

AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN
NANKING 7, CHINA



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南京美國長老會緘

Jan. 9, 1938

Copied

Handwritten mark

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3 Ping Tsang Hsiang,
Nanking.
January 9, 1938.

Dear Nina:-

Up to this time I have had no opportunity to write to you when I felt it would be safe to do so. The Japanese Embassy has offered a time or two to take out letters for us, but we knew they were censoring everything, so one could write almost nothing that one wanted to write. But briefly, the situation is this. Before the fall of Nanking the Chinese troops behaved very well, at least inside the city. They looted some outside, and perhaps a little inside in certain sections, but relatively very little. Foreign property was well respected by them. But since the Japanese came in it has been hell. I think all of us feel that is the only word to describe what took place during the first ten days or two weeks of Japanese occupation. Cold blooded murder of soldiers taken after the capture of the city, and of many innocent civilians alleged to be soldiers, the shooting also of many without even that excuse, the raping of women on a widespread scale, and the wholesale robbing of the people combined with the deliberate destruction of large sections of the city, there is no other word for it all than the one I used.

During the actual fighting around the city we escaped very well. Almost no shells fell within the Safety Zone. The Kuliou Christian Church was struck once, the hospital got a little shrapnel, perhaps from that same shell, one of the University dormitories was hit, the stewards' house also - that was about the extent of the damage in these parts. Elsewhere Andy Roy's house was a little damaged and the Parish House of the American Church Mission on Tai Ping Lu quite considerably so by shell fire. But aside from these places there was not much harm done to any of the homes or buildings we know best. Most of the Japanese attack was directed against the southeastern section of the city, and that is chiefly the reason why we escaped so easily here. I do not think the Japanese so much respected the zone, as that it simply did not fall in with their plans to attack it. Of course to do the Japanese justice, they never did formally agree to recognize the Zone but simply said they would not intentionally attack it if there were no Chinese soldiers there. Of course a few other shells fell within the zone beside those I mentioned, but generally speaking there was little loss of life and little damage to property. Best you are not wholly clear about the location of the zone let me say that it went from Han Chung Road north to the Shensi Road Circle, including the part of the city lying west of Chung Shan Road between these north and south boundaries. Andy's house and the A. C. M. property were of course not within the zone. A lot of property in the suburbs of the city, notably Haiakwan, was burnt by the Chinese in their retreat, but aside from the foolish burning by them of the Ministry of Communications building (if indeed they did burn it, some say this fire was due to a bomb) there was little destruction within the city before the Japanese came in. Since then there has been a great deal.

Chung Hua Lu (the old Fu Dung Giai) is largely burned out, so is Tai Ping Lu. Chiang Yang Giai has also suffered heavily. These among the principal business streets. Mission properties on these streets have suffered as might have been expected. The Methodist Church on Chiang Yang Giai is gone, and ~~the~~ the two buildings of the Christian Mission's Boys' School near the South Gate have also been

burned. Mr. Chen Ah Ming's store just north of our Fu Dung Church has been destroyed, and consequently all the windows on the north side of our building (the one rented to the Salvation Army) have been burned out. The fact that there was a small shop in between Mr. Chen's big store and our place, and also a tiny vacant space as well, alone saved our building from further damage. The Y.M.C.A. has been burned. These are the principal damages to Christian property from burning. As to other property block after block of business buildings have been destroyed. I do not think there has been a day ~~or night~~ since the Japanese entered the city that there has not been a fire somewhere, and usually more than one. During one of the evenings earlier in the occupation I once counted eleven fires at one time. Fitch counted either on that same evening or on another occasion fourteen.

As to looting the Japanese soldiers have done a thorough job. I do not think there is hardly a Chinese store or residence or building of any kind that has not been entered and robbed if it contained anything the soldiers wanted. All the stories that the Japanese have put out about the city having quickly returned to normal after the occupation are sheer rot. There is no business going on yet anywhere outside the Safety Zone. The people are afraid, those who live outside the Zone, to go back to their homes. And they may well be for they are still likely to be robbed, or taken for forced labor, or raped. In the Zone, due to our frequent protests, things are now better, but even there not wholly satisfactory.

I must close this letter unexpectedly here as there is a chance that it may be sent off at once. More later.

With love,

Plum.

Dear Mary:-

Our own house has suffered some at the hands of the Japanese soldiers, but not as badly as some other places in the city. Just all of you are well. I have sent a copy of this to Harriet. Please circulate to the other in the family, but do not publish.
With love, Plum.