

## Chapter 2

### Japan

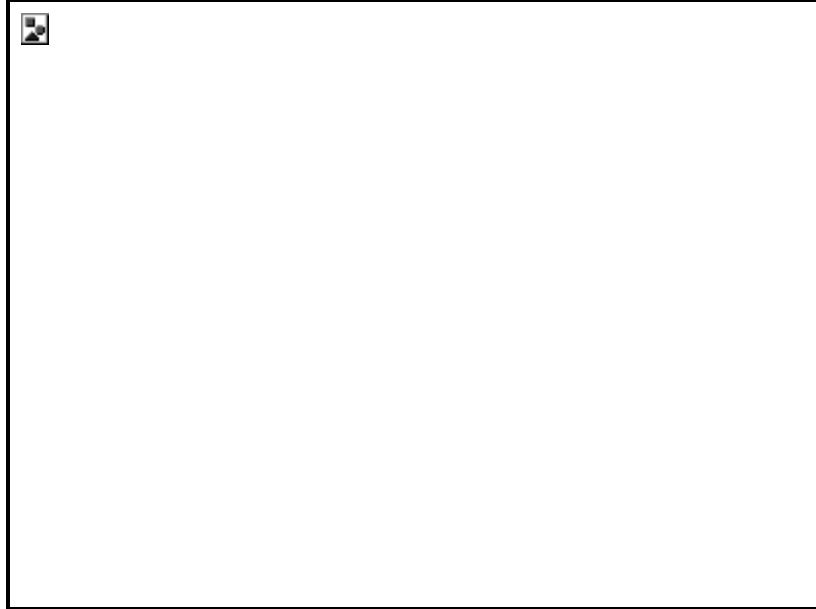
***“The Emperor is the descendant of the Sun Goddess. All Japanese are the sons of gods.” Amletto Vespa.***

Early on the morning of October 26<sup>th</sup> 1934, Gareth’s liner, the *SS Manhattan* steamed out of Southampton harbour bound for the city of New York, on the first stage of his ‘Round the World Fact Finding Tour’. His final destination was the Far East. The evening before, his father, Major Edgar Jones, his sister, Eirian, his niece Siriol (the author), and his close friends, the von Dewalls said goodbye to him on the boat train at Waterloo station, London. As he left, Wolf von Dewall, the London correspondent of *Die Frankfurter Zeitung*, gave him a Chinese name of Yo Nien Sse (which translates as lofty mountains, studying and reflecting).

Two days after he arrived in the United States of America the American Congressional elections were held, resulting in a great victory for the popular Franklin D. Roosevelt’s Democratic Party. Gareth forever the journalist, immediately telegraphed this news, at great expense, to the *Berliner Tageblatt* arriving in time for their next morning’s edition. He then spent a very full and hectic month on the East coast of America lecturing on his Russian experiences, meeting influential persons, writing articles for American and British newspapers and speaking on the radio. On November 27<sup>th</sup> he left by Pullman sleeper for Wales, Wisconsin in the Mid-West with the intention of visiting the Welsh farming community. One of their famous descendants was Frank Lloyd Wright, the idiosyncratic architect of worldwide repute and Gareth spent a most interesting time with him and his wife at their home, Taliesin.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Lloyd Wright’s maternal grandparents, Richard and Mallie Lloyd Jones left their home in Llandysul, Cardiganshire (Ceredigion) in 1843 at the time of the Rebecca Riots to find a new life in America. Wright was proud of his Welsh heritage and according to his biography by Meryle Secrest: “anyone named Jones was accorded preferential treatment there”.

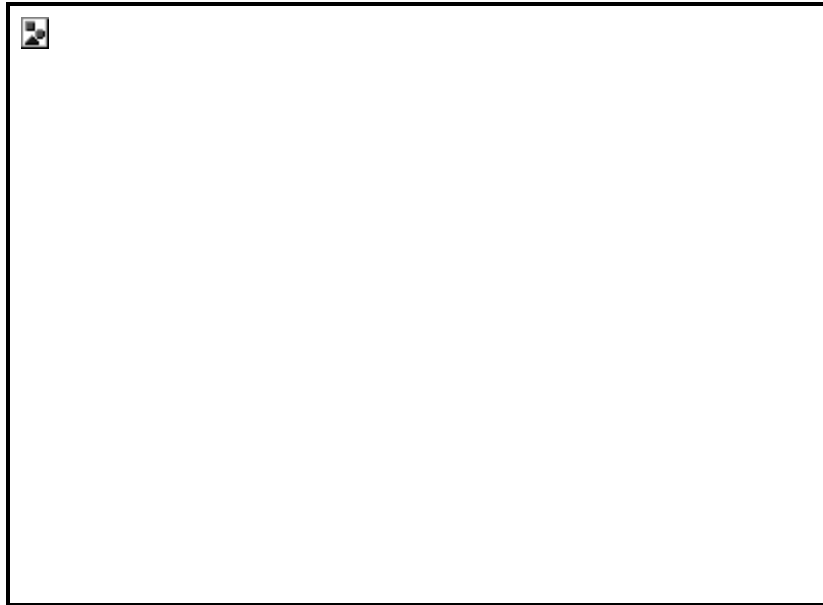


***Frank and Olgivanna Lloyd Wright at Taliesin. [FOR PICTURES  
PLEASE VISIT WEBSITE OR PURCHASE BOOK.]***

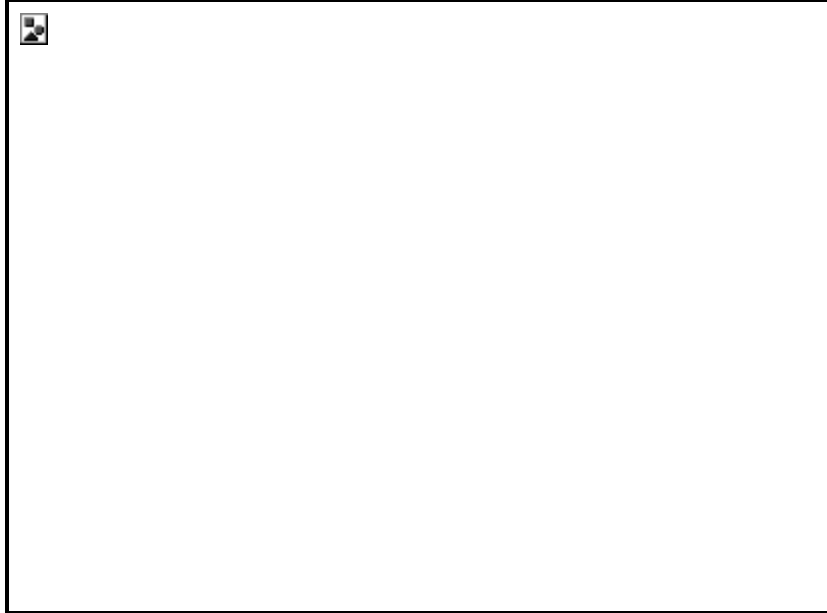


*Gareth and Mrs Lloyd Wright at Taliesin. The photo was taken by  
Frank Lloyd Wright.*

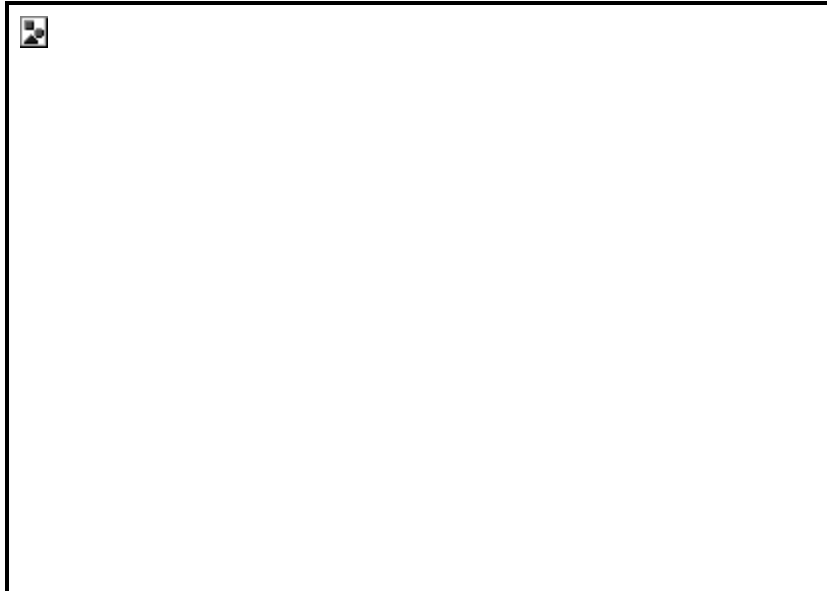
He returned from Madison, Wisconsin, for yet more energetic days in Chicago before he embarked on the Grand Canyon Railway line. From the train's observation car he described passing the frozen Missouri River, and dreary cornfields in Kansas. Stopping briefly in Santé Fe, he continued through the Arizona desert to California. The Christmas period was spent in Hollywood where he visited the Metro Goldwyn Mayer Studios and attended the preview of the film *David Copperfield*. Earlier in the summer, as a young journalist on the staff of *The Western Mail*, Gareth interviewed William Randolph Hearst, at his Welsh home, St Donat's Castle, Llantwit Major and the newspaper magnate invited Gareth to stay on his ranch, San Simeon when he visited California. New Year was spent at this elegant home and Gareth sent photographs of the palatial estate to his parents. One picture was of Gareth braving the inside of the Royal Bengal man-eating tiger's cage at the Hearst's private zoo. As in the Eastern States he lectured on such topics as the New Commonwealth and the International Police Force and wrote articles on Roosevelt's Foreign Policy for the *Manchester Guardian*. He was fêted wherever he went and he described his time in California as fantastic and a very great success.



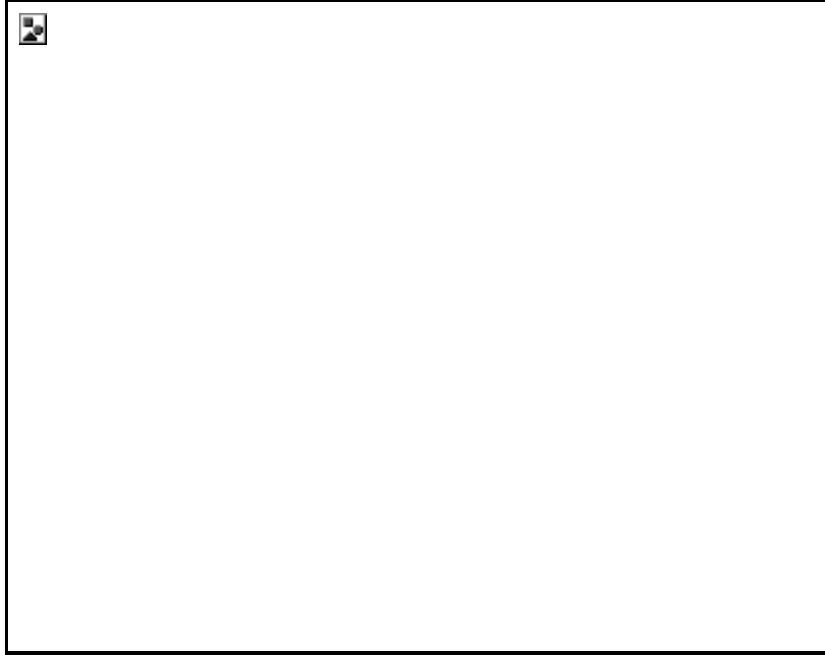
*William Randolph Hearst's ranch, San Simeon.*



*Gareth wrote on the reverse side. "I took this photo inside a man-eating tiger's cage at the Hearst Ranch. The trainer stood by my side with a pitch fork." January 2<sup>nd</sup> 1935.*



*Gareth's bedroom when he stayed at Hearst's Ranch.*



*Gareth in the Mojave desert.*

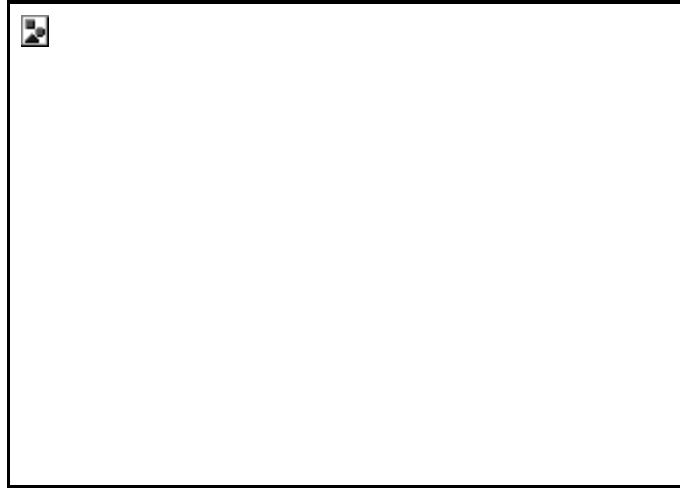
On January 20<sup>th</sup> 1935, in San Francisco Gareth embarked on the *SS President Monroe* for Honolulu. The sea was extremely rough - the old boat pitched and tossed and rolled continually, it constantly poured with rain.<sup>2</sup> He hoped that when he reached port he would have more enthusiasm for Japan and China. The company was very dull - so dull that he spent most of his time reading. The best-selling book, which especially excited his imagination was *One's Company* by Peter Fleming,<sup>3</sup> an account of the author's adventurous journey through Chinese bandit country in the previous year - this thrilling story subsequently inspired Gareth's choice of route from Hong Kong to Manchukuo.

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<sup>2</sup> He wrote to his family: "I would give anything to be at home in front of a good fire or to go for a walk with Dada (his father) and Ianto (his dog) on the beach. I am homesick, but not seasick."

<sup>3</sup> Peter Fleming was probably the role model for Ian Fleming, his brother, in the James Bond spy thrillers. On account of his buccaneering lifestyle, Peter became a special operation executive in World War Two.

After a few days in Hawaii he boarded the *SS President Coolidge*. As the ship left port, thousands of coloured streamers were thrown from the ship to the pier and Gareth was presented with a lei; a wreath of flowers to put round his neck. It was a beautiful boat, such a contrast to the *SS President Monroe* and was about five times larger and very luxurious, having excellent drawing rooms, suites, a cinema, tea garden and an orchestra. In the dining room he sat with a charming young Chinese man who had a great sense of humour and his young son, aged three, called Pax. Mr Cheng<sup>4</sup> had been for many years at the League of Nations Secretariat, hence the child's name. Pax could only speak French and was always talking about Mickey Mouse and 'le grand méchant loup' [the (animated) big bad wolf from the Three Little Pigs].



*Gareth with young Pax on the SS Coolidge.*<sup>5</sup>

During the voyage they experienced one of the worst storms in the Pacific for a very long time. Many people watched the

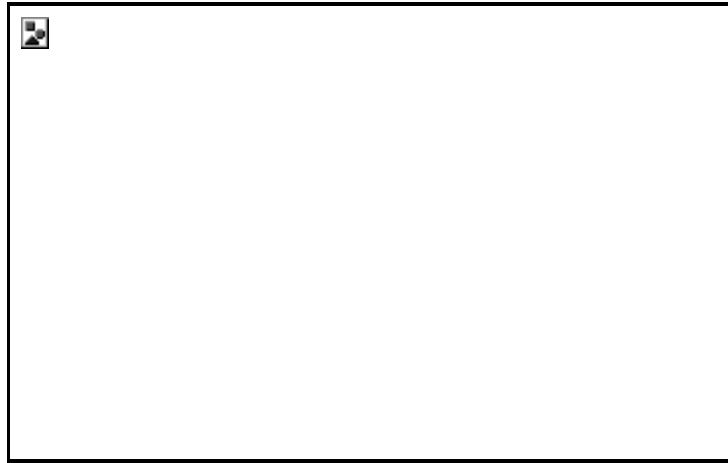
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<sup>4</sup> Mr Cheng was very worried about the banks failing in Shanghai on account of the American Silver Purchase Act and he sent a cable from the boat telling the bank to pay out all his account in cash to his father-in-law.

<sup>5</sup> In the Second World War, the *SS President Coolidge* was converted to a troop carrier. On 20<sup>th</sup> October 1942 it struck a mine in the Segond Channel off the island of Espiritu Santo in Vanuatu in the Southern Pacific with the loss of two lives.

mountainous waves for hours. Huge ‘monsters’ came towards the ship and the boat would go up and then down again. Sometimes the whole vessel would crash, while bumping on two waves. One night there was a fancy dress party, but just as the dancing began a wave made the boat lurch and a great many people were swept from the middle of the floor to one end falling on top of each other. The tables collapsed and chairs fell over. The captain said it was the worst storm he had fought in 25 years of seamanship.

Gareth was delighted to be on land again after days of violent storms. The immigration officials paid great attention to him when they learned he was a journalist. They asked what papers he wrote for and made him list every book and pamphlet that he had with him. With his companions from the ship, Gareth caught a bus from Yokohama to the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo (designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, and said to be the most talked-of hotel in the world). The yellow brick was not very pleasing - the overhanging stones were good, but Gareth thought that the building just resembled some big railway station.<sup>6</sup>



*The Imperial Hotel in Tokyo built by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1922 and eventually demolished.*

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<sup>6</sup> Though the Imperial Hotel withstood the Great Kanto earthquake of 1923, which destroyed nearly half the city of Tokyo, some years later this architectural masterpiece was demolished because it had been neglected and had become unsafe.

After such a long period at sea, and having had no news of events from home, he was delighted to find a huge bundle of letters waiting for him. At last he was in Japan and, as he quickly felt more comfortable in Tokyo, his homesickness lifted. Spring was a fine time to be in the city with its beautiful blossoms and he thought he would stay in Tokyo until the middle of April when the Emperor of Manchukuo, Pu Yi, was to visit the country. Everything in the city looked very modern except for the rickshaw men who shouted and followed him persistently wherever he went. Many of the houses were lightly built of wood because there were so many earthquakes. There were well fed children everywhere, many in old padded costume with wooden sandals, and they swarmed all over the place looking most picturesque in their coloured garments.

One evening Gareth, together with some young American students (who had been on the boat and were also staying at the Imperial Hotel), were taken by a young man from the American Embassy to a Japanese restaurant. Maiko (apprentice geisha) girls entertained them. These girls were doll-like and little more than children, seeming not to be fully trained. On entering, Gareth's party had to remove their shoes before sitting cross-legged on the floor while dinner was cooked on the table. Gareth remarked that he found it very difficult to use chopsticks and was the clumsiest of them all.

Gareth had no intention of spending much time at leisure and was soon at work in his role as a journalist. The facts contained in his diaries are of historical interest and form a great contrast with the light-hearted letters he wrote home. He interviewed many of the most powerful men who dominated Japanese policy in the early thirties and the questions he asked might be the first pieces of the jigsaw of his very short life. These may have had some bearing on his death and their significance will become apparent as this story unfolds.

The Japanese Ambassador to Great Britain, Mr Matsudaira gave Gareth a letter of introduction to Amau (Amō) Eliji, the spokesman for the Japanese Foreign Office in Tokyo and he contacted him soon after his arrival in Japan. Gareth described Amau's office as being in a wooden shack just like the Buttrils (army huts in Barry) during the Great War. Amau had lots of black hair, a roundish face



with big glasses, and a rather serious appearance. Gareth attended a number of Amai's press conferences, which enabled him to gain an insight into the Japanese Foreign Policy towards Russia and China. Amai put on record that the Japanese had no intention of interfering with Chinese internal affairs, but that if the Russians invaded Manchukuo then they would have no option but to fight to defend Manchukuo.<sup>7</sup>



*Gareth with maiko (geisha) girl.*

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<sup>7</sup> One year previously he proposed the “Amai Doctrine” which stated that Japan had a special mission to maintain peace and order in East Asia and opposed any financial assistance to China by foreign countries. This statement was termed in China and elsewhere as ‘the Japanese Asian Monroe Doctrine’, which openly challenged the ‘Open Door’ Policy and ‘Nine-Power Treaty’ system. A summary of Amai’s statements is in the endnotes. The State of Manchukuo is referred to in a later footnote.

After the first press conference Gareth discussed Outer Mongolia with the Russian correspondent for Tass and then a man of about forty-five introduced himself as Mr Cox, the Reuters' correspondent. Mr Cox was exceedingly helpful - he took Gareth into his office and introduced him to some journalist colleagues who were influencing world opinion about Japan including Mr Iwanaga, the head of Rengo (the very powerful Japanese news agency), Mr Byass of *The Times* and Mr Young, an International News Service correspondent.

In a private conversation with Mr Cox, Gareth formed the impression that co-operation between China and Japan was impossible. Gareth wrote in his diary that James 'Jimmy' Melville Cox believed:

They're certain to annexe Manchukuo. They've only got old Manchu's in big positions there. What the Japanese Army wants is the possession of North China - they want Pu Yi to go to Peking, which could then be taken in a day. Defensively the Japanese could say that they are helping the Manchu's to their rightful empire. Of course it would be foolish, but the Japanese military are of that frame of mind. They are mad - they think they can do anything and have never been in the outside world. In the Philippines they are aiming for domination, while in China, the Japanese want a proposal to send military advisors to fight against the Communists. You might get a chance of going through in June and seeing anti-Communist raids. The Russians can help the Communists in Sinkiang and we are afraid that the Szechuan Communists will join up with them. China is being united by a hatred of Japan.<sup>8</sup>

Despite Mr Cox's and the American correspondents' opinions, Tokyo seemed so peaceful that Gareth felt disappointed that it was going to be a terribly quiet summer in the Far East because Japan and China would be out of the news. The Japanese he met led him to believe that Japan was 'making friends' with China and Russia; that war was out of the question and he felt he was in for a dull time.

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<sup>8</sup> In 1941 Jimmy Cox died in the custody of the Japanese Secret police. See endnote.

After a few days at the Imperial Hotel Gareth moved to the Bunka Apartments and wrote in his next letter home that:

The time has rushed along so much that I'd better leave my experiences in Japan to another letter. I am having a great time and am most happy. I found a journalist friend, Günther Stein, whom I knew in London.<sup>9</sup> He is Jewish, formerly of the *Berliner Tageblatt*, and we are living in the same apartment house. He is good company. When I arrived I found that there were no sheets, towels, pillows or restaurant and that I was supposed to supply everything. I borrowed a cushion and blankets and put a coat over myself. The trams made a horrible din and I found it hard to sleep. I read poetry and tried to go to sleep, but it was very hard. I woke early with the noise of the trams. It is now very quiet and I overlook a number of Japanese houses. It is a beautiful crisp day - just the kind of day for a walk with Ianto down the Vale of Glamorgan. The sun is setting and I have been all day working. It is difficult to realise that I am in Asia, because everything is so modern. Nearly all the food I have is European, though I do like some of the Japanese food - the fish, lobsters and prawns are lovely. This place that I stay in is quite European - in my room I might be anywhere, London, Berlin or Vienna, except that every night I hear the watchman in the street beating two sticks, which sound a hollow ping-ping to show that all is well - like the 'Maestersingers' of Nüremberg. He comes carrying a Chinese lantern. The other night an earthquake awakened me. I felt the bed shaking back and forwards and the room was trembling. I could not quite understand what it was. It lasted for three minutes. A fellow traveller Mr Pickering, the Liberal M.P. from Leicester, said that it was a quite a fair-sized quake.

Gareth made an appointment to meet the British Ambassador, Sir Robert Clive, and walked to the Embassy for his interview. It was a lovely two mile walk from the Bunka Apartments passing wonderful

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<sup>9</sup> Günther Stein was a colleague of the notorious double secret agent, Richard Sorge. See endnote.

trees along the moat. They discussed many political issues.<sup>10</sup> Having bid the Ambassador farewell he walked back to his apartment through the streets of Tokyo and came across what he thought was a fine temple. He saw people taking off their shoes and going through a doorway. He looked in, removed his shoes reverently and followed the women going in when he was stopped and told to use the other entrance. He took off his hat, was given a piece of wood, which he thought was a prayer stick and went in. To his great shock and surprise, inside a number of people were taking a bath!

A few days later Gareth interviewed Baron Shidehara<sup>11</sup> who seemed to be afraid of saying anything except that he desired peace and that it would be impossible to conquer China. He did however ask Gareth what had impressed him most about Japan and Gareth replied immediately saying: “The fascinating trees with their grotesque and poetic shapes”. He noticed the ex-minister’s eyes fill with tears and the older man said: “I am moved by that. It is curious that Lord Grey said a similar thing when he came to see me and when we looked out at the trees near the lake”.

Though Gareth wrote affectionately of his home and family he was not lonely, and led a very full social life. His diaries and letters are full of innumerable invitations to lunch and dinner. He seems to have made quite an impression on the English community in Tokyo who found his conversation lively, and were particularly

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<sup>10</sup> See endnote for a summary of the interview.

<sup>11</sup> Shidehara had been the Foreign Minister of Japan up to the end of 1931. He became Acting-Prime Minister after the attempted assassination of the Prime Minister, Hamaguchi. After the conquest of Manchuria he played no active part in government, as his policy towards China was considered weak. An acquaintance, Mr Kumasaka, told Gareth that when the Prime Minister Hamaguchi was mortally wounded on the station at Tokyo, he was standing near with Baron Shidehara. Hearing a bang, he rushed over to the Prime Minister and then went and stood near Shidehara. He guarded the Foreign Minister from behind as his life was in great danger, because of his politics, which, however, reflected the modern public opinion at the time. For three months, a “would-be” assassin lived in a house nearby in order to kill him. Fortunately, Shidehara had a heart attack, which kept him at home for a very long time and he was not assassinated. In 1945 after the Second World War, Shidehara was briefly the first Prime Minister in the period of the American occupation.

impressed that he had been foreign adviser to David Lloyd George. In his next letter home he gave an account of his invitation to dine with Sir Robert Clive, the Ambassador; Sir Leslie Wilson, the Governor of Queensland; Captain Vyvian, Colonel James and ladies. His recollections of the conversation at the meal were that it had revolved around whether Japan wanted war or peace.<sup>12</sup> This mix of journalistic investigation and high social life was something that Gareth relished:

I am enjoying myself exceedingly. I've been busy seeing heaps of people and being invited out all the time. All is going well. I am amazed at the freedom of expression in Japan. There are many attacks on the military. The description of the famine here is in the papers and in Parliament continually.

He wrote from Bunka Apartments that he had decided to go to Siam and gave details of his journey. There were three reasons for his plans - journalistic, climatological and financial. He felt very few journalists went to the Philippines, the Dutch East Indies or to Siam and there would "be masses of new and valuable material":

On Friday week, March 15<sup>th</sup>, I sail for the Philippines via Shanghai and Hong Kong. I shall stay a week in the Philippines, then go to Batavia in Java, to Singapore and then on to Bangkok. I have decided to go from Siam through French Indo-China to see the ruins of Angkor Wat in Cambodia, then to Hanoi and on to Hong Kong. It will be new material. I can't think of many British journalists who have written about Indo-China. In the late autumn I shall go to America to lecture and give radio talks where I have had some splendid reports last year, then HOME for Christmas.

The summer in the Philippines, South China and Singapore is terrible. The only liveable place in the Far East

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<sup>12</sup> Sir Leslie ridiculed the idea that Japan wanted to attack Australia, Dutch East Indies or India saying that he believed that they wanted good relations with China. He thought General Hayashi, the War Minister, had common sense and calmed the other ministers; that Baron Takahashi (an ex-Prime Minister) was a "wonderful old boy" and General Araki was now in the background, but was still revered by the young officers.

in August is in the mountains of Japan. All the diplomats and journalists go to Karuisawa where it is cool because there one has contacts and can work. Knowledge of countries like Siam will be helpful if I give talks in America.

Life was full and exciting and Gareth obviously enjoyed every minute of it. On March 7<sup>th</sup> in his next letter home he wrote that:

This is going to be an exceedingly interesting week, because I am going to have interviews with four of the outstanding personalities in Japanese life: Matsuoka, who took Japan out of the League of Nations at Geneva,<sup>13</sup> General Araki, the firebrand who was Minister of War, General Hayashi, who is now Minister of War and Admiral Osumi, who is the Minister of the Navy. These politicians are the men who play such a big part in modern Japan.

The first of these interviews was with Mr Matsuoka Yosuke, a stockily built man with broad rough features and Hitler-like moustache. He received Gareth wearing a black silk kimono. Gareth met him on a previous occasion, when dining with Mr Iwanaga. At this dinner party, Mr Matsuoka told the assembled company that he could not understand why Britain had suddenly deserted Japan at the League of Nations. He considered that Sir John Simon, the British Foreign Minister, had been on his side up to the very last and believed, but was not certain, that America had used pressure on the question of the war debts. When Matsuoka, who had been educated in the United States, travelled through America, was asked by the Americans: “When will you return to the League of Nations?” he sarcastically replied, “Why did you never join?”

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<sup>13</sup> Matsuoka Yosuke took Japan out of the League of Nations on February 24<sup>th</sup> 1933, following the Manchurian (Mukden) Incident (September 18<sup>th</sup> 1931) and the Shanghai Fake War (January 28<sup>th</sup> 1932). On March 1<sup>st</sup> 1932, a manifesto announced that Manchukuo was founded. The reference is to the time when all the members of the League of Nations, except Siam, voted against Japan following the Lytton Report, which condemned Japan for having invaded Manchuria and annexing the territory from China. Matsuoka was then instrumental for Japan withdrawing from the League. See endnote for a summary of the interview.

The following day he interviewed General Araki Sadao.<sup>14</sup> From a narrow side lane, passing the miniature trees in a few yards of garden, Gareth reached Araki's small humble wooden home on the outskirts of the city. He took off his shoes at the threshold, donned slippers, and was taken into a modest room with European furniture. In one corner, there stood a medieval suit of Japanese armour with a golden dragon on the helmet. In another stood the statue of General Nogi, who committed hara-kiri with his wife on the death of Emperor Meiji, grandfather of Emperor Hirohito, showing the type of courage that General Araki admired. The tiger skin on the sofa and the picture of a wild tiger with staring eyes about to spring were perhaps symbols of the sudden attack favoured by the Japanese Army in the past. As a contrast, underneath a picture of a tiger there was an oil painting of apples and grapes - Victorian and in Gareth's opinion, very amateurish. Near the window a bullet had the place of honour. General Araki, dressed in a black kimono, his head shaved like a Buddhist monk, entered quietly. His voice was quiet. His eyes were sharp and keen; his moustache was long and tapering to a point. His movements and welcome were more those of a priest than a military man.

Gareth recorded that the interview with General Araki was a great success:

It is curious that the firebrands of the world should be small in stature and meek in manner. The personality of General Araki, the "Tiger" of Japan, the prime mover in the conquest of Manchuria, former War Minister and it is rumoured the future Prime Minister bears this out.

Gareth's next important interview was with Admiral Osumi Mineo,<sup>15</sup> the Navy Minister. The admiral was a jolly gentleman with a round chubby face, sparkling eyes and laughing countenance. In the waiting room at the Naval Department there was a grand piano with a bronze statue of General Foch. The furniture was Victorian with chairs decorated with gilt flowers and with a dressing table and mirror. There were four ebony elephants, a Samurai suit of Japanese armour,

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<sup>14</sup> See endnote for a summary of the interview.

<sup>15</sup> See endnote for the interview in full.

and in one corner stood a statue of an eagle with claws. He gave Gareth a typed reply and his answers were negative and guarded. The admiral though, expressed a wish to see Gareth again on his return to Japan later in the summer.



*Photo taken from the 1934 Daily Telegraph supplement on Japan and Manchukuo.*

The first of Gareth's three interviews were successful but on this fourth occasion, General Hayashi (the War Minister who had ruthlessly deposed General Araki) was only prepared to give him a written reply. It was no secret that Gareth intended to visit Manchukuo and then return to Japan in the summer to follow his journalistic investigations. He asked the General Hayashi very leading questions and these may have had some bearing on Gareth's fate. The first he posed was: "Some Chinese fear that Japan will attack North China. Has this fear any significance?" to which Hayashi replied that: "This is mere rumour. Japan will never attack North China unless we are provoked to do so". He questioned whether there was any significance in Major General Doihara's visit to Nanking and Canton. The Japanese officer, Doihara, figured prominently in the current newspaper articles and it was reported that he was endeavouring to bring autonomy to the Northern Provinces of China. Hayashi replied: "The Major General is travelling in a purely private



capacity through different parts of China. He is an expert on China and has a large number of friends among the Chinese with whom he has held conversations. He has no official mission.” Hayashi concluded stating that co-operation with the Chinese was difficult to foresee as anti-Japanese sentiment was deeply rooted in the Chinese heart.

March 15<sup>th</sup> was Gareth’s last day in Tokyo. He went to see the War Exhibition of the Russo-Japanese War of 1905 in the big store opposite Maruzen. On display were pictures of General Nogi.<sup>16</sup> Crowds, including a number of children, were pressing to see scenes from the battle and the exhibits including his boots, bags and handwriting, which were on show in the exhibition.

On that last day Gareth lunched with Iwanaga (formerly station master on the South Manchurian railway) and sat next to Baron Tanaka Tokichi who was formerly Japanese Ambassador to the Soviet Union (1925-30). He attended Amau’s press conference for the last time where he met a Hungarian, Metzge, who took him to see Kozo Yamada, the head of a commercial information bureau. Metzge said Mr Yamada had a great influence behind the scenes. Gareth was to send a telegram to Mr Yamada when he arrived in Manchukuo. He was given a visiting card to see Mr Tsutsui, the First Secretary of the Japanese Embassy in the capital of Manchukuo, Hsinking (Changchun) as well as a letter of introduction to see Major General Itagaki when Gareth arrived in the city.

His last letter home as he bade farewell to Japan is, with hindsight, poignant:

Today I sail for the Philippines via Shanghai and Singapore. A year ago I was in Ireland interviewing De Valera. Don’t you think I have an interesting life? I like Japan immensely. The people are courteous and kind. They seem to grin and laugh without stopping. Everybody giggles! It is most clean

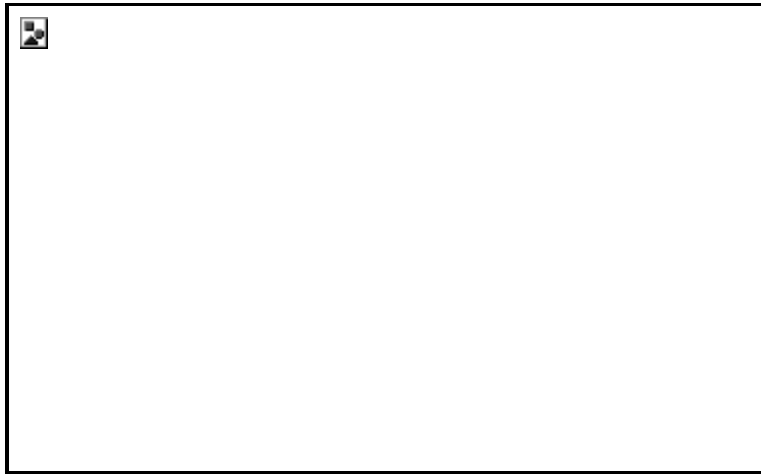
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<sup>16</sup> General Nogi was a dedicated general who lost both his sons in the battle for Port Arthur in the 1905 Russo-Japanese War and who expected a very high standard of discipline of his troops in the true Samurai tradition. The vanquished Russian Commander presented his white horse to General Nogi in respect of his high moral character.

here - spotless. People seem to spend their time having baths. When I go to visit Matsuoka or Shidehara I always take my shoes off at the threshold. Nobody dreams that there will be a war here - out of the question for a long time - if ever.



*A postcard sent by Gareth from Japan sent to his niece Siriol (the author).*



*[March 1, 1935. My dearest Siriol, I am going to Siam where there are white elephants and also to China, Philippines, Singapore and Java. Do you like the clothes of these girls? Warmest love. Uncle Gareth.]*

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**ENDNOTES**

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**JIMMY COX.**

Cox held controversial views and asked awkward questions at the Japanese Foreign Office press briefings. Raymond Lamont-Brown's book *Kempeitai, The Dreaded Japanese Secret Police* states that: "He made no effort to cover up his contempt and growing animosity for the Japanese militaristic state". In his book he also says that James 'Jimmy' Melville Cox, the *Reuters'* correspondent in Tokyo: "was arrested on 27<sup>th</sup> July 1940 by the Kempeitai on the usual non-specific charge of espionage". Two days later he was seen falling from an open window on the third floor of the Kempeitai Headquarters. They claimed that he had committed suicide because he was guilty of espionage. The foreign community very much doubted this and was fully convinced that he had been thrown out of the window to conceal damage done to his body by the Japanese secret police. "The mercurial Gaimu-daijin (Foreign Minister) Matsuoka Yosuke issued a report exonerating the Kempeitai."

**GUNTHER STEIN**

Günther Stein was a known socialist, but Gareth was probably unaware that he had become a committed Communist during his time spent as a correspondent for the *Berliner Tageblatt* in Moscow before 1933. During his period in Tokyo he became associated with Richard Sorge, the double agent. Stein allowed Sorge to use his house as a base for radio transmitting and acted as a courier for him by taking microfilms to Hong Kong. In 1941, Richard Sorge was tried by the Japanese and found guilty of spying for the Russians, for which crime they executed him. The case against Günther Stein was never proven. (Deakin, F W and Storry, G R (1966) *The Case of Richard Sorge*. Chatto and Windus.) Though Gareth had been David Lloyd George's foreign affairs adviser, he gave no indication in his diaries that he had any strong political affiliations.

***THE FINAL FIVE ENDNOTES ARE TAKEN FROM GARETH'S  
DIARIES REFERING TO HIS INTERVIEWS WHILST IN JAPAN.***

**SUMMARY OF AMAU'S PRESS CONFERENCES**

At his first press conference there were about fifty journalists assembled to talk with Mr Amau. Amau introduced them to young Japanese diplomats who appeared very embarrassed. They bowed to the journalists; some went to the English and some to the Americans. Amau stated that:

“The Japanese policy to China is to maintain peace and friendly relations. It benefits to Japan to keep the peace in East Asia. Japan has been standing like a watchdog in East Asia. We have fought several times for that. Other powers have an interest in China, but ours is more vital. The Chinese question to us is a matter of life or death. The British have a considerable interest, which is not necessarily vital. The U.S. is interested but only economically and commercially. China is a vast country. At the beginning of the Washington Conference (1922), Briand asked, “What is China?” China failed to answer this. In 1920 Soviet Russia compiled a Treaty with Outer Mongolia, by which each control ports in respect of recognising the benefited Government. Since then Outer Mongolia has sent an Ambassador to Moscow and Moscow sent to Korea Government representatives.

In 1924, our Government commanded a Treaty at Peking and Mukden with the authority of China by which the Government respected temporary integrity of China. Our Government was helping the Sun Yat-sen Government in Canton. Borodin represented the Government in Canton, and Canton government was dealt with independently. Therefore at the time Canton was the Facto authority. In 1920 Mongolia concluded a treaty with Soviets. In 1924 Mukden concluded a Treaty with Government. Today Sinkiang is virtually under the influence of the Soviet Outer Mongolia. The other day a Chinese Consul in Novostrik, who was returning home to China had to apply for visa from the Soviet authorities.

In the time of the Tsarists, there was a conference in the presence of the Tsar and it was discussed as how to find a way to penetrate the Far East and reach the ports. A railway route was finally decided upon through Siberia, Manchuria, Harbin, Dairien and Port Arthur. In 1895 we fought with China for the lease of Liaotung peninsula. In 1895-1905 China concluded a secret alliance with Russia. China promised materials for building of the Russian Court. The Russians promised to help China in the war between China and Japan.

“...We have been endeavouring to maintain peace in the Far East. China has had a civil war for 25 years, but we desire China restored some day.

We expect equal opportunities for foreign powers. League of Nations attacked Japan, because Japan closed door on China and made the China Sea a closed sea. But it is not Japan, but the League of Nations who closed the doors to Japan.

At the time of the Manchurian Incident it was resolved by the League of Nations (Feb 24<sup>th</sup>, 1933) that the China boycott since September

18<sup>th</sup> 1931 is recognised as a reprisal. The China boycott is legalised by the League of Nations decision and the principle of open door was closed to us. It was instigated by the Euro-American powers.

We are concerned about any communist presence in East Asia, but we have no intention of interfering with Chinese internal affairs. Manchukuo will separate China and Soviet Russia. We estimate there are 200,000 Soviet troops on the border. We have no intention to fight, but if the Soviets interfere with Manchukuo affairs, we will fight. We must defend Manchukuo”.

At a later press conference Mr Amau discussed British dominions attitude to racism. In South Africa the restriction of the Japanese immigrant was strictest. There, even the consul had the greatest difficulty in entering a restaurant or finding a hotel. Australia was very much better. Japan only wanted free entry of their merchants. Japan was not going to invade Australia. In the Far East, Japan cannot compete with American but only the German goods, especially toys and sundry goods. “We import more from Germany than we export. Germany is restricting Japanese goods, and in banking and shipping they have a number of regulations by which they impose many different conditions on Japanese traders (shipping) e.g. currency. Germany proposes to buy soya beans from Manchukuo and wants to sell more to Japan. There is no political arrangement with Germany.”

At the final press conference Amau reviewed the current aviation situation in Japan. It was different in Japan compared with Britain and U.S. owing to the mountainous and atmospheric conditions. In Manchukuo aviation was proceeding very rapidly, because there were plenty of landing places and atmospheric conditions were good. The Japanese Army and Navy made great progress. They were one of the five largest aeronautic powers, but civilian aviation was very poor. There was a lot of rivalry between civilian, some of whom were without jobs, and army and naval aviation. In Japan it was difficult to find landing places as the land was over cultivated. He emphasised the quality of the pilots, the number of planes and aircraft carriers and the faith in German airships. He informed the journalists that the Pacific Aviation Co. would be organised in June or July to fly from Tokyo to San Francisco, via the Aleutian Islands and Alaska using Zeppelins. Since the Manchurian and Shanghai troubles, the military flying corps had improved greatly and they had increased their equipment. In the recent Jehol conflict in Manchuria the corps took part in the battle by bombing and carried ammunition to the advancing army. In this region, where the transport by land was very difficult, the supply of goods and arms to the advancing army by aeroplane was the only means available at the time.

SIR ROBERT CLIVE, BRITISH AMBASSADOR

- 1) The recent British economic mission was a success, and reversed the grievances that Japan had against Britain.
- 2) The Americans were withdrawing from the Far East as they had no great interests in the area compared with those of the British.
- 3) The Australians were pro-Japanese in that they were exporting millions of pounds worth of wool to Japan
- 4) Canada was diametrically opposed to the Australian point of view. (Canada insisted on a strong pro-American Policy.)
- 5) Japanese Foreign Policy aimed to show they were peaceful and co-operating with China and with Russia.
- 6) Sir Robert was amazed by an interesting change of relations with Soviet Russia - he had received an invitation from the Soviet Ambassador to dine with Prince Kanin, the Commander-in-Chief of the Japanese Army. He could not recollect a Japanese Commander-in-Chief socialising with the Russians since Iswolski's day, (Russian Minister to Japan, 1900) before the Anglo-Japanese alliance.
- 7) The Japanese Army was behind the Foreign Minister, Hirota, in his Chinese policy, because of their need for raw materials. Hirota saw the world shutting out Japanese goods and believed that the future market would be in China.
- 8) They were very disappointed with Manchuria, as the resources were not so rich as they were hoped to be. The invasion was mainly strategic against the Russians, as the Japanese feared Communism. The Russians were experts in oil and were going to set up a refinery in Kharatorovik for their own use in the Far East to refine Sakhalin oil. This, the Ambassador thought this might effect British oil interests. The recent British economic mission which had been a success, and which had reversed the grievances that Japan had against Britain.

MATSUOKA YOSUKE

Matsuoka had faced the world for his country at Geneva. When asked about his political aims, he replied that he was agitating to abolish political parties as the West was already doing. The disappearance of parties in Italy, Russia and Germany was too obvious to mention. In Japan, due to their racial traits and their history, they could never introduce Fascism similar to that of Mussolini and Hitler because it was not in their temperament to allow a dictator to control the whole country, and therefore such a thing would never happen in Japan. He believed that they should get away from the Western democracy that bred corruption and return to the rule of the Emperor as this was true Japanese democracy. The Emperor was the mainspring of their country, he was responsible for all that happened in Japan

and ruled according to the “Will of Heaven”. (They had a saying that the will of the people was the Will of Heaven.) The State Ministers were solely responsible to the Emperor, and through the Emperor the ministers were responsible to the people. For 3000 years they had the idea that Ministers who were responsible to Parliament could have no place in their history. Western civilisation was facing a kind of catastrophe as it had become too individualistic and egoistic. The Japanese were obliged to care for their parents; their notion was that children would even offer their lives for their parents. Gareth pressed his interview further and asked what was meant by ‘Asia for the Asiatics’. Matsuoka replied:

If that means the conquest of Asia, you cannot do it, even if we could it would take 100 to 200 years. It must mean a step towards finally establishing peace through the world, to let all and every nation have its own place and be satisfied.

#### GENERAL ARAKI SADAŌ

General Araki was held to be the greatest opponent of Communism in Japan and had been a supporter of war against the Soviet Union. He was the leader of the militarists and a champion of ‘Asia for the Asiatics’, a national figure in Japan revered by the young officers. He kept at his side, until he died at the age of 90, a file on Emperor Hirohito as an insurance against untimely death. He was opposed to many of Hirohito’s policies and was his last domestic adversary. After a mutiny in February 1936, he and other supporters of the Strike-North faction were retired from the Army leaving the Emperor a free hand to plan to strike south. Bernard Shaw met his match with Araki telling him: “If you had been born in Russia you would have become a politician greater than Stalin. I should like to stay here talking with you until the Chinese land on the Japanese mainland”.

Gareth interviewed Araki through an interpreter and he told Gareth that he thought that Communism might succeed in China, as conditions there were anarchical. If Chang Kai-shek could unify China the young Communists might rise against him and drive him from power. Gareth asked very directly whether a struggle was inevitable between Japan and the Soviet Union to which Araki responded that it all depended on the attitude of the other side and that he found it difficult to continue this line of conversation. He considered it futile to help the Chinese against the encroachment of Soviet influence when asked what Japan should do to counter-act the growing Soviet influence in Inner Mongolia. Gareth continued his searching questions and asked what would he advocate for Asia rather than Communism. Would it be Pan-Asianism, that is ‘Asia for the Asiatics’? The conqueror of Manchuria pondered and then replied that he was firmly

convinced that the fundamentals of Asiatic civilisation are just as good as European.

He ended the interview by saying that: “Unless all the peoples of the world get together, disaster will befall humanity. May the Twentieth Century be the century of transition from national separation to international harmony”.

Gareth remarked that it was not these last sentiments, however that attracted many of the young Nationalists to the personality of General Araki.

#### ADMIRAL OSUMI MINEO

Admiral Osumi, the Naval Minister served Emperor Hirohito faithfully though even he opposed him during time of controversy. Gareth asked Osumi very pertinent questions about what his attitude to America developing bases on the Aleutian Islands and Alaska was and whether the Japanese Navy would be prepared to maintain the independence and neutrality of the Philippines if that neutrality were guaranteed by an international agreement. Osumi replied that he had nothing to say on either subject. He did however express a desire for a new Naval Treaty between Japan, Great Britain and the United States, the three leading sea powers of the world. Gareth had worked hard on a brief for Mr Lloyd George when the Naval Conference was convened in London in 1930. He wrote in his diary that Lloyd George said that: “The Conference is a farce, an absolute farce!”