

Copy of OLIVE KINGSBURY'S letter of February 8/68 to Marilyn Olsen from

Nhatrang, Viet Nam

Nhatrang, Viet Nam
February 8/68

FEB 15 REC'D

Shocking as the deaths were, especially Carolyn who lived until
the 8th Field Hospital Friday evening, I certainly feel the worst
Dear Marilyn, . . . Why the Lord should so ordain that I should be away at
this time, and she should have to go through this, I can't understand. But
Although hearing your name very often, seeing your picture, and seeing your
letters around, I can't even remember the name of your city! This is Olive
Kingsbury writing, wanting to tell you just everything possible about last
week, but had been waiting to get more details so as to have as complete a
story as possible. Yet this is altogether too incomplete, but have pieced
the events together as well as possible at the moment. I was in Cheo Reo at
the time to care for a leprosy clinic there, as I returned from Nhatrang where
I had gone for some blood tests. Thus, I had not been in Banmethuot since
January 23, which would be a help.

Evidently early Tuesday morning, the 30th, a satchel charge was thrown into the
one mission house where Mr. Griswold and Carolyn were. He died very shortly,
and Carolyn was finally dug out almost eight hours later. She had a broken
leg and they were caring for her at the Ziemer house next door. I think Ruth
Wilting and Betty were up there with them, or at least were after this to care
for Carolyn. Fighting was going on in the immediate area so that they could
not take her out to get to a doctor. But the girls at first were able to get
some supplies from the clinic. . . .
Wednesday, the area the other side of the road was hit badly, napalm being used
by the VC as I understand it injuring the ones in Ama Nang's bunker. (I'm sure
you know the pastor, Ama Nang and his family) Y Nang, the oldest boy who is a
student in Bible School this year, was severely burned, and so they were caring
for him at Ziemers together with Carolyn. We understand that he later died,
by Friday morning we think.

Fighting continued almost continuously, giving no opportunity to get the wounded
out. It is barely possible that the others could have escaped individually, but
of course they wouldn't consider leaving Carolyn. So by Thursday morning Bob
went out as the enemy approached, and pleaded for mercy. That was when they just
shot him down, dying immediately, and then turned to the bunker, spraying the
occupants with bullets and killing Ed and Ruth Thompson and Ruth Wilting, and
wounding Marie Ziemer. But Betty seems to have been in the car, for I think it
was then that she had tried again to drive up to the clinic and get more
medicine, was shot at, but escaped injury although the car was hit. Marie thinks
she was in the car at the time of the shooting, ready to take Carolyn out.

Anyway, when they realized Marie wasn't dead, they made her and Betty, together
with a number of the Ralay near, go down to a Ralay house in the village where
they were kept the rest of the day and that night. Marie says Betty had a tote
bag with money, etc. and they let her take it - had two little bags I think for
she gave the one with money to Marie to use as a pillow. They looked through the
bag, taking out a clock and radio, but didn't take the money - maybe didn't see
it. During Thursday they got Hank and Vange Blood with their three children.
A number of the Ralay were being held there too, including Ama Nang, the pastor,
and Ama (?), the district superintendent. That evening the pastors led two of
the others being held to Christ - not even one day that they didn't keep busy for
the Lord! Sometime that night they led off Betty, Hank, Ama Nang, Ama R--, and
Y Ton, a Bible School student. They let Vange and the children go back to their
house and the next morning let Marie go - Y Djal, the one studying medicine in
Saigon who was home for the holidays took her to the hospital.

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Shocking as the deaths were, especially Carolyn who lived until arrival at the 8th Field Hospital Friday evening, I certainly feel the worst over Betty's capture. Why the Lord should so ordain that I should be away at this time, and she should have to go through this, I can't understand. But one comfort to me is that she was taken with Ann Nang, and I just pray that they will be kept together. For he is an unusual man of understanding and has grown much in the Lord just in the past couple years. Furthermore, Betty was such close friends of that whole family, as you know. So she would receive real encouragement and help from being near him. The others would be a help, too, but especially Ann Nang's tact and understanding. Fortunately she knows Radey very well, enjoyed spending time talking with them, and so would not feel strange if not with Americans. Of course Hank is another American there too, which would be a help.

Before ever hearing this news, but after knowing that there was heavy fighting in Banmethuot, the Lord led me to read a selection from Amy Carmichael in Thou Givest They Gather. This was referring to James' imprisonment and in Acts. Let me quote "Let us turn all our puzzles, all our temptations to wonder why, into opportunities to receive the blessing of the unoffended. And now all the grief of those days has been utterly forgotten by those who loved James; they have been all together with him in the Presence of their Lord for 1900 years, and the one thing that matters now is how they lived through those days when their faith was tried to the uttermost.....In a few years - how few we do not know, but few at most - we shall all be together in joy. So with us too, all that matters is how we live through these days while we are trusted to trust." Isaiah 26:3,4, was referred to also, and I have been dwelling on the last clause of vs. 4 much - "In the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." He can give her and us the strength for this hard time. ~~that she later died,~~

At present, the Mission is making arrangements for sending all women and children out to Bangkok, probably within 2 or 3 days. Our receiving home there is at 2 Preamun Road if you would like to ask more questions. It grieves me that we have to leave without one short visit back to Banmethuot to confer with our workers and Christians. Reports indicate that our leprosanarium workers are safe, unbelievable as it seems because of all the destruction and suffering there. Mission property mostly destroyed, although some buildings are standing but completely ransacked. Other stations had very narrow escapes, but praise God, people are out safe. I will try to write you later as I hear. (I'm writing to your parents too.) ~~had escaped injury although the car was hit. Marie thinks she was in the car at the time of the shooting, ready to take Carolyn out.~~

Anyway, when they realized Marie wasn't dead, they took her and Betty, together with a number of the Radey crew, go down to a Radey house in the village where they were kept the rest of the day and that night. Marie says Betty had a tote bag with money, etc. and they let her take it - had two little bags I think for she gave the one with money to Marie to use as a pillow. They looked through the bag, taking out a shirt and radio, but didn't take the money - maybe didn't see it. During Thursday they got Hank and Wang Hsing with their three children. A number of the Radey were being held there too, including Ann Nang, the pastor, and Ann (T), the district superintendent. Next morning the pastors led one of the officers being held to Christ - not even one day that they didn't keep busy for the Lord! Somehow that night they let off Betty, Hank, Ann Nang, Ann B--, and Y Tan, a Bible School student. They let Wang and the children go back to their house and the next morning let Marie go - Y Hjal, she was studying medicine in Saigon she was home for the holidays took her to the hospital.