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TARLETON PERRY CRAWFORD

by

GARLAND D. HADDOCK

APRIL, 1940

On my honor as a gentleman, I declare
that this paper is my own work. Where credit
is due, it has been given.

Garland D. Haddock

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by

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APRIL, 1940

PREFACE

This paper is an original one on the missionary life of Dr. Tarleton Perry Crawford, missionary of the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. Dr. Crawford was in China from 1852 to 1885 and stationed at the Shanghai and Tung Chow missions.

The source of material for this paper comes from the correspondence of Crawford with the Foreign Mission Board. These papers are found in the Depository of the Virginia Baptist Association, S. B. C. All facts in this paper were derived from these letters and reports. Any material gathered from other sources has been acknowledged by footnotes.

G.D.H.

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TARLETON PERRY CRAWFORD

TARLETON PERRY CRAWFORD

Prominent among the names in the missionary annals of the Southern Baptist Church is that of Tarleton Perry Crawford. Crawford labored in the Shanghai and Tung Chow stations of the Foreign Mission Board between 1851 and 1885. He preached, taught, and labored with all his strength to spread God's word among the Chinese. He labored through successes and failures with all the fervor and interest of one called to work for God. Crawford created for himself an enduring place in Southern Baptist foreign missions.

Tarleton Perry Crawford was born May 8, 1821, in Warren County, Kentucky. He was educated in the country schools of his neighborhood. He later attended Clark's Institute (Tennessee) and the Academy of W. L. Slack in Tennessee. He entered Union College at Murfreesboro in 1848 and graduated at the head of his class in 1851.¹

T.P. was baptized in July, 1837. He had shown interest in the ministry for many years. He was ordained in April, 1851, in the Denmark Church of the Big Hatchie Association, Tennessee.² His appointment as a missionary to Shanghai came on January 6, 1851.³

In April of 1851, Tarleton Perry saw a young lady, [Martha Foster] teaching in Clinton, Alabama. Three weeks after the first meeting, they were married. Dr. Manly performed the ceremony on May 12. Mrs. Crawford was the second daughter of

1. Tupper, H.A., The Foreign Missions of the Southern Baptist Convention, p. 202.
2. Ibid., p. 203.
3. Ibid., p. 204.

John L. S. Foster of Tuscaloosa. After the ceremony, the Crawfords went to Memphis via Mobile and New Orleans, a tiresome journey in those days but probably thoroughly enjoyable to the newlyweds.

The Crawford had little time to enjoy peaceably their new married bliss because of preparations for their journey to China. On November 17, they sailed for their new home to take up their life's work, preaching the gospel as missionaries. They were accompanied by Dr. and Mrs. Burton. The passage from the harbor was good but before tea, both ladies and Mr. Crawford were sick. The voyage lasted one hundred days and some hours. It was uneventfull except for one storm of twenty-four hours duration. The ship was becalmed once.

The party arrived at Hong Kong on February 27, 1852 at eleven in the morning. They were met by Brothers Dean and Johnson of the Hong Kong Mission. The Burtons were lodged at Dean's and the Crawfords at Johnson's.

The party sailed from Hong Kong to Shanghai on the Schooner Minna around March 10. They paid seventy-five dollars apiece for passage including baggage. The voyage was very pleasant.

They arrived in Shanghai on March 30. Brother Yates met them at the ship, but the entire mission welcomed them at Yate's home. As T.P.'s house was still undergoing repairs, the Crawfords lodged with Brother Huck and the Burtons with Yates. Mrs. Crawford had the misfortune of being sick for several days.

Realizing the necessity of understanding the Chinese

language, T.P. immediately began its study. His teacher was Tsane Seen Song, a scholar with teaching experience. Crawford would carry foreign articles to the shops in the evenings to get the people to talk. He would laugh with them and sip tea with them. When the laugh on him was too great, T.P. would give English words that the Chinese couldn't pronounce and then he would laugh at the Chinese.

Crawford believed that Chinese labor would ultimately supplant slave labor in the South. The Chinese knew farming and understood the raising of Southern staples. They could easily adapt themselves to life in the South. Crawford said the region back of Shanghai was the best cultivated area he ever saw.

The usual evening exercise at the mission station was walks in the open-air. The mission members would distribute books and religious tracts to the people on these walks.

Mrs. Crawford had opened a school in a room of the Crawford dwelling house remodeled to care for a school. The chief among many duties of female missionaries is the conducting of schools for the natives. The second session of this school began on February 24, 1853, with an enrollment of ten pupils.

Mr. Crawford was decidedly against a "Mission Compact," a firm or board for carrying on the work of Christianizing the Chinese. He got into this situation through ignorance, he didn't understand 'compacts.' T.P. also wanted to abolish missions.

His reasons for this belief are as follows: (1), The

4.

very nature of mission work forbids a "mission" or board. There are certain things best done individually and missionary work is one of them. (2), Mission compacts weaken the feeling of individual interest. An organization received the blame for mistakes of its members and it is easy for a delinquent to hide behind the body. (3), The mission relation is undefined and indefinite and seems incapable of definition and limitation. Where is the line between the individual and the group as a whole to be drawn? (4), A mission is a checking rather than a stimulating body. (5), "Monthly mission meetings" tend to bring men into conflict. A natural and possible step arising from conflict of ideas. (6), Mission meetings of missionaries only will cause the Chinese to believe there is some "inner" temple into which only ministers are admitted. This would be bad for the mission program in China.

T.P. wanted a treasurer appointed by the Foreign Mission Board independently of the "mission." The missionaries could draw from him money for their individual needs. T.P. believed that a missionary should be free from the restraint of any sort of board.

For several years there had been revolution in China. The capitol of the revolutionaries was Hankin and their leader was called Emperor or Head of the Empire. Immediately under him there were four persons of equal rank called the Eastern, Western, Northern, and Southern Kings.

In August of 1853, the Crawfords received a visit from Dr. Roberts of the Canton mission. Dr. Roberts had re-

ceived a letter from the leader of the revolutionaries, a former disciple of Dr. Roberts, to come to Hankin and teach the people. Dr. Roberts attempted to get through to Hankin but was forced to turn back by Imperial troops.

Hung, leader of the rebels, left Dr. Roberts in 1846 or 7 and took up a school near the home of Foong, the Southern King. Hung tore down the pictures of Confucius in his school. One day Hung and Foong washed in the river, put on clean clothes and considered themselves cleaned of idolotry and polutions. Hung left some time later for Kwangse Province. Here he preached and some two or three hundred espoused his cause. Because they destroyed idols and pictures of Confucius, officials set on them and killed two. The band took up arms in self-defense and the conflict spread naturally.

Foong left his family at home and joined the army of his old friend. The imperialists captured his wife. His son, Foong A' Mow, 14, and his nephew, Foong A' Sow, 21, fled with their teacher to Dr. Roberts in Canton. These two men accompanied Dr. Roberts to Shanghai as servants. In this manner, Mr. Crawford entertained Chinese royalty under his roof. Both youths were interested in Christianity and the elder asked to be baptised. They stayed with the Crawfords for some time.

Hung and Foong did not require their followers to bathe as they did but this practice was used - when an individual was repentant [Crawford questioned the appropriateness of the use of this word], they took a basin of water and washed the forehead and the place opposite the heart. This was significant of

their cleansing from sin.

Shanghai fell on the seventh of September by an uprising of its residents. These forces were not of the regular strife but wished to be so considered. On September 29, a troop of Imperial soldiers, around 10,000 men, arrived to retake the town. The Insurgents numbered around 6,000. Strategy seemed the only means to secure success for the Imperialists.

All the missionaries including the Crawfords found refuge in the American Episcopal Mission. The group worked at various tasks so as not to burden their hosts. The men had to take turns staying in their mission because the Imperialists would rob the houses and use them for fortifications. The Crawfords were in the city during the first two days of Imperial cannonading. All the mission houses were hit by balls.

Matters remained in this condition for several months.

The U. S. Consul and vice-Consul at Shanghai sided with the Imperialists. On December 7, the Imperialists made an effort to take the city but were worsted. They lost two ships of war and two hundred men (report). They set fire to suburbs of Shanghai where 20,000 people lived. The foreign communities were contributing to the suffering natives. In April, 1854, the rebels attacked the Imperialists and broke their power around Shanghai. A truce for fifteen days between the rebels and Imperialists was effected by the British consul. By January, 1855, the rebels and French had bad relations between them. On January 6, the French and Imperialists made a breach in the city wall but had to retreat. The French had forty-five killed, the rebels forty, and the Imperialists three hundred. The French threw large

balls into the Chapel during the bombardment. T.P. Believed the French meant to destroy it. He also believed the French meant to bring Catholicism to the people. A few months after this the foreigners gained control of the city and continued to hold it.

A custom frequently found among Eastern missionaries was the employment of native preachers from mission funds. This practice was disapproved of by Crawford because it tended to corrupt and degrade the native ministry by introducing into office many whom the Lord had not called to work and by making mere assistants of those he had called. It tended to weaken the feeling of mutual sympathy and dependence which should exist between native preachers and native members of the church. Crawford claimed it shifted the burden of support from the hearts and shoulders of native churches to those of another land. He also claimed that the influence of "assistants" wasn't much because the people regarded them as working merely for the pay. T.P. Believed it caused many to seek admittance into the church hoping to get such a position.

Crawford divided the history of the Shanghai mission into two divisions, before and after the war at Shanghai (1854). The period before lasted six years and that after three. A tabulation of the two periods follows:

Before

2 preaching places.

4 day schools.

No school books.

After

4 preaching places (annual cost less than the 2).
Did more preaching.

6 day schools.

Had little series with no expense to mission.

Shanghai dialect was in
unwritten state.

Dialect written.

Had only parts of New
Testament.

All of New and epitome of old.
Also denominational tracts and
a hymn book.

3 converts, all unworthy.

6 converts, all worthy.

Seldom had enquirers.

Seldom without them.

Worshipped as a church once
a month in English.

Worshipped every Sabbath in
Chinese.

Couldn't sing in Chinese.

Sang in Chinese.

Rented dwellings.

Lived in houses owned by Board.

Mrs. Crawford's health became bad and she planned to return to America. If her health did not improve, T.P. intended to return home to care for her. He placed duty to his wife above duty to the heathen. Yates was also to return home at the same time. They sailed for America on the Nabob on November 17, 1857. T.P. Was in charge of the church after Dr. Yates departure. There were twenty-two members.

Crawford became dissatisfied with the long separation from his wife and his own failing health and applied to the board for permission to return home. This was granted and he sailed for home around August 10, 1858, via Puget Sound, San Francisco, Panama, Havana, New Orleans. He met his wife on December 1 at 10 P.M.

The health of both Mr. and Mrs. Crawford improved with the change and care of Dr. Snead of Memphis. They remained in the United States over a year and a half. They sailed from New Orleans for San Francisco on December 5, 1859. They planned to catch a ship sailing direct to Shanghai as this was the quicker and more economical route. While waiting for the ship, T.P.

took charge of a church in Clove City, Colorado. This was a small town of around three hundred inhabitants. The town was one day's journey from San Francisco. The Crawfords remained there two months. No ship sailing direct to Shanghai appeared so the Crawfords sailed the 26th of March, 1860, on the Oracle. They had to pay a tax of \$7 apiece to leave California. Passage from San Francisco to Shanghai via Hong Kong was \$100 apiece. They arrived in Shanghai in the middle of the summer of 1860.

Back in Shanghai, T.P. found that the large chapel in the south part of the city had been burned on June 28. The fire was believed to have been caused by the rebels. The chapel was repaired by the end of July.

The British and French had settled all difficulties between themselves and were in control of Shanghai. About the middle of August, 1860, the rebels threatened the city. The Chinese fled in terror and the Allies were left to defend the city. There were only about one thousand foreigners. T.P. slept every night with an English sword beside him.

The rebels were driven back by the foreign forces and finally gave up. They attempted to reach an understanding with the Allies but the foreigners fired on them and drove them off.

By February, 1861, Crawford was alarmed over the news from the United States. He expressed an inability to see how high-minded Southern gentlemen could serve under Lincoln. He hated to see the dissolution of the Union but believed it to be better for the South than to be subject to the power and functioning of a hostile party. Crawford believed the South to be right.

T.P. had for many years wanted to take up his residence in some inland Chinese city. All cities under rebel control were too filthy for habitation with the possible exception of Hanking. A British admiral was going up the Yangtse River three-hundred miles past Hanking. T.P. secured permission to accompany the expedition and look around for a place to settle. He left February 11, 1861, and the trip lasted seven weeks. He found conditions unsuitable for settlement.

In February, 1862, the rebels again approached Shanghai but did not dare to attack it. In May, the English and French began driving the rebels out of near-by towns.

In September, 1863, Crawford had to leave Shanghai because of his health. He moved to Tung Chow in northern China. There he established the mission that occupied the remainder of his missionary life under the Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

T.P.'s sympathies were wholly with the South. He wanted no union or compromise with the Northern Baptist Church in 1865. Later in his missionary career, he favored cooperation of Northern Baptist and Southern Baptist missionaries in their labors in China.

Crawford looked for great events to happen in the world. He believed that the year 1866 was to be a prophetic epoch in the world's history. In this, he was doomed to disappointment.

1866 may have been of great importance to Crawford. In that year he decided to settle permanently in Tung Chow. He bought a house in April. Mrs. Holmes, whose husband had been killed near Shanghai by the rebels, went to work with the Crawfords.

Tung Chow was on the sea about fifty miles up the coast or west of Chepoo, the port and post office. Tung Chow was a walled city with around 80,000 inhabitants. It had little or no trade. The literary examinations for ten counties of the Empire were held there.

In 1866, Mr. Crawford again complained to the Board about the "Mission." He did not want to be an "independent mission" but an "unassociated missionary" directly responsible to the board.

In 1867, T.P. expressed a wish that he could live and die in China. He was then forty-five.

In July, 1867, the rebels overran Shantoong Province, burning the country and robbing the villages and killing women and children. They carried off men and boys. Tung Chow itself was untouched as it had a high wall and was fairly well defended. The U.S.S. Wyoming arrived in time to afford protection. The people were afraid to leave the city as the Imperialists were as bad as the rebels.

Crawford divided all Eastern missionaries into two groups. The first type baptized all persons ~~he~~ considered honest enquirers without waiting for any experience of pardoning grace. The second type looked for a marked change of heart preceded by conviction of sin. The Southern Baptists and some individuals belonged to the latter group. This was the reason for the small number of baptisms by the Baptist missionaries. The Chinese asked for baptism the first thing and went where they could receive it. This former and newer policy began around the middle of 1858 in India.

Fire swept the house of Crawford and burned four rooms in December, 1867. Most of the things in the rooms were saved. The cow and the calf were badly burned, being tied near the burning building. None of Crawford's other buildings were hurt and neither was any neighbor's. Mrs. Crawford was hit on the head by an eleven pound tile dropped from the roof. She was not disabled or permanently injured but she received a severe wound.

In June 1868, T.P. bought his eastern neighbor's house and lot. The cost of the house and lot and the needed changes was around eight hundred taels [a tael was equivalent to two U.S. greenbacks, subject to slight variation]. Crawford wanted the space to enlarge his chapel, at that time only 20' by 13½', and study, for guest rooms, for a boarding school, health and convenience. Crawford's place was one quarter of a mile from the city walls south and west and over one mile from the north and east walls. His street corresponded to Grace Street in Richmond and his church to the Grace Street Baptist.

Since Mrs. Crawford's health had been poor for several months, she spent June of 1868 in Shanghai for recreation, society, medical advice and treatment.

In August of 1870, T.P. feared an uprising of the people to kill all foreigners. This fear was caused by the Tientsin massacre. War between China and France seemed highly probable. The Crawfords fled around September first on an English ship to Chepoo. They returned home on October 19 on the U.S.S. Benicict. The Tientsin affair was settled in August. Twenty of the rioters were beheaded, twenty-five were banished. The burned houses were

to be rebuilt and an indemnity paid to the families of those murdered.

In March, 1872, there were five missionaries at Tung Chow, Mr. and Mrs. Crawford, Mr. and Mrs. Hartwell, and Mrs. Holmes. There was also one native preacher. The church membership was one hundred and three, the largest of the three missions in China. Eighty men were working on the new chapel of Mr. Crawford's. This chapel was completed in December, 1872. It was 36' by 71' and seated two hundred and seventy-five.

T.P. complained to the Board in February, 1872, of the spurious reports circulating about his riches. He admitted having a small fund at interest. These funds he made trading in lots during the war at Shanghai for eighteen months only. Crawford wasn't rich and wasn't making money in China and objected to such tales.

He visited Shanghai in May, 1873, and while there had a minor accident. He was kicked above the knee by a mule. It wasn't serious.

Also in May, the mission at Tung Chow received a communion service from the Richmond Female Institute.

Ever since the Civil War, Crawford begged for money and new persons to serve in China from the Board. Money was sent him slowly and in small quantities, but new helpers never came.

The Board gave T.P. permission to return to America in 1874, but he deemed it inadvisable to leave and remained in China.

The Emperor of China died in 1875 from smallpox according to official reports. Crawford said rumors abounded that it

was some venereal disease contracted from sodomy with the eunuchs about the palace. Crawford considered the palace one large brothel.

T.P. visited Peking for his health during May, 1875.

During the past two or three years, difficulties had arisen and grown between Crawford and Mr. Hartwell. These difficulties were of three types, personal, ecclesiastical, and missionary. The first should have been settled by mutual friends, the second by a council of Baptists, and the third being closely related to the Board, awaited its decision.

Crawford visited Japan between July and October, 1876. He considered the land lovely and the people amicable and ready to learn. He believed Japan a great place for missions, especially the cities of Osaka and Yeddo. Establishment of a mission there would be cheaper than the placing of one in an inland Chinese city.

In May, 1877, Crawford again complained of false stories circulated about him reputedly by Mr. Hartwell. He refused to even honor Mr. Hartwell with a denial.

In May, he attended a "General Missionary Conference" at Shanghai. T.P. believed the conference to have been a success and of much value. The Northern and Southern Baptists at the conference met and agreed to a General Association in China. The first session of this Association was to be held in Shanghai, October, 1878. The Crawfords were at the conference for six weeks. Both read essays before the group.

T.P.'s health had been poor for several years and in June, 1878, his lower limbs were partially paralyzed. As rest

was imperative he left Tung Chow on June 21 and arrived in Yokahama on July 11. He left for San Francisco on July 24. He caught a train for Boston on November 6 and arrived there on the fifteenth.

He spent some time in Boston. He read an essay before a Pastor's meeting. From Boston he went to New York for three weeks and from there to Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington. In each town he read an essay before a pastor's meeting. He arrived in Richmond on January 21, 1879. He received an Honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from Richmond College. T.P. attended the Southern Baptist Convention in Atlanta and greatly enjoyed it, his first in sixteen years. Mr. Crawford returned to San Francisco on May 15. He sailed for home on July 1 and arrived at Tung Chow on August 9, 1879.

The "annual meeting" of the Tung Chow church held in April, 1880, was a successfull one. It voted unanimously to join the "Kiang Chek Association." The Association was to meet at Dr. Yates' at Shanghai on October 19, 1881.

Crawford stated that the Chinese didn't appreciate oratorical gifts and showy talents. In China spurgeon or Beecher would fall as flat as a "pan cake." Crawford said that only dogged work would meet the Chinese case.

Mrs. Crawford sailed for America on October 14, 1881, for America. Her health had been bad for several years and it was imperative that she receive some rest.

The Kiang Chek Association met in October as expected. The Association was composed of all Northern and Southern Baptist

churches in Northern China. There were thirty-one delegates present representative of thirteen churches. The meeting lasted three days. This cooperation of Northern and Southern Baptists in Chinese missions was exactly the opposite of Crawford's wish of 1865. In 1880, he heartily favored cooperation of the two groups.

In December of 1881, the long-awaited help arrived. It was Mr. N. W. Holcomb. Holcomb was greatly welcomed but he was not the man expected. The Board appointments were changed at the last minute and Crawford was not informed.

Mrs. Crawford returned from America in 1882 and resumed her work at Tung Chow. Things there proceeded slowly as they had in the past. The mission had its ups and downs, its successes and misfortunes. It was never large *IN* its successes or wholly gone in its defeats. Financial support of the mission by the church in America was very small, so small that Crawford had to continually ask for back salaries and money for necessary expenditures almost constantly. This failure to provide proper funds made the Tung Chow mission depend on itself to a large extent for its support. This probably led to Crawford's plan of self-support for mission work.

T.P. sailed for America in the spring of '85 to present his ideas before the Board. He arrived in San Francisco on May 6, 1885. The Board knew of his presence in America until after his arrival.

Crawford took a leisurely trip across the country to Richmond. He visited friends in Texas and preached in several Texas towns, Waco, Moulton, Flatonia, San Antonio, Austin, Belton,

Salado, Temple, Dallas, Marshall, and also Shreveport, Louisiana. He attended the Mississippi State Convention in Aberdeen in July. He spent some time during the summer at Monteagle, Tennessee.

Crawford went before the Board in Richmond on October 12, 1885. He requested a special committee to hear his plans. There was another meeting on October 27. Dr. David of the Africa missions and Dr. Taylor of the Rome mission also presented their views on missions. Dr. Taylor was sick so his opinions were presented in writing.⁵

Dr. Crawford brought before the Board some plan for making exactly the appropriation to each missionary, and the abolition or modification of the system technically called "missions". The special committee appointed to hear Dr. Crawford's ideas did not act on these suggestions but referred them to the Committee on Revision of rules.⁶

T.P.'s main point of discussion was the adoption of some rule whereby the Board appropriated money only for the work done by missionaries and leaving native laborers to support themselves or to be supported by their followers. This plan was not adopted although it created much discussion. The committee presented the following resolutions to the Board:⁷

Resolved 1, That while the principle of self-support in our mission work is essential to healthy progress and ultimate success, we believe its practice is to be established, not by formal rule, but as the result of growth and development.

Resolved 2, That we urge upon our missionaries the duty of holding constantly in view self-support as an

5. Foreign Mission Journal, Vol. 17, No. 5., p. 1, Dec. 1885.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

object to be attained, and of training their converts and churches in this direction with all possible diligence.

From this time on there are no reports on Dr. Crawford.

All letters from him to the Board cease. He does not seem to have returned to China, at least not as a representative of the Foreign Mission Board. Where he went or what he did is unreported.