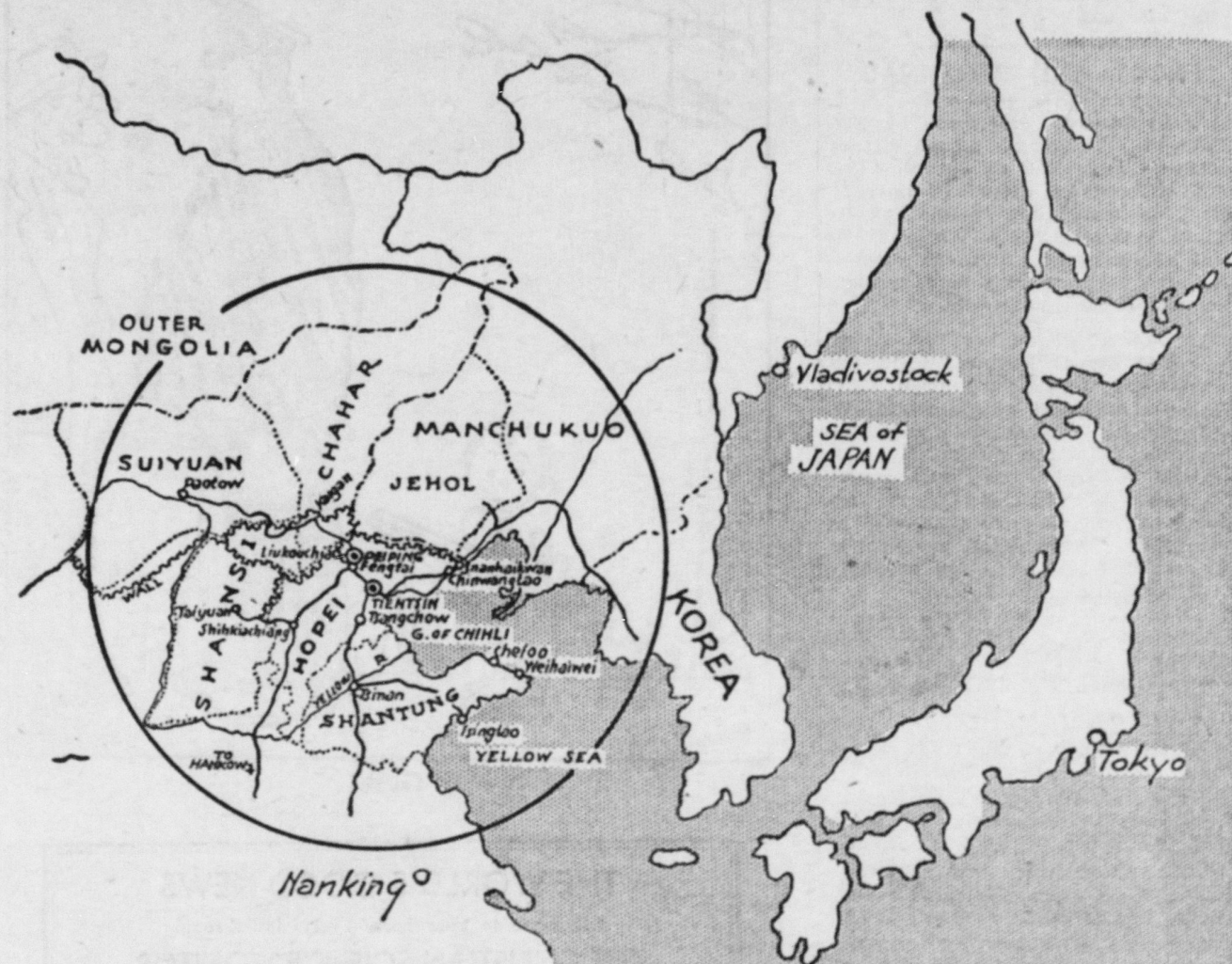


WHAT'S BEHIND THE WAR IN CHINA

Japanese Seek New Wealth They Failed to Find in Manchukuo; Chinese Are Not Yet Ready for Unified Resistance.



Circled on the map above are the five North China provinces which may be the next step in Japanese expansion.

By WILLIAM C. UTLEY

JAPAN is an ambitious nation and a needy one. Her ambition is the governmental and economic leadership of Asia, or at least eastern Asia. Her needs are territory for an ever-expanding population, raw materials that her own islands cannot produce in sufficient quantity, markets for her manufactured goods and adequate defense against her enemies.

This is why you read every few years—or even every few months—of a new war scare in North China. Sometimes it is not merely a scare, but an actual war, even as today, whether war has been officially "declared" or not.

Always upon the Chinese who oppose her gradual expansion, Japan wreaks a vengeance which to us across the Pacific often seems all out of proportion to the "aggression" committed by opposing her. But after each of these retributions she is found, when the smoke and flames clear away, to have assumed domination or even actual control over one more piece of territory.

Just how much more her influence will be extended after the present conflict has died out it is impossible to say. Indeed, that may depend upon the degree of opposition she meets. If the Chinese national government at Nanking, under the dictatorship of Gen. Chiang Kai-shek, decides to let the twenty-ninth army carry the main burden of defense, Japan will probably emerge with nothing more than an extension of control to cover the Peiping-Tientsin area and part of the province of Chahar. If, however, a China now more united than at any time since the downfall of the Manchu dynasty decides to come en masse to the aid of the twenty-ninth army, Japan may attempt to punish China to a terrible degree. Successful in this, Japan would probably extend her dominance throughout all the five northern provinces and virtually all of China south of the Yellow river valley.

Japan's Westward March.

If Chiang Kai-shek does throw the full strength of China at Japan, it will be a fight to the death. For the Japanese are full of that strange oriental pride which permits no loss of prestige. They will fight China to the bitter end before they will submit to a compromise on their demands. "Death before dishonor!" is more than a slogan with them. It is a law of nature as inexorable as the law of gravity.

The fighting in North China today is but another step in Japan's westward march. Earlier steps were those which resulted in control, tantamount to annexation, over the Chinese provinces of Manchuria and Jehol. For a short time after those steps were taken Japan marked time, strengthening her hold upon these provinces, and fortifying her front against Russia, the eternal enemy.

Manchukuo was supposed to open up vast, new and desirable horizons. Japan's population of 70,000,000 was growing at the rate of 1,000,000 a year; her people needed more room and more raw materials. Since 1931 she has poured investments totaling 1,400,000,000 yen into the puppet state. Some results were forthcoming—soy beans and kaoliang, chemicals, slight increases in iron ore and coal, and a good increase in oil shale—but these fell far short of Nippon's hopes.

Manchukuo was supposed to open up a great new market for Japanese manufactured goods; but the increase in exports to the United States for 1935 over 1934 was equal to one-third of the total exports to Manchukuo. As a new home for

Japanese colonists Manchukuo was pretty much of a flop; less than 250,000 Japanese live there today.

It was apparent that Japan could not, in pursuing her hegemonic policy, continue marking time for very long. In North China were larger fields for her exports; in addition, the area was that much closer to the great market of China proper. So the Japanese began to cast covetous eyes upon Hopei, which includes the cities of Peiping and Tientsin; Chahar, which lies between Mongolia and Manchukuo; Suiyuan, Shansi and Shantung. They penetrated (peacefully, to be sure) through Hopei and Chahar, until these two became practically self-governing states.

Anti-Japanese Spirit Grows.

In Hopei's eastern countries, Japanese influence blossomed into a virtual protectorate. But when it reached a certain point Japan's peaceful invasion was halted. With the rise of Chiang Kai-shek, the Chinese were developing a new unity, although they were not nearly so unified as our states are, for instance. Yet the anti-Japanese spirit was becoming more widespread and more open. It probably culminated in the skirmish between Chinese and Japanese at Marco Polo bridge, the incident which gave rise to the present grave crisis.

It is assumed by many observers in the Far East that the incident was seized upon by Nippon as an excuse for further Japanese invasion on the pretext of retaliation, which would extend Japanese control over the five North China states and even to the south, eventually. Others contend that Japan's immediate objective is the strengthening of her grip on Hopei and Chahar.

Yet it cannot be overlooked that the other three provinces hold rich prizes for Toyyo. Shansi contains more than half of all the coal in China; the other northern provinces are capable of great cotton production for Japanese industries and for the manufacture of gunpowder, so essential to a militant nation. Japan once imported the bulk of the cotton crop of China, which is third in the world's production; but China began to restrict her cotton exports to Japan and left the latter in a bad way.

Suiyuan and Chahar are extremely important to Japan's military strategy, for they would act as an efficient buffer along the left flank of her Asiatic front, greatly strengthening her position on the mainland.

On the other side of these provinces lies Sovietized Mongolia. The terrain of Suiyuan and Chahar, partly included in the Gobi desert, is wild and difficult, and without satisfactory transportation facilities. It would take only a small, well-trained Japanese army to prevent penetration by the Russians and to prevent the spread of communism. Further, the Japanese, in possession of these two provinces, could then put an end to their use as a base for communist guerrilla warfare against Manchukuo and Jehol.

Railroads Key to Control.

On the peninsula of Shantung are the rich Yellow river valley and the ports of Chefoo, Weihaiwei and

Tsingtao. With Hopei and Shansi, Shantung forms the transportation center of North China. In possession of the peninsula Japan would be in a position to control the Gulf of Chihli and the Yellow sea.

Key to domination of China is its railroad system. Who controls the railroads can control the territory they serve. It may be seen upon the accompanying map how the railroads of North China radiate from the area about Peiping and Tientsin. Once Japan is in complete control of this area her influence could follow the rails to the important city of Kalgan in Chahar, and from there to Paotow in Suiyuan; into the southwest over the Peiping-Hankow railway to Shihkiachiang and southern Hopei, and to Taiyuan in Shansi; southward from Tientsin to Tsangchow and across the Yellow river to Tsinan, thence southward again to Nanking itself and eastward to the port of Tsingtao. These railroads, in addition to one across Hopei from Tsangchow to Shihkiachiang which the Japanese wish to build if they can get the permission of China, are of tremendous military importance.

From the latest dispatches it appears Japan is in control of the all-important line between Tientsin and Peiping, although it is a precarious sort of control, with the Chinese twenty-ninth army constantly threatening to attack. Actually, during the early days of the present crisis, the Chinese did press a drive along this railroad, capturing three key stations, only to lose them again after a brief tenure.

Liukouchiao, the railroad junction south of Peiping which controls the Peiping-Hankow railroad route, is also vital to Japanese hegemony; it was the scene of one of the early battles.

As this is being written Gen. Chiang Kai-shek is faced with a decision that China has had to make again and again since the Japanese awakened to the necessity for expansion. Shall he declare open warfare against Japan, or shall his national government continue to make feeble protests while the local troops of the North defend their country—in effect, as they are wont to do?

Japanese Better Equipped.

China is more united today than it has been for many years in the past; indeed the very bond of unity has been the common feeling of indignation over the encroachment of the Land of the Rising Sun. There are many demands for war pouring into Nanking from the provinces. But the feeling is generally that the time has not yet come for general and unified effort to throw out the invaders.

Local Chinese forces in Hopei and Chahar are not equal to the task of repulsing the Japanese, even though every last man is ready to lay down his life. The twenty-ninth army is fairly well equipped, but hordes of the provincial troops have only long swords with which to battle airplane bombers, artillery, tanks and machine guns. The Japanese are ready to make war with the finest modern paraphernalia, and there are plenty of troops ready for replacements. Chiang's only hope, if he should declare war, would be to dispatch the national government's best troops to the North China front and defeat the Japanese with sheer power of numbers—for he could outnumber them two to one, and better.

Probably he will decide to let the Japanese have what they want, just as they took what they wanted in Manchuria and Jehol.

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"Horse Versus Man"

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Famous Headline Hunter

"HERE," says Raymond J. Hopper of Roslindale, "is the story of my life's darkest moment."

And I've got to admit that there was one time when Ray's life got pretty dark. It got so dark, as a matter of fact, that even the captain was worried. But I've got to admit, too, that from all the evidence I've been able to gather, it wasn't Ray the captain was worried about. They're pretty hard-boiled—these captains.

Ray was in the army. Any buck private will tell you that life's dark enough in the army without adventures coming along to make them darker.

But Ray got into the army and into an adventure too. And that gives you a combination of sombre hues that's about two shades darker than an undertaker's hat.

'Twas the Day Before Christmas.

The United States Coast artillery was Ray's branch of the service, and Ray was stationed at Fort Greble, Rhode Island. It was December 24, 1900. Ray remembers the date because it was the day before Christmas. Also, he remembers that it was cold—bitter cold. The mercury was way down below the zero mark and the only things around that weren't frozen were the beans boiling on the cook shack stove.

Fort Greble is on an island. All the supplies come by boat, and the boat ties up at the end of a wharf built out two hundred feet into the sea to reach deep water. Ray says the wharf was about 15 feet wide, with six-by-six timber bolted all the way around the edges.

I suppose that stuff was put there to keep things from rolling off the pier—but it didn't do very well in stopping Ray Hopper.

Ray was down on the wharf juggling supplies for the quartermaster's department. They had given him a horse and a two-wheeled tip-cart. Driving down he noticed that his buddy was working on a small boat pulled up on the shore about a hundred yards from the wharf. He didn't think anything of that at the time—but he thought plenty about it later.

Out of the Cart Into the Water.

Says Ray: "The fact that he chose that particular day and hour and minute to do the job he was working on is the reason why I am alive today."

Ray drove on out to the end of the wharf. The supply boat was tied up there and he started pulling the horse around to back up to it.

As he did, the horse came face to face with a large black boiler that had been left there the day before.

The horse wasn't accustomed to seeing that boiler there. It frightened him. He gave a sudden jump backward.

And then—it happened!

The wheels of the tip-cart rammed up against the six-inch timber that circled the edge of the wharf. They hit it—and went right over.

Ray, on the seat of the cart, was thrown backward. He somersaulted off of the cart and landed head first in about 30 feet of icy salt-water.

"And as I fell," he says, "I saw first the cart and then the horse coming over on top of me."

Ray couldn't swim a stroke. He was dressed in heavy clothing, including a heavy felt army ulster, and that made his chance even slimmer.

The water sent an icy chill through his body. He went down—down. He tried to strike out with his hands to bring himself to the surface—and then there was a kicking, flailing body on top of him, pushing him down even farther. It was the horse!

"I was told afterward," Ray says, "that the horse hit the water on his back, at the exact spot at which I went under. The men on the wharf were sure I would never come up alive. But I did. I came up right beside the horse."

Horse Tried to Climb on Him.

The horse was being dragged under by the heavy cart. Ray came up, right under the heels of the kicking, screaming animal. The horse saw Ray, and tried to climb up on him.

Once more, Ray was pushed down into the green water.

Ray caught a deep breath just before he went under. Then he was back again, with the horse's hoofs beating a frantic tattoo on his back and shoulders. That second time he thought he'd never come up.

His lungs felt as though they'd burst before he got to the surface.

He rose slowly—his heavy water-logged clothes holding him down.

And when he did come up, there was the horse again, climbing all over him—pushing him down once more. That time, Ray slid off to one side and didn't go down so far.

Thrashing madly at the water with his numbed arms he fought his way to the surface again. He caught a breath—started to go down again.

This was the third time. And Ray had heard that people who go down for the third time don't ever come up again.

Then, suddenly he felt a hand grasp him by the hair. He was being pulled out of the water—into a boat. And there was his buddy in the boat, hauling him over the side.

From where he was working he had seen Ray fall into the water. He had launched the boat and come speeding to the rescue.

Before his buddy could row him back to shore, Ray's clothing was frozen stiff. Ice fell off him in little chunks as two men carried him to his quarters. Meanwhile, someone had cut the harness from the horse and he swam ashore.

The boys stripped Ray, gave him a good rub-down and wrapped him in blankets. Inside of half an hour he felt as good as new—and he didn't even catch a cold as a result of his ice-water ducking.

Ray's buddy worried about him for a while—but the captain, apparently didn't. Ray says that when they reported the accident to him his only remark was "Is the horse safe?"

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Japanese Girls Are Expert Pearl Divers

Pearl diving in Japan—exclusively an occupation for women—today is an important industry, producing 5,000,000 pearl oysters a year, many of which are exported to the United States, writes a correspondent in the Kansas City Times.

For hundreds of years Japanese girls, ranging from sixteen to twenty-five, have supported themselves and their families by following this romantic profession of the sea. No men are allowed to break in on their work of snatching pearl oysters from the sea's bottom.

The metropolis of the pearl world is "Pearl island" in Miye prefecture, which has been known from antiquity for its "ama," or feminine divers. At one time they went nude from the waist up, but Kokichi Mikimoto, the famous "pearl king" of Japan, who is reputed to have become as rich as the fabled King Minos of Crete from the virtual monopoly he enjoys in pearl fishing, insists that all feminine divers shall wear white waists along with their cotton skirts.

So vigorous and hardy do these pearl mermaids become that they continue pearl diving even on the eve of childbirth. The remorseless sun beating down on the sea gives them a tanned skin, their hair turns reddish from the salt water and they become as weather-beaten as seasoned "salt tars."

Japan's fair pearl divers not only search the sea bottom for pearls to adorn the necks of American and

other foreign women, but they must work hard in field, farm and home. In fact, they support their brothers, fathers and husbands, who stroll about the village doing nothing. The girls seldom marry young, because they are too valuable to their parents as breadwinners. Even the wife of a Japanese in easy circumstances—if she be a pearl diver—is expected by public opinion to continue her aquatic profession until long after she is married. Among the elders of the village she would lose "face" if she gave up so ancient and honorable a profession merely for marriage.

Fatal Duels in Scotland

Auchtertool is the field of Balbarton, in which the last fatal duel in Scotland was staged. It was within this vicinity that the great duel between Sir Alexander Boswell, son of the great biographer, and Mr. Stewart, of Dunearn, was fought. Boswell was fatally injured and was carried to Balmuto, resulting in a storm of protest which ended duel fighting in Scotland. The village is also associated with the great Palace of Halyards which figures prominently in three centuries of English literature. It was at this palace that Sir James and his son, William, were implicated in the murder of Cardinal Beaton, and where King James V left Edinburgh to live in seclusion. Equally famous, the palace has long been identified with many historic plots, including the Jacobite raids of historic note.

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More fun than a picnic... drying dishes with these cross-stitched towels. Put color into them with cotton floss, and you'll have the gayest, gladdest set ever! Here's pick-up work that fairly flies for each motif's in 8-to-the-inch crosses. Think what a welcome gift just a pair of these would



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