

# I. PRELIMINARIES FOR THE MOTOR JOURNEY

## LEAVING PEKING

**T**he whole background, the preludes, the plan and the preparations of the car-journey to Central Asia in the service of the Central Government in Nanking to which this Part III of the History of the Expedition is devoted will be found in the last chapter of Part II.

On the morning of October 21st 1933 HUMMEL and I, the two Chinese engineers IRVING C. YEW and C. C. KUNG and the geodesist PARKER C. CHEN, were to leave Peking for Kuei-hua. BERGMAN came to the train to see us off, but did not accompany us, as he had first to take his family down to the Swedish boat on which they were returning home from Ch'in-huang-tao. He intended to join us in Kuei-hua in a day or so. Our passenger, the archaeologist HUANG WEN-PI, left by the same train as ourselves.

Cars, petrol, provisions and all the heavier equipment had been brought from Peking to Kuei-hua six days earlier by GEORG SÖDERBOM and our Mongol chauffeurs.

Many friends had gathered at the Hsi-chih-men station to say good-bye. There were Professors LIU FU, SIU PING-CH'ANG and PAUL STEVENSON, Mr BOSSHARD, *The Times* correspondent Mr McDONALD, and others. When the train rolled away to the north-west, most of them thought that they had seen us for the last time.

The hours passed; the following day the walls and towers of Sui-yüan rose to our left, and presently the train stopped at Kuei-hua and was met by a swarm of people. There was a Babel of voices.

## A DISASTER IN KUEI-HUA

GEORG SÖDERBOM's gigantic form appeared outside our carriage window. HUMMEL hurried up to him, and GEORG half whispered something to him that caused him to exclaim in astonishment: »What, is he dead?«