

AMERICAN RED CROSS COMMISSION TO PALESTINE
AND THE NEAR EAST

Merash, Turkey.

June 2, 1920

Dear Dad & Mother & everybody:

Yesterday our first mail arrived from Aleppo enclosed in a box of medical supplies a Turk brought us from Aleppo. I got about nine letters, all but two from you, one from Oliver Grubb & one from Gene Carpenter & one from Ido Powell. You can imagine how glad it was to get them & to hear you had not been worrying about me. It is still impossible to send mail out uncensored, except in a case like this where Americans are carrying it. Tomorrow Dr. Wilson, Mrs. Wilson, Snyder & Miss Foster are leaving by horse for Aleppo with all their baggage, leaving here only Dr. Bell & me as relief workers. (Miss Buckley is still here but not working) The missionaries are here, but Miss Lied is sick, & Miss Hardy & Miss Blatky are also going soon. & no other workers are coming to help except one man. I am now, director, treasurer, bookkeeper, food administrator, & business manager in general. I don't see how I can do it. I have only a few minutes to write as I must get off some other business mail. Mr. Lynan went off to Jutun & Celbratan & Gentsour to inspect our orphanages there. We just had a



a telegram saying he had been attacked by bandits
when three hours away from Gentsour, his horses
& everything stolen, one gendarme killed &
one wounded. I guess he walked to Gentsour.

Marash is quiet. Aintab has had a hard
siege, & now there is a 20 day truce, during which
time the French are said to have withdrawn from
the city. Urfa had a terrible time, but they say
Marash was the worst. So Dr. Wilson is leaving
under Turkish guard during the truce.

Thanks for all the newspaper clippings. Everybody
enjoyed them. My last letter was yours written on
Apr. 2nd, 1920. It was good to hear they are
nominating me for a fellowship, but I had to stop
studying French & have little hope of mastering it
between now & Oct. with the heavy work I have.
Will try. The Xmas package may be in Aleppo, but
has not reached Marash yet. I will be
home not later than Sept. 15 if I can possibly
do it, even if I have to leave here with no
one to take my place.

Will write more of a letter when I have
time. Lots of love to Dad & Mother & Stuart
& Marion & all the Adamises & friends

From
Stanley.

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Marash, Turkey.

~~Dec. 7, 1919.~~ May 4, 1920.

Dear Dad:-

I just looked over the letter I wrote Apr. 23, & see from the tone of it that we all expected trouble. But so far none of us has had anything happen to us in the way of massacre, etc. The news from Aintab seemed to be more encouraging to the Turks and so they change their attitude accordingly. Their news reports talk as if the French might withdraw from Aintab any day. Apparently the "chetas" are just besieging the city and giving all the trouble they can to the French. Here in Marash they are quite unfriendly to the Armenians now, & say they will kill them yet. About thirty have "disappeared" since the French left. Two Armenians were killed last night. Life was all monotonous here. About a week and a half ago everything was quiet, not even rumors of trouble. But about eleven o'clock at night, just as I was getting into bed there was a tremendous crash as if the world was exploding. The whole hospital shook. The thing was so sudden & over so soon that I couldn't imagine anything but an earthquake. Then I thought it must be a munitions explosion so ran out on the balcony. The whole sky was a mass of black smoke. Looking towards the Turkish barracks which had burned the night the French left, I could see flames starting from the building near where the Turkish supplies are kept. It didn't take me long to dress, & get out on the third floor balcony to watch the



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big fire, for the building contained a lot of gasoline, & had made an enormous blaze. No one knows how the thing started, except that the gunpowder & dynamite went off first. By the time I got outside the ammunition began to explode. The building is less than a quarter mile from the hospital and only a few hundred yards from the college, so you can imagine the force of the explosion. The college windows broke, & the wind, which was blowing about forty miles an hour, carried the sparks over to the college buildings. The ammunition exploding sounded like the battle of Marston all over again, a continuous rattle of rifle cartridges with bombs, grenades, & shells exploding every few minutes. One shell landed in the hospital yard, crashing thru the trees a few yards in front of where we stood.

The Armenians in the city all feared trouble, & so in a short time our hospital yard was filled with Armenians from the nearby houses. They even cut a hole in the brick wall around our enclosure in order to get in. But no trouble came of this. The Turks even said among themselves the next day that the Armenians could not possibly have done this. But they were all pretty sad about it, as it was their main depot and so all their reserve ammunition was now gone.

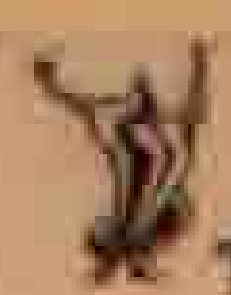
This gave us something to discuss & gossip about for a day or two. Then in a few days I heard a Muslim merchant whom I know well was going to send his caravan to Aleppo. As we were out of money I thought I would go along with him & bring back gold. So Dr. Wilson & I went to the government and saw the Mutisereef, or rather the acting mutisereef, (the real one having been put out by



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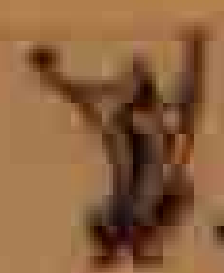
the Turks ~~on the~~ for having been friendly with the Christians.) The acting mutasarrif said I could go with the caravan & he would send gendarmes along as far as Aintab, but would not be responsible after that. He gave permission to go, but at the same time urged me to wait. So apparently it was best to follow his advice, & I didn't go. As a result we are out of money, absolutely & I don't see where we are going to find any more. As now we had no more excitement to look forward to. Everything was quiet again, only reports of fighting in Aintab. But on Sunday ^{Mar. 12} a report came that the French were advancing towards Marash & were not far away. But we didn't believe it.

About four A.M. Monday morning I was dreaming of watching a scrap between "chetas" and Zeiton Armenians. The dream was very real, & I could almost hear the crack of the rifles. Suddenly I sat up in bed & realized that I actually heard rifle fire, shots coming from various points in the city. Running to the window I heard the Moslems priests shouting ~~to the~~ from the minarets of mosques. The flash of the rifles fire could be seen everywhere. At first I thought the French had come, then decided that the Turks were probably celebrating a victory over their enemy - perhaps the French had withdrawn from Aintab. I dressed quickly. The firing increased ~~until~~ over the whole city ~~was~~ until it looked like a great battle. The whole house was awake & all the nurses scared. As I ~~went~~ started from my room down the hall I stopped to ask one of the Turkish patients what was going on. He is a young lieutenant who speaks German. He said, "Es gibt kein Licht



4 # von dem Himmel, und die Turken schüßten so dass
Allah wird Licht geben." (There is no light in the sky,
& the Turkes are shooting so that Allah will give light again.)

So I ran out on the balcony & looked at the sky.
The moon was eclipsed - totally! Can you imagine
several thousand Turkes all shooting at once at an
eclipsed moon? Probably in every city or village
the same thing was going on. I remembered as soon as
I saw the eclipse that the uneducated Turkes believe
that when the moon or sun is eclipsed it is caused
by a bear in the sky getting between the earth &
the light, so everyone must shoot at the bear. Another
old belief is that when the eclipse comes it means that
Allah is angry, so every man must shoot off his gun
& place it empty in his house, & all prisoners must
be released. But this time apparently they emptied
their guns & filled them up again, & let no prisoners
go. This great bombardment of the moon continued
for half an hour, until the bear was thoroughly dead,
then all was quiet again. Naturally all the Armenians
were scared to death until they knew what was the
trouble, & even then supposed the Turkes would start
some killing on the side. But there was no trouble anywhere.
This is the craziest custom I ever heard of. Anyhow, they
must have hit the bear, because the eclipse gradually
went away. I heard the next day that the French
soldiers who are living near the college all thought the
French army had arrived & jumped into their clothes in double
quick time. Snyder slept thru the whole bombardment!
The rest of the night I dreamed of battles. This time
I dreamed American soldiers were sitting on a wagon,
when some Turk soldiers came and started to push the wagon

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down the road, saying they would push the Americans out of the country. Then the doughboys fixed bayonets & chased the Turks. I woke up just as a soldier was being caught up to a Turk & was going to hit him with his gun. Some dream!

Last night the brother of our head nurse (an Armenian) disappeared in a rather strange way. A week ago two Turks had invited him to come and look at some ~~old~~ goods they wanted to sell him. He went but knew better than to go in their house. When he got into their yard he refused to go farther. No one was around so the two Moslems drew their knives to kill him, but the Armenian went one better & drew a pistol, so saved himself & got away. A few days later a Turk patronized the Armenian's shop quite frequently & made himself very friendly. Yesterday he told this Armenian he had cloth to show him & they went together to see it. No one has seen the Armenian since. The Turk was seen this morning with his arm in a sling. This is the typical way of disposing of Armenians during "closed" season.

Must close for the present. Will write more later.

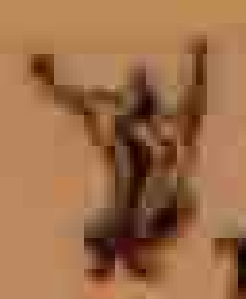
A. M. M.

(over)

May 15th. Sunday Evening.

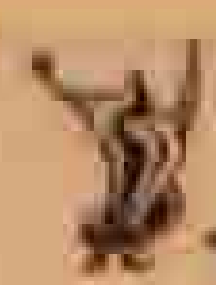
This has been a fine Sunday, weather just right, all the roses & honeysuckle etc. in full bloom and everybody happy. So I must finish up with a short letter and then go to bed. I'm sore all over as though I had been run thru the cogson a clothes-wringer, but will explain later. According to what I wrote last we were in the midst of a "money famine". Now we are having a good crop, and gold is thick enough to roll in. Our famine was caused by the road to Aleppo being closed on account of fighting. But apparently the Moslems have found a by-path, and a great caravan went to Aleppo a few days ago. They Turkes were afraid to go singly, so all the merchants in town combined to make one party. Over a hundred men went, all well armed, with all their camels & mules. As there is much fighting between Hulis and Aintab they were afraid to carry money, so came to me for checks. For three days I did an enormous business, and have a right to call myself the cashier, president, board of trustees, paying & receiving teller & bookkeeper of the 1st Amer. Bank of Marash. In three days I took in \$40,000 in gold, & then refused to take any more, for fear they would bankrupt the Aleppo office when they presented their checks for payment. So now we have drawn all we have a right to for May and June both. We have no communication with Aleppo, so I took this opportunity of writing short letters on each check in order to get some information thru.

Yesterday a Moslem merchant arrived from Aleppo & brought a letter from Dr. Lambert (the director there). He has been trying to get up here to Marash for some time but says the roads are blocked by the fighting between French & Turkes.



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He had just come back from Urfa & said he brought five of the Americans with him. The French had left Urfa on April 11th, but were attacked on the way out, & nearly all were killed. I can't understand why the French newspapers & the public opinion in France stand for allowing the Turks to keep this country. They don't seem to realize that Turkey is at war with them. We who are on the inside know that this is not just unorganized bandit warfare, but actual war between Turkey & France. The Turks look at it that way. Ali "the Sword", or Kuledge Ali, the commander of the national forces in this whole region is directly responsible to Mustapha Kemal Pasha, the leader of all Turkey. He was in command in Marash when the French left, so we got to know him quite well. Then he went to Aintab & has been ~~seeing~~ directing the fight there. We heard not long ago that the fight was finished in Aintab, a sort of draw. But so I was not surprised the day before yesterday to see him outside the hospital. He shook hands as if I was an old friend & asked where Dr. Wilson was, so we went to Dr. Wilson's house, together with his companions, officers of the national army. At Wilson's house he said that 500 French soldiers were still in Aintab, & that 10,000 Turk volunteers were around the city. A regiment of French reinforcements had tried to come from Hilles to Aintab with two armored cars, but the Turks drove them back with heavy losses. We have heard this same report from so many sources that I



begin to believe it now. Kuledge Ali said his work in Antab was finished & he was going to Angora for a conference with Mustapha Kemal Pasha. He would not allow us to take his pictures, & probably had good reasons. A Turk friend of ours here went with him to Angora & carried letters of ours. I sent one, for home & hope it got there safely. This Kuledge Ali seems to be a fine character. We certainly have found him to be a gentleman. ~~He seems to~~ After leaving Dr. Wilson's house he came down to visit the Turkish wounded in our hospital. A little ^{Armenian} girl who works here, as she saw him, exclaimed "That's the man who saved me, and he knows where my father is!" This little girl & her father had lived on the farm belonging to Beitschallan orphanage. According to the girl's story the Turks had come one day and would have killed them, (in fact they did kill an old woman, whose body was hid in a brick oven, for we found her body all hacked to pieces a few weeks later) but this man had saved her father & ~~and~~ all the children & taken the children to a place of safety along with all our Rescue Home girls. But her father was taken some other place so this little girl pleaded with Miss Timin, the nurse here, to ask Kuledge Ali about her father. She pleaded so hard that when Ali came down stairs Miss Timin asked him to come in the room a moment, & then told the little girl to ask him about her father. Kuledge Ali (who has the rank of a general) recognized the girl when she told her story, & said to her "I saved you & your sister, so do you think I would tell your father? He is alive and I will have him sent to you." He was very



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much affected and talked for several minutes with the girl, promising to bring her father, so she thanked him & he went. We have been looking for this man for two months, but haven't found him, altho many Turks say he is alive. But now perhaps he will turn up.

I have been out to the At Su twice this last week in the auto. It is about 20 miles from Marash, on the way to Aintab. We found the last two spans of the bridge were destroyed. The Turks burned it when they thought the French would come from Aintab. Yesterday Snyder (the driver) thought it would be well to see if the river could be forded, & at the same time give the ladies a ride. So about three P.M. he started out. I was in the market, but jumped in the car when it passed. There were two Turkish gendarmes, Snyder & I, and ~~five~~ five women (four American & one German). We had a fine drive to the river, then left the road, & ~~the~~ drove on the gravel of the river bed up to the water's edge. Snyder then waded across in various places to find the best road for the car. It was waist deep in places, but very swift. Finally a zigzag course was found which would make the entire path less than knee deep, so off we started. We were half way over when the engine gave a cough and stopped! The fly wheel was splashing water at a great rate all over the engine, so either water got in the carburetor or something else, but anyway the engine wouldn't go more.



107 than a few seconds at a time. Snyder & I got out in the water to investigate, then made all the women take off their shoes & get out & push. We had gotten slightly off our course & the water was more than knee deep, & besides the car was sinking in the gravel. Well, & make a long story short we pushed & pulled & tore down a good part of the bridge for beams for levers, but no use. We were all soaked to the waist, & at the end of two hours decided to give up & get dry. So the women went in one direction & the men in another & we all dried our clothes on the rocks in the sun & crawled under blankets, while our two gendarmes went off towards a Kurdish village a few miles away. By the time our clothes were dry & we had made up our minds to stay out over night we saw the two Gendarmes returning with five wild looking Kurds or Turks & some boys. We were glad to see they were not armed, which was strange because everybody carries a gun these days & the roads are full of "chetas" returning from the Aintab fight.

Snyder & I set the example by wading into the ~~river~~ river minus our trousers, & in fifteen minutes with all the Turks pulling (in the same state of costume as we) we had the car on the dry gravel. The men were tickled to get a mejideh each (a silver piece worth 60 cents) and we were tickled to find the engine ran O.K. again. We made record time going home, and arrived at 9 P.M. just about the time a searching party was preparing to start out for us. Of course we invented a wild story about being held up and robbed, which Mrs. Wilson believed for an hour. Today the one of



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the ladies is in bed, sore all over & still shivering from the wading party, & Snyder & I both feel as if we had been thru the clothes wringer. I'm stiff all over. We took a long horseback ride this P.M. & loosened up.

I would have given a lot for a photo of all those women in the water pushing the auto. They all enjoyed the party immensely & voted that it couldn't have been nearly as exciting if we had not got stuck.

It's late now so I must close & go to bed. I am planning to go to Aleppo this week with five Circassians, & to return with more relief workers. Will write more later.