

3 Ping Tsang Hsiang,
Nanking.

March 3, 1938.

Dear Nina:-

My letter of yesterday was almost entirely about the inner man; and I am sorry that I did not have time to add to that letter before mailing it the things I had intended to add. But I shall take advantage of the fact that we have another mail this week to say some of the things now that I wanted to say yesterday.

You may be interested to know how the group of us here who have gone through the last few months together have divided the tasks that had to be done between us. During the last two weeks or so, before the fighting became acute around Nanking but during the time when the wounded were coming in by the thousand over the Shanghai-Nanking Railway, John Magee and Ernest Forster, who has succeeded Billy Roberts here, did yeoman service for the wounded men at the Hsiakwan station. They spent long hours there, both day and night, especially at night, for during the last few days the trains bringing the wounded tried to run at night so as to avoid as far as possible the danger of being bombed. Mrs. Twinem was also a member of the group that worked at the station. Sometimes they worked all night, or at least so much of it that little was left before the dawn. Magee and Forster both lived at Hsiakwan, so it was natural for them to assume responsibility for this wounded soldier work, but as I look back upon it, I fear the rest of us left them with a load that was really heavier than their just share. When it became impossible to live longer at Hsiakwan, John and Forster moved into the Safety Zone, and took over Hansen's house and one or two others and looked after a group of refugees there. These were largely their own church people or some others that had in some way been entrusted to their care.

In the early days of the protracted development of the Safety Zone, Searle, Lewis, and I carried most of the responsibility. There were endless conferences and discussions with Chinese and foreign friends, with the Embassies, and with Chinese officials. Searle and I "spent" one air raid in the Mayor's dugout, one of the few really first class dugouts I have been in during all of the air-raid period. The Mayor had a telephone in his dugout, so that while we were incarcerated, so to speak, we could call up our friends and tell them of our whereabouts. Real chairs to sit in too in this dugout were a luxury not to be found in most places of refuge in the city. Besides the conferences necessary in Nanking, there was the telegraphic correspondence also with the Japanese in Shanghai, which took no little time and thought. Of all the things which I have enjoyed in the last few months, and in spite of all the tragedy there have been some things that one could enjoy, it was this battle of wits with the Japanese - and we didn't come off second best in that either! Every time the Japanese gave us an inch, we took an ell, and we finally landed, with the help of others, the Safety Zone!

Once the establishment of the Zone became a certainty, we were of course faced immediately with a host of practical tasks. Provision had to be made for housing the people. Food had to be brought in. A

staff had to be built up almost over night. Plans made for financing the work, et cetera. Moreover to make it all the more difficult, while the Mayor and his group were urging us to take over this and that before we were really ready to do so, the military simply would not move out their troops with that promptness which we had a right to expect when they agreed to the establishment of the Zone. In addition too these preparations had to be made in the midst of war conditions, with constant air raids, and with the Chinese soldiers in their last feverish preparations for defence or retreat ready to take over any truck they felt they could get to use in their service. Riggs helped with the housing. Sone and Kroeger worked on getting in supplies. Fitch ran the office. Sperling acted as Inspector, trying to get the Chinese military out of the Zone. He was also instrumental in getting the Safety Zone flags put up around the borders of the Zone. We must have made flags by the hundred literally. The bill for this item alone was \$600 and the money was not wasted either.

Trimmer, Wilson, Miss Bauer and Miss Hynds were of course at the Hospital. Most of the Chinese staff went away in the last hectic rush out of Nanking. We did not approve of their going as they did, but later when we saw that they might have suffered at the hands of the Japanese had they remained, we were naturally much more reconciled to their departure. McCallum has served the Hospital as Business Manager during all this period, and he has been most useful in that capacity. Miss Vautrin has of course been occupied with the refugee work at Ginling all of the time. This has been all along one of our largest camps with a population ranging at different times from around 3,500 to nearly 10,000. We have jokingly told Minnie that Ginling has had more students this winter than ever before in its history. The big buildings there and the large extent of the campus has made it an ideal place for a relief camp. So also with the University, and I might add with the Seminary and the Bible Teachers Training School too.

In addition to those above mentioned there were three others who have been quite a help to us. One German, one Austrian, and one young White Russian. Hatz and Zial helped with the trucks, and Podshivaloff, otherwise known as Cola, made himself generally useful. Two other Germans went through the siege with us, Mr. Hempel and Mr. Zandig, but the former was too much occupied with his own business and the latter was too old to take much part in our work. Unfortunately Mr. Hempel's hotel, a small one on the East Chung Shan Road, was burned after the Japanese came in.

For the first two or three weeks after the occupation of the city the major efforts of all of us were centered on trying to mitigate in such ways as we could the treatment which the Japanese were according to the people. Our relief problems were also made more difficult by the fact that during this period one hardly dared to leave a car or a truck unguarded by a foreigner for even a few minutes, lest the Japanese make away with it. One or another of us had to accompany every load of food or fuel that was moved, and were even obliged to accompany the coolies that we used to and from their lodgings, lest they too be molested. In those days relief work had to be combined with police duty.

With all my love to you and Angie,
Plumer.