

A visit to Nanking by SIU and myself grew more and more imperative. As we had been refused permission to travel by the direct caravan-route through Kansu, we had resolved to take the long, though for the most part comfortable, detour through Siberia.

AMBOLT was by now so far recovered, although still convalescent, that HUMMEL might safely leave him and accompany me. The Russian physician PEDASHENKO promised to look after AMBOLT during HUMMEL's absence.

THE LAST DAYS IN URUMCHI

Our last days in the provincial capital were largely taken up with farewell visits, invitations and packing. On the occasion of our visit to the yamen the Governor-General did not put in an appearance; and also at the farewell dinner that was given by the entire body of commissioners, he allowed himself to be represented — by his big, red visiting card.

One of our neighbours, one of the many to give a farewell dinner for us, was the deceased FAN's interpreter for Russian, one Mr CHAO, who had taken part in General GUSTAF MANNERHEIM's journey through Eastern Turkistan and China in the years 1906—08 in an interpreting capacity. It was curious thus to meet with a link, here in the heart of Asia, with the then administrator of Finland.¹)

A full week before our departure to Peking we had been informed that a bus and a lorry would be available on the morning of December 17th, to convey us to Chuguchaq. They would cost us together 1,170 Swedish crowns to hire — a good round sum for a stretch of 630 kilometers.

Two days before starting we were told that the Governor-General had had a proclamation affixed in the garage, announcing that until May the following year all motor-traffic to Chuguchaq had stopped on account of the impassability of the road. We at once jumped to the conclusion that this was a fresh thrust at us, and that the idea was to prevent our journey to Nanking. However, our anticipation proved groundless, and we were able to assure ourselves that the two cars were still at our disposition.

We were three Swedes and three Chinese: HUMMEL and myself, bound for Peking and Nanking, and BERGMAN, who was going to Stockholm; Professor SIU and his servant WANG, and CHAN, the topographer, who were all bound for Peking. We were also to have the company of Father VELTMAN, who was returning to Holland on a year's leave.

¹ In 1940 was published Field Marshal MANNERHEIM's diary from this long and extremely meritorious and fruitful journey; the English edition bears the title «Across Asia from West to East in 1906—1908». MANNERHEIM's TCHAO is one and the same as the above-mentioned Mr CHAO. By 1934 he had attained the rank of Governor in Chuguchaq. F. B.