

Nanking, December 16, 1937.

Dear Family:

Another week has passed since my last letter to you was written, but it has been a week so replete with rapidly changing events and situations that it has not been easy to settle down to writing letters. We are now busy adjusting ourselves to the Japanese occupation of Nanking; but more about that later.

Last week, just after I had written, I received word thru the Embassy here that Bp. Roberts had ordered Clarissa, Miss Sims, and Miss Barnaby to proceed to Shanghai via Hongkong. Miss Sims is our woman evangelistic worker at St. Paul's, and Miss Barnaby teaches in St. Mary's Hall, Shanghai. They have been helping out at St. Hilda's School and Boone School this fall on account of the emergency here. They were to have left Wuchang last Friday but I do not know whether by train or by plane. I tried to get Crisso on the telephone on Thursday morning, but she had gone out and I could only tell Frances Roots who received the message that we were all right in Nanking and that I had received Crisso's telegram about her plans for going to Shanghai. I presume they have reached the latter place safely. I shall not know for several more days as regular communications with Shanghai have not yet been re-established and the Embassy staff that remained behind went aboard the U.S.S. Panay last Saturday. You probably know by now that this ship was sunk by a bomb dropped from a Japanese plane about 28 miles from here on the Yangtse River. That is all we know so far. Some of the newspaper men made their way down to the river bank in order to request the J. fleet which had just arrived at Hsiakwan to forward a message to the Panay to the effect that all foreigners in Nanking were safe and that it was all right for the Embassy people to return. The officers looked a little embarrassed and then said that the Panay had been sunk by one of their planes which was attempting to hit another ship supposedly carrying fleeing Chinese troops. They said their admiral had proceeded to the spot immediately with doctors and nurses to be of whatever assistance they could. We have no further news. The Embassy people, who were obeying orders from Washington not to remain in the city, had repeatedly urged us to go with them; but we felt that duty kept us here. We have been in the midst of war and confusion but thru it all God has sustained us in a wonderful way.

I was able, the other day, to make a trip down to the southern part of the city where the J. troops entered and where St. Paul's Church and our future residence are located. The church is intact, having sustained only a few broken windows and a broken door or two; but the parish house was hit by a shell and the roof at one end of the building is stove in. The residences are unharmed tho a shell exploded last Saturday afternoon just opposite us and destroyed a Chinese hotel. We do not know certainly about our mission buildings at Hsiakwan but we think they are still standing. Most of Hsiakwan was set afire by the Chinese to clear the view as the enemy approached so we had very little hope of saving our buildings. There was lots of fighting in that section (our mission is located just by the city gate) between the Japanese and the retreating Chinese soldiers, but it was the southern part of the city which got most of the shelling and bombing. I cannot tell you all that has been happening; I do not know how I am going to mail this letter; but we must work and pray more

fervently that the scourge of war may be wiped off the earth forever.

We have organized a local branch of the International Red Cross Society to care for the wounded and destitute. John Magee is Chairman and I am secretary. We are no longer able to do anything for the wounded soldiers, but there are many civilians straggling in from various parts of the city who need help.

The 'Safety Zone' has been the means of saving the lives of countless thousands of civilians who would have been killed by shells and machine gun fire if they had remained in their homes in other parts of the city. We are laboring under considerable difficulty and still have a tremendous problem on our hands but are hoping that we can save some lives atleast. Our presence in the city is not welcomed very cordially by certain persons as it puts a curb on their style but one shudders at the thought of what would be if we were not here. It is bad enough as it is.

It does not look as though Crisso and I would have Christmas together this year; but we will try to honor the New-born King by humble service to His children wherever we happen to be. Our Christians have shown a splendid spirit. They are housed in several residences in the 'safety zone' belonging to foreign business people, and they are adapting themselves to this life at close quarters pretty well. Altogether we are trying to be responsible for about 300 persons whome we know. We estimate that there are atleast 100,000 people in the 'safety' area. Most of them have nothing but what they were able to carry with them. Fortunately the weather has been fairly mild, so that the suffering in that respect has not become so great. Food kitchens are being opened for those who are absolutely dependent on us. We are hoping that normal conditions will be restored soon so that a lot of the people can return to their homes. There will be thousands however with no homes to return to.

We hope that this will find all of you well. It will be good to get some news from you again. Our mail is probably going to Yangchow or remaining at Shanghai and it will be some time before this service is restored to normal working order.

With much love to you all,