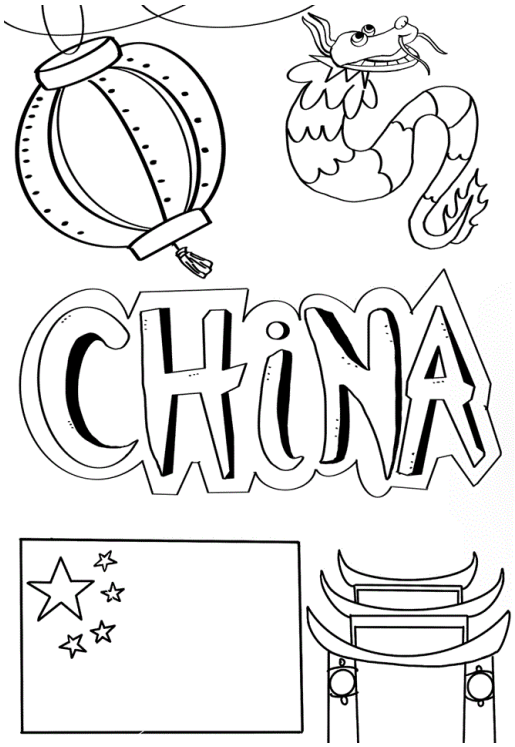
China from 1912



BEACON MEDIA

Nationalism

In 1912, a group of nationalists took over China. The Chinese Nationalist Party was able to overthrow the Qing Dynasty which had been in power since the 1600s.

Unfortunately, the new government was failing to provide for the Chinese people and many were living in poverty. Many Chinese were angry, and became interested in the Communist Revolution.

The Communist Party

In 1921, a group of young men met in Shanghai to form the first Chinese Communist Party, headed by Mau Zedong.

The party promised to improve peasants' living conditions and won the support of many Chinese people.

Principles of Communism

- Communism is both an ideology and a kind of government.
- In a communist society, everyone lives in large communities called communes.
- Under communism, individuals are not allowed to own any personal property.
- The goal of Communism is for everyone in the society to be treated as equals and to share things equally.
- The "father of communism" is Vladimir Lenin, (Russian).
- The idea of Communism comes from a book called the Communist Manifesto, which was written by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in 1848, (Russian).
- Communism does not allow for the practice of freedom of speech or for the freedom to choose your own job or move around.
- In a communist society, government authorities have an inordinate amount of power.

Several countries have implemented communist governments, including Russia and China, and the reality of communism has turned out to be quite similar to the theory.

Civil War

A civil war began between the Nationalists and Mao's communist follower.

The Chinese Civil War was fought between the Nationalists, led by Chiang Kai-shek, and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Armed conflict continued intermittently from 1 August 1927 until Communist victory that led to Nationalists’ retreat to Taiwan on 7 December 1949.

Why it happened

After the fall of the Qing dynasty (1912), China fragmented under competing warlords. The Nationalists and the Communists initially cooperated to reunify the country, but in April 1927 Chiang Kai-shek turned on his Communist allies, launching the Shanghai Massacre and a nationwide purge. The CCP retreated to rural bases and built a peasant-based revolutionary army. Five Nationalist encirclement campaigns nearly destroyed the Communists, forcing the Long March (1933–1935). In 1933, Mao led over 600,000 people on the Long March through the mountains for over 6,000 miles (10,000 km), to avoid being captured by the Nationalists.

How it ended

After Japan's surrender, the CCP's land reform programme won mass peasant support, and Nationalist forces were weakened by corruption, hyperinflation, and low morale. The Communists captured Nanjing in April 1949, and on 1 October Mao Zedong proclaimed the People's Republic of China. Chiang Kai-shek fled to Taiwan - a former Japanese colony returned to Chinese control in 1945 - with roughly 2 million soldiers and civilians. No peace treaty was ever signed.

Quote from Mao Zedong, 1927:

Revolution is not a dinner party, nor an essay, not a painting, not a piece of embroidery; it cannot be refined, so leisurely and gentle, kind, courteous, restrained and magnanimous. A revolution is an insurrection, an act of violence by which one class overthrows another.

Activities

1. What was the government that overthrew the traditional Qing Dynasty?

2. What did this government promise to deliver, and what was the outcome?

3. Why did the up and coming Communist Party gain the support of many people?

4. Name the respective leaders of the Nationalist party and the Communist Party.

5. Why did the Communist Party leader take his followers on the Long March?

6. Why was the Communist Party successful in overtaking the National Party in the end?

7. What is dangerous about Mao Zedong’s quote?

8. What do you think it would be like to live under communism?

The People's Republic

The Communists and Nationalists had to call a truce during WWII as both were fighting to keep the Japanese out of China.

The civil war continued from 1946 to 1949, until the Communists, now called the Red Army, took control of China's government.

On October 1, 1949, Mao declared the creation of the People's Republic of China, a communist country.

Mao was appointed the head of China's government and had almost complete control over China. He became popular with many Chinese people when he took land from wealthy citizens and gave it to peasants.

The Great Leap Forward

Mao implemented a program in 1958 to organize all farms into collectives where large communities of about 25,000 people farmed together under government supervision.

He believed this would speed China's economic development, so the program was called the Great Leap Forward.

The Great Leap Forward was a disaster.

Chinese farmers did not like the government making all of the decisions and, because they no longer owned the land, they had little reason to work hard, Droughts and floods damaged the food supply that year, making things worse.

As a result, about 20 million people died from 1958 to 1960 during one of the largest famines in history.

The Cultural Revolution

The failure of the Great Leap forward made many Chinese lose confidence in Mao's leadership.

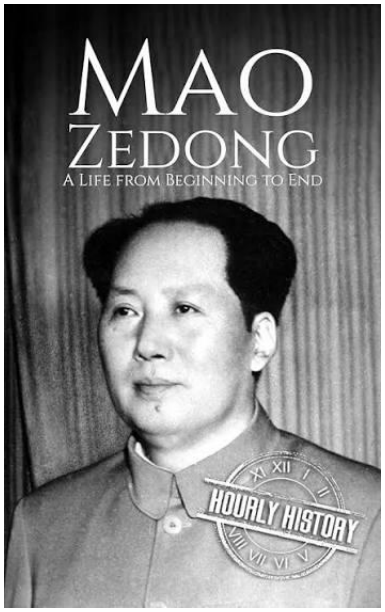
In response, Mao created the Cultural Revolution in 1966 to stop all opposition to the Chinese Communist Party. He urged students to quit school and wage war on anyone who opposed communism.

The students were organised into an army known as the Red Guards. They attacked, imprisoned and even killed those suspected of not agreeing with Mao.

The Cultural Revolutions created mass chaos in China for almost 10 years.

Many schools and factories were closed, and people were denied health care and transportation by the government.

Activities



1. Why was there a truce between the Communist and National parties during WWll?

2. What was significant about the establishment of the People's Republic of China?

3. What was Mao's plan for "the Great leap Forward"?

4. Who would have been advantaged, and who would have been disadvantaged by this?

5. Why was the "Great Leap Forward" a disaster?

New Leader

Mao Zedong died in 1976 and the Cultural Revolution finally ended.

China's new leader, Deng Xiaoping, made many reforms to Mao's rules, but the government still stuck to its communist roots.

He began to allow farmers to own their land and to make decisions about what they should grow. He allowed some private businesses to open. He opened China to foreign investments.

Unfortunately, the Chinese people were still not given basic human rights, like freedom of speech.

Tiananmen Square

In 1989, communist governments were under siege in numerous places around the world.

Over 10,000 Chinese students gathered to protest China's corrupt communist government in Beijing's Tiananmen Square.

They filled the square for seven weeks, peacefully speaking against communism and calling for a move towards democracy in China.

On June 4, 1989, the Chinese government sent soldiers and tanks into the square, killing hundreds of innocent people.

Countries around the world condemned this violence and began urging China to improve human rights.

Activities

1. What reforms did the new leader make?

2. What still remained the main problem for the people?

3. How long did the Tiananmen Square protest last for?

4. What was it about?

5. How did the student conduct themselves?

6. What was the government's response?

7. What does this show you about Communist governments?

Example of Government over-reach

A population planning initiative in Mainland China was implemented between 1979 and 2015 to curb the country's population growth by restricting many families to a single child. The program had wide-ranging social, cultural, economic, and demographic effects.

Because it was important for Chinese fathers to have a male child to continue the family heritage, it meant that many baby girls were aborted or killed. As time went by, there became a dominance of males and shortage of females for the males to marry. Now in China there is a large aging population which is a burden to the government.

Maps of China





Activities

1. On the maps, locate major cities: Beijing, Nanjing and Shanghai. What was Beijing called during WWll?

2. Name the countries bordering China on the 1941 map.

3. Which of these countries do not appear on the current map, (the lower map)?

4. What is the alternative name for Burma.

Wars between China and Japan

The First Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895)

The First Sino-Japanese War stands as the most significant early conflict where Japan emerged victorious over China.

This conflict was primarily about control over Korea, a strategic and culturally significant neighbour that both the Qing dynasty of China and an increasingly ambitious Japan sought to dominate.

The Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945)

This war was part of World War ll. The war was marked by brutal campaigns and atrocities such as the Nanjing Massacre, where hundreds of thousands of Chinese civilians and disarmed soldiers were killed. Japan managed to occupy significant portions of Eastern China, establishing puppet governments and exploiting resources.

The Nanjing Massacre was the mass rape and murder, between December 1937 and March 1938, of Chinese civilians, noncombatants, and prisoners of war by the Imperial Japanese Army in Nanjing, the capital of the Republic of China. It took place immediately after the Battle of Nanjing and retreat of the National Revolutionary Army during the Second Sino-Japanese War.

After the outbreak of the war in July 1937, the Japanese had pushed quickly through China after capturing Shanghai in November. As the Japanese marched on Nanjing, they committed violent atrocities in a terror campaign, including killing contests and massacres of entire villages.

The massacre began on December 13 after Japanese troops entered the city after days of intense fighting and continued to rampage through it unchecked. Japanese soldiers murdered civilians, including children, women, and the elderly. Japanese units also summarily executed thousands of captured Chinese soldiers in violation of the laws of war, as well as male civilians falsely accused of being soldiers. They raped women and girls, their ages ranging from infants to the elderly, and destroyed one third of the city with arson. Rape

victims were often murdered afterward. In addition to civilians, Japanese units indiscriminately murdered tens of thousands of Chinese POWs and men who looked of military age.

Japan's Emperor Hirohito told the army to remove all international constraints of international law regarding treatment of prisoners of war. Twenty-two brave missionaries and western civilians remained and formed a Nanjing Safety Zone. John Magee, a missionary who remained, filmed and photographed the massacre. He and his friends saved many Chinese lives by bravely defending them verbally within their Safety Zone.

Activities

1. What was the reason for conflict in the first Sino-Japanese War?

2. What was the Nanjing Massacre and which country was responsible?

3. What international law did this country violate?

4. Who was the emperor?

Biography: John Magee

he Reverend John Magee (October 10, 1884 – September 11, 1953) was an American church minister, best known for his work in Nanjing as a missionary, and for the films and pictures he shot during the Nanjing Massacre. He is also credited with saving thousands of lives throughout the event.

As a missionary in China, he became the minister at a Christian mission in Nanjing in 1912. While in China, he married a missionary from England, Faith Backhouse, in 1921. They had four sons: John, Hugh, David and Christopher. Their oldest son went on to write the famous poem High Flight, when he served in the Royal Canadian Air Force during the Second World War.

During the Nanjing Massacre, Magee was performing missionary work in Nanjing and was at the same time the chairman of Nanking Committee of the International Red Cross Organization. During the period when hundreds of thousands of defenceless Chinese were slaughtered by the Japanese army, Magee was appalled by the atrocity of the Japanese invaders.

Disregarding his own safety, Magee ran out of the Nanking Safety Zone, going through streets and lanes, and took part in rescuing more than 200,000 Chinese civilians who were facing being slaughtered. Magee filmed several hundred minutes with what was then the most advanced 16mm movie camera. This was later made into a film to create public awareness. Magee left Nanjing for U.S in 1938, he went on a tour speaking about the Nanjing Massacre.

Activities

Give a short summary of John Magee's background, his work in China and his role in saving many Chinese citizens during the Nanjing Massacre.

Biography: Watchman Nee

HE DIED ALONE. THEY HID HIS LAST WORDS.

No one was with him when he died.

Not his family. Not a single friend. Not one person from the church he had spent his whole life building. Watchman Nee died in a Chinese labour camp in 1972, after twenty years of imprisonment, completely alone.

Watchman Nee was one of the most influential Christian leaders China had ever produced. Starting in the 1920s, he built a movement of independent, locally-led churches across the country, unshackled from foreign denominational control, teaching believers to know Christ deeply and personally. His writings would eventually reach millions of readers around the world.

Then, in 1949, the Communist Party seized power in China. Christian leaders who wouldn't fall in line with the new regime were branded reactionaries and enemies of the state. In 1952, on false charges, Watchman Nee was arrested.

He was sentenced to fifteen years. When that sentence ended, the authorities simply extended it. He was never released.

For two decades, Nee endured prison and labour camps. His wife, Charity, waited for him faithfully the entire time, visiting when she was permitted, holding on to the hope that he would one day come home. She died in 1971, just months before Nee would have finally been freed. He never got to say goodbye.

On May 30, 1972, Watchman Nee died in the labour camp. There was no funeral. No official notice went out. By the time his family was even informed, his body had already been cremated.

His niece and elder sister rushed to the labour farm, only to be handed a small container of ashes.

Then a prison official told them something else. Before he died, Nee had written something down, and hidden it under his pillow. The official held the note out just far enough for them to read it, but would not let them keep it.

Written in his own shaking hand, weakened after twenty years of suffering, were his final words: "Christ is the Son of God. He died as the Redeemer for the sins of mankind, and was

raised up from the dead after three days. This is the most important fact in the world. I shall die believing in Christ."

Even the government that had spent twenty years trying to break him could not take that away.

Lessons From His Life:

- Faith doesn't need witnesses to be real
- What they try to bury often speaks the loudest
- Twenty years of silence couldn't erase one lifetime of conviction
- Some victories are won in a labour camp, with no one watching but God

"I shall die believing in Christ." — Watchman Nee's final written words

They hid his last words. They couldn't hide what they said.

Revelation 2:10 Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

Activities

1. What does the biography of Watchmen Nee tell us about Communist governments?

2. Why do you think Communist governments are opposed to Christianity?

3. What is the “Underground Church” in China and why has this been formed?

4. What dangers do members of the Underground Church face today?

China and Taiwan

Has Taiwan always been separate from China?

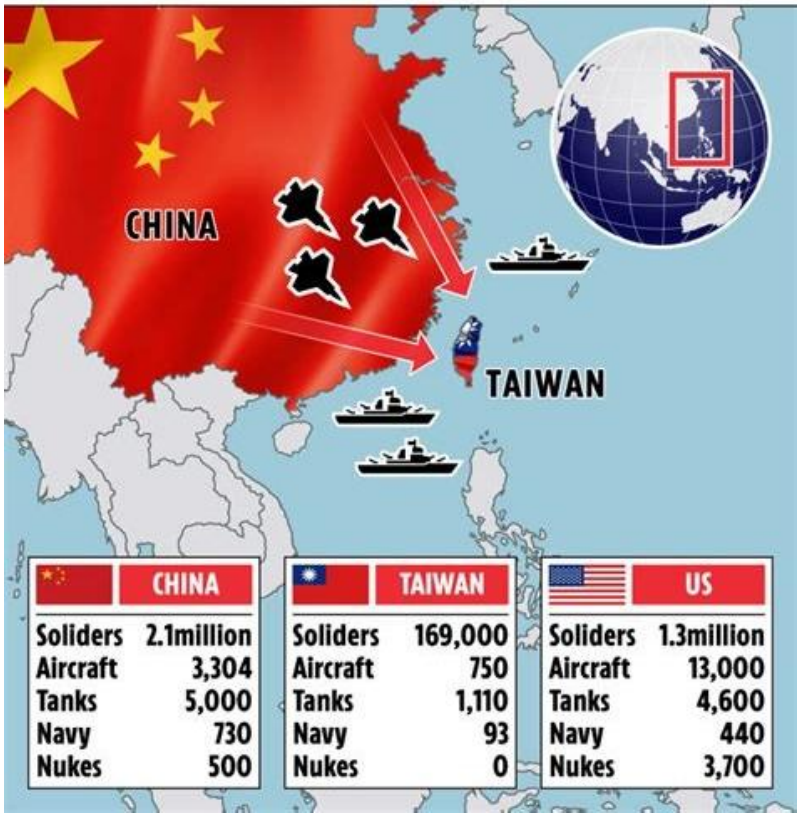
The island, which is roughly 160 km from the coast of south-east China, has been home to various indigenous tribes for centuries.

Historical, it first came under the full control of a Chinese empire in the 17th Century. It became a Japanese colony in 1895, after the Qing empire lost the first Sino-Japanese war. Then in 1945, after Japan lost World War Two, China took the island but now a nationalist government, led by General Chiang Kai-shek, was in power.

This was at the height of a decades-long conflict between Chiang's forces and Mao Zedong's Communist Party. When the communists won in 1949, Chiang Kai-shek, and what was left of the nationalist party, fled to Taiwan, where they ruled for several decades. They called this the Republic of China, a name Taiwan has retained.

Taiwan has operated as a democratic republic with a semi-presidential system. The president, directly elected every four years, serves as both the head of state and commander-in-chief of the armed forces.

But China now is claiming sovereignty over the island of Taiwan and the stated objective is "re-unification" by 2049. A conflict would devastate global semiconductor supply chains, with severe economic consequences. Taiwan is a critical hub in the global semiconductor supply chain, including leading-edge microchip manufacturing.



Activities

1. When did Taiwan become under a separate government to Communist China?

2. How did this happen?

3. What freedoms would Taiwanese experience under a democratic government?

4. How would communist take-over affect the people of Taiwan?

5. How would it affect the rest of the world?

Hong Kong





The region of Hong Kong came under the rule of Imperial China around the 2nd century BC, its history is much the same as the rest of China for the next two thousand years. Hong Kong's population originally relied on fishing, pearl farming and salt production for their income, but the coastal area eventually became an important free port involved in trade with the British Empire.

Hong Kong as a British Colony

By the early 19th century, the British Empire was dependant on importation of tea from China, but could not keep up with the country's demands for silver in exchange and instead started illegally importing opium to China. Opium had long been used in Chinese medicine, but it began to be used as a recreational drug, leading to mass addiction, which the British Empire used to export more and more.

The Qing dynasty, who ruled China at the time, declared their opposition to the illegal trade, and so the First Opium War began in 1839. Britain occupied the island of Hong Kong in 1841, defeating China and concluding the war with the Treaty of Nanking in 1842, in which part of Hong Kong was ceded to the United Kingdom.

Following the Second Opium War and the 1860 Convention of Beijing, further cessions were agreed: part of the Kowloon Peninsula and Stonecutters Island, giving Britain complete control of Victoria Harbour. The signing of the second Convention of Beijing in 1898 increased the area of the colony significantly with the New Territories, part of the Kowloon peninsula and Lantau Island, which were leased to Britain for 99 years from 1 July 1898 to 30 June 1997.

Despite plague and typhoons, the population of colonial Hong Kong eventually grew. After the Chinese Revolution of 1911 and the establishment of the Republic of China in 1912, Hong Kong became a political refuge for Chinese exiles from the mainland. In 1937, during China's war with Japan over Manchuria, it again became a place of refuge for hundreds of thousands of Chinese people displaced by the Japanese invasion.

The Second World War saw Hong Kong falling into the hands of the Japanese who transformed it into a military centre for their campaign in Asia. The British took back Hong Kong in 1945 after Japan's surrender, and the Chinese Civil War subsequently brought waves of rich and poor refugees from the mainland, providing both capital and cheap labour and building the foundation for Hong Kong later becoming one of the world's financial centres. However, in the 1950s during the Korean War the United States banned trade with communist China, hurting Hong Kong's businesses and slowing its economic progress. As part of the Cultural Revolution in 1967, violent riots protesting against colonial power paralysed the economy and the Hong Kong stock market collapsed in 1973.

One Country, Two Systems

Despite this, during the following decades there was a massive influx of immigrants from the mainland and from surrounding countries, particularly Vietnam. Increased labour meant rapid growth, and by the end of the 1980s, Hong Kong had become one of the wealthiest places in Asia.

As the end of British lease on the New Territories approached, China and Britain began talks on the future of Hong Kong. Their Joint Declaration, signed on 19 December 1984, pronounced Hong Kong a Special Administrative Region of China. The agreement, set out as the Basic Law of Hong Kong, promised that, under the "one country, two systems" policy, Hong Kong would retain its capitalist economy and existing legal system for the next 50 years until 2047, but China would take over foreign policy and defence.

Uncertainty about the future under Chinese rule lead to the mass emigration of tens of thousands of Hong Kong citizens at the end of the 1980s. This concern turned to fear when on 4 June 1989 the Chinese army killed pro-democracy demonstrators in Tiananmen Square in Beijing. Relations between the UK and China were further strained by disagreements over the financing of a new airport on Lantau Island, and by democratic reforms introduced by the last British governor of Hong Kong. Even so, on 1 July 1997, Hong Kong was transferred to China as a Special Administrative Region.

Hong Kong & Democracy

Since the handover, Hong Kong has become one of the world's leading tourist, industrial and financial centres, playing the role of a springboard for trade and investment from the mainland. However, civil unrest, dissatisfaction with the Chinese government and a desire for democracy have remained a central issue.

The most recent political demonstrations against a proposed extradition law have been ongoing since June 2019, and are considered to be the largest public protest in Hong Kong history. The current regime is set to end in 2047, although there is much speculation as to what this will mean: Hong Kong could be fully reintegrated into China, or the territory could continue to be administered separately.

Biography: Gladys Aylward

Brief history:

Gladys May Aylward (24 February 1902 – 3 January 1970) was a British evangelical Christian missionary to China, whose story was told in the book The Small Woman: The Heroic Story of Gladys Aylward, by Alan Burgess, published in 1957. The book served as the basis for the film The Inn of the Sixth Happiness, in 1958.

Gladys left England for China in October 1930, where she worked in the Inn of Sixth Happiness. Here she was able to share the gospel with travellers. She also was instrumental in stamping out the practice of foot binding in young girls. She worked in prison ministry. She rescued orphans after invasion by the Japanese during Worl War ll. She did not return to Britain until 1949, when her life in China was thought to be in great danger from the Communists – the army was actively seeking out missionaries. In England, she gave many lectures on her work. After her mother died, Gladys returned to China. After rejection by the Communist government, she finally settled in Taiwan in 1958. There, she founded the Gladys Aylward Orphanage, where she worked until her death in 1970.

The life of Gladys Aylward

Gladys Aylward returned to her job as a housemaid with a heavy heart.

She was sure God had called her to be a missionary to China, but having just failed Bible school she knew that no missionary organisation would sponsor her, and because she had no rich friends, she would have to save the money for the fare from London herself.

Once Gladys had earned three pounds, the twenty-seven-year-old set out to find a shipping agency who would get her a deposit on a ticket to China. The clerk behind the desk didn't take her seriously at first, but Gladys was determined.

She got the deposit and returned every Friday for seven months with a little more money until she had paid off the ticket.

Gladys knew that if she was going to get more missionary training, she would have to give it to herself. So she went to a busy square, climbed onto a soapbox, and started preaching. Many of those passing by jeered at her.

But each time she did this, Gladys cared less and less about what those people thought of her.

One day at church her ears pricked up when she overheard a woman talking about an elderly missionary, Mrs Lawson, who had just returned to China. Mrs Lawson had wanted to take someone back and train them up, so that they could carry on her work when she died.

Gladys blurted, “That’s me!” Then she copied down Mrs Lawson's address, which was in Tientsin province.

A Treacherous Journey

And so, on the 15th of October 1930, a large crowd gathered at the train station to wave her goodbye. Gladys clambered aboard carrying everything she owned. The train chugged her across Europe through Russia into Siberia. The further they rode, the colder it became.

Gladys also noticed the kind of passengers aboard. As grannies and businessmen stepped off, soldiers climbed on until she was the last civilian on the train.

Then, there came a point where the train could not continue, for there was fighting going on up ahead. The conductor had tried to get her off at Chita, which had the last train station, but she had misunderstood because of the language barrier and stubbornly stayed on the train.

Now, the conductor launched into a charades act explaining that the train was staying here and that Gladys would have to walk thirty miles through the snow back to Chita.

She had no other option but to obey.

After a tiring journey up the train track, Gladys curled up in the snow alone with the sound of wolves howling and cannons firing.

Two days later, in Chita, the official examining her passport got excited when he noticed her occupation: “missionary.”

“Ah! We need good machinist who make machine go good!” he exclaimed. Gladys eventually gave up trying to convey to him the difference between “missionary” and “machinery.”

After taking most of the clothes in her bag, the officials put Gladys on a train heading to China. But this was not to be.

More confusion led to her driving to Vladivostok instead. Here again, her passport was checked, however this time they changed “missionary” to “machinist."

When a rowdy hotel clerk, who was intent on sending her to the factories, took to following her every move, Gladys knew that she must escape.

Very kindly, a pair of complete strangers snuck her out of the hotel and led her to the docks where she boarded a ship to Japan. There was a missionary compound in Japan where she was warmly welcomed, and here she had her first good night's sleep since leaving London.

She was soon aboard a steamship to Tientsin, China. Gladys gratefully thanked God that her journey was nearly over.

Gladys Aylward Arrives in China

One of the first things she noticed there was the women and girls painfully hobbling about on their tiny bound feet. In China, small feet were considered beautiful.

When she arrived in Tientsin, Gladys was distraught to learn that Mrs Lawson hadn't been there for some time. In fact, the last anyone had heard of her she was a twenty-five days' journey away by train and then by bus.

After a bone-jarring ride, Gladys finally made it there only to discover that Mrs Lawson had left that district months ago. She was supposedly staying in a walled town called Yangcheng nestled high in the mountains, which took two days by mule train to reach. Sitting in a basket on a mule's back, Gladys prayed that Mrs Lawson really would be there.

Despite the many picturesque houses in Yangcheng, the mule train stopped in front of what looked like an abandoned, vandalised building. An elderly woman stepped out of the rubble and introduced herself as Mrs Lawson. This white-haired, blue-eyed woman had a sharp gruff manner, toughened by fifty-three years of service in China.

The people of Yangcheng were afraid of white "foreign devils" and threw mud and spat on them. Amongst other entertainment, executions were a common occurrence. Eventually, the townspeople started tolerating Mrs Lawson and Gladys, however, they still would never think of attending a Bible study or Church.

Then, one afternoon, Mrs Lawson had an idea. They would convert their house into an inn for the travelling muleteers. It would be an inviting clean place and it would offer something unique: Bible stories. The people could never resist a good story.

When it was up and running, Gladys's job was bringing the mules into their courtyard and cleaning and feeding them. Ten months later, the inn was proving to be a great success.

While Mrs Lawson was on a trip to a nearby village, news reached Gladys that she had fallen from a balcony and hurt herself. Gladys set out to find her immediately. Mrs Lawson was much worse than Gladys had imagined, and she died three weeks later back at the inn. This left Gladys in charge of the finances and management.

An Unexpected New Career

It was only then that Gladys discovered that Mrs Lawson had been using her supporters' donations to pay the large monthly tax to the district's mandarin. Gladys had no supporters, and the inn's profits only covered enough money for itself.

Upsetting the Mandarin could mean losing your head. Then one day the Mandarin himself paid Gladys an unexpected visit. Being someone who never concerned himself with minor matters, Gladys suspected the end of herself. Instead, the Mandarin had come to ask a favour of her.

You see, the new government had just outlawed foot binding, and they were holding each Mandarin personally responsible for the un-binding of every single girl's feet in their province. However, because no man was allowed to look at a woman's feet, the Mandarin needed a woman with unbound feet to travel his province and ensure that all girls' feet were unbound. There was only one woman who fit that job description: Gladys.

So, accompanied by two soldiers, she set out the next day. With the Mandarin's authority backing her, Gladys was respected in all the towns she went to, and she grew to know many village elders. She likewise preached about the living God wherever she travelled and grew extremely familiar with the countryside of that district.

The Mandarin was so impressed with the job she had done that any time he needed the bravest person in the province, he would call for her.

Prison Ministry

This is why she was summoned to the prison when the prisoners were rioting and killing each other. The Warden and soldiers were too scared to go in, so they summoned Gladys and commanded her, "You, and the living God about whom you preach, go into the prison and stop the riot."

An idea had developed that because she had the living God within her, she couldn't be killed. She reasoned that if she didn't go in, word would spread around Yangcheng that there was no living God in her. On the other hand, she also knew that Christians could certainly still be killed.

While praying under her breath, she agreed to go in. Miraculously, she captured the prisoners' attention. Taking charge, she ordered the dead to be piled up and the weapons handed to her.

One prisoner came over to her and introduced himself. He apologised for the fight and explained that they really hadn't meant to kill anyone. All they did every day was sit and wait for the day to end.

Gladys was horrified and visited the prison warden every day for months until she convinced him to provide the bored prisoners with useful occupations. She ran many of the activities herself and the situation within the prison was turned around.

The Second World War and the Japanese Invasion

One day, as Gladys was walking to report to the Mandarin about her foot inspection tours, she came across a child seller. The lady had a sick little girl that she was trying to sell. Gladys bought or 'adopted' the child—as she preferred to think of it.

Not long afterwards, she took in a little boy—and as WWII broke out over Yangcheng, the inn became home to many more children whose parents had died in those perilous Japanese bombings.

Along with the devastation of the bombs, came word that the Japanese were marching toward Yangcheng. They would arrive in two days.

The Mandarin and Gladys decided that, once the dead had been buried, everyone must abandon the town and disperse throughout the countryside.

Because of her foot-inspecting travels, Gladys knew the perfect place to go. She led a group of about forty people to a small town with no road that led to it and it wasn't on any map either. They lived there in caves and sent scouts back to Yangcheng to report the happenings there.

Just when it seemed that it would be safe to move back to town, news arrived that the Japanese were coming back.

Before leaving Yangcheng for the final time, the Mandarin held an important meeting. Gladys sat in the seat of honour and listened in curiosity as the Mandarin gave a full account of all the incredible things she'd done, reaching the climax, he announced that he had decided to become a Christian too.

Throughout the war, thousands of people found their way to the converted cove, which was now a makeshift hospital.

After the Japanese Occupation of Yangcheng

When Gladys discovered that the Japanese had again retreated from Yangcheng, she repaired the inn and moved her nearly 200 children back there.

She had heard of an orphanage out of the warzone in the next province, Sian, which could house some of her children. So she kissed one hundred of them goodbye—all of whom arrived safely at the orphanage five weeks later.

Because or her knowledge of the countryside, the Nationalist government asked Gladys to keep track of the Japanese troop's movements and report to them.

Soon an American journalist found his way to Gladys and wrote an article on her activities including her spy work for the Chinese. It was published in the Times magazine and read by millions worldwide. Her name became a household word.

Unfortunately, a copy of this fell into the hands of the Japanese. Gladys was now a marked woman. Her name appeared on wanted posters, which offered a great reward to the person who handed her in. Gladys was famous one hundred miles around, and she knew that eventually some person would give in to this temptation.

However, Gladys was determined not to leave unless God sent her away. Praying for guidance, she opened her Bible and read the verse her finger was on. It read, “Flee ye! Flee ye into the mountains! Dwell deeply in the hidden places, because the king of Babylon has conceived a purpose against you!”

So along with her ninety-four remaining children, Gladys Aylward trudged out of Yangcheng for the last time. They headed across high mountain trails, trying to avoid the Japanese. Twelve days later and utterly exhausted, they entered an abandoned village on the banks of the Yellow River.

Into Hiding

Sian was an eight-day train ride beyond the river. But even the train station on the other side seemed like an eternity away. The starving children sat on the riverbank for four days while Gladys drifted in and out of consciousness.

All that while, not a single boat passed them. Luckily, a Chinese Nationalist soldier overheard them singing and arranged a boat to take them across. When Gladys heard that, from there, a train could take them all the way to Sian, she put her hands over her face and sobbed with thankfulness.

But four days in, they discovered that a bridge had been bombed. So they walked another five days across more mountains and then rode on coal cars for three days and reached Sian at last! But no. Soldiers were guarding the train station there, to ensure that no more refugees came into Sian (Thailand).

Gladys was told that the city of Fufeng may still accept them. Fufeng was a three days’ journey away. When they at last reached Fufeng, Gladys couldn’t celebrate. She didn’t know where she was or who she was.

Despite her condition, she managed to find an orphanage that took all her children. Two days later, Gladys fell into a coma that no one could wake her from. She was transferred to a hospital, where she lay semi-conscious for two months. When she had recovered, Gladys returned to the missionary work that she loved so much.

Conclusion

In the following years, Gladys Aylward worked in prisons, refugee camps and leper communities. She witnessed more bloodshed as the communists took over.

She watched many of her converts be beheaded because of their Christian beliefs. Gladys was now watched much of the time and feared that she was endangering the local believers.

Although it had been seven years since her trek through the mountains, she needed more medical help and lots of rest. She reluctantly accepted a ticket back to London.

After seventeen years apart, neither Gladys nor her parents recognised each other. In fact, Gladys looked older and more frail than her mother. In England, Gladys was embarrassed to find out how famous she had become. But in her heart, she longed to return to China.

Because no one was allowed to enter the mainland, Gladys sailed for Formosa, (now Taiwan), arriving in 1957 after ten years in England. Here, she continued her mission work and was grateful—just like Mrs Lawson had been—when a young missionary arrived from England to help her. Here she founded the Gladys Aylward Orphanage.

On New Year's Day, in 1970, Gladys Aylward fell asleep and never awoke. She had lived a hard, full, and extremely influential life.

Activities

1. Make a timeline to show the events in the life of Gladys Aylward.

2. What aspects of her work showed Gladys's the extreme bravery?

3. Place names have changed since the time of Gladys Aylward. What are the current names for Sian and Formosa?

4. What impact did WWll have on her ministry?

5. What impact did Communism have on her ministry?