

December 9, 1937

Dear Folks:---We have been through almost hell the past few days. Sunday we had our first bad bombing. Two British steamers near the railroad station were hit. The TUCKWO immediately burst into flames, and what panic! Several were blown into the water and many jumped in. They did fine rescue work and many were saved. We had quite a few come in pulled out of the river and how thankful we were to have a warm hospital and plenty of hot water. The poor creatures had been half scared to death and shook like everything. We had 70 wounded from that bombing and other places. Just as soon as the planes went many went out and brought in the wounded. I never, never want to see such sights again. Poor human mangled souls, it would have been better if some had passed on. We all did our best and the crew did 30 operations. The city was thrown into panic and many tried to leave. The s.s. "Tatung" and the chief engineer, who was on deck, received shrapnel wounds in his arm and hand. He came in and was X-Rayed and shrapnel was found in both wounds; but there were so many more serious cases he had to be put off for operation and went back to the ship. His wife also received slight injuries. The Captain of the British gunboat received slight flesh wounds.

Most of our doctors and nurses had gone by Sunday and so we had a very small crew to do all this work. Sunday night none of us had much sleep and we had hoped to finish up the operations on Monday. Without any warning planes came about 10:00 o'clock and what a shower of bombs! For two hours and a half we had one bombing right after another. They flew over us time and time again and we wondered if our time had come. The folks think they used us as a land mark and took off from over us. How it thundered and banged, and how frightened we all were. Then Tuesday we had another day of it, with looting at night. The bombs started some terrible fires that burned for hours. Last night we had six huge fires and gasoline tanks exploding, and ammunition exploding. For several nights we have had shooting with small guns. I have never seen such fires. One burned for over twenty-four hours. There have been huge fires on the Ma-lu, Do Men Han, Yang Ma Tou, and Ehr Chiai. No reports from Ho-nan, but the Yang Chiang bridge is destroyed. The China Merchants' godown exploded. The fires are still going. It is heart breaking to see our city burning.

We only got 30 cases from the bombing Monday. Most of them were killed, and one almost feels thankful that they are out of their suffering. No one knows how many were lost. All night long we hear people fleeing across the river and out the road. Margaret Lawrence has a bed in my room and how glad I am to have her. I was just opening the window last night and said, "Oh, Margaret, there is another terrible fire!" when we heard a terrific explosion. I thought it was bombing, but learned it was gasoline. I got dressed immediately and went around to quiet and comfort the nurses and patients, and back to bed again. I don't know how I did, but slept the rest of the night with all the noise and excitement. Suppose I was just weary.

Mr. Watters has just come and says there is a Tai Ku boat going to Hankow so must send this without hardly reading it. I am well and going hard. The Lord has certainly given us strength to carry on day by day. We do not know from day to day what we will be doing next.

Frances.

Further word about our co-workers in Wuhu is contained in a letter from Miss Cammie Gray, dated November 29th, part of which is as follows:

"I came back yesterday from Nanking and found that all our Chinese co-workers are leaving Wuhu temporarily, and they had already included my name in the list of those going. Wuweichow is the place decided upon. They have engaged a houseboat to take the whole crowd. There will be about 30 or 40 in the party going, including children, all our own disciple co-workers. We all hope that we can come back soon. But if the fighting here is prolonged we will have a longer time for our service in Wuwei. We plan to hold regular meetings there and help revive the church work there.

"This letter is written very hurriedly as they are calling me to come, that the boat is waiting and I am holding it up. If you are able to do so, please write me at the following address: Wuweichow, Anhwei, via Wuhu, care of the Christian Church."

Hofei. During the past week I received a letter from Miss Teagarden and Miss Wilkinson jointly, and one later from Mr. Burch, both letters brought to Hankow by China Inland missionaries who were passing through Hofei en route here. Miss Teagarden and Miss Wilkinson requested that I send a cablegram for them to you, assuring their friends that they were unharmed so far, and sending Christmas greetings. Mr. Butch's letter, dated December 6th, is as follows:

"We are still holding on in Hofei. Ladies may decide to leave today or tomorrow but I am staying for the present. No members of staff of Students (student nurses- E.M.) have left. In case of danger in city would go to country. Hospital and School grounds to be used as a concentration center for Christians and friends in last resort. Am not sure I can mail this letter but am trying."

The C.I.M. lady who brought the above letter to me, travelled by train to Yu Chi Kou, terminus of the railway on the Yang-tse, ten miles below Wuhu, where her party boarded an American gunboat that brought them to Hankow. The looting and burning of Wuhu was already in progress when they arrived there, so were unable to go ashore. She said the commander of the boat, U.S.S. "Guam," went ashore and urged the missionaries to leave with him, but they declined to do so. Eighteen hours after their train made its trip from Hofei, the railway was bombed and disrupted so that no further trains are running on the line now. She reported that the whole country north of the river in that section of Anhwei province is over run with robbers and bandits. Many of the missionaries from that and other sections, who have evacuated, have been forced to do so rather by the dangerous situation created by these bandits, than by any imminent threat from war hostilities. This is coming to be a very generally existing condition in the country.

Kuling. The following has been sent by Mrs. McCallum (Dec. 7th);--

As the advance of the enemy up the river was assured, there was a general exodus from Kuling. Two of the large Chinese schools closed and moved on up the river to points further inland. Two mission schools which moved up from Nanchang are still in session although some of the students are leaving. All Chinese official families who have been refugeeing in Kuling have hurried away. A few foreign families have left. The staff of the Kuling American School were given permission to leave by the Headmaster, but they have all chosen to remain. Mothers of more than half the students in the school are in Kuling while the majority of the fathers remain in their stations. With travel and weather conditions so uncertain this time of year, the risks involved in remaining in Kuling during the turn-over of the government seem less than those involved in traveling. The school authorities are well aware of the possible dangers and are taking precautionary measures. And in the meantime the children are so occupied with their normal school activities that there is little time to think about war. Occasionally a sentence prayer by a freshman or sophomore during their service on Sunday evenings reveals concern. Last Sunday one lad asked the Lord's blessing on "Mother and Dad in Nanchang tonight."

Joyce Brady was very seriously ill for more than a week. She was removed from the school infirmary to the Community Hospital and Dr. Brady was called from his duties in the Nanking University Hospital. By the time he arrived Joyce had taken a sudden turn for the better. The Chinese Superintendent having left Dr. Brady is being urged to remain in Kuling on the hospital staff. Should the other Chinese doctor leave the hospital otherwise would have to close.

There are a few cases of German measles in the school, all of which are proving light. War news reports disturb, but the weather is ideal and we are grateful for every day's peace and quiet.

Nancy Fry is filling a real need as superintendent of nurses in the Hospital. Several of her Nantung Chinese nurses have come to work with her.

Nantung. The only news from Nantung station since last week, is in a brief letter from Miss Swen Pao-hwa, principal of the Ts'ung Ing Girls School. She writes from Fuh Girls' School, Hwai-an, Kiangsu, under date of December 2d:--

"When Mr. and Mrs. Burch were here (November 10-13 E.M.), we decided to open a school at the Community Service Building in Nantung, but conditions changed so rapidly that I could not run such a risk as to open. So the plan we decided on failed. Almost all people moved back to the country districts. Both Mr. Cheo (Pastor Cheo Hsiao-chen) and Mr. Chien (Si-lin) left Nantung on the morning of November 20th, and three of us, including two Christian Hospital nurses coming back from Shanghai left in the afternoon of the same day. They intended going to Hobei. One of them returned to Jukao after waiting three days for the boat at Taichow, and the other went on with one of her relatives. I was ten days on the way and arrived home yesterday. I cannot bear to think of my school, my coworkers and my students, for I miss them so much. I hope the Lord will lead us back to Nantung again. Please write to me when you have time."

Hankow. Miss Katherine Schutze has done a very fine bit of service here acting as registrar and dean of a Language School for foreign students studying Chinese. About 30 have been enrolled. She has also taught one class a day in English for Chinese students in a Christian school. She has made a wide circle of friends.

Mrs. Marx is managing to keep busy by doing a little shopping for friends of Kuling, and also conducting personal tours of the city since there are so many transients here who have business of various kinds. In between times she is sewing for the Red Cross.

The city has not been seriously threatened by air raids for several weeks, but the signs of approaching crisis are becoming more evident day by day. A substantial part of the National Government of China, and various foreign embassies are located here temporarily. The city is crowded with refugees from every direction. The increasing probability of the city becoming an objective of attack in the near future, and the problem of defending it under present conditions, has already prompted the authorities, both Chinese and foreign, to warn and urge their nationals to depart for other places as speedily as possible.

Conclusion. Naturally, it is with mingled emotions that we contemplate the approach of the Christmas and holiday seasons, with their sacred memories of fellowship in the past years, and the awful discrepancy between the conditions prevailing, and those that the Christmas spirit symbolizes. For various reasons, many of us have not had the means of sending to our friends in various parts of the world, the usual number of personal Christmas greetings and messages. However, we wish all our friends to know that we are remembering them at this most tender of seasons, and their fellowship, sympathy, good-will and prayers mean more than ever to us, because of the tragic circumstances. We still trust in Him whose birth this month commemorates, and pledge renewed faithfulness in trying to bring His will to prevail among all men.

Yours faithfully,

Edwin Marx

Edwin Marx.

Hofei, Anhwei,
Feb. 15, 1938

Mr. Marx:

Nothing has come through from you or the Nanking people. During a lull in Wuhu we sent a runner down who brought letters from there. Otherwise we have had little mail.

The Hospital is running, about half capacity or less. The Nurses Training School has closed. One doctor has gone "on vacation."

We had three bad bombings last week on the main streets. Of course many were killed and wounded, chiefly civilians. None of our own people have suffered.

The war seems to have swung around us and gone to the north. There were a few tense days last week.

Before Christmas strange radio reports made it seem that Hofei had fallen to the enemy, when in fact it had been perfectly quiet here. After the last report of our fall, General Li Chung-jen appeared suddenly and four traitors were shot, --- men of high standing. Lyrel, Hannah Stocks, and I happened on to the execution.

....

Every one is well and supplies are holding, though a bit low. A fresh cow makes home-made butter possible.

Part of the time we are glad to be here to be of a little help, and the rest of the time we feel awful fools for having remained. Of course, we may run yet, as most "bitter-enders" do. I am almost ready to myself.

Please extend greetings to the friends there.

Very sincerely yours,

Wenona Wilkinson

China Mission
Nanking, Ku.
Feb. 12, 1938

Dear Mr. Paul:

We are putting ten men (Chinese) of the International Committee in our South Gate quarters. It is the first move of the Committee out of the Zone. Do not know what will develop but there will be some activity at South Gate again.

Don't waste any sympathy on the foreigners in Nanking. We had our baptism of fire which was not as tough as that received by those who sought safety. We have had some unpleasant and trying experiences and have been fed up on barbarism in the raw. But aside from that we are having the time of our lives. Don't look for lean and haggard faces or broken spirits. We are living well and are in good spirits and only looking for new avenues of service and planning ways to outwit those who consider us to be anti Japanese and try to block us at every turn. Both of you would enjoy a few days with us here.

Sincerely yours,

Jas. H. McCallum

EDITORIAL, from the "China Press", Nanking Daily Edition, November 3, 1937

The Good Samaritans.

The news that many foreign missionaries in Nanking have taken up war relief work in the Capital may prove to be the best and most welcome message to all heathen Nankingites. Such an example set by these foreign Christians coming to China in response to a call from above is in itself a true message from God that will be most readily heard and harkened to. Never was the message from God more needed and there never has been a chance for the gospeler to preach more eloquently than at the present time of China's crisis. The word of the Holy Scripture may sound "devilish" to the heathen and ignorant Chinese at peaceful times, but when it comes from those who have stayed in their midst at this dangerous time sharing their sufferings and nursing their wounds, it sounds like the sweetest music. Thus the ideals of love, justice and righteousness of the Christian religion may go deepest to the hearts of all Chinese unpreached.

(The "China Press" is a newspaper published in English,
and is Chinese owned and edited. --- Edwin Marx).

From The New York Times, Sunday, March 20, 1938

5 AMERICANS FLEE CHINESE WAR ZONE

Women Go 400 Miles Amid Many Dangers From Hofei
to Safety at Hankow

Minister Stays at Post

Refugees Report Big Defense Preparations in East
Anhwei and Patriotic Fervor

Wireless to The New York Times

HANKOW, China, March 19- Completing a hazardous 400-mile trip, part way afoot, partly in rickshas and partly in a Chinese army truck, five American women missionaries arrived here Wednesday from Hofei, a small Anhwei city seventy miles west of Wuhu, after many thrilling adventures and a number of narrow escapes from death.

Since the capture of Nanking and Wuhu, Hofei has been the major objective of the Japanese forces in Eastern Anhwei. For weeks before the missionaries' flight the city was subjected to daily Japanese airplane bombardments during which much of the city was ruined and hundreds of soldiers and civilians were killed.

The hospital of the United Christian Missionary Society, with which four of the missionaries were connected, many times narrowly escaped destruction. The increasing danger persuaded them to leave the almost-deserted city and flee westward with streams of Chinese refugees who were abandoning their homes in Eastern Anhwei.

The women refugees are Miss Lyrel Teagarden of Danbury, Conn.; Miss Wenona Wilkinson of Lincoln, Neb.; Miss Grace Young of Indianapolis and Mrs. C. A. Burch of Detroit, all of the United Christian Missionary Society, and Miss Hannah Stocks of Bristol, Conn., of the Advent Christian Mission, who has her own station at Chaohsien but recently joined the others at Hofei.

Hid From Japanese Planes

The group set out in rickshas on Feb. 15, reaching Anking, 100 miles to the southwest, in four days. At times they walked beside their vehicles and on a number of occasions sought protection in ditches and among grave mounds as Japanese planes passed while on their way to raid Anhwei centers.

At Anking, General Yang Sen, commanding a detachment of Szechwan troops, permitted the women to ride in an army truck headed for Hankow via Luan. Also in the truck were twenty-five soldiers and civilians and a great pile of baggage and supplies.

The truck reached here three weeks later. For many days they were held up by storms. Traversing almost impassable highways, the truck was disabled many times.

The women passed the bitter cold nights on the bare floors of crumbling temples or in small country inns. They lived in constant fear of bandits who thickly infest Central Anhwei because of the unsettled situation caused by the war and the acute economic depression.

The refugees left behind at Hofei the Rev. C. A. Burch, the husband of Mrs. Burch, who remained with a few Chinese members of the hospital staff who will stay through the prospective siege by the Japanese and remain even if the city is captured.

The women reported that tens of thousands of refugees were pouring westward across Anhwei. They said that everywhere they noted amazing fortitude and a general determination to fight. They often met groups of students, boys and girls, marching to the front, happy and apparently ready for any sacrifice.

Chinese Troops Courteous

They found the soldiers well-disciplined and enjoying the full confidence of the people, a rarity in China until recently. The troops and their commanders were invariably helpful and courteous to the Americans.

In Eastern Anhwei was a vast network of trenches and tank traps. The entire Hofei Railway had been torn up and great ditches had been dug across the embankment.

Miss Teagarden, Miss Young and Miss Stocks will return to the United States. The others will continue church work in the Hankow area.

Miss Stocks aided J. Hall Paxton, second secretary of the United States Embassy at Nanking, when he stumbled into her home at Chaohsien during his wanderings last December while seeking help for the Panay survivors after the bombing of the United States gunboat in the Yangtze River by Japanese airplanes.

A cable just received from Mr. Marx reads as follows:

SHANGHAI MAR 23

INDIANAPOLIS INDIANA

MARX SHANGHAI ADDRESS MISSIONS BUILDING CABLE DISCIPLES

WILKINSON TEAGARDEN YOUNG MRS BURCH HANKOW.

March 23, 1938

Dear Friends and Relatives of the
China Missionaries:

We have chosen excerpts from letters received recently either through the missionary secretary, Mr. Edwin Marx or from the missionaries themselves in order that you may have our latest word.

At the close you will note the copy of the news item from the New York Times, March 20, giving the account of the trip made by the Hofei missionaries.

Very sincerely yours,

FOREIGN DIVISION
The United Christian Missionary Society

March 3, 1938

Dear Mr. Paul:

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Sic! Mr. George A. Fitch of Nanking Y.M.C.A. has been persuaded to make a trip to the U.S.A. for the purpose of acquainting certain circles there with the situation here in China. He is going on the same plane which I expect will take this letter. He was Chairman of the International Relief Committee in Nanking, and was there all through the siege and Japanese occupation, until a few days ago. He has a thrilling and absorbing story, which he tells in a quiet and straight forward manner, but most convincingly. He was for years Secretary of Y.M.C.A. in Shanghai, and for the past three or four years held same position in Nanking. He is a brother of Dr. Robert Fitch of Hangchow, and a brother-in-law of A. R. Kepler, Secretary of the Church of Christ in China.

I leave here Friday, the 4th, on the P & O s.s. "Naldera." Nora will accompany me.

With best wishes, always,

Edwin Marx

Feb. 7, 1938
Hofei, Anhwei

Mr. Edwin Marx,
Shanghai,

Dear Mr. Marx:

South Gate workers here are now reduced to Huang Shao-chi and family and a teacher by the name of Cheo. Luther Hsiao, Bao Wennien and families are now in Hankow. Word from Cammie at Wuweichow states that she fled Wuhu with forty-nine workers and Christians, including Cheo Shao-chan and family, Chao Wei-long and family, son-in-law and daughters of Lee Hou-fu. There has been no trouble of any kind at Wuweichow. They are all in need of money, however, including Cammie. I will try if possible to get money to them when conditions to the east of us improve and there seems to be a possibility that Hofei may escape occupation.

The Kuanghsi army has now more than a hundred thousand soldiers in this area and the high officers seem to think they can hold the line and prevent a westward push from the Gingou line by the Japanese. We are planning to hold on as everything

will be lost if we leave now. The main reason for our staying however is that we hope that we may be able to save the lives of hundreds of our Christians and workers who are here. Many of them can run no further and there is no place to go. I tried to persuade the ladies and Hannah Stocks who is with us to go out via Hankow or Anking, but they have finally decided not to do so. If there is no fighting here we may be able to weather the storm but if the Chinese troops try to hold the city we are in for a time of destruction and terror. We have more than a hundred people living in an organized camp in the Rural Center opposite the girls and another hundred or so living at the Girls' School. We are not using the term refugee camps. Each person will have an arm-band and flag with the words Gao-tu. We will do the best we can if outsiders come in but warn them that we have no certainty that we can protect them. We shall be able to secure plenty of rice by gifts as soon as it seems probable that the Japanese may come and shall drive in our sheep (some seventy head), our pigs, and the Goulter's cows. We shall not try to save the school compound as it is now being partially used by the army headquarters. (A first alarm has just sounded, the second today, and we are waiting for the second before going outside.) We are trying to build a stronger shelter with iron rails and tiles from the railroad to use if the city is besieged.

The hospital has decided to open a dispensary in Shucheng, about 120 li to the west of here to which we may send women and children and to which some of our staff might retire if there is to be fighting in the city. Dr. Cheng and family and our kitchen supervisor and two nurses have left but the rest of the staff are staying by. Our receipts for the month of January amounted to about \$2400 and December receipts were also fair. Over the Chinese New Year we had more than thirty patients in residence which is more than for a number of years. More children have been born in the hospital during the past year than for any two years previous and the number of operations has greatly increased. We have been doing a great deal of charity work and have received no pay for the scores of soldiers we have treated and looked after in this hospital. We should be paid for this later on as we had an agreement with the Wei Sheng Shu but of course we cannot collect now.

I hope you may be able to write us by air mail as far as Hankow. Letters from there reach us in about ten days. We still have supplies of milk, flour, sugar, and coffee but the coffee is getting low. (A lone Jap plane flew over and dropped some bombs but they fell on vacant ground and no one was hurt.)

Please get word to the homeside folks that we are carrying on from day to day. We have one demented girl, two children, one partially blind girl and several other patients in the hospital who cannot be sent elsewhere so there is no way for me to leave even if I wanted to do so. We feel that the lives we have been able to save and the possibility of protecting and helping many more people in the event of the Japanese taking the city justifies our remaining here.

Kindest regards to all our friends,

C. A. Burch.

P.S. Excerpt from separate letter of Mr. Burch's February 4th.

"House occupied by the Cheo's in Chuchow destroyed by fire. Catholic property and Advent Church as well as many private homes at Chao Hsien wrecked by Japanese bombing raid."

The 'house occupied by the Cheo's in Chuchow' I take as referring to the home of Pastor Cheo Yu-wen, which adjoined the church, and in former years was the home of Mr. and Mrs. Willigm Renfry Hunt.---Edwin Marx.