

# Japanese Atrocities Marked Fall of Nanking After Chinese Command Fled

## NANKING INVADERS EXECUTED 20,000

Mass Killings by the Japanese Embraced Civilians—Total of Chinese Dead Was 33,000

## THE CONQUERORS RAN WILD

Deep-Rooted Hatred Instilled by Barbarities—Burning by Chinese Caused Vast Loss

By F. TILLMAN DUDIN

SHANGHAI, Dec. 22.—The battle of Nanking was undoubtedly the most tragic episode in modern military annals.

In defending the city as they did—against all the dictates of modern military strategy—the Chinese allowed themselves to be trapped, surrounded and wiped out to the number of at least 33,000, about two-thirds of their army there. Of this number, it is estimated, about 20,000 were executed.

The siege as a whole was feudal and medieval in many aspects. The Chinese defense was a desperate, last-ditch effort to hold the city against the Japanese, who were attacking from the north and south, and the Japanese forces who had fought a frontal battle against the Chinese.

In losing Nanking the Chinese lost more than the capital of their country. Their army lost invaluable morale and thousands of men. Chinese forces who had fought a frontal battle against the Japanese from Shanghai up through the lower Yangtze Valley were shattered, and it is doubtful if they can be rallied again for effective military machine.

For the Japanese, the capture of Nanking was of paramount military and political importance. Their victory was marked, however, by barbaric execution of prisoners, the looting of the city, rape, killing of civilians and by general looting and pillaging which would remain a blot on the reputation of the Japanese Army and nation.

## City Vulnerable Geographically

To understand the indefensibility of Nanking it is necessary to note that the city lies in a bend in the Yangtze at a point where the river turns from a northward course and flows east. It can easily be seen that a defending force occupying only the area within the city walls and the immediate suburbs could be surrounded on three sides by an attacking force gaining possession of the right bank of the river; both above and below the city.

Moreover, the concentration of attacking power of the Japanese, the Chinese military leaders should have realized, was a manifestation of the Japanese strategy to break through and capture Wuhu and points between Wuhu and Nanking fully three days before they entered the walls of the former capital. Having advanced in the first place along the right bank of the Yangtze, the Japanese, after having taken Wuhu, were able to press in upon Nanking along a semicircular front converging upon the city at all points except from the Yangtze river side.

It might be argued that the Chinese could have relied upon exit in case of need through the water-front district and across the Yangtze. Into this waterfront, or Hsiaokwan, section, the Hsiaokwan gate gives access. Reliance upon the Yangtze outlet was unwise primarily because of the likelihood that the Japanese fleet—despite the boats intended to bar its passage below Nanking—would eventually in the course of the siege by the Japanese Army arrive off Hsiaokwan and make escape by the Chinese over to the left bank of the river impossible.

## No Retreat Was Contemplated

It is evident that the Chinese command never contemplated that any but a few thousand of the defending Nanking troops could escape across the river. The absence of all means of conveyance across the river except a few junk and steam launches throughout the siege period was proof of this.

Indeed, the contention is inescapable that statements of Defense Commander Tang Sheng-chi and division commanders subordinating him—made before the siege—were ever contemplated were sincerely meant and were expressions of the real intentions of the Chinese command.

In other words, the Chinese command, fully realizing the practical certainty that the Chinese Army would be completely surrounded, the walls of Nanking would be like rats while Japanese land and naval artillery and airplanes would be in a position to pound them to pieces—chose just such a situation, apparently with the intention of making the capture of the city as costly to the Japanese as possible in a final heroic gesture of the kind so dear to the Chinese heart.

The disgraceful part of the whole business is that the Chinese command proved lacking in the courage needed to carry through their announced and apparent intentions. When Japanese troops had broken in from the south and the Hsiaokwan back door was still open, though threatened by a rapidly encircling Japanese Army and the Japanese fleet, General Tang and a few close associates fled, leaving subordinate commanders and well-known leaderless troops to their fate. The Chinese command, which probably had never been explained to them in the first place.

## Officers Were Uninformed

Tang Sheng-chi made his getaway at 8 o'clock Sunday evening, Dec. 12, doubtless by boat to the left bank of the Yangtze. Many officers of his own headquarters staff were uninformed of his intentions, and this writer knows of one captain who, learning near midnight that his chief had departed, himself tried to get away, only to discover the advance of the Japanese Army had by then swept around the city

walls from the west and was taking over the Hsiaokwan district. The captain, who had been ordered to hold the city, was left in a state of confusion and was unable to do so.

But the hopelessness of the Chinese strategic position in trying to defend Nanking can best be shown by details of the siege and of the occupation of the city.

After having captured the Kiangyin forts and taken Changchow, the Japanese advanced to the Yangtze Valley line from Wuhang northward to the Yangtze River with dramatic rapidity and within a few days had taken Kwangchow, the south shore of the Yangtze, and the north and, after having occupied Tanyang, were attacking the so-called outer defenses of Nanking near Kuyung.

The Kuyung defense line as well as seven others radiating from Nanking, each a few miles from the other, in concentric circles, were for months declared to be heavily fortified and well-prepared. As a matter of fact, permanent defenses through Kuyung, which is about twenty-five miles from Nanking, were superficial, consisting only of occasional pillboxes, so far as could be ascertained by neutral observers who inspected the fortifications.

Other defenses were hastily erected in the form of barbed wire made of bed frames and other debris, debris of burning variety and loose dirt. In addition, machine-gun emplacements were put up and the roads and bridges dynamited as the Chinese tried to inspect the fortifications.

Cantonese Troops Declined Opposed to the Japanese forces as they closed in on Nanking were a number of Cantonese divisions, a few Kwangsi troops, some Hunanese and—within the city itself—the Thirty-sixth and Eighty-eighth Divisions, former crack troops of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, had been badly shattered around Shanghai. Withdrawn to Nanking, they had been replenished with raw recruits. Seemingly, they were not to participate in the battle for the former capital.

It is difficult to say just what the strength of the Chinese Army in Nanking was. Some observers estimated that there were as many as sixteen divisions participating in the battle for the city. This could mean that the Chinese divisions even in normal times have an average of only 5,000 men; the battered divisions that defended Nanking were, however, composed of only 2,000 or 3,000 men each. It is fairly safe to say that some 50,000 troops took part in the battle, but many of them were surrounded and captured in the defense of Nanking.

Kuyung fell to the Japanese on the night of Monday, Dec. 6. The Japanese then turned their attention toward the Nanking walls from three directions. From Kuyung a column deployed northward through Meng-tze, a village near Nanking, and from the south, another column attacked Nanking from the south, and from the east, a third column drove on Chenchu-chang.

Orgy of Burning by Chinese The advance of the Japanese beyond Kuyung was the signal for an orgy of burning by Chinese troops, apparently as a part of last-minute preparations for resistance around the city walls.

From Tang-shan—China's "West Point," where are situated the artillery school, the infantry school and General Chiang's provisional summer headquarters—on across fifteen miles of countryside into Nanking almost every building was set afire. Whole villages were burned. Barbed wire, the modern chemical warfare school, the agricultural research experimental laboratories, the police training school and other institutions were reduced to ruins. The torch was applied to districts around the South Gate and in Hsiaokwan, which were in reality small islands of safety in the sea of fire.

Calculated Chinese military incendiaries accounted for destruction of property easily worth \$20,000,000. The Japanese, however, estimated that the damage caused by Japanese explosives during the actual siege and by Japanese troops after occupation of the city.

Chinese military leaders usually explained the wholesale burning around the city as dictated by military necessity. It was said to be essential to clear away all obstructions, all shelters, all facilities that might be utilized by the Japanese in the final struggle around the city walls. To this end not only buildings but trees, bamboo groves and underbrush were cleared away.

Neutral observers believe the burning was to a great extent an act of "scorched earth," an outlet for rage and frustration, the result of a desire to destroy everything that the Chinese were to lose and that might be used by the Japanese as a manifestation of the extremist "scorched earth" policy, which calls for leaving the Chinese districts to be occupied by the Japanese only as wastes of no use to the conquerors.

nected with the defense army also left by motor car. From Wednesday on, General Tang Sheng-chi was the supreme authority in Nanking.

On Wednesday Japanese airplanes rained bombs on Chinese positions at the little village of Chenchu-chang and that night Japanese troops occupied the place. Chenchu-chang is only six miles from the Nanking wall.

Chinese troops no doubt testified to the Japanese advance from Kuyung and Tanyang. But defense works were inadequate and the Chinese equipment made a resolute stand impossible. Japanese planes were able to spot and bomb Chinese troops at will and report their positions to field batteries. Tanks and armored cars led the Japanese advance, and against these Chinese machine-guns and Maxim pistols were of no avail.

Artillery of Little Value What artillery the Chinese had was of little use because the guns did not know the positions of the enemy. The Chinese had ceased to participate in the Nanking battle days before the Japanese laid siege to the city. Consequently, there was no coordinated fire, and the Chinese fought in a "blind" and which was ignorant of the positions of the invading force until enemy troops were close upon them.

With no position reports on the Japanese, most of the expensive fort guns placed by the Chinese on Liong-shan, outside the South Gate and on hills near Taihou Shan inside the walls were of little use to the defenders. On Tuesday night they were soon shelled into silence by the Japanese.

Terror seized the city on Thursday as the Japanese advanced. The Japanese fired from the hundreds of rifles raging around the walls at all points on the city. The Japanese fired from the hundreds of rifles raging around the walls at all points on the city.

Advised by the Chinese authorities that the situation had worsened, the Japanese sent a diplomatic official, including George Atcheson Jr., senior state secretary in charge of the United States Embassy, to Hsiaokwan, and Captain Frank Roberts, assistant military attaché Thursday evening, to see the Japanese commander. The Japanese refused to accept the American offer of a truce.

Japanese Aided by Spies Thursday night the Japanese forces at Chenchu-chang suddenly pushed in to the very walls of the city. The Chinese troops, who had been ordered to hold the city, were surrounded and captured in the defense of Nanking.

Later, Chinese plainclothes men set out to the Japanese suffered a general repulse in the ensuing confusion, but their advance was not to be denied as they were threatening not only Kwangchow Men but also maneuvered advance units to within striking distance of near-Tungting Men, or Chenchu-chang, which is the city's biggest gate.

On Friday artillery was brought up and it began pounding at the city walls while airplanes bombed these massive structures and unloaded explosives among Chinese troop concentrations all around the city walls.

Foreign diplomatic representatives came ashore for a short time on Friday, but after another warning from Chinese sources in Maoumou Park, the modern chemical warfare school, the agricultural research experimental laboratories, the police training school and other institutions were reduced to ruins. The torch was applied to districts around the South Gate and in Hsiaokwan, which were in reality small islands of safety in the sea of fire.

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CHEERING JAPANESE AFTER NANKING'S FALL  
Invading troops on 400-year-old wall shattered by their artillery

burning continued in the suburban areas still unoccupied by the Japanese, particularly in Hsiaokwan.

The Japanese settled down to intensive attack on Saturday. Having brought up heavy artillery, they began shelling many areas within the walls.

At many points within the city zone, many civilians were killed by missiles landing in front of and behind the Fochong Hotel on Chenchu-chang Road. Others struck on Wu Tai Shan near the American mission Nanking Theological Seminary. The shelling did not appear to be intentional nor consistent and possibly was done when newly placed guns were finding their range.

## Bitter Machine-Gun Duels

Saturday was marked by intensive conflict. Rival forces engaged in machine-gun duels, and the Chinese firing from the top of the battlements and in many cases still side the walls. The Japanese intensified their fire in particular against heavy Chinese troop concentrations.

Gradually the Japanese troops pushed their way around the walls so that by Saturday night they were attacking the West Gate, or Han Hsi Men, and the main North Gate. A certain feeling of hysteria was becoming noticeable among the Chinese defenders.

By late Monday the Japanese had taken the South Gate, and the eastern and western districts of the city after only isolated skirmishes. By Tuesday night all Chinese soldiers were armed and the Japanese were in complete control of the city.

In taking over Nanking the Japanese indulged in slaughters, looting and rape exceeding in barbarity any atrocities committed up to that time in the course of the Sino-Japanese hostilities. The Japanese are to be compared only with the vandals in the Dark Ages in Europe or the brutalities of medieval Asiatic conquerors.

The helpless Chinese troops, disarmed for the most part and ready to surrender, were systematically rounded up and executed. The Chinese who had turned themselves over to the Safety Zone Committee and been placed in refugee centers were methodically killed. Their hands were bound behind them, to execution grounds outside the city gates.

Small bands who had sought refuge in dugouts were routed out and shot or stabbed at the entrances to the bomb shelters. Their bodies were then shoved into the dugouts and buried. The Japanese were not satisfied with groups of bound soldiers. Most generally the executions were by shooting with pistols.

Every able-bodied male Nanking resident was ordered to the Safety Zone. An attempt was made by inspecting shoulders for knapsack and rifle belt marks to weed out the soldiers. In many cases, of course, men innocent of any military connection were put in the execution squads. In other cases, too, the Japanese were passed over and escaped.

The Japanese themselves announced that during the first 15 days of cleaning up Nanking 15,000 Chinese soldiers were rounded up. At the time, it was contended that 25,000 more were still hiding out in the city.

These figures give an accurate indication of the number of Chinese troops trapped within the Nanking walls. Probably the Japanese figure of 25,000 is exaggerated, but it is likely that about 20,000 Chinese soldiers fell victim to Japanese executioners.

Civilians of both sexes and all ages were also shot by the Japanese. Firemen and policemen were frequent victims of the Japanese. Any person who, through fear, approached the Japanese soldiers was in danger of being shot down. Tours of the city by foreigners during the period when the Japanese were consolidating their control of the city revealed daily fresh civilian dead.

Often old men were to be seen face downward on the pavement, apparently shot in the back at the whim of some Japanese soldier.

Wholesale looting was one of the major crimes of the Japanese occupation. On a district by district basis, full control, Japanese soldiers received free rein to loot all houses therein. Food seemed to be the first demand, but articles of value were taken at will, particularly things easily carried. Occupants of homes were robbed and any who resisted were shot.

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Houses that were barricaded were broken into. Foreign properties were not immune. Japanese soldiers entered faculty houses of the American mission Gilling College and took what they pleased.

The American mission University Hospital was searched and looted. The Japanese took from the dormitory. Foreign flags were torn from buildings and at least three motor cars were taken from the Japanese. The home of the United States Ambassador, Nelson T. Johnson, was entered, but the five intruding Japanese soldiers were made to leave before they had obtained any loot except a flashlight.

Chinese women were freely molested by Japanese soldiers and American missionaries personally known of cases where many were taken from refugee camps and violated.

It should be said that certain Japanese units exercised restraint and certain Japanese officers tempered power with generosity and compassion. But the conduct of the Japanese Army as a whole in Nanking was a blot on the reputation of the Japanese Empire. Japanese officers and diplomats who visited Nanking some days after the occupation admit all the horrors of the Japanese atrocity.

When the final collapse of the Chinese municipal regime and the defense command that the people were ready to welcome the Japanese troops. Indeed, scattered Japanese columns as they marched in from the South Gate and the West Gate.

Feelings of relief and of welcome soon gave up to terror when Japanese barbarities began. The Japanese might have gained a wide measure of support and approval from the Nanking Chinese, instead they drove deeper into the Chinese soul a hatred of Japan and set back to a distant future prospects for gaining the Chinese cooperation for which they profess to be fighting.

An account of the siege of Nanking would not be complete without reference to the safety zone and the role of the foreigners who remained in the city.

Not an unqualified success, the Nanking safety zone was nevertheless instrumental in saving thousands of civilian lives. It was the result of the Japanese promise to maintain its complete demilitarization and have its neutrality respected throughout the siege. Full demilitarization was never attained, and during the last days of the battle for Nanking Chinese soldiers streamed through the area. When the Japanese entered the city they also entered the zone freely.

However, the Japanese never subjected the zone to concentrated shelling or air bombardment, and as a result civilians who took refuge there were comparatively safe. It is estimated that 100,000 had sought sanctuary in the zone, which occupied an area of three or four square miles in the western district of the city.

The head of the safety zone committee was John H. D. Rabe, a white-haired German respected by every one who knew him in Nanking. The director was George F. Taylor, a British physician, and two American nurses, Grace Bauer and Iva Hynds, labored day and night with only a few Chinese helpers to care for the nearly 200 patients in their charge.

When the Japanese had occupied the city, the war wounded relief committee within a few minutes organized themselves as a chapter of the International Red Cross and took over the main hospital of the Chinese Army in the Foreign Ministry building. What transport could be marshaled was sent throughout the city to bring in wounded soldiers, and Chinese doctors and nurses still in the city were rallied to work at the institution.

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small American city during a period of flood or other catastrophe. The secretary of the committee was Dr. Lewis S. C. Brinton, Professor of Sociology at the University of Nanking, a man of much force and initiative. Prominent particularly in the negotiations for establishing the zone was Dr. M. S. Steele, Professor of History at the university.

Dr. Bates was in the forefront, too, of efforts to obtain an armistice at Nanking, during which it was planned to have Chinese troops withdraw and Japanese occupy the city peacefully.

Fifteen Americans, besides two American newspaper correspondents and one American newsreel photographer, remained in Nanking during the siege. Six Germans, one British and two Russians comprised the remainder of the foreign contingent who stayed for the siege.

From the time of the departure of the Panay on Saturday, Dec. 11, until contact had been made with the Japanese Fleet on Tuesday, Dec. 14, this little foreign group, without connection with the outside world, trapped like the Chinese troops within the Nanking walls. The city water supply had failed, and the Japanese had cut off all telephones and many food staples were unavailable.

All the foreigners of the city except the pulpit contingent actively associated themselves with safety zone or war relief work. Managing the safety zone involved more than the Japanese had bargained for. Thousands of penniless refugees had to be fed and housed. Policing had to be attended to. Medical facilities had to be provided. The skeleton banking service had to be set up.

The Rev. John Magee, Episcopalian missionary, heading the pulpit contingent, made heroic efforts to provide some care for the thousands of Chinese soldiers wounded during the siege.

Chinese soldiers, for treating wounded were extremely sketchy. There were hospitals, but the number of doctors and nurses was small. Many hospitals were restricted to men from certain divisions.

The Rev. Mr. Magee's committee during the actual siege concentrated efforts on marshaling the medical resources of the city for the existing hospitals and on transporting wounded men to these institutions. They were unable to cope with the tremendous number of casualties, and the Chinese wounded to be seen everywhere on the streets of Nanking during the siege were one of the more appalling sights of the whole tragic episode. Injured men hobbled about, dragged themselves through alleys, ways, died by the hundreds on the main streets.

The American mission University Hospital operated throughout the battle, and an effort was made to keep it reserved for civilian casualties. However, a few soldiers were admitted. Two American doctors, Frank Wilson and C. S. Trimmer, and two American nurses, Grace Bauer and Iva Hynds, labored day and night with only a few Chinese helpers to care for the nearly 200 patients in their charge.

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free function of this hospital, but on Wednesday morning, Dec. 14, they barred foreign access to the place and would make no commitments as to the fate of the 500 Chinese soldiers within.

Nothing had come of the Safety Zone Committee's efforts to arrange an armistice. General Chiang Kai-shek replied in only the most perfunctory manner to the committee's true proposal, the Japanese not at all the fate of the Chinese. General Tang made it clear that he was anxious for an armistice, and their attitude became one of almost frantic appeal for intervention as the outlook for the Chinese worsened.

However, the collapse came before negotiations could progress to formulation of any program for Chinese withdrawal and Japanese submission to the Japanese.

In any case, after the Panay, with her radio facilities, had left, there was no means of communicating with the Japanese except by a visit to their lines, which would have been an exceedingly dangerous business.

Nanking knew practically nothing of the Japanese ultimatum to General Tang, and apparently the Chinese commander never replied.

Casualties Heavy on Both Sides Casualties during the fighting for Nanking were heavy on both sides, with the Chinese taking the heaviest losses. Japanese casualties during the actual siege probably totaled 1,000. Chinese casualties, 3,000 to 5,000, perhaps more.

Many Chinese civilians who failed to leave the southern and southwestern sections of the city were killed. The Japanese, as they advanced, killed many civilians as high as the total of military dead. This writer, visiting the South City after the Japanese had occupied the area, found sections of the city almost demolished by Japanese shelling, and Chinese civilian dead were lying everywhere.

Just where the blame is to be put for the sorry military situation of the defense of Nanking turned out to be for the Chinese is difficult to say.

The defense was carried out against the earnest exhortations of the German military advisers of the Chinese Army. Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, who was strongly against the defense, General Chiang himself at first was said to favor a stand at Nanking, pointing out that a hundred thousands of dollars spent on fortifying the city and the desirability of at least making a fight for the country's capital.

It was generally reported that General Chiang was won over from this point of view; many of the best informed Nanking observers, however, believe that the defense was carried out because of the attitude of General Tang Sheng-chi and a number of other army leaders who insisted on a stand at Nanking and who themselves offered to make the stand with the army in the city.

Certainly, General Chiang should not have permitted the blunder that occurred. Certainly, General Tang, too, is to be strongly censured for starting on a course of sacrifice that he failed to carry through at best managed badly.

It may be that Tang made some efforts to save the situation on Sunday by arranging for a general withdrawal under protection of small units left to hold up Japanese penetration far into the city. Appearances indicate otherwise. In any case the situation was not saved and Tang's departure, unknown even to many members of his own staff, left the army leaderless and was the signal for complete collapse.

There was little glory for either side in the battle of Nanking.

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