



Marash, Turkey,

March, 7, 1920.

Dear Dad,

This is Sunday night, so I'm going to steal an hour or two to write a letter. You people at home are probably just having your dinner after church, as we are about seven hours ahead of you. I've almost forgotten what the inside of a church looks like, as we don't have such things here. The last service we had here was on Sunday Feb 8, a sort of "Thanksgiving" service after having had the visit from the French aeroplane and when we could see the reinforcements down on the plain below the city. As you already know, our "Thanksgiving" was somewhat premature, as the French evacuated two days later.

Speaking of churches, six churches and seven mosques were burned in Marash as a result of the fight here. The Protestants <sup>churches</sup> are, I think, "completely destroyed", while two Catholic churches were not harmed, altho the Turkish flag now flies over each, & Turkish soldiers guard the doors.

I think my last letter was written on Feb. 12, so there is much to tell now, but nothing very exciting. I suppose you got my letters written Jan. 21, Feb. 6, & the last on Feb. 12th. The first two went in one envelope, I think, and had a rather interesting trip if it got to you at all. It went with the French troops on Feb. 10th to Islahic, along with 3600 Armenians & five Americans. One out of every three of the 3600 failed to reach Islahic. Probably over a thousand died on the road, as the cold was terrible. The night they left here was the worst I've seen this winter. The next night



it began to snow, and the following night more snow and a heavy wind, so that here in Marash we had drifts six feet deep. The Moslems all said "Allah is helping us by sending the snow to kill the French". Nearly all our patients had gone, and over fifty of the <sup>our</sup> orphan girls. So when a telegram from Adana stated that only 2400 Armenians reached Islatkie, it confirmed what the Turks said that a thousand bodies lay on the plain. Two days later the Turks found on the road one of the hostages the French had taken - an old Turk official whom the French commander had kept as prisoner in Marash. Probably he had escaped during the night on the road, but of course the Turks here spread the story that the French had left one of the hostages on the road, bound, after robbing him of his coat and money.

The other letter of course was taken by Dr. Lambert and Dr. Shepard by horseback to Antab & Aleppo. They probably have not reached home yet. The letters Lambert brought me also came on a dangerous trip. You will probably be interested in knowing how traveling conditions are between here & Aleppo, & probably won't urge me to leave Marash in a hurry when you read this. The story Dr. Lambert & Dr. Shepard told of their experiences was quite an interesting one. Both of them had heard rumors of trouble in Marash, but nothing definite. The French in Aleppo newly said there was some fighting, but that the situation was "well in hand". On Feb. 10th they said relief forces had reached Marash, and after clearing up there would sweep on around to Antab & clear the road to Aleppo. On Feb. 11th Dr. Lambert

received the telegram we had sent him on Feb. 1st by way of Zeton and Hadjin, telling of the desperate situation. This telegram had been carried by two Zeton men over the mountains from Marash to Hadjin. From here the message was telegraphed to Constantinople and then back to Aleppo. Took at the map to see how far it went. This was the first definite news they had received from Marash. Altho the French had already evacuated, their officers in Aleppo told Lambert that there was a division of troops still in Marash & that everything was all right. Even after the truth was known, the French authorities said that only a few Christians had been killed in Marash, while several thousand Turks were dead. They must have known that 8 or 10 thousand Armenians had been massacred.

A few days after the French evacuated, Dr. Shepard in Antab got Mr. Lyman's letter by Turkish courier telling a little of conditions here. Dr. Shepard decided to go to Aleppo himself, especially as he had on his mind the death of the two Y.M.C.A. men, which <sup>was</sup> probably not known to the rest of the world. The Turk governor, knowing that the news would be out if the Doctor went, did not want him to go. After much difficulty he got permission to go. The two gendarmes sent ahead to clear the way went only as far as the first village, where Shepard caught up to them & passed them. Reaching the "bandit" zone he did the wise thing and got two bandits for his escort. The bandit chief himself rode along with Dr. Shepard thru the most dangerous part, then saluted and left let two of his men go the



rest of the way.

Reaching Aleppo he informed Constantinople of the death of the two Americans, Johnson & Perry, which I will tell about later. With Lambert he returned to Kiles by auto, then bought horses and came by way of Aintab to Marash, with Turkish gendarmes as escort. They left Aintab in a very unsettled state. The roads to Marash were filled with armed Turks. Ali Bey & his army had left Marash for Aintab, so they must have passed them. At Karabekla (I sent you a picture of this town, called the "Black Mustache") where Snyder & the car were attacked on Jan. 20, a band of Turks on wonderful horses stopped Dr. Shepard & Lambert. These men must have been Ali Bey & his staff. They allowed them to pass after examining their papers, but called to the villagers not to allow these men to enter the village. Armed men rushed out of the loading their rifles, & things looked serious, but Dr. Shepard knew the village chieftain & managed to quiet the mob. They stayed here all night. The next day they came on to Marash, fording the At Su, as the bridge was burned, and arriving here at the hospital about noon, covered with mud. Both were loaded down with the vests they wore, lined with gold in rolls. Each carried like cartridges. Each had 1250 liras, making \$12,500 in all - which we certainly needed.

They were greatly surprised to hear that the losses in Marash had been so terrible, & that the French statements were untrue.

The news Dr. Shepard brought us of conditions in Aintab is worth repeating. About the time trouble began in Marash a massacre was planned in Aintab. The day had been set, but providence interfered in a peculiar way. The night before this proposed massacre, a French soldier quarreled with a Moslem & killed him. This meant certain trouble the next day, and so all Armenians, when they heard of it, remained at home. The day set for the massacre no Armenians were to be found, as they feared trouble. In the morning Dr. Merrill went down to see the French commander, who said the moment the Turks started anything he would open an intense artillery fire on the Moslem quarter. Dr. Merrill informed the Turkish leaders of this, & believing that the French meant exactly what they said, they gave orders to their followers that no disorders begin in the city. Thus the quarrel between the French soldier & the Moslem saved the Armenians from a massacre.

But fracasos started twice in the days following, and would certainly have instantly started massacres had not the Moslem leaders restrained their followers. They feared the French would destroy their property & city. Finally at a meeting of Moslems, Armenians & American representatives Dr. Merrill told the Turks openly that the Armenians had every reason to fear them, & that if they wished to have peace in the city they must show by actions, not words, that they meant no harm. He also said he noticed the Turks did not want a massacre - "for the present time," at which all the Turks laughed.



his  
driver.

On Feb. 1st occurred the tragedy in which two Americans were killed. Johnson & Perry, two Y.M.C.A. men left Aleppo in a car, with my old friend "Zeki" driving, & a boy as servant. Fifteen miles from Aintab they passed four wagons which were carrying our supplies from Aleppo to Aintab & Marash. The Armenian drivers said fourteen more wagons were ahead, also carrying our supplies, but with Moslem drivers. At that very moment the Moslem drivers were having their troubles. Bandits had killed them, wounding one man and a horse because they had not stopped quickly. On being asked whose supplies they were carrying, the head driver answered that everything belonged to Moslem merchants in Aintab. The bandit chief began to look under the covers, but two gold tires bribed him not to tell what he saw, so the wagons passed on. Only a few minutes later the auto came along and stopped at a little stream for water. What happened next is almost too terrible to tell. The bandits rushed out and opened fire - not heeding a shout from Zeki - "These are Americans, not French." Perry was shot twice thru the body and had his spinal cord severed by a sword blow on the back of the neck. Johnson was shot in the head & then struck with a sword in the face. A pistol bullet struck Zeki, and his throat was cut, <sup>and two fingers were cut off.</sup> The boy too was killed. The bandits then proceeded to loot the car. <sup>[Their loot was partly mail, & most likely contained some letters from me. It will reach you including the photos Stuart says he sent, & the flags in the suit.]</sup> Meanwhile the four wagons were approaching. See

of the Armenian drivers was posing as a Turk, and learned from some passing gendarmes that bandits were ahead. When the driver said there was probably no danger the Turk answered "They have killed the men in the auto. You can see them ahead on the hill carrying things from the car."

The Armenians lost no time in turning around and starting back for Aleppo. It was nearly night so they stopped at the first khan and put up for the night. But the bandits also came along and stopped here. Discovering the Armenians and wagons they told the inteper they would go out & have a drink in the village, and afterwards would come back to kill the Armenians & get the stuff in the wagons. The Armenian who posed as a Turk heard about this and told his companions. Taking the best horses they left quietly & escaped. Needless to say, all our supplies on those four wagons was taken by the bandits.

Dr. Shepard has since learned that the Turk Nationalist soldiers - "Chetas" - we call them, were instructed to kill all Christians on the road and to turn over all loot to the gendarmerie. A considerable quantity of stuff has been turned in, which indicates that some Christians have been killed on the road. So this was ordered by Turk commanders. It is probable that they had not taken into account the presence of Americans in this section. It surely was a slip in their plans when the two Americans were killed. However, they concocted a story about some



escaped convicts having killed the Americans & that gendarmes later killed the murderers. To prove this they even brought in a ring of Jetti's and Johnson's coat. Gendarmes brought in the four bodies, <sup>to Antab</sup> after many days peasants dragged the carts into Antab also.

From Aleppo another Y. man, Archer, together with Wallace and Price, two of our A.C.R.N.E. men, started ~~for~~ out a few days later for Antab with a French caravan and escort of troops. They thought that with 250 French soldiers guarding the wagons and camels the caravan would stand a good show of reaching Antab, and perhaps they could find the bodies of the two murdered Y. men. But as they started up the hills half way to Antab, "chetas" among the rocks opened fire. The French advanced but the fire became more intense. It was impossible to fight, as the Turks could not be seen among the rocks. With the cumbersome wagon train and slow camels there was nothing to do but turn and retreat. It was learned later that 3000 Turks were waiting along that road for that very convey. Only a few French were hit, but several wagons were lost. Our American men were rather disgusted with the military efficiency of the French guards.

You can see from these things that Dr. Shepard & Lambert told us that this is no time for tourists in Turkey. You will also know that if you got my last

letter, dated Feb. 12, that the two doctors reached safety, since they carried that letter. I also gave Dr. Lambert a copy of my diary up to Feb. 12, since he wanted to make some notes from it. He promised to forward it home for me, so you may have duplicate letters.

I haven't said anything about events here in Marash since Feb. 12, and haven't even kept a diary, except for a few notes. Since the "war" is over (for the present) we have had reports from Beitschallun orphanage and the Rescue Home, which were isolated. Beitschallun had a hard time. The Turks shelled it, and did their best to burn it. It is said that over forty Turks were killed or wounded trying to burn the place. Fourteen Turks were offered 100 liras each (500) to fire the building, and each one was wounded in when they exposed only an arm holding a pole with fire on the end. By continually working the pumps the orphanage boys saved their home. All houses near the orphanage are destroyed.

The Rescue Home ~~is~~ was not as fortunate. When the Turks entered the place they intended to slaughter but their leader objected. The girls were ordered to leave at once. The Hannum in charge turned to get some belongings & was shot. One of the girls jumped over the wall and escaped to a church where she told everyone all the other girls & Miss Buckley were killed. Miss Buckley was safe in Beitschallun.

The girls had to leave all their blankets, beds, etc behind. The soldiers took them out of the city, mistreated



some of them, then took them to a nearby village. The Turks knew that the girls were under American care, & seemed to be anxious that none be lost. One woman died while giving birth to a child. Meanwhile the Rescuer Home was pillaged and burned. Since the fighting ceased we were able to bring these women from their backs & put them in a house next door to the hospital. All we could provide in the way of bedding was burlap for covers, & burlap stuffed with a little straw for mattresses - nothing else. There are 73 of these women - dirty, lousy & hungry.

The Turkish officials have been quite anxious to keep our good will. They are exceedingly courteous. Ali Bey, the commander of the Nationalist forces <sup>which were</sup> here, is a Kurd, and a fine man - Kuldage Ali. They call him - or "Ali the Sword". The Mutesereef - Urfan Bey - is a very intelligent man & seems determined to have peace here. But the lower class Turks are not friendly with Armenians, & therefore not friendly with Americans. They handled Miss Ainslie & Miss Hardy - two missionaries, - roughly a few evenings ago. Miss Ainslie grabbed one Turk who had shoved her, & as she held him by the collar said "Wait till I get a gendarme to arrest you." A Turk then raised his rifle to shoot, but instead

of <sup>being</sup> ~~scared~~ <sup>he</sup> ~~she~~ said "You don't dare shoot an American." The Mutesereef was quite disturbed about these incidents.

In the market I have had considerable trouble buying grain or any kind of food. In the food commissariat here & have to provide for 8000 Armenians, so when the Turks made a boycott against Armenians they included me in it. I had to get special permission from the government to buy rice, salt, etc. But now that one Turk is selling foods to me, the others are seeing they are losing trade, so every day now Moslems bring samples of rice and wheat they want to sell. To show what "big business" ~~for~~ is now, I never buy less than 3 to five tons of rice at a time. The Armenians in my family eat a ton of rice a day, let alone bread & other things.

The news now is that help is coming this way in the shape of doctors & workers, food supplies, clothing, bedding etc. This sounds good. But we also hear rumors of the French returning. The Moslems will kill all Armenians before the French ever get into the city. There is no doubt about that. We are afraid too there will be trouble in Antak.

When Dr. Lambert & Dr. Shepard called on the Mutesereef a few days ago he made a statement which is rather significant. Discussing the fight, he said the Turks were armed not for massacring Armenians nor even for fighting the French, but in





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order to be prepared to resist any decision of the Peace Conference detrimental to Turkey. He said he was determined to have peace & good government in Marash, but that if the French attempted to return he would not be able to keep the people here "from killing each other", which means he could not prevent a massacre.

Two days ago we saw the Turk Nationalists on parade. About 800 or a 1000 of them marched thru the streets behind a band. None were in uniform, except a few wearing French uniforms, but all had several rows of cartridge belts, and either Mauser rifles or shotguns, knives, or pistols. Even boys of twelve were marching along with old muskets or shotguns. I had my camera on the job, and they even stopped the parade to have photos taken. Some army! But the French found them too much for annoying to make staying in Marash worthwhile. This makes the fourth army for Marash in 2 years. First the Germans, then came the English, next the French, & here we are with Turkes running things again.

Must close for tonight, as it is late. Will write more before this is mailed. Lots of love to all at home, from

Stanley.