

EXPERIENCES OF A PRISONER OF WAR
IN JAPAN AND THE PHILIPPINES

by

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2

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The USS CANOPUS was at anchor in Manila Bay on the morning of December 8, 1941. The Liberty Section of the crew was ashore, as usual. At 2:00 a.m. the message was received that Japanese planes had attacked Pearl Harbor; this was an act of war and we were instructed to act accordingly.

The stimulating effect of war was felt immediately, as all hands were turned-to to prepare the submarine tender for war. Blue paint was applied over grey paint to blend the ship with the blue ocean. All unnecessary material was removed from the ship and landed at Cavite. Service ammunition was placed in the ready boxes and all possible preparations made to make the converted freighter, CANOPUS, defensive.

At 9:00 a.m. an air raid warning sounded and general quarters sounded on the ship but nothing happened in our vicinity. At 8:00 p.m. air raid sounded again. Japanese planes came and bombed Nicholas Field. The rosy glow of fuel dumps burning lit the horizon. Most of the fighter planes intended to defend the Philippines were destroyed in this raid or rendered useless.

The CANOPUS weighed anchor, went in, and docked at Pier One, Manila. Fish nets were spread over the CANOPUS and red paint was applied to the weather decks and super structures to blend the ship with the near-by red-roofed warehouses. Most of the supplies, provisions, and fuel oil was removed from the ship and preparations were made to scuttle the ship alongside the dock to prevent it from capsizing should the Japanese bomb her.

Fifty-four Japanese bombers bombed Cavite Navy Yard on 10 December, destroyed the yard, hit the submarine SEA LION, and badly damaged the SEA DRAGON. The merchant vessels Sagaland and Kellogs were sunk in the bay. Several other vessels were damaged and hundreds, perhaps thousands, of navy yard workers were killed in the raid. Not a plane was shot down in our area during this raid.

The fifty-four Japanese planes flew in V formation, circled the yard, made two practice runs, released their bombs on the third run, flew a reconnaissance by Corregidor and returned to their bases in Formosa. All ships present fired on the planes without results. The reason was obvious--the obsolete three inch AA guns would shoot 17,000 feet; the

planes flew from 18,000 to 19,000 feet high. Where were our fighter planes? Most of them were still in the planning stage. The Philippines were not ready for war. Americans had observed treaties and expected others to do likewise.

Newspaper and radio accounts of Pearl Harbor minimized the damage to the fleet.

Eighty Japanese transports landed an army at Lingayen Gulf. Five other Japanese landings were made simultaneously on Luzon and five spearheads aimed at Manila and other vital points commenced to drive, bringing woeful war to the peaceful Philippines.

The local radio commentator summed the situation up by saying: "Eighty Japanese transports have landed troops at Lingayen Gulf and the U.S.A.F.F.E. (United States Armed Forces Far East) have contacted them and, if you will pardon my saying, are giving them Hell". "The little Brown Men from Nippon can't fight with their glasses on, and they certainly can't fight with them off--Keep 'em Flying." This misrepresented the situation, however, for most of the landings were unopposed, and the American Army withdrew to Bataan Peninsula as planned and made the heroic stand against superior forces and equipment.

All ships and submarines except the CANOPUS, SEA LION, and SEA DRAGON, QUAIL, TANGER, PIDGEON, FINCH, VACA, RANGER, and GENESSEE (all small tugs and mine sweepers except the CANOPUS and SEA LION and SEA DRAGON) sailed for Australia. The SEA LION was demolished when found to be beyond repair. The CANOPUS worked on the SEA DRAGON five days and fitted her for sea. She made a safe voyage to Australia and played an important part in the war.

The CANOPUS quickly loaded her supplies, provisions, and fuel oil and left Manila at midnight 24 December. Huge fires glowed in the Manila area as the Americans abandoned the great city to her fate. Filipinos were looting, as demolition squads were blowing up and destroying fuel and ammunition dumps.

The CANOPUS anchored in south harbor and went into Marivales Bay and tied up in a cove after daybreak Christmas Day. Branches were cut from the jungle and piled on deck and some boughs were tied to the mast to hide the ship from the Japanese. Green paint was applied over the red camouflage paint, but the camouflage efforts were useless. Bombers found the ship and bombed her, killing seven of the crew and injuring several. Anti-aircraft gunners stayed on their stations but they fired at planes without effect. The submarine TROUT brought twenty-one fuse for the AA guns at Corregidor and the news leaked out of the staggering losses at Pearl Harbor. The TROUT took 20,000,000

dollars worth of gold from Corregidor.

The Japanese Army swept south, Hong Kong, Singapore, Java, Sumatra, the Celebes, and part of New Guinea were taken in succession. Bataan and Corregidor stood fast.

General MacArthur made his speech. "Bataan and Corregidor cannot and will not be surrendered. We must fight; if you retreat you will lose your life. Help is coming, hundreds of planes and thousands of men are coming, but they have to fight their way through thousands of miles of enemy infested waters."

With the fall of Singapore more Japanese forces were sent to the Philippines and the fighting was intensified. Frequent air raids became more frequent.

The crew of the CANOPUS was sent ashore at 7:00 a.m. daily. Oil barrels filled with rags had been set on fire on the ship's decks, black paint had been applied in places to give the Japanese the impression that the ship was a burned out hulk. Japanese photographers were apparently deceived, for they didn't bother the ship anymore.

General MacArthur, his wife, son, son's nurse, and some of his staff left in P.T. boats in March of 1942. The P.T. boats took MacArthur to Del Monte in Mindanio and he was flown to Australia.

The Japanese radios and pamphlets dropped from planes appealed to the Filipinos to surrender, stating that "MacArthur has left and you have no one to protect you now." Other pamphlets gave instructions on how to surrender. Some pamphlets had pictures of beautiful girls offering a kiss. Radio programs from Manila addressed to the Americans at Bataan were usually as follows: "And to you Americans at Bataan, the world's largest self-supporting concentration camp, why do you continue to fight? You are sick, hungry, and longing for your loved ones. For you we dedicate this number." "They're Waiting for Ships That Never Come In", "Old Folks at Home", "Old Black Joe", and "My Old Kentucky Home", would follow.

Days passed, hunger, malaria, dysentery, and war casualties took their toll. Defenders of Bataan were meeting more and more offensive forces. Our P.T. boats were gone. Our submarines came no more to be serviced. B-17's had also flown away. Hope was waning. When would the convoy arrive?

On April 17, the crew of the CANOPUS worked all night removing bedding, clothing, provisions and other useful articles of food from the CANOPUS. She was scuttled at daylight to prevent capture by the Japanese. All of her officers and crew were taken to Corregidor where the crew and junior officers were put into the Marine beach defenses.

Bataan surrendered at 8:00 a.m., 18 April 1942. Americans captured at Bataan made the eighty-one mile march to O'Donnell in Tarlac Province known as the "Bataan Death March" or "Death March to O'Donnell." Prolonged marching without food or water in the intense heat killed many prisoners outright and weakened many more to the point that they died soon.

Pathetic SOS was flashed from Bataan's beaches at night for a week after the surrender. Some men managed to get small boats and rafts and cross to Corregidor for four or five days after the surrender. Men arriving at Corregidor said the Japanese weren't accepting surrender and were killing everyone.

Corregidor was in shambles, no buildings stood. Trees and shrubs had been splintered, bombs and artillery shells had blown craters in all the areas. The one by three mile isle was cluttered with rubble. Gun batteries located in Batangus Province had shelled the isle since February 1942, and with the fall of Bataan, Japanese moved hundreds of siege guns up to the front and shelled the fortress as well as Fort Hughes, Frank, and Drum in the bay. Bombers based at Clark Field could make a round trip flight in half an hour, meeting very little opposition as most of the AA batteries were knocked out. An estimated 200,000 rounds of artillery shells were fired at the forts the last ten days of the siege.

Food was rationed. We were eating two meals a day consisting of cracked wheat, weiners, and coffee. The shelling and bombing interfered with cooking. Many were getting weak on the ration.

The arrival of May brought increased shelling and bombing. Submarines had been coming in to Corregidor and taking out some men. The captain of the CANOPUS, some radiomen, the repair officer and some metalsmiths were evacuated. Two PBV's came in and landed in the bay at night and flew some personnel, including seven nurses, out. The situation was becoming hopeless.

At sunset 5 May 1942, a mock battle between small Japanese vessels was put on at the mouth of Manila Bay to divert attention.

At 7:00 p.m. Japanese batteries commenced firing on the island. Thousands of artillery shells mowed and exploded, landing barges appeared out of the darkness. Our machine gunners and infantrymen who survived the barrage, met them. Tracer ammunition from the Japanese barges threaded vertically, indicating to the Japanese gunners on the beach the location of the barges. The battle raged all night and into the afternoon of 6 May. Casualties were heavy on both sides. When dawn came planes appeared to spot for the artillery, bomb, strafe, and render the barren ridges untendable. Tanks, flame throwers, and field pieces were landed. Most of the small ships had been sunk by gun fire before the invasion commenced. Some were still afloat. Some were scuttled. Many of the wounded had been taken to the rear of the lines for treatment.

Orders were received to withdraw and fight delaying action. Tanks with flame throwers were coming. No artillery was left to knock them out.

The United States flag was hauled down and a white flag hoisted. Shelling continued and planes strafed.

Military Police with white flags were stationed at the entrance of the tunnels.

When the fighting stopped, order seemed to break down. Men started wandering aimlessly around; some started seeking their buddies; Navy men were trying to find their shipmates.

In the Queen and Malinta tunnel important papers and documents were being burned, and paper money was being destroyed. The food carefully hoarded previously was now free to all who wanted it.

Clothing which had also been issued officially was being taken, after meeting some protest by the quartermaster who said no more would be issued until tomorrow.

Thousands of Americans and Filipinos lined the tunnels, men returning from the front lines fell to eating the food, drinking water, and smoking. Orders were received to discard all guns, hand grenades, bayonets and ammunition. Cigarette smoke billowed from the ranks of unwashed men.

The first Japanese to arrive at the tunnels were the tank drivers. They were very thirsty, and having stopped the tanks, rushed to the tunnels for water. The water system had been knocked out but it was put back into commission and drinking water was available. A Japanese officer came through the tunnel with an American 45 automatic held in both hands.

He said nothing but seemed surprised at the number of men alive after the destructive shelling and bombing of the surface of the isle. There was no ventilation in operation in the tunnel, and everyone was smoking endlessly and pondering their fate.

The captain of the mine sweep, QUAIL, with eighteen men escaped in a forty foot motor launch from Fort Hughes about 10:00 p.m. and made the 1,800 mile trip to Australia as told in his book "South from Corregidor."

During the night more Japanese soldiers came to the island and more came through the tunnels. They were looking for watches, fountain pens, rings, money, gold rimmed glasses, and sweet foods such as jams, jellies, honey, preserves, sugar, and pineapples. Most of them could not read English, and if a can had an attractive label on it, they would thrust a bayonet in it. If the can contained meat, vegetables, or unsweetened fruit, they would discard it. Japanese soon learned the word for pineapples and would ask Americans for them.

Outside the tunnels activity continued. More occupation forces arrived. Americans were pressed into the working parties to help bring their baggage ashore.

Looting continued. A Japanese officer asked for two American officers to guide him on a tour of inspection. Two volunteered. He took them to a turn in the road, relieved them of their money, watches and rings, apologized, and let them go.

On the 9th of May orders were received to prepare to leave on a five day march and to take some food with us. Columns of one hundred men were formed four abreast and marched out of the tunnels around the winding road to an area known as Ninety Second Garage. Each incoming column was counted and recounted by Japanese guards before being dismissed into the area which was in shambles of wreckage from bombing and shelling.

Some prisoners had been assembled at this area since surrender. Tractor and truck radiators had been drained and the water drunk. An emergency seepage spring had been dug near the two large seaplane hangars. A bucket tied on a line was in operation continuously to keep the thousands of thirsty men from perishing, but the spring would be dipped dry and water would have to seep back in. After repeated requests, the Japanese allowed prisoners to form columns of one hundred men and go to Malintas tunnel for water. Water was flowing through a trough that had been used as a toilet. Occasionally a Japanese would have an

American wash a pair of trousers or a shirt in the water. Prisoners waited their turn patiently.

Working parties were demanded daily by the Japanese to do all types of work. The dead Japanese were buried, but dead Americans remained where they had fallen for four or five days. Finally the Americans were allowed to bury the maggot infested, bloated bodies. The nearest shell hole was often the grave.

Bomb craters, revetments, and ditches were being used as latrines; flies were multiplying as only insects can.

No arrangements were made to feed the prisoners--every-one foraged for himself. Groups got together and pooled what food could be stolen while on working parties, but hunger reigned in the compound. There was no shelter. The hangars had been riddled with shrapnel and gunfire. Every group rigged up sheets, blankets, coats, shelter halves and anything available for shade.

Dysentary was prevalent by now. Water was very scarce. The only bathing available was the sea. Many misused it, and the beaches were badly contaminated.

Working parties started removing food from the tunnels and placing it in small ships now at the dock. Several tons of goods had been stacked near the compound. Other parties collected guns and ammunition. One party started collecting non-ferrous metal and scrap iron.

There were some instances of Japanese guards slapping prisoners and hitting them with rifles, but the treatment was good compared with that to be received later.

Rumors were circulating in the camp and continued to circulate. One rumor was that five American transports were enroute from Australia to take us home.

With the Germans at Stalingrad, England fighting for life, the Japanese moving unchecked toward Australia--the future looked very bad for us. Beyond the Pacific, America was forging arms and armor, men were being marshaled. That America would win we had no doubt, but America was beyond the Pacific--the Japanese were here.

Seventeen dreary days passed at Ninety Second Garage. Sun, thirst, hunger, and flies by day; mosquitos and no place to sleep at night. On the night of 23 May a heavy rain came. Everything and everyone got wet. About 9:00 p.m. word was passed to prepare to leave at 6:00 a.m. Long

before day, preparations were being made to leave. Everyone packed in a blanket, bag, towel, or all articles we regarded as essential. Only what could be carried was taken. Men who had money, watches, pens, and rings left had hidden them. One way to conceal small articles was to hide them beneath a bandage. When a Japanese was searching a column, a man could start coughing and scratching himself and the Japanese would usually avoid searching him. They seemed to fear germs.

By 7:00, 23 May, all prisoners had formed into columns and started marching toward the dock. The long column moved slowly. At the dock area we were assembled in a gravel pit where the sun was almost unbearable and we were overcrowded. Fishing boats were taking men out to two rusty freighters in the bay. Aboard the fishing boat, the Japanese were pawing through everyone's pockets and belongings and asking for money. One took a prisoner's tobacco pouch because it had a fascinating zipper--imagine his surprise when he found 500 pesos (two hundred fifty dollars) hidden in the tobacco.

The Americans, numbering about 7,600, were put on separate ships from the Filipino prisoners.

The hospital staff, nurses, and wounded were left at Corregidor and removed later. The nurses were taken to the University of Santo Tomas and repatriated the first of January, 1943. None of the American nurses were molested to my knowledge.

The Fourth Marines mascot, SUCHOW, went aboard ship with us. This remarkable dog survived three years internment at Cabanatuan. When rangers rescued the prisoners at Cabanatuan, they were taken to Leyte. The men were sent to America aboard ship, but SUCHOW was denied passage. One of the Fourth Marines was left to take care of him. Both were flown to the States long before the ship arrived. SUCHOW died recently and received an honorable burial.

Conditions were crowded beyond imagination on the ship. Sanitary measures were the crudest. There was enough fresh water to drink. No food was served.

At dawn on 24 May the old freighters weighed anchor and sailed toward Manila. Upon anchoring the Americans were rapidly crowded into landing barges. One barge, usually towing two barges, would take a load of men to within two or three hundred yards of the beach and force them to jump into the water. Men who were reluctant to jump were hit on the head with a boat hook. Some men lost their shoes; many abandoned their baggage when it became wet.

Americans were formed into columns of one hundred and marched on Dewey Boulevard and halted. Japanese Calvarymen flanked the columns. About 10:00 a.m. the 11 kilometer "March of Shame" or "Dewey Boulevard Parade" commenced.

The tropical sun was too much for many of the starved Americans. The streets were littered with collapsed men. Men who lost their shoes suffered from severely blistered feet. Many dropped out. Japanese sentries were stationed at all intersections, entrances to buildings, and at all alleys.

Thousands of Filipinos lined the streets to view the parade. Many wept. Some held their hands to their face giving the "V" sign. It is believed that the march was intended to humiliate the Americans in the presence of the Filipinos, to bolster the prestige of the Japanese, and to foster the empire in East Asia. The effect was the adverse of the expected. The Filipinos were astounded at the starved condition of the small number of Americans who had resisted Japan's war machine so long.

As the heat increased more men discarded their packs. Garbage cans full of water had been put out and tin cups to drunk from had been placed near the Admiral Hotel. The water was gone before half the column had passed.

Men who were overcome with heat were brought to Bilibid later in a truck. Some were kicked roughly by the guards.

Filipino constabulary along the way would whisper the number of kilometers to be marched and tell us our destination.

At 5:00 the last of the column reached Bilibid, the former prison of the Philippines. The prison was enclosed in high walls, and with the breakdown of law and order, all prisoners had been released and all fixtures, including plumbing, removed.

The ship bringing the Filipino prisoners had docked, and they had been marched directly to Bilibid.

Bilibid was badly overcrowded. Every inch of floor space was taken up. Men slept on the concrete floors as close together as was possible. We were fed for the first time since capture--a small amount of rice.

Japanese guards patrolled the top of the wall. Some guarded the gates, others circulated among the prisoners looking for loot. Some of the guards would lower a string and prisoners who had money would tie it on the string. The Jap would take a percentage and throw some molasses,

coconut, popcorn, or some other native candy to the man. Candy was usually contaminated and sometimes caused dysentery. Trenches were used as latrines.

Some of the Americans had medicine and were trying to sell it to the ones who had money. Quinine, sulfa drugs, and aspirin were worth their weight in gold.

Fifteen hundred men left daily. Their destination and fate they would not know. They would be marched to the railroad station, eighty to one hundred men put in a box car, a Japanese guard at each door, and the train would make the trip to Cabanatuan, arriving about noon. The men would march to a school house, camp in the yard overnight, and march to Bong a Bong the next day.

The group I went with left on 29 May. The heat in the car was almost unbearable. The Japanese guards would not permit the men with dysentery to get out to relieve themselves.

Upon arrival at Cabanatuan we were marched to the school house, given some rice, and told to prepare for a twenty kilometer hike the next day. Everyone was advised to consider his baggage and discard all unnecessary articles. A rain came at sunset and after many requests the Japanese permitted the prisoners to go under the buildings--not in them. When the rain ceased, some men returned to the campus and slept on the damp ground rather than under the crowded buildings.

We were called at 3:00 a.m., given some rice, assembled in columns of one hundred and marched onto the road, halted, and told to sit down. At 8:00 a.m. the march commenced. The sun's heat was starting to absorb the moisture from the rain of the night before. The humidity was high.

Filipinoes had set up stands along the road and had an assortment of food for sale such as boiled eggs, calesa pony sugar, homemade candy, rice cakes, popped rice, bananas, sugar, peanuts, and tobacco. The Japanese guards would not permit prisoners to purchase anything. Filipinos tried to give us food--this was forbidden. An old grey-haired woman, weeping and mumbling something about her son, broke into our ranks and started giving out rice cakes. A guard beat her to the ground.

Every two or three miles, guards were changed. The fresh guards started rushing the columns. The sun was getting hotter, and perspiration was rolling from the men. Canteens were empty, and no water was available to refill them. Men started collapsing from fatigue, heat, and exhaustion. The

-11-

vicious guards would soundly beat all men who collapsed with their rifle butts, stomp them in the stomach, and other vital places where men dread to be hit. Some prisoners rejoined the column after a few sound blows or kicks with hobbled nail shoes. All men had an intense dread of fainting. If a prisoner was totally unconscious, a stick with a piece of paper attached would be stuck up and a truck hauling rice would bring him to camp.

At 5:00 p.m. we reached Camp No. 2. It had been built for the Philippine Army, was incomplete, and there was no water. Everyone was thirsty; some were raving. At sunset a heavy rain came. We bathed under the eaves of the straw-covered barracks, drank all we wanted, filled every available container, and thus merciful heaven provided again.

After sunset a small amount of rice that had been cooked at Camp No. 3, six kilometers north, arrived by truck.

Two days were spent at Camp No. 2, and we were ordered to prepare to leave. We marched six kilometers back over the same route to Camp No. 1 where I spent twenty-one months.

On June 2, groups of 1,500 prisoners from O'Donnell in Tarlac started arriving. These men had participated in the ill-famed "Death March" and were in bad condition. Some of them died immediately.

During the month of June, five hundred and one prisoners died at Cabanatuan. Malaria, dysentery, beriberi, diphtheria, and many other ailments took their toll. Many prisoners were horrible to behold. There were no bathing facilities, few had razors, malnutrition worked differently on individuals. Some got agonizing pains and every bone and muscle in their body seemed to ache. Every remedy was tried--pacing the ground, soaking feet in water, and massaging feet. Some prisoners would swell up to grotesque proportions, faces would swell until eyes closed, hands would swell to boxing glove size, feet would swell like footballs; their stomach would swell then usually death would occur. The rudimentary mammary glands of some would swell. Eyes would get inflamed and discharge tears constantly when exposed to light. Pieces of pasteboard with narrow crossed slits cut in them were used by some of the men. Cod liver oil was very scarce, and at one time, a practice of placing a drop in the patients eyes was tried. Late in 1942 the Japanese confiscated some drug store stocks and brought some patent medicines in camp. Such home remedies as "Winter Smith's Chill Tonic", "Sixty-six Chill Tonic", "Wine of Cardui", "Black Draught", "Silver Pine Healing Oil", "Simmons Liver Regulator", "Syrup of Pepsin", and many other familiar home remedies were used, some of which are no longer on sale in the United States. The Pure Food and Drug Act has changed matters pertaining to labels on bottles in the United States.

One man received a bottle of vegetable compound tonic. The label recommended the tonic for female ailments and mothers. The man's ailments were not described on the bottle, but the Japanese thought medicine was medicine and should be good for male ailments also.

The American doctors tried everything to save the men, but the diet--rice and a weed resembling water lily was not enough to nourish the bodies wasted by warfare and hardships. The necessary vitamins were missing.

Rice was fermented and yeast added to try to develop yeast for the worst cases of malnutrition. About a half teacup full would be given each patient on the average. Dysentary was treated in several ways: charcoal was powdered and eaten, rice was boiled to a sticky, thick, gummy mass for dysentary patients, and the crust or rice that stuck to the side of the rice pot was given to dysentary patients. Some malaria patients were advised to lay in the sun with their blankets over them when a chill came on to try to sweat off the malaria. Tropical ulcers were treated by washing the sore as clean as possible and sunning the area. The ones who had sulfa drugs scrapped sulfa powder into the wound. Diphtheria broke out, killed hundreds, and would have killed many more if some serum had not been brought into camp in November of 1942.

Bathing facilities were makeshift. Men who could get a can, bucket, or a piece of tin made the tubs to bath in. Baths under the eaves of barracks were a common practice.

Flies were a serious menace. Trenches two feet wide, eight feet deep, and forty feet long were dug and rails thrown across to keep the weak men from falling in. These trenches would be filled in a few days, covered with dirt, and new ones dug. The trenches were ideal breeding places for flies, and they bred very rapidly in the favorable climate. A great campaign was launched against them. Every prisoner was ordered to kill twenty flies a day. Later that number was increased to one hundred. Bounties were paid by the Americans for the greatest number of flies. Many men became fly trappers. A fly trap over one of the latrines would net a milk can full of flies in a short time. Putting the flies over a steam drum would kill them, then they would be measured and a record made. Many five gallon cans full of flies were gathered by one man. Posters similar to Burma Shave Posters were put up in camp, such as: "Who's going to die--you or the fly?" "Brood not on beriberi, but wipe out the dysentery." "Caught short, can't make it--cover up--control flies." "If you're broke and crave a smoke--kill flies."

July 1942, seven hundred eighty-five prisoners died at Cabanatuan. Rainy season set in. The dead were buried daily in trenches ten feet by six feet by three feet. The nude bodies would be placed in the common grave and covered up. Sometimes the bodies would be above the surface and dirt would be heaped over them. Wild dogs scratched into some of the mounds. Another trench would be dug for the next day's dead. Sometimes the trenches would be full of water and the bodies would be held down with a shovel until dirt could be piled over. Sometimes a Shinto Japanese guard would place a cigarette on the new mound. It wasn't the dead men who smoked it, however. Chaplains conducted burial services at the burial site later.

Planks about one inch by twelve inches by eight feet painted white with the names of the dead written diagonally across the board were placed on the mounds. This practice was discontinued and all boards were removed. In 1943, the Japanese had a detail of prisoners clear the coogan grass and weeds from the cemetery and carefully shape the mounds. All were uniform shape. A concrete shaft about nine feet high was erected to mark the cemetery. The high death rate continued until February, 1943. Colonel Beacher, the American Camp Commander, announced on Christmas Eve of 1942 that for the first time in twenty-four hours we had not had a death in camp.

The Japanese started feeding us a little better in August. A few caraboos were brought in and butchered. A farm was started near the camp. Simple tools were brought in from the warehouses and farms in Luzon. Often there were not enough tools and many prisoners had to pull and carry grass by hand. Thousands of ant hills, some of them twenty feet in diameter at the base and ten feet high, had to be leveled off. Scrub tree, vines, and grass had to be cleared from the area to make the farm. The Japanese having farmed on a small scale in Japan insisted on building hundreds of trails and roads running parallel and others intersecting at right angles about a hundred yards apart. Prisoners would use a wire to line the roads and would also use a wire to lay off rows in the plots. Rows and roads were as straight as a tightly stretched string. The numerous roads were a great waste in labor and land.

A detail of prisoners were sent to Cabanatuan to dig fertilizer from the city dump. An accumulation of debris for ages past was dug from the dump. Caraboo carts were used to haul the black dirt. Later a truck was also used. Twenty-four men and two guards went down daily and dug and screened the dirt, loaded the carts, and returned at night.

Excreta was taken from the Japanese guard's latrines and put on the garden. Because of the large number of Americans suffering from dysentery, excreta was not taken from the American camp. Oil drums, cut in half suspended in the middle of a bamboo pole with a wire bail and carried on the shoulders of two men, were used. Forty men were assigned to this detail daily, and as it involved considerable walking, the men were sometimes permitted to wear shoes. American officers were often assigned to this detail. Grass was pulled and piled up to decay and become fertilizer.

Work on the farm usually commenced at 7:00 a.m., continued until 12:00, then from 1:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. Two fifteen minute rest periods were given, one before noon and one after noon.

An attempt was made to grow sweet potatoes, corn, radish, mustard, okra, pepper, onions, cabbage, casaba, papayas, squash, mongo beans, tomatoes, eggplant, peanuts, watermelon, and rice on the farm. The hot climate with a rainy season and dry season was suited for rice.

Sweet potato vines grew rank but produced very small potatoes. The vines were fed to the prisoners--very few potatoes. The vines would be pulled loose from the ground except the main root and turned upside down in the sun in an attempt to make them yield potatoes. Sweet potato vines have a bitter, poisonous taste.

Corn yielded small ears if planted at the right time. Radish and mustard produced very little because of insect pests that ate the plants. An insecticide made by boiling tobacco stems in an oil drum was not effective nor was one made of soap boiled in water. Okra, pepper, eggplants, and tomatoes yielded good crops, but very little was planted. Peanuts, watermelons, mongo beans, cabbage, and onions produced poor crops due partly to the soil, partly to the climate. Casaba and rice produced good crops.

A day on the farm was a day of dread and terror. Japanese would notify the American camp staff at 8:00 p.m. daily of the number of prisoners desired for the next day's work. The number varied daily. Prisoners would assemble near the farm gate at 6:30 a.m., would be organized into groups under an American group leader, would be counted and recounted (one instance a group was counted eighteen times before going to work), then the guards would assemble, get their orders from their officers, and the gate would be opened. Prisoners would march out and form columns to be counted by the Japanese.

Guards would take over the groups. Some prisoners prayed silently to be spared from falling into the group under the

most vicious and hated guards, such as the Japanese sergeant named Ihara San (nicknamed "Air Raid"). All guards had nicknames. All survivors from Cabanatuan will remember "Air Raid", "Laughing Boy", "Charlie Chaplain", "Many Many" or "Donald Duck", "Angel Face", "Mortimer Snerd", "Doll Eyes", "Baggy Pants", "Old Dog Tray", "Pop Muskrat", "Little Muskrat", "Big Speedo", "Little Speedo", "Major Mickey Mouse", "Mable Porky", "Edna Mae Oliver", and "Dorothy Lamour". The most unforgettable American characters on the farm will be "Farmer Jones" and "Captain Moore".

A Japanese guard nicknamed "Muskrat" had charge of the carpenter's detail at Cabanatuan. The carpenters (all American prisoners) made and repaired tools such as hoes, rakes, shovels, mauls, litters, treadmills, buckets, boxes, threshers, plows, drags, and harrows by hand. The tools the Americans worked with were very crude bolos, improvised planes, augers, and saws.

One of the Japanese guards named "Air Raid" had some rice, sugar, and bananas hidden in the loft of a shed near the carpenter shop. When the Japanese officers had completed their morning inspection of the farm and returned to headquarters, "Air Raid" would take a quantity of rice to a remote part of the farm, boil the rice, and have a mid-morning meal of sweet rice and bananas.

The carpenters had been working on an engine and had left a three gallon bucket of gasoline in the shop.

While the prisoners were in camp during the noon hour the straw-covered roof of the building in which "Air Raid" had the food hidden started smoking. The Japanese guards rushed to the scene and in the confusion that followed their attempt to put the fire out one of them seized the bucket of gasoline and dashed it on the fire, thinking the bucket contained water. The straw roof was enveloped in flames immediately. Gates were opened to the camp and Americans came out and put the fire out.

At 7:00 a.m. next day eighteen hundred prisoners were called out to work on the farm. Guards came, lined up, received orders from their officers, loaded rifles and fixed bayonets. Gates were opened and prisoners marched out to be counted by the guards and marched away to various details on the farm. The eight carpenters were the last to be called that morning and instead of going to the carpenter shop they were marched into a teelelum patch and lined up for execution.

A Japanese orderly ran to headquarters and returned with the Japanese officer's sword. The Japanese officer,

nicknamed "Baggy Pants" drew the two-handed sword from the scabbard, limbered his arms by swinging the sword over the prisoner's head. The interpreter said to the prisoners: "There was a serious fire yesterday and considerable Japanese property was destroyed. Which one of you set the building on fire?" None of the men spoke.

"Baggy Pants" stepped forward with the raised sword, and the interpreter continued: "Don't be brave. Who set the building on fire? There is no need for all of you to die."

A warrant officer of the Fourth Marines said: "There were no Americans in the building yesterday." The interpreter asked him if he was sure. When the Marine had replied "yes" to this question, he was asked if he had seen any Japanese in the building. The Marine's reply was "No."

A Chief Boatswains' Mate suggested that the sun set the building on fire. "Baggy Pants" didn't agree. A carpenter explained to "Baggy Pants" that the loft of the building had several large sacks of tightly packed tobacco stems stored near the roof, explained the danger of spontaneous combustion and added that many tobacco barns in Kentucky, Tennessee, Carolina, California, and Washington burn every year due to spontaneous combustion starting fires. Washington and California are not noted for tobacco culture, but "Baggy" certainly had heard of them even though he hadn't heard of Kentucky, Tennessee and Carolina. The story convinced simple-minded "Baggy", and he dismissed the prisoners.

"Air Raid" returned at noon and was very angry and frightened. Thinking the carpenters, to escape execution, had told "Baggy" about him leaving a lighted cigarette in the loft, he lined them up and tried to force a confession by slapping the nearest man across the temple with the flat side of the bolo. The interpreter came and explained to "Air Raid" that the carpenters blamed the sun for the fire and that "Baggy Pants" was satisfied that the sun had caused the fire and that all was forgotten.

"Air Raid" would have received a thorough beating with a club had the carpenters told, and would have, in turn, killed the carpenters for telling on him.

A Japanese guard telling in pidgin English about the fire said the guard who threw the gasoline was "Many-Many Hammer Head".

A very annoying thing happened while we were standing before "Baggy's" menacing sword--a guard felt my knees to see if they were knocking--they were.

-17-

Very few of the Americans had farmed before and were very awkward at using farm tools. They had never worked in a hot climate and were in poor physical condition due to the diet. None of them had any interest in the farm, for regardless of how much the farm produced, the diet was about the same.

Some of the guards were better than others, and various forms of punishment was meted out. A set of rules was put out which were "do not's":

- Do not whistle
- Do not sing
- Do not talk except in line of duty
- Do not cross plots
- Do not smoke except during rest periods
- Do not sit
- Do not stand idle
- Do not sit on water cans during rest periods
- Keep moving and keep alert

Violations of these rules usually brought down the wrath of the guards on the prisoners, such as slapping, kicking the prisoners, hitting them with rifles, belts, or clubs, forcing them to stand bareheaded in the sun all day with hands held overhead and often with a pick or the tool they were using in their hands. They forced prisoners to face and slap each other, and often innocent men were drawn into this to make a pair or a foursome. Prisoners were forced to kneel so the short guards could strike them in the face easily. Pick handles would be placed in the bend of their legs and the legs folded back on the handle, thus cutting off circulation.

A prisoner was caught stealing a bar of soap from the tool house one morning while going to work. He was severely beaten with a pick handle, forced to stand at attention in the sun holding the bar of soap in his outstretched hand until noon. Each of the thirty Japanese guards walked past the man and struck him across the back three times with a rifle knocking him down many times. He would be kicked in vital parts until he got up. When the demonstration was over, he was carried in camp with a leg bone broken, an arm badly injured, some ribs cracked, and numerous bad bruises--all for a bar of soap he did not get after all.

Another man was caught stealing pepper. "Air Raid" forced him to eat three pods on the spot, pulled a sign board up which read "Anyone caught pulling the vegetables will be severely punished", and blistered the man's traditional place. He forced the man to stand at attention all morning holding a pod of pepper in each hand as a warning, gave him a beating at noon, had the sign changed to read "Anyone caught stealing the vegetables will be shot". "Mable",

the Japanese who counted and kept record of the number of prisoners on the farm, gave the man forty centavos (twenty cents) and told him to buy some pepper. The man never liked pepper after this.

During dry season a small stream which flowed through the farm was dammed up in three places and hundreds of five gallon cans were brought in. Some cylinder shaped buckets were made and water was carried from the stream to water the plants. The hot sun dried the water almost as fast as it could be poured. A 20,000 gallon water tank was built on the farm and a small pump installed to pump water to the tank. Irrigation ditches were dug in various directions and reservoirs dug so that water could be obtained at various points. Canals were laborously dug to divert another stream through the farm.

Japanese officers asked Americans to offer suggestions and a prize was offered for the best drawing of a devise to pump water without fuel. Windmills, tread mills, and hydraulic rams were suggested. The prize was awarded for the drawing made of a windmill, but a tread was made. The shafts and even the chain was made of wood. The chain links were made Y shape from a piece of two inch by six inch by ten inch board. A reservoir twenty feet deep by about two hundred feet square was dug on the highest point to store water.

Watering details were sent out to water the plants at 6:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. This practice was discontinued when two prisoners escaped.

Prisoners were forced to work barefooted on the farm to lessen their chance of escape.

Numerous projects were being carried out simultaneously, and some details were more desirable than others. Houses were picked up and carried for a kilometer at times by prisoners. One hundred men cut wood in the jungles daily for fuel for the Japanese and American galleys. Hundreds of men were used to build roads. Permanent details were sent to various places in Luzon, Palawan, Mindanao, Formosa, Manchuko, and Japan. Some details such as building bridges, roads, airports, docks, mining, and shipyards were more undesirable than the farm.

A detail of divers was returned to Corregidor to recover about seven million silver pesos (three and one half million dollars) from the bay. This money was dumped before the fall of Corregidor. The divers recovered about one million pesos. The United States had recovered the remainder of it since.

A detail of three hundred men left O'Donnell and went to Taiabas to build a bridge. Seventy of the detail survived

-19-

and were sent to Cabanatuan three months later.

Language difficulties were responsible for many of the misunderstandings and beatings.

Starting in December, 1942, officers were paid a small regular salary a month (about \$5.00). Men who worked on the farm were paid the following wages: privates, ten centavos (\$.05 a day); corporals and petty officers to warrant officers, fifteen centavos (\$.07½ per day); warrant officers, twenty-five centavos (\$.12 per day). A commissary was organized and a few food items were available, but the large group could never be supplied.

The interior of the camp at Cabanatuan consisted of about a hundred buildings. Most of the buildings were made of nipa and covered with straw. They were about twenty-four feet wide by seventy feet long and had a platform through the center. Upper and lower bays or shelves floored with bamboo strips one and one half inches wide and three-fourths inch apart were the areas for sleeping. The barracks were light and cool, but they were ideal places for bedbugs, and they soon infested the camp.

Death and disease were so prevalent that the Japanese guards seldom came in the camp. There was little left for them to loot anyway. Guards were eager to trade with the prisoners and would buy watches, fountain pens, and sulfa drugs if any could be found.

The main road through the camp was called "Broad Way". Paths between buildings were named such as "Maiden Lane", "Burro Alley", "Sante Fe Trail", and "Drizzle Drive". The headquarters was called "Times Square". An open area was called "Polo Grounds".

A path was made around the camp on the inside of the wire fence. American sentries patrolled the inside of the camp to prevent escape. Japanese sentries patrolled the outside of the camp at night and stayed in guard towers during daylight to guard the camp.

Prisoners were divided into groups of ten men called shooting squads. If one escaped the remaining nine would be shot in retaliation. If the entire squad escaped, ten squads would be shot. Sixteen prisoners were shot at Cabanatuan Camp No. 1 and four at Camp No. 3.

Twenty-six hundred and forty-four died at Camp No. 1 and had been buried in the cemetery by Memorial Day, 1943. Casualties were high at other camps, including O'Donnell at which 1,500 Americans died.

Two ships loaded with prisoners were torpedoed or bombed by Americans and casualties were high. One ship with 1,800 prisoners had four survivors. A ship with 1,600 prisoners had 450 survivors. These numbers are from the survivors.

When Japanese officers announced that retaliatory measures would be applied, the senior American officer had all Americans assembled and explained the situation. He informed all prisoners of the distance to the nearest allies (1,800 miles away), stressed the difficulty and danger that lay between us and safety, and pointed out the retaliatory measures of reduced food and water and threat to shoot ten men in reprisal. Japanese retaliated against any Filipino village caught harboring Americans. A trial by General Court Martial when the war was over was promised to all who escaped.

A Japanese guard company raided a neighboring barrio (village). How many Filipinos were killed and why they raided the barrio I do not know; but when the guards returned to camp in the afternoon, one of them had a bamboo pole across his shoulder with a Filipino man's head dangling from it. Americans rushed to the fence near the road to watch the wierd procession pass, and everyone saluted as was the rule when the guards went by. Someone commented: "We're not saluting you, you bloody S.O.B., we are saluting the Filipino's head."

The head was hung from a light pole on the road by the camp. By afternoon of the following day, the head had begun to smell and the flies were after it. The Japanese sentry cut it down, put it in a sack, and gave it to the next Filipino who passed. The Filipino took it, bowed again, replaced his hat, and walked away.

Friends usually got in the same shooting squad, and requested the others not to escape without warning. They promised not to stop them but to go with them.

Many would have preferred their chances in the jungle. Some men stayed at large after the surrender of Bataan and had a wonderful Robinson Crusoe type existance in the wilds. They even raised families and helped overcome the man shortage.

Three young Ensigns escaped from Camp No. 1 on June 2, 1942, but were captured on Southern Luzon in September. They gave the names of three Naval officers slain at Corregidor and told the Japanese they had never surrendered but fled and were trying to reach home. They were brought back to Camp No. 1 and advised to tell the Japanese the truth. They were forced to get on the stage at the assembly and read a long speech about the impossibility of escape, the perils of the jungle, and praise the wonderful opportunities and treatment in camp.

They were sent to the Japanese military prison camp. Their treatment was harsh, but that is another story.

Two colonels and a Navy lieutenant attempted to escape shortly after the return of the three ensigns mentioned above. They were apprehended by the American guards while attempting to crawl out through an opening for a drainage ditch. Japanese came in the camp to investigate the commotion, took the three officers in custody, beat them unmercifully about the legs and body, took them to the guard house, bound them in very uncomfortable positions, and beat them all night. During the following day and night they were beaten and kicked at every change of guards. Filipinos who passed were required to strike them. On the morning of the third day a Japanese burial squad marched past the group with spades. A rifle squad came, and the prisoners were unbound. Two were still able to walk. The third, nude except underwear trunks, could not walk. A truck was stopped and all three were roughly shoved in and taken to an area near the corner of the camp. A short time afterwards a volley of shots were heard and the Japanese returned without the prisoners.

Occupants of the buildings in which the three officers slept were given thirty days in their barracks with only rice to eat. Charges: harboring a criminal--Japanese justice.

Six prisoners were shot one afternoon for going under the fence to buy food from the Filipinos. Two were shot near the hospital area and four near the main camp area.

Prisoners to be executed were subjected to horrible punishment. It is difficult to understand the oriental mind, but it is believed that the reason for punishing prisoners was to cause them to regard death as a relief from the punishment. An instance occurred at the hospital area one night. A prisoner was supposed to have been trading with a Japanese guard. He was outside the fence trading with the guard when a Japanese officer appeared. The guard blew his whistle, seized his friend, the prisoner, and bound him to a post, thus thwarting an escape. The remainder of the story is similar to others. The prisoner was beaten almost to death, marched off, and shot.

A sick prisoner hid in a grass field, and when the farm detail was brought in and counted one was missing. A commotion followed, and large groups of guards left for the field at sunset. A noise like an indian war dance could be heard in the direction of the field and at midnight a Filipino brought the prisoner in a carabao cart. The body had been badly mutilated and beaten to a pulp. All bones had been broken,

-22-

numerous bayonet wounds had been inflicted, and the corpse had been shot. Group leaders were summoned the next morning and were told to inform the men of their barracks of the incident as a warning.

An insane prisoner crossed the fence one morning at daylight, left his wooden shoes at the place of crossing, and went into a large sweet potato patch and hid. A three day man hunt followed. Guards searched the field repeatedly without finding the man. The search was abandoned on the third day and work resumed. A week later prisoners were removing decayed grass from a pile and uncovered the escaped man. He had been getting water from a spigot very near a guard shack, and had some raw sweet potatoes and papayas in the woodpile with him. He was in such a weakened condition that he could not stand. He was carried to the Japanese headquarters. The American Camp Commander was summoned and the burial detail was sent to the cemetery to dig a grave. A Japanese detail took the man to the cemetery. The story varies at this point. One is that he was dead; another is that he died as a result of a pistol bullet fired into his head while in the grave. The burial detail covered the body the next day.

While the death rate was high, a man thought to be dead was placed in a shed used as a morgue. The burial party placed the bodies on litters and took them to the cemetery. A finger among the pile of corpses was observed to be moving. The body was removed to the morgue, came out of the coma, and recovered. He said the experience was too terrifying to relate.

For recreation in the main camp, amateurs put on shows that were very entertaining under the circumstances. Some musical instruments were obtained and some musical shows were put on. Lectures by men from every profession were given. Men with degrees from nearly every college or university could be found.

Lectures were given on medicine, astronomy, history, horsemanship, agriculture, beekeeping, trials and tribulations of a private plane owner, insurance rackets, adventures of soldiers of fortune, cattle raising, restaurants and unique places to eat, rescue of Floyd Collins, death of Colin Kelly and many more interesting subjects. Subjects pertaining to food were the most popular. The subject of sex was seldom brought up except in some of the shows where anything could be said until the chaplains launched a clean-up speech campaign.

Church was held every Sunday. Sometimes the Japanese observed Friday instead of Sunday. Attendance at church

was good, and many joined church in camp.

The Japanese showed four or five movies: The Marx Brothers in "Animal Crackers", "Pinochio", "The Ghost Returns", "Japanese Bombing of Pearl Harbor", and "Asia for Asiatics."

Thirteen hundred prisoners were taken to Bong a Bong to make the surrender scene for a movie said to be called "Down With the Stars and Stripes". Of all my days as a prisoner that day was nearest to a day of outing. A detail was sent to Corregidor, Bataan, and Manila to finish the movie. Some of the American tank men caused a near riot in Manila, for the Filipinos saw them and thought the Americans had returned. The Filipinos were badly disappointed. When requested to fill the American canteens, they obliged by filling them with good American whiskey from a secret, prewar stock. All the boys wanted to become movie actors.

Some of the distinguished men in the camp were as follows: Major Wing (Toby Wing's Father), Arthur A. (one man Army) Wer-mouth, Captain Robinson (Colin Kelly's co-pilot), Governor Rodgers, Governor of Jolo, adviser to the Sultan of Sulu), and many other prominent men were present.

Rumors circulated through the camp constantly. The collapse of Germany was a standard one. A rumor that we were to be exchanged in South America was persistent. When the war was over, a Japanese was asked if it was true that the Japanese had tried to negotiate an exchange of prisoners. He said that they had and that Japan offered exchange of all prisoners on the basis of one American for ten American trained Japanese technicians. America was to provide two way transportation and was to give the San Pedro, Pearl Harbor, and Vancouver fishing fleet to Japan. He reported that Cordell Hull said: "No, we cannot meet this offer, but we will, however, give Japan a lesson in human decency or kill every damned one of them." The Japanese wanted to know what damned meant.

News was fairly accurate. All communication was forbidden, but Filipinos would smuggle notes in camp. Americans operated all power plants which supplied lights to the Japanese quarters and to the perimeter of the camp. There were no lights in the camp. The Japanese had radios which were repaired by the American technicians. A trick employed by the Americans was to start a D.C. generator and send D.C. current through the radio and burn out some of the parts. A spare part was hidden in the power plant and while repairing the burned out part the radio would be used and the news obtained and circulated. Separating news from rumors was difficult--thunderstorms were American artillery already moved in. The Japanese controlled Manila newspaper was smuggled in camp at times, and it was a

fairly reliable report if reversed casualties or numbers were used.

As death and transfer to Japan and other places reduced the number of prisoners, the size of the camp was reduced.

Ingenious methods of disposing of the excreta finally reduced the number of flies, and consequently, the dysentery rate decreased.

Some Red Cross supplies came into camp at Christmas of 1942. The packages were part American, part British, and part Canadian. All contained food and tobacco.

One and a half packages was issued to each man. The Red Cross food seemed to stop the beriberi temporarily. In addition to food, there was medical supplies, clothing, cigarettes, and material to mend clothing and shoes, toilet articles, and some athletic equipment.

Japanese guards issued the rations daily, and carefully weighed and recorded all food. Americans worked in the galleys, and Americans even supervised them. There were some complaints about the men who cooked taking more than their share of food.

The galleys of the camp had rice quallies or shallow thin pots for boiling rice and batteries of regular oil drums set in mud furnaces for boiling potato vines or any other vegetable. The galleys burned wood cut by the Americans in the jungle.

Dog meat was never served on the regular mess in the Philippines, but some of the prisoners trapped the wild dogs, and killed and cooked them in a five gallon tin. They shredded the meat and eight or ten men would pool their rice and the dog meat would be mixed with rice and baked in a loaf in the fire coals. Removal of the head, skin, liver, and intestines of the dog seemed to remove the strong dog odor.

An animal resembling a fox, sometimes trapped in the jungle by the wood-cutting party, was also eaten. It had a strong odor.

Small frogs would be eaten often.

The Japanese guards were very fond of snakes. Often when prisoners were leveling ant hills on the farm, the guard would pay a bounty of four cigarettes for each snake caught. He would slap the prisoner if the snake was killed. One guard called "Snake Eater" would skin the snake alive (the species of snake resembled cobra), run a stiff wire down the live snake's throat, completely through the body, and pass the snake back and forth through a flame until cooked. The snake's meat would puff up, be dry and white, and would

taste like a pond perch.

As the war progressed rations were reduced. By the end of 1943 rations were again scarce. Some American Red Cross food, medical supplies, athletic equipment, and clothing were again received. Also, 25,000 letters that had been censored in America and in Tokyo, but still the Japanese camp authorities insisted on censoring the letters again. Two Japanese were assigned to the job. It is doubtful if they could read English, but they delayed distribution considerably. Ten to a hundred letters came in camp a day. Anyone getting a letter with anything of interest in it was requested to post the information on a bulletin board. Most of the information was of a personal nature.

In March of 1944, five hundred of the most able-bodied prisoners in camp were called out and ordered stripped to the waist. A Japanese inspecting party went through the ranks and picked out three hundred for a detail to Japan. We were given dysentery tests after dysentery tests by the Japanese. All enlisted men were given a Navy blue uniform taken from the locker club of Manila. Everyone was given an extra pair of socks, soap, equipped with a canteen, mess kit and spoon, given a hat, shoes, and paid all the money owed to him from the farm. The officers (warrant officers were not classed as officers) were given a ridiculous looking Japanese officer's uniform.

We were called at ten minutes past midnight the day we left, were given some rice and some rice to take with us. We told our friends good-bye before turning in the night before, but everyone seemed to be up to see us off. There was prolonged waiting and finally three trucks were ready at 4:00 a.m. We were crowded on the trucks, waved parting, and the trucks moved off into the darkness leaving Cabanatuan behind in the closing gloom. What tragedies had passed since we arrived twenty-one months before! What lay in store for us and for our friends we left behind? The mud, rain, bedbugs, sweltering heat, almost unbearable stench, bamboo slats to sleep on, the farm and its miseries were past memories.

Upon arrival at Cabanatuan we were marched to the awaiting freight train and after some cuffing, grunting, and shoving we were loaded into box cars that had a two foot layer of fire wood in them. The train started about daylight, and unlike the previous trip, the guards permitted us to buy food from the Filipinos. Popped rice candy, a dry rice cake faintly sweet, peanuts, and bananas were available. The Filipinos knew our plight and gave the food when possible. The train reached Manila about 12:30 p.m. We disembarked; fifteen were left at the station to load the wood and baggage on trucks. Others marched to Bilibid.

At Bilibid we were welcomed by many of our shipmates whom we had not seen since capitulation of Corregidor. We were given commissary privileges and managed to buy some duck eggs, peanuts, salt, and bananas in small quantities.

Personal packages were given to the prisoners enroute to Japan. I received a package from home. It had been rifled and all the valuables taken. One shoe, size six for the right foot with some candy in the toe, was in the box. I gave the shoe to a friend who had lost a left foot at Corregidor. Some razor blades, handkerchiefs, underwear, towels, tooth brush, tooth powder, cheese and soup cubes was all that remained. The soup cubes and cheese were spoiled. I ate them anyway. Packages for men now dead were given to men who received none.

We were kept at Bilibid until 24 March. We were called early on the morning of the 24th, marched to the dock, and put into the hold of a freighter. The hold was badly overcrowded, and very dusty and dirty from having hauled cement without being swept. Hot putrid air arose from the hold. There was no ventilation except what air came through the hatch.

At noon the freighter sailed, passed Corregidor and Marivales, stirred many memories, and caused anxiety for if conditions were reduced to the worst, our very last chance of escape was being reduced with every turn of the ship's propeller. In Japan the chance of escape would be zero.

Outside of Manila Bay, submarine alert sounded. All prisoners were ordered below, but the ship got through without mishap. We were in waters infested with American submarines and where ships had recently been sunk. A destroyer and plane escort went to Formosa with the three other ships present. The ship had chromite ore in the hold, logs, and crates of what was thought to be plane parts on the deck. The ship was not marked as carrying prisoners of war and was thus a legal target for submarines.

Food was very scarce, and the small amount of rice was poorly cooked. A pot on the after deck and a half of a barrel for a fire box was the cooking equipment. Fresh water was stringently rationed. A small amount of raw fish and a cherry pickled in salt was the usual noon meal. Sea weeds were added to the rice served at night. Nearly everyone had a little extra food brought from Manila and ate it to help out on the reduced rations.

The ship anchored at Tacao, Formosa. A forty ship convoy was assembling to go south; a freighter with

- 27 -

thousands of troops tied up alongside our ship. Landing barges, field pieces, fire wood, and all types of junk cluttered the deck. The soldiers seemed to be inferior to the usual Japanese soldiers. All seemed poorly dressed.

More logs were taken aboard, and we sailed at sunset on the third day after arrival. Plane and destroyer escort went along until after dark, then left us. Bad weather set in and probably saved us from the submarines.

We arrived and anchored at Shimonosiki. A doctor in a blue uniform with wrapped leggings came aboard and looked the prisoners over, felt a few pulses, and left the ship. We sailed into the inland sea. All lights were turned on. Ships that had been gutted by explosions, a few sunken wrecks were visible.

On Easter Sunday, 9 April 1944, we docked at Osaka. A few flakes of snow were falling. Everyone had a cold and was coughing constantly. Guards arrived to take us over, but apparently the ship was late and we were kept aboard that night. The ship got very cold when the boilers were secured. New Japanese guards with new type rifles came into the hold for a short time, gave a few cigarettes to the prisoners, couldn't stand the odor, and got out on deck.

We were called at 4:00 a.m., given some half-cooked rice and a small ration of rice to carry with us, and disembarked--leaving the Tailoku Maru, sleepless nights on crowded bare steel decks, and the crowded hold behind.

The Americans were marched to the streetcar line, where they boarded cars and were taken to the railroad. The sun was shining, yet there was ice on the ground. Stores were empty; only a few were open. People stared at us. The streets had very little traffic. A large sign had a picture of a B-17 falling with wings coming off, and the writing apparently urged the Japanese to apply the all-out effort.

The railroad underpass, at which we were to wait five hours for the train, was miles from the station. Several carloads of gravel had been dumped in the underpass, and we were allowed to sit on the gravel.

It was Monday morning, and yet there were many idle people loitering in the area. A Japanese, who seemed to know all of the American movie stars, told us that Secretary of the Navy Knox was dead and volunteered some information about the war--the Japanese people seemed to know very little war news. When asked about our destination and

-23-

fate, he said he did not know where we were going but that we would get better treatment, more food, mail, and see many of our friends. He thought the war would end soon but thought it might continue a hundred years.

Four Japanese girls were strolling near us. They were plump, rosy-cheeked, and clean but shabbily dressed. Two of them seemed eager to talk, would give us a shy smile, and turn away. No lovers were strolling arm in arm as Americans do. The guards would not allow them to associate with prisoners.

The wind was cold, and we were in poor physical condition, not used to the weather and not dressed for it. Some of the Americans sprawled in the blocked street in the sun, more ventured out, and eventually everyone was in the sun. A guard nicknamed "Georing" ordered us back in the gloomy shadow. At 4:30 p.m. a passenger train came in. We boarded it and would take time about sitting in the seats. Others sat on their baggage. The train was on schedule.

During the night small wooden boxes containing barley, small pieces of squid, pieces of oranges, sea weeds, and pickled radish were distributed. Each prisoner received a box and a pair of chop sticks. Some hot water tasting of tea leaves was given us. When the train approached a town, we were required to pull the window shade down. The guards were lenient, and it was possible to look out at times. There was no evidence of bombing.

There was no opportunity to sleep in spite of the sleepless nights aboard the Taikoku Maru.

At 6:00 a.m. the train arrived at Tokyo Station. A Japanese doctor met the train and took all of the medicine which the American doctor assigned to the detail had brought from Bilibid. This left us again without medicine. We disembarked and were rushed to a streetcar for a ten minute ride, boarded another train for a five hour ride north.

No sign of spring was evident except a few buds on weeping willow branches, and winter crops, such as mustard, were in bloom. Barren, poverty-ridden villages, rendered more barren by war and the drain on man power, were built along the railroad. Startled women and children stared at the train loaded with white prisoners from foreign lands.

At 1:00 p.m. the train reached Haistachi. We disembarked, were marched to a park, halted, and given a barley ball. The barley was boiled in water and molded by hand into a round ball about the size of a tennis ball and wrapped in a thin shaving of wood. The ends of the shaving could not be bent

so the barley was exposed to dust, dirty hands, and flies at the ends.

When the meal was finished, we were again assembled for marching. The baggage and sick men were put on a truck and hauled to the mining town of Moto Yama (Mountain Top) about a one hour hike from the station. At the village we were halted and allowed to rest before starting to climb steps to our new home about five hundred feet uphill from the valley. The climb was nearly vertical, and men were exhausted by the climb.

When we marched in the new camp enclosed in a wooden fence ten feet high, the Japanese Camp Commander ordered assembly on a level between barracks. The little dwarf striking a Napoleonic pose yelled "Kiotski" (Attention) very loud, then screamed the same word like an excited woman. He seemed very angry. Guards rushed between the ranks with fixed bayonets yelling, but they could find no one who was not at attention; then a speech commenced:

You are prisoners of war. You came over the Pacific Ocean to kill Japanese soldiers. You have fought against the Japanese Empire--a crime for which you cannot be forgiven. You must work. You must work hard. If you do not work hard, you will be severely punished. You will be treated fairly but not kindly.

The type of work was not mentioned. The interpreter was a kind-faced, soft-spoken, aged Japanese who would close his speeches with: "Take care of your health so you will be able to work when you return home someday." When the speech was over, we were dismissed and told to go in the barracks and rest.

Friends and shipmates got together in the barracks and were planning to live in the same groups if possible. Navy and Marines were together and Army personnel from the same units were together.

At 3:00 p.m. we were assembled, marched down the hill and got our baggage, and returned.

The barracks had a hall with no floor on the north side facing the valley and was divided into four rooms with a half inch partition between rooms. At the end of each barracks was a "benjro" (toilet). A pit was dug beneath the opening in the stall and the pit was cemented. The odor was, of course, very offensive.

The rooms had straw mats eight feet by three feet by four inches thick on the sleeping spaces. There was no

-30-

floor, but a board three-fourths inch by twelve inches flush with the mat ran around the square enclosure within the room. A brick fireplace occupied the center of the room. There was no flue. Two twelve inch shelves two feet apart around the room were used to store all baggage. Windows were sealed shut with paper pasted over seams. There were lights in the barracks but no chairs or benches.

We were issued three bowls: a large one, a middle-size one, and a tea bowl. This was the first container we had been issued since capture. All others had been gotten any way we could.

At sunset we were given our first meal at the camp-- a bowl of soup made of Irish potatoes flavored with meat.

Two Japanese women were working in the kitchen. They worked for two days and left. Americans were put in the galleys.

Seven blankets were issued to each man. The blankets were not woolen, as were the U.S. Army blankets. The following day all woolen blankets were confiscated. British and Australian overcoats were issued.

Everyone was called out to clean the interior of the camp. When this job was completed, physical examinations were given to all men. Eyes, ears, lung capacity, color blindness, and many physical strength tests were tried. Several Japanese hypodermic inspections were given.

At 3:00 p.m. all men were assembled and marched to the town theatre during a downpour of rain. Everyone was wet on arrival. The meeting in the theatre was to instruct us concerning our job. All of the prominent Japanese were seated on the stage and everyone was introduced. They would bow to the prisoners and grin. Some of the more prominent ones would say a few words.

The instructor had a chart with some drawings showing the layout of the mine and also drawings of the various tools used in the mine with the Japanese name for them.

The hope that men placed in rumors that we were to be leased to Japanese farmers and to private families, the stories read in Japanese papers in the Philippines about American prisoners of war seeking to marry Japanese girls were not true in our detail nor any other American detail that I know of.

Some men cherished the hope that they would be given a job as a house servant, rickshaw boy, farmhand or fisher-

man with a woman for boss. Prisoners were not permitted to fraternize with civilians. Many of the Japanese in this area had never seen white men and were amazed at the size of the Americans. Blond, red, and dark curly hair and blue eyes attracted much attention. Practically all Japanese except babies are brown-eyed with dark straight hair. There was no romance on our part even though man shortage was evident.

In the lecture in the theatre, we were instructed to work hard, be careful--not to stool in the mine. "If you must stool ask your Japanese boss and he will show you where to go."

Each man was issued a carbide light, hoe with a pointed blade, a pan with three sides and a bottom with handles on the sides for lifting it when full of ore, a miner's cap, pair of tennis shoes, pair of wrap leggings, pair of Japanese sox, can of carbide, and a box of matches. Two suits of Japanese work clothing similar to a uniform but of very poor quality cloth were also issued.

The suit of Navy blues issued to us in the Philippines and our American shoes were confiscated and stored in the warehouse.

On returning to camp, we were assigned to different barracks and different rooms. Warrant officers were in charge of the rooms of usually sixteen to eighteen men each. There was no compensation for the responsibility. The room leader had to set an example as a leader and a hard worker.

The food was not as plentiful in Japan as in the Philippines. Barley and a grain called "Coreon" were issued instead of rice. Some vegetables such as cabbage, potatoes, and beans were served at times but in such limited quantities that prisoners were always hungry.

The staple diet seemed to be barley and radish. Radish grew to be two to three feet long and three or four inches in diameter. Night soil was used as fertilizer.

A substance resembling peanut butter in appearance called "Mizo" was issued daily. It was made of bean meal and salt. This was our only source of salt. Each man would receive about one spoonful daily.

On the morning of the third day, we were assembled; lunch and mining equipment had been issued to each man. Lunch consisted of a ration of barley, a spoonful of Mizo,

-32-

and sometimes a slice of radish or a piece of ginger root. Japanese guards from the mine arrived and took charge of various details--I was in the "Jock O Soo Soo Caboo" group (worked on the nine hundred foot level)--and marched the Americans down the steep path to the valley below, into a tunnel, and one-half mile under the hill.

The mine had been in operation three hundred years and ancient jig jag steps led down seven hundred feet to the various levels where work on the copper veins was in operation.

The first detail to which I was assigned included a ride in a cable car down a nine hundred foot shaft and a walk through narrow, low, damp dripping tunnels or corridors to the area assigned.

The work was very tiring and dangerous. There was no ventilation and no lights. A carbide lamp was used. Water dripped constantly.

Some of the details consisted of loading small cars about one cubic yard in demensions with rocks from a chute and pushing the car to another chute and dumping the waste rocks down into a corridor being filled.

At noon work would be halted and lunch eaten. The barley would usually be sour and would cause stomach disorder. Work would be resumed when lunch was over and carbide lights had been refilled.

Work would continue through the afternoon and usually end at 6:00 p.m. Long hours would be spent at the shaft. It seems that Japanese and Koreans had priority and the prisoners would be sent out as space on the elevator was available.

When Americans arrived on the ground level, they would march to a corridor and wait until all had arrived before marching one half mile out of the copper mine and then up the hill to the camp.

The practice of carrying a load of wood up the hill to burn in the galley was also started. Decayed mine timbers and cross ties were brought out of the mine and used as fuel.

A bathtub had been installed in camp--a wooden box, water-tight, fourteen feet square and three feet deep. All three hundred men bathed in the same water. The

water was warmed by a small coal stove built in the side of the tub in a water-tight jacket.

An American major and hospital corpsman who had come to Japan on a detail three weeks before our detail arrived in camp. They had been at Shinagawa and talked with prisoners from various camps. They had also talked with some prisoners who had been captured recently; submarine crews and crews from Flying Fortresses shot down were among them.

The weather was cold. Sanitary arrangements were very poor. Work was hard and the hours were long. Food was poor as well as scarce. These conditions started breaking down the health of the Americans. Beriberi appeared; dysentery and hookworms were common. Pneumonia, colds, and sinus trouble were prevalent.

The Japanese guards were not as prone to hit prisoners as in the Philippines, but there were incidents of severe beatings.

The weather was cold until late in May, when the cherry trees started blooming and the dreary barren hills were more cheerful to look at, if one had been above ground to see them in daylight.

Cable cars suspended on wire cables spanned the mountain valleys like spider webs. The tailings or waste material from the mines were sent to distant points from the mine to be dumped. The finely crushed rocks contained a chemical that would kill plants we were told. The water from the streams was used for irrigation further down stream. The great pyramid-shaped piles of tailings added more gloom to the picture. The squeaking cars in need of lubrication and ducking and cable fair-leads continually running ever reminded us of the dreaded mine and the hard labor in confined quarters.

We were given a day off out of the mines every two weeks. On the day off, the toilets were cleaned out and wood would be brought from the mines. Decayed timbers as well as coal were burned in the galleys.

When the weather got warm, flies and maggots were pests. Fleas were very numerous and made sleeping very difficult.

Each man was issued a blank book and told to keep a record of his work and experiences in the mine. He was promised by the Japanese that if he died the diary would be sent home when the war was over.

Men were reluctant to write what they actually thought or did, for some believed that the Japanese intended to

collect the diaries, translate them, and find what the American attitude toward Japan was. Had the Japanese decided to fight to the end, prisoners would have been killed before the Allied Forces arrived if the diaries had contained their true attitude.

Some of the Americans wrote recipes in the diaries; others wrote names and addresses. The war ended as we wished it would, so the diaries were not collected.

On "Yasume" rest days, in addition to cleaning camp, getting wood, and clearing the drainage ditches, we were required to clean and repair equipment. Cigarettes (three a day for men who had worked) were issued on "Yasume" day, as was toilet paper. Toilet paper was issued by sheets eight inches by ten inches. Sheets were counted carefully. Each man usually carried his supply in his pocket. Some rolled tobacco in it for cigarettes when tobacco was available.

The strenuous labor and poor food soon weakened the strongest men, and so many men were in a state of collapse daily that a night and day shift was started.

My legs swelled from beriberi, and a severe attack of dysentary weakened me to such an extent that I was put on a detail called "Centa Hara". It was supposed to be light duty for sick men. The duty was above ground and consisted of loading waste mud after the rocks had been crushed and the ore removed. The work was too much for sick men, but I managed to last until August.

On July 2, 1944, we were lined up for "tinko" muster at 6:00 a.m. when a blast sounded at the mine. The concussion was so great that some of the walls of our camp were forced out of line a foot. The dynamite shed had exploded and several houses were flattened. There was no work for us that day!

On August 22, we were told to bring all tools from the mine. The next day we were given our American shoes, Navy blues, and paid all the money owed to us from the mine. Privates were paid ten sen. Corporals to sergeant and petty officers to chief petty officers were paid fifteen sen. Warrant officers were paid twenty-five sen a day for work. Sick men and men who worked in camp were not paid. Money was useless. There was nothing to buy.

We were ordered to pack our clothing and prepare to leave the next day. The Americans were divided into three groups. One hundred and fifty went to Ashio, eighty went to a dam site west of Tokyo, and the remainder stayed at Moto Yama.

-35-

Chinese, Dutch, Javanese, and Americans from other areas were sent to replace us.

It is believed that the mixing of nationalities was to prevent organized resistance should the Allies attack Japan.

Ashio, my new camp, was located in a valley. A local proverb, "A frog in the well sees no seas," described the area. Steep mountain walls on all sides keep the sunlight out of camp at all times except at noon. The camp was located across a small stream from the mine and main town.

The work at Ashio was similar to that at Moto Yama. The change of environment was pleasing, however.

We met Americans at Ashio for the first time who had had communication with America since the war commenced. Some of them gave eyewitness accounts of Pearl Harbor. Some had flown missions over Europe. Others had been shot down over the Solomons. Some had been taken from the water when their submarines sank. The Americans captured more recently were not as hardened as the ones taken in the Philippines and were willing to talk.

The most interesting subject was America--that fabulous land beyond the Pacific.

Many questions were asked, such as: "What are new cars like?" "What are new movies like?" "What are new ships like?" "What are new arms, armament, planes, or tactics like?" "What is the news about the war as well as things in America?" "When do the people in America think the war will be over?" was a question always asked by the prisoners from the Philippines.

There were thirteen officers at Ashio. Three days after our arrival they were transferred to another camp. A Dutch Major captured in Java was in charge of the camp; his assistant was an Australian Flight Officer. About one-fourth of the camp was Javanese, and Javanese Dutch, some British merchantmen, and some Americans captured at Guam. About one-fifth of the Americans were from the New Mexico National Guard and were of Mexican or Spanish descent. One Chinese merchant seaman who spoke very little English was there, but he was skilled at translating the Japanese newspaper. Ching Lee, the Chinese seaman, worked in the Japanese quarters, would take the Japanese newspapers often before the Japanese officers saw them, and get a summary of the contents before returning the paper. The camp kept informed on the news in this manner. Ashio had about three hundred prisoners.

English, Spanish, Dutch, Javanese, Chinese, and Japanese was spoken in camp.

In addition to the copper mine, there was a copper smelter at Ashio. Copper and brass were brought to the smelter by train. Copper and brass metal had been collected and sent to Japan from all of the empire that the Army had subjugated. Trinkets, works of art, household utensils, coins, temple bells, watch and clock works, belt buckles, collar devices, and insigna were melted and cast into pigs. The prisoners who worked in the foundry usually managed to steal bowls, bells, and small jewel boxes.

When the camp was searched, the bowls were confiscated. Japanese officers finally allowed sections to keep some of the large cast brass bowls to bring food to the barracks in.

The weather started turning cold in late September. The grass that grew on the top of the almost vertical mountain across the stream from the camp started turning brown as the frost line crept downhill. A dismal chill seemed to follow the camp.

The food at Ashio was bad as well as scarce. Barley and radish soup was served. A small amount of greens and hot water for breakfast was the usual fare.

Salt was scarce in Japan. Men who had anything to trade would exchange it with the Koreans in the mine for salt. They seemed to have considerable difficulty in getting salt also. All bartering was forbidden, naturally, but it was carried out secretly anyway. The Japanese were aware of the fact that salt would cause the men to drink more water, and water would cause edema or swelling of the limbs if drank in large quantities while on the low protein diet.

In November the Japanese army started sending some very poor sickly horses to the butcher shop at Ashio. On butchering days (about twice monthly), the cart detail would pull the two wheeled cart to the butcher shop and get a burlap bag full of horse bones and sometimes a keg of horse blood. The bones would be free of meat and would be brought into camp and boiled in a barrel, and the broth would be issued to the men by sections. The bones would be divided and sent to different sections and would be distributed by this method.

The Japanese butcher was very good to the prisoners. He often had a battered, dented, rusty, wash basin with a small quantity of gravy made from horse blood on an open fire and would give the cart-pulling men a portion. Americans would reciprocate by giving him a cigarette or a puff off of one they were smoking, if they had any.

Cigarettes were very scarce in Japan. Men would beg the dirty, sickly-looking Koreans for a puff off of their

-37-

small pipes. They would smoke after anyone. There was no such thing as a discarded cigarette butt.

All men at meal time would place their containers on the line of tables that stood in the center of the barracks. The man rationing out the food would fill a small bowl with barley from the wooden pail and dump one full bowlful in each man's food container. When each man had received a bowlful, if there was any barley left, a spoonful would be added to each man's container until the remainder was expended. If the bucket did not have a bowl of barley for each man and the last container was empty when all barley was given out, the man would take a spoonful from each man's container until the bowl was full minus one spoonful. Bones and objects that could not be measured would be divided into even units or as near equal as possible. A man would turn his back to the table and the man rationing the food would hold the bone over a container and say: "This one?" The man awarding the morsels would say: "Yes" or "No". If he said "yes", the morsel would be placed in that container. If he said "no", the morsel would be held over another plate and so on until all were given out. Hot water, soup, and any liquid would be measured and rationed out by a dipper made from a tin can. A handle made of wood or bamboo would be secured to the can by a nail or a piece of wire.

When the work detail would arrive at the work project, the Japanese would line them up facing Tokyo. At 8:00 a.m., Japanese would remove their hats, say a prayer of thanks, and pledge their loyalty to the emperor and bow to the emperor and the sun.

The work at Ashio was of the same type as at Moto Yama. I was assigned to a section where the tailings came out of a chute. Cable cars coming downhill on a cable would complete a circle around the round house, detach from the main cable, and roll on an overhead track. Prisoners would seize the car, push it to the chute, allow it to fill, and push it around the house to the main line, and catch another car. The work was very strenuous and continuous. Three men would be assigned to each of the stations No. 1 and No. 2. The shifts were eight hours and the cars came in at one minute intervals. Tired men with swollen hands and feet labored hopelessly for long hours.

Dysentery, beriberi, respiratory ailments, and hookworms seemed to prey on all the Americans. The food lacked the nourishment and body-building properties. Large boils would appear on the men and become infected. Bodies became so thin that the bones were almost exposed.

As autumn passed, the days grew shorter, the nights longer and colder. The work was divided into three shifts

of eight hours each. One shift went to work at 7:30 a.m. and worked until 4:00 p.m. Evening shifts went to work at 4:00 p.m. and stayed until midnight. The morning shifts were from midnight until 8:00 a.m.

Sleeping conditions were bad. There was no heat in the barracks and the ground was damp. The platforms for sleeping were long and unbroken. A draft swept through the barracks which were one hundred seventy feet long by twenty-eight feet wide. More men became ill; many were becoming paralyzed in their legs. Three died and one was killed in the mines.

The funerals were gruesome at Ashio. The body would be placed in the brig. A Japanese carpenter would make a coffin from one half inch pine boards and the body would be put in the coffin. At 4:00 p.m., men returning from work would place the coffin on a cart. Four men would pull the cart to the crematory. Wood would be placed in the furnace and the coffin shoved in the fire. Two men would return the next day with a clay urn, and under the direction of a Shinto priest, they would gather some ashes from the furnace. Often the bodies weren't consumed entirely and the remaining bones would be thrown into the yard. The Shinto priest slapped two men several times while they were gathering ashes of one of their friends with chop sticks. When a sufficient amount had been gathered, the men would carry the urn to the shrine and deposit it to await the end of the war.

The grain we were fed was hard to digest. The Americans requested that bread be made. The Japanese sent some of the coreon to a mill and had it ground. The meal resembled whole wheat flour, was mixed with water to a sticky dough, and was shaped in mounds about the size of a baseball. The bottom of the mound-shaped loaf would have a square opening to admit steam. The loaves would be placed in a square box that had a lattice bottom. Five or six of the square boxes, one loaf deep, would be stacked over a barrel of boiling water. The steam would pass through the lattice and steam the bread. A flat board top would confine the heat. The top layer would be placed at the bottom in succession until all had been next to the barrel. After about an hour of steaming, the pun was done.

It was chocolate color, the texture of liver, and was so heavy and soggy, it would sink instantly. It resembled a dumpling more than bread. There was no salt nor rising agent added and the bread was tasteless and hard to digest. A rectangular solid shaped loaf was substituted for the mound-shaped one; both were the same size. A loaf was considered a ration and supper usually consisted of a loaf of pun (bread) and some greens. Grasshopper powder (dried grasshoppers)

was also served. The powder resembled fertilizer and smelled and tasted like a wet dog smells. It seemed to contain proteins, however. Dried fish heads, fins, and other waste by-products of the fish canneries were served at times. A small amount of fish usually in a bad state of preservation was also served.

At one time about forty boxes of shark heads and intestines were sent to the camp. The sharks' stomachs were full of parrot fish in various states of digestion, and the bones and contents of the parrot fish's stomachs were in turn in various states. When the intestines were boiled the mass was very much like mud and had a very strong odor of ammonia; it smelled like a horse stable. No stomach could retain it, and on the way back up the odor and taste was disgusting indeed.

The shark's heads were edible and were carefully rationed. Some of them were boiled three or four times to prevent spoiling.

In November, about three tons of sweet potato vines were sent in camp. Frost was killing all non-frost-proof plants, and the generous supply was given to us. All sick men and men on night duty were put to work sorting the vines and cutting them into pieces three or four inches long and sacking them. Leaves were stripped off, rolled in toilet paper, and smoked sometimes. Every root that could be found was eaten raw. The roots of potato vines as well as vines are sweet if chewed without cooking them. The vines would be boiled in water and served; they were hard as straw when dry. Most of the vines were stored while wet and were covered with mildew.

Beriberi, scurvy, dysentery, and other ailments due to malnutrition were disabling so many men that only seventy could be used on the heavy labor at one time. Men tried to get light duty. No one could be blamed for feigning illness--after all, we were being forced to labor on a ration that no American in America would eat and to labor for a cause contrary to the one we fought for.

Dysentery and beriberi finally weakened me to the stage that I could not stand the heavy labor. I was eventually assigned to light labor, such as cleaning the barracks and grounds, cutting wood, working on the road, mending shoes, and pulling the heavy two wheel cart with three to ten other men. The cart detail would haul lumber, grain, coal, food, or anything to be trucked. A motor truck could not come to the camp; narrow roads and steep cobblestone hills prevented it.

The cart detail was a heavy, hard job. All men had to exert effort when climbing the hill with a load on the cart. A straw rope would be attached to the cart for each man in the detail. The guard would sometimes ride.

The advantages of the cart detail were the opportunities to steal food, especially grain. To steal from the Japanese was considered honorable and the proper thing to do at any time the opportunity presented itself. To steal from the Americans was frowned upon by all, and yet a few would steal. Americans dealt with the stealing among themselves by having the biggest man in camp take a service belt, and while the required number of men held the culprit in position, give him a beating that made up for all of the ones he needed and did not receive at home and in school.

Anyone caught stealing from the Japanese was beaten unmercifully and forced to stand all day and until late at night at attention.

The work at camp was almost at a stand still. Several cartloads of Chinese cabbage were sent in camp, and everyone was stealing and eating them raw. A Javanese was caught eating a cabbage and was forced to hold it in outstretched hands in front of the guard house all day. When his arms would waver, a guard would slap him several times and knock his arms back into position. When a detail of prisoners would pass between the guard house and the man with the cabbage in his hands, he would bite, chew, and swallow three or four mouthfuls of the cabbage--hunger knows no law--by sunset the cabbage was reduced to the size of an orange--but what a way to eat! The guards changed and failed to notice the reduced size of the cabbage. Several foolish attempts were made by the Japanese to save the cabbage. Some were hung on nets to dry; some were cut and put in barrels without salt to make kraut; some were buried upside down in the ground.

When food was issued to the Americans, no more stealing was permitted. Had we received all of the food that the Japanese Army or the mining company sent into camp, we would have fared better.

When apples, persimmons, or Japanese oranges were sent in camp, the guards would delay the issuing of them until a "Yasume" day. The guards would swipe them, and when they were issued, sometimes a small apple would have to be divided among three men. Fruit very seldom was available and was held until rotten by the guards in many instances.

By the end of November, 1944, so many men were unfit for work that an investigation was made and all who were disabled were sent to Shinagawa at Tokyo.

All men declared unfit took their gear to the yard and laid it out for inspection. The guards confiscated nearly everything the men had. Some men had on two pairs of trousers, but they were compelled to remove and surrender one pair.

We were called at 3:00 a.m. the next day. After breakfast the ones who could not walk were hauled in the cart to the highway and two charcoal-burning busses were waiting. The trip to Tokyo was pleasant, if overcrowded. The change of scenery, the barren mining camp to the beautiful level land with winter crops growing, was pleasant.

None of the windows in Tokyo had any merchandise in sight. People walked about with no apparent destination.

We arrived at Shinagawa at sunset, were checked by the Japanese guards at the gate, all of our possessions were searched, and names and numbers of prisoners were taken. Prisoners were designated by numbers in Japan. Every camp would assign a different number.

Shinagawa was the main hospital for prisoners of Tokyo and the adjoining areas. All buildings were plain, unpainted, low, unfloored structures. The buildings were close together; the entire area covered about two acres and was surrounded by a pine board fence ten feet high with barbed wire at the top. One building was used for the guards, one was used for the galley and storeroom, and the other buildings were barracks with the same sleeping arrangements as regular work camps.

The bathing facilities were the worst I encountered in Japan. The bathtub was a wooden box four by seven feet, three feet deep, and had a tin bottom in it. Three hundred prisoners would bath in the same water. A fire would be built under the tub with what scrap wood, coal, paper, or anything that could be used as fuel.

The men would wet their bodies, soap would be applied, rinse off, then get in the tub and scour. As more and more men bathed, the water became more contaminated. Men with smelly open sores, men with scabies, tuberculosis, dysentery, and other diseases bathed in the same water. Another trough of water the same size as the first stood in the bathhouse. It was usually frozen over during December, January, and

-42-

February. Some men would break the ice and pour the cold water over their bodies to rinse off the foul smelling, sticky water of the tub. The ice water would have a stunning effect on the skin, and the cold could not be felt temporarily. Usually a warm sensation would follow.

Prisoners from many different camps were sent to Shinagawa, usually to die. Shinagawa, called "Hell Hospital", was not a work camp. The only labor performed was the camp maintenance, such as cleaning the latrines, working the gardens (every foot of available land was used to grow food), taking care of the Japanese guards' quarters, preparing their bath for them daily, and maintaining the muddy paths in the camp.

My first night at Shinagawa was one to be remembered. When we had been searched by the guards, assigned to barracks, and had eaten our supper of barley and a small piece of fish, an American doctor who had come to China on the same transport with me visited us. He inquired about the news and put out the news he had.

B-29s had been raiding Tokyo. We would see them soon, he assured us.

Men from other camps gave accounts of their experiences and some knew our shipmates and friends from the Philippines.

The weather at Tokyo was not as cold as it was at Ashio in the mountains. A slow drizzling rain started after dark. Leaden clouds hung low and added their gloom to the camp.

Tenkyo (muster) was held at 7:00 p.m., and as was the custom in other camps, it was very strict. All prisoners must kneel down and bow to the guards as they approach. Quiet must be maintained and very rigid discipline carried out. The American Honcho (sargeant) would call out in Japanese the commands to the men in his room, report in Japanese to the Japanese, and require the prisoners to count off in Japanese--giving a full report. When the ceremony was over, all prisoners went to bed and were soon asleep.

About 10:00 p.m. air raid sirens moaned in Tokyo. All the surrounding stations sounded air raid. Every light was put out. All prisoners were called, marched out of the buildings, and put in trenches about three feet wide and five feet deep. They were ordered to pull a blanket over their heads and remain quiet.

Faint hum of motors could be heard far to the south. Peeping from beneath the blanket I could see search light

batteries probing the overcast sky.

Antiaircraft guns fired and flashes of light followed later by faint reports could be heard. Red fires glowed to the south. A flight of B-29s had come over and bombed a target and were returning to their base. This was the first strike back at Japan I had witnessed since the fall of Corregidor. When all clear sounded, we returned to the barracks--wet but very happy.

Two days later B-29s made a daylight raid. We were ordered to the trenches as before, but most men managed to get a look at the wonderful air ships. The sky was clear and blue. The planes flying at 35,000 feet left a long vapor trail flowing behind from over the horizon from which they came. Antiaircraft guns fired without effect. White puffs of smoke from the exploding antiaircraft shells marked their position and range.

Japanese zero fighters whinned and zoomed as they tried to reach the thin-aired altitude at which the B-29s flew. Tiny, glittering, silvery crosses could be seen at the forward end of the vapor trails as the B-29s flew through the sky over Tokyo.

Air raids became daily occurrences. Night raids became more frequent.

Three hundred or four hundred planes raided Tokyo one cold night in January. Thousands of tons of incendiary bombs were dropped on the target. Fires burned unchecked. Smoke and ashes rose into the air. The practice of requiring prisoners to go to the trenches was discontinued. All men were required to go to their barracks and stay out of sight. Smoking was forbidden.

Shinagawa had large quantities of American medicine sent by the Red Cross, but the Japanese maintained custody of it, and the American doctors were required to appeal to the Japanese for medicine for the men as needed. A certain amount of Japanese medicine was required to be given. Men with advanced stages of malnutrition were given an injection of what looked like blood broth in the thigh daily. Several men would be shot with the same needle without sterilizing it. A spoonful of dried blood was given daily. Some tablets containing iron and some sulfa drugs were issued. Carbasome tablets were given to dysentery patients.

Blood was drawn from a vein in the arm and injected into the thigh by the Japanese doctor.

Dysentary patients would receive ten days treatment of carbosone, would report to the Japanese doctor, remove their clothing, and lay on a board on their back while he examined their lower intestine with a cystoscope. The weather was below freezing on the morning I was examined. The room was unheated. The Japanese doctor cuffed some patients soundly. A blast of cold air was injected by an apparatus similar to a bicycle pump. The cold air caused cramp.

I was told by men who worked on the hospital staff that bile had been taken from the gall bladder of dead tuberculosis patients and injected into live patients in experiments. I was also told that a dead American's intestines were stretched out and measured.

Dead prisoners were taken from the camp by a Japanese undertaker who would ride a bicycle into camp and take the body out on a trailer behind the bicycle. The undertaker would bring a cubic box thirty-eight inches by thirty-eight inches by thirty-eight inches and a small box twelve inches by twelve inches by twelve inches to return the ashes in. Tall bodies had to be broken to get them in the small box. The ashes of the dead were stored in one end of the barracks.

Food was scarce at Shinagawa. The Japanese seemed to think that sick men didn't need much food and reduced the rations in accordance. Bread was served at Shinagao -- a small loaf about the size of two buns. It was made of barley meal, was baked in Tokyo, and was delivered to the hospital. Each man would receive a loaf at each meal but would not receive any grain. A typical meal was a loaf of bread and a bowl of thin radish broth. A small amount of beans was served and a small amount of fish.

Fourteen pneumonia patients were kept in a room. Having had experience in the hospital corps, I was assigned to help care for them. There were no beds, only blankets on the straw mats. The only heat in the room was a charcoal bucket which was permitted from 5:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. An American electrician made a small heating unit that would heat water, and with a tea kettle, water was heated for the sick men, put in their canteens, and put next to their bodies. The only bed pan was a half of a five gallon can, cut into lengthwise, that would slide into a wooden box slightly larger. Three or four patients would have to use the pan before emptying it. Seriously ill patients would have to be lifted up to sit on the box. The weather was cold and a bed bath was seldom given. The filth and smell of the place was difficult to imagine, and yet most of the patients recovered and returned home.

I was assigned to the job of Japanese bath tobon (bath keeper). My job was to heat the bath water daily for the guards. I would have to cut the wood to fire the furnace, fill the tub, and start the fire about 10:00 a.m. to have the bath ready by 3:00 p.m. This was considered a very good job. I could heat canteens of water for the sick men, could heat water to drink for myself, and could cook any food that could be stolen from the Japanese. All heating and cooking was forbidden by the Japanese, but one could usually do it without getting caught.

In January 1945, a B-29 pilot was brought in camp. He was in very bad physical condition from starvation in solitary confinement. He was twenty-six years old (looked to be fifty) and was from Oregon. He had been flying from an airport in China and was shot down over Naigisaki in November, 1944. He thought the war would end in eighteen months to two years.

When shot down the pilot's bombardier had been beaten to death by a mob. The flyer had had his clothing torn off and a humiliating Japanese kimono put on him and had been taken through town on a pole and beaten unmercifully.

The pilot had been questioned many times about his ship and base from which he was flying. From the B-29 pilot, we got information about the size and capacity of the B-29.

His valuables--ring, watch, and bible had been taken, but they were returned to him when he left the place of confinement for Shinagawa.

Food improved slightly. Some Red Cross supplies, including food, were received and issued to prisoners.

The weather was bad during December, January, February, and part of March. Two snows fell and remained on the ground three or four days. Late in March, the weather started improving--trees were beginning to bud and the miserable winter was past.

Synchronized motors rumbled empty bombers along Tokyo's skyway of battle, their bombs having exploded on the earth far below rendering cities to ruins. They headed toward distant bases leaving smoking fires and the prisoners longing for the day that they could accompany the bombers in their homeward flight.

Air raids were more frequent. During February, 1945, fighter planes appeared overhead, carrier-borne fighters

-46-

darted through the sky in a very defiant manner. Zero fighters were no match for them.

During the heavy raids on Tokyo, I saw only three B-29s shot down. One came over camp one day badly damaged. The pilot glided it to sea before bailing out.

The Americans were officially notified of President Roosevelt's death. Officers were required to write an article stating what effect Roosevelt's death would have on the war in their opinions. The opinions expressed were that his death would not alter the course of the war at all.

By the end of March the boils on my head had healed, the swelling of feet and hands had reduced, and the dysentery was under control.

On 21 April, five prisoners were to be transferred back to Ashio. We left camp at 7:00 a.m., marched to Shinagawa Station, and boarded a train. A great crowd of refugees was in the station. Vast suburban areas of Tokyo had been burned out, rendering many homeless. Men, women, and children slept on the concrete floor. The usually clean station was cluttered with rubbish and smelled very strongly of excreta. Sullen Japanese, stupid from lack of sleep, moved slowly at the guard's orders. We most surely could not have gone through the crowd without the guards. On the train, we were crowded into a small area with the guards near by. Hundreds of Japanese crowded into the train. Men, women, and children thrust their belongings through the windows of the coaches and climbed through the windows; seats, aisles, and doorways were packed with refugees leaving the world's largest cities, seeking refuge in the country and in smaller towns. They were calm and took their misadventure as part of their hard lives. Some of them even ventured to smile at us.

The train could not carry all refugees seeking passage. Many were left behind. When the train left the station, the ruin wrought by the bombers began to be noticed. Vast areas formerly factories, shops, and homes lay in charred ruins; skeletons of metal marked the location of machine shops, arsenals, assembly plants, garages, and hangars. Guards forbade us to look, but we managed to see it anyway.

The refugees had what possessions they could carry with them. Many of them had food.

An aged Japanese woman near us opened her lunch, offered the guard some of it, and tried to give us some of the barley

balls with a few black beans cooked in it. The guard would not permit it.

Upon arrival at the mining camp, we were again searched and returned to the barracks. All of the men at the camp were very eager to hear an account of our experiences and of the news and the damage to Tokyo.

The news we had was that a hundred Russian divisions were poised on the German border waiting for the spring thaw to commence the greatest drive of all times. Germany had been bombed thoroughly and fighting on all sides was being intensified. An estimate of not more than one month would be required to finish the war in Europe. Tanks and certain types of guns and planes were no longer being made in the United States, as enough had been built to conclude the war.

With the fall of Germany, Japan would receive all attention needed. History's greatest war machine would be caused to bear on Japan. An estimate of one month to whip Germany and that August 5 would see Japan prostrate was not far wrong in the news resume.

The following day, we were taken before the Japanese doctor and inspected and assigned to work. I was very thin and was assigned to camp detail--pulling the cart and sewing shoes. The shoes worn by the Americans in the mines were made of cloth and rubber similar to American tennis shoes. They were easily torn and had to be sewed by hand.

Gardens in camp were started. A Japanese gardener nicknamed "Tumble Bug" was in charge of the gardening. "Tumble Bug" was an excellent gardener and an industrious worker. Prisoners preferred "Tumble Bug's" detail with all of its stench to the mines or details with the vicious guards. With gentle hands the old gardener would plant the seed, give the young plants a generous helping of liquid excreta, and laborously weave little nets beneath pumpkins to help the vines support the fruit as it increased in size and dangled from the eaves of the buildings. His specialty seemed to be radish.

A disabled prisoner was working with "Tumble" one day. They were carrying liquid fertilizer from the latrine. The tall American was in front, had one end of the pole on his shoulder, "Tumble Bug" had the other end on his shoulder, when "Tumble" fell down and the keg full of fertilizer poured over him. He wiped the fertilizer from his face, went to the spigot, washed his clothing and body, smoked his caseri (pipe), and went to work, but he smelled unlike a rose.

A farm was started about six kilometers from the camp. When day of rest from the mine was given, all well men as well as sick who could go were required to go to the farm and work, clearing the ground and preparing it for planting. The hill was very steep and rain washed the soil away rapidly, but the farm continued anyway. The weather was warm in May, and a day on the farm was a pleasure compared to the mine. Lunch of barley was taken with us and eaten in the plot. On two occasions we were permitted to swim in a clear mountain stream that flowed by.

A hen was brought in camp, and the Japanese sergeant announced that chickens were to be raised. The hen died from eating maggots on the fourth day. The sergeant took one-third of the hen; the remainder was given to the fifteen sick men who were down with beriberi.

Three goats were brought in camp, and an announcement that goats were to be raised was made. One of the goats was a very young kid--it died, was skinned, quartered, and boiled in the soup. There was hardly enough goat meat to even flavor it.

Two pigs were brought in, but food was difficult to get, and the pigs had to be fed on weeds. Four white rabbits were brought in. Their delicate stomachs could not digest the coarse weeds. All rabbits died or were killed by rats within a week. All were eaten by the guards or found their way unnoticed into the soup.

Ten prisoners with two Japanese guards were sent out every third day with the cart and burlap bags to gather edible weeds for the camp. The weed-gathering detail was a pleasant diversion from the smelly camp.

The scenery in the country away from the barren mine was beautiful. Flowers bloomed in summer and plants were arranged in beautiful array.

Some of the Red Cross medicine had been sent to the labor camps. The Japanese rationed it carefully and would insist on giving Japanese medicine also. A tablet made from the polishings of rice was given. It was for beriberi, but it was a better food than medicine.

A Japanese interpreter nicknamed "The Quack" was also the doctor. He was present at all sick calls and would prescribe the treatment. Patients were burned for all ailments. I had beriberi. The "Quack" put ink dots in the form on a cross on my stomach, between, and outside of the legs in a symmetrical pattern. Pieces of punk

were placed on the dots and lighted. The punk would blister the area. This was his method of treating beriberi. Some prisoners had rows of dots burned on their legs; others were burned on the hands, arms, and back.

Sixteen Japanese guards were sent to Ashio. All spoke English and all were polite. Americans were taken to headquarters and questioned daily. Questions were usually as follows: "What is your name?" "Where were you born?" "Are you married?" "How many children?" "Is it true that you have bread in your house three times a day in America?" "What do you think of the Japanese people?" It is believed that the questioning was to get an idea of the prisoner's attitude toward Japan and to learn, if possible, what was to be expected when the war was over as far as Americans were concerned.

The isolated town of Ashio was not bombed. When air raid sounded in the coastal cities, it also sounded there. Air raid alert was on almost constantly during July.

August brought more frequent air raid warnings. Prisoners were required to go inside when a three blast warning was sounded. A flight of bombers passed over camp one night. Two flew over one morning. Targets were being eliminated and Ashio must be on the list--we knew and hoped.

The camp was searched one day, and a can of meat that a man had hoarded since the last Red Cross food had been issued was found. The man was accused of stealing the food from the Japanese warehouse, was given a thorough beating, and was forced to stand at attention in front of the guard house from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. daily for two weeks. He was given two meals a day and forced to sleep in the brig. Upon completion of his sentence, he was given two weeks rest in camp as the Japanese Camp Commander's guest.

Dutch and Javanese were transferred to a camp six kilometers north of our camp. This move made a better arrangement in camp. The Americans co-operated better, and with the Dutch and Javanese out of the galley, food was prepared better and cleaner.

A rumor was brought in about a big bomb being dropped on a city in the south. Many people had been killed, according to the report.

On August 15, 1945, all work was halted without any explanation. Prisoners were marched in from the mine. A

Japanese Army truck was sent to the farm to bring the prisoners back to camp. Even the heavy cart was hauled

in the truck. Gates to the camp were shut and all Japanese guards were excited. Some were crying.

Excitement among the Americans was high also. Speculation as to what was wrong varied. One detail was informed by the Korean guard that Washington and Tokyo were talking.

The American in charge of the galley requested that food be issued for lunches in the mine next day. He was told to wait. Darkness came--lights remained on.

Tenkyo was held. No one was slapped. Dawn came, and Tenkyo was politely held. After breakfast, the American officer in charge of the camp requested that a working party be sent to the hill for fire wood to be burned in the galley.

I took advantage of the lull and repaired the wooden tubs, buckets, and stirring sticks for the galley. On the second day, we were assembled and told that in the future we need not salute Japanese soldiers, only officers were to be saluted. Even Japanese officers weren't saluted henceforth.

The American who had been punished for having the can of meat in his possession asked the Japanese officer to return the can of meat. He stated that he had taken the unjust punishment and had not received the meat which belonged to him.

The officer informed him that someone had broken into his office and taken the meat along with his Saki. He apologized to the American and asked what he could give him in return for the meat.

The American said he wished to bake a cake and needed flour, sugar, eggs, shortening, and milk. The Japanese officer returned the next day with two cans of asparagus, a can of salmon, some barley flour, and some raw sugar. The next day, he got three eggs. On the third day, a quart can of milk was brought in. The American made the cake as planned, baked it in the coals, put toothpaste on it for icing, and ate it. Food was very scarce; there were no cows to be seen in the locality. On inquiring as to the source of the milk, a Japanese guard said in pidgin English "Woman".

We were called together and told not to do anything to excite the guards, to remain in camp, and to be quiet. The Camp Commander made a speech telling of the difficulties he had met in getting food for the camp. He said that the

climate was bad, that the work was hard, that people spoke badly to us, and that he had done what he could to make conditions better.

Instructions were received from MacArthur's headquarters not to molest the guards nor civilians. We were told that the War Crimes Commission would punish the guards. We were also instructed to paint P.O.W. on top of our barracks so that planes could identify the camp.

Fighter planes came to our camp and flew low. A Coronet Magazine, a pack of cigarettes, a box of matches, and two packs of mint life savers candy was dropped. Fighter planes came daily and dropped articles. Cases of cigarettes, chewing gun, and clothing and toilet articles were dropped.

The three goats and two pigs were butchered and cooked in a stew.

Church was held for the first time in camp on Sunday; there was no chaplain, but the Australian Flight Officer preached a stirring sermon.

On 30 August, a B-29 came over, circled, and made a practice run. It made another run, opened bombays and dropped three or four tons of food. None of the parachutes opened and the food smashed into the side of the mountain. Some of the cans were badly damaged. Very little of it was wasted.

We gathered the food, carried it to the camp, and stored it. Candy, cigarettes, chewing gun, and toilet articles were issued immediately. Food requiring cooking was cooked and a very good stew was prepared for supper. Peas, pears, corn beef, carrots, beans, peaches, sugar, and even lemon powder found its way into the mixed stew.

A printed form was in the drop mentioning the fact that the Japanese government had surrendered. It said, "The Allied Governments will feed you. You will be evacuated as soon as possible. Don't eat too much. We will be back in three days."

Another drop was made the next day three kilometers south of our camp. It was intended for the camp north of us.

No more planes came, but we had plenty of food and everyone was getting rid of malnutrition ailments rapidly.

The Japanese not to be outdone entirely, sent fish vegetables and barley in camp. They also issued an extra ration of toilet paper, a raw silk towel, pondouche (Japanese drawers, a strip of cloth on a string that ties around

-52-

the waist), and some hair tobacco, and cigarettes. The Japanese guards would curry our favor and say that they thought we were going to America tomorrow.

Americans requested that some of their favorite bosses in the mine, mostly Koreans, be sent in camp. "Tumble Bug" was also invited. At 8:00 the next day the Koreans invited were in front of Japanese headquarters, lined up, and appearing very nervous. When the word was received, men from various details went out and motioned their former bosses to follow them. They did, but they had a look of suspicion and worry on their faces. The surprises that awaited the Orientals were almost too much for them. The work groups of Americans had prepared a party for their former masters. Cigarettes, chewing gum, candy, coffee with sugar, food, and clothing were given to them. The Americans would call out, "Hey Honcho" to the Koreans. They would reply, "Honcho Nai" (now I'm no boss, you're boss).

"Tumble Bug" was such a favorite compared with regular Japanese guards that everyone gave him something. All old clothing was discarded. "Tumble Bug" received enough clothing to last him through life, if he got home with all of it.

September came with the cool nights and pleasant days. We were not doing any work except camp maintenance. The food and rest had improved everyone considerably. Parties were held at night--singing, joking, and story-telling--no women.

Boards were nailed up two feet above the regular mat to get above the fleas. Magazines, newspapers (dated May 1945), and a book (Share Leave) had been dropped by the planes. Matters in camp were all that could be expected.

Pictures of new ships, planes, and methods of warfare were very interesting, but advertisements with the prices of food were very hard for even us Americans to believe.

September 3, we were instructed to be prepared to leave at 6:00 the next day. Everyone was busy preparing his keepsakes to take with him, exchanging names and addresses with friends, and making all final preparations to go. Lights remained on all night.

Reveille was unnecessary the next morning. At 3:00 a.m. everyone was up and about. Breakfast was served. We had K rations and rice with orange powder and plenty of sugar in it. Men in the galley continually called for men to come and get second helpings of the sweet rice.

When we finished eating, all bowls, tubs, and buckets were left on the table, and the guards were told to help

themselves. They fell to stuffing themselves, sensing some hungry days that lay ahead.

We assembled at 5:30 a.m. and were asked if anyone wanted to stay in Japan or if anyone had a family there. "No" was the reply.

An American flag and an English flag had been made from the parachutes. Everyone had some of the brightly colored silk. We took the guard's guns, and the Japanese Camp Commander and four of the guards were taken along to act as guides. We bade the guards good-bye and marched out of camp, leaving behind the stench, lice, fleas, bedbugs, maggots, hunger, hard work, and memories.

At the railroad station, we boarded a train on which the prisoners from the neighboring camp were on.

An American who had brought a large roll of the parachute silk decided it was too heavy to take home, saw a rose-cheeked Japanese girl in an office, opened the door and walked in to give her the silk. She misunderstood his intentions, jumped out of a low window, and fled.

We took a parting look at our former home. We observed the part of the yellow P.O.W. letters that bent over the peak of the barracks, but we were soon concerned with other men whom, although we were only a few miles apart, we had not seen in months.

The train left, and Ashio soon lay behind in the mountain canyon.

One of the most scenic trips I have ever taken was the trip from Ashio to Yohohama. The morning sun was starting to shine in the mountain valleys as we reached the low lands. Picturesque farms and homes with startled Japanese could be seen as we sped along. The Japanese had cause to be startled. Every window had a long piece of colorful silk hanging from the windows. Many of the prisoners, displeased at the treatment received at the hands of the Japanese at the mine, refused to give any clothing or discarded things to them and would toss things to Japanese along the railroad. Any Japanese girl who happened to be standing near the railroad track would receive a shower of chewing gum, cigarettes, matches, ragged britches, drawers, or other articles that could be used by them.

Thoughts of the past and trying to realize what was happening at present were almost too much for one to bear. What had happened at home? What did the future have to offer?

At all the small stations, the train would stop and Japanese would serve hot water for us. Everyone had soluble coffee, sugar, and bullion powder and would make a cup of soup or coffee. We ate K rations or candy, gave cigarettes to the Japanese who gave the hot water, and waved good-bye to the startled Japanese. Every train we met going north was loaded with Japanese soldiers going home from the front. Many of them had large bundles of loot taken in China and other places. They appeared sullen and resentful. None of them smiled or waved as we passed. One Japanese woman waved and held up her hands as if in surrender.

The train reached the suburban area of Tokyo about 11:00 a.m. In the burned out area, there were hundreds of little hovels made by propping burned tin together to form a dwelling shaped like a chicken coop. Miles on miles of burned out districts lay along the railroad. Japan had received payment in kind for the treacherous attack on Pearl Harbor.

The train arrived at Tokyo's Shinagawa Station. We were politely guided to another train that left as soon as all prisoners were aboard. One hour later the train was in Yokohama.

The American Army had not entered Tokyo at this time. Tanks, jeeps, and reconnaissance cars were at the edge of Tokyo, but the Army was not to enter until a few days later. Tokyo was apparently deserted. The people that remained behind were hidden in cellars and garrets.

Never before in the history of modern Japan had a conqueror set foot on their shores. Japan expected the conqueror to treat them as they had treated people in the countries overrun by their war machine.

When the train stopped at Yokohama, eight or ten American Army Nurses were lined up on each side of the steps to the coaches. Each had a box of candy and gave each prisoner a bar as he disembarked from the train.

The nurses had make up on. They smelled like the lovely flowers they resembled and reminded one of Angels from the golden halls--as a matter of fact, we were back in heaven.

We boarded Army trucks and were driven to the dock area, passed through the medical center, were examined by the American doctors, sprayed with D.D.T. to rid us of fleas and lice, given some clothing, and told to fill out a telegram to be sent home. Nationalities were separated. Ching Lee, the Chimaman, was separated from us, and we never saw him again.

-55-

As soon as we were finished with the medical examination, we were sent aboard a Dutch hospital ship. The ship had no provisions, and only a glass of soup and piece of bread was given us for supper. No one complained.

Next morning for breakfast, we had almost enough to eat. An American Navy tanker alongside watering the hospital ship supplied the remainder of the food needed for the Navy ex-prisoners. We were also given up-to-date news.

At 9:00 a.m. all Americans were ordered onto the docks, and Army and Navy personnel were separated. The Army went aboard an Army hospital ship. The Navy was transferred to the U.S.S. WATERMAN and taken to the U.S.S. OZARK where we were given more clothing and a place to sleep. We were called at 3:00 a.m., fed, put in an L.C.M., and sent to the Yokohama Airport. Hundreds of damaged Japanese planes lined the airport. The reports about the air battles were evident.

At 9:00 a.m. three C-54s were taxied to the field. We climbed aboard and the motors were revved up. The wished for wind was given and the skymasters lumbered down the runway, lifted from the ground, flew around Tokyo, over Fujiyama, over Yokohama Bay, and we had an opportunity to look at the task force in the Bay that was many times larger than the fleet before the war. All day long the skymaster rode the Asian skies and at sunset landed at Guam. Four years to the day, I had sailed westward to China. Today, I was homeward bound.

As the plane approached Guam, I heard an officer remark that he had stopped there four years before. When I looked, I recognized him as a doctor who had been a passenger on the transport HENDERSON. He informed me that a friend who had stopped at Guam on our way westward had died in camp only three weeks before the close of the war. B-29s lined the runways. Others took off on missions. Planes came and went like sea birds from a nesting ground.

At 9:00 a.m. the next day, we were again in the air, and at dark that day, we were at Kawapalieu in the Marshalls. At 3:00 a.m. the following day, we were off for Pearl Harbor. At 6:00 p.m., we landed at Pearl Harbor, remained overnight, and stayed until 7:00 p.m. the next day.

At 7:00 p.m., we took off and were within sight of California at 9:30 a.m.

The plane landed, and we were transferred to Oakland Hospital. The Red Cross asked us to send telegrams.

I flew to Memphis, Tennessee on September 13, was treated for beriberi, hookworm, and malnutrition, given

dental treatment, and sent home on ninety days leave.

The train reached Huntsville, Alabama at 3:00 a.m. A taxi took me home. Honeysuckle was in bloom and mocking birds were singing. The full moon was sinking low in the western sky as the taxi rolled up the driveway. Lights went on in all houses in the neighborhood. There was no more sleep that night. Everyone was anxious to hear about my experiences and many questions had to be answered.

I spent three years and four months as a prisoner.

I held the rank of Carpenter (Warrant Officer) when captured.

Prisoners received pay for the rate or rank held at time of capture. Prisoners were advanced in rate or rank to the equivalent rate or rank of their contemporaries.

The President sent a from letter to each of the repatriated prisoners. The letter addressed to me is quoted below:

The White House
Washington

14 December 1945

Dear Talmadge A. Smithey,

It gives me special pleasure to welcome you back to your native shores, and to express, on behalf of the people of the United States, the joy we feel at your deliverance from the hands of the enemy. It is a source of profound satisfaction that our efforts to accomplish your return have been successful.

You have fought valiantly and have suffered greatly. As your Commander in Chief, I take pride in your past achievements and express the thanks of a grateful Nation for your services in combat and your steadfastness while a prisoner of war.

May God grant you happiness and a successful future.

/s/ Harry Truman

Repatriated Naval P.O.W. have been given their choice of duty by the Navy.

I never complain about food nor taxes. Taxes appear high at times, but I will consider it a privilege to live the American way even though I have nothing left.

This is the story as I saw it. Three years and eight months have elapsed since I stepped forth from bondage. Many of the unpleasant instances have been forgotten. My health has improved considerably.

I sincerely hope that no others will have a similar experience. There was no fun, pleasure, or romance involved.