

Yang Mingzhen's Testimony

My name is Yang Mingzhen (杨明贞). I was born on February 9, 1931. In 1937, my family lived in Nanjing city's East Wensi Alley (东文思巷; near the Dazhong Bridge 大中桥). There were three people in my household: my father, Yang Guangyuan 杨光源, age 53, who was a bamboo ware craftsman; my mother, nee Song (杨宋氏), age 51, who was a homemaker; and myself, who was 8 years old at the time. At present, my family resides in Nanjing city, Luolang West Village (罗廊西村), number 16, room 202.

The Japanese army entered the city on December 13, 1937 (the eleventh day of the eleventh month of the lunar calendar). On the first day, Japanese soldiers came to our home several times. One soldier came first; my mother treated him to sit, but was kicked by him onto the ground. The second time, two Japanese soldiers came and asked us for matches and cigarettes. We didn't have any, so they started beating us. Helpless, my father wrapped some dried tobacco leaves for them; only then did they leave. Subsequently, two Japanese soldiers came again and stole our salted meat. Then in the afternoon, five or six Japanese soldiers, brandishing guns and bayonets, rushed into the courtyard of our home. They first fired several shots at the old watchman. This old man was called Pu Gouzi (浦狗子), fifty-odd years old; he passed away come nightfall from losing too much blood. Then they fired a shot at the landlady, Mrs. Zhu, which hit her waist and killed her instantly. At that time my father was also shot inside the house by Japanese soldiers. His left arm was wounded and the bullet was lodged there. At dusk, still more Japanese soldiers came and took my mother's gold jewellery, our money, as well as our cotton quilts.

On the morning of December 14 (the twelfth day of the eleventh month of the lunar calendar), before the sun had risen, our family was preparing to head to the refugee zone to escape from disaster. Little did we know that right as we reached the Dazhong Bridge, we would be interdicted by Japanese soldiers. The soldiers pointed their guns at us, and we could only return to East Wensi Alley. At about 3 pm, a Japanese soldier with a big beard on horseback, gun and sabre in hand, burst into our courtyard. He grabbed me, undid the knots on my cotton wadded gown and pulled down my pants. I was so scared that I cried and yelled out; the Japanese soldier took his sabre and hacked twice at my forehead (the scars are still there today). My father saw this and used his right hand to grab me back from the Japanese soldier. The soldier slapped my father twice, kicked him onto the ground, and moreover hacked at his shoulder three times. My father sustained serious injuries as a result of trying to save me, dying not long after. His corpse was dragged away and buried by the Red Swastika Society (红卍字会). Even today I do not know where he was buried.

On December 15 (the thirteenth day of the eleventh month of the lunar calendar), the third day since the Japanese entered the city, my mother and I were hiding in our house. In order to avoid the atrocities of the Japanese army, my mother rubbed soot all over her face and wrapped her head with cloth. At around 1 pm, two Japanese soldiers with guns and bayonets came. One of them ripped off my mother's shirt with his bayonet, pulled

down her pants and raped her. He also rammed the handle of his gun into my mother's private part. It hurt so much that my mother cried out and pleaded, but the soldier ignored her plea. The other soldier forcibly undid the knots on my cotton wadded gown and raped me.

My mother experienced severe trauma and subsequently developed mental problems. She cried until she went blind, and passed away not long afterward. Thus I became an orphan. At first I had to beg for food; later I sold snacks in order to subsist. Getting raped by the Japanese soldier had a great impact on me. Not only did it result physiologically in urinary incontinence, it also caused extreme trauma psychologically.

The daughter-in-law of one of my father's friends was a child bride and was 18 at the time. After a Japanese soldier raped her, he even rammed his sabre into her private part, killing her instantly. This was on Jiankang Road (建康路). The Japanese soldiers raped every woman they came across. There was also this 12-year-old girl who was killed after two Japanese soldiers raped her.