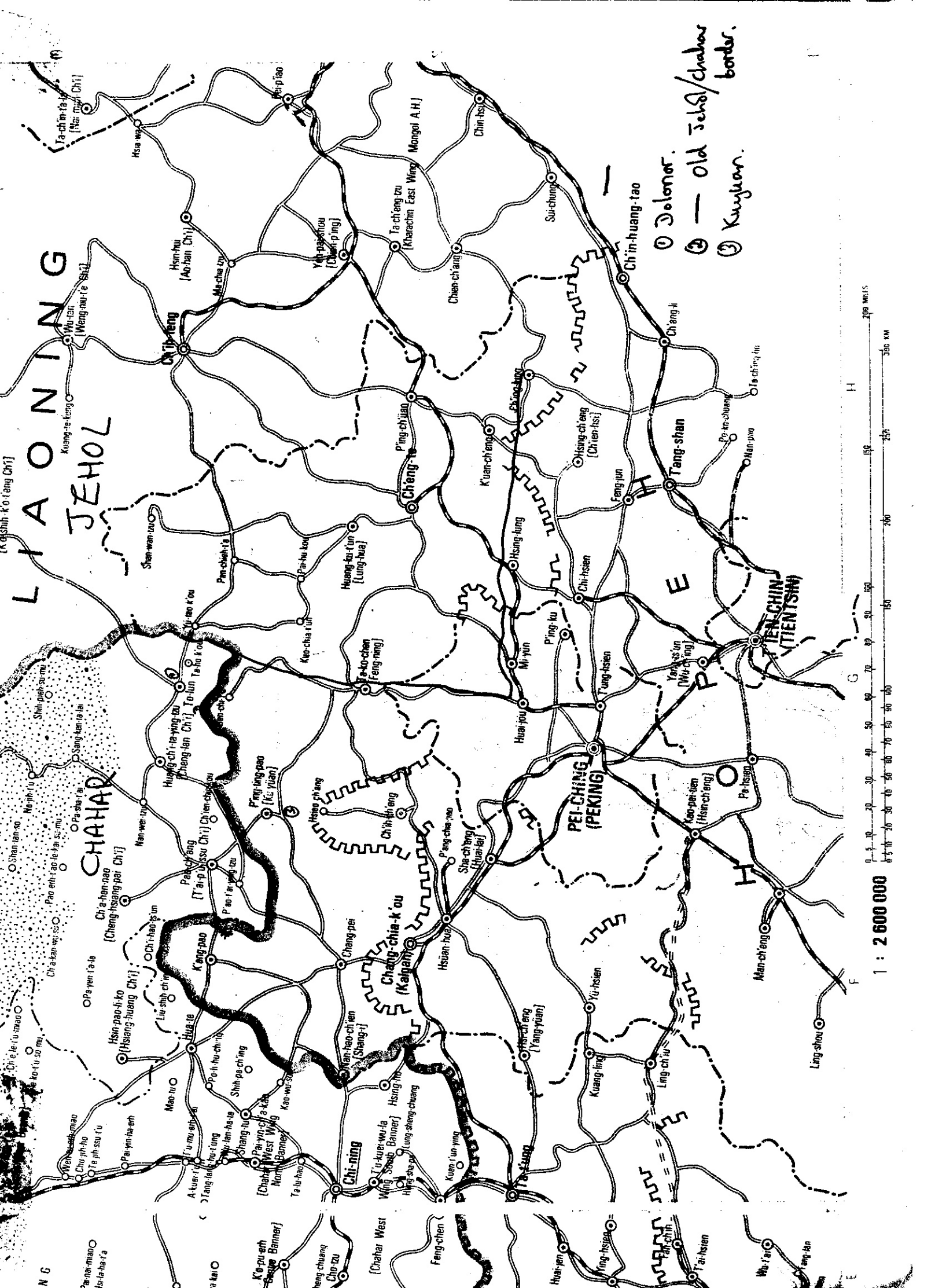
Photographs by Gareth Jones, courtesy of Miss G. V. Jones.

4. The Murder of Gareth Jones

Numerous newspaper articles, predominantly from the period 30/7/35 to 10/9/35.

Public Record Office - File 'FO 371/19268'.

I would also like to pay tribute to the co-operation and remarkable memories of Miss Gwyneth Vaughan Jones and Mrs. Erian Vaughan Lewis, sisters to the late Gareth Jones.



LIAONING
JEHOL

CHAHAR

PEI-CHING
(PEKING)

TIENTSIN
(TIENTSIN)

- ① Dolonor.
- ② — old Jehol/Chahar border.
- ③ Kuyuan.

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