

## **Testimonial record of survivors (4)**

### **1) Shigeko Hamaguchi testimony**

Shigeko Hamaguchi was the wife of Ryoji Hamaguchi, who was appointed to the Manchuria Cotton Association, complying with a request from the Jidong Communal Government to lead in the development of the cotton industry, and was later gunned down in the Tongzhou Incident.

Pretending to be dead, Shigeko, blessed with “nine lives,” miraculously survived. She is one of the eye-witness survivor who provided written testimony when a think tank, “Showa History Research Center,” did live-audio interviews, transcribed in “Showa History Research Center Report” No. 36, April 10, 2000 pp. 1-3. No.37, May 10, 2000, pp. 1-3, No. 38, June 10, 2000 pp. 5-6. Showa History Research Center closed in 20xx and the center’s activities were followed-up by the Media Research Center (Kazuo Koyama, Chief Representative).

### **The Tongzhou Massacre: “What a Horrifying Incident!” Testimony of a Victim about Her Experience**

• • • • An ill omen already existed • • • •

**Chinese Soldiers Broke Into the Building and Fired at Random**

**I lost consciousness in a pool of blood**

< Part 1 >

#### **Questionable House to House Census-Taking Visit**

To my memory, it was the evening of June 29, 1937 when my husband Ryoji Hamaguchi, as successor to the staff dispatched to the Jidong administration, and I left Mukuden and arrived at the Yasuda Official Building, situated near the west gate of Tongzhou Castle. At that time, I was in the sixth month of pregnancy, not long after putting on a maternity belt.

Couples Yasuda and Ishii, and Mr. Fujiwara, and the couple Lee and Fumiko, a-sister-in-law, welcomed us heartily. Then we changed to ordinary clothing from traveling clothing in an separate dwelling prepared for us in the official residence. Then, we talked about various topics far into the night. I heard of their hard work and

difficulties in establishing a base for improvement and increasing production of cotton as the vanguard of the mission. I was filled with hope and happiness in becoming a member.

I lived a peaceful and harmonious life, maintaining the home with pride and self-conceit as a Japanese woman. I would like to talk about some of our memories of every day life. The Marco Polo Incident, which ignited the Japan-China War, happened eight days after our arrival in Tongzhou but we got news about it two or three days after the Incident because we received no newspapers and letters.

If my memory serves me correctly, it was the 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> of July, a Chinese man who resembled Japanese police came, did something like take a census and then left. We all laughed and said “it was similar to Japanese census taking.” But it might have been investigating the movements of Japanese residents.

There were many strange things as we lived in Tongzhou. We had to buy water every day, but the water was so hard that soap did not dissolve well. The heat was really terrible. About four o'clock in the morning, swallow hatchlings chirped noisily for food, sparrows came to play and were not afraid of people so they didn't fly away. When we went shopping, we did not succeed in bargaining due to our poor Chinese conversational ability. Mr. Ishii's wife often went to the Jidong Government building by rickshaw to deliver his lunch box and ate lunch with him, as a loving couple would. We often talked about them. Mr. Ishii was good at cooking curry and rice, and often prepared it the previous evening. He told the wife to bring it for a lunch the next day. I remember these things as happy memories.

Thus, our lives were very peaceful, cheerful and joyful spending every day with hope for a bright future—before our lives fell into a bottomless pit with a mere month. Only God could have known that my life was to completely change.

### **An ominous feeling on July 28**

Time had passed in the meantime. Then, a threatening atmosphere pervaded around the outside of Tongzhou Fortress on July 26 or 27. Mr. Iwasaki, the manager of the Tongzhou cotton test facility, moved to the head office building with facility personnel Mr. Oyama, Mr. Ogawa and Mr. Imai [actual name uncertain], on July 28. He visited the

office first and explained the situation, and requested that everyone stay in the building, saying that “The atmosphere is questionable and the facility is not safe.” Mr. Yasuda kindly acknowledged the request, so they took shelter in the building. Mr. Yasuda decided to give them the reception room. Mr. Iwasaki and Mr. Oyama sent their wives to Dalian--the other two were single.

There were seven men, Messrs. Hidekazu Yasuda, Tooru Ishii, Ryoji Ishii, Iwasaki, Oyama, Ogawa and Imai [actual name uncertain] and four women, Mmes. Masako Yasuda, Shigeko Ishii, my sister-in-law Fumiko and I—eleven in total in the home office building. Our colleagues, Mr. Entetsu Fujiwara and Mr. and Mrs. Lee Yonkang lived elsewhere. My husband, Ryoji, had gone to the Jidong Government building for night duty as liaison, so the number of people staying in the home office building on the night of the incident was ten.

My husband went to the Jidong Government building for night duty on July 27 because a decision had been made that someone was needed for overnight duty in the building from the night of July 28 in order to keep close communication between the home office building and Jidong Government to prepare for suspicious movements of the 29<sup>th</sup> Route Army stationed outside of the castle. My husband went to the Jidong Government after dinner in place of Mr. Yasuda, who had to take his soon-expecting wife to the hospital in Tianjin on July 29, though he had drawn the lot to decide who were to go to the Jidong Government.

I would like to discuss something about the incident. Though the management of the home office building requested that the telephone office install a telephone way in advance because of the urgency, for unknown reasons, the telephone office had not installed a telephone by the appointed day. There was doubt whether this was intentional or that there were too many requests. The date they promised installation was July 28, but in the end, they did not keep their promise. I guessed later that some people may have already received information concerning the rebellion by security forces. Judging from the fact that Governor Yin Jukeng stayed in Beijing for safety, the telephone office intentionally delayed the installation of a telephone machine. But it was too late for us to come to this conclusion.

I could not fall asleep due to the heat during the night of July 28, and rolled about in bed. I fell asleep at about eleven o'clock at last. I seemed to sleep soundly, but then suddenly

awoke and went to toilet for some reason. I felt a chill and became anxious for my husband, feeling a premonition. I happened to notice that it was ten-past-one in the morning. I later learned that that was just when my husband was shot dead in the reception room of the government building. People often say that someone close to a person appears in that person's dream when he or she is about to die. I can say that this is true, as I myself experienced the phenomenon.

### **Surprise Attack by the Jidong Peace Preservation Corps**

Then, I went to bed, praying for the safety of my husband, and dozed before even noticing it. However, the so-called Tongzhou massacre had already started and Japanese residents were recklessly victimized everywhere by the atrocious deeds of the rebellious Jidong Peace Preservation Corps.

It was summer and the dawn broke early. I think it was almost four o'clock in the morning when the sky gradually became bright in the east, I heard the firing of pistols from the street and the place became noisy.

Mr. Yasuda, who seemed to understand the situation, came to my bedroom quietly and he had an anxious expression, advising me in a lowered voice to go to the reception room with Fumiko as a precaution against suspicious movements. I moved to the reception room of the home office building with Fumiko. All of our colleagues had already gathered there, and their faces were white and strained. I shook, for some reason, with excitement.

Thus, all ten of us gathered in the reception room, but we had only three pistols for self-defense. One of them was one that my husband left for me, a Browning III model. Mr. Yasuda, however, had considered that if we did not resist them they would not use violence, and proposed that we were better off taking the path of nonresistance. Everyone agreed with him.

Sometime later, we heard shots being fired at the building and shouting, demanding that gate be opened "*kaimen! kaimen!* (Open the gate!)" In the meantime, a hail of bullets came at us with awesome noise.

Then we had an old servant go out to survey the scene. He mumbled with the attackers

and came back, hastily telling us, "They told me to open the gate at once or they would torch the gate and burn it, and ordered me to get out with the female servant as soon as possible. So, we decided to ask your permission to let us run away." We thought that we had no control over the situation and let them go away. Then we entered the room and prepared a defense. The day had already broken around then.

In the meantime, they fired incessantly and bullets ricocheted off the brick walls. We were terrified every time the bullets hit the walls. Then, Mrs. Yasuda and I took refuge in a small room behind the reception room. We put down a blanket on the floor. I sat down in front of the wall. I remember that it was six or half-past six o'clock in the morning.

The men were positioned near the entrance of the reception room, and the rebellious soldiers crowded into the building and fired their rifles at random. There was no way to defend against them and the men were shot and fell, one by one. I, on seeing this, had the feeling of vengeance rather than fear. If my memory is correct, a certain man responded to the enemy's firing with a pistol. Anyway we had only three pistols against numerous intruding rebellious soldiers who fired at random. We had no way to defend ourselves and be shot, falling one by one.

At that moment, we women covered our bodies with the blanket and lay on the floor with baited breath. When Mrs. Yasuda tried to rise a little, she was shot in the left underbelly and fell on the spot. Her husband rushed to her and took her and my hands firmly saying "Pulling you together". At the moment he was shot in the temple and died tragically, with his hands holding our hands. The moment he was shot, blood spouted from his head, the blood pouring on Mrs. Yasuda's and my face and heads. We felt a terrible feeling beyond description. His grip may have been weakened for a moment but he still gripped our hands when I became realized what was going on. Mrs. Yasuda lost her sense and fell to the floor. (Refer to the sketch of the Yasuda building layout on the second page.)

Mrs. Ishii was hit by several bullets and groaned nearby. Fumiko suffered from a most atrocious attack. She resisted with all her might, throwing at the rebellious soldiers a handbag which she highly valued because it was the present from Mr. Matsuda, the managing director of the facility. But she was hit by several bullets and eventually fell, crying in a faint voice "Mother! I have a severe pain!" This scene pained my heart the

most.

In the meantime, I heard the a gun being loaded, and felt more dead than alive, wondering when I would be hit and fall to the floor. Then, suddenly a shock hit my back and it felt as if I was clubbed. It made me nauseous and I vomited. I realized that I had vomited a lot of blood. Then I fainted and fell on the spot. Then, curiously, I was half-awake and half-asleep, dreaming as if the rebellion died down and telling each other “What a terrible incident.”

< Part 2 >

**I barely escape death by pretending to be dead**

**I look at a Chinese broadsword with eyes half-closed.**

The last thing I remembered was being struck by a bullet and the fading sound of a gunshot, but I came back to consciousness. Babbling renegade Chinese soldiers were snatching our rings, watches and even glasses. They kicked us in the belly and they said something like “Both of them are pregnant.” The soldiers held my shoulder with a Chinese broadsword, repeating “They are dead. They are dead.” I heard this. It was really disgusting and it made my blood boil. Then I opened my eyes slightly and looked at the shape and thickness of the Chinese broadsword. Holding my last breath, I looked in horror at the sword touching my body.

The renegade soldiers thought we all were dead. They dragged men’s bodies and placed them in the center of the reception room. Mr. Yasuda’s body was right beside us, they pulled him by one of his arms and put it side-by-side with the other bodies and counted them...one,...two,...three. They looted the whole house and left.

I was smeared with blood and bled from my mouth. My hair was a mess and my face was deadly pale. I looked just like Oiwa in *Ghost Story of Yotsuya*. Later, Mrs. Yasuda told me, “I remained there with you because I knew it was you. But if you were someone else, I would have been afraid.” I looked worse than a ghost.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Yasuda came back to consciousness but we felt as if somebody was watching us. We lay silently without moving and all we could do was to look at each other.

I don't remember when exactly, but I noticed Shigeko Ishii and Yasuko's bodies gave off gas, hence I thought they were already dead.

I don't know how the men were wounded, but Mrs. Yasuda's injury was a piercing bullet wound that ran from the lower left part of the abdomen to the left thigh. She was at full term and her belly was expanded like a balloon but a bullet hit her in the thigh at an angle between the skin and the flesh. The bullet didn't hit the fetus, so Michiko was born without any complications.

I suffered from a wound in the left side of my back, where a bullet was lodged, and small pieces of broken bones entered my body. The broken pieces were under my right armpit and they were removed in Tianjin on September 6. Mrs. Ishii suffered a fatal injury in the head and also had bullet wounds. Fumiko had 7 or 8 bullet wounds all over her body and from the words coming from her mouth it seemed she couldn't endure her pain. I felt really sorry for her.

It was just after twelve o'clock, noon, when Mr. Toru Ishii and Mr. Ishikawa seemed to come back to consciousness. Mr. Ogawa rambled on and on, in a delirium. It was not really clear but I heard him say "*roma, sui, kei*" or "*charsui, narai*". He must have been asking a maid to bring him tea or water to wet his mouth. He was parched with thirst in his last breath but I couldn't give him a drop of water. It was really heart-wrenching.

A few days later, Mr. Saburo Ishida and Mr. Rikuta Ishida, my cousins, came to Tungchow from Mukden and held a memorial service at the diplomatic office. They happened to find Mr. Ishii's bloody notebook in the office where he died. The bloody notebook showed his farewell note and a poem: "We were attacked at 6:30 a.m." "Papa, Mama, you have savings for Masakane," "I will cross the Styx cheerfully" in cluttered handwriting. I assume that Mr. Ishii put forth his final effort to write his farewell poem and he died right away. I don't remember the exact words and phrases of his farewell note but I believe his farewell poem showed exactly what he said. By the way, I heard that the notebook was returned to Mr. Ishii's family. After the war the Ishii family asked Mr. Matsuda to write down the farewell poem and built a monument to the memory of Mr. Ishii.

I was right beside him while he was dying with dignity but I couldn't take care of him and couldn't even give him water, which I will regret for the rest of my life. At least I

want to visit the monument to light incense, offer flowers and pray for Mr. Ishii. I ended up staying there all day long on the day of the assault without eating and drinking. It was horrendous but I didn't feel I was dying.

The night came. My hunger and thirst were unbearable. So I crossed over the 1-meter-high window to look for food and drink. Mrs. Yasuda was in her final month of pregnancy and I was in the seventh month of pregnancy so I was surprised that we crossed over the window without injury.

First, we went to the closest house, which was Mr. Ishii's residence, but didn't find anything there. We went to the pageboy's room and found water in a kettle and leftover food but I don't remember what kind of food it was. We took the food, left the house and crossed over our room's window again. We stayed overnight with the bodies but I wasn't scared at all and it didn't feel creepy.

When we came back after picking up food, Mrs. Yasuda came over with two knives and said that we should die. But I couldn't summon the courage to die and I also felt deep in my heart that I must tell someone about the terror. I tried very hard to stop her and eventually she agreed with me.

### **Chinese looting has just begun**

A downpour continued since morning. I wondered if this was the so-called *namida ame*, when rain falls like tears. I heard sporadic gunfire outside of the house and it appeared that someone was fumbling around on the roof. It was really eerie and I couldn't express it in words.

Around noon, I heard the noise of a large cart and saw a few Chinese in it. They entered Mr. Ishii's house. They took the furniture and many other things. This was happening right in front of my eyes which made my blood boil. Among the things they took were various things I made for my unborn baby and I felt miserable and sad but I had to hold back. All I could do was to stand there and grit my teeth.

In the meantime, darkness set in. I heard someone yelling "Mrs. Yasuda, Mrs. Yasuda!" I looked carefully in the direction of the shouting - it was the landlord, who looked at us from the inner gate. I was frightened by him. The landlord approached us

and said, “I saw your belly moving so I realized you were alive. Come over here. I will fix something to eat.” He took us to his house located in the back and made rice gruel for us. I finally sighed in relief.

The landlord suddenly took a friendly attitude toward us because he knew that the Japanese Imperial Army would send rescuers. We didn’t know that at time but learned this later. Be that as it may, we were rescued and we were really grateful.

### **Faces of Chinese who renege at times and submit at other times**

The rain continued on the 31<sup>st</sup>. The landlord made steamed buns and kindly took care of us. He repeatedly asked us to say, “You and I are friends. When the Japanese soldiers come here, please tell them this.” I figured out his real intentions. The shoes the landlord wore belonged to Mr. Yasuda and the shirt he wore was my husband’s. He had a lot of nerve to say such things to us and we were fully aware that his shirt and shoes didn’t belong to him. I couldn’t help but think that his nation’s way of thinking and feeling was different from that of Japan.

At around 10 o’clock, I heard some men calling us though I didn’t remember clearly what they were saying. We were frightened and rushed in the light rain to hide in the corn field located on the homestead (see the floor plan of the Yasuda diplomatic office).

The landlord went to these men at the gate and seemed to have been engaged in a continuous argument. He came back to us, saying, “The Japanese soldiers have come.” We asked if he told the Japanese soldiers about us. He waved his headgear and said “No, I didn’t.” We were angry, and when we asked him, “Why didn’t you tell them?” he replied, “Please promise me again that we are friends.” I was really disgusted, but had to exercise my patience, and said to him, “I promise to say so.” We eagerly waited for the Japanese soldiers. A few hours later the men came back. We were afraid that they were renegade soldiers but got up the courage to rush over to them. They were the long-awaited Japanese soldiers. They were a godsend, to those of us in hell, and we ran to hug them and cried with joy.

They explained to us why they came: “We heard from Mr. Fujiwara that 10 people were here but found only 8 bodies. We suspected 2 bodies had been hidden somewhere so we came back to search for them”.

I also have an embarrassing story to tell but I have to share it. I don't really remember if it happened on 30<sup>th</sup> or 31<sup>st</sup> but it was around noon. A Japanese airplane flew by twice at low altitude. I really wanted to show them that we survived in one way or another and my instant action was to remove my loincloth with all the strength I had. I struggled to survive, so I didn't really care about how I looked. When the airplane flew by for the second time, I thought someone waved his hand. The Japanese Imperial Army will come to rescue us! I finally had a faint sense of hope.

< Part 3 >

### **A Memorandum Written by a Survivor (the last issue)**

**A Man with his Palm of Hands Pierced with a Wire Was Taken About on the Street  
A child was killed with his head being smashed against a stone wall**

### **Atrocious Deeds I Heard of Chinese Soldiers**

Thus, we were rescued by the Japanese independent defense corps and taken to the garrison in Tongzhou Castle. When I got the feeling of relief, I then became very anxious about my husband and checked every person who had been brought there, praying in vain that he survived.

In the meantime, Mr. Fujiwara came back from his viewing of bodies. I met him three days after the incident. I could not speak a single word and only tears welled up as I stared at him. Mr. Fujiwara brought bed clothes from his dwelling to the garrison and kindly took care of me. And he went out saying, "I will try to find your husband."

I was restless and several hours had passed. Mr. Fujiwara came back and spoke words of comfort to me, "I'm sorry, but hope that you won't be too discouraged," and handed the hair of my deceased husband wrapped in paper. According to Mr. Fujiwara, my husband fell prone in the reception room of the government building. He was shot, fatally wounded in the forehead.

Though I should have been prepared for this situation, I realized that I would not be able to see my husband in this world and, having been injured and pregnant, as a weak woman, I could not stop the tears welling up and wept to my heart's content. However, I

did not lose my presence of mind so as not to be ridiculed by others. I expressed my gratitude for Mr. Fujiwara's hard work and bowed to him politely. And I had the hair of my husband put next to the one of Mr. Yasuda. Then I offered incense sticks and a sacred light, and prayed for them.

Then an army surgeon disinfected my back wounds and at Mrs. Yasuda's belly wound. It was lucky that our wounds did not fester though they had been left untreated for three days when the heat was severe. But my body temperature was considered very high and I had the shivers, feeling a chill. And I felt oppressed and unpleasant.

The army surgeon seemed to have difficulty in treating Mrs. Yasuda because her delivery was at hand. Though I understood that she was very much worried about her condition, I could not take care of her at all and was nervous about her and this irritated me.

Mr. Fujiwara attended to us and took care of us since we were rescued by the defense corps. As the defense corps was short-handed and very busy, the injured and pregnant were very inconvenienced.

Many things happened and we heard many ghastly things during our three days in the defense corps. All the incidents were bloody and shocking. Among the stories which I was told was an atrocious incident in which the branch manager of the Jidong Bank had been taken about in the city with his hands pierced by a wire. I also heard of a murder of a loved child, thrown to death against a stone wall in front of the child's mother, who was the wife of a policeman who worked for the consulate. I was depressed to hear such atrocious incidents.

### **Hospitalized in the Ami Hospital East in Tianjin**

My memory is not clear but it may have been August 1 or 2 when I was suddenly told that Mrs. Yasuda would be sent to Tianjin by air. Mrs. Yasuda told me that she was sorry because she would be leaving me alone. I felt lonely because I would be left alone, however, it was unavoidable due to the lack of seats in the airplane. They had to send a badly injured soldier and Mrs. Yasuda, whose delivery was at hand. So, she had to go first and went to the airport.

After Mrs. Yasuda left, Dr. Shinshichiro Yoshida unexpectedly appeared. I was astonished and he looked like a dream-come-true to me. This encounter reminded me of the saying of a blind turtle finally finding a piece of floating lumber to rest upon. I could only say “oh!” Then I was too moved with grief and joy to do anything but stare at him.

He told me that he was anxious about our safety and flew here by a Moth-type airplane owned by The South Manchuria Railroad Co., Ltd. He met Mrs. Yasuda at the airport and arranged for my hospitalization in the Ami Hospital East in the Tianjin French Concession soon after arrival in Tianjin. And he solaced my uneasiness, saying that he would send a plane to take me to Tianjin and persuaded me to have patience for one more day. So, I felt at ease at last and could relax.

Then he heard the details of the incident from Mr. Fujiwara and me. And he went back to Tianjin by the Moth-type plane that had been sent to take Mrs. Yasuda to Tianjin and shuttled back to Tongzhou. I was also taken to Tianjin by the plane and hospitalized in the Ami Hospital East in Tianjin.

I have brought up Machiko, the child my husband left behind, and have been able to live rather long though I have experienced many difficulties after returning to Japan after the massacre in Tongzhou. I owed these things to Dr. Yoshida and made up my mind that my gratitude towards him should be deeply impressed on my memory.

By the way, Mrs. Yasuda gave birth to a baby girl soon after arrival in Tianjin. While her wound was from a piercing bullet, she recovered more quickly than expected. When I imagine how much joy her husband would have experienced had he had been alive, I become very sad thinking about things like that.

### **I Gave Birth to a Baby after Safe Arrival in My Home**

On the other hand, my condition was terrible in contrast with that of Mrs. Yasuda. When I was hospitalized, I often coughed and spat bloody phlegm incessantly, so much so that I needed a few bunches of tissue a day. I had no appetite and inhaled every morning and evening. The medical doctors tried all kinds of treatment, such as giving oral medicine, injections etc. My coughing was soothed by the fifth or sixth day and the quantity of bloody phlegm decreased. Though my appetite was still poor, I forced myself to drink milk and eat noodles, under strong advice of others. So, I felt my

strength failing. I did not have an easy recover from my bullet wound at the right back, which made it difficult to lift my right arm. I could use only my left hand to wash my hair and to make up my face. I suffered from much inconvenience. Due to this incapacity, I could not completely remove Mr. Yasuda's blood, which stuck to my hair, until September.

But as the wound gradually healed, I had surgery on the lower part of my right armpit. Nine fragments were unexpectedly extracted and moreover some fragments were found in the lungs. But as it was decided that they were not life-threatening, the doctor decided to let them stay in the lungs. Even now, when thirty years have passed since I was shot, the fragments can be clearly seen by X-ray. A doctor who sees my X-ray for the first time is surprised and is doubly surprised when he or she hears about what I experienced.

According to the initial plan, I was to come back to Japan with Mrs. Yasuda, but she came back at first with her brother-in-law, who had come to Tianjin to bring her back to Japan. However, my wounds had not completely healed and I was not expected to deliver soon. Both of us narrowly escaped death together and felt reluctant to part. She boarded at Dàgǔ to her home town Gifu.

As my recovery went unexpectedly well after the operation, I left Dàgǔ on September 20 for my hometown Ujiyamada (now called Ise-city) and gave birth to Machiko in Nisseki Hospital on October 27.

Machiko was borne without any trouble even though I was kicked in the belly by rebellious soldier during my pregnancy. With my daughter, I would like to give thanks to my murdered husband for his heavenly protection of us.