

3 P'ing Ts'ang Hsiang,
Nanking, 3 January, 1938.

Dear Lilliath:-

The picture taken by the Nichi Nichi photographer was left here with a card on New Year's day, saying: "We are Japanese War-correspondents and brought you a letter from your boy. if you knock our office we shall be very much pleased." Next morning (yesterday) I was at the Japanese Embassy on business, and there received the letter from you dated Dec. 16-17, and opened for inspection. The clipping you spoke of was not found, but probably was not important anyhow.

It's very good to hear from you again, since the last message of any sort was the note dated 8 Nov. and brought by Lyrel to Shanghai, which I received about Dec. 1st. Our Post Office practically ceased to function about that day, and there is no present indication of reopening. I am most sorry for your distress in lack of information. Actually I was comfortably content that you would be saved most of the anxiety. For somewhere about 7 Dec. the American Embassy wired for me to Shanghai, asking Rees to cable you that I was alright and remaining in Nanking. I then expected quick messages to get out after the turnover, reporting that all foreigners or all Americans were safe, barring possible specified exceptions; and that thus you would have quick relief. Then on the 14th. and 15th. the American newspaper men who had remained in the city left on destroyers (Japanese) for Shanghai through the courtesy of naval officers. They took for me another note for a cable from Rees announcing safety. Meanwhile the Japanese Navy officers had offered to send a radio message on behalf of the American community, and it went to Shanghai as a report of health and safety. Probably Boynton's wire to you was on the basis of that report, soon after he heard it. More recently written greetings went out through the courtesy of an officer of the Embassy, and this will probably go the same way or through friendly Japanese journalists.

Your letter was not fully clear and consistent about your plans, but the balance seems to be that at that time you were planning to come to Shanghai this present week -- alone and for a short stay in the expectation of a visit with me there or elsewhere. If so, I hope that before you got so far you will have had information that travel between Nanking and Shanghai is not open, according to my present information, and may not be so for some time yet. If, however, you were planning to come with Bobby and remain in Shanghai indefinitely, that's another story which might work out more ~~at~~ satisfactorily. But I can scarcely encourage you to do even that, for ordinary civilian life is not in sight yet. You can get some idea of my duties from the fact that there are thirty thousand refugees on University property alone. We must simply accept the idea that war conditions do not permit usual activities or movement or correspondence. I hope there will be considerable easing by spring. Meanwhile we must do the best we can in the state we now experience, whether Nanking or Tokyo or Shanghai. There are 14 Americans here, 4 or 5 Germans, 2 White Russians, 1 or 2 Austrians. It has been announced that American consuls will be here about the 5th. Now there is some beginning with electricity and with water, which will help a great deal. If you do come to Shanghai, or if other friends can aid us, please try to get to us at least ten pounds of butter and several pounds of coffee; also ^{several} flashlight batteries of the ~~950~~ size and ~~smaller~~ 935 (Ever-Ready ^{numbers}) -- a dozen of each, needed for Hospital also.