

c/o American Embassy, Nanking  
Jan 11th 1938.

Dear Billy:

We were very happy indeed to receive some foreign letters including yours, and to get some news of the various people in the Mission.

I have just consulted Paul Tong about the number of trunks I sent as he and Mr. Kuo packed them. He said there was one big trunk, one "standing trunk" (he probably means wardrobe trunk) 2 ordinary trunks and a roll of bedding. In addition there was Helen VanVest's trunk. I'm amazed that it took so long to get the trunks to Shanghai and very much hope that one has not been lost.

Glad to know that all at Wuhu are safe, and pray that our Chinese workers and people have come through everywhere. J.L.Chen's son was carried off with 500 to 1000 others, including about 15 of J.L.Chen's Christians and inquirers. We heard he was not shot with the others but he has not been seen since the day the others were killed Dec. 16th so it looks very bad. His father thinks he is dead. Another of his people, old Mr. Tung's son of San Pai Lou was shot dead in the street in the Refugee Zone near to the houses where his people are refugeeing. The Ch'en family have taken this wonderfully and he has shown up very well through the whole crisis. One day he was taken off to do coolie work but returned after a few hours in safety. All Chinese, with exception of children, were forced to register with the military, and at this time another of our inquirers from J.L.Ch'en's group was taken and has not been heard of since.

Thousands of men, women and children have been murdered in addition to all the disarmed soldiers who have been discovered. There were dead bodies in every street and alley in the city, so far as I could tell, and I went around quite extensively including Hsiakwan, although it is impossible to go to the latter place now. I went with the Consul-General (Japanese) who has tried to help, but the soldiers paid little attention to him. The Consul took George Fitch to Hsiakwan and then he was not allowed to enter with the consul and had to wait for an hour and a half until the Consul could get a military permit. It is impossible to say how many people have been murdered (including disarmed soldiers, but my guess is 20,000. A little boy of seven died in the hospital of five bayonet wounds in his stomach. I saw a woman yesterday who had been raped between ten and twenty times and then two soldiers tried to cut her head off. Her head has to be held up but fortunately nothing vital was cut and she will recover. In addition to the terrible wound in her neck she has a number of other wounds. I have talked to a Buddhist nun who was living behind a temple in the south city. The soldiers rushed in killed the "mother superior", aged 65 (Chinese) count) and a little apprentice nun of 10 (Chinese). She herself was shot in the hip and a little apprentice nun of hers, aged twelve (Chinese) was bayoneted in the back. She took refuge in a pit with the little nun and feigned death covering herself with dead bodies. An old nun of 70 was crushed beneath the weight of the bodies, according to her story. She and the little girl did not move for five days and had nothing to eat. She did not dare open her eyes. Then she heard a soldier



in Chinese (Many of the Japanese soldiers know a little Chinese) "K'o-lien" and she opened her eyes. This soldier pulled her out of the pit and told some Chinese to carry her to a Japanese dressing station - she and the child - and some days later a neighbor brought her to the Univ. Hospital.

The raping of women has been beyond description or imagination. Most of the foreigners in town have been kept busy driving off Japanese soldiers from houses all over the refugee zone. I do not know how many women I have taken to the hospital to be tended to after this experience. Among them was one little girl of twelve (Chinese). Dean Tong told me he knew of a child of thirteen who had been raped by three men. Men in the Texas Oil Co. Installation outside the city told me that a child of ten (Chinese!) had been raped just by them there. In the one time for a long time that Ernest and I left these houses at the same time two of the girls in Herr Stinnes' house where the St. Paul's Church Christians are were raped. It was on New Year's Day and as everything seemed peaceful we went over in a car to Buck's house where most of the foreign men (Americans) are living. Just as we were finishing dinner Catechist Fan and Paul Tong came running to tell us that the soldiers had arrived and were after women. We were too late. Mrs. Chou was trying to save one girl and was beaten over the head with a bayonet but not hurt seriously. Another girl who was in the third story escaped by cleverly tripping up a soldier. About a week ago while I was in front of our Refugee Zone office a policeman came running and said a man had been killed. I went with him to a nearby house and found a house with many people crying. It was then after five o'clock. A soldier had been there at about 4.30 and tried to drag a woman into a room. Her husband in some way assisted her so that she was able to run into this room and out through a door at the back onto the street and escape. The soldier, who was unarmed, went away and came back twenty minutes later and killed the man. The woman, whose husband kept some kind of a small shop for selling goodies, said to me "How am I going to feed my five children"?

This is only a small part of what I have seen and heard. Not long ago several hundreds of soldiers gave themselves up among the four thousand men refugees in the U. of Nanking at the time of the compulsory registration of all Chinese except children. An officer had told the whole crowd of men if those who were soldiers would acknowledge the fact he would guarantee their lives although they would give them work to do. He allowed them twenty minutes to think it over, after telling them that if they did not acknowledge it and were discovered they would be shot. Two hundred stepped forward and were led off. We discovered by a remarkable circumstance that I do not want to mention on paper they were taken out near a temple inside the city and all killed with bayonets. Can you imagine such perfidy? Here and there among the soldiers there have been decent men, but it seems like most of them went mad after entrance into the city. Such a ferocious body of men I have never seen and I have seen the worst type of Chinese bandits looting this city, too.

The marvel is that none of us foreigners have been killed. This looks to me as though the officers could have controlled their men if they had wanted to, as a member of the German Embassy staff told me today that a number of French R.C. fathers had been killed by Japanese soldiers in the north. I read about the death of these



men in the newspapers several months ago but the Japanese had announced that Chinese bandits, former members of Sung Cheh-yuan's army had done it. This German told me that they now knew for a fact that it was the Japanese who did it. We foreigners repeatedly drove soldiers out of houses and away from women. I myself burst into a room with a J. lying on top of a woman and shouted at the man, "Ch'u-pa" and he went. Afterwards the woman's mother came and kowtowed to me. A soldier drew a pistol on Bob Wilson who came into a room in the University Hospital where a soldier had crawled into bed with a girl nurse and Bob thought he was going to use it but he thought better of it. Others have had similar experiences.

The night before last Gearle Bates was pushed down the stairs of rather Kearney's house where he had gone to see the head of the Military police who is occupying the place to intercede for a fine young Middle School student of the University Middle School who had been bound and taken off by soldiers just previously. The officer there was furious with him. This boy's father was a merchant in Japan and he could speak Japanese. They had been trying to get him to help them for days but the boy had made various excuses and finally they carried him off. We fear for his fate.

Things are improving. The bodies have been moved from the streets but are still lying in ponds and out of the way places. Just yesterday one of the foreigners saw soldiers (two) push a Chinese with his hands tied into a pond by Shansi Road and then shoot him dead while he was standing in the water. Any little corporal seems to be able to determine the fate of the poor Chinese. Fires still continue but on greatly decreased scale.

Please be very careful of this letter as we might all be kicked out if it were published, and that would be a disaster for the Chinese of Nanking. Please send copies to John Wood and ask him to send copies to my wife, Louise Hammond, and my sister Mrs. J. V. Scaife, Schenley Apartments, Pittsburgh.

With much love to you all,

As ever yours,

John

P.S.

Dont send it to Dr. Wood until you have a perfectly safe way to do so.