Trouble had been brewing in China for years. Foreign exploitation by various countries had escalated to the point that the outright partitioning of China into international zones seemed likely. This aroused a violent movement among the Chinese to rid their country of foreign influence. At its vanguard was a group that called itself the "righteous harmony fists" The foreign press labeled the group the Boxers.

In early 1900, Boxers in China's Northern provinces attacked and killed hundreds of Chinese Christians and foreign missionaries. The violence culminated on June 20, with the killing of the German Minister in Peking (Beijing). Most foreigners and many Chinese converts fled to the foreign legations in Peking and were promptly besieged by a large force of Boxers supported by Chinese imperial troops.

In the summer of 1900, the U.S. joined forces with Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Austro-Hungary, Japan and Russia in mounting what was termed the "China Relief Expedition." The objective of this multi-national force was to rescue the foreign nationals besieged by the Boxers.

America’s recent acquisition of the Phillipines as a result of the Spanish-American War of 1898 had increased its interest in the Pacific and the Far-East. The country’s involvement with the China Relief Expedition marked the first time since the American Revolution that the U.S. cooperated with a foreign power in a military operation.

The Relief Expedition, numbering about 19,000 troops including 2,500 American soldiers, stormed Peking in mid August, rescued the legations and forced the imperial court to flee the city. On September 7, 1901, China and 11 other nations signed the Boxer Protocol ending the uprising. The Protocol required China to pay an indemnity of $330,000,000 and gave the foreign powers certain territorial rights.

"Kill the foreign devils! . . Kill! Kill! Kill!"

Luella Miner was among the foreigners besieged by the Boxers in Peking. She was a professor at the American College at
June 15: About ten o'clock the most horrible noise began in the southern city, just on the opposite side of the city wall. It was a horde of Boxers going through their rites, burning incense, crying, "Kill the foreign devils! Kill the secondary foreign devils! (Christians). Kill! Kill! Kill!" They called other things, but I could only distinguish the "kill!" There may have been from twenty to fifty thousand voices, not all Boxers, swelling that mad tumult. After two or three hours the noise suddenly ceased. The Boxers in their indiscriminate pillaging had looted a Mohammedan bank. The Mohammedans gathered a band of three hundred, pursued them, and got back their money, after which the mob dispersed.

Our lines of defense have been extended to include all the streets bordering on this mission property - three or four streets and alleys being under martial law - and all passers-by are challenged. The same conditions prevail on Legation Street - stray Boxers are captured and passers-by are challenged. The missionaries and Chinese who have weapons all help in guard duty. There are barbed-wire barricades at the end of each street.

Now, in the compound and adjoining streets we have barricade within barricade of barbed wire or brick, all the walls and some of the small buildings having been torn up to get brick. This is said to be the best fortified place in the city now, thanks to the free labor of our numerous refugees, and if we had a Gatling or machine gun we would feel quite safe.

Evening. - This forenoon ten Americans and twenty Russians went to the south cathedral, where the Boxers were looting, burning, and killing, killed seventy Boxers, captured ten, and took Catholic refugees to a place near the British Legation. In the afternoon twenty-five Germans and an equal number of French went to the same place, with much the same result, though not quite so many Boxers were killed, I think.

June 18: We have now spent ten full days in this place, and may be obliged to spend many more, for we can get no word from our foreign troops who left Tientsin a week ago yesterday.

We are more effectively cut off from the world than ever, for no couriers can now be found to carry mail to Tientsin for the Imperial post-office. We have been surprised that they have succeeded in keeping up the service so long. We hope that in two or three days communication will be open again. We hear
that vast numbers of Boxers attacked the railroad station in Tientsin and were repulsed with great slaughter. It is rumored that the relief army is now only ten or fifteen miles from us, but we cannot be sure.

Placards are being distributed everywhere in the city commanding that this place and Legation Street be destroyed today.

Over seventy of us American missionaries live, eat, and sleep in the little church at the British Legation, though a few of the ladies sleep in Lady Macdonald's ballroom, two or three in the billiard-room, and some of the men outdoors. In the church we all sleep on the floor or on the church seats. There are thirty-five in our Congregational crowd, about twenty Methodists, and sixteen Presbyterians. We eat by denominations, but there is only one tiny stove to cook over, so we cannot cook much. If we are besieged long, we shall have to go on short rations. In fact, we are now leaving most of the canned meats for the men, who are doing hard work outside, watching and fortifying.

**July 18:** About two o'clock this afternoon - four weeks to an hour from the time when we took refuge in this Legation - we received our first authentic message from the outside world. On June 30 a Methodist young man was sent by the Japanese Minister as a messenger to Tientsin, and he has just returned, bringing a letter from the Japanese Consul in Tientsin, stating that foreign troops numbering 33,300 will leave Tientsin about the 20th, day after tomorrow, for the relief of Peking.

**August 14:** At last our ears have heard the sweet music for which we have been listening for two months - the cannonading of the relief army - so plainly that we know that intense desire and imagination are not deceiving us, as so many times before. Our deliverance is at hand. Last night was a fearful one. There were at least six distinct attacks, the first beginning about eight in the evening, and there was almost incessant firing between these attacks. Our implacable foes seemed determined to use to the utmost this last chance to wipe us out. Our garrison returned fire more than at any other time, for now they are not afraid of exhausting their ammunition.

It was a little after two in the afternoon, as I was sitting writing under the trees in the tennis-court, where I have spent so many hours during these past weeks, when an American marine from the city wall ran into the yard shouting, "The troops are inside the city - almost here!" There was a wild rush for the south end of the compound, and there, sheltered by the barricades, we stood and saw the first of the relief army straggling up the
streets. And who do you think they were? Black-faced, high-turbaned troops, Rajpunts from India - great, fierce-looking fellows, but their faces were beaming with joy, and they hurrahed louder than we did. There were British officers with them, and one of them stooped in passing and kissed a pale-faced girlie who looked as if she needed to be rescued by a relief army. All that afternoon the troops came streaming in, Sihks, Bengal Lancers; English soldiers, and, most welcome of all, our American boys."

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This eyewitness account was originally published in Miner Luella, A Prisoner in Peking, Outlook, November 10 (1900), republished in: Hart Albert Bushnell American History Told by Contemporaries v. 5 (1929); O’Conner, Richard, The Spirit Soldiers A Historical Narrative of the Boxer Rebellion (1973).

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