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Medical Experiences in Hong Kong during World War 2

Interviewed by

Charles G. Roland, M.D.

22 April 1985

Oral History Archives

Hannah Chair for the History of Medicine

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Charles G. Roland, MD:

Dr. To, could you tell me a little about your parents, your upbringing in Hong Kong, and your education?

Wesley Ernest To, MD:

Yes. My father was a medical student and he graduated the day I was born, 1899. In those days they had the Hong Kong Medical College. Amongst those who started was Dr. (I have mental blocks now -- one of the very old) Manson, Dr. Manson [Sir Patrick Manson], and Dr...perhaps I can come back to that later. I lose my memory. His father was also a doctor. Now, his father has a very wonderful history. He was kidnaped by some white slave traffickers, when he was about 7 or 8, in a village, and taken to America. And there he escaped. When he was about 14 he got to some artist and worked for him in San Francisco. Then, gradually, he learned about Christianity. He joined the YMCA, and later on he wanted to be [baptized a] Christian. So they asked him for his name. He couldn't tell them [he had forgotten his own name]. He was so religious that he named himself after Jesus, in Chinese "Yea-So", so he took on "So." Then, when he was almost 30, he returned to Canton. That is in Kwantung. And there for the first time he learned Chinese. Subsequently he wrote an autobiography which I'm getting translated. (My Chinese is very poor now.) Beautifully written, about how he discovered his own village, and his name, and his mother. It was very romantic. Eventually he continued his training in the hospital. Kong Yee Hospital -- that was a missionary hospital. I think Dr. Paul Todd was in charge of it. I knew him. He

adopted several children. One of them now is Professor Todd, of Hong Kong University, a Chinese. He adopted three. And one daughter and two boys, all Chinese, they all became doctors.

Then he [my grandfather] started to practice and I have a book here which I can lend you but it's very precious to me. A lot of quotations about him, about how he did a thousand anesthetics [without a fatal case]. In those days they used -- what's that? -- you know, in the old days they used....

C.G.R.:

Ether or chloroform?

W.E.T.:

Chloroform, yes. Then he also did about a thousand iridectomies. He was quite famous, and eventually I think he became a Mandarin or something like that. He was given -- in those days they were given a decoration, you know. There were three degrees, gold, silver and crystal. Crystal is the first lot amongst the Mandarins. He practiced, and eventually I think he died in Hong Kong. He wrote his autobiography in Chinese; I'm getting it translated now.

My father, he qualified in 1899, the day I was born. He practiced, he did general practice, and he was very good at delivering children.

C.G.R.:

Oh yes, obstetrics.

W.E.T.:

Well babies. I think he delivered almost half of Hong Kong. And another thing, he was very good at dental extraction.

Because in those days the people didn't want to go to the dentist, they just wanted the tooth out. Even if it was only a small cavity. That was done without anesthesia, and later, when I took on that job, it used to terrify me at first. These people wanted their teeth out and I hadn't the foggiest idea how to do it. Eventually, my father taught me. He used a special kit, and he used a different type of forceps. For instance, for molars he'd use one for bicuspids -- I mean the, what's the front teeth?

C.G.R.:

Incisors?

W.E.T.:

Incisors, yes. They used to go to him to have their teeth extracted before they'd go and see a dentist.

Now, I was an only child -- terribly spoiled. I was very, very, weak. I was a seven-month baby, premature, and up to 12 or 13, I was constantly ill. I couldn't go to school. So when I was about 14, I started to have tutors. I had about five or six tutors a day, learning English, I think, even though I was able to speak that as a child, because my mother came from Australia. I think I did speak English when I was very young. As I say, at 14 I started to have tutors.

Then at about 16 I went in for the first Oxford examination. They did not have local exams then. You had to have the Oxford exams. When I was 16, I went in for the senior exam. At 18 I passed my matriculation. That was something -- very crammed up, all crammed up. Then, in those days, there were only three possible faculties -- medicine, engineering, and arts. For [those who went in to be] engineers and arts, always ended up

with teaching. So I forced myself -- I said I'd take up medicine. Mind you, my parents didn't care a damn what happened to me because as long as I'm home, I'm so spoiled. I said, "There must be a future," so I took up medicine. I don't know how I managed to get through, but in 1924 I graduated.

C.G.R.:

Now, was this at Hong Kong University?

W.E.T.:

Hong Kong University, yes. I had a Professor Digby, he was the professor of surgery. When I passed through, I had to work in the hospital for a year; I was his surgical clerk, more or less, under him. Then at the time, there was an x-ray installation in the hospital. Nobody knew how to work it. Sometimes the dispensers had a go at it -- they hadn't got the foggiest idea. So Professor Digby said, "You know about photography, you try it." In those days -- they were very, very, early [days in radiology]. I remember one of the first machines was called a Wantz Junior, with all Coolidge tubes and everything, wiring too, exposed. There was an instruction book, and from that I experimented, first with my hand, making exposures of it, and by trial and error. I'd start taking more and more. I based my diagnosis then from my x-rays I'd taken, at the patient's bed and sometimes at the mortuary, to find out what sort of diagnosis I should make [whether my diagnosis was correct]. It was really funny, eventually I became very good at it, but those days the machines were going wrong all the time, because of the high humidity -- breaking down. I had to even do

the repairs myself. I didn't know much about electricity then.

Anyway, I carried on and I worked for a year, and then the government said, "Look here, in order to work here you must have a degree." My father wouldn't let me go. They said, the government will pay everything for you to go abroad and get your degree. In the meantime, I could be training somebody [to take over the place]. But in the meantime father, of course, wouldn't let me go then. So, after a year, I had to join my father. He bought a machine, the same type of machine as the hospital, and I started working. I did lots of things without any guidance. I used to do treatments of skin; I experimented with my own skin, for erythema dosage and things like that -- very daring. And I've treated -- honestly, I think if I did that now, they'd put me in jail. Really, the risks I took. I had, say for instance, people with carbuncles in those days. It's a difficult thing to treat [surgically]. I found out when I'd given one an erythema dose, the thing resolved completely [without the use of the scalpel].

C.G.R.:

Is that right?

W.E.T.:

I don't know whether it was due to experimenting. I've really treated a lot of skin diseases. And psoriasis in those days was supposed to be impossible to cure. I've treated a man whose total body [was involved], and I would treat one square feet at a time, each week; this man, when he was about 40, was completely cured. It was really marvelous. I still remember that. Of course, I learned more by reading. I started to do

IVPs in those days, and even do, what do you call it? -- salpingograms. I'd say that it was actually daring. I mean, I'm not a gynecologist but somehow I managed it then.

Then the American government got hold of me to take all the chest pictures for immigration. Then the Canadians got hold of me, and then the Australians, so I worked for the three. Then there was the question of age. Some of them had to be a certain age before they could immigrate. So I started research on bone age, with the help of Gray's Anatomy. I used to do the wrist and different [bones of the body]. Find the...what do they call it?

C.G.R.:

The epiphyses?

W.E.T.:

Yes, epiphyses, union of epiphyses at certain ages. I had a chart about then. Four years I did that for them. Of course, there was a lot of opposition from the doctors in the States and Canada. I used to appear in court to give my expert evidence, sometimes. However, I gave that up because it was much too controversial.

I developed certain techniques for taking different parts of the lung -- spot films, very difficult. I used to take spot exposures of the apices, where it's very difficult [to photograph]. All different doctors from the States and Canada used to write to me, congratulating me on the results I was getting and asking me how I did it. I still remember.

Then, that went on. I practiced, I worked for my father for about 25 years. Then I got married and my children were going

abroad to England to be educated. I was on a salary basis. So I told my father, I said, "Look here, you must make me a partner otherwise I can't afford it." "Oh," he said, "all right, never mind, I'll send you around the world with the family." So we went around the world. And after coming back I again approached him. He said, "I've given you that trip." I said, "No, that's not good enough." So I gave him an ultimatum. I said, "In two weeks' time, if you don't make me a real partner, I shall have to leave you." And really, I left him. Oh, he was very angry!

Luckily, one of my doctor friends, Dr. Armstrong, he had too big an office. He gave me half his office. We, [with the help of friends], overnight partitioned it. Then I had no money, so one of my friends went to an electrical [supply] company [General Electric], and asked for a complete x-ray equipment. They said, "Oh, it's Ernest To, we will give him all the equipment he wants. He needn't pay us immediately -- he can pay us any time." So I started on my own practice.

C.G.R.:

Was this before the war or after the war?

W.E.T.:

That was after the war. I left my father in 1952. I was 53 then. Then I worked and worked. Then I took on some partners, in order to allow me to travel with my family. But then in 1971 I was about to retire and they did all kinds of tricks. One went to Australia, for he said he couldn't afford to pay into my retirement fund, you see. When I eventually had retired, he came back. So anyway, he's back again and through that I took up a legal case against them but lost. That's why I came straight to

Canada within the week. After 70 years I left Hong Kong, I uprooted myself! Then I came here [with my family].

During the war, I remember one morning, December the 8th, I think, I was having my shave. We were living near the airport. All of a sudden I heard, bang! bang! bang! And people said, "Oh, the British have come from Singapore (what do you call it?) practicing [exercising]. But it was the Japs [dropping bombs on the airport]. Half an hour afterwards, a boy scout came to me, "Well, you've got to go to the hospital." So I went to the Kowloon Hospital. I worked there for two days. I'll tell you, although the bombs were small, the amount of casualties was terrific. In the Kowloon hospital, all the patients were lined up in the corridor on stretchers. It was a very cold day with a through draft, and all these people in their bloody clothing. As I walked I was slipping all over the place [because of blood on the floor]. So they said I had to go out [from the x-ray room to] help. I hadn't done any surgical work for a long time, I'd been doing x-ray work only. But I had to help. I noticed that the Chinese were really wonderful as far as pain was concerned. They hardly groaned. I sewed up a woman's thigh, you know, her pierced artery -- what is it?

C.G.R.:

Femoral artery?

W.E.T.:

Yes, the femoral artery. The blood was shooting up to the ceiling. I asked for needles and sutures, and they got some, but all they had was rusty needles. But then, after the second

day, second night, my wife said, "You must come back to us." So at nighttime the auxiliary police took me home. Thank goodness, for the next morning the Japs took over the hospital. I would have been in prison. Some of those [who went to prison] died later on.

Then we [my wife and three children] moved 13 places, running from one place [to another]. Our house was taken over by the Japs. But before then, our servant took over. He said [to the other servants], "Now, I own this house." Nobody at the household. He took charge before the Japs came.

C.G.R.:

You mean he took your house from you?

W.E.T.:

Yes, but we were away.

C.G.R.:

Oh, he was protecting it.

W.E.T.:

He was not protecting it, he took over everything, you see. So the servant, who apparently came from Canton, he had experienced the Japs before, you see. And we hid important things above the ceiling. My wife was very brave. She was really a very nervous person, and during the war she was really afraid of the bombing. She would run down to the market, buy a few things, and as soon as the siren began, she'd run like anything! We had hardly anything to eat. There was one day when I passed one of the nuns I worked with in the hospital (I had x-ray equipment in one of the Catholic Hospitals, where I used to do some free work), a nun passed me and she said, "Look

here, I've got some money collected for you." And then from under her skirt she pulled out about a hundred or two hundred dollars. That was really a wonderful thing.

Then later on we had to close our office. The Japs were going to take it over. The funny thing was, the third day after the Japanese occupied Hong Kong, I was outside somebody's place, and there I saw a man I knew very well, a Japanese dentist. A good Christian, a friend of mine. He was in uniform.

C.G.R.:

Really.

W.E.T.:

He said, "Sorry Doctor, this is war." Apparently in Hong Kong, every Japanese was a spy.

C.G.R.:

I've heard that.

W.E.T.:

Every one. So now, in Canada, they said they ill treated them; they put them in camp. I think they couldn't be, what you call it, because you can never tell. In Hong Kong, every one of them. Even the dentist's receptionist, a Chinese girl, was a spy.

C.G.R.:

Really.

W.E.T.:

Yes. She came and said she would protect a lot of my stuff -- my hi-fi and things -- and we never saw them again. In those days, the funny thing was we were living in a place under some

Portuguese in Caine Road, and opposite, across the road, there was another Portuguese family. Every night around about 8 o'clock, I'd creep over, and we'd close the windows. They had a short-wave radio hidden. We'd bend down and we used to listen [to the news]. But then one night, when we were trying to engage a teacher for our children, a tutor, we talked and talked till past nine o'clock. I couldn't get over. The next morning we and friends always met at a place on Stanley Street where they sell all the loot -- the Chinese were terrible during the war, they looted. These things were for sale. We'd always meet there in the morning. And somebody passed by and said: "Thank goodness you weren't there. Everybody was taken." You know, there were some East Indians that obviously had been watching us, and notified the Japs. So that night the Chinese, the Chinese fellow working under the Japs...took the whole lot away. Most of them died in camp. It was terrible.

Now, talking about cruelty. The famous thing they used to do was to put a hose in your mouth and fill you up until your stomach was completely distended. Then they'd put a piece of board across your stomach and sort of see-sawed and squeezed all the water out again, to get you to confess something. That's one of the famous tortures. The other one was to put a towel across your face and let water drip so you had to inhale the water. Another way was they pushed a thin piece of cane under your nails.

C.G.R.:

Under the fingernails.

W.E.T.:

Under the fingernails. One of our teachers in the church was hung by his fingers for days and days. Many people were taken in. I was on the list also. In two week's time, if we weren't relieved [by the British in 1945], I would have been the next one to go in. There was a negro, but his name was Wong -- Chinese name, funny. He was one of the spies. He used to come and help me sometimes, but he used to tell me what was going on. He told me that very soon I'd be the next one to go in. So I was hiding. The cruelty was terrible, really. That was the first time in my life that I saw people eating human flesh.

C.G.R.:

Really? Was that done?

W.E.T.:

What do you call it?

C.G.R.:

Cannibalism?

W.E.T.:

Cannibalism yes. People were starving, so I'd see along the road a naked body with a piece of newspaper over him. The only place they would cut was the buttocks. They cut the buttocks off because there's more meat there, and they'd cover it [the body] up [with newspapers]. One morning I was going down to the office when I saw a baby decapitated -- the head was there but all the flesh was taken and only the bones were left. It was amazing. I mean, people had to eat. I remember once I ate some sort of tart, and the moment I tasted it I could have thrown up. It must have been human meat. It's awful.

C.G.R.:

It's awful, yes. And you saw that with your own eyes?

W.E.T.:

Yes, yes. Oh yes. The worst thing was, during the war my son had pneumothorax. I don't know what happened. And effusions started. Every day I and my wife used to (they had sedan chairs in those days, two coolies for carrying) take him in a sedan chair to carry him down to the office. I put infra-red right on him. I didn't know it would help, but fortunately, all the effusion disappeared. He had about four inches of it. The lungs half collapsed. And you know, up to now there's no residue at all. No adhesions whatever. It's amazing.

C.G.R.:

He's very fortunate.

W.E.T.:

We had four years of it, and we were giving up hope. I said the world had forgotten us, but one day I was walking with a Chinese girl and her boyfriend; she was working for the Japs. The Japs told her, "Today, you'd better take a holiday." She didn't know why. So we walked along halfway up the Peak, and all of a sudden I heard a boom! boom! boom! and saw pine-tree-like smoke go up -- bombs! You know, that's going up over across in Kowloon. And she was terrified. I knew how frightened my wife would be so I rushed back home. She was in hysteria. So after that we had a back room, we called it the bomb shelter. We had blankets and everything in it. But we had a big wall there [across the back lane], so that when the planes came and bombed, everything sounded as if it was just on top of us. She was

terrified, so eventually we had to bring her up to the roof and watch these bombings. They were happening far away. But one day as we were waiting, one particular day we were going to watch for more to come. No, the British came and we were rescued, you know, the first day.

Oh yes, the Americans came for a whole day of bombing. The task force was outside. You used to watch all these planes, squadrons coming down, and being shot down. Most of these planes were shot down. The Japs captured all the pilots and their uniforms that were in these planes, showing them in the different shop windows. But that same afternoon, the Americans came back and sank all the vessels in the harbor. That's the first time we said, "At last, the world knew we were still there." And the Chinese would wave and yell but then the Japs would slap them down and shoot them.

But the thing is, one day, I was living with a landlord who was a collaborator with the Japs. He used to get drunk every night. He had lots of liquor, and I went over to his place when I wanted to have a drink. I used to sit on the staircase and wait for him to come back about three in the morning. He'd say, "Hey, come on in, I'll give you a drink." We'd fill a glass of gin that high [2-3-inches], "You drink all that or nothing." I answered, "You're torturing me!" But then one day he had a crate with a radio that the Japs stored there. He daren't open it. I said, "Now, I think you'd better open it." The moment he opened it, "Peace is here!" I forgot what day it was. So I went out, I yelled out in the street, I shouted, "Peace, peace, peace!"

Now, some said, "Be careful." That's funny, as soon as peace was declared, the Japs were wonderfully [disciplined]. In the old days if somebody were to say something bad to them, they'd get their heads cut off. But that day the children were spitting and threw stones at them. They wouldn't do a thing. Wonderfully disciplined. They just cried.

C.G.R.:

Did they?

W.E.T.:

Oh yes, they cried. It's wonderful. I suppose the Germans were the same. I suppose in war most people act the same way.

C.G.R.:

I'm afraid that's probably true.

W.E.T.:

Yes. I think probably the British and Americans at times were cruel too, but not to that extent.

C.G.R.:

No, I don't think to that extent.

W.E.T.:

I don't think <u>any</u> human being can be so cruel. They used to use cigarettes butts to torture prisoners.

C.G.R.:

Well, certainly I've heard that when they came first to Hong Kong, they bayoneted men in their beds and they raped nurses and killed them.

W.E.T.:

Oh yes. I remember the famous story about Dr. Black, a good friend of mine. He was in an emergency hospital at St. Stephen's

College, down in Stanley. A nurse I knew very well, I've forgotten her name, they wanted to rape her and the Doctor said, "No!" and they just bayoneted him -- Dr. Black. There were only three British firms -- Dr. Anderson, then Dr. Black, and another one -- three of them. Now, Dr. Black was the head of one of those firms, British firms, and he was a very nice man. He was killed. There are so many stories pertaining to those days. And nobody has written all about those atrocities.

C.G.R.:

No.

W.E.T.:

No, nobody has.

C.G.R.:

Were you able to practice during the war?

W.E.T.:

You know what happened, one of the local doctors collaborated with the Japs. He was practicing. Then below his place was a place where they do electroplating.

C.G.R.:

Electroplating?

W.E.T.:

Yes. So they have electrical current. I used to take my portable machine over and do what x-rays I could for a few yens. But this chap was very good to me. He sent me cases and I did work for him. I ended up with a few yens. I still have these Japanese yens.

C.G.R.:

Occupation money?

W.E.T.:

Yes. My father, funny, was so stingy; every month, he would write down so and so. "I've given you so much -- some of the peanuts and some other things." He gave so much. And, "You only brought in so much." I was amazed at my father -- every month: a statement. Then when peace was declared, my wife wanted to buy a chicken for us. He still said, "How can we afford a chicken?" Eventually, I think, we were given a sack of rice. We bartered for a chicken with that barrel of rice. Those were terrible days. Yes, those were the days. I hadn't thought about that for a long time. I'd forgotten about those instances.

The first thing I saw -- we were in Kowloon then, the mainland. It was one month after, before I went back to Hong Kong. My father lived in the office. I remember this lady whose father was well known in Japan, and the moment she mentioned his name, the Japanese would salute. So she got me some sort of a notice that prevented anyone entering my office. And she took me over on the motorboat, and even then, as I crossed the harbor, lots of bodies still floated in the water -- soldiers and people like that. Terrible.

The last week or so [before the war began] they sent 500 Canadian boys to Hong Kong. I don't think they were even armed. They were just being murdered by the Japs. It was really a terrible thing. Maybe one or two got away. It was a terrible thing. It was peculiar, for the evening before the Jap attack came (I usually know all the Mary Knoll priests, the Canadian priests) it was about 7 o'clock, one of them passed by and said,

"Look here, the war's on." How could he know? Because they attacked Hong Kong the next morning. But he said, the war's on. Peculiar.

C.G.R.:

Yes. He was right.

W.E.T.:

He was right. Maybe it wasn't the exact time, because in Hawaii it was the 7th, in Hong Kong it was the 8th. But that's all they...maybe not, maybe it had really started.

C.G.R.:

I think there was a few hours difference, yes. I can't remember the order. Actually, I think Singapore was attacked before any place, just by an hour or two. Not Singapore itself but in Malaya.

W.E.T.:

I remember the big battleship.

C.G.R.:

Oh yes, the Prince of Wales.

W.E.T.:

The Prince of Wales. I listened to that, by golly! And then we heard Churchill's speech; that was very wonderful.

[End of side 1.]

W.E.T.:

I was the main....

C.G.R.:

The bread-winner?

W.E.T.:

The bread-winner, yes. Because I had then the Canadian, American, Australian immigration work -- a sort of monopoly, you know. That helped me a lot, but it helped them also. Then after I left my father, they stayed with me, till now. I think my partners have taken over now.

C.G.R.:

How was your health during the war? Did you keep well?

W.E.T.:

Not too bad, no, not too bad. It was not until I came here, I had my first attack of diverticulitis. Well, I had one attack in Hong Kong; it was so bad that I had a very huge hard lump [in my right abdomen]. I thought it was cancer. But then, after they x-rayed me they found that I had diverticulitis. So I was released and the next day I went to the races, and my wife was mad and she said, "Send me all the way to London, and now you go to the races!" Then here in Vancouver I had the second attack. I was so blown up. The doctor came, he was a Chinese doctor. My doctor's partner. I said, "You give me a dose of morphia." And he said, "Oh, I see you must." So he gave me a dose of demerol. What is demerol? Is it morphia?

C.G.R.:

Yes, artificial but very similar.

W.E.T.:

Yes. I never heard of it until here, you see. He gave me a shot. It was all right but they took me to the hospital, and then, oh, the first time I had a proctoscope up my backside, oh, that thing was awful! Then they thought my prostate was giving me trouble, and I was operated on -- it wasn't very successful --

and periodically I had to go for dilatation. Then my eye. The last few years I've started to age, really. In 1982 it started. Tension built up, and I've got this nervous condition. But now my legs are giving away.

Yes, it's a long story but all this is really not much use to you, but....

C.G.R.:

No, it's very interesting. I'm wondering, during the war, were there particular diseases, were there epidemics of disease in Hong Kong or Kowloon, that you can remember?

W.E.T.:

Not particularly. The Japs are quite efficient that way. But then cannibalism -- to think it happened in Hong Kong!

C.G.R.:

Was that late in the war?

W.E.T.:

No, early in the war. No, when the Japanese occupied Hong Kong there.

I've still got these military yen, they called them military yen. My father at the last moment of the day when the Japs surrendered, the chief of police came to me and gave me 5000 yen, and he said, "Spend it today, tomorrow it will be no use." I phoned my father up, he wouldn't believe. So he still had stacks of them. I've still got them here.

C.G.R.:

I was going to ask you, did you take photographs during the war?

W.E.T.:

All my cameras were stolen, everything gone away. There were lots of pictures I could have taken. These dog fights. And when all the important Chinese politicians paraded with the Japanese flag [in the "Victory" march]. Even my brother-in-law. My cousin was amongst the first ones, because he was very British. It's terrible to see how people can change. Anti-Japanese feelings were so high, but when the Japs came everybody was waving flags. Human beings are awful!

C.G.R.:

Well, self-preservation is a very strong drive.

W.E.T.:

During the war we were, at one time, under the protection of the Argentina Consul. The week before, I x-rayed him, he'd had acute appendicitis, and he was operated on. Then the war came, he took us and the neighbors, the Portuguese and we Chinese, under his care, and he flew the flag. But then we had a bad time. Some of these Portuguese, they told him, they said, "Look here, why do you want these Chinese here?" "No, no, they are dirty people." They are good Christians, saying things like that. But the consul told them, he said, "They are my friends, if you don't like it you can go." You see, when war happens friends can turn unfriendly. It's awful to think of.

I have still a book written by this Jewish journalist. She's well known. Hong Kong to Me. You must know her. She married a British military man. She stayed in Hong Kong. If she had stayed longer she would have written more about those who collaborated, and how the Japs tried to rape her, and other

things. She is a good Jewish woman. It will come to me soon.

I remember one day she came to the office and said, "Hey Doc, take an x-ray of my tummy." I said, "What for?" "I want to see what this baby is like?" I said, "Either you've got a baby...." Maybe she was pregnant then. But you must know her, she is a very famous Jewish women. She's tough. She used to come in the office and smoke cheroots. Mickey Hahn!

C.G.R.:

Who?

W.E.T.:

Mickey Hahn. Have you heard of her?

C.G.R.:

I don't think I have, but perhaps so.

W.E.T.:

Mickey Hahn, H-a-h-n.

C.G.R.:

Why did she want the baby x-rayed?

W.E.T.:

She said she wanted to see what happened. She'd got a big tummy. She said, "I want to see if it's a boy or girl." I said, "I can't tell." She's a tough woman. But her book about Hong Kong while she was there is really wonderful. She wrote about...I think she mentioned Dr. Anderson's partners too.

C.G.R.:

I wanted to ask about one person who has nothing to do with the war. I wondered if you ever knew a Canadian medical missionary whose name was Gushue-Taylor, George Gushue-Taylor.

He was on Taiwan mostly. But I just wondered if perhaps he'd ever turned up in Hong Kong and you'd known him?

W.E.T.:

No. I've known many missionaries -- Canadian and American. I used to know that famous neurosurgeon, what's his name? Canadian neurosurgeon.

C.G.R.:

Penfield?

W.E.T.:

Penfield, yes.

C.G.R.:

Wilder Penfield.

W.E.T.:

Yes. He gave me some books he wrote. He is a religious person. Is he still living?

C.G.R.:

No, he's not. He died in about 1977 or 1978. I knew him myself, not terribly well, but I knew him.

W.E.T.:

What's his name again?

C.G.R.:

Penfield.

W.E.T.:

Yes. My memory's loose.

C.G.R.:

So is mine.

W.E.T.:

I'm 86, now, you see.

C.G.R.:

I know. That's wonderful.

W.E.T.:

But you're a young man.

C.G.R.:

Well, I'm not 86 but I'm not a young man.

W.E.T.:

About.....

C.G.R.:

I'm 52.

W.E.T.:

52. I started on my own when I was 53 years old. Oh yes, you're an infant [laughter].

C.G.R.:

Well, I trust I have a few years ahead of me still.

W.E.T.:

Oh sure.

INDEX