

*Dated Jan. 3, 1930*

*Opine*

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Miss Mary N. Mills  
1421 Pendleton Street  
Columbia  
South Carolina  
U. S. A.

Dear Mary.

There is no time to write more now,  
so I send this as it is. Plumer.

65 Mo Tsou Lu,  
Nanking, China.  
January 3, 1938.

Dear Nina:-

This is the first letter I have written in the New Year and the first I have sent you in a long time, as it has been impossible for more than a month to get letters through. I trust that you have had messages from one or two sources that all of us here are well. The members of the Japanese Embassy have been most kind in taking out certain mail for us when some of their staff have gone to Shanghai. In this way I have been able to write to Harriet and to Mary, sending to the latter a copy of the letter to the former. I did not however write to you through this channel, as I thought there was no communication up river. Lewis Smythe, it seems, did write Martie that way, sending the letter via Shanghai and thence by air to Hankow and Kuling. I hope that the air mail from Shanghai to Hong-kong is still functioning, and so on to Hankow. In that way I may be able to reach you at Kuling. Anyway I shall try.

You had telegrams I am quite sure that all foreigners in Nanking passed through the fighting here quite safely. Fortunately it did not last long. There were only one or two nights when there was much cannon firing, and even then nothing fell either at our house or at Ping Tsang Hsiang. I slept in the basement two or three times and felt fairly secure there. Our mission property was almost entirely undamaged during the fighting. One small shell struck the steps of Andy Roy's house, but did not do any great damage. Other mission property fared just about as well, or even better. We were certainly thankful to come through the fighting without any loss of life among the foreigners and with so little damage to property.

Before the fighting began the Safety Zone was well filled with refugees. We have estimated the number of these people at 200,000. Some of them came from outside the city from places burned by the Chinese soldiers during their retreat. Others came from Hsaikwan and from various parts of the city proper that were more exposed to the fighting than the Safety Zone itself. As very few shells fell within the Zone there was almost no loss of life among the Chinese civilians during the fighting around the city. We hope that before long the people can go back to their homes. The authorities are now registering them and as soon as this process is completed it will doubtless be possible for the people to return.

I do not think I ever told you that the cook came back to Nanking just about a week or so after he left Kuling. It has been fine to have him here and he came just at the right time. Buck's house-boy wanted to leave and go back to the country, so Lu-si-fu stepped at once into his place and has done very well. All of the men like him, and he and Bob's cook, who has been doing the cooking for us, are very good friends, so his return has worked out nicely. Wang-si-fu is also quite well. His wife has been sleeping lately at Ping Tsang Hsiang, and Wang comes to see her every so often. The baby stays here with the mother and the little girl with her father. Tell Angie that both Mickey and Mother Puss are well. I see them nearly every day when I go to the house.

Well it's 1938 and next year we go home on furlough. Isn't that a nice prospect? By the way do you remember what your wardrobe trunk cost? We will need another like it when we go. I hope that you can return here before long but don't bother to bring any mattresses back with you from Kuling. We can get the extra one we need either here locally or in Shanghai.

With love,

Plumer.