(i) *Thursday, December 9, 1937*
If you are getting the same sort of radio reports that we are, you are undoubtedly rather alarmed for our safety here. Well we are a little concerned ourselves. I am writing this to the tune of big guns firing just outside of the city. Today I counted eight fires going at once both inside and outside of the city. Japanese advance guards have reached the walls in several places. The Embassy has all departed for the gunboat [U.S.S. *Panay*] after a last effort to get us on. The official air raid tally must now come to a close as today was one long raid from morning until night. The sirens sounded once in the morning and then didn't bother to sound for the rest of the day. Japanese places could be seen most of the day bombing both within and without the city. We received a number of casualties and the hospital is again filling up. We have a pretty good nursing staff now but still only the three doctors, Trim [Dr. C. S. Trimmer] and myself and the little fellow from Kiangyin (who claims to have a medical training though we haven't been able to unearth any evidence of it yet).

[...]

Counting up today I find I have nine fractured legs at the hospital, four amputation stumps with severe infection, all open flap amputations in an attempt to save the patients' lives, three ruptured appendices now draining, two fractured (no, it's four) arms besides a host of other surgical conditions, most of them severe. With such a charge, there seems to be nothing to do except to take a chance on the Japanese shelling, the Chinese looting or whatever else may be in store for us.
My little shrapnel and bullet collection is increasing daily and I will be able to open a respectable museum before the war is over. The International Committee, of which five members are here at the house, are doing a splendid piece of work but the outcome is a matter of grave concern. The Japanese definitely say they will not recognize it. In this zone around us here, we now have about a hundred thousand poor people crowded into all the available buildings. What will happen to them is mere conjecture. The committee has gathered great quantities of rice and stored them in the University chapel. The zone is all marked with flags and banners and so far the Japanese have not bombed it. We still have hopes that even if they do not recognize it they might respect it. If they do, it will mean the saving of thousands of lives of poor people. The hospital has its work cut out for it. Trim is heading up a sanitation committee for the zone.

So far we have continued both our electricity and city water but expect both to go shortly. [Archibald] Steele, the Chicago Daily News reporter, got a baptism of fire today when he went with [Associated Press reporter] Yates McDaniel to Kwanghua Men [Gate]. They reached there to find Japanese machine gun bullets whistling over the wall over their heads. Chinese were replying from the wall. Several airplanes then started to dive practically overhead and a number of bombs dropped within two hundred yards of them. A good many Chinese soldiers were killed. The radio reports suggest that the fall of the city will come in a day or so and we think it entirely possible. There has not been much looting though we got in the hospital this afternoon an old lady of 72 who had been shot twice by a pistol by a Chinese looter, the first shot passed through the metacarpals of her left hand and the second shattered her thigh. I have the second bullet in my collection.

The air has been heavy with smoke all day and the city looks more like Pittsburgh than our Nanking. A terrific explosion occurred about supper time and I happened to be looking at the spot when the explosion occurred. There was a big fire around Hansi Men and suddenly the sky was lighted with a huge flare from the center of the fire. After a few seconds the boom came. It must have been a big collection of ammunition. I was on my bicycle heading home from the hospital at the time.

(ii) Tuesday, December 14
[... ] The battle of Nanking is finished and gone. It is a pathetic thing to see a breakdown of morale. The Chinese morale broke all of a sudden and we were treated to the full effects of it. My last note as I recall was written last Friday but I'm not at all sure. We have been very busy treating cases wounded by the aerial bombing. On Saturday the big guns began to creep closer to the city. We could see a couple of observation balloons somewhere in the vicinity of Spirit Valley. We had all kinds of trouble with wounded soldiers. We could not receive them as we were in the so-called safety zone but we treated them by the score and tried to get them to the military hospitals which were very sketchy institutions.

On Sunday the Japanese were pounding the city wall in several places and they made a breach near Kwanghua Men but were repulsed. Then suddenly starting about dusk on Sunday night the morale broke and all night the Chinese soldiers streamed north towards Hsia Kwan by the thousands. There was no discipline and they threw away all their guns and equipment which lay scattered all over the roads. They say the situation at Hsia Kwan was appalling as there were no boats to take them across the river. Thousands were drowned as crude put-together rafts were overturned and what small boats there were were overcrowded and sunk.

The looting on their way out was not marked as they
didn't seem to have time. The Japanese big guns shelled the city throughout the night. Numerous fires were started and our windows rattled practically all night. Needless to say we didn't get much sleep. Working in the hospital and particularly the operating room with the big guns going is a rather uncomfortable job. The Japanese seemed to respect the safety zone remarkably with their big gun fire and so none of us came near to being actually hit. The Chinese had spent two days barricading Chungshan [Sun Yat-sen] Road right in front of the hospital and up to Sunday night we were gravely concerned as the hospital formed one border of the barricade. The rout on Sunday night however left the nicely built sand-bag barrier just as they had built it without a single defender.

On Monday morning the 13th, exactly four months after the trouble started in Shanghai, the Japanese entered the city by several gates at once. Some came in Hoping Men in the north and some in Hansi and Kwanghua Mens in the west and south-east respectively. By night they had complete control of the city and numerous Japanese flags flew from various places including their former embassy.

The entire remaining population of Nanking, some 150 or 200 thousand individuals, were crowded into the zone I have described earlier as the refugee zone. The International Committee are doing a tremendous job with them and there is no doubt but that they have saved thousands of lives by their efforts. At the last moment thousands of Chinese soldiers threw away their uniforms and equipment and donned looted civilian clothes and crowded into the zone. Handling them is a grave problem in itself. Doubly grave has it become since the Japanese have not been fooled and are rounding them up by the hundreds and shooting them, putting their bodies in the conveniently handy dug-outs built for air-raid protection.

Any civilian who shows no signs of fear and goes qui-
shell exploded right on the corner of the Christian Mission church in the next yard. I happened to be facing the window and raised my head to see the cloud rising from the explosion. Four pieces of metal came through the windows of the operating room and two of them have been added to my collection which is growing steadily. The operating room nurses were naturally pretty shaky and wanted to know if we should continue the operation. There was obviously nothing else to do but I don’t think many eyes have come out that fast. The corner of the Church is pretty badly smashed. Another shell from the same source entered the new dormitory of the University and exploded. Fortunately neither shell either killed or wounded a soul.

We have added another young Chinese doctor to the staff also from the Kiangyin hospital. He seems to have a little more medical knowledge than the other one and I have had him help me once or twice in the operating room. The three Kiangyin nurses I have there have been doing beautifully. I did eleven operations today including the inevitable amputation. We have considerably over one hundred patients now and I didn’t manage to get around to see them all today. One ward I had to leave over. The electricity is naturally off as is the water supply and now the telephone is off so we have few of our modern conveniences commonly regarded as necessities. What we are going to use for food shortly is something we can only guess at. I hope mail becomes established again shortly as I would like to get this off to you all and needless to say it would be rather grand to hear from everyone again.

(iii) Wednesday, December 15

It would be interesting to see what is in the headlines of your papers. We received confirmation today of the sinking of the U.S.S. *Panay* on which we all were supposed to be by Japanese bombing. You undoubtedly have fuller information than we have. Our story says that an Italian newspaper correspondent and an American captain of one of the Socony river steamers were killed and a number wounded including [Second Secretary] Hall Paxton. The group were taken directly to Shanghai by the U.S.S. *Oahu* so that we have not seen any of them.

The hospital gets busier every day. We are about up to our normal capacity as far as patients go. There were about thirty admissions today and no discharges. We can’t discharge any patients because they have no place to go. About ten of the hundred and fifty cases are medical and obstetrical and the rest are surgical. Neither of our Chinese doctors have the ability to care for them except under careful supervision, so that keeps me humping. Yesterday I wrote that I had eleven operations. Today I had ten operations in addition to seeing the patients in the ward. I got up early and made ward rounds on one ward before coming home to breakfast. After breakfast I spent the morning seeing the other wards and then started operating after lunch.

The first case was a policeman who had had a bomb injury to his forearm shattering the radius and severing about three-fourths of the muscles. He had had a tourniquet on for about seven hours and any attempt to stop the hemorrhage would have completely shut off the remainder of the circulation to the hand. There was nothing to do but an amputation. The next case was a poor fellow who had a large piece of metal enter his cheek and break off a portion of the lower jaw. The metal was extracted as well as several teeth imbedded in the broken off portion of the jaw. Then came a series of cases under the fluoroscope with Trim’s assistance. One fellow had a piece of shrapnel in his parotid gland, it having severed his facial nerve. Another had a bullet in his side. It had entered his epigastrium and gone straight through his stomach. He vomited...
a large quantity of blood and then felt better. His condition is excellent and I don’t believe I will have to do a laparotomy on him at all. I got the bullet out of the side without difficulty. Another case had his foot blown off four days ago. He was very toxic and I did an open flap amputation of his lower leg. Another case was that of a barber bayonetted by Japanese soldiers. The bayonet had cut the back of his neck severing all the muscles right down to the spinal canal, through the interspinous ligaments. He was in shock and will probably die. He is the only survivor of the eight in the shop, the rest having all been killed.

The slaughter of civilians is appalling. I could go on for pages telling of cases of rape and brutality almost beyond belief. Two bayonetted cases are the only survivors of seven street cleaners who were sitting in their headquarters when Japanese soldiers came in without warning or reason and killed five of their number and wounded the two that found their way to the hospital. I wonder when it will stop and we will be able to catch up with ourselves again.

(iv) Saturday, December 18

Today marks the sixth day of the modern Dante’s Inferno, written in huge letters with blood and rape. Murder by the wholesale and rape by the thousands of cases. There seems to be no stop to the ferocity, lust and atavism of the brutes. At first I tried to be pleasant to them to avoid arousing their ire but the smile has gradually worn off and my stare is fully as cool and fishy as theirs.

Tonight as I came back from supper to stay here for the night I found three soldiers had ransacked the place. Miss [Iva] Hynds had accompanied them to the back gate. Two of them arrived and the other had disappeared. He must be hiding somewhere around the place. I motioned to the others outside stating in no uncertain terms that
this was a Beikoku Byoyen [American hospital]. How do you like that? The two that were there allowed themselves to be led out. They had taken Miss Hynds’ watch and several other watches and fountain pens as well.

Let me recount some instances occurring in the last two days. Last night the house of one of the Chinese staff members of the university was broken into and two of the women, his relatives, were raped. Two girls about 16 were raped to death in one of the refugee camps. In the University Middle School where there are 8,000 people the Japs came in ten times last night, over the wall, stole food, clothing, and raped until they were satisfied. They bayonetted one little boy, killing him, and I spent an hour and a half this morning patching up another little boy of eight who had five bayonet wounds including one that penetrated his stomach, a portion of omentum was outside the abdomen. I think he will live.

I just took time out because the third soldier had been found. He was on the fourth floor of the nurses’ dormitory where there were fifteen nurses. They were scared within an inch of their lives. I don’t know how much he had done before I arrived but he didn’t do anything afterwards. He had a watch or two and was starting off with one of the girls’ cameras. I motioned for him to give it back to her and to my surprise he obeyed. I then accompanied him to the front door and bade him a fond farewell. Unfortunately he didn’t get the swift kick that I mentally aimed at him. One of the earlier ones was toying around with a rather formidable looking pistol which I’m thankful he didn’t use.

One man I treated today had three bullet holes. He is the sole survivor of a group of eighty, including an eleven year old boy, who were led out of two buildings within the so-called safety zone and taken into the hills west of Tibet Road and there slaughtered. He came to after they had
left and found the other seventy-nine dead about him. His three bullet wounds are not serious. To do the Japanese justice there were in the eighty a few ex-soldiers.

One girl I have is a half-wit with some sort of birth injury, I believe. She didn’t have any more sense than to claw at a Japanese soldier who was taking away her only bedding. Her reward was a bayonet thrust that cut half the muscles of one side of her neck.

Another girl of seventeen has a terrific gash in her neck and is the only survivor of her family, the rest of them were finished off. She was employed by the International Export Company.

As I left the hospital for supper after finishing my rounds on the 150 cases now under my care, the full moon was rising over Purple Mountain and was indescribably beautiful, and yet it looked down on a Nanking that was more desolate than it has been since the Taiping Rebellion [1853–64]. Nine-tenths of the city are totally deserted by Chinese and contain only roving bands of plundering Japanese. The remaining tenth contains almost two hundred thousand terrified citizens.

Last night [Plumer] Mills, [Lewis] Smythe and [George] Fitch went over in Fitch’s car to escort Mills to Ginling [College]. Minnie [Vautrin] holds the fort there with several thousand women. When they got to the front gate they were held up by a patrol of Japanese soldiers under command of a pugnacious, impudent lieutenant. He lined the men on one side and Miss Vautrin, Mrs. Chen [Shui-fang] and Mrs. [deWitt] Twinem on the other side. He snatched the hats off the men and ordered everyone off the place including the women. Fitch told him he didn’t have a place for them to stay but he insisted. They just got into the car when he ordered them back again and again harangued them for some minutes, finally sending the men back where they came from. Later we learned that while this was going on some Japanese soldiers had climbed over the wall and helped themselves to sixteen women.

The population faces famine in the near future and there is no provision for winter’s fuel. It is not a pleasant winter that we look forward to. It is too bad that the newspaper reporters left on the day they did instead of two days or so later when they could have been more detailed in their reports of the Reign of Terror.

Another interruption to usher two Japanese soldiers off the premises.

As I probably won’t get much sleep tonight I had better turn in dressed to get what I can.

(v) **Sunday, December 19**

I guess it’s Sunday. After writing last night’s installment the night passed peacefully. I came home this morning to listen to a dozen or more tales of plunder and rape. After writing an account of last night’s visitation to the hospital I went with [Searle] Bates, Smythe and Fitch to the Japanese Embassy (they still call it that) and we talked with Mr. Tanaka [Sueo], one of the secretaries of the Embassy, who was formerly here at Nanking. He read over the account and listened to many other tales. He himself is sympathetic but has no control over the military and can only make representations like we do. There seems to be a very small glimmer of light but it is very faint and today was one of the worst days so far.

Practically every American house in the city was broken into. I dropped in at [University Hospital Superintendant Dr. J. H.] Daniel’s on my way home. Three Japanese soldiers were there when I got there. As I have said, my smiles have ceased and I ordered the soldiers out in no uncertain terms. They had broken into our locked room in the attic and everything in our big trunk was
strewn all over the floor. One soldier had broken the lock on my microscope and was trying to look into it. Somewhat to my surprise, they actually ran down the stairs and out of doors. Probably they came back when I had gone but I couldn’t stay there all day. The second floor is sacked clean. How thankful I am that Marjorie [Robert Wilson’s wife] managed to get as much of my stuff away as she did, and that most of my useful clothing is over here.

Just as I came home to supper [Dr. Richard] Brady’s cook and Mr. Chu who live where we were last summer had come in to get someone to go there and interfere with the raping of all their women. Bates, Smythe and Fitch went over, caught three soldiers at it in the basement of the house and Bates sent them packing. Again, they will probably return as soon as all is clear. The Japanese are swarming all over the place and I fully believe that the hospital is the only building in town except the one we are in where someone has not been raped and I’m not sure that there wasn’t some done at the hospital before I located the fellow on the fourth floor.

Another stunt today seems to be a big burning tear. Yesterday there were a number of fires but today several large blocks near Taiping Road were ablaze about supper time and one house about two hundred yards from us here was burned. From the hospital it looked as if this house was going up in flames and I didn’t feel comfortable about it until I had finished my rounds and came home to find it still intact.

I made rounds on two wards this morning starting late because of the visit to the Embassy. This afternoon I took out the third eye I have operated on lately and did five other smaller operations, adding two pieces to my museum. Another day has passed without an amputation.

At least four American flags have been torn down lately. Today at Hillcrest the flags were taken down and a woman raped and then bayonetted in the basement. A pool of blood was on the floor when Mills took a consular policeman from the Embassy there this evening. The woman apparently is still alive and has been taken to the hospital where Trim will see her as he is on call tonight. I will see her in the morning.

All the food is being stolen from the poor people and they are in a state of terror-stricken, hysterical panic. When will it stop!

(vi) **Tuesday, December 21**

This is the shortest day in the year but it still contains twenty-four hours of this hell on earth. We heard yesterday that the Japanese news agency, Domei, reported the population returning to their homes, business going on as usual and the population welcoming their Japanese visitors, or words to that effect. If that is all the news that is going out of the city it is due for a big shake up when the real news breaks.

Huge fires are set in every business section. Our bunch has actually seen them set the fires in several instances. Yesterday before going home to supper I counted twelve fires. Tonight at the same time I counted eight. Several of them include whole blocks of buildings. Most of the shops of our vicinity have been burned. The populace is crowding into the refugee camps even from the private residences within the zone as the degree of safety is slightly greater though there is no guarantee anywhere. If it were not for the way the Committee had gathered rice beforehand and done what they could to protect the population there would be a first class famine already and the slaughter would have been considerably greater.

Several more stories of the slaughter keep coming in. One man came to [Rev. John] Magee today with the tale of what happened to one thousand men led away from a
place of supposed safety within the zone. The bunch contained perhaps one hundred ex-soldiers that had given up their arms and donned civilian clothes. The thousand were marched to the banks of the Yangtze, lined up two deep and then machine-gunned. He was in the back row, fell with the rest and played dead until, several hours later, the Japs had gone and he sneaked back to the city.

As we have seen a good many similar round-ups in this part of the city with no returns we presume the same has happened to all of them.

Yesterday a seventeen year old girl came to the hospital in the morning with her baby. She had been raped by Japanese soldiers the night before at seven-thirty, the labor pains had begun at nine o'clock, and the baby, her first, was born at twelve. Naturally at night she dared not come out to the hospital so she came in the morning with the baby who miraculously seemed to be safe and healthy.

This afternoon I put a cast on a lovely little girl of 13. When the Japanese came to the city on the 13th she and her father and mother were standing at the entrance of their dugout watching them approach. A soldier stepped up, bayonetted the father, shot the mother and slashed open the elbow of the little girl giving her a compound fracture. She has no relatives and was not brought to the hospital for a week. She is already wondering what to do when she has to leave. Both the father and mother were killed.

Day before yesterday at Hillcrest a young girl of nineteen who was six and a half months pregnant attempted to resist rape by two Japanese soldiers. She received eighteen cuts about the face, several in the legs and a deep gash in the abdomen. This morning at the hospital I could not hear the fetal heart and she will probably have an abortion. (Next morning: she died last night at midnight. Technically, a miscarriage.)
cups given us by Mr. Nyi had only half disappeared. How thankful I am for every kori full of stuff that we got out in September.

The Americans composed a telegram yesterday asking for the immediate return of an American Diplomatic representative. The Japanese military refused to send it in spite of the fact that they had said before that they would send messages. Today the entire American community and several Germans went to the Embassy to put in protests. I was too busy to go.

We have every bed filled. There are only about four nurses out of our staff of twenty or so that have ever had any training, as far as I can gather. We have three male nurses on one of my wards and I'm sure that they are nurses only because they say so and think that it is about the safest profession there is at present. I have a very sick case there with a through and through wound of the chest wall. The chart naively told me that his temperature was 99, his pulse 80, and his respirations 24. Realizing that all was not well I took them myself and found a pulse of 120, temperature 102.6 and respirations of 48. The little discrepancy is typical of the nursing on the floor.

This noon I came as near being shot as I ever hope to be. On my way home the police in front of the girls' dormitory at the University told me that a Japanese soldier was inside and begged me to see to it. As that is getting to be an old story now I barged in and ordered him out in no uncertain terms. He was having them pump up one of their own bicycles for him to ride but I put a stop to that and kept urging him out. He also wanted to take a ricksha and bicycle pump along and I roughly objected to that but that is where I overplayed my hand as he had brought the ricksha along himself with a poor coolie in tow. We were now no longer friends and he proceeded calmly to load his rifle and play around with it a little. The Chinese then told me that he had brought the ricksha and pump so I told him to take them and get along, which he did. We then went outside and as I passed loaded several more bullets in his rifle. I fully expected to be shot in the back as I went beyond him towards our house. He must have lost his nerve.

(vii) Thursday, December 23
This typewriter was rescued by Plumer Mills from the office of the Presbyterian mission. The ribbon is considerably better than mine and I see no immediate prospect of renewing mine.

While things seem to be calming down slightly the reason seems to be that there are no more houses to burn and the people have nothing more to be stolen and there are only a few able bodied men left to lead out and kill.

They still find a few houses to burn. Three fires are burning not far from here, one just across the road from the Middle School gate and slightly to the north. It is a small block of buildings that contain a garage, a butchery, a photo shop and several other stores.

Yesterday the cook asked me to go over and help him rescue his rice supply which I was afraid would be stolen. We got over there to find that the Japs had been in the place several times during the morning. There were five women in the cellar and they were terrified. I took two of them to the University along with the rice. Before I could get back for the other three, several soldiers had again entered. As I drove up I caught sight of a Jap officer with a white arm band. They have a few military police now and that is the way they are distinguished. I had him come with me and eject the soldiers. They were again ransacking Imogene's things. I took the three women to the University. This morning they tell me that the soldiers came back last night looking for them.
Two patients were admitted this afternoon whose condition represents about the last word in fiendish, unmitigated, atavistic brutality. One is the sole survivor of 140 led from one of the refugee camps to the hills where they were first sprayed with a few shots and then soaked with gasoline and set afire. His head is burned to a hideous fixed stare minus the eyes, which are burned out. He actually walked to the hospital. The burn extends from the top of the head and encircles his neck. The other was shot in the jaw first and then soaked in gasoline. He was then set afire. His hands had been bound together behind his back. He has a third degree burn of half his face, both hands half way to the elbows, half his back and from his hips down both legs are completely burned. Our auxiliary hospital is now full with over seventy patients and every bed we have is filled. In addition we are suddenly getting a lot of obstetrics cases. We had three today. Trim delivered two and I delivered one today. Fortunately I had only two small operations. It takes a fair share of the day just to make rounds and see everybody. There are practically no light cases. I have one man with a hole in the side of his head back of his ear about three and a half by one and a half inches in size. A considerable portion of his left temporal and parietal lobes have oozed through the hole and more comes off with the infection daily. He has been there for four days and is still conscious and can even smile with the left side of his face. His right side is paralyzed from head to toe. He would be a marvelous case for neurological study if I had the time. He seems if anything slightly better than when he came in and has no signs yet of meningitis. The injury was a bayonet slash.

One of the stupidest acts they have committed to date came to our attention today. They have been negotiating with the committee for the reestablishment of the water, light and telephone systems. When they went to round up the workers in the electric light plant they found that 43 out of the 54 had been taken out and shot for no reason at all and now there is no one who can run the plant. They have also burned the telephone building.

Just two years ago tonight I left New York to start on my way here.

(viii) Christmas Eve
This seems like anything but Christmas Eve. It is sort of tough to sit in a small X-ray room to keep Japanese soldiers from looting a hospital in the center of what was a few weeks ago a great city while the rest of the family is scattered all over the globe. My baby will be six months old in four days and I have seen her for seven weeks of that time.

The burning seems almost over. Only a half a dozen fires were started today to finish up the job of wiping out the shops on both sides of all the main streets. The looting continues. They carried off the Daniels' rugs today, one of them requiring four men to take. The poor people who stay in the house can of course do nothing about it and can only tell about it later. J. Lossing Buck has no idea how extremely lucky he is to date. His house, by virtue of the fact that there are eight Americans in it, has so far been spared the ravages of looters. [The] Thompsons' house next door has also been left untouched. The remaining houses are mere shells.

This morning Trim and I went over to rescue some eatables from the Gales' house. There were some preserves and canned fruit which are most welcome. Our larder is getting low with no prospect of replenishment. We also looked in at the Bishops'. Both houses have been pretty thoroughly sacked. I took the opportunity of dropping in
since writing on Christmas Eve I have been primarily an obstetrician. After finishing the installment I went to bed only to be called at eleven and again at three-thirty to preside at the inauguration ceremonies of two little Chinese. It was like being back on the obstetrics service at the medical school with the slight difference that no matter what happened I was still the ultimate medical authority.

Yesterday I managed to make complete rounds on all wards before dinner and went home to a Christmas dinner with the eight of our immediate family and four guests. This time we had Grace Bauer, Minnie Vautrin, and two Chinese girls, Blanche and Pearl [Bromley] Wu (no relation). Miss Hynds refused our most urgent entreaties. Miss Blanche Wu had supplied the two Christmas geese from Ginling and in addition made us a present of a dozen fresh eggs, our first in several weeks. [. . .]

This morning we found Trim struggling with a temperature of 102 and feeling pretty miserable. We put him to bed in Grace Bauer’s house, where he would get a little better food than at the hospital and he is feeling some bet-