

'By The Grace of God...'



Americans on Death March

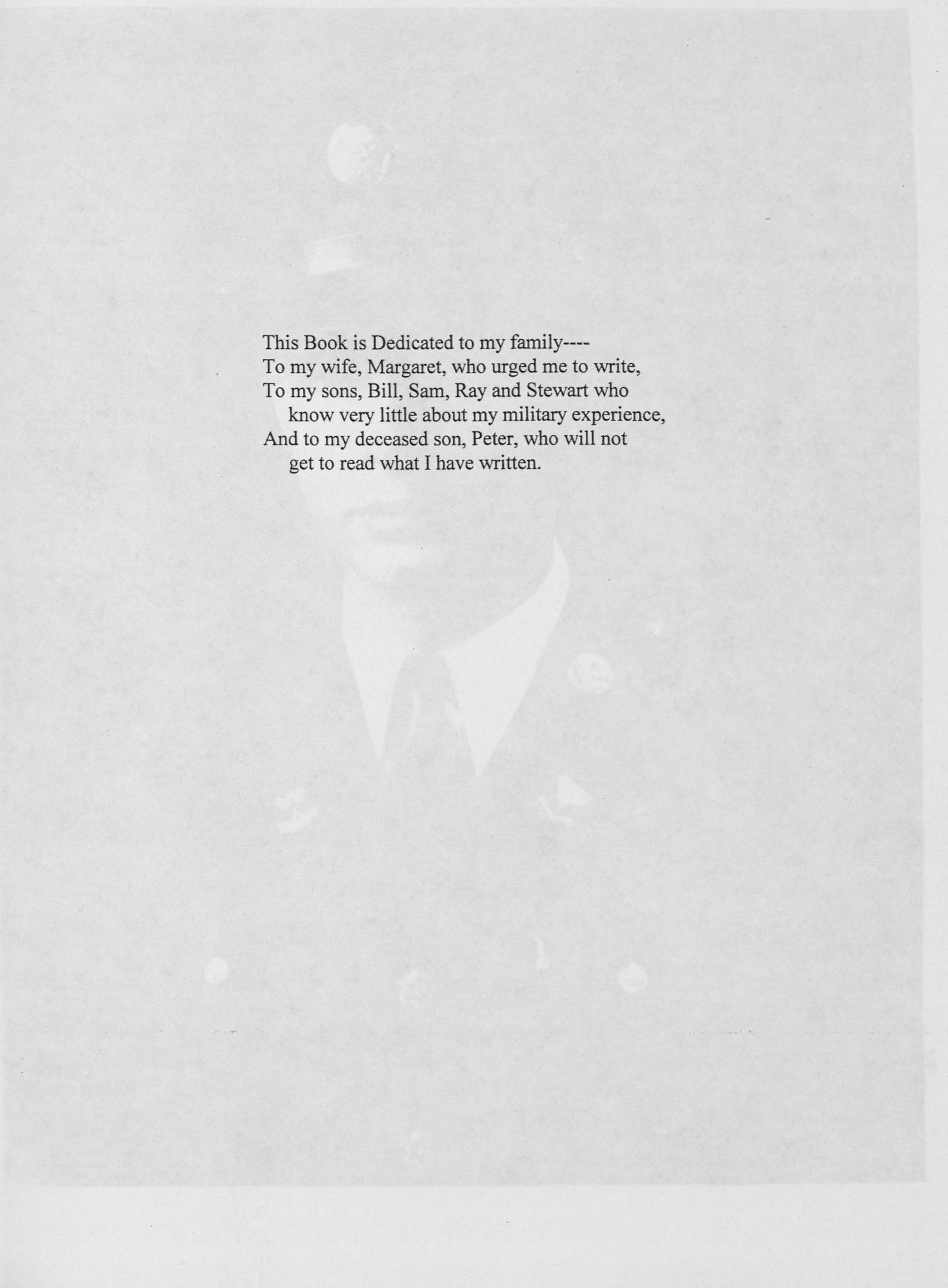
By
Erwin R. Johnson

This Book is Dedicated to my Family --
To my wife, Margaret, who urged me to write,
To my sons, Bill, Sam, Ray and Steven
And to my deceased son, Peter, who will
get to read what I have written.

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To my wife, Margaret, who urged me to write,
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And to my deceased son, Peter, who will not
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Erwin K. Johnson. 1412. Uwar. St N.O. La 1-1-41
48th materiel Squadron. Savannah. Georgia.
and in Philippines.

He was Track star and Captain at Warren Eastern
School's Track team in 1939.

He Graduated from the Army Air Corps
Technical School and Air College.
at Dallas. Texas.

Jun. 1941

19 YRS OLD.

Return to

Johnson
1412 Uwar St.
N.O. La

Written on the back of the original photograph by
my Father, John K. Johnson, Sr.

There was a war going on over in Europe. Hitler's German army had already conquered a couple of small countries and was bombing Great Britain. The United States was trying to stay out of the war but was also helping Great Britain by sending supplies and arms. I decided to join the Army Air Corps thinking that if the United States was drawn into the war I would be a pilot. Then, again, since, at present, I was in Trade School taking an Airplane Mechanic course, I could be an airplane mechanic in the service. How could I have been so wrong about my future in the Air Corps. It turned out that I was sent to the Philippine Islands and wound up as a Provisional Infantryman fighting with no food, no equipment and no infantry training.

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In the fall of 1939 I went to Delgado Technical School in New Orleans. I was geared to graduating as an Airplane Mechanic. This course also included Machine Shop and "hands on" an aircraft engine. I enjoyed this course so in the summer of 1940 I decided to leave school and join the Army Air Corps. I went down to the recruiting office because he had been in the National Guard and he figured he knew the ropes and could help me out. Also, make sure no one took advantage of me. He pointed out Sergeants, Master Sergeants, Lieutenants and Majors by their insignia. I think this recruiting office was in the Customs Building on Canal Street. I was given a physical and they said I was OK so I signed up. I was glad Eddie was with me - he gave me a lot of confidence. My enlistment date was September 17, 1940 and I was 18 years old. My parents also gave the OK for me to join.

A couple of days later the recruiters put me on a train with a bunch of other guys who had just signed up. We were sent up to Barksdale Field in Shreveport - actually, Bossier City, Louisiana. Here I was given a lot of shots and went through basic training. The drill Sergeant really put us through the paces and we learned to march. There were more shots. It was amazing - a couple of really big guys would be in line and when it came to be their turn to get a shot, they'd see the needle and pass out. They'd be given the shot then revived with a sniff of ammonia under their nose. I was put into the Second Materiel Squadron in the 35th Air Base Group and we lived in a permanent brick barracks on the base.

One day we were taken to a theatre and were shown a movie on venereal diseases. This was to try to discourage anyone from going to a house of prostitution and if they did, to show them what they should do to keep from getting a disease (Syphilis or Gonorrhea). If they did have sexual intercourse, what to do afterwards. The pictures didn't hold anything back. I'm sure this stopped a lot of guys for awhile anyway.

We were in Barksdale for three weeks then we were shipped by train to Savannah, GA., on October 6, 1940. The airport there was known as Hunter Field. We were on the far end of the field where we helped put up tent city - there were no permanent barracks. This became Savannah Air Base. The Second Materiel Squadron was changed to the 48th Materiel Squadron.

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Back to just prior to joining the Army Air Corps. I graduated from Warren Easton Boys High School in June of 1939 in New Orleans, Louisiana. I was 17 years old and had been Captain of the Track team. I had participated in various track and field events but my specialty was the high hurdles. During the summer of 1939 I took part in the Sunday night track meets at Tad Gormley Stadium in City Park and ran the high hurdles. I guess I was in pretty good shape because I won every race I participated in.

In the fall of 1939 I went to Delgado Trade School at night and worked during the day doing drafting. At Delgado I studied Mechanical Drawing and Math which was geared to graduating as an Airplane Mechanic. In June of 1940 I finished my first year in the mechanics course. This course also included Machine Shop and 'hands on' an aircraft engine. I enjoyed this course so in the summer of 1940 I went to Delgado full time during the day and worked at night.

The war in Europe was getting hot and heavy so in September of 1940 I decided to leave school and join the Air Corps - the Army Air Corps. My cousin, Eddie Vidou went with me down to the recruiting office because he had been in the National Guard and he figured he knew the ropes and could help me out. Also, make sure no one took advantage of me. He pointed out Sergeants, Master Sergeants, Lieutenants and Majors by their insignia. I think this recruiting office was in the Customs Building on Canal Street. I was given a physical and they said I was OK so I signed up. I was glad Eddie was with me - he gave me a lot of confidence. My enlistment date was September 17, 1940 and I was 18 years old. My parents also gave the OK for me to join.

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and we were to be part of the 27th Bomb Group (Light). Our 48th Materiel Squadron was a unit that supported Fighter or Bomber Groups by doing the maintenance on the planes and maintenance included mechanics, radio repair men, welders, armorers, sheet metal men and parachute riggers - any job required to keep the planes flying. Other parts of the 27th was Headquarters, the 16th Squadron, the 17th Squadron, the 91st Squadron and the 454 Ordinance. Our tents were square and held five people. They had wooden floors and we slept on cots. There were no tables in these tents. In the winter they were really cold. We would put newspapers on top of the cots then put a blanket then a sheet. We'd lie on the sheet with a sheet and a blanket over us. There was a stove in the middle of the tent and the stove was on a square metal base which was on a wood floor. We still were cold.

We eventually got an evening of leave and rode the bus into town. The name of the main drag was Bull Run. I remember walking down Main Street and seeing a person selling peanuts. Well, I liked peanuts so I bought some. I quickly found out they were boiled peanuts. I had never had boiled peanuts before and I tasted them. Ugh! I gave the rest of them to my buddy who enjoyed them. I might mention, our pay was \$21.00 per month. We could have our clothes washed and get stuff at the PX and pay for it at the end of the month when we were paid. They didn't trust anyone so at the end of the month the cost of the items were taken out of our pay. Needless to say, after all this was taken out we would have about \$8 or \$10 bucks left over for the rest of the month. That was OK because it didn't cost hardly anything to go out.

The public bus into town cost a nickel and a movie cost 10 cents. A hot dog was a nickel. Of course, while we were on the base the food, medical and dental service was free. So were our first issue of clothes. Actually, the first issue included about three sets of clothes but only one pair of shoes. If we had to replace any of the clothes it cost us.

We were given some tests to see if we had any technical ability and if we were worth sending to school. I must have passed because in December of 1940, I was sent to Love Field in Dallas, Texas to attend the Dallas Aviation School - an Airplane Mechanics School. This was my first Christmas away from home and I guess I got kind of homesick. Anyway, I got over it - it was to be the first of many Christmases away from home. My class was the fourth class to attend this school. Here we had class room and hands-on instructions about airplane engines and airplane maintenance. There were about 20 men in our class and we were given instructions in a class room and also a lot of hands-on learning. This went on eight hours a day for five days a week.

We had the weekends off and could get leave to go into the city of Dallas. One of the fellows in our class was from my squadron, the 48th. His name was Henry Hoskins and his home was in a town named Canton, Texas which was about seventy miles from Dallas. He would drive home for the weekend - he had an old Auburn. I don't remember what was the year of the car - and sometime he would ask me to go with him. He had a girl friend whose name was "Rose" whom he eventually married and had a son and daughter. Hank would get his girl to get another girl and we would double date to a movie. We would sleep at his parents house and return to Dallas Sunday night to be ready for class on Monday. His parents, Mr and Mrs Hoskins were great people and treated me royally. We had two other men in the class from the 48th, Otis Houston (pronounced House-ton) and Eddie Harold. Sometimes Hank would invite either one of these other two guys to go home with him on the weekend. When he did that I would go into Dallas by bus and see the town and drink beer with some of the other guys from our class. I met

a girl who lived close to Love Field and not too far from our barracks and I started going out with her. Her name was Inez Bradbury. Around this time the girls were wearing their dresses just above the knee. The guys really went ga-ga over watching the gals with the short dresses - just a normal bunch of GIs.

We graduated in June of 1941 and each of us returned by train to our respective squadrons. I have no idea of what happened to Inez Bradbury. She was a great dancer and I really missed her. However, all the time I was writing to a gal in New Orleans - Nellie Tracey. We had been going steady when I left New Orleans to join the service and I was wondering when I would get to see her again. After graduation, I returned to my squadron in Savannah, GA. In the six months I was gone, new and permanent barracks were built. These were much better than the Tent City I had left. I was put on the flight line as a mechanic and would service some of the planes our pilots flew. These planes were A-20s and A-24s which were low altitude attack planes that did a lot of strafing.

I worked the flight line for a few months then I was given the duty of chasing prisoners. This meant wearing a .45 pistol and getting in a truck with about 10 guys who had been put in the guard house because of various crimes and misdemeanors and going with them to different jobs such as picking up trash in certain areas and my job was to make sure they all returned that evening. I didn't like this job at all because if I had let one of these men escape I would have to serve his sentence in the guard house. Fortunately for me, none of the guys were in the escape mood. I chased prisoners for about 2 ½ weeks. I was glad to be taken off this job and to do something else-----anything else.

Late in September of 1941, we got word that our whole Bomb Group was moving out. We had no idea where we were going. We started loading our trucks on flat cars which would make up a troop train. In October we were working by sunlight by day and by flood lights by night getting all of our equipment on flat cars and tied down. Finally we were told that we were leaving within a week and to get our affairs straightened out. My parents drove up to Savannah and brought my girl friend, who was now my fiancée, with them. I almost got married but decided against it because I didn't know where I was going or how long I would be away. I asked her to wait and we would be married as soon as I returned. She said she would. It turned out that it would be almost 5 ½ years before I would ever see her again. My parents returned home with Nellie and I was really dejected. The next day we boarded the troop train with all of our gear and left Savannah Air Base, Savannah, GA. Our foot lockers were in the baggage cars and our barracks bag was with us. The date was October 19, 1941. The reason I remember this date is because it was my birthday - my 20th birthday and we were leaving for parts unknown.

We were on the train about nine days. The train would stop once in a while to let everyone get off to stretch their legs and walk around. It was always out in the boondocks so we had no chance to buy anything like sweets or fruit. I guess this was their way of keeping everyone together and not wandering off so they'd be ready to get back on the train when it was ready to leave. There was no air conditioning on the train so most of the guys would open the windows. The trouble with that was the coal cinders would fly into the window and there would be cinder dust all inside the train coach car. We came through New Orleans and stopped at the old Louisville and Nashville Station at the foot of Canal Street. My parents and Nellie met me at the station as did a few of the other parents of guys that had lived in New Orleans. We had a very

enjoyable meeting but it was a short one. I can't remember the full route the train took but know we went through one of the higher passes called Tennessee Pass in the Rocky Mountains in Colorado and then Utah and Nevada and the Donner Pass in California. We followed the Feather River in the Feather River Canyon down into Sacramento. From there through the Modesto wine country on down to San Francisco. We were about nine days on the train and arrived in San Francisco on about the 27th of October. We slept on the troop train which was on a siding near the docks. We found out that when the train people or the stevedores put some of the baggage cars on the docks with the foot lockers and other personal gear, one of the cars toppled into the bay. Fortunately, my foot locker was not amongst the wet ones. The next day those guys whose foot lockers did go into the bay, were spreading their clothes and personal belongings out in the sun in a grassy area near the docks.

On the 29th of October we boarded a bay ferry and were taken to Ft. Mason on Angel Island. Angel Island is just North of Alcatraz, the prison island, in the San Francisco Bay. After we were all safely on the Island, only then did they tell us our destination - the Philippine Islands. We had some inkling of this because the code name of our destination was "Plum" which someone figured stood for Philippines, the Island of Luzon and Manila.

Of course, we had no way of getting off the Island and in this way no one could go into town and blab their mouths to the wrong persons. Ft. Mason on Angel Island was an Army base. There were old guys who had already been in the service many years. One would kind of expect most of these guys to be high ranking sergeants and, actually, they had been. A lot of them were privates and privates first class and corporals. They would work their way up to a tech or master sergeant then go into town, get drunk, get arrested and get broken down to a buck private. Then they would work their way back up the scale, only to have the same thing happen to them. I guess that was Regular Army life.

Late at night on October 31, 1941 we were loaded on the ferries again and taken to the dock in San Francisco and boarded the S.S. President Coolidge. This was a beautiful cruise liner which had been converted to a troop ship. We sailed out of the San Francisco Bay very early on the morning of November 1, 1941 and out under the Golden Gate Bridge. It was still beautiful in the dark with all of it's lights. We cheered when we passed under it. It was a great sight. Little did we know what the future held in store for us or else we would have jumped overboard. One third of the guys were destined not to return. We stayed on deck and watched the bridge until it disappeared in the darkness. There was another group the 5th Air Base Group and a couple of squadrons besides the 27th Bomb Group (L). My bunk was four decks down and the third from the floor. Fortunately, the bunks were rigid and not hammocks. There was no place to store my barracks bag except on the floor, but there was a little room to put necessities. When I needed something from my bag, I had to climb down past two bunks to get to the floor. However, I was seldom in my bunk except to sleep.

We had a lot of freedom on the ship. The first day out the ship was rolling and yawing and I got seasick. I was told the best place was on deck and not down in the bunk. They were right. I got over my seasickness and was not bothered with it for the rest of the voyage. In order to keep our bodies trim we had to do exercises every morning and to keep our minds active and not get lazy we each had particular jobs to do. I volunteered to work in the mess hall. This way I could get extra rations. Not that we needed to get extra rations because we were fed very well and as

much as you could eat - most of the time. My job was to butter the toast at the officers' mess. The officers ate at one time and the enlisted men ate at a different time. I buttered the officers' toast bread at breakfast. I had a soft bristle brush and a bowl of melted butter. No matter how much butter I used there was always another bowl of melted butter there for me to use. The dining room was very elegant. There was carpet on the floor and tapestries hanging on the walls. Entrance to the dining room was by descending about 20 carpeted steps at the front and the rear of the dining room. There were round tables for either four, six or eight persons. I could never even imagine a ship that had a dining room that looked like that.

After mess I had a lot of free time. In the evenings I would go up to the top deck and sit down with my back to a smoke stack and feel the soft breezes on my face and talk about unimportant things. When the moon was out, which was most of the time, I would gaze at the silver path on the water that led right up to the moon. It looked like a person could actually walk on that path. We had beautiful weather. Sometimes during the daytime I could look over the side and see some Man-of-war jelly fish with tentacles about 20 feet long. At night, looking over the fantail, I could see the phosphorous in the water which would light up in the foam of the propeller. Sometimes I would see some flying fish.

This was very restful. There was no way of knowing what was in our future. We stopped over in Honolulu in the Hawaiian Islands. When we pulled alongside the dock there was a band playing. We were allowed to go ashore for a short time then back on ship and out to sea again. After leaving the Hawaiian Islands the President Coolidge picked up an escort of two other ships. We stopped at the island of Guam for a short period but were not able to leave the ship. I guess they picked up some supplies. Then we left Guam and headed for the Philippines. Little did we know that the two ships we picked up at Honolulu were our escort for protection against Jap subs. On November 20, 1941 we sighted Islands of the Philippines group and stayed close to the shore. Before long we were passing the island of Corregidor and entering Manila Bay. We saw a tip of land near Corregidor but had no idea how that tip of land belonging to the peninsula of Bataan would affect our lives.

We arrived at the dock in Manila in the Philippine Islands on November 20, 1941, exactly one month after leaving the security and comfort of our permanent barracks at Savannah Air Base in Savannah, GA. When the ship pulled alongside the dock we were again serenaded with a band playing. We disembarked and were taken by truck to Ft. McKinley which was just outside of Manila and they dumped us down in a wide open area which was called the "A" Range on Ft. McKinley. Much to our chagrin, there were tents for us because they could not accommodate all of us in the permanent barracks at the Fort. This was to be our home for the next few weeks. We were just a bunch of Army Air Corps mechanics and pilots but we were now part of the United States Armed Forces in the Far East "USAFFE" under the command of General Douglas McArthur.

Our planes, A-24s, were on a ship following us. Evidently they were quite a ways behind us because we learned later that when Pearl Harbor was bombed by the Japs the ship with our planes was diverted from Manila to Australia leaving us stranded in the Philippines with no planes. There were already some P-40Bs and Es in the Islands at Clark, and Nichols air fields and but not nearly enough. There were also B-17s, B-18s, A-27s, B-10s, P-26s, P-35s and various Observation planes. This was a very old assortment and very few in number. Since we had no planes we were converted to the 2nd Provisional Infantry. Can you imagine how much

experience we had in ground tactical warfare fighting as an infantry outfit? We were issued WWI Springfield rifles and they were still packed in cosmoline which was a very thick grease to help preserve the gun from rust. Guess what! We each had to clean all of this cosmoline from our rifle. This gave us a couple of days work. There was a firing range nearby at Nielson Field and they took a few of us at a time to do some firing with our rifles and with a 45 cal. pistol. We were not issued pistols. The extent of our firing practice was shooting 5 - that's five - rounds with the pistol and five rounds with the rifle. A round is one bullet.

In the evenings after chow we had leave to go into the city of Manila. This was very different from other cities in the United States. For one thing, the cars drove on the wrong side of the road - wrong for us, that is. A couple of the other guys and I walked around looking at clothing and things in the different shops. There was always some kid or person in front of us trying to get us to go into their shop to buy something. They probably knew that there was a new group of GIs that just got off the ship from the States and were looking to make an easy buck - or Peso which was what their dollar was called.

There were a lot of dark skinned Philippino women in town. There were GIs that were stationed at Ft. McKinley that had been in the Islands for a long time and when I saw these GIs walking arm in arm with some of these dark complexioned Philippino women I thought to myself that I could never go out with any of these women. The trouble was, after a couple of weeks, the complexion of these women started to get whiter and whiter the longer we stayed there.

I would go bowling in town with a couple of the guys and twice we went bowling in the walled city. The walled city was a very old part of Manila, probably the very first area to become the city of Manila. One time when we were looking for some women to have a good time with, we asked the taxi driver where we could find some women. Well, this was at night and the driver took us a little away from the city and down some back roads. We were wondering if we were going to be mugged or waylaid or even killed. Finally, he stopped at a corner under a street light and told us to go to the middle of the block and we would find a building with very large and tall doors. He told us to open those doors and to go in and we would find what we were looking for. We were a little hesitant about doing this because it was very dark down in the middle of the block. We decided to go ahead and sure enough we found a building with very large doors. We opened one door and walked in. We couldn't believe what we saw. Evidently the taxi drivers had been very busy bringing GIs to this place because the place was filled with GIs and Navy personnel and young girls probably not over seventeen and younger. It was filled with smoke. If a guy wanted one of these young girls he had to get in line and there was quite a long line. We decided we did not want to go with any women this night at this place so we had a beer at the bar then turned around and went out through those huge doors into the dark night. We walked to the corner to the street light and up drives a taxi. He must have been just waiting down the street because he knew there would be guys coming and going all night. That was quite an experience. We enjoyed seeing the walled city and the new Manila because it was so different from the cities in the states.

W A R! Sunday, December 8, 1941. The news came that Pearl Harbor had been bombed and that the United States had declared war on Japan. In the United States the date was December 7th. In Manila it was December 8th because we were on the other side of the International Date Line. How could I be in this part of the world when the United States declares war on Japan?

What am I doing here? I'm in the Army Air Corps - I'm here without any planes. How can I do the job I was trained to do? With no planes, I'm put into the Provisional Infantry. I'm not trained to be in the infantry - I don't know infantry tactics. I guess there will be someone to tell me, though. It comes early enough. Sunday night we are brought over to the firing range at Nielson Field and we get under an overhang behind the mound of dirt which is usually behind the targets.

The Jap planes come over and there is firing all around us and bombs dropping too close. We stay in this area all night. We can see the guns firing at the planes and the tracer bullets heading up in the sky towards the planes. Tracer bullets are every eleventh bullet on the string. With these tracer bullets the person firing the gun can see where the bullets are going and correct his aim if necessary. The next day we go back to the "A" Range to our tents and move to a wooded area to avoid being out in the open. They tell us if planes come over to get somewhere where we cannot be seen. There was a lot of very tall grass where we could lie down flat so the planes couldn't see you. The planes come over and straffed the tents and the whole area. We are told these Jap planes are called Zeros. We can see the large red dot on the under side of the wing. We call this the Flaming Asshole. Occasionally, we see a P-40 get up into a dog fight but the Zero had much more maneuverability than the P-40 and soon the P-40 is shot down.

I remember an incident about these Jap planes coming over Ft. McKinley. I was in my tent when I heard planes coming. I ran out into the tall grass and decided to watch the planes to see which direction they were headed and if they were headed my way then I would lie down on the ground. The planes were coming right at me and I saw something drop from one plane at just about the right spot that it would be awfully close to me when it hit the ground. I knew that had to be a bomb. I dropped to the ground and clawed myself a little further down and waited for the explosion. I waited and there was no explosion and I couldn't figure out why. Maybe the bomb was a dud but it could go off any moment. I got up after the planes had passed and saw something in the grass about twenty yards from me. Part of it was sticking up above the grass. Curious, I went over to see this thing. It turned out to be a wing tank that planes use for fuel to get extra distance to their flight. They usually carry two of them, one on each wing. A wing tank. Boy, was I relieved. They usually drop their wing tanks when the tank is out of fuel.

A detail was taken over to Nielson Field to help clean up. Clark and Nicholls Fields had been hit very hard and so had Nielson Field. Many of our planes had been bombed and straffed on the ground and for two of them the pilots did not get out. There were bomb craters all over the field and the runways. One or two pilots tried to get into the air but they were inexperienced and excited and ran into bomb craters. The hangars had been bombed and were afire. These Jap Zeros had 50mm canon in the nose of their plane. I saw a bulldozer that had a one inch blade on the front of it, with a hole completely through it.

We were told by guys who were at Nicholls Field that pilots were in their planes ready to take off because they knew Jap planes were headed their way. Then word came from Gen. MacArthur not to take off. For just this moment of confusion, the Jap planes came over and caught every one of these planes on the ground and destroyed every one of them by straffing and bombing. Some of the pilots were able to get out of the planes and run for cover, others did not make it. Nielson, Clark and Nicholls fields did not have any radar and had no advance warning system of approaching enemy planes. They could not tell when they were coming until they could actually see them and of course, then it was too late.

The 48th Materiel Squadron had orders to send a detail of one officer and 52 men down to the southern part of Luzon to establish an airfield for planes which would be coming up from Australia. Since I was a raw recruit just out of mechanics' school I was not picked for the detail - they only took the experienced personnel for this job.

There was one other detail sent out of the 48th but I was not on it. Luzon is the largest island in the Philippine group. Manila was still putting out a newspaper and I can still remember one of the headlines: 100 Jap ships sighted off Lingayen Bay. Lingayen Bay is about 75 miles North of Manila on the China Sea side of the Islands. The Japanese had planned on capturing the Philippine Islands in 55 days. The surrender did not come until 148 days later - three times longer than expected.

On December 25th, Christmas Day, the remainder of the Squadron was getting ready to have a nice Christmas dinner which our cooks had fixed. It was all spread out on tables under a lot of trees so if Jap planes came over they could not see us. However, we did not get to eat any of that dinner. General McArthur had ordered all USAFFE (United States Armed Forces in the Far East) personnel to go to Bataan to make a stand there because our forces on the Island of Luzon were not holding back the Japs. This was called Operation Orange. We were ordered to get our gear in our barracks bags, get on the trucks which suddenly appeared as from nowhere. We were brought to the docks in Manila and up a gang plank onto one of the Inter-island steamer boats to be brought across Manila Bay to the Bataan Peninsula. Our foot lockers were already in some warehouse in Manila and I had put so much of my personal gear in my barracks bag that it was overloaded. You should have seen me struggling up the gang plank with that barracks bag.

On December 24th General McArthur ordered War Plan Orange-3 to begin. Orange was for Japan and one of many "color" plans which was developed in pre-war years. In WPO-3 it was assumed that a Japanese attack would come with less than 48 hours notice and it would be impossible to provide reinforcements from the United States in time to help. None of the officers who knew about War Plan Orange ever thought they would have to put it into operation, but here we were, headed into Bataan on an antiquated plan. The mission of the forces in the Philippines was to hold the entrance to Manila Bay and deny it's use to the Japanese. If fighting the Japanese on the Island of Luzon failed, delaying action would begin and all defenders would withdraw to the Bataan Peninsula. The 14th Japanese Imperial Army under the command of Lt. Gen. Masharu Homma had secured the beachhead on Lingayen Gulf and the west coast of Tayabas province and now started a gigantic pincer attack. MacArthur was thrown back in fierce actions by the advance of the enemy and retreat into Bataan became inevitable.

From January 1 to January 5 the entire USAFFE struggled from south and north toward Layac Junction, the only approach to Bataan but the delaying forces held its line against massive Japanese aerial and artillery bombardment and concentrated tank attacks. The Abucay-Morong line was abandoned on January 24 and the Orion-Bagac line was established two days later. Bataan was recognized as the key to the control of Manila Bay along with Corregidor and it was to be defended at all costs. This was the reason they were withdrawing us from Manila to Bataan.

Although, there were beautiful beaches with giant coconut palms overhanging Manila bay from the southwest corner of Luzon, the peninsula of Bataan was known as a death hole filled with every tropical disease known to man. Other American and Philippine forces and thousands

of civilians were heading into Bataan from the North. The Army was fighting a delaying action as they moved into Bataan by blowing up bridges and putting up tank blockades. We were on this steamer and when we were half way across the bay, Jap bombers flying high came over and dropped bombs narrowly missing the steamer. The steamer was old and we thought we would never get across the bay.

We made it to the Mariveles Harbor at the Southern tip of Bataan, disembarked and taken to an area to bivouac. Corregidor was not too far from our location and all night and for the next few days we had the sound of their big guns in our ears. On the evening of January 8th we climbed onto trucks that took us North to a small village named Orion. Here, we turned left off the main road onto a small gravel road, proceeded West for about four miles to an area where we would bivouac for the night and for almost all of the next four months. The area had a lot of shade trees and tall bamboo. There was a small gulch that wound around East and West.

Our area was on the South side of the gulch. The 27th was incorporated into the 2nd Battalion and was to be part of a reserve line of resistance. The 48th Materiel was in the middle of the 27th with other units of the 2nd Battalion on either side of us. The 48th, after the withdrawal into Bataan, became part of a Provisional Air Corps regiment but was still considered Provisional Infantry. This regiment was composed of ten Air Corps Squadrons and all personnel became infantrymen. It was primarily from the 20th Air Base Group and the 27th Bomb Group(L). It also included the 2nd Observation Squadron along with the 7th and 48th Materiel Squadrons. We were formed into two battalions of five squadrons each. The 1st Battalion consisted of Hq. Squadron, 20th Air Base, 19th Air Base Squadron, 27th Materiel Squadron Air Base Group, 28th Materiel Squadron Air Base Group and the 7th Materiel Squadron. The 2nd Battalion consisted of HQ. Squadron, 27th Bomb Group (L), 17th Bomb Squadron, 91st Bomb Squadron, 2nd Observation Squadron and the 48th Materiel Squadron.

The 48th arrived in the Philippines just before war was declared and while our planes were still at sea. When war was declared, our planes were diverted to Australia. Why couldn't they have taken all of the Air Corps personnel and send them down to Australia too. The ten squadrons were selected because we no longer had any aircraft to service or operate. When the regiment was organized we were told we were being converted to provisional infantrymen because they needed more men in the field. The next day, infantry training was initiated to make us more familiar with infantry weapons and tactics and we were also put to work digging fox holes and trenches, preparing gun positions and stringing barbed wire. The gulch in front of our position made a good natural trench and barbed wire was strung out just in front of this gulch. Tin cans were hung on the wire so if anyone tried to sneak through the strands of wire the cans would make a noise.

Our squadron was divided into squads and groups of personnel to stand watch in the trenches and to also go out past our front line to try to find out where the enemy was located. We were not supposed to try to make contact with the enemy, only to observe them and report back to our officers their location. However, there were times when contact had to occur and we'd wind up losing one or two men.

There were three groups to man the trenches. One group would be in the trenches of the MLR, Main Line of Resistance while the second manned the OPLR, Outpost Line of Resistance and the other rested. There were always rumors and the biggest one was that the convoy was coming. There was always a convoy coming to send in reinforcements and to take us off this island back to civilization. Of course, the convoy never came. Even MacArthur believed there

was a convoy coming to rescue us and he even told us so. He was wrong again. Then there was President Roosevelt's speech on the status of the war. It was a death blow for Bataan. He spoke of American groups in Greenland, Ireland and England and of help to Russia, China and India. He spoke of the miles of ocean between America and Japan and the necessity of defending Australia and the impossibility of relieving Bataan and the Philippines. After the battles of the Points, Pockets and Trail 2 where USAFFE had severely beaten the Japanese, they withdrew to regroup their forces and to wait for reinforcements. Now we knew it was only a matter of time. However, the Japanese had no walk through. They had to fight for every foot of ground they gained. As our morale dwindled and our physical ability was hampered due to lack of food and ammunition and malaria we started giving ground to the Japs. I was in one of the groups that rotated manning the trenches and I also was a designated runner. During a bombing or shelling, if we lost contact with our left or right flank because of phone lines being down and we had to make contact with them, I would take the message from our Captain to the Command Post on the right or left flank. It was a hazardous errand to do while bombs and shells were dropping, particularly shells.

Once when we were told we could write a letter home I sat down in the jungle under tree cover and wrote one. Through normal mailings the mail from Bataan was put on an inter-costal boat and brought to the Southern Islands where the mail would be picked up by plane and flown to Australia and eventually delivered to the USA. I found out from my family when I returned home that there was a story behind the delivery of the letter. The inter-island boat which carried the mail was sunk by the Japanese. An American submarine that happened to be in the area surfaced to replenish their air supply and floating on the water were two mail bags. They picked up the mail bags, brought them to Australia where they were finally delivered to the addressees. My letter was in one of the mail bags and was delivered to my family about six months later with a note explaining what had happened to the letter. They then showed me the letter. I thought this was absolutely amazing.

Those men that were supposed to rest did not really rest. Most of the time they were out looking for food. Animals became very scarce. First it was the horses of the Cavalry, then the caraboa, then goats, dogs, snakes, iguanas, monkeys or anything edible and after a while, everything became edible. Of course some of the first eats were edible fruits from the trees. Sometime these trees that still had fruit were in the no-man zone. This was a zone between our front line and the enemy front line. I remember a few trees out there had a fruit called a Kosoy. This was an apple-like fruit with a nut growing underneath it and attached to the bottom. We found out that this nut, with a heavy fibrous skin like a cocconut, turned out to be a cashew nut. In getting the nut out of that skin, one had to be very careful because it was very acidous. If this acid got on the hands, the hands would swell and any place the hands were rubbed on the body that part of the body would swell. There were also peanut patches out there. I would sneak out there sometimes and dig up peanuts, come back to my tent, make a small fire and roast the peanuts in a can. One time I was out in the peanut patch and I stayed out there a little too long digging up peanuts when our 155 artillery opened fire. It was starting to get dark and I could actually see the red hot shells flying over me towards the Japs. I was lucky not to have a Jap patrol discover me out there.

We were lucky we dug our foxholes because every morning at least three (usually, more) Jap planes would come over our lines and drop bombs. When the planes came we could observe their direction and when their bombs were released. If we looked like we were safe on this particular bombing run we wouldn't bother to get in our fox holes. When it looked like the bombs would be dropped near us, into the fox hole we went. There were two kinds of holes we could dig - a fox hole or a spider hole. Normally, two men shared a fox hole and the spider hole was for only one man. Usually two of us shared a foxhole because we shared a tent and our foxhole was just in front of our tent. There were two men to a tent because each carried one-half of the tent, called shelter halves. Many a time we could see that our foxhole was in the line of bombs coming down. When we jumped into the foxhole we would claw at the ground to try to get deeper and pray that a bomb would not come directly into the foxhole. Fortunately for us, none ever did. If anyone ever asks, "How deep do you dig a foxhole?" the answer is never deep enough. It was scary when we got out of the foxhole to see craters where the bombs hit. There would be one in front of the foxhole approximately 50 yards and one behind it approximately 50 yards. If one had hit near the center that would have been all she wrote.

On the night of January 15, 1942 we boarded trucks and without lights the trucks moved us to a forward position on the Pilar-Bagac road on the East slope of Mt. Samat where we were supposed to protect the left flank of troops already in battle. We arrived at the area and hunkered down. Unfortunately, we were right in front of an artillery unit and after we had settled down, without tents, the artillery units with 155 guns opened fire and almost blasted out our ear drums. At the first round of firings we probably jumped four feet off the ground. What a surprise that was. We did not see any action there so on January 22nd, we were returned to our previous position West of Orion.

One night I was picked to drive a truck up into the mountains. I was told to drive up this certain road and to continue on it until some officers stopped me. There were a few boxes on the back of the truck but they were closed and I didn't know what was inside the boxes. I had to drive the truck without any lights on. It wasn't bad driving at first but then I started getting onto Mount Samat. As I drove on, the road became narrower. In fact so narrow there was hardly room for the width of the truck. I had to stop every once in a while and get out to look at how close the outside tires were to the edge of the road. One time I stopped, got out and looked. The rear wheels had double tires and one of the tires were off the road. I looked down and could not see the bottom. Believe me, I drove very carefully. Finally around 1:00 AM I came to a wide place in the road and a couple of officers stopped me. They called some men and they came and unloaded the boxes from the truck. They told me the boxes contained dynamite they needed. They thanked me and told me they were glad I was able to keep the truck on the road then they told me to take the truck back to my unit. I almost collapsed when they told me it was dynamite. I didn't know how close I came to be blown up if that truck had gone off the road. I got back to my unit about 6:00AM and was allowed to get some rest.

On January 26th, our units were assigned to II Corps on Bataan, and we became the main line of resistance in Sector B. This was the only unit comprised entirely of Americans on Bataan on front line duty full time. The bombings were better than the enemy artillery shellings. Neither one was any good to be caught in. When the planes came over we could look at the planes and see when the bombs were dropped. If they weren't dropped at a certain time or if they weren't directly overhead we didn't have to get into the foxhole. When the enemy artillery shells started coming in you'd better find some kind of indentation in the ground like a ditch because if a shell

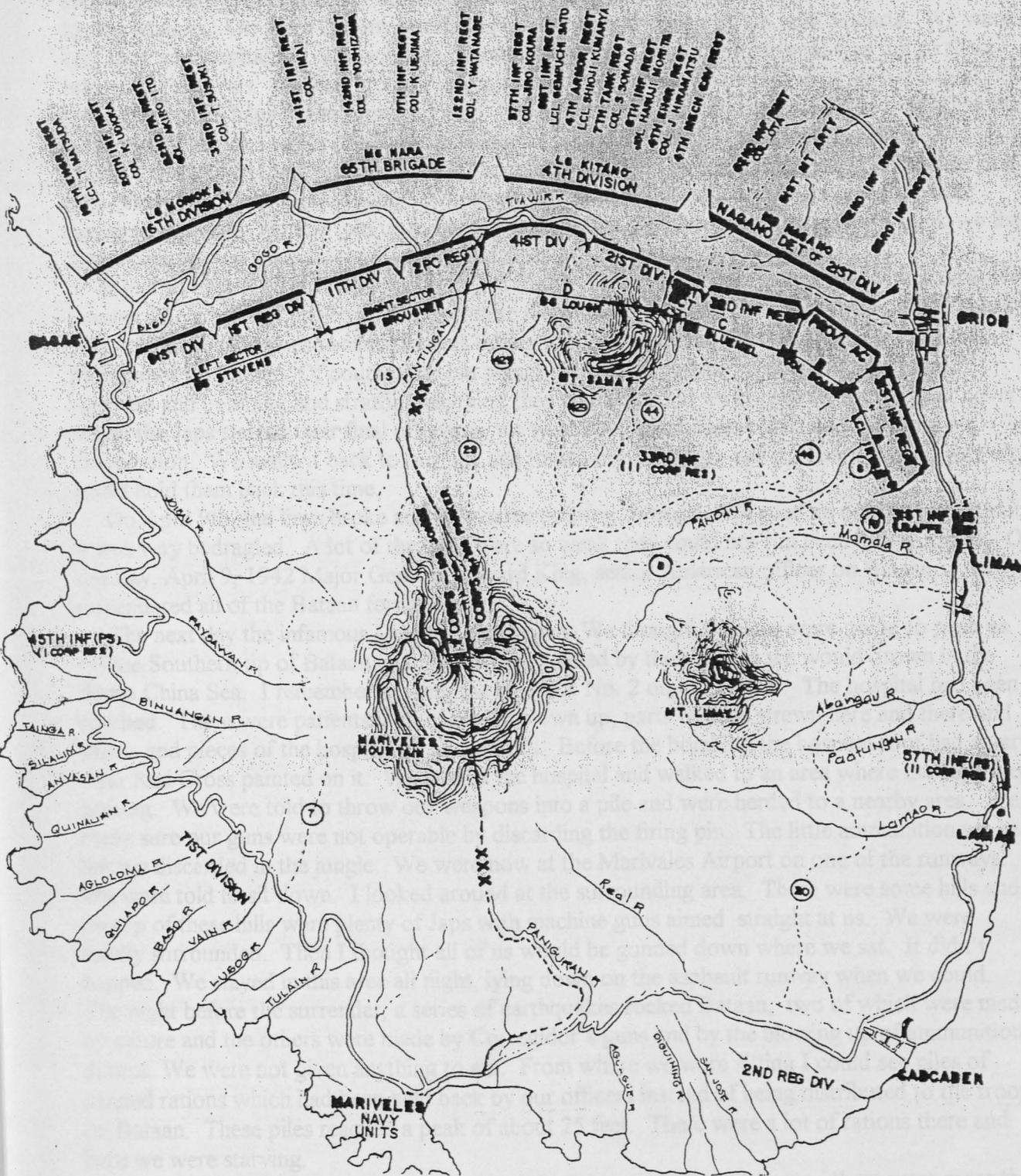
hit the ground say 20 or thirty yards in front of you, the shrapnel would fan out towards you and be about a foot off the ground. If we were able to get to a foxhole that was the best thing but most of the time when the shelling started we were away from our foxhole trying to discourage the Japs from coming in our area. A group of shells would come in before anyone knew what was happening. Shells made a whistling sound in the air as they travelled towards you. If you heard this sound, it was too late to get out of it's way.

As far as rations were concerned, on January 6th food rations to every man on Bataan were cut to two meals per day and the main meal to be cut to one-half. In February 1942 rations were again cut and by this time there was a considerable notice of loss of weight and the inability to perform duties efficiently. It was in March when MacArthur sent a message (I SHALL RETURN) from Corregidor (a morale booster but no truth) to the troops on Bataan saying that help was on the way from the U.S. This was just before he and his family left in the middle of March on four PT boats for Mindanao - an Island in the southern part of the Philippine Islands - and from there were flown to Australia. MacArthur told us thousands of troops and hundreds of planes were being sent. No further retreat is possible. He said we have more troops in Bataan than the Japanese have thrown against us. He said our supplies are ample and a determined defense will defeat the enemy's attack. He called upon every soldier in Bataan to fight in his assigned position and to resist the enemy's attack. He said if we fight we will win, if we retreat we will be destroyed. This was the biggest pile of bull-crap he ever came out with. Of course, no one believed him. Where were his ample supplies? We were already on half of half rations. Still it was a morale booster: hold on a little longer, tighten your belts, fight with all your strength. What else could we do? MacArthur's departure was the end of the USAFFE. After MacArthur left the defending army was re-named the United States Forces in the Philippines - USFIP - under the command of Lt General Jonathan Wainwright.

There was considerable scrounging of areas for animals and fruit. There was a rice field close by so we would go into the field and gather the ripened rice plants. We spread sheets on the ground and thrashed the rice to get the kernels then we thrashed the rice to remove some of the husk. At this time we were issued one can of Salmon for ten men. We would mix the portion of salmen with the rice and get a couple of meals in that manner. On the 1st of March the rations were cut again and each man was receiving less than 1000 calories per day. By this time the men could no longer function as we should have been able to. However, we still had the ability to shoot, although fortunately for us, the Japs only sent patrols our way. The main and bulk of the fighting was to the West of us. Their patrols did the same as ours - reconnoiter and seek out but do not contact the enemy.

Fortunately, the other squadrons and regiments were able to do the same thing even with reduced rations. In March of 1942, General Wainwright ordered all of the horses of the 26th Cavalry and the mules of the Artillery Batteries slaughtered. We received a little of the meat from this action but it wasn't long before all of the meat was consumed. By April 1st all of the men had lost considerable weight. By this time we were on a food ration of 800 calories per man and 75 to 80 percent of the men were sick mostly with Dengue Fever and Malaria. They told us the province of Bataan was one of the most heavily infected malaria areas in the world. Since we arrived on Bataan all of the men were given heavy doses of quinine but in early March 1942 the supply of quinine ran out and many men started feeling the effects of Malaria. Also, many men

PREPARATIONS FOR FINAL BATTLE OF BATAAN



BATTLE SITUATION ON OR ABOUT APRIL 1, 1942

started having dysentery. They told us this was mostly from the starvation diet rather than from having Malaria. On April 2nd my buddy Otis Houston and I came down with Malaria. We were sent back to Hospital No. 2 which was nearest to the front lines. The hospital was full so there was no place for us. We had brought our guns and our packs with us including shelter halves but left our barracks bags in the squadron area. We set up a tent outside the hospital in the jungle. We were each given one tablet of quinine and they told us that was all they could do for us. We stayed there one day and just lay there in the tent all day long sleeping and resting. The next day was Friday April 3rd, Good Friday. Somehow we felt a little better and decided we'd better return to our unit. No one told us to but we figured that was the best thing to do. I think we felt better because we were able to lie there and sleep all day and no one bothered us.

It just so happened that this day April 3rd the reinforced Japanese opened fire with a savage bombardment by their artillery. The Japanese General Homma had been sent thousands of extra men, planes and supplies because he was taking too long to defeat the Americans and the Philipinos on Bataan. Of course, the Jap planes were now coming in increasingly greater numbers and bombing and strafing anything they could see and we constantly had to seek cover. When the Japs started their final offensive, we were all weak, hungry, tired and very low on ammunition. We made it back to our line and joined our squadron again. There was no way we could hold them back this time.

On April 9th, the lines broke and they came pouring through. We tried an orderly retreat but it was very bedragled. A lot of the guys were so weak they could not run even if they had to. On this day, April 9, 1942 Major General Edward King, senior American officer on Bataan, surrendered all of the Bataan forces.

The next day the infamous Death March began. We thought the Japs were going to push us off the Southern tip of Bataan and if we weren't killed by their bullets we would drown in the South China Sea. I remember passing the Hospital No. 2 on our retreat. The hospital had been bombed. There were patients who had been blown up, parts of beds strewn here and there and sheets and pieces of the hospital up in the trees. Before the bombing the hospital roof had a very clear Red Cross painted on it. We passed the hospital and walked to an area where the Japs were waiting. We were told to throw our weapons into a pile and were herded to a nearby area. We made sure our guns were not operable by discarding the firing pin. The little ammunition we had left we discarded in the jungle. We were now at the Marivales Airport on one of the runways. We were told to sit down. I looked around at the surrounding area. There were some hills and on top of these hills were plenty of Japs with machine guns aimed straight at us. We were totally surrounded. Then I thought all of us would be gunned down where we sat. It didn't happen. We stayed in this area all night, lying down on the asphalt runway when we could. The night before the surrender, a series of earthquakes rocked Bataan, two of which were made by nature and the others were made by Corregidor's guns and by the blowing up of ammunition dumps. We were not given anything to eat. From where we were sitting I could see piles of canned rations which had been held back by our officers instead of being distributed to the troops on Bataan. These piles reached a peak of about 25 feet. There were a lot of rations there and here we were starving.

Instead of the 40,000 to 45,000 prisoners the Japanese expected to see, there were more than 80,000 prisoners including about only 15,000 Americans. The rest were Philippino Army men and civilians. The next day we were told to stand up and they took us off in groups of approximately 400 to 500 to a group. Japanese guards were assigned to our group and we

started walking. The men were sent off in groups like this because, I imagine, they could control the men easier. The next group would wait a certain length of time then they started marching. We were told to stay in our group and to keep walking. If we stopped walking or if we wandered or left the group, we would be shot. We had no idea of what they intended to do with us. Many of the guys had a lot of gear with them like blankets, packs with personal gear like shaving cream, razors and towels. They wanted to have as much of their personal gear as possible. They didn't walk very far before the hot weather made them start discarding their gear and because it was too heavy to carry. I made sure I had my mess kit with my knife, fork and spoon and my cup and canteen. If I did not have these utensils how would I be able to eat or drink whatever they gave us. The way it turned out we didn't get much by way of food or water but I was glad I kept my gear with me. They were all attached to my web belt. I had a small back pack but no blanket. I got rid of my shelter half. I did have my steel helmet. I traveled light. We walked about one-half mile when we came upon a very grizzly sight. The Japs had used their tanks to run over about 100 Philippino prisoners. They were all flatter than a pancake and pushed down in a wet part of the road. We had to walk on the side of the road to keep from walking on the remains of these people. Well, they were not people anymore. They were flattened road kill. They were not individuals anymore, they were ground meat. We walked awhile when we met up with some patients who had been in Hospital No.2 when it was bombed. They were still in their pajamas. The Jap guards made them fall in with our group. They had no gear and no shoes - there were about 10 of them. They walked until they could walk no more. When they dropped out of the column they were killed. It's amazing how much the human body can take when it is trying to stay alive.

We continued walking until sunset and it started to get dark. We were not fed anything. Men who were sick with dysentery, malaria and beri beri were becoming weaker and were really trying to keep up the pace but the Jap guards kept trying to speed up the pace and make the men move faster. Some of the men dropped out of the column to sit beside the road. They were immediately bayonnetted. We walked about another hour when we were finally told we could stop and sit down. Boy, did we drop - right in the middle of the road. They didn't have to tell us a second time. We were still in the roadway on the main road leading North out of Bataan. We stayed there for about two hours, then told to get on our feet and start walking again. We walked for about three more hours when we came to a large building not too far off the road. We were put into this building and told not to leave. Here we would stay for the night. The floor of the building was mud with short grass. The men sat and leaned against each other back to back and rested that way. We stayed there for about three hours. Still no food or water. Then the Japs got us up and to the main road and we started walking again. This was the night of April 10th. Since they did not kill us right away, we figured we were going to some kind of a prison camp or to be put to forced labor in some manner. We walked all night.

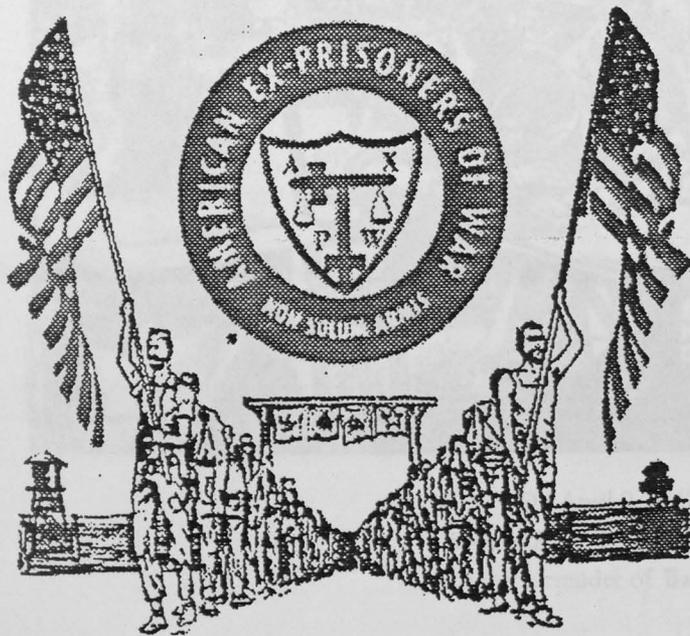
The next morning we stopped in a field and were each given a ball of rice but would give us no water. Before the sun was up we stood in line while the Japs searched each man one by one and relieved him of any jewelry he had on his person. I had my Warren Easton High School ring on my finger. I was standing down the line and when I saw what the guards were doing I put my ring in my mouth. Fortunately, I was able to keep my ring by doing this every time we were searched and we were searched many, many times. A couple of the guys had some Jap money on

BATAAN
DEATH MARCH
1942





General DOUGLAS MACARTHUR



"We exist to help those who cannot help themselves"

"We Are Not Barbarians"

BATAAN MARCH OF DEATH

APRIL 9, 1942



Courtesy of Homma family

General Masaharu Homma, commander of the Japanese forces in the Philippine Islands in 1941-1942. General Homma was executed for war crimes.

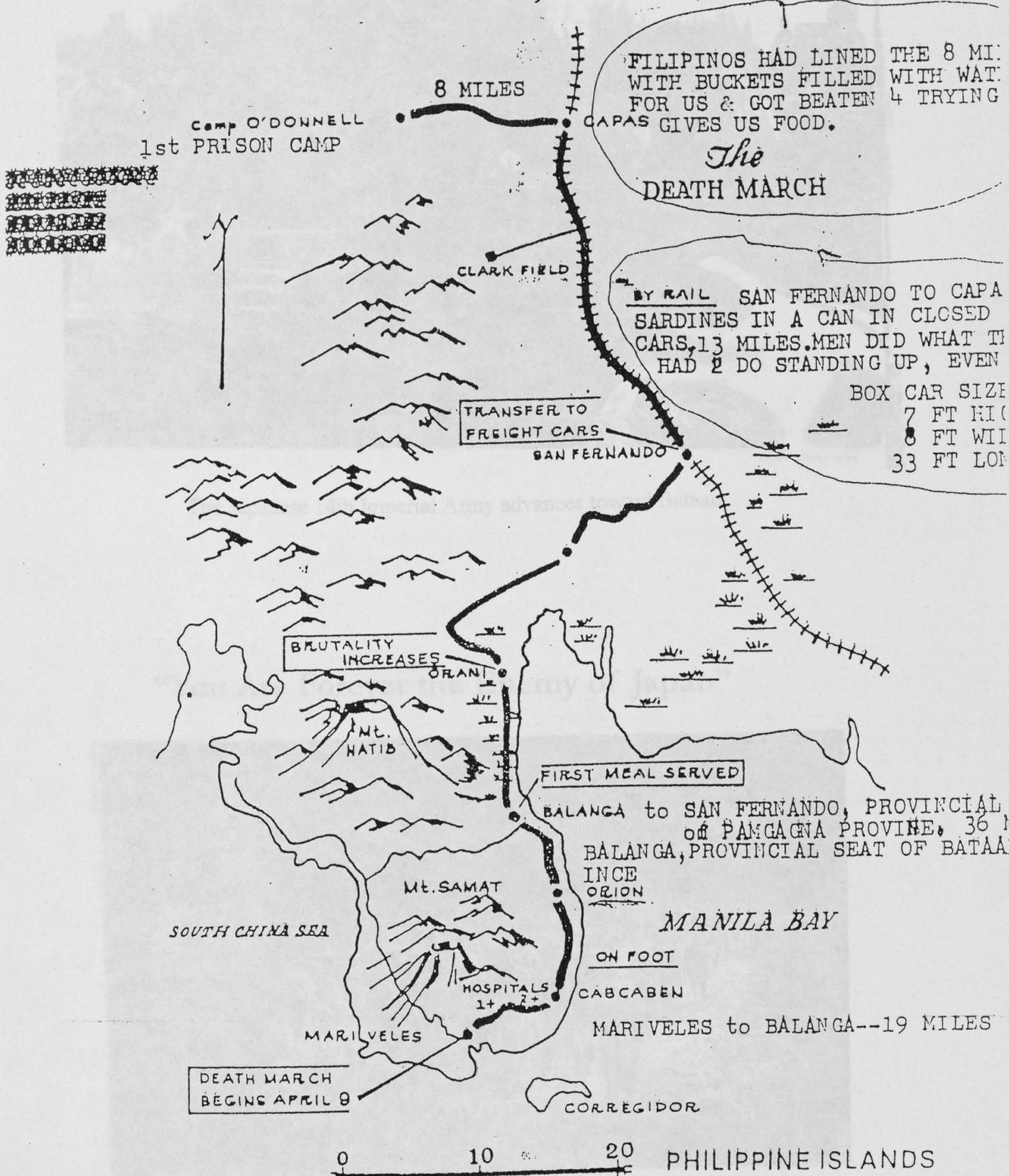


MacArthur Memorial Library

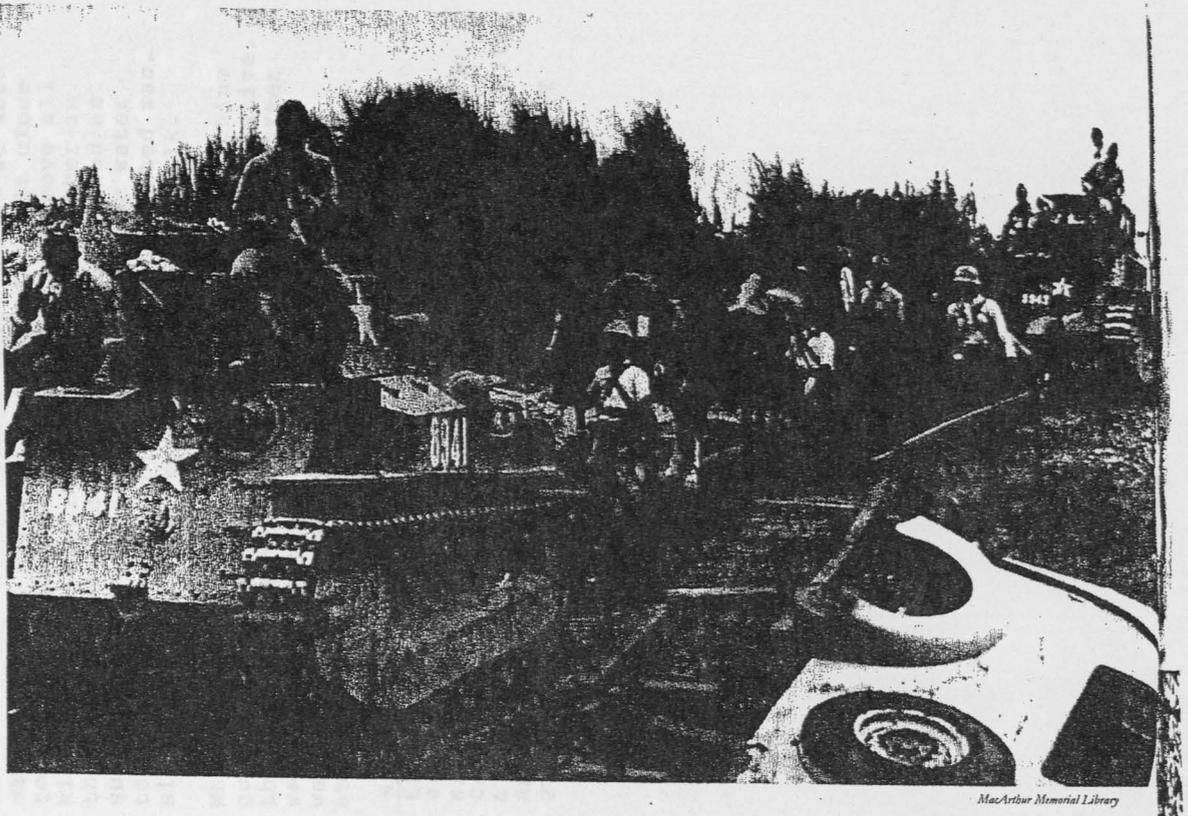
On April 9, 1942, General Edward King, center, negotiates for the surrender of Bataan.

BATAAN MARCH OF DEATH

APRIL 9, 1942



THE DEATH MARCH CLAIMED THE LIVES OF 16,950 AMERICAN AND FILIPINOS

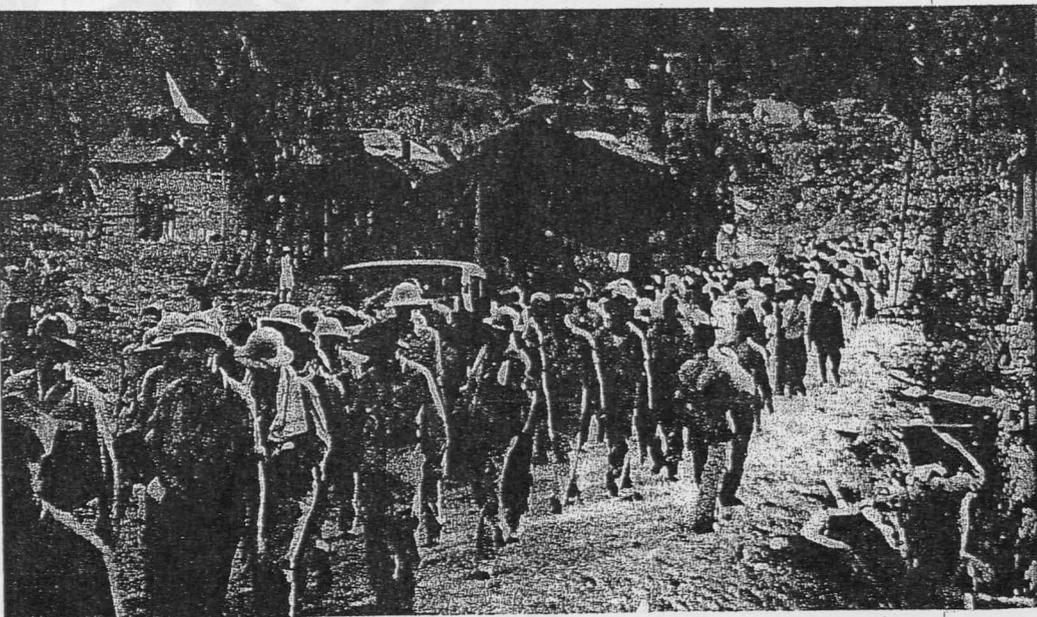


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The Japanese 14th Imperial Army advances toward Bataan.

“You Are Forever the Enemy of Japan”

Japanese Army photo

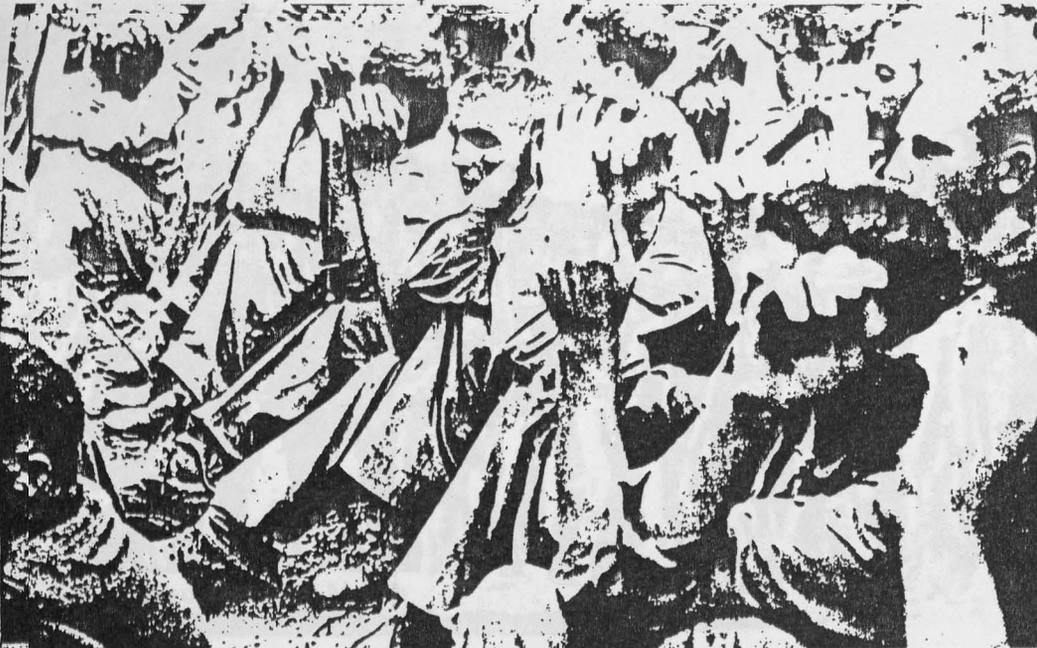


American captives trudging North on the Bataan Death March

ROY PARDUE
HQ. Sqdn.

James W. Ray
17th Sqdn.

T. E. Buchanan
HQ. Sqdn.



The Photo:

April 10, 1942

After 6 hours of the Bataan Death March, we were stopped beside the road and forced to sit close together and they motioned for us to remove all kinds of head coverings--sit close together in the tropical sun and it has been identified as sun treatment; we used sign language for water to drink--the only reply that they indicated was, sit still, sit close together and don't talk.

What is not shown, we were surrounded by machine guns and riflemen with fixed bayonets. A relative, the late Roy Pardue was beaten up and died after we arrived at the POW camp and James Ray, who was originally from Jonesboro, Arkansas, died about 4 months later while in Cabanatuan Camp.

J. R. Pardue

NOTE

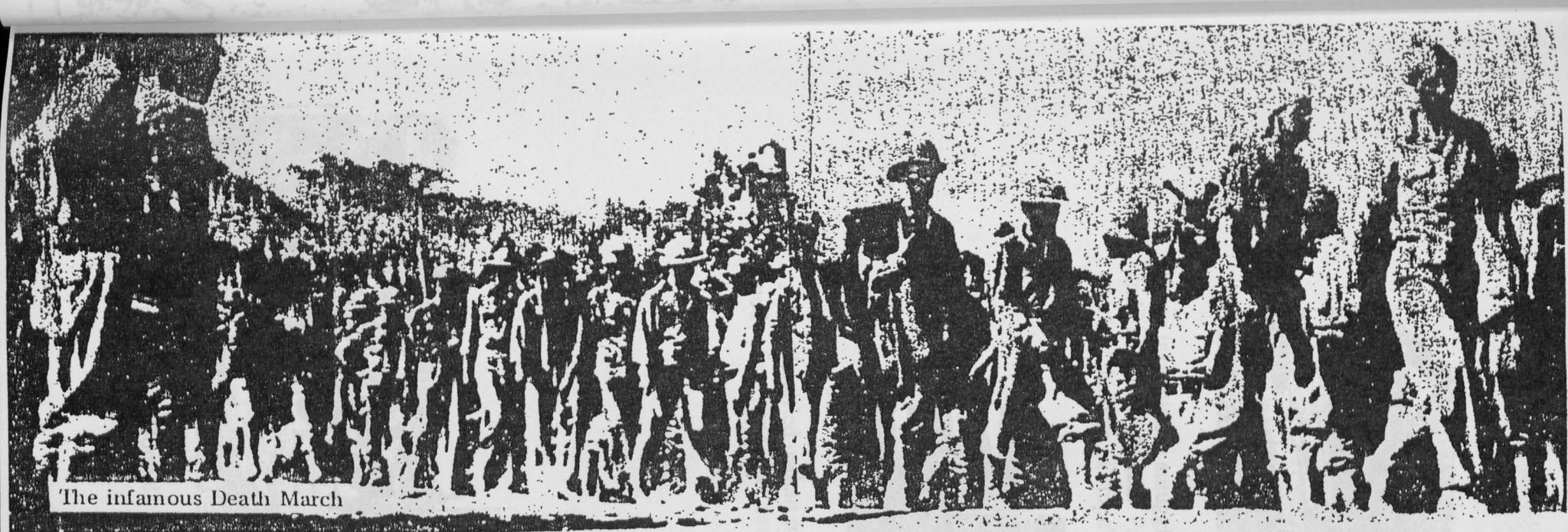
ERRONEOUS INFO ON JAMES RAY. HE DIED WHILE ON A WORK DETAIL WITH GEORGE MCCLELLAND, 17TH SQDN, & WAS BURIED IN THE SCHOOL YARD WHERE THEY WERE CAMPED. "BIG" GEORGE MADE A MAP OF THE BURIAL SITE & GAVE IT TO JAMES'S FATHER AFTER THE WAR. THE REFERENCED SQUADRONS ABOVE WERE ASSIGNED TO THE 27TH BOMB GROUP(L). CONRAD

J. G. PARDUE RESIDES IN MONROE, LA.
L. D. VISTUBA RESIDES IN SAN ANTONIO, TX.
C. CONRAD LANGLEY RESIDES IN BOSSIER CITY, LA.
T. E. BUCHANAN RESIDES IN MANHATTAN, KS.

-over-

USAFI soldiers improvising take cover in a "foxhole" in the face of heavy shelling by the enemy.

Five who survived the march



The infamous Death March

Sigal Corp.



USAFVE soldiers temporarily take cover in a 'foxhole' in the face of heavy shelling by the enemy.



Five who survived the march

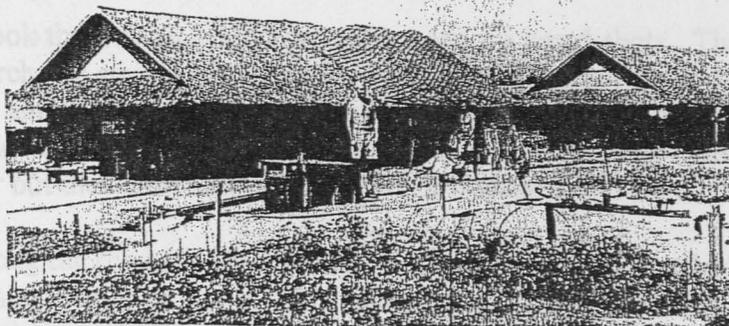
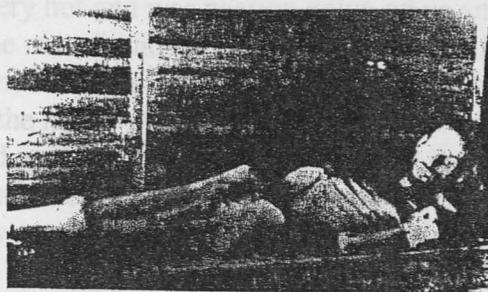


Photo taken with a smuggled camera of a Cabanatuan prisoner and his "Quan" garden. Probably in the Officers' section. Also, a look at the type of "nipa" buildings which are living quarters.



MacArthur Memorial Library

An unidentified patient in the Zero Ward at Cabanatuan where odds of survival were deemed to be nil.



Courtesy of Building Battalion of Bastian

A burial detail at Camp O'Donnell with corpses hoisted in blankets.

them. The guards took them away behind some trees and we heard shots. They were never seen again. After the search, we started walking again. We passed a small creek with flowing water. The guards allowed about 15 of the guys to fill their canteens from this creek. Then they laughed pointing to some dead caraboa lying in the creek a short ways up. The guys didn't care, they had some water but they didn't know what kind of disease they would contract because of this polluted water.

As we walked along the road Jap trucks would pass going South toward Mariveles. As they passed they would take their rifles and see how many prisoners they could hit. One man was hit so hard he fell unconscious. As he was lying there a Jap guard came by with his bayonet on his rifle and bayonneted the man. As we walked by we could see the blood gushing out. We had to continue walking or the same thing would happen to us. I tried to make sure I walked in the middle of the column and when the trucks came by to walk on the opposite side of the road.

We walked until about 10:00AM when we came to an open field. We were told we could rest here. That tropical sun was very hot and was bearing down on us and there was no shade. We had to sit in the hot sun. Some men did not have hats and they felt the heat most of all. The Japs made us sit very close together, brushing up against each other because this made us feel the heat more. Some passed out from the heat. We sat there for about six hours then we were herded back onto the road and started walking again. We walked until dark. We came to a place that had some water. The guards allowed a few to get water and we started to walk again. That was the only water these few lucky men received during the whole six days we were on the march, most received no water at all.

We walked all night nonstop. This was the night of April 11th. We continued walking on into the the next day. About 9:00AM we were again given the sun treatment for the rest of the day. No food or water. When it started to get dark we would again start walking again. This was the day of April the 12th. We passed another small creek which was right next to the road and in a small Barrio. A Barrio is like a small village where some of the Philippino people lived. There were three of us that decided to jump out of line to get some water. We looked up and down the line of marchers and could not see a guard so we ran to the creek and filled our canteens. Some Philipinos were watching us and cheered us as we started to run back to the column. They were even trying to throw cooked rice wrapped in banana leaves to men in the column of marchers. All of a sudden a Jap guard appeared right in front of us. One guy continued to run and got into the column but not before the guard hit him with the butt of his rifle. The guard used the butt of his gun to knock the other guy down and he swung around and knocked me down. He started kicking the both of us and hitting us in the head with the butt of his rifle. We were both bleeding at the head and face. Usually, a wound of this type produces a lot of blood but is not too serious. I was worried that he would shoot me or bayonnet me. Then I managed to stand up at attention. He slapped me across the face and this time I managed to stay on my feet and stay at attention. When these guys slapped it was more like getting punched in the face with their fist. I guess he was satisfied with this because he pushed me back into the column. All the while the Philipinos were yelling and screaming for him to stop. The Jap guard made a few steps toward some of the Philipinos who were closing in on the guard because they were very angry at him. When he turned around to go after the Philipinos I made sure I was way on the other side of the column and walked looking straight ahead. I could see him out of the corner of my eye but he had already turned his attention to the other guy who was now standing at attention. The other guy must have done the same thing I did because the guard

just started walking along with the column. Why he didn't bayonet the two of us I'll never know. The good Lord was on our side and I thanked him for it. I decided I would not try anything like that again.

All of us were in bad shape and while we were walking every once in a while a man would fall by the side of the road. Sometimes a buddy of his would hurry and pick him up and two of the guys would try to hold him up until he might be able to walk again. When they could hold him no longer they had to leave him on the side of the road. The Jap guard came along and clubbed him with his rifle until he was unconscious then shot him.

During the walk we would pass through barrios - small Philippino villages and they would come out and try to give us water or to give us food or fruit. Some were successful. It was a dangerous thing to do because if they were caught by the guards they would be killed. One time a woman holding a baby tried to give one of our guys some food. The Jap guard caught her and bayoneted her then he proceeded to bayonet the baby. Both of them were killed. Incidents of men being killed because they were too weak and fell out of the column continued to happen.

The next day we were searched again, each given some rice in our mess kits or in whatever we had to hold it and were given the sun treatment in a field for a full day. Six days we were on this road walking out of Bataan. On the 15th we came to a town called San Fernando. Here, we stopped at a railway station. It was early morning and still dark. We were put in small box cars, crowded to a point of standing room only and even beyond that. Since it was dark outside, there was no way to see if there were any cracks or openings in the sides of the boxcar to get ventilation and plenty of the guys started to get panicky, believing that we were all going to die by suffocation. The train started moving and as it moved faster we could feel a little air and we were able to keep breathing. As it was, many were sick with malaria and dysentery and weak from lack of food and dehydrated from lack of water. Their pants were soaked with urine and feces and the odor in this closed boxcar was almost unbearable. I say almost because we had to bear it.

As dawn came and the morning darkness began to fade we could see small cracks in the wood sides - not many but enough that we were not going to suffocate from lack of ventilation. Still there were those who passed out. Two died while standing and had to be supported by those around him because there was no room for them to fall to the floor. We rode in this boxcar like this for four hours. This was a narrow gauge railroad and the box cars were small and had low ceilings. With this reduced space and the sun beating down on these boxcars the temperature increased tremendously and it was suffocatingly hot. Then the boxcar started slowing down and came to a stop. We still didn't know if they were going to commit mass murder by killing all of us. Since we were almost all of us the walking dead, we were at a point where we didn't care and had practically given up hope. In the condition we were in we figured it would only be a few days before all of us were dead anyway. Suddenly the train stopped and the boxcar doors opened and we smelled some fresh air. We were told to get out. We were happy to get out of there but we had to leave the dead in the boxcar. We don't know what happened to their bodies because we were again put on a road and started marching again.

We were still not fed any food or water and were fast approaching the end of our endurance. We found out the name of the town where we were let out of the boxcars was Capas. We walked for about six more miles when we came to a very large area with a barbed wire fence

around it. The first thing we saw was a man's body draped on the barbed wire fence. The body was headless. The head was stuck on a post nearby. Needless to say, we were impressed with their ruthlessness. I wondered what the man had done to deserve this fate. We were marched through a gate in this fence, put in a smaller enclosed area and told to sit. After a while a Jap officer, who was introduced to us through an interpreter as the camp Commander, came on a stage set up for him and told us the rules of his camp we were to be enclosed in. The name of the camp was O'Donnell. His name was Colonel Tsuneyoshi. He was on a platform with a conopy over his head so the sun could not get to him while we stood out in the sun. You know we were really interested in hearing a speech at this time when most of the men could hardly stand. He had a bowl of rice, sat down on a chair and started eating. He knew how hungry we were and I guess he was trying some sort of psychological treatment. He yelled and stomped and said that we were not Prisoners of War, we surrendered and were captives and would not be considered a prisoner of war. The Americans and British were not as good as the Japanese, we were inferior and if we did not obey all camp rules we would be shot. He regretted he could not shoot everyone. He said if he were allowed to kill everyone that's what he would do. We must salute all Japanese guards. If we failed to do this we would be shot. We must stay away from the fences. We must work if we expected to get anything to eat. We must bow to all Japanese. We must not try to escape. If we disobeyed the rules we would be shot. All of this was through an interpreter. I learned later that the interpreters name was 1st Lt. Amato. He spoke very good English and told us that he had been educated in Los Angeles in America. After what seemed an eternity, the Jap Colonel stopped talking and strode off the platform to what turned out to be the Japanese headquarters building. I think the only time he came out of the Jap Headquarters building was when he launched his tirade at other incoming groups.

We were turned over to American officers who separated us by groups, such as the Air Corps group, the 31st Infantry group, etc. and each group was brought to their respective barracks. Of course, the officers were separated from the enlisted men. The barracks were Nipa shacks where we could at least rest in the shade and sleep up off the ground. Before we got to our area, General King met us and made a short speech telling us that he was sorry he had to surrender all of the troops but it was necessary to try to save as many of our lives as he could. He also said that he was the one who had surrendered us - we did not surrender - we were surrendered. He had given the order and we had no alternative but to obey his order.

This day was April 15, 1942 and it was about 3:00PM in the afternoon and the sun was hot. It is unknown exactly how many men died on the march, but it is estimated 2,300 Americans and 10,000 Philipinos died on the march from various causes - sickness, beatings and execution. It was really a "March of Death". Air Corps men were put in barracks in the northern side of the area and the total area of all Americans was enclosed with barbed wire. If a man got closer than 10 feet to the barbed wire fence he was shot. Our so called barracks was a building about 75 feet long and about 20 feet wide. It had two tiers and a dirt floor. The lower tier was about two feet off the ground to allow rain water flow under and those situated on the lower tier did not get wet. The upper tier was about five feet above the lower tier. Each tier was made of bamboo poles cut in half and laced in side by side. The roof was made of thatched Nipa which is a sort of grass. The way this grass was put on the roof made it very waterproof. Some of the buildings were not in good shape and had big holes in the roof.

There were details made later to fix the holes in the roofs. The sides of the building had large

windows - about 4' x 6' with hinged mats which were used as window covers and which could be raised to get fresh air or lowered for the heavy rains. When we first were assigned to the barracks we had plenty of room between men. As more and more groups arrived more people were put into the barracks and there were even men sleeping on the ground beneath the barracks. We were not fed this whole day. There was one spigot from a well to get water. If we wanted water we would have to get in line to fill our canteen. The line was very long and the water at the spigot was just a dribble. Sometime we stood or sat in line for 10 hours and then we were allowed to fill only one canteen so a man could not fill a canteen for his buddy who would be too sick to get in line. A man would have to fill his canteen, get out of line and go give some water to his buddy then get back in line to refill his canteen. Men would die waiting in line. The bamboo poles used as 1st and 2nd tier floors was very hard to sleep on especially since there was not that much flesh left on us - the fat was all gone, however, the first few nights it didn't make any difference, we could have slept anywhere. The next day we were given some lugao which is a watery, soupy rice. At least, we got something. Back to the water line and another day of captivity at Camp O'Donnell. One of the rules was for nighttime - we were not to leave the barracks between the hours of 7:00PM and 6:30AM. Well, that rule had to be changed very quickly because so many of the men had dysentery and had to go to the latrines. Their clothes would become soiled and there was no water to wash them so they would wind-up staying and sleeping near the latrines without any pants or shorts on.

The officers were in a separate part of the compound and they had it the easiest of anyone. They seemed to get a greater share of the essentials than enlisted men and of course, even in a prison compound, they put themselves in charge of everything. The veneer of civilization started wearing off of these officers as it did with the enlisted men and there were squabbles, scrounging, stealing and fighting amongst themselves. It was funny, in a way, to see a fight. The two guys were so sick and weak from no food that they could hardly raise an arm to try to hit the other guy. They would make a fist and wildly swing an arm, miss the other guy and fall to the ground. Both of them would wind up on the ground without even landing a blow. There were still angry words but no physical harm was done.

Eventually, one of the barracks was set up to be a hospital even though there was still no medicine given to the medical officers and medics by the Japs. Mess halls had already been set up to cook the lugao. After it was cooked inside the building, we would line up outside with our containers to get our portion of a meal, when it was available, then walk back to our barracks and eat it. After a few days some camotes - sweet potatoes or potato leaves were added to our rice. If a man was not picked out to be on a detail for the group or for the camp he could lay around and sleep and try to recover from the effects of the march. There was always latrines to dig and burial details. One good thing was that the Japs gave us lime to sprinkle on the top and sides of the latrines. The latrines would fill up faster than we could dig them. Even though we put the lime on the latrines the stench was getting worse and the big blue and green blow flies that gathered around the latrines would be all over your mess kit of rice.

When we ate, we'd hold the mess kit in our lap or on the ground, chase the flies away with one hand and eat with the other hand. If we were not fast enough we'd wind up eating some of the blow flies. This is the way much of the dysentery was spread and men were dying every day. Their bodies would be carried out of camp by the stronger men and thrown into a hole which was

used as a mass grave on the side of a hill to the North of the camp. It was a problem getting men strong enough to carry and bury the dead. It was not unusual to have several of the burial detail drop dead from exhaustion and to be thrown into the common grave which they dug for other men. Sometimes a man would drop from exhaustion and be buried before he was actually dead.

One time we picked up a man in the Zero ward that the doctor told us was dead. We picked him up then he suddenly arose and said "Hey, what are you doing to me". They had to move a leg or arm or turn over to show they were alive or else they were buried. The next day that man was dead so he was buried.

I knew that if I didn't do something soon to get away from this camp, I would soon be tossed into the hole, too. The men who brought the bodies up to the hill did not have time nor the strength to cover them fully with dirt. That night we would hear the dogs barking and fighting. The next day, when they went up the hill again with more bodies, they could see where the dogs had been there that night and had been eating on the bodies that were already there. When it rained, the water would wash away the mud and the bodies would come floating up. It turned out to be the monsoon season and when it rained it would rain for days, not hours, and every thing would be soaking wet. That didn't stop the guys from waiting in line to get water or waiting in line by the mess hall to get food but their clothes would be soaking wet. This was a time when a man could wash the filth from his clothes. When the rain stopped their clothes would dry fast because of the heat.

The days and nights started to blend in. Whether it was day or night the idea was to survive. Do anything to go on living - survival of the fittest. Guys would steal from one another just to get something to survive - a mess kit, cigarettes, money - anything they could get to trade for some extra food. Guys I thought would be willing to help others, it seemed like they would be the first ones to break down under pressure, lose the veneer of civilization and do anything to further their own interests. On the other hand, some guys who in regular Army life were always for themselves, were the first to try to help others.

I felt some of my strength returning so I started volunteering for any job I could get. Mostly, I tried to get on the details that went outside of the camp. I had talked to some of the guys that were fortunate to get on a detail going outside of the camp and they told me about how they could get a little extra food from the Philipinos, that the guards were not that harsh if the prisoners worked. Then I was able to get on one of those details. About six of us would get on a truck with a Jap guard and ride into a town. We would load supplies onto the truck to be taken back to the camp then we would unload them. If we worked, the guard would not mind if the Philipinos slipped us some food like fruits or a sweet cocoanut sugar cake.

One day I had just finished working on a detail and I was walking down the road by myself between the American and Philippino camps. A Jap officer was walking along the road in the opposite direction. There was no way I could get off the road before passing him so I decided to just walk on by. When he got close, I gave a little bow and continued walking. He stopped and yelled at me to stop. I turned towards him and stood at attention. He came over to me and slapped me on the face as hard as he could with the back of his hand and knocked me down. I could see a bunch of the Philippino POWs standing by the barbed wire fence on the other side of the road looking to see what was going to happen. I saw some stars for a moment. I slowly got up and stood at attention again. He hit me again and down I went. This time I had blood coming from my mouth. I saw him grab the hilt of his sword and I thought he was going to cut off my head so I got up again and stood at attention. He held onto his sword hilt then he evidently,

decided not to do anything more. He just yelled a few Jap words at me, turned on his heel and walked away. The only reason I could think of for his attack on me was that I did not bow low enough for him or for not saluting him because when I bowed to him I could not salute. If I saluted and bowed, I would be saluting at the ground. After a couple of days, my face was still sore. If my eyes had been closed when he hit me, I'd have sworn he hit me with his fist.

I volunteered to go on a bridge building detail. Anything to get out of this place. They took about thirty of us in trucks to a small town by the name of Garpanin in the province of Tarlac. This was known as the Tarlac detail. We stopped at a school house. This was to be our sleeping place for the next few weeks.

We were close to a river that had a bridge that had been blown up by our own forces. The Japs had already secured the lumber needed to rebuild the bridge. We had to wade into the river with water up to our chests to hold posts while they were pounded into the mud by other guys and Philipinos. Fortunately for us, there were Philipinos working with us. They lived in the village close by. For those who had them, we always wore our web belt with our canteens on when we had to go into the river. Sometimes we would exchange our canteens for the Philipinos' canteens under water so the Japs could not see us make the trade. The Philipinos would fill their canteens with milk or a juice or some good liquid which we would drink and the Japs thought we were drinking water. In this the Philipinos were helping us to recover from the malnutrition from the march. The work was hard, though. Two Japs would lift a 4" x 12" board x 14 ft long onto the shoulders of two American prisoners and we would have to carry it about 50 yards to the bridge site and drop it. Then we would have to maneuver the planks into place so others could do the nailing. I did not mind because my health and strength was improving all of the time especially with the extra food we were getting from the Philipinos. The guards were still rough but not nearly as rough as back in Camp O'Donnell.

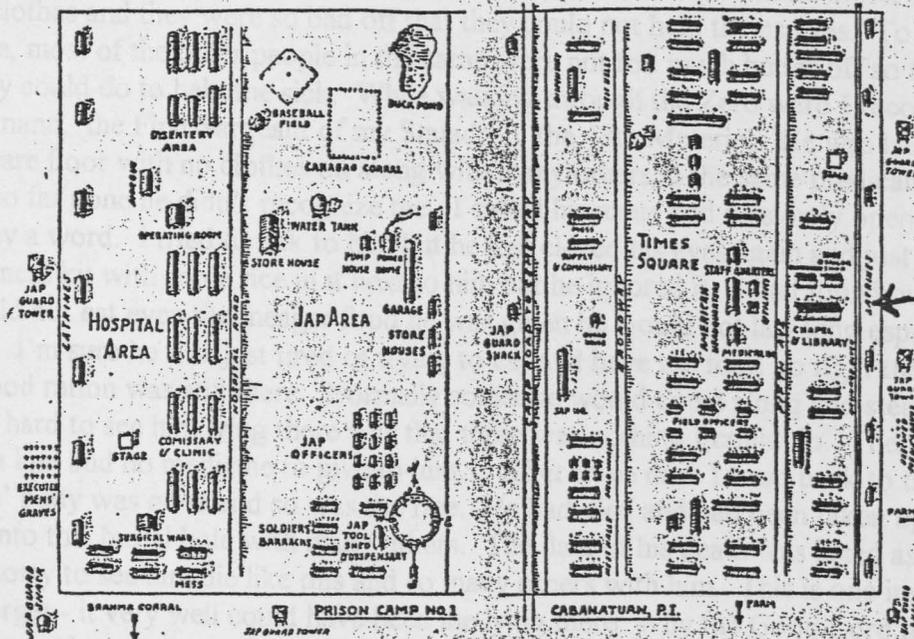
In the school house we slept on the floor. The odor inside the school house was pleasant compared to those barracks at the camp. Only one man had diarrhea. He didn't have it bad so he was able to control it and eventually, he was able to overcome it. We finished the bridge in about three weeks and we were brought back to Camp O'Donnell.

Conditions had improved slightly while we were gone. There was more water available and the food was a little better but still two meager meals per day. The principal diet was rice. The morning meal still was lugao, a watery rice. The evening meal was lugao with either a very small piece of camote, which was like a sweet potato and some potato leaves. We would get a small piece of meat about every three weeks. Cooking water was taken from a creek with scum and algae and was about one mile away. The water was carried to the camp in oil drums on bamboo poles. Even though the Japanese knew the men were sick they insisted on work details. Their motto was that if you didn't work you would not get near as much food as one who worked. It really didn't make any difference because we didn't get anything to eat even if we did work.

The Japs would harrass the men whenever they got the chance especially the sick ones. However, once a man was known by the Japs as one who would work it was a lot easier to get onto one of the better and easier details. My next large detail was that of getting wood to be used by the cooks and by the Japs. About twenty of us were put on a truck with a Jap guard and taken to a heavily wooded area. We were told to get off the truck, then walk into this wooded area.

Some Philippines were already in the woods cutting trees - These trees were mostly what I thought were pine trees and were about twelve to fifteen inches in diameter. The limbs were cut off and the trunks cut to about five feet in length. Two Japs would lift the section of tree on the shoulders of one POW and the POW would carry it about 30 to 75 yards out of the jungle to the truck and dump it in the truck. This wood was for the fires for our cooks. We did this for a week then back to the hell hole called O'Donnell.

One day while I was in camp I walked past the hospital barracks to see if there was anyone I knew. Then I went through the barracks to the Zero ward because 99% of the guys who were in the ward were from the Zero ward. The guys were lying on the bare floor with no blankets and no covers. They were very thin and some were so weak they could not walk.



CABANATUAN PRISON CAMP NO. 1 PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

Somewhere around the latter part of June 1942 we were taken to O'Donnell with all of our belongings - which was a lot. We were taken to Camp I. About 2,500 Americans and about 27,000 Japanese were taken to O'Donnell. Here at Cabanatuan, it was more of the same as in Camp O'Donnell. The barracks were the same type we had before but in a far better condition. This was an area which had been used by the Philippine Constabulary - those Philippines drafted into the military. These men were just drafted not too long before the start of the war and did not have much training. They were just the opposite of the Philippine Scouts who were career soldiers, had been in the army a long time and were very well trained. Cabanatuan was made up of POWs taken from Corregidor and practically all of these men had been well fed and did not have the illnesses as those on Bataan. Camp O'Donnell was made up of men who had made the death march. When the men from Camp O'Donnell walked into the Cabanatuan camp the men who were already in that camp could not believe their eyes. These men coming into camp were so emaciated with weight loss and sicknesses and hunger, they could barely walk. The men already in the camp from Corregidor had been well fed right up to the moment of their capture and surrender and did not have to make the death march.

Some Philipinos were already in the woods cutting trees. These trees were mostly what I thought were pine trees and were about twelve to fifteen inches in diameter. The limbs were cut off and the trunks cut to about five feet in length. Two Japs would lift the section of tree on the shoulders of one POW and the POW carried it about 50 to 75 yards out of the jungle to the truck and dump it in the truck. This wood was for the fires for our cooks. We did this for a week then back to the hell hole called O'donnell.

One day while I was in camp I decided to go through the hospital barracks to see if there was anyone I knew. Then I went through the barracks called the Zero ward. This was called the Zero ward because 99% of the guys who were put into it never came out alive. The guys were lying on the bare floor with no clothes on because they had dysentery and their clothes had become so soiled from urine and feces that they had no more clean clothes. There was no water to be used for washing clothes and they were so bad off that they could not help themselves. To make matters worse, most of the other people in the camp were not too much better off so there was very little they could do to help the sick. While walking through the Zero ward I recognized Charles Fuhmann, the First Sargeant of my Squadron, the 48th Materiel. He was lying on his back on the bare floor with no clothes on along with many others in the same predicament. Charles was so far gone he didn't recognize me. I called his name and he slowly opened his eyes but did not say a word. I tried to talk to him but he just closed his eyes again and just lay there. There was a mess kit with some rice in it next to him but he ignored it. I had found out that when a person would not eat even the meager food he was given he would not last long especially in his condition. I'm sure he was just tired of trying to eat and have the food go right through him. At least his food ration was still there. Normally someone would come along and steal the food. What made it hard to see him lying there was that there was nothing I could do. There was no water to clean him and no medicine to give to him. After three days I went back to the Zero ward. Charles' body was gone and so was the rice. He had died and had been taken up on the hill and dumped into the burial hole with many others. The date of his death was listed as June 11, 1942. I was sorry to see him die like this and so many others with him. This is one instance that I will never forget - it very well could have been me lying there. Why the Good Lord took all of these good men and passed over me and allowed me to live to return home to my loved ones I will never understand.

Somewhere around the latter part of June 1942 we were taken out of O'Donnell with all of our belongings - which was not very much - by truck and sent to Cabanatuan Camp I. About 2200 Americans and about 27,000 Philipinos died in Camp O'Donnell. Here, at Cabanatuan, it was more of the same as in Camp O'Donnell. The barracks were the same type we had before but in a little better condition. This was an area which had been used to train the Philippine Constabulary - those Philipinos drafted into the military. These men were just drafted not too long before the start of the war and did not have much training. They were just the opposite of the Philipino Scouts who were career soldiers, had been in the army a long time and were very well trained. Cabanatuan was made up of POWs taken from Corregidor and practically all of these men had been well fed and did not have the illnesses as those on Bataan. Camp O'Donnell was made up of men who had made the death march. When the men from Camp O'Donnell walked into the Cabanatuan camp the men who were already in that camp could not believe their eyes. These men coming into camp were so emaciated with weight loss and sicknesses and hunger, they could barely walk. The men already in the camp from Corregidor had been well fed right up to the moment of their capture and surrender and did not have to make the death march.

In the month of June 600 died and in the month of July 800 died. Ninety five percent of the dead were those who had made the death march and had come from Camp O'Donnell. From May to early October of 1942 I continued to get on details and was able to leave the camp often. In camp I ate whatever food was given to me because those who did not eat, died. We still had the big green blow flies that would alight on any food they could find. When we got our allotment of rice in our mess kit it had to be covered. When eating the rice everybody would inevitably swallow some blow flies. We decided to make the most of it and just say that we were getting a little extra protein.

I passed some of the time by copying an Air Force picture that was on my wallet - empty wallet - onto the lid of my mess kit. It was a picture of an airplane and an American Flag and some other things which I forget. I also carved my girl friend, Nellie's name all over it. I still had that mess kit until 1993 when I gave it to one of my sons. Whether they still have it I don't know. The way I could make the picture in the aluminum mess kit was to take the mess kit knife point, jab it into the aluminum and turn it from side to side all the time moving it forward. That way I could make a deep line embedded into the aluminum. I carved anything I could think of until there was no more room.

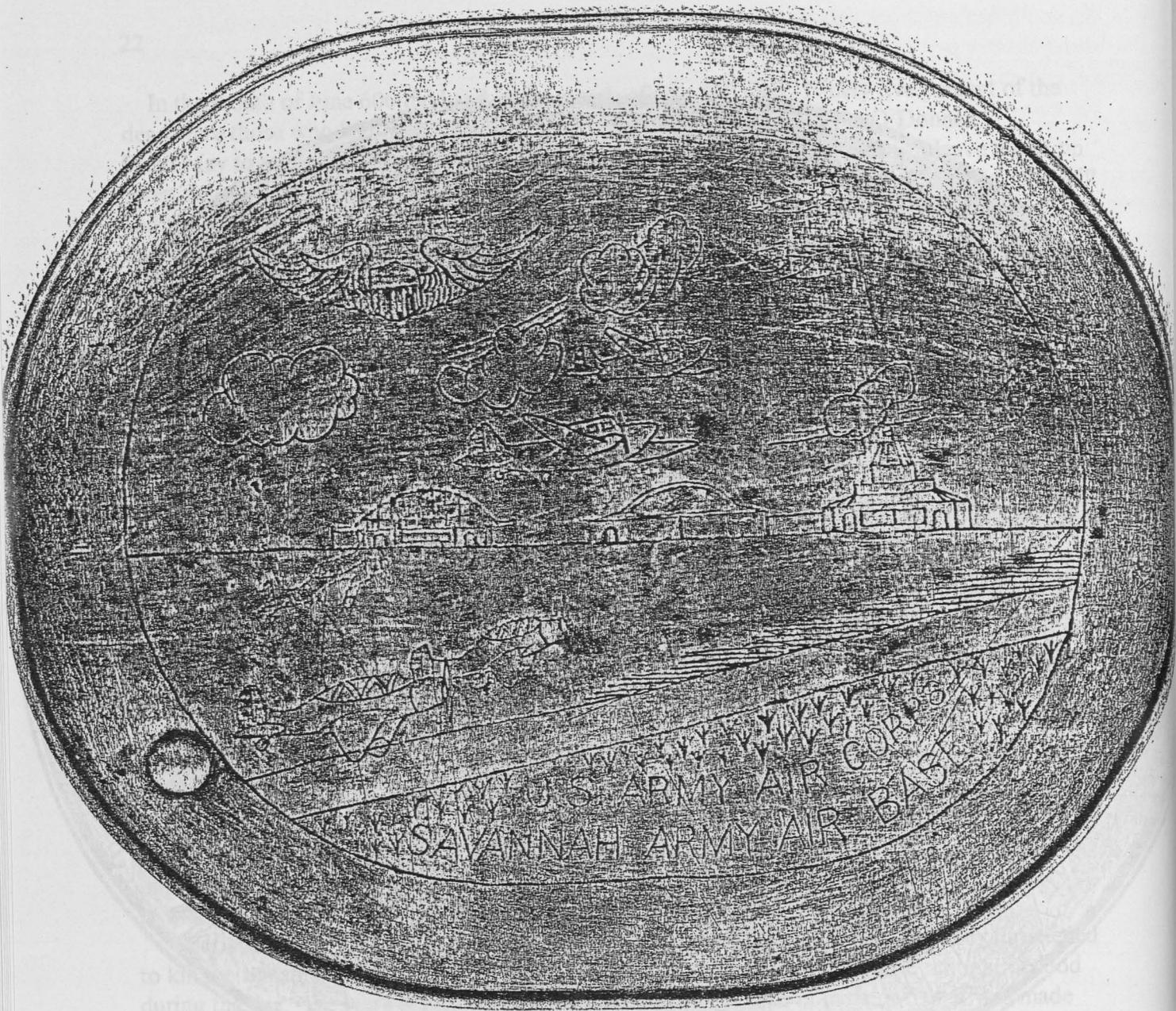
Three men escaped. They were caught a few days later and were brought to the road between the Jap section and the American section close to the barbed wire fence so most all of the men could see what was happening. The Japs made each of the men dig their own graves. After the holes were deep enough they were made to kneel beside the hole. Then a Jap officer pulled his sword from the scabbard at his side, raised it in the air over his head with two hands and severed the POWs head from his body. The head fell into the hole and his body was then kicked into the hole. When the head was cut off the blood came gushing out of his neck then it disappeared into the hole. This was done with all three of the men who had tried to escape. Most of the men, at one time or another, thought about escaping. However, most of the men were so weak from malnutrition and sick with malaria, dysentery and most of all, had no place to go. Quite a few of the Philipinos were starting to sympathize with the Japs and they would turn an American over to the Japs if he escaped and asked to be hidden.

The Japs started forming groups of ten. If one of the ten men tried to escape they threatened to kill the remaining nine men. This also was a deterrent to escape. Everyone thought of food during the day. We were constantly hungry. If there was a piece of meat or fish, it was made into a watery soup and we never got to see the meat or fish. The prime food was rice. Even this had it's drawbacks. Most of the time the rice contained small rocks, wood splinters, mouse droppings or it was molded. The soup that was served had rice, camote (potato) vine leaves and sometimes grass to make it look green.

There was a main road running between the Japanese compound and the American POW compound and we were close enough that we could see into each others compound. There was a barbed wire fence around the American POW compound. The Jap enlisted men would line up in two rows and face each other toe to toe. The men on one side would start by slapping the men opposite them in the face and the slapped men would have to stand rigidly at attention. Then the slapped men would get their turn to slap the first men in the face. Sometime the slap would be so hard as to knock one man to the ground. When this happened the man that fell to the ground would immediately jump up and stand rigidly at attention. They would keep this up for at least



The top side of my mess kit lid. The outline of the State of Louisiana was on an empty wallet. All printing was my own done with the point of my mess kit knife in the prison camp of Cabanatuan in the Philippine Islands.

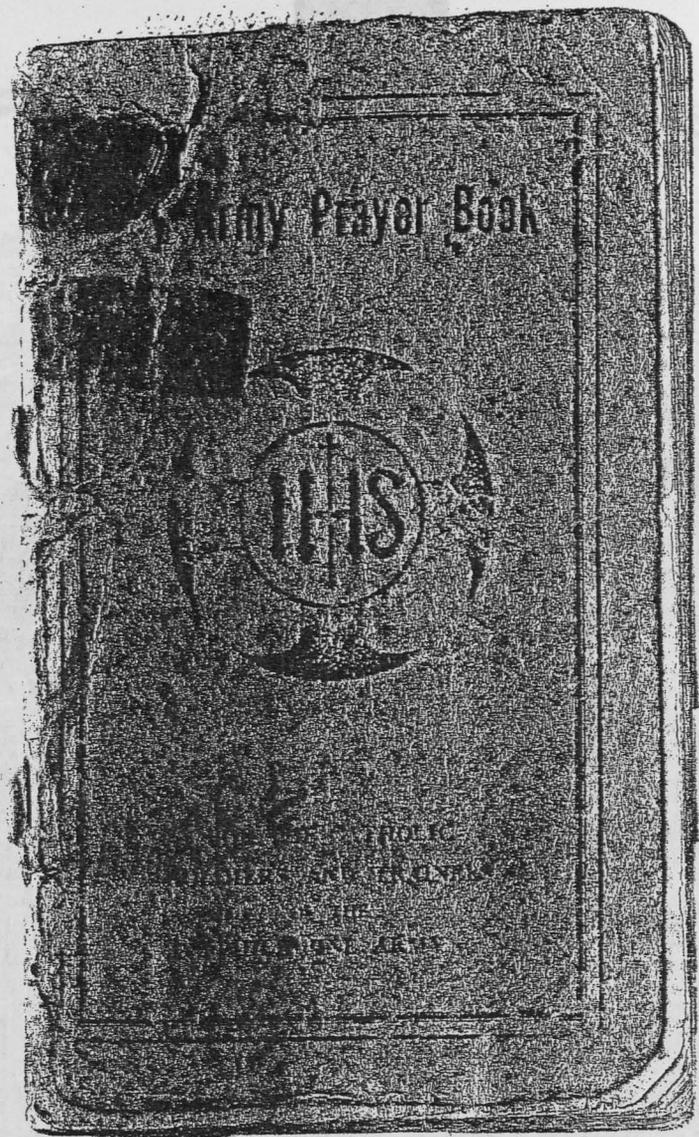


to be... during the... into a watery... had it's draw... droppings or it was... sometimes grass to make it look green.

There was a main road running between the Japanese compound and the American POW compound and we were close enough that we could see... The under side of my mess kit lid. This picture was also on the wallet which I had purchased while I was stationed at the Savannah Air Base in Savannah, GA.



This printing was done on the under-side of the mess kit. The sentiment was to my fiancee, Melva "Nellie" Tracey.



This is a prayer book for the Catholic Religion which was issued to me when I arrived in the Philippine Islands. I managed to keep it with me throughout my internment with the Japanese.



My Warren Easton Boys High School graduation ring.

30 minutes - slapping each other in the face. The purpose of this was that if one of the enlisted men would do something an officer didn't like, the officer would slap the enlisted man. And woe to that enlisted man should he ever cringe or show fear or if he fell, not to get up immediately and stand at attention. If an officer hit a man and he fell and did not get up right away or flinched the officer would beat the man severely. So the purpose of the Jap drill of hitting each other was to prepare and train them to accept an officers' blow. Many times we saw a Jap officer strike an enlisted man and knock him to the ground. But the man would jump up and stand at attention. Most of the time when the enlisted man jumped up and stood at attention, the officer would choose not to strike him again but to yell a few choice words then walk away. This particular drill was done by the Jap enlisted men every day.

Our latrines were slit trenches - a narrow hole dug about six feet deep and and about six feet long so 2 or 3 men could use it at the same time. It was narrow enough so a man could stand straddled over the hole with his pants down. He would squat down to do what he had to do. In digging the hole, the mud taken out was thrown right on the side of the hole so it was not as stable as the solid ground. Rains had become a problem. There was no roof over the slit trenches because they filled up fast with urine and feces and rain water and had to be filled in and new holes dug. When it rained it came down in torrents and lasted for days. The rain did help keep down the blue flies so we could eat. However, when it rained and a man had to use the slit trench the mounds of dirt alongside became very slippery. Every so often a man would slip into the slit trench and had to be pulled out. This was very demeaning to the individual but was very funny to others who happened to be nearby. We had to make the best of a very bad situation. To take the mind off of food and freedom and illness we would just lie down on our bamboo space in the barracks during rest time and just listen to the rain coming down on the roof and imagine ourselves being free again and talk about food and women. This was not always the case. When we worked it was very hard work. Staying alive was very hard work. One could never tell when an angry guard would come by while we were working and decide to pull one of us away from the work and get bayoneted because his officer got on his case about something or the war was not going right for Japan or any other trivial thing. I had been sick and had run a temperature but not as sick as many of the guys were. I wouldn't go the the hospital to see a Jap doctor unless I was really in a bad way. I worked, slept, ate, had a little spare time once in a while and the days were slipping by.

One time the Japanese had all of the men to fill out a form on paper. The form contained a lot of questions about what we did in civilian life and what kind of schooling we had. We had no idea what this was for. In early October of 1942, I was put with a group of about 1600 men. We were told to take all of our gear and were put on trucks and taken to Pier 7 at a dock in the harbor of Manila - a ride of about 60 miles. We arrived very late at night at the dock and were given a meal of rice and fish heads. The next day, October 6, 1942, we were told to get up and start walking. There was a lot of confusion and we had no idea of where they were taking us or what they were going to do with us. They lined us up and we started walking alongside a large, old Jap freighter that was docked at that Pier 7. To our amazement we were directed to a gangplank which ended up on the ship.

The name of the ship was the Tottori Maru. We later found out that all of the Jap ship's names ended with the word Maru. We walked on the deck towards one of the ship's holds. I think there were four of these holds on the ship. A hold is the place where cargo is stowed when the ship normally carried regular cargo. We passed a lot of Jap soldiers who were also on the

ship. At the hold we were instructed to climb down a steel ladder down into the hold and were told we would be in this hold for some time and to make the best of it. All of the men were put into two holds. There were two other holds which were filled with Jap soldiers. It seemed we always got a Jap interpreter that had been educated in America and spoke perfect English. There were two lights in the hold so we could at least see where we were. The trouble is we didn't like where we were. We were very crowded and barely had enough room to lie down. It was the same old thing again - crowded next to each other like we were cattle. I think even cattle had more room than we did. After we were all on board and in the holds we felt the ship starting to move. We still had no idea where we were going. There was no bedding or anything to lie on except the bare floor of the hold. There were no facilities to relieve oneself in the hold. There were buckets that the men used to relieve themselves into but these buckets would fill very fast and all of the area around the buckets would be filled with feces and urine.

Eventually the buckets would be drawn up by rope and the contents dumped over the side of the ship. While the buckets were being hauled up some of the contents spilled over and would splash on the men below. The veneer of civilization was wearing very thin. There was shoving and hitting and fights - sometimes trying to get out of the way and sometimes trying to steal someone else's belongings or space.

The latrine that was on deck was a primitive outhouse which was built to hang over the side of the ship. There were many who had diarrhea, dysentery and malaria. If a person was down in the hold and had to defecate he had to climb up the ladder to use the latrine on the deck or he had to use one of the buckets that were already in the hold. Only a few men were allowed to be on deck at the same time to use the latrine or to try to get water. If an outsider could have looked down on the scene he would have laughed to see five or six guys sitting down on this small bench with their pants down and their asses hanging over the side of the ship.

The POWs were not allowed to mingle with the soldiers. The soldiers had their particular area away from the POWs. A line would form to use the latrine but sometime a man could not wait and had to defecate right on the deck. Needless to say there were many in the holds that were not able to make it up to the deck to use the latrine so they had to do their thing right on the floor of the hold. After we were under way more men were allowed on the deck in a very small area. There was very little water to drink and none to take a bath. Drinking water was taken from an open top water tank on the deck next to the latrine. One time the water started tasting odd so the Japs got one of their men to climb up to look in the water tank. He pulled out a pair of pants. Someone who had messed in his pants had thrown it into the water tank. Since that was the only water we had, we had to drink it or do without.

When the hot sun beat down on the deck of the ship it made the heat in the holds almost unbearable and it was very hard to do without water. We were fed rice and crackers or a very watery soup once each day. On the morning of October 9, 1942, after we had sailed a few days out of Manila, I happened to be on the deck. Some of the guys were pointing at something in the water. They thought it was a big fish and was headed right for the ship. As it got closer we could see it was a torpedo. The Captain turned the ship sideways and faced the coming torpedo and it went right past us. Another torpedo was coming right for us but the Captain slowed the ship down to where the torpedo missed us and went right across the bow of the ship. Another torpedo was coming right at us but suddenly it just stopped, went down and disappeared. All of

the guys that were on deck were yelling and running around out of the area we were supposed to stay in and saying we would be blown up. We couldn't believe that US submarines were shooting torpedoes at us. The Japs got their guns and threatened to kill every POW on the ship if they didn't calm down. Fortunately, these Jap soldiers were not like the guards on the death march or we would have been shot immediately. A couple of days after the torpedos incident the freighter pulled into Taipei on the Island of Formosa. This was around the 11th of October. All of the POWs were allowed to get off of the ship onto a pier and were washed down with hoses. The water from the hoses felt great. We could take off our shorts and clean them. We all got back on board and we soon left Formosa and headed North again. The ship pulled into a small island which the Japs were using as an air base. The ship had mechanical problems and we stayed here for almost three weeks. We were not allowed to get off of the ship. I spent my 21st birthday, on an old tub of a Jap freighter near an island in the China Sea.

On October 30th, we left the island and sailed north. The weather started to change. In the first part of November we docked at the port of Pusan, Korea. We had lost twenty men on the trip who were buried at sea. It was cold and we were still wearing the clothes we wore in the Philippines which were mostly shorts and tattered sleeveless shirts. The wind was blowing hard which made it feel colder. We got off the ship and lined up on the docks. We were freezing. Then, amazingly, the Japanese gave each man a Jap pants and coat. We were grateful to get these clothes. We were marched over to a waiting train and got aboard. There were about 1200 men that got off of the ship. The rest stayed on and were taken to Japan.

The train pulled out and we headed in a northerly direction. We were on the train a couple of days. One thing I remember about riding on the train was that we had enough room in each car that we were able to sit down while we were riding. Also, I remember there was a train going in the opposite direction when we were pulling out of the station that was filled with Jap soldiers and they were so crowded they had to stand.. When we pulled into the station and got off the train the weather was really cold and there was snow on the ground. We got on trucks and went a few miles to another Prisoner of War camp. As we walked through the gates to this camp we wondered what next. It was night time and the date was November 11, 1942 and the temperature was 30 degrees below zero Fahrenheit. While we were in this camp I remember looking at one Fahrenheit and one Centigrade thermometer and both of them were equal. There is only one temperature that this will occur and that is at 40 degrees below zero and that is what the temperature in the camp was.

The first night we entered the camp, as we walked in we were sectioned off in groups. The first group went to the first barracks, the second group to the second barracks and so on. I was in the third group and went to the third barracks. These were old barracks where previously Japanese soldiers had trained. There were about 100 to each barracks. These barracks were not like the ones we lived in in the Philippines. These were built for the cold weather. Half of the building was below ground level and half was above the ground. There were wood platforms on each side raised above the ground floor about two feet. There was an entrance in the front, a side entrance then another section in the back with a back entrance. Both sections were similar and each had a wood/coal stove in the middle of an aisle about six feet wide.

As we walked into the barracks each man took his place on the wood platform. This is where we would sleep. However, we were not worried about where we would sleep, we were now worried about keeping warm. The interior of the barracks was slightly warmer than the 20 degrees below on the outside but it was still freezing inside. In each section there were about 50

men, 25 men to a side and 50 men to a section. After we were in the barracks for a short while, the Japanese started bringing in blankets. To the amazement of all, each man was given six blankets and we had an area of about four feet wide for each individual. There was a small shelf above our head along the wall for personal items. The first night we put these blankets down and crawled into them with two on the bottom and four on top. Believe it or not, we did start to get warm and we slept. The next day each barracks was given a small allotment of coal in a coal shuttle to build fires in the stoves. We actually started to warm up a little. After a few days everyone was given a number starting with the first man in the first barracks then on down the line. My number was 277. In Japanese it translates to "ni-nanna-nanna". We were eventually given wooden tags with our number on it and we had to wear this tag at all times so we could be easily identified.

After a couple of days of getting everything straightened out in the new camp and trying to get acclimated to the new weather conditions and our new surroundings, we were told that we would be split up into groups and that each group would go to a different place to work. One group would be going to a saw mill, one group would be going to a tannery and one group would be going to a steel mill. We found out the name of this city originally was Mukden, Manchuria and the Japanese now called it Hoten. We also knew that very few people around this part of the world spoke English and our chances of escaping were practically non-existent. I was in the group going to a machine tool factory. The remainder of the men would stay in camp to take care of all camp details. There were about 150 men in my group. We were all issued a little more clothing because the weather was so cold. The days were still cold. The temperature warmed up a little but day and night was still below zero.

After about a week the groups started moving out to their respective jobs. My group lined up, our numbers were checked off, we had our guards and we marched out of the gate of the compound. The compound had only the one main gate and was surrounded with two rows of barbed wire separated by about twenty feet. We were not to go within ten feet of the inner fence of barbed wire. We marched out of the compound with our guards and we were wondering what would this factory look like and what would we be doing. Snow was still on the ground and as we walked frost would build up around our noses where we breathed. Those men who had beards and moustaches would get a build up of ice on their moustaches. We walked for about four miles and came to this huge factory. It was just like a large factory in the USA. A barbed wire fence had been built around the factory with a main gate. We walked through the main gate and employees of the factory took a certain number of individuals to work for them at their respective locations inside the factory. The name of the factory was MKK - Manchouko Kibitshi Kaishi. It was a machine tool factory where they actually made new machine tools such as lathes, radial drills, shapers and so on. There were large buildings which had sand floors and at one corner were machines of all types. Most of the machines were American made. There were Milwaukee table drills, Cleveland shapers, extra large Gray planers and so on. These were used to make other precision machine tools and from those, airplane parts were made.

I was in a group taken into the factory office where we were to clean the office and help with office work. I was also put at a drafting table with all drafting equipment and was expected to make drawings of layouts in the plant. I was given four hours to work on drawings and clean the office. When I finished with that I was to go outside and assist the other groups. Each man had

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MY POW NUMBER WAS 277 AND HERE ARE VARIOUS
NUMBER TAGS WHICH I WORE AT VARIOUS PRISON CAMPS



the colored tag with their number on it that was given to him by the Japanese at the prison camp. An additional tag was given by the factory people so they could identify where a POW was supposed to work. There were about five of us working in the office. We were allowed to go visit areas in the factory. The job of the groups outside was to go into the buildings surrounding the office building and to try to make concrete floors and to position the machinery according to blue prints. There were piles of cement, piles of sand, piles of gravel and a bucket for water. They got the idea of what they would be doing at this factory. During this cold weather we were glad to be working inside the buildings. There were some digging jobs out in the open but with the temperature below zero the ground was frozen down about five feet so digging with shovels was out of the question.

Around noon we were brought together into a mess hall at the factory. The POWs at the prison camp had to prepare the food as they did in O'Donnell and Cabanatuan and the food was brought to the factory for us to eat. This time, instead of rice or a watery lugao we were fed a type of maize. Maize is a grain used to feed farm animals. It was purpleish in color and when water was added it turned into a kind of purpleish soup. We were also given some water to drink and some bread made into a bun. We had one hour to eat and rest then go back to work. When I worked in the office, we were actually working next to Japanese men.

There was a Chinese girl who worked in another department - her name was Cheng Hua Lan. I passed her a few times and it got to the point where she would slip me a bun sometimes - a piece of dark bread. The Chinese liked the Americans but the Japanese did not. After we were liberated I actually got to meet her at the house of an old German (he was 72 years old) we met. His name was Mr. Schirer. He was very nice to us and felt sorry for us that we had been prisoners of war.

At five o'clock we stopped working, lined up inside the gate, were counted off and when all were accounted for, we marched out of the gate to go back to our camp. We had to walk another four miles back to the camp and happy to get into our respective barracks. The men had been picked out of many different barracks. The Japanese running the camp had obtained some coal one scuttle was issued to each barracks. After our walk in the snow, having even a little heat in the barracks made it feel better. Also knowing that we had those six blankets made it even better. This was our routine day in and day out for six days each week. I did not have a calendar nor did I keep track of the days. When they told me to get up and go to work, I went. When they told me it was time to eat, I ate. When they told me to go to bed, I was happy to do that. We spent our first Christmas in Mukden - not by doing anything out of the ordinary or getting any extra rations of food but by remembering bygone Christmases with our families. This would be the first Christmas of three spent in this area and as a prisoner.

One time I remember getting a tooth ache so after we got back from work I went to a hospital barracks which had been set up by our doctor and our medics while we were at the different places of work. We still had people who were plenty sick and still had men who were dying. There was one barracks that was used for a morgue. The men that died were put into this barracks because the ground was frozen and graves could not be dug. They just had to wait until the weather turned warm. The first night we got into camp 50 men died from sickness, malnutrition and exposure to the cold.

Well, I went to the hospital barracks to find out what could be done about my tooth. A man who was a medical corpsman in the Air Corps, Jim Brown, looked at my tooth and told me it should come out. He said he would pull it but that he did not have anything to give me to deaden

the pain. The tooth ache was so bad I told him to go ahead. I knew before my trip to the hospital barracks that they did not have any novacain or any pain killer and that this was the way it had to be done. He sat me down in a chair and told me to hold on. He used an instrument to push my gums down from around my tooth. I wasn't enjoying this at all. Then he took the forceps and locked it around my tooth and started twisting and moving it from side to side. I thought I was going to pass out when he gave it a hard yank and out it came. Needless to say, I was relieved the tooth was out and this ordeal of pain was over. He folded a piece of cloth and put it in my mouth in the hole where my tooth was to stop the bleeding and told me to bite down on the cloth. He gave me the tooth to keep. I thanked him for his efforts and walked back to my barracks kind of wobbly. When I was back in the USA I had a tooth pulled but the dentist had deadened the area first so that I didn't feel the pain. However, afterwards it took a long time for the novacain to wear off and the jaw was swollen for some time. This time there was no after effects from novacain and no swelling of the mouth. Even so, I think I still preferred to have the area of the tooth deadened if I had to do it again. As it turned out, I did have to have another tooth pulled while I was a POW and I had to go through the ordeal over again of not having anything to deaden the area.

We walked to the factory in all kinds of weather: snow, rain, sleet and heat. There were men in the barracks that smoked and cigarettes were at a premium. I didn't smoke so I told some of my friends that if I saw any butts on the ground while I was walking to and from the factory I would pick them up and give it to them. The Manchurians and Chinese and Japanese living around the area were very poor and I never once found a cigarette butt on the ground.

There was an incident I recall that happened during our morning and evening four mile walk. One time during the morning walk to the factory there was snow on the ground. We passed by a poor old chinese man standing out in the snow. He was not doing anything, just standing there looking at us walk by. That evening we passed the old man. He was still in the same spot but he was sitting down in the snow. None of the villagers would help the old man. The next morning when we passed we were looking for him and saw him lying in the snow. He was dead. When we came back, some of his clothes had been removed from his body and his shoes were missing. The next morning when we passed his leg was missing - the dogs had been eating on his body. One time his head was lying a short distance from his body. As we passed there each time various parts of the body had dissappeared until there was no more left of the body. There was no blood because the body had frozen. There was an old saying when someone got in a bad situation that "they didn't have a Chinaman's chance". Here we had the unfortunate chance of seeing the truth of this saying.

We walked to and from the factory for about seven months until July 29, 1943. We were then told to get all of our belongings - that we were leaving this camp and the barracks and that we were going to another camp with new barracks. We actually rode this time. We took our gear, boarded trucks and were taken to the new camp which was only a quarter of a mile from the factory where I was working - MKK. There was one main gate with a brick wall all around the camp. Inside the wall about 20 feet from the wall was a barbed wire fence and there were four guard towers that were manned at all times with machine guns. There were three main brick barracks for the POWs, one barracks for the Japs, a hospital barracks, a mess hall with cooking facilities for our cooks, a small building used for a barber shop and a bath facility. The bath

facility consisted of a covered open air area with two large wooden vats about 8 feet in diameter. To take a bath a man removed all of his clothes, stood by the vat and dipped a large wooden mug - actually a small wooden pot - into warm water in the vats. He would then wet his body, soap down then use the mugs to dip water out of the vat to get the soap off. Then he would wipe and get dressed. This was all out in the open air and this procedure was done no matter what the temperature was. Many of the men would not take a bath when it was very cold like 10 degrees F. No one took a bath when the temperature was below zero.

The living barracks were numbered 1,2 and 3. The Air Corps men were put into barracks no. 2. The barracks consisted of two floors with about 6 stalls on each side of an 8-foot aisle running down the middle of the floor front to rear. Each stall had two wooden double decker bunks with a 10-foot space between them with a table and benches and close to the wall was a large iron cylindrical coal heater about 5 ft in diameter and about 6 -7 ft tall. They were called "Petschukas". The lower bunks slept about six men as did the upper bunk.. There was a ladder in the middle and on the end of each double bunk so each stall slept 24 men. At the rear of each barracks were facilities to shave, with running water and a toilet area. The toilets were like slit trenches in the wooden floor and a large open area beneath the floor about six feet deep and there were about six of these slit trenches. To do his thing a man had to straddle the hole and lower his pants and squat. In the summer time there were native people who came into the camp with their wagons pulled by a horse. We called them the "Honey Wagons" because they removed the waste matter from beneath the slit trenches. These people then took the waste matter and spread it out on their fields to grow crops and vegetables. That was one reason all vegetables had to be boiled or cooked before eating. We could get very sick by eating raw vegetables. In the winter the "Honey Wagons" did not come because everything was frozen. The toilet area was not heated.

After many uses of one of the slit trenches in the winter the waste matter would freeze as it hit the bottom of the pit then each successive time that slit trench was used the waste would pile up until it was right up at the top of the slit trench and the man could no longer squat without hitting it with his rear so he had to use another slit trench. Urination was into the slit trench. There were no walls or partitions separating the slit trenches or from a person trying to wash hands or shave. There was a wall between the living space and the latrines. Each bunk had a narrow shelf just above where the man's head was when lying down. This was used for storing his personal gear the same as it was in the old barracks.

In the winter we were given one coal skuttle full of coal per day - sometimes. Once a fire was started in the furnace, we didn't put it out but it was 'banked'. This means that the live coals were covered with dead and burned coals from the edges so that in the morning there were still live coals in the furnace. Then in the morning it was easily started by pushing aside the cinders so new coals could be put on top of the live coals. We weren't toasty warm but it kept us from freezing - when they gave us some coal, that is. One time when the temperature outside was like 20 degrees F below zero, I devised a way to keep my hands warm. I cut off the four corners of one of my blankets, took each piece and made an outline of my hand, including tracing around the fingers. Then, with two pieces for each hand, I cut a strip from the blanket about three-quarters of an inch wide and long enough to go around all of my fingers. I sewed these strips to each one of the fingers and wound up making myself a nice pair of gloves. Since they were made from a GI blanket they were pretty warm. I had a small needle and thread kit which I received when I arrived in the Plilippines and which I carried with me through-out all of the

searches on the "march". This was something the Japanese did not confiscate. I still have and use kit this today.

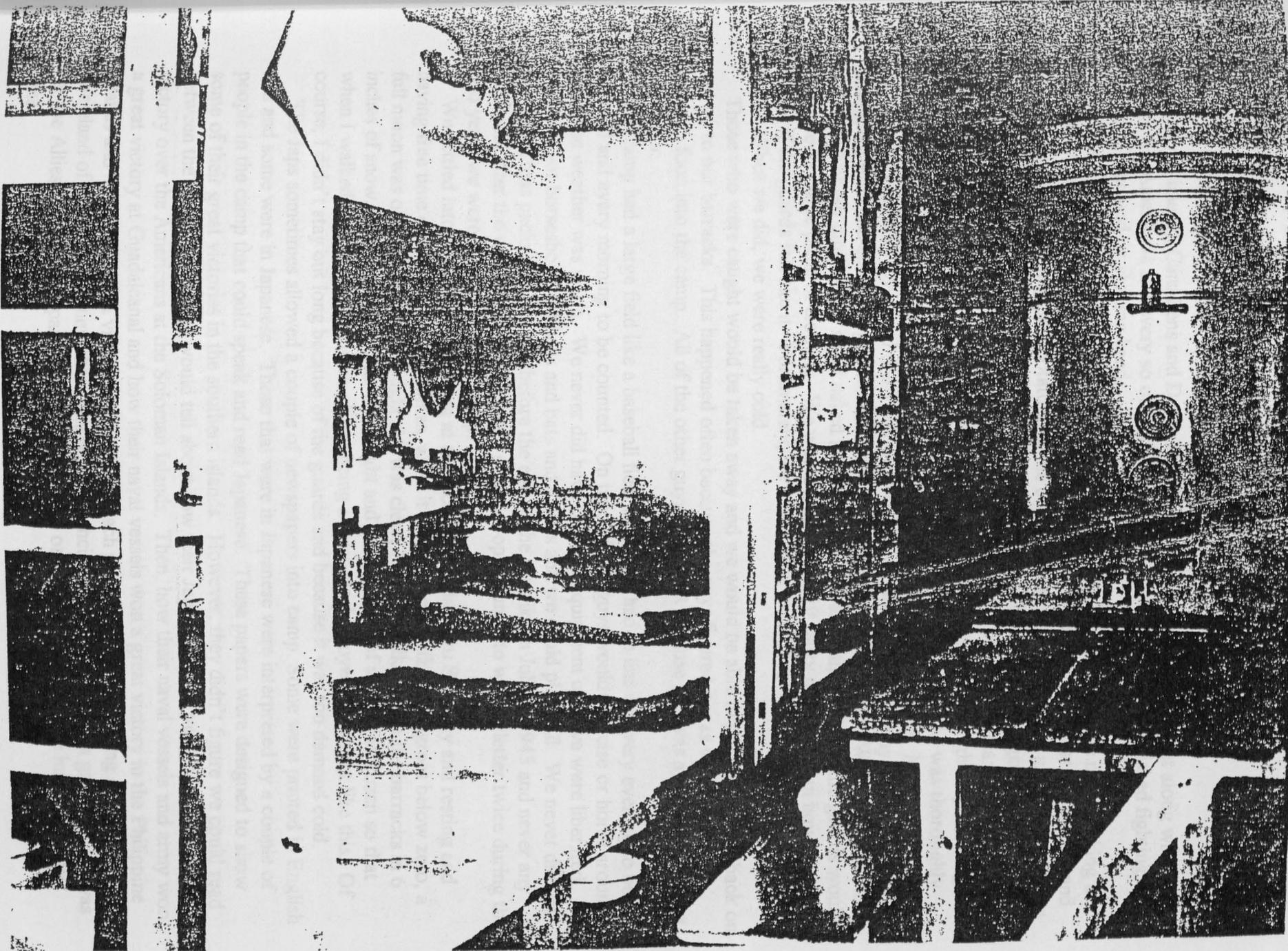
We still had to go to the factory to work but had only a short distance to walk. Those of us who were going to the factory would line up outside near the guard house to be counted. We did this whether it was snowing, sleeting, raining, bright sun or 30 degrees below zero Fahrenheit. Then two guards would take us out through the main gate, take us about one-half mile to the factory main gate and turn us over to the factory guards who took us to the job we would be doing that day. We had a half hour for lunch and during that half hour, after we finished eating, we could lie around or do exercise when it was warm, or huddle around a wood burner stove to keep warm when it was cold.

Some of the automobiles run by factory personnel were wood burners. There was a large cylindrical steel vertical tank on the back of the car and was filled with small wooden blocks about two inches square. There was also a bin on the back of the car to hold the wooden blocks. A fire was started in the tank then the cover was put on the tank with holes to give the fire just enough oxygen to keep the fire smouldering and emitting smoke fumes. These fumes were channelled to the engine and provided the propulsion for the car. It was interesting to see Cadillacs and Lincolns as wood burners. There was a lumber pile where the wood was cut into the small blocks. One day while we were working, some of the men were cutting the wood blocks when they discovered a newborn baby in the lumber pile. Evidently, one of the local women gave birth to a baby which they did not want and put it over the 6 ft barbed wire fence and lowered it into the wood pile. I don't think the Mother was ever found but the baby was alive and treated and taken away. These women were amazing. They would be working and didn't even look pregnant. Then they would go off by themselves, have the baby, give it to the factory people to hold until they finished work that day, then go back to the work they were doing before they had the baby.

One thing which the POWs did about three times was called the disappearing machine. They were put inside one of the buildings to make a concrete floor. There were all of the ingredients to make concrete inside the building and, of course there were all of these new American machines in there and a lot of machine parts. When the men were put into the building the Japs would put a guard on the outside of each of the four entrances to the building. Since the Japs were guarding the doors from the outside, they figured none of the POWs could escape without their knowing it. There was no guard on the inside of the building so the men would dig a large hole in the sandy soil, use the overhead crane to put one of the machines into the hole, cover it up with sandy mud then mix concrete and pour it over the spot where the machine was dumped.

The factory people never could figure out where or why their machines were disappearing. Besides putting a whole machine under concrete, there were a lot of gears, steel shafts and other machine parts that turned up missing. The Japs didn't know they were in the concrete, they could never figure out what had happened to the missing parts. This was known to all the POWs as 'sabotage' and they got away with it. Our food was still the maize which was a grain that was usually fed to horses and cattle. Sometimes we were given a type of bread which was not too bad - it did partially fill our stomachs. This was given at the factory and at the camp.

The groups that worked at the sawmill usually lived on the grounds of the sawmill. The same for the tannery group and the textile group. In the camp, we had British men (the Americans



Typical Living quarters in New Camp Mukden POW Camp

called them Limeys), Canadiens and Dutch men. Some of the British did not get along with some of the Americans and every so often there were fist fights. When they finished fighting they usually wound up shaking hands - until the next time.

When we returned from the factory everyone was searched. Sometimes the men working at the factory would get friendly with the Manchou or Chinese who also worked at the factory and those workers would smuggle a potato or some cigarettes into the factory and give or trade them to the POWs. It wasn't much of a problem getting the contraband out of the gate of the factory but more of a problem getting it through the Jap guards into the camp. The man would hide the contraband on his person in such a way that if the search was not very thorough they would get away with it. If the search was a hard search and it was found on the man, he was thoroughly beaten and put in solitary confinement for a certain number of days or weeks. Many times when the weather was below zero and there was snow on the ground one or two guys would be caught smuggling stuff into camp the guards would take it out on the whole group. We would have to take off all of our clothes and stand naked at attention in the snow and cold and the guards would inspect every little piece of clothing. We would stand there for thirty minutes or an hour or longer if the guards felt like it. Fortunately, we didn't have to remove our shoes most of the times. When we did, we were really cold.

Those who were caught would be taken away and we would be able to put our clothes back on and go to our barracks. This happened often because the guys figured it was worth trying to smuggle food into the camp. All of the other guys endured it because this was a way of life being a prisoner.

The camp had a large field like a baseball field where we had to line up every evening to be counted and every morning to be counted. On time off the guys would exercise or horse around when the weather was warm. We never did have sporting equipment until we were liberated. Then we got horseshoes, softballs and bats and gloves and we could play ball. We never did get any Red Cross packages until just before the end of the war like in July of 1945 and never any mail until after the war was over. We were given an opportunity to write a letter twice during the two years we were in this particular camp.

We settled into a routine of working at the factory Monday thru Saturday and resting and having free time on Sunday. A few times, when it was very cold, like 20 degrees below zero, a full moon was on the wan and the night sky was clear, I would walk outside the barracks in 6 inches of snow. The night was clear and bright and the top layer of snow was frozen so that when I walked on it it would crunch. Even being a prisoner, I enjoyed a moment like this. Of course, I didn't stay out long because of the guards and because it was too damned cold.

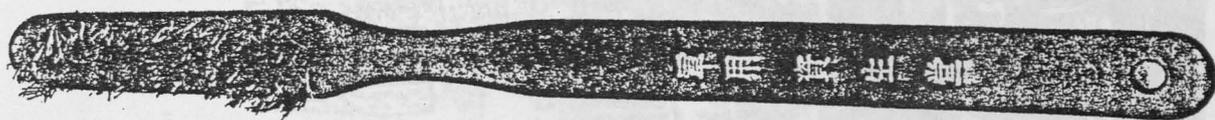
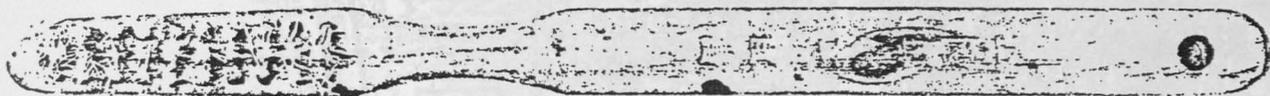
The Japs sometimes allowed a couple of newspapers into camp. Some were printed in English and some were in Japanese. Those that were in Japanese were interpreted by a couple of people in the camp that could speak and read Japanese. These papers were designed to show some of their great victories in the southern islands. However, they didn't figure we could read between the lines. The papers would tell about how their Japanese naval vessels won a great victory over the Americans at the Soloman Islands. Then, how their naval vessels and army won a great victory at Guadalcanal and how their naval vessels won a great victory in the Philippine Islands and how they won a victory at Formosa. Each great victory was getting closer to the homeland of Japan so we knew the Allies were advancing northward and each great victory was for the Allies rather than Japan. This was one of the only morale boosters we had for a long time.

One time there was a fire at the factory and we didn't have to go to work that day. When we did go to work we saw where one of the buildings that housed some of their best machines had burned to the ground amid warped and fallen steel girders and the machines that were in the building were completely destroyed. We enjoyed seeing that but we didn't dare cheer or show any elation over the catastrophe because the Jap guards would have taken it out on every POW in the camp. We all figured the fire was started by one of the Manchou or Chinese workers at the factory but there was never any official disclosure as to how the fire started.

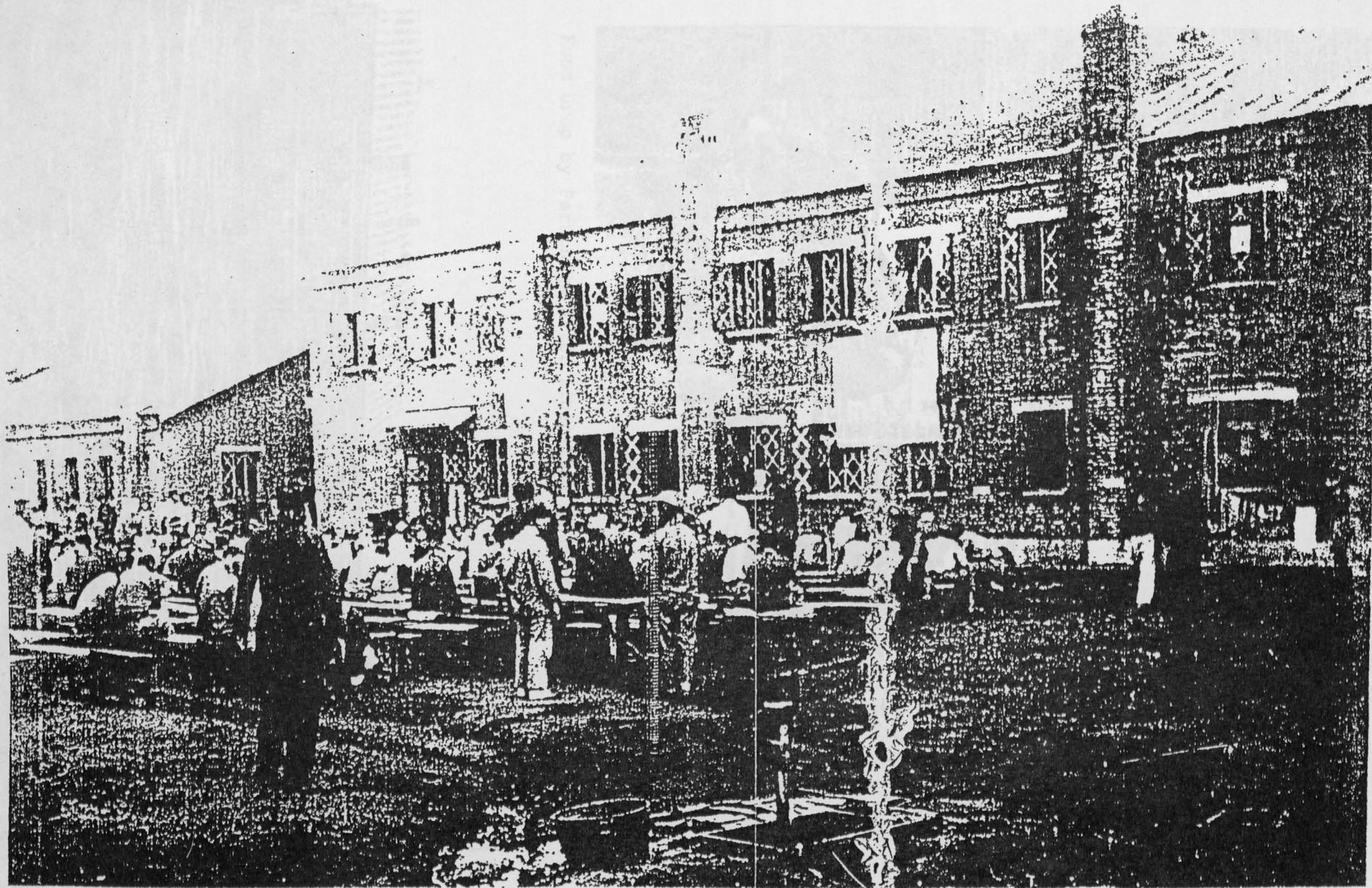
In November we saw a flight of Bombers fly over the camp. They were very high and left contrails in the sky. These were a type we had never seen before but we could tell they were American because the Japs were all excited. We were made to stay in camp. On December 7, 1944 the bombers came back. Shortly after arriving for work at MKK factory the prisoners were hurriedly rounded up and marched back to their prison barracks at double time. Sirens sounded at 10:00 AM and all prisoners were ordered not to enter buildings but to assemble on the parade ground. The drone of approaching aircraft was heard, vapor trails were sighted. The prisoners were not sure what it was until the aircraft were close enough to actually be seen. There were approximately 86 airplanes. The raid lasted until 12:30 PM. Thousands of bombs were dropped in the surrounding industrial district. Two bombs fell inside the prison compound and one bomb fell on the brick wall surrounding the prison camp. Nineteen prisoners were killed, 35 were wounded and 20 had minor injuries. They bombed the factory which was about one quarter mile from our camp and an ammunition factory which was only about one half mile from our camp.

We were out on the parade ground lying as flat as we could. We were looking up and could see the bombs falling. Imagine going through all of the hell the Japs had given us and getting this far and then being killed by our own bombs. The weather was very cold - about ten degrees below zero so there was not any blood. The blood froze in a few minutes and so did the parts of the bodies. I was put on a detail to recover body parts. This was the only time the Japs let us go between the barbed wire fence and the wall but a Jap guard accompanied us. I walked around with a bag picking up hands and feet, an occasional leg. If we sat down and actually thought about it, it was a gruesome detail but while it was happening, we just went out and did it. Seeing dead bodies was nothing new. We were just glad it wasn't us. At the time of the bombing, we thought maybe it wouldn't be long before we would be freed and maybe get back to the USA. We were wrong. It would be another eight months before we would be liberated. Fate really dealt us a blow that was very hard to take. Nineteen men killed after all that time and hardship of being a Jap prisoner. We were saddened but life goes on and the Japs will let you know you have to keep working if you want to keep eating. After this bombing by American planes there were no more such incidents. We didn't even see another American plane, but they did have us dig fox holes in the parade grounds just as a precaution against more American bomber raids in this area. This did not do our morale any good - we were hoping to see more places bombed but it didn't happen.

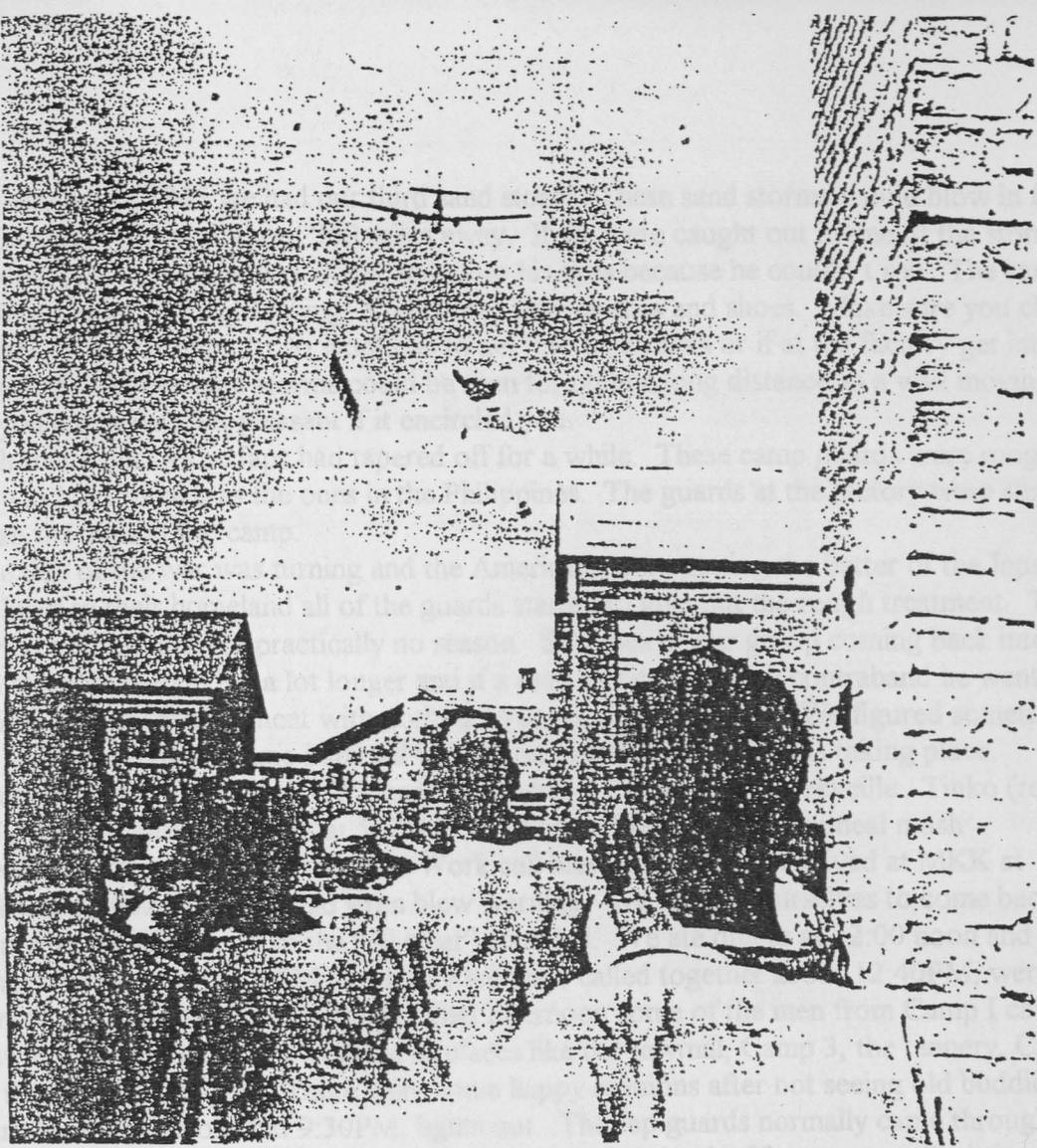
Christmas of 1944 came and went without incident. To recount my birthdays - October of 1942 I made 21 and I spent this on the Jap hell ship in the China Sea. October of 1943 I made 22 and was in the new camp in Mukden close to the factory. October of 1944 I made 23 and I was still in the same camp and still working at the MKK factory.



TWO JAPANESE TOOTHBRUSHES WHICH I USED
WHILE IN MUKDEN JAPANESE POW CAMP



After Liberation Movie Equipment was flown in And We
Were Shown Movies.



Food Drop by Parachute after Liberation at Mukden POW Camp



Looking at Camp hospital from inside fence across parade grounds.

In the summer of 1945 we had our third sand storm. These sand storms would blow in from the Gobi Desert which was about 300 miles away. If we were caught out in one of the storms a person would just have to hunker down and close his eyes because he couldn't see. The sand was blinding and got into everything. Your nose, ears, clothes and shoes. Make sure you close your mouth. The best thing to do would be to get into a barracks or if at the factory get into one of the buildings. These sand storms could be seen for quite a long distance as a wall moving towards you and it was not pleasant if it encircled you.

Rough treatment by the Japs had tapered off for a while. These camp guards were rough but not nearly as hard to take as the ones in the Philippines. The guards at the factory were slightly better than the ones at the camp.

As the tide of the war was turning and the Americans were getting the better of the Japs and getting closer to their homeland all of the guards started to give out the rough treatment. The Japs started beating men for practically no reason. Searches of our group coming back into camp from the factory were taking a lot longer and if a man was caught with contraband he went straight into solitary confinement with nothing to eat or drink for days. We figured something must be happening. At this time I started writing on paper what I saw was taking place.

Wednesday August 15, 1945 - We had the Jap bugle call at 5:30AM reveille. Tinko (roll call) also at 5:30AM. Tinko was over at 5:55AM. We had a breakfast of cornmeal mush (unsweetened) with two cornmeal buns. Work call blew at 6:20AM. Arrived at MKK at 7:00AM. At 11:00AM the air raid siren blew warning. We readied ourselves to come back to camp but after a half hour or so the "all clear" sounded. We ate dinner at 12:00 noon and usually after dinner we rest until 1:00PM, but today we were called together about 12:40PM, were lined up, counted and marched back to camp. That afternoon some of the men from Camp I came in. These were men who had been working at places like the sawmill, Camp 3, the tannery, Camp 2 and the textile mill, Camp 1. There were some happy reunions after not seeing old buddies for a few years. 5:30PM, chow and 9:30PM, lights out. The Jap guards normally came through the barracks with their guns to make sure everyone was in their bunk. If we were still sitting at a table or just not in the bunk we could expect a good beating from the guard.

Thursday August 16, 1945 - Arose at 5:30AM to bugle call of reveille and also Tinko. Chow about 6:00AM. Did not return to MKK today. About 11:20Am one plane was seen to have dropped parachutes. We thought the Japanese were practicing and paid no attention. This morning more men came into camp from Camps 1 and 2. Also more men this afternoon. A very heavy rain this morning and part of the evening. In the afternoon, after some men from Camp 2 came, six men arrived with parachutes and much equipment. They were not allowed to come over to our side of the camp but we were able to get a glimpse of them after much straining of our necks. After this we started to sense something really big was in the atmosphere. Later in the evening after dark, one or two of the mystery men were seen to be smoking, laughing and drinking tea in the presence of Japanese officers and without an ash tray, something unforgivable in the eyes of the Camp Commandant. Then was when we started thinking they might be delegates on our behalf and that the war was really over. Of course, there were rumors many times. This time, though, we sensed something big. Tonight many of our men were so excited they could not sleep. After lights out at 9:30PM, many stayed up in the latrine and wash room, smoking and talking. Some few went even so far as to bring benches outside the barracks and smoke through growing excited talk. The first time I have ever seen men outside the barracks smoking and talking after lights out, since I have been a prisoner. Very unusual. Once, a Jap

guard came through, which was their usual wont to do about 20 times a night and counted the ash trays which were cleaned and placed in rows of two at lights out. One tray was missing. He told the American night guard (the prisoners stood fire guard every night, 3 men 1 hour each on each floor of each barracks) about the ash tray and the night guard told the Jap that it was just too bad. The Jap moved on without saying a word, to our surprise. Then the pitch arose higher. It was 2:30AM before I fell asleep.

Friday August 17, 1945 - Morning came with reveille and Tinko call at 5:30AM. We lined up in ranks, but waited quite a long time before the Japanese came over to our side for tinko. After we were counted we ate breakfast and then stood around in little groups talking. If something didn't break right now there would probably be a riot. Then Major General Parker was called over to Japanese Headquarters with British Vice Air Marshall. They returned after a while. Assembly sounded at 8:15AM in an American bugle call. It was just the thing we had been waiting for. After assembling around the North side of the Galley, we were told to quiet down. Maj. Gen. Parker addressed us. He told us there must be no demonstrations. As soon as he said that, I knew it had come. Then in a low voice he said "there is an armistice.....(long pause).....an armistice has been signed between Japan, United States, Great Britain and the Netherlands. Japan and Russia are still fighting". We were told this about 8:20AM. The news was so good and meant so much to all of us we were dumbfounded and left with very little to say. So, after all these years of war, it was finally over and we would soon be free men. Free!!!! No one who has not gone through what we have, can ever know what being free is. Can you imagine what it is like to be free after all these years?? What a wonderful feeling. We would soon be returning home. There were soon groups talking together now in joyous conversation. This morning the camp was turned over to the Americans. All of the mail which had been held back by the Japs, was now issued. Mail was issued all the latter part of the morning and practically all afternoon. Thousands of letters. We were issued two packages of Japanese cigarettes and four boxes of matches for each section. In late afternoon, we were issued two Red Cross packages for every three men. These food packages had also been withheld by the damned Japs. For supper we had, at last, some american chow to eat instead of maize and beans. By this time we were getting in a very happy spirit. One of the mystery men, who had arrived mysteriously, was a radio man and a radio outfit was set up alongside the hospital. He was supposed to get in contact with their base station. After chow we had a program and our little band played. That night I slept outside the barracks in the moonlight. Hardly no one went to bed before 12:00 midnight. By the time I went to bed at 2:30AM, the radioman had not yet made contact.

Saturday August 18, 1945 - Arose at 5:30AM to Jap bugle call. Tinko also at 5:30AM. Our last Tinko under the Japanese as Japanese prisoners of war. After this morning there will be all American Army bugle calls. After Tinko, breakfast of American Red Cross chow and sweet mush. After breakfast, everyone moved their belongings out of the barracks in order to clean up. We were also going to change barracks (we found out later). Some men cleaned up, I did not. I lay on my bunk and rested in the morning sunlight, reading. Dinner at 12:00 Noon. After dinner I moved my bedding to the cloakroom where the 7th Company was sleeping - Air Corps and groups associated with the Air Corps. Nothing of importance happened the rest of the evening except the higher officers trying to again maintain their old status in the Army as of before the

war. We got another speech from Gen. Parker telling us we were American soldiers again and he expected us to act like American soldiers. Went to bed about 11:00PM and had one of the best night's sleep in many a day. The fleas probably had not known we were there yet.

Sunday August 19, 1945 - Got up at 6:30AM - first call - and 6:45AM reveille, entirely under the American Army. Fell out for roll call. Ate breakfast - mush and buns. At 8:00AM I went to church. We didn't really have a church - just a place outdoors to hold an all-faith service. A Thanksgiving service. Did not go to confession and communion because I almost forgot about going to mass and was a little late. Later, I was put on guard duty (damn my luck - and not because I was late for services). I had to go on duty at 11:00AM. On two hours and off four for 24 hours and then off for 48 hours. We were allowed to write home today and telegrams are to be sent to all of our families.

Monday August 20, 1945 - American bugle call - first call - sounded at 6:30AM. I had been on guard duty since 5:00AM. My duty ended at 7:00AM. Reveille sounded at 6:45AM. I came off duty and ate breakfast. After breakfast I washed, shaved and sat down on my bunk. Fooled around until Guard Mount at 9:00AM which officially ended my 24 hours of duty. Now 48 hours rest. The other guys filled in the fox holes today making the parade ground smooth again. I came back to my bunk, wrote a few lines of diary and went to sleep about 10:00AM. Slept through dinner until about 2:30PM. I got up, ate my chow and about 3:00PM went out and walked on the parade ground for an hour or so. I came in about 5:00PM, talked, had a cup of coffee and rested until 5:30PM then retreat. While we were standing in retreat we were rewarded with the sight of a C-87 (old B-24) flying directly over our heads at about 300 feet - very low. It was beautiful. Earlier in the morning we saw a Russian plane (P-39) pass directly over camp going very fast - about 6:25AM. After the C-87 passed over camp it circled and approached camp again. This time it came to the right of the camp and dropped leaflets. Some fell right into camp. They relayed a message concerning our welfare and was signed by General Wedemeyer. The message was printed in both English and Japanese. As the big plane passed, another Russian plane came over camp very fast and very low. Once more the C-87 circled, came to the right of the camp and acknowledged our cheers and shouts by dipping his wings. We were crazy with joy. Who wouldn't be after 3 ½ years of thus being penned up with only Japs around. After recall, we ate chow and what a chow it was. Boiled potatoes, gravy (flour), beans, corn bread, pie. All was our good American chow which (by the way) was running low. After chow I sat around and talked awhile. Then about 7:00PM I went out to wash my bowls at the water pump.

As I was standing there, lucky me, some Russian Generals came into camp (conquering Generals) and came right up to a set of steps on the hospital just about 5 yards from where I was standing. He had an interpreter with him - the interpreter couldn't speak very good English - who told us to gather 'round. He was going to give us a speech. The news about this Russian General being here spread around camp fast. In a short while everyone had gathered close to listen to this man. Here was something unusual so, naturally, all men were eagerness itself. The General raised his hand for quiet then told us the Russians had captured the city of Mukden. Sergeant Hurley, a person amongst us who could speak Russian fluently, was called up to interpret. The General told us they had come 1000 kilometers in 10 days and had liberated Manchoukuo from under the Japanese oppression and that the men of this camp - British, Dutch, American and Australians - were FREE. FREE!!!! At this we all hailed and cheered for a few minutes. We were jubilant. The General had indeed brought us some good news. The camp was turned over entirely to General Parker. The Russian General asked to see General Wainwright

and was not a little dismayed when he was told the American General was not in this camp. Then he told us there was one American plane in Mukden and many Russian planes and that he would dispatch the two American Majors (pilots of the plane) to a certain point to get Lt. General Wainwright and return him to this camp. Some Japanese officers were listening to the speech and they were very unhappy. The Russian General left to have a meeting with camp staff in another part of camp. I left to take a bath (after we dispersed). My bath was cut short. Everybody was ordered inside the barracks. Then the Japanese officers of the camp and the camp Japanese enlisted men were led out onto the parade grounds and all the prisoners (ex-prisoners) stood around the grounds to watch. The event??? The surrendering of the Japanese of the camp to the Russian General.

Colonel Matsuda (the Japanese camp commander) and all of his men were ordered to put down their arms. This was done. The Russian General picked up a revolver and handed it to General Parker and told him he was presenting him with a Russian Trophy of War. The Russian General announced that the Japanese were turned over to the Americans and were their prisoners. Now was our big moment because the situation was exactly reversed from what it had been a short time ago. Where the Japanese were on the top and the Americans were prisoners, now the Americans were on top and the Japanese are our prisoners. Something certainly so good that I had never expected or looked for to pass. It's a great feeling. Then the Japanese were led away.

During all of this I had gone to the second floor of the barracks to see. A good point to see from except it was getting very dark. The one thing wrong with it all. It should have taken place earlier so we could see better. Before it was over - about 9:00PM - one could only see by moonlight. After the Japs were taken away the Jap officers were put in the Jap quarters and the Jap enlisted were put in the brig. They were taken away by American guards to whom the Russians had turned the Japs over to. The men cornered a single Russian. Questions were fired at him. He told us, through our interpreter, that we were free to go to town but he advised against it until we received our proper clothing from our Army or the American Red Cross which would be in a few days. I returned and finished my bath about 9:30PM. After bath I returned to my barracks and wrote a little in my diary. Then I was informed by the Sergeant of the Guard that I would be on guard duty tonight. We hemmed and hawed around until 11:30. Then we went over to the main guardhouse by the main gate which was taken over by the Americans. I went on guard duty at 12:00 midnight. From 12:00 midnight until 4:00AM. I stood guard over the Japanese Colonel and 10 officers. Nothing unusual happened. While I was there I 'found' a Japanese sword and I picked up a Japanese roster of names of all of the men in camp, whether they were army, navy or marine, dates of deaths and the barracks in which they were assigned. Came off duty at 4:00AM and I took my loot back to my bunk and hid it so no one would steal it. Our guards found some hand grenades and ammunition which the Japs had hidden. I went to bed about 4:30AM on Tuesday August 21, 1945.

The above information from August 15, 1945 to early morning of August 21, 1945 was taken directly from writings I had made at that time. Unfortunately, I did not write any more. On August 22 we were told to stay in the camp because there was a lot of unrest, lootings and killings going on in the city. Also, we were told that the Russians gave guns and ammo to the Chinese and Manchous and told them they had three days to burn and loot the Japanese businesses and warehouses and that the Russians would not bother them. Then the Russians

turned around and gave guns to the Japanese and told them that the Chinese and Manchous planned on looting their warehouses and the Japanese should defend them. It was hard for us to stay in camp but we didn't want to be killed at this stage of the game so we stayed in the camp. We could hear the gunshots and fighting outside the camp. The people fighting outside the camp did not try to come into our camp because they knew the Russians were there and that the Russians would not have any mercy on them. On August 23rd Lt. Col. Donovan took over the command of the camp and told us it would be in our best interests to stay in camp. However, a lot of us had different ideas. On August 25th the guys started going over the wall. We had been cooped up for 3 ½ years and wanted to get out on our own for a while. Also, on August 25 American B-29's started dropping packages of food and clothing.

On August 26th the officers decided to give us some freedom and let us go out of the main gate if we wanted to go. A lot of the guys stayed in the camp thinking that we all would be evacuated soon to some place and flown out of Mukden. I was with a group that went out. We started walking into town. There were a lot of Russian soldiers in town and scattered everywhere. Some of us found a brewery and proceeded to see how much we could drink. Naturally, we got drunk as a hoot owl. How we found our way back to camp I'll never know. The next day we decided to go back to the brewery but there were a lot of Russian soldiers there and would not let us in so we decided to go elsewhere. We walked around making a tour of the city. Two other guys and myself found a Manchou that could speak English so we asked him where we could find some women. He directed us to a house of prostitution. The women there were very accommodating and we each left there very satisfied especially since their services were without charge. Back to the camp to get something to eat.

August 27th I went back into the city with Bob Branch and a fellow named Callahan. We met an old German named Schirer. He could speak English very well. He took us to his house and told us that he was pretty much of a recluse and the Japanese had shunned him so he was able to live in peace during all of the hard times. We had tea and some cookies and he even had the Chinese girl Cheng Hua Lan and one of the Chinese boys at his house. He respected the Chinese girl very much. We talked and had pictures taken. Branch and I went for a little walk with Cheng and another Chinese girl. Cheng could speak broken English. He told us to come back the next day and he would have a present for us. The next day we returned and he had some very old embroidered scrolls which he had in his possession for many years. He gave us a written history of these scrolls and gave one scroll with it's history to each of us. He said they were from an old Manchou Dynasty and that the bright threads woven into the scroll were made of pure gold. He said this was verified by the fact that the threads had not faded at all over the many years. I accepted and thanked him and took the scroll back to the camp with me. I still have this scroll to this day 55 years later and the threads still have not faded. That was August 28th. On my return home I corresponded with Schirer and with Cheng the Chinese girl until gradually our correspondence stopped, mostly on my part. I was young and foolish and did not keep up with the correspondence. I had too many good times to catch up on.

On the 29th I went back into the city with Felix Kozakevitch. We made friends with a Russian Girl by the name of Tanya who took us to her house to meet her parents and some other people. We stayed the night at their house and were fed. They were very pleasant people. A Manchou friend of theirs came to the house and asked us and them to dinner at his house that night. He provided a very good meal of some type of meat and rice and gravy and a very tasty rice wine which he called "Saki". We went back to the Russian girl's house and stayed the night

again. No, we did not sleep with the Russian girl - everything was on the up and up, darn it.

While we were at the Russian girl's house we found out that they were White Russians and they had to tread very lightly because it was the Red Russians who had the power in the government. Down the street there was a White Russian family. While we were at the home of the Russian girl we actually saw a truck with a tall body on it pull up to this house. Russian soldiers got out of the truck and went into the house with their guns drawn ready to use. They came out of the house herding the whole family to the truck. The family got inside the back of the truck then the Russian soldiers got in the back with the family and the truck drove off. The Russians in the house where we were told us that the family living in that house were White Russians and that they would be sent to some labor camp in Siberia. We were saddened over that because we knew what it was like to be prisoners.

The next day we took our leave and wound up down at the train station. There was a train with a lot of Russian soldiers. With these soldiers were Russian women soldiers who traveled with the men to be their cooks. Boy, these women were built big just like the men and they carried guns just like the men. They could have wiped the street with four or five of us scrawney guys. We became friendly with some of the soldiers, men and women and they offered us some vodka. When they drank the vodka they just drank right out of the bottle. The women drank the vodka too just like the men. Of course when they offered the bottle to us we had to drink, too. Big mistake. After sharing three bottles, we had to be carried into the station. They did this and left us there. I guess they figured we could not hold our vodka - and they were right. We spent the night in the train station sleeping it off. The next day we made our way back to the camp and stayed in the camp for a couple of days trying to get our minds back in order. The guys in camp told us that on the 29th B-29's came in the afternoon and dropped foodstuff and clothing. A lot was destroyed because the boxes broke loose from the chutes. On the evening of the 30th we saw our first picture show in over four years. The picture was "To Have or Have Not". More planes and chow arrived today. On Sept. 2nd they issued new coveralls, caps and towels. That night they showed the film "Lost in a Harem" starring Abbot and Costello. We were all issued Saki - but not enough to get drunk.

We went into town again on the 5th of September. This time there were four of us. We met five Manchou girls and they invited us up to their apartment which was on a second floor of a building near town. I guess they figured there was safety in numbers. We spent all afternoon with them and wound up sleeping there. We didn't sleep on beds, we slept on the bare floor and, yes, we each had a girl to sleep with and, yes, they satisfied us immensely. At some time during the night I woke up. All of the girls were already up and were sneaking out of the room onto a balcony. I didn't let on that I was watching them, I just wanted to see what they were going to do. There was a ladder out there. They all climbed the ladder then pulled the ladder up behind them so none of us guys could follow. I guess this was their way of getting rid of us. They must have had a planned evacuation. We got up the next morning and I knew the girls were gone but no one else did. We never saw them again. We were happy, though, we were free to do what we wanted.

Today was the 6th of September. There was an old section of the city called the walled city. We went there and did some sightseeing then back to the camp. We knew we could always get



Possible Note on original

Remember me, my dear young AME
me for some time at least. You
soon as you have reached your
am much worried about the fact
you. It was not my good fortune
here in Moukden, Manchuria and
the fact, that I am living a
Chinese friends I have had ve
by my own country men I was a
my refusal, to join in their
Your sufferings are over. Their
protection. He will see you
for you. You are young and in
sure/have met with the highest kind of human sincerity and
human sensibility. I mean to say, you have met Miss Tseng.

Remember her and possibly do write to her. She will be
well, be rewarded for any kind word you may bestow on her.

You are leaving per air ship. Heavy or bulky things to
carry along may be difficult for you to manage. So from a
collection of old Chinese /Manchou Imperial Dynasty/ embroideries
I have selected one piece of special silk work, to be offered
to every one of you. Since over 30 years ago such things have
been discarded and lost they are, never to return. In some of
the Museums you may come across some pieces like them. Perhaps.
The old Chinese Official dress consisted of several garments and
some of the outer garments were in front and were on the back
of the chest decorated with the essential embroideries. They

Letter should
be just behind
picture on
page 38

ntly

even
of

5.

his
stor
you/

My dear

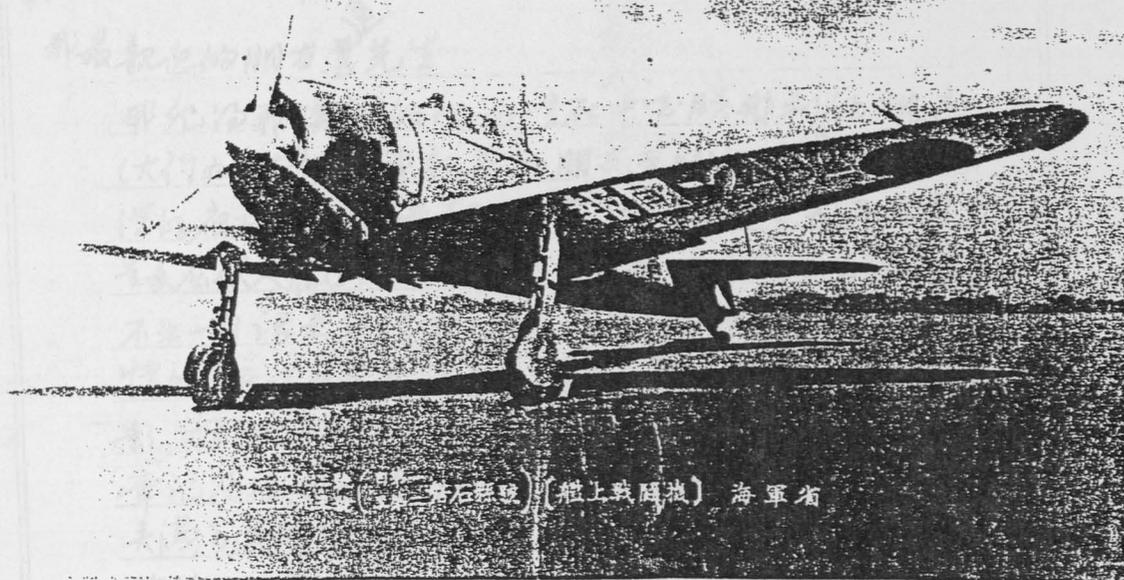
We working together again now, this is very gladdens me and even cranky. But all due to your action and I was all understand. However I am love you, please you believe about this. We leave so far ago, and I am to have a peep for you. Do you know? because our foolish love and take up of an accident before. Therefore our feeling is more firmness. Our glory and the great love: — other ^{man} can not to get. My dear, I have writing your name in every day. — I have great light which was I see you, are you how do?

We ~~must~~ must take care the work and take all thing up in mind or do not see by

the other man. — My dear, I wish me that to a maid-servant and never to stand by your side. My dear, are you do not to hatred me? That a photograph is to made my companion. — the other man is I to express a feeling of sympathy, then please do not mistake my meaning. During I get up the news of you will to go away. I am sorrow. If to take effect this news, and I am ~~stop~~ stop the work at once.

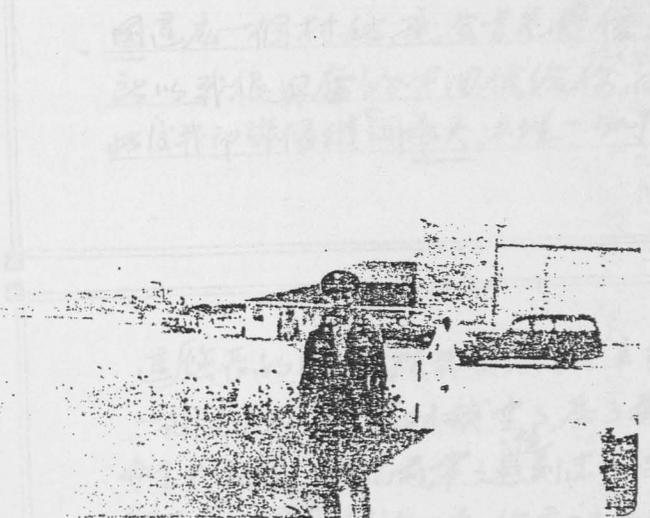
Yours affectionately,

Henry?



海軍省 (艦上戦闘機) 零式艦上戦闘機

JAPANESE "ZERO"



1945 - TANYA
RUSSIAN GIRL

NOV. 9, 1945 - GOING HOME FOR 1ST TIME IN 5 YEARS
VIA EASTERN AIR LINE. SAN ANTONIO, TX.

August 1945-- --Cho, Mr. Scherer, Tsung Hua Lan
(Miss Cheng); Calahan, Bob Branch and Erwin Joh



another letter written in Chinese.....
I cannot understand a word of it and never
had it translated.

我最親近的朋友姜先生：

我記得我模糊的記憶，是在中吃勝那利的秋夜，
(大約九月十號)即我親愛的朋友西吃的函文，是一個深
深的夜裡，你由興營走到我家對面表的路，別在眼裡了
是怎麼使人痛心的一件事情，也有幾千言，可是你說
不出一句話來，送你回去的有爸爸，塞斯曾及我最惋
惜的是在次日清晨，沒有看到你，火車站上找不到你的踪
影，一到四年多朋友你好嗎？府上的西及合妹也你好嗎？
牽記的很，我祝福你們已安全的回到了家鄉，此幸福又
美滿，可還留下來的是愁會榮憤恨，朋友——我沒有勇氣聯
絡你……我祇有記念著你，意料外，你還沒有忘記中
國這一個村鎮，竟會首先寄信來，謝之你的好意，
所以我很興奮的寄回信給你，由施先生代為翻譯，
此後我即準備離開奉天，辦理一切手續，朋友！分別這

這悠長的時間裡我受盡了千辛萬苦，家鄉土匪猖獗
一個完美的家，霎時掠空了，為了要求生活，不得不到兵鄉
奔走找飯吃，月夕花前常了^憶到過去的一切，五月三日降雪的
早晨，我們審判的一天，你忘記了沒有，那是多麼危險的
一件事，寶貴的友情——多麼使人留念啊！我到上海已經
三個月了，本來很早就想寄信，為了生病為了寫，連買郵票
的錢都沒有慘愧極了，朋友！我正煩人找事做，
你上海還有朋友，你幾時到中國來，我現等唐祝斌
宗，他們很好，我希望你把最近的傑作寄給我幾份，因
幫忙給我寄美國抗戰團已呢西井十盒(每盒十瓶)果以
便治療之用，用費多少，我慢慢的再寄給你好嗎，等候你
的回音，盼望你多寄信來祝你

永遠平安

你
梅的很尊敬之友
鄭惠蘭上

Remember me, my dear young AMERICAN friends, please remember me for some time at least. You are starting a new life as soon as you have reached your home country. Old as I am, I am much worried about the fact, that I can do so little for you. It was not my good fortune to know that Americans are here in Moukden, Manchuria and the reason for this is evidently the fact, that I am living a solitary life. Except with my Chinese friends I have had very little social intercourse, even by my own countrymen I was somewhat boycotted, on account of my refusal, to join in their modern German Hitler Nazi ways. Your sufferings are over. Thank GOD for his grace and for his protection. He will see you through and sunny days are in store for you. You are young and in some of your Chinese friends you/ sure/ have met with the highest kind of human sincerity and human sensibility. I mean to say, you have met Miss Tseng.

Remember her and possibly do write to her. She will be well, be rewarded for any kind word you may bestow on her.

You are leaving per air ship. Heavy or bulky things to carry along may be difficult for you to manage. So from a collection of old Chinese /Manchou Imperial Dynasty/ embroideries I have selected one piece of special silk work, to be offered to every one of you. Since over 30 years ago such things have been discarded and lost they are, never to return. In some of the Museums you may come across some pieces like them. Perhaps. The old Chinese Official dress consisted of several garments and some of the outer garments were in front and were on the back of the chest decorated with the essential embroideries. They denote the Court rank of its wearer. A phoenix or a swan/ or pheasant similar, flying through the clouds towards the sun. Below is the water of the ocean with the waves shown (as are the clouds) in a style, developed and approved by the highest art in China since say 1,500 years or longer ago. The "Court rank breast plates" are indicating that the official was /under some circumstances/ admitted in the presence of the Emperor. They are of silk. They were woven about 100 to 120 years ago (or even before that time). The glittering threads are made of genuine gold. Proof is that they have not faded in so many years. The weaving is similar to the French or Flemish-Dutch weaving called

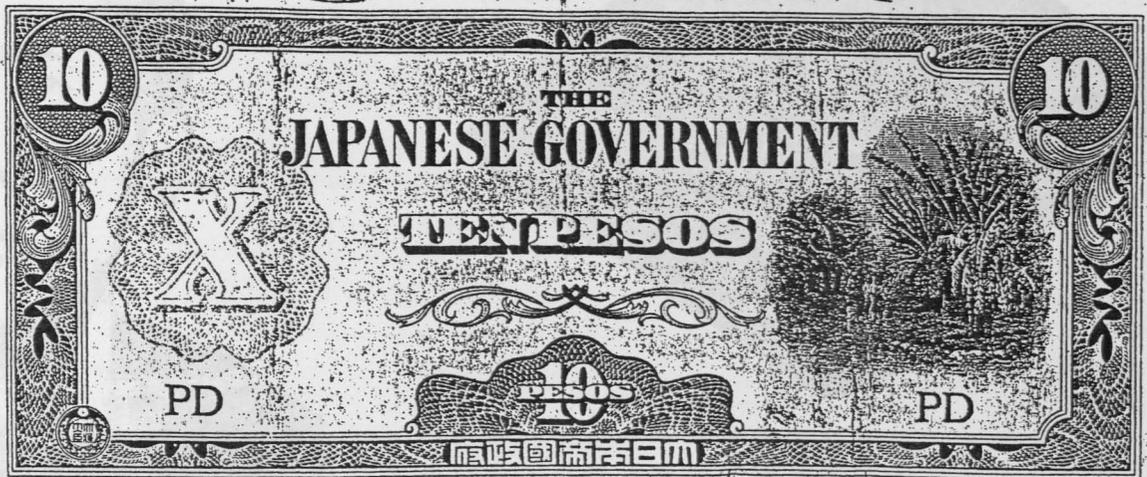
GOBELIN. But the man of that name who started such weaving in France had learned it by using some early Chinese weaving. And, if you compare European Gobelins with the Chinese master works of this line, you find out soon that the Chinese are past masters. Hold the pieces against the light and see the art. Chinese- Wars without ending or breathing space for good over 30 years duration have burned, spoiled, destroyed and utterly ruined the old Manchou art and the artists as well. No modern civilization will or can bring back the beauty--that was. Gone. Done with. Never to return.

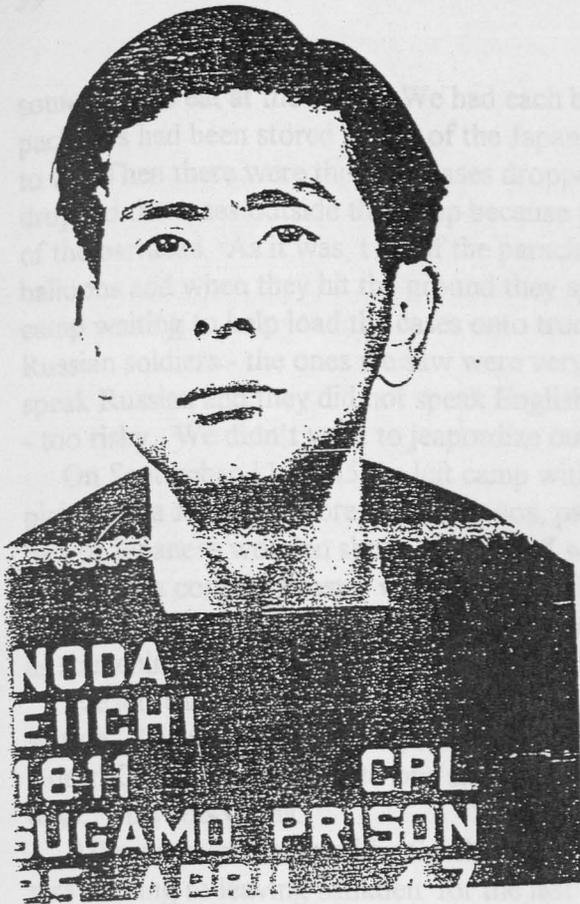
To Messrs. Long, Branch and Johnson
Moukden, Manchuria (China) September 2nd
1945.

Yours very sincerely
E Scherer



奉天
九十三
路





Erwin R. Johnson Freed from Japs

Private Erwin R. Johnson, prisoner of the Japanese from the fall of Corregidor in May, 1942, to August 19, 1945, has written to his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Johnson, 1412 Alvar street, of his liberation and return to American forces. The letter was written August 19. The former Warren Easton High school track star is now stationed at Camp Hoten, Mukden, Manchuria, with the 48th Materiel Squadron. He enlisted in the Air Force in 1940 and went overseas in June, 1941.

(Erwin R. Johnson, prisoner of the Japanese from the fall of Corregidor in May, 1942, to August 19, 1945, has written to his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Johnson, 1412 Alvar street, of his liberation and return to American forces. The letter was written August 19. The former Warren Easton High school track star is now stationed at Camp Hoten, Mukden, Manchuria, with the 48th Materiel Squadron. He enlisted in the Air Force in 1940 and went overseas in June, 1941.)

something to eat at the camp. We had each been given a Red Cross package. Red Cross packages had been stored in one of the Japanese warehouses but they would not distribute them to us. Then there were the food cases dropped by B-29s by parachute just outside the camp. They dropped the cases outside the camp because they did not want to hit any of the men or any of the barracks. As it was, two of the parachutes did not open and the cases came down like lead balloons and when they hit the ground they split open. One of the men who was outside of the camp waiting to help load the cases onto trucks was killed. We had no more incidents with the Russian soldiers - the ones we saw were very nice to us. We got along even though we didn't speak Russian and they did not speak English. Normally, though, we just stayed away from them - too risky. We didn't want to jeopardize our new freedom now.

On September 11, 1945 we left camp with all of our belongings - which wasn't much. I had picked up a Japanese sabre, two kimonos, part of a parachute and some of the nylon rigging, a pair of Japanese wooden shoes and while I was on guard duty in the Japanese section of camp I picked up a complete roster with names of all of the men who were in the camp, which work factories they were sent and dates of when prisoners died. I managed to get all of this stuff home as souvenirs.

We left camp for the last time and what a great feeling that was. We were trucked to the train station. Then we were leaving the city of Mukden. As the train pulled out of the station we saw a dead Chinaman lying off to one side. He was bloated and probably had been there for several days. This was China.

After we were liberated by the Russians we enjoyed being out in the city on our own but that was nothing to leaving Mukden for the last time. We arrived in the Port of Dairen, Manchuria on the Yellow sea. We walked up the gang plank of the U.S. Navy Transport ship the U.S.A.T. Colbert. What a wonderful feeling to be aboard a U.S. of A. ship again. This was about 7:00 PM on the evening of September 12, 1945 and there was still a lot of evening light left. I understand that the Port of Dairen is about 200 miles South of Mukden. We still had our Jap uniforms on - Some of the guys had some old G.I. clothes that they wore. We were taken down to a place on the ship where there were showers. We had to take off all of our clothes which were full of lice and no telling what other kind of vermin. We were de-loused, got hot - get that, HOT showers with good soap that really lathered. Ship's personnel couldn't do enough for us. They took our old clothes and put them in an incinerator. Maybe that was a good thing for them, too. They knew our clothes were full of bugs. We were given some Navy clothes, underwear (skivies, in navy lingo) and shoes. After we showered and dressed and feeling great, we went to their mess hall and were fed. Oh boy, were we fed. That night when we were shown where we would sleep we hunkered down and after the lights were put out about 4:45 AM we slept. We slept the sleep of babes. Later, for most of us, we awakened and lay there wondering if this was not just a dream - it was just too good to be real. FREE!!! This is one thought what will be with us for the rest of our lives. Whenever I think of those first few moments of freedom I get too emotional and tears come to my eyes. This is another thing that will happen to me for the rest of my life.

The U.S.A.T. Colbert weighed anchor on September 13th and at about 7:00 AM steamed out of the harbor of the Port of Dairen, Manchuria on the Yellow Sea. Without incident we reached the Island of Okinawa on September 15th and the skies were omniously overcast. They let the anchor down. It was late so we were all kept on board that night. However, next morning September 16th the skies were still overcast and we had word that a typhoon was headed for

Okinawa. The ship pulled up anchor and headed out to sea. All of the ships around us - and there were many - did the same as we did, pulled up anchor and headed out to sea. I was told that it is best for a navy ship when it is in a harbor in shallow water and very bad weather is coming to head out to sea to ride out the storm. There is more room out at sea and there is less of a chance of one ship being blown against another. Well, we were riding out the typhoon about eighty miles out to sea and the wind was really blowing. The waves were so high that when our ship was in a trough we could not see any of the ships around us. We were also told to try to keep a lookout for floating mines because the Yellow Sea and the waters around the Islands were beset with mines which were freed by recent typhoons.

On September 17th I awakened early got up and went out on an open deck. The wind was still blowing hard. I walked to the stern of the ship and was facing the front of the ship on the right or starboard side. I kept my life vest with me because of the storm, I didn't know what might happen. All of a sudden there was a terrific explosion about midships and on the left or port side. It was about 6:50AM. I saw one guy fall to the deck then the ship started listing to the left. The deck was at about a 30 degree angle (it felt like it could have been more than 30 degrees). I was holding onto the rail. As the ship kept listing further and further I climbed up and over the rail and held on. I saw the side of the ship come up a long ways out of the water. I thought the ship would keel over on it's side and I was ready to slide down the side of the ship and into the water. I held on and gradually the ship started to right itself and I climbed back over the railing. I thanked God that I didn't have to jump. I ran over to the area where the blast had taken place. A man was lying on the deck without any head. There were a few other guys there and I asked what happened. They said they were watching a floating mine. They said the mine hit the ship in the front, a wave swept it away then the ship hit it again about $\frac{1}{4}$ down from the bow and nothing happened. It was swept away again then was swept against the ship a third time when it exploded. This guy was leaning over the rail watching it right at that spot. It exploded and shrapnel swept up the side of the ship and took his head off. I learned later that the mine had made a hole about 10 feet by 10 feet at midships in the engine room and killed five seamen. The ship was then without power. I thought to myself what am I doing on a ship with no power miles out to sea in a typhoon with waves bigger than buildings. I can't be in a situation like this. I was just freed from a Japanese prison camp after 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ years and I'm supposed to be in the caring hands of the my Uncle Sam. Is this the way I'm going to die after all those horrible years? I learned that the man on deck who was killed was William Albert Frising who was a Marine Corps private and his Mukden POW number was 1414.

The ship was at the mercy of the wind and waves. We had to make the best of it. The ship's crew had to make the best of it. The cooks served a lunch of crackers and a cold soup which had been made the day before. I don't know how the ship's crew liked it but we were able to put up with it a lot better than they could. We were glad to get it. It was dark and the ship had no lights except search lights. Another ship came close to us and got a rope over to our crew who fastened it to the bow of our ship. Somehow it held and then we were being towed so we were no longer at the mercy of the waves and sea. All of a sudden the rope broke. Once more we were doing whatever the waves commanded. It was about 2:00AM when the rope broke. I had found a cozy little spot on deck where I spent the night. I slept some but I was not about to go below and be caught down there if the ship decided to sink.

The next morning another ship got a line to our ship and it was securely fastened at the bow. Once again we were being towed. By this time the wind had died down somewhat and the waves were not quite as high as the day before. We stayed out another day and finally got back into harbor at Okinawa on September 19th. This time we were told to get our barracks bags with our belongings and to leave the ship. On land again. We were shown the tent where we were to bunk and stash our gear. I wasn't there too long when I spied an old friend walking up to me. Jack Broyl had been patiently looking for me because he heard a group of American POWs were coming in. I had known Jack for many years since we were kids. Our families used to be in a group that went to picnics and such things. Boy, was I glad to see him. He was now a Captain in the infantry. I later learned one of his jobs was to take a detail out to the caves on Okinawa and rout out the Japanese who were still hiding there. I started by asking how were things at home and I was particularly interested in my fiancé, Nellie. He started telling me about everyone except Nellie. I was starting to get suspicious so I asked him point blank to tell me about Nellie. He didn't want to but he told me that Nellie had married. I kind of expected this because here it was 3 ½ years later and for two of those years she didn't know if I was still alive. I had been missing in action for two years before my family was told that I was a prisoner of war. Jack and I sat down on my bunk to renew old acquaintances. He brought me up to date on a lot of things including back home news and about the A-bomb.

While I was in Okinawa Bob Hope was putting on one of his many road shows. Jack showed me how to get around because I was such a klutz at Army protocol and modern Army programs, who to salute, when to salute, etc. He took me to see the Bob Hope show. There were thousands of guys there. We had to sit on the ground quite a ways back but we were able to see what was going on and did get to see Bob Hope and Francis Langford. It was pretty muddy after all the rain that the typhoon had dumped on the Island and there was still a light drizzle. I will never forget how Jack took time out from his duties to be on the lookout for me and to sit and talk to me and to show me around. He didn't even know if I would show up there or even be in that group. He was a great friend then and he is still a great friend.

My group was only in Okinawa for 2 days. On September 21 at 3:00AM in the morning we boarded a C-46 for Manila and arrived about 5:30 PM at the 29th Replacement Depot - an embarkation processing area. We were told that on one of the planes bringing POWs from Okinawa to Manila, the guys were sitting on the side benches and on the floor. They had taken off and when they were over the China Sea the bomb-bay doors opened accidentally and those men that were sitting on the floor were dropped out of the plane. What a hell of a way to die after spending all those years as a POW. I really felt sorry for them and their families. The next day we were asked if we wanted to go into Manila. We responded 'of course' and they gave us each a permanent pass to leave the area. We went in and out of this area many times.

After a couple of days in the processing area I saw a Red Cross truck and they had doughnuts and coffee. I went to get some and they wanted to charge me for the coffee and doughnuts. They were charging everyone and if you didn't pay you didn't get any doughnuts or coffee. Ever since that time I have been down on the Red Cross. To this day I will not donate to them. Salvation Army, yes, but not to the Red Cross. When I tell someone this they can't believe it because they say the Red Cross have always given their food away. Well, I happened upon an instance where they did not give it away.

It was at this Embarkation Depot that I found out I had been made a Corporal. The list of promotions was on a bulletin board. After three and one-half years of being a Private they finally made me a Corporal. I couldn't believe it but there it was in black and white for everyone to see. We went into the city of Manila on a pass. It was certainly a lot different than the last time I had been there. Many of the buildings had been destroyed especially in the old Walled City. There was one hotel standing which had not been touched by shells or bombings when Mac Arthur had returned and retaken the city. He had his headquarters set up in this building. We were told that MacArthur owned this building prior to the war and when he returned to retake Manila he gave orders that this Hotel was not to be bombed. Isn't it great to be in command? We met some girls who lived close to the processing area where we were staying so we could just walk to their house when we wanted to visit them. We had to take the time to be processed but we did not mind that because that meant we would soon be returning home. Some of the guys were lucky to be put on a plane and flown back to the states.

I was put on a ship to sail back to the states. We left Manila at 5:30PM on October 8, 1945 on the U.S.A.T. (U.S. Army Transport) Klipfontaine from Pier 7 - the same pier where we had been put on the hell ship Tottori Maru by the Japs. I don't remember too much about the voyage back except that I could feel an inner peace in the rest and relaxation I was able to get. When we crossed the International Date Line going back to the States there was a ceremony and all of the men who had never crossed that line going from West to East received a certificate for the occasion. Unfortunately, we lost a day. When we were going from East to West we gained a day.

We sailed into the Seattle harbor on November 7, 1945. I had spent another birthday at sea, my 24th birthday. Of the 12,000 Americans in Bataan, 1500 returned to the United States. We got off of the ship with our barracks bags and into some trucks. They took us to Ft. Lewis in Tacoma, WA. We were to spend a few days here because they wanted to see what kind of condition we were in. The second night we were there, I and a couple of other guys got a pass to go into town. We went to Seattle. The weather was misting with a light rain. We got totally drunk but we managed to get back to the Fort in Tacoma that night. We had a great time. October 28th they put us on trains to send us back to hospitals in our respective areas. I was on a hospital train that went to San Antonio, Texas, to Fort Sam Houston and Brooks General Hospital. We had full beds on the train and huge windows. We could lie down in bed and look out of the window and wave at all of the people as we passed through a town or city. The people waved like mad at us. The train had big Red Crosses on the side denoting a hospital train. When I got on the train I really did not know where I was going. When I was finally told our destination I was glad because my Father's brother, my Uncle Bill Granfors, lived in San Antonio. He had worked a lot with the military at Fort Sam and I was hoping I would get to see him.

We pulled into the Texas and Pacific train station, then the train went to Fort Sam. I think this was November 2, 1945. When I got to the hospital, I was hardly settled in my bed when my Uncle Bill Granfors comes in. He was a great guy. Even though he was my Father's brother he had a different name than my Father. My Father was born in Finland and left there at an early age to be a cabin boy on a sailing ship. My Father's Mother was a widow and she came to America a few years later with my Father's brother who was still fairly young. She settled down

DOMAIN of the GOLDEN DRAGON



Ruler of the

180th Meridian.

To all Sailors, Soldiers, Marines, wherever ye may be and to all mermaids, flying dragons, spirits of the deep, devil chasers, and all other living creatures of the yellow seas, Greetings: Know ye that on this 20th day of OCTOBER 1945, in latitude..... longitude.....

there appeared within the limits of my august dwelling the

U. S. A. T. KLIPFONTAINE

Hearken Ye: The said vessel, officers and crew have been inspected and passed on by my august body and staff. And know ye: Ye that are chit signers, squaw men, opium smokers, ice men, and all-round landlubbers that CPL. ERWIN R. JOHNSON

having been found sane and worthy to be numbered a dweller of the **Far East** has been gathered in my fold and duly initiated into the

Silent Mysteries of the Far East

Be it further understood: That by virtue of the power vested in me I do hereby command all moneylenders, wine sellers, cabaret owners, _____ managers and all my other subjects to show honor and respect to all his wishes whenever he may enter my realm. Disobey this command under penalty of my august displeasure.

Golden Dragon
Ruler of the 180th Meridian



ALASKA
SCALE OF MILES
100

HAWAII
SCALE OF MILES
100

in Michigan and remarried. When she did so, my Father's brother took the name of the second husband. That is the story about my Father having a different last name than his brother. Anyway, my Uncle Bill persuaded the hospital people to let him take me to his home. I guess because I was able to walk and get around on my own, they allowed me to go. When we got there, he showed me around the house. It was so odd to be in someone's home. He took me to the bed room and showed me the bed I would be sleeping in while I stayed at his house. I sat on the bed. It was one of these feather beds. When I sat on the bed I sank deeply into it. I wasn't expecting that and I had to catch my breath. When I did that everyone laughed. His daughter, Arlene, my cousin was staying at his house temporarily. She was married and her husband, Nick, was in the service so she was keeping her father company. She was also around my age. She even took me out one day to show me downtown San Antonio and the Alamo.

I made a phone call to my family and it was great talking with them. I stayed at my Uncle Bill's house at night and he drove me to the hospital where I stayed during the day. We were given a good examination and I had to have some cavities in my teeth fixed and one pulled. After a few days I was given a 60 day furlough. I got on a plane and flew home.

My whole family - parents, two brothers, one older and one younger and a sister - met me at the airport and we had a very tearful reunion. I found out later that my older brother, Milton, was working at Higgins Industries. This is the company that made the Higgins P.T. Boats which were used to ferry General McArthur away from Corregidor south to Mindoro Island where he (and his retinue) boarded a plane to Australia. My younger brother, John (They called him "Spooky"), was in the Navy and was serving aboard the aircraft carrier, U.S.S. Ranger and he happened to be home on leave when I arrived home. After 70 days I returned to Brooks General Hospital and I was given another furlough, this time for 90 days.

In June of 1946 I was sent to Camp Shelby, Mississippi (near Hattiesburg) where I was mustered out of the service on June 20, 1946. The officer asked me if I had any service related disability I wanted to report at this time and if I did, I would have to stay a few more days to fill out claims forms. I wanted out and to get back to civilian life so I told him I didn't want to make any claims. I was young and dumb. A few of the XPOWs in other areas did fill out claims forms and wound up getting a monthly disability allowance. I got zilch. I didn't file a claim until 1989 - I could have been getting a disability allowance all that time. I didn't mind, though, because I felt good, I still had all of my extremities, I was able to think and get around on my own. If I had done some smart thinking I would have stayed and signed those forms. I did sign up for reserve duty.

One thing that happened while I was at Camp Shelby. I met a guy that had a car and he asked me if I wanted to buy some white lightning. This is some 120 to 130 proof alcohol. I said sure so we got into his car and went up and down some back roads until I didn't know where in the heck I was. It was night time and it was very dark. Finally he passed a farm house, turned off the car lights and drove about ¼ mile past it and stopped. There were no lights on in the house. He told me to wait for him in the car and he started walking back to the farm house in the dark. I watched him when he turned in the gate. He was gone for about 15 minutes and then he came out. There was never a light turned on while he was in that house. He came walking back with two one-gallon bottles. He hurriedly put them in the trunk of the car and drove off. He didn't turn the car lights on until he was about another mile down the road. We went back to Camp Shelby with our illegal loot. We had a little drink by mixing a very little bit of this white lightning with a coke. It would be suicide to try to drink that stuff straight.

My last day in the regular service was June 20, 1946. When I mustered out I joined the Air Force Reserves as an enlisted man. In July, the government told me I could go to Miami, FL for two weeks of R and R - rest and relaxation. I was able to take two people with me and my parents did not want to go so I took my older brother, Milton and his wife, Eunice. We had a great time. However, my brother's son Milton, Jr., suddenly had a fever and they decided to leave right away. My brother's wife had never flown before and had said she would never fly but when she was told the difference in time between driving and flying to New Orleans she decided to fly and take the quickest way home to her son. It took a long time for her to live that down about not wanting to fly. I liked it so much down there that when I met a fellow EX-POW who was just starting his two weeks that I talked him into letting me stay with him for another two weeks. When I returned home I rested for a couple of months then I started looking for work.

In November of 1946 I got a job doing drafting at the Johns-Manville plant in Marrero, LA. I had to walk three blocks from my home to catch the St. Claude Ave street car which cost seven cents, get a free transfer ticket, ride to Canal street and transfer to a Canal Street street car, ride to the river, get off and take a free ferry across the river to Algiers where I caught the Westwego Bus for ten cents and that finally took me to my place of work in Marrero. It took me one and one-half hours to get to work and the same amount of time to come back home. This went on every day and I enjoyed it. I worked at Johns-Manville until June of 1947.

The G.I. Bill was available so I decided to take advantage of it and enrolled at Tulane University in September of 1947 - with the help of my brother, John. I wanted to try to get a better education. While at Tulane I enlisted in the Air ROTC. I figured since I was going to school full time I might just as well include the AROTC in my studies. If I decided to go back into the Air Force after I graduated I would be able to go back as an officer. When I finished the ROTC program I enlisted in the Air Force Reserves as a 2nd Lieutenant. I completed my studies at Tulane and earned a B.S. degree in Mechanical Engineering. I went to work for North American Aircraft in Los Angeles, California. I worked for a year and a half, quit and decided to tour the country. I traveled from North to South and from West to East of the United States. The motto at that time was 'See America First'.

I returned to New Orleans, married a wonderful woman, Margaret Ruth Stewart, in February of 1957, helped her to raise five wonderful boys who are now grown men with good jobs and, thankfully, by the grace of God, I have lived a good, healthy and happy life. I still keep in touch with many of my military friends. I go to a reunion of the 27th Bomb Group (L) every year, a reunion of survivors of the Mukden POW camp every year and a reunion of the survivors of Bataan and Corregidor every year.

It has been 55 years since the OSS men and the Russians liberated me from the Japanese in August of 1945. I often think back to that time and to where I spent what were supposed to be the best years of my life between the ages of 20 and 24. I still have recurring dreams of the atrocities which I saw and which was done to me. I get a 50 percent service-connected disability compensation for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), a 30 percent service-connected disability compensation for my heart and 20 percent for unemployability due to service-connected disability for a total of 100 percent disability. I thank God for giving me the strength and the health to survive the prison camp ordeal and to return to my country and to live a full life.

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
 UNITED STATES ARMY FORCES, PACIFIC

AG-KD
 -178-

AG-KD 220.2

AFPO 500
 29 Sep 45

SUBJECT: Orders.

TO : EM concerned.

Exigencies of the sv precluding issuance of orders in advance VO C-in-C on 20 Aug 45 are hereby confirmed and made a matter of record. Under provisions of AR 615-5, 30 Jun 43, fol-named EM, unasgd, are appointed to gr as indicated:

TO BE MASTER SERGEANT (TEMP)

T Sgt Clarence P. Graves	6822281	T Sgt August G. Rucker	19050409
T Sgt Lurry G. Jordan	6243898		

TO BE CORPORAL (TEMP)

Pfc Eligio Baca	38012017	Pfc William L. Ware	14042441
Pfc Alonzo T. Baggett, Jr.	7085802	Pfc Garland P. Weeks	18042287
Pfc Oscar Baier	19019936	Pfc John R. Wertenberger	15017361
Pfc James E. Beard	13000768	Pvt Robert K. Bates	33035525
Pfc George Becker	19020005	Pvt James D. Beshears, Jr.	14049258
Pfc Joseph Biszaha	13038251	Pvt Harold F. Carpenter	39302688
Pfc Kay D. Britton	18015216	Pvt John F. Christmas	14049180
Pfc Peter J. Cappellano	32035490	Pvt Anthony Cianfrini	13004915
Pfc Valdemar A. DeHerrera	38012214	Pvt Ward S. Clark	20602321
Pfc Milton F. Dusek	18048932	Pvt Donald R. Clements	19017577
Pfc Ernest F. Earhart	35100842	Pvt Clarence S. Cox	15067586
Pfc Sol Fromer	19018310	Pvt David M. Evans	33062330
Pfc Roger H. Gagne	11016520	Pvt Donald L. Fitzgerald	19053149
Pfc Warren D. Graves	38011383	Pvt Neil Gagliano	33033801
Pfc Harold B. Green	12002557	Pvt Edward Griffith	19050953
Pfc John J. Hecimovich	17025128	Pvt Cody H. Grundy	17023623
Pfc Thomas H. Hennessy	20916630	Pvt John A. Hall	19003606
Pfc Virgil Hillard	15081839	Pvt Robert C. Herbert	18001657
Pfc Edward W. Holt	19054264	Pvt William H. Hopkins	6555920
Pfc Sidney R. Hudgens	38012314	Pvt Jean S. Howard	18017455
Pfc Harry W. Hunke, Jr.	17018677	Pvt Arthur E. Huebner	17025003
Pfc Warren P. Johnson	39010218	Pvt Trino C. Huerta	38031569
Pfc Earl Kearney	15065704	Pvt Erwin R. Johnson	14017289-501
Pfc James W. Kee	6998319	Pvt Rollin O. King	33084519
Pfc John A. Krebs	19048591	Pvt James L. Kniffen	19020638
Pfc Walter C. Lamm	33081923	Pvt John S. Koot	19002442
Pfc Ralph W. Middlebrooks	17014363	Pvt Herbert J. Kranc	36106369
Pfc Norman S. Pysher	7021000	Pvt Robert L. Kucera	18048976
Pfc Dagoberto S. Ramirez	20843369	Pvt Donato Leone	32048497
Pfc Raymond E. Rau	36115332	Pvt Estel E. Lockhart, Jr.	15065804
Pfc John A. Salazar	19052642	Pvt William A. Lowry	15017287
Pfc Joseph G. Schisser	18048868	Pvt Noah Mullins	15043941
Pfc Sigfreid Schreiner	11010324	Pvt Ross E. Newkirk	19013552
Pfc Oscar D. Secrest	18001734	Pvt Raymond Penda	11077337
Pfc Bernard T. Wallon	6980652	Pvt Oren D. Watkins	19003712
Pfc Dean F. Walter	18001656		

By command of General MacARTHUR:

I had to retire from work in January of 1992 due to rising stress from my PTSD. My big question is why did God allow me to live and return when so many good men did not come back. There are many instances and happenings which has occurred but of which I cannot remember. When I try to think back to those times my emotion gets the best of me. I try to tell family and friends about those times in the past but I get to a point where I cannot continue. When I do mention something from those times, they don't really understand. They cannot understand. The reason for attending these reunions is that these are the only people that really understand - we can relate. When we talk we are bringing out of some of the memories that have been closed inside our heads for some fifty-five years. We are just now starting to relax with our memories of those horrible years.

OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES

China

By Lt. Robert Stein

and Fred Coker

Appendix I

The following is a report by Paul Hallberg, a pilot who piloted a five member OSS team that parachuted into Mukden on August 16, 1945 to tell the Japanese that the war was over and to take over our camp so the Japanese officers and guards would not execute everyone in the camp. They probably saved our lives. They, the OSS team and the two Atomic Bombs.

News Release
OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES
China Theater

By Lts. Roger Starr
and Fred Heckel

Kunming, China

Censor, Carl R. Hammons

The radio operator of the B-24 handed Corporal Leith, who was squatting beside him, the extra set of earphones and motioned to him to put them on. Lieth did. It was shortly after six o'clock, China time, on the morning of August 16th. Over the radio, Prime Minister Atlee was making the first announcement of the Japanese acceptance of the Potsdam terms and the end of hostilities. Leith listened to the whole announcement and then handed the earphones back. "I hope the Japs at Mukden know it's over," he shouted above the roar of the motors. The Japs at Mukden did not know it was over, Leith later learned. He learned it while looking into the business end of their rifles, after he and four other members of his team parachuted down on the heavily guarded Japanese industrial center in broad daylight. Planned as a post war rescue mission to speed the return of Allied prisoners of war from the prison camps of Manchuria, Leith's team arrived 45 minutes too early, in a city whose Japanese rulers thought the war was still on. "The result was somewhat dramatic, as one of the rescued prisoners said later. "We'd often wondered just how our jail term would end, but the real thing had our imaginations beat hollow. The ending was straight out of Hollywood.

The Hollywood ending was plotted three days before the end of the war, at a conference in Chungking between Lt. General Albert Wedemeyer, commanding all United States Forces in China and Colonel Richard Heppner, Chief of the Office of Strategic Services operations under him. American Intelligence officers in China knew that the Japanese had established a large prison camp in Manchuria for Allied POWs. They guessed that Lt. General Jonathan Wainwright, General MacArthur's deputy in the Philippines was in this camp, along with a number of other high-ranking officers and civilian government officials, British and Dutch, as well as American. But the intelligence officers could not be sure exactly how many prisoners

were being held in Manchuria, nor where they were being held, nor what their conditions were.

With the surrender of Japan expected momentarily, it was hoped that Wainwright could be evacuated in time to attend the ceremonies in Tokyo. General Wedemeyer wanted to insure the remaining prisoners safety from possible reprisals by the Japanese commanders, prompt medical treatment if required, a quick release from captivity and a speedy return to their homes.

In order to accomplish these objectives, an American mission had to go into Mukden and get there as soon as possible after the end of the war. A delay of even a few hours might make the difference between life or death in the case of men critically ill from malnutrition, or give the defeated Japanese an opportunity to work vengeance on their helpless captives. Because of the possibility that a plane landing on the Japanese-held field at Mukden might be fired on, it was decided that the rescue mission should parachute in. Once on the ground, they were to find the prison camp, give medical attention to the prisoners, prepare for bringing General Wainwright and the critically ill back to Chungking immediately and to perform this mission calling for daring and courage as well as diplomacy and language skills, assist in making plans for the best ways in which to handle the evacuation of the remainder.

To perform this mission calling for daring and courage as well as diplomacy and language skills, Wedemeyer called on the Office of Strategic Services. Major General William J. (Wild Bill) Donovan's organization, whose name has become synonymous, to war-wise Americans, with irritating secrecy, had been established in China for two years. There it had carried on a wide variety of activities including the training of Chinese and American parachute

"Commandos" and the dropping of a considerable number of highly trained saboteurs to harass the Japanese and their puppets far behind the battlelines. General Wedemeyer explained to Colonel Heppner what he wanted. Heppner promised to have a small, picked team ready to jump into Mukden on the announcement of the end of hostilities. He wired his orders from Chungking to OSS headquarters in Kunming. Forty-eight hours later the team was on its way. Although the team was almost shot by the Japanese on its arrival and the city of Mukden, soon afterwards, became a shambles of looting and rioting, although the prison camps weren't where they were supposed to be and General Wainwright was actually 165 miles from Mukden, the mission accomplished its objectives. Within ten days the most seriously ill of the former prisoners were safe in the American Army hospital in Kunming. General Wainwright and his staff were on their way to Tokyo. The orderly evacuation of the majority of the former prisoners had started, after 3 years and 4 months captivity since the fall of Bataan.

"We think we're the luckiest men in the world", the first of the evacuees said when they reached the safety of the Kunming hospital, 2000 miles from their Mukden prison. "The Nips were getting ready to take us away and hide us in the hills, they didn't want to let us get away alive. They were going to move us out the day those guys jumped in. When we found out who they were we thought they must have been crazy. They had plenty of guts." Coming from men who had stood the physical violence and the psychological cruelties of the Japanese for almost four years, that was quite a compliment. As one excited Scottish Sergeant put it "Five Yanks took Manchuria."

Colonel Heppner's wire from Chungking to his organization at Kunming caused hardly a ripple, accustomed to unusual and bizarre assignments, the OSS officers went to work. A code

name was assigned to the mission and the selection of personnel began. First requirement was a doctor and the choice of a man for this spot was easy. The senior medical parachutist of the United States Army, Major Robert LaMar, slight mustached veteran, 31 years old with 38 months overseas, had just returned from South China to Kunming. In the South he had dropped in to patch up a wounded OSS soldier. LaMar, the second doctor to volunteer for paratroop training back in 1941 (his predecessor is no longer jumping), had previously made 58 jumps including one in Lao, New Guinea, in the first parachute operation of the Pacific War. He had been in China less than two weeks and was impatient to go out on his second mission.

A Japanese interpreter was the second assignment and for this spot the OSS picked Corporal Fumio Kido, 21 of Honolulu. Kido, in civilian life was an electrician, he was a native born citizen of Japanese extraction with eight months of service with the OSS in Burma behind him. Kido had never used a parachute before and was so small of build and so light that although he was the third member of the team to leave the plane, he was the last to reach the ground.

Corporal Edward Starz was chosen as radio operator. Starz, also an OSS Burma veteran, took with him two small but powerful transmitters with which to establish communications from Mukden to OSS Kunming. A freshman at Wisconsin University when he was drafted in 1942, Starz plans to return to college under the GI Bill of Rights.

At least one man who could speak Russian was needed and Corporal Harold Leith was an obvious choice. Leith, a 23 year old San Franciscan, in civilian life a translator at the Library of Congress, had been sent by the Army to take language training under the Army Specialized Training Program and speaks both Russian and Mandarin Chinese. Leith had been overseas only three months when he was assigned to the Mission. Ching Shih Wu, a Chinese interpreter lent by the Chinese Government, also accompanied the team.

To lead the team, OSS picked Major James T. Hennessey, a 27 year old West Pointer, who had been with OSS since March, 1945. Steady and quiet, Hennessey was taking parachute training at Kunming when the mission was formed. His home is in Springfield, Missouri where Mrs. Hennessey and their two children live.

While the personnel were being picked, briefed and were drawing their personal equipment, the OSS supply officers and parachute riggers gathered the special equipment for the team. About 5500 pounds of equipment went along, including large amounts of penicillin and DDT. The prison camp doctors, LaMar learned later, had never heard of either of these two new inventions.

Helped by a Japanese Army doctor, the prisoners own medical staff had done a wonderful job in the camp, LaMar discovered. The Japanese doctor, one of the few Japanese to show the prisoners anything but brutality and mistreatment, bought medicines for them with his own money and smuggled them back into the camp. The American doctors, captured on Corregidor, farmed the pills out among the prisoners for safe keeping from the Japanese guards. "It was easier for each of twenty different men to keep two sulfa pills than for one man to keep forty" Colonel Gillespie the chief medical officer, told LaMar. "I don't know what we'd have done without the pills. They saved the lives of many of our boys." Despite these efforts 200 prisoners had died at the camp of undernourishment, exposure and beatings.

In addition to the medical supplies, all of which were packed for airdrop, the team carried clothing and rations for the former prisoners and the two radio sets. Each man had his own automatic pistol but no other arms.

On the night of August 14th, the team was alerted and given its final briefing in the OSS headquarters in Kunming. Each team member was given a copy of a letter from General Wedemeyer to the Japanese Commander, stating that hostilities were over and outlining the humanitarian nature of the mission. At 3:00 in the morning the team was driven through the dark muddy streets of Kunming to the airport, where they boarded a C-46 that took them to Hsian, an advance OSS base in northern China, about 1200 miles from Mukden. Here the team waited for orders to board the bomber which would take them to their target. Back at Kunming, Colonel Heppner waited for the flash from Chungking. Early on the morning of the 16th it came. "Go ahead with mission", Heppner wired Hsian. At 0450 that morning the team took off.

Six hours later the big OSS B-24, "Flight Pay", piloted by 1st Lt. Paul Hallberg, a veteran of OSS parachute missions over France, roared across the Great Wall of China and nosed into Manchuria. "Thirty minutes to go", Hennessey shouted in LaMar's ear. LaMar got up from the floor, stretched and yawned. It was cold. "You might have let me sleep another fifteen minutes", he said.

Then Hennessey went over their plans again. "LaMar first, then, Kido second. There won't be any reconnaissance because the plane has just enough gas to get back. Just the two passes and we're on our own. Assemble as soon as you hit. I'll lay out my chute for the supply drop marker and everybody keep your eyes peeled when they come down - seventeen bundles, we can't afford to lose any of them".

The men were busy for the next fifteen minutes, doing things that had been done before. Starz chewed a stick of gum, spat it out, tried another. Hennessey played with a pencil and a notebook. LaMar looked out of the window. No one said much. LaMar explains that the tension before every combat jump seem a little worse than all those before it, but this one, he adds, "seems really worse. We didn't know what to expect, just that we were to head for the prison camp and that it was probably on a golf course".

Then the jump master came back from the pilot's compartment. "There's a fifteen mile wind down there, Major", he shouted at Hennessey, "Do you want to jump"? Everyone in the plane knew that five miles a hour is the prescribed safety maximum. The others looked at LaMar, the veteran. He was carefully lacing a boot. "What are we waiting for"? he asked when he had finished. "Okay", Hennessey said, "We'll jump." They hadn't come all the way to Mukden just to go back. They hooked up their parachutes to the static line.

The jump master lined them up, sitting on the floor beside the bomb bay opening, in the order in which they were to go out. The bomb bay doors were open and LaMar's legs dangled in the air. Between his knees he watched the ground slide by at a hundred and thirty miles an hour. They were over the outskirts of the city. Below them were green cabbage patches, red brick factory buildings, non-descript shacks, black cinder roads. LaMar was wondering what Mukden would be like and where the golf course was when the jumping light flashed red and the bell rang. "Go", the jump master shouted, tapping LaMar on the shoulder.

Six parachutes billowed out and drifted down to a Manchurian cabbage patch on the outskirts of the heart of the city of the Japanese Manchurian Empire. They carried the first free Americans

to touch Manchurian soil since December 7, 1941. These were a few Americans who hoped the Japanese knew the war was over.

The Japanese corporal moved listlessly up the road with his squad. Another day, he thought, another day in Mukden like every other day in Mukden. Walk your patrol and walk back. Then do it all over again. Up the road he could see some Chinese farmers approaching.

The corporal looked around at his men shuffling along the road behind him. He glanced at the sky and saw a plane shrinking to a speck. He looked up the road at the farmers. Something was wrong. The farmers, now much closer, were wearing uniforms, strange uniforms, but familiar. But those men walked straight down the road as though they belonged there. Something was very wrong. Those were American uniforms.

The corporal shouted an order and he wished an officer was there.

Up the road, Hennessey saw the Japanese patrol unsling their rifles and come up on the double. Up to now everything had gone well. The mission had come down without incident thanks to the gentle soil of a small farm. They had been greeted by waving Chinese who poured from factory buildings around them, gathered the supplies together and volunteered to furnish a guide to take them to the Japanese Hoten prison camp. Hennessey had left Starz and Wu to guard the supplies and had started down the road with the others and the Chinese guide.

Suddenly the guide stopped, pointed down the road and vanished in a maze of broken-down sheds. That was when Hennessey saw his first Japanese, on the double with fixed bayonets. It wasn't a pleasant sight. Hennessey was glad that he had had the team walk down the center of the street as though to attract attention, obviously not the way in which one would make an attack. Even so, the Japanese seemed to be expecting one. Their patrol spread out across the edges of the road, as though expecting to be outflanked. Eyeing each other carefully, both parties continued to advance until the Japanese corporal shouted, in Japanese, "Halt!" Kido relayed the command to the other members of the Cardinal team.

"Who are you?" the corporal asked.

"Americans. We've come on a humanitarian mission and we want to see the prison camp commandant", Kido shouted. "Don't you know the war is over?"

"Are you armed?" came from the corporal. The two groups were so close together that shouting was unnecessary.

"Only our own pistols", Kido said. "We want to see the prison camp commander".

"Drop your arms and get down on the ground". The team did this. Then at a command from the coporal, the front file of the Japanese squad kneeled down and raised their rifles. Bolts clicked and cartridges went home into the chamber.

"Kido", LaMar said, say something, for God's sake keep talking".

Hennessey described the scene later. "I wasn't scared so much as I was sorry". Leith says he remembers noticing a billboard on a nearby house advertising beer and with the curious irrelevance of such moments trying to puzzle out the Chinese characters of the advertisement.

Meanwhile Kido needed no encouragement. He was talking as fast as he could. "We want to see the prison camp commander", he repeated. "The war is over".

LaMar was afraid Kido could not be heard. "Stand up, Kido", he hissed. The Japanese corporal motioned Kido down again with his bayonet. Then he ordered two of his soldiers to

pick up the weapons the Americans had dropped. Now, with everything under control, he was ready to listen.

"Who are you and what do you want?"

Kido repeated his story, but the Japanese said nothing. With the rifles still leveled on the OSS men, he seemed to be waiting for something that would relieve him of responsibility in a situation too far out of the ordinary for his comprehension. Had any of the four Americans made a move, he would have known what to do. The mission would have ended right there.

For twenty minutes the two groups faced each other, waiting. Then the corporal seemed to realize that some action was expected of him. He started to march the Americans down the road, surrounded with eloquent bayonets. It began raining. The rain reminded Hennessey of the equipment and of Starz and Ching guarding it. Through Kido he asked the Japanese to allow LaMar to go back for the big radio man and the Chinese interpreter. Much to his surprise, the Japanese corporal said, "Let him go." That was the last they saw of the doctor for over three long hours during which they were roughly moved from one headquarters to another, questioned, blindfolded and shoved into and out of truck after truck. Kido said later, "Everyone figured we were too hot to handle. They passed us around like a hot potato."

Meanwhile LaMar returned to the jump scene. A huge crowd of milling Chinese farmers had gathered around, wrenching his shoulder and bruising his arm with the flat of a bayonet. They tossed him in the shack beside the others. Immediately all three were blindfolded and pushed out of the building. For the second time in two hours, the jumping doctor thought the books were about to close on the mission. "Starz", he asked, to get the record straight, "What's your first name?" "Eddie", Starz said.

The big radio man, also responsible for coding their messages, later described his feelings to LaMar. "I was sending in prayers as fast as I could and, brother was I sending them in the clear!"

One of the prayers must have gone through, for fifteen minutes later the entire mission was united in the back of a truck, on their way to Japanese Military Headquarters. The truck stopped in front of a large brick and stone building in downtown Mukden and the mission was ushered into the office of the Commandant, an elderly, gray haired colonel who rose to greet them in English.

The colonel apologized at great length for the treatment which the team had received and took a bottle of whiskey from his desk which he offered to them. "You jumped in at 10:15 this morning", he told Hennessey, "and we here at headquarters weren't notified that the war was over until 11:00. It was much later than that when the word got to our outlying patrols."

Those 45 minutes had almost cost their lives, but Hennessey was not interested in the apologies. He wanted to get to the prison camp. This, the colonel said was impossible. Certain permissions had to be obtained, would the mission wait? They had no choice. The afternoon dragged on, until, at four thirty, the colonel said that he had received the permissions and they could go to the Hoten Camp. With all their belongings, the mission was loaded on a truck.

This was their first chance to really look at Mukden. They were surprised to find Mukden a large and very modern city which the Japanese had apparently tried to make symbolic of their Asiatic Empire. The streets were wide and well paved, lined with trees. Many of the houses were built of red brick, with limestone columns and a large number seemed to be official of one sort or another. But as the truck left the center of the city, the character of the scenery changed,

the truck passed through an ancient Chinese gate into a slum section of broken-down wooden houses smelling of sewage. Along the side of the street naked children stared at them. Vendors hawking Chinese food and selling watermelons, cried their wares. "This is more like it", LaMar said. "The Japs live O.K. and everyone else is on the wrong side of the tracks. I guess we're going to the worst place of all".

The truck turned down a wide, but dirty and rutted street, into an industrial suburb of the city. Now the wooden houses clustered around the wall of large brick and concrete factory buildings. High tension power lines passed overhead,. Shortly the truck turned to the right and drove down a road towards a group of large walled in factories. When it reached one of these the road circled around the outside of the wall. Leith noticed a triple strand of electric wire across the top of the wall and Starz pointed at the wooden guard platforms which rose above the wall at several points. "This is it", Hennessey said and realized that the Japanese had placed the prison camp in the midst of a number of prime industrial bomb targets, which it so resembled in general appearance that it could not be distinguished from them from the air.

Later the team found out that an airplane parts factory, one of the largest in Manchuria, was only 500 yards to one side of the prison compound, with an immense die and tool works eight hundred yards to the other. In fact, American photo reconnaissance had spotted the POW camp as an unidentified industrial target on a B-29 raid on Mukden in December 1944. The camp had been deliberately, but mistakenly bombed by our own fliers with over 50 casualties.

The truck reached one corner of the wall, turned and drove down to a gate. The Japanese sentry stopped the truck, asked a few questions and allowed the driver to pass. Inside, along the edges of the ash covered courtyard, a few Americans were raking and shoveling, in clean but patched-up bits of uniform. "Hey", Leith yelled to them, but a Japanese soldier motioned that he was not allowed to talk to the prisoners. LaMar noted that none of the prisoners looked up, none appeared to see them, they kept on with what they were doing.

The truck pulled up at the headquarters building and Hennessey led his men out. Inside the building they were taken to the office of Colonel Genji Matsuda, the prison camp commandant.

Matsuda was a short, very stocky Japanese, some sixty years old. His face was covered with pockmarks and as he stepped from behind his desk, Hennessey noticed a limp. Matsuda, speaking through his own interpreter asked Hennessey his business. "We've come here to give immediate medical attention to the prisoners and to get them ready to go back home". Hennessey said, "I demand to be taken to the senior American officer in the camp and to have a list of all the men interned here. I also want Major LaMar, our doctor, to be given immediate access to the prison hospital".

Matsuda looked at them, unsmiling, for several long moments before answering. "That will be impossible", he said at last. "What will be impossible?" Hennessey asked.

"I have no authority to do any of those things", Matsuda said. "If you haven't, who has?"

"The Area Commander has the authority", Matsuda said.

"I demand to see the Area Commander", Hennessey said.

"I'm sorry", Matsuda answered. "The Area Commander is very busy."

"I want to see him anyway", Hennessey said. Did these people know who had lost the war? "Please get in touch with him for me and tell him that I want to see him".

"We will get in touch with him for you", said Matsuda, picking up his telephone and speaking a few words. The mission waited.

After a half hour the phone rang. Matsuda answered, a brief conversation followed. He turned to the Americans, "the Area Commander and his staff regret they are too busy to see you", he said.

During the wait, Hennessey's temper began to fray. He thought of the prisoners in the yard, full Colonels and Generals perhaps, forced to clean toilets and pick up scraps of paper, but far worse, a system of oppression which prevented them even from raising their eyes. "Now look, Colonel," Hennessey said, "The war is over, Japan has surrendered. We want permission to tell our soldiers that they are free. You have no further right to hold them."

"I have no right to do anything else. I have no authority except to follow my orders." Hennessey stared at him. Matsuda was obviously stalling for time, hating the day on which he would have to give up the prisoners. Every moment that he stalled meant dragging out the humiliation and the hunger longer than there was any need for. He remembered the men outside, with their eyes cast down on the ground and the news that they were free, it was over, which he had come to bring them. Matsuda, old and crippled, Hennessey thought - but force he decided reluctantly was out of the question. He could argue with Matsuda and cajole, but he could not use threats. Anything that might seriously offend Matsuda might have the most terrible consequences on the men outside. The discussions continued through the afternoon and into the night. Finally it was apparent that Matsuda would do nothing for them that day and Hennessey asked for permission to stay in the prison camp that night.

"I have no authority to allow that" Matsuda said. "We shall arrange to put you up in a hotel in Mukden. You are not prisoners".

"I'll say we're not, but you've been trying to treat us as though we are", Hennessey said, but further argument was useless.

It was well after nine P.M. and it had been a busy day. Worried that the prisoners might not be safe from reprisals that night and bitterly disappointed that he had not been able to announce their freedom to them, Hennessey had no alternative but to tell the members of the mission to get back on the truck. The Japanese put them up in the biggest hotel in Mukden in very comfortable beds with American mattresses. Fifteen guards were assigned to protect them, but though the mission was worn out, no one slept much that night. The stalling of the Japanese had aroused their suspicions. The following day would tell the story.

Hennessey, in thinking that the prisoners failed to know what was up, had underestimated their ingenuity. Over a long period of time, months each of which were identical and the slightest unusual incident was treasured in the memory as something precious, the Allied prisoners in the Hoten Camp had built up a very efficient system for gathering and disseminating news and information. This underground grapevine had the Japanese completely hood-winked, probably because their own psychology left the Japanese wide open to the efforts of their captives.

The Japanese consider that if their soldiers are captured by the enemy, they are forever disgraced and subject to immediate execution if they return to Japan. Knowing this about themselves, the Japanese probably assumed it would be true also of their enemies. Despite their systematic beatings, unnecessary starvation, stealing Red Cross supplies, interference with the

mail, severe punishment for infractions of bewildering and petty regulations (smoking too far from an ashtray was punished by ten days solitary confinement). The Japanese thought they could make the prisoners work in Manchurian munitions plants. Every day, large numbers of enlisted prisoners were taken to the plants where they were forced to work beside Chinese civilian workmen on the lathes, benches and desks.

Of course, the prisoners did little work. But they hindered the Japanese effort by even more overt acts. Forced to lay a concrete floor for the factory, the prisoners tossed into the wet cement over a million dollars worth of gears and machine parts. They convinced the Chinese workmen to slow down on the job. They wasted prodigious amounts of the Japanese short supply of metals, by always putting the largest possible piece of stock on the lathe, no matter how small a finished piece they wanted. The Japanese paid for their misjudgement of the Allied prisoners. In the three years that this plant operated, it turned out 18 pieces of machinery.

Besides this, the prisoners working in the factory developed a full-scale underground grapevine through the Chinese employees who worked beside them. The Chinese whispered the latest news to them and rumors of the war's progress came back into camp in that fashion. Copies of Japanese newspapers, despite regulations, were smuggled in daily, concealed in the soles of the shoes of those working outside. Two of the Colonels held in the prison had been language officers previous to their imprisonment and translated the papers clandestinely. Although the Japanese news was distorted and inaccurate, the very use of place-names enabled the prisoners to form an accurate picture of the trend of battle. When the team dropped into Mukden, the prisoners knew that the war was almost over. They had not heard of the atomic bomb, but they had heard of Russia's entry into the war.

On the morning of August 16th, the day of the team's arrival, it was apparent to all of the 1700 prisoners in Hoten that something unusual was in the air. The factory work details were not taken out of the compound, but were allowed to stay in the prison. Early in the morning, the prison cooks, all of them POWs, were ordered to make enough extra buns (a crude piece of black bread) the standard item of prison food to last 300 men 3 days. Since the Colonels and Generals in the camp numbered 300, the rations seemed to be designed for them.

Quickly the rumor spread that the high-ranking officers were to be taken elsewhere. The morning of the 16th passed while the prisoners discussed where they were going, to Korea, to remote regions in Manchuria, to Japan, to be walked to death to keep them out of Russian hands. At 10:15 in the morning, some of the prisoners loitering in the prison courtyard noticed a large, shiny airplane some five miles off to the southeast. Suddenly six parachutes appeared in the sky and the prisoners stopped to watch. The plane circled and dropped a number of colored parachutes and then disappeared from view.

Everyone started talking at once and everyone had a different theory. None of the prisoners had ever seen a B-24 before. They had been incarcerated before the first of these planes had come off the assembly lines. "It's the Russians," said some of the prisoners. "It's the Japanese maneuvers," others said. As Lt. Matthes, a prisoner taken on Bataan, said later, in describing the scene, "there were so many ideas that someone must have had the right one. But of course we didn't know it then. We just knew that something was up."

For the prisoners, the day dragged on slowly. Towards the middle of the afternoon, those who were working in the yard saw the truck with the mission, but their long subjection to the

Japanese had taught them to conceal their signs of interest. They kept their heads averted, but they noticed. One of the prisoners, Sgt. Fred G. Templin, of Thornton, Illinois, saw Sergeant Starz riding on the truck. "There's a guy who could hunt bears with a flyswatter", he whispered to a companion. It had been a long time since any of the prisoners had seen an American with meat on him. Many refused to believe these could be Americans, they must be Russians, they thought. But what were they doing in the prison camp? Were they prisoners?

Throughout the rest of the day everyone in camp was trying to learn the answer to the last question. "They couldn't be prisoners, some said because they're carrying pistols." "They aren't pistols", came the answer, "they only have empty holsters". When night fell and the conference in Colonel Matsuda's office continued. Prisoners stayed at the small square windows of their barracks peering at the figures in the office. They relayed messages to their comrades. They tried to signal to the strangers, but got no reply. "They must be Russians, they reported, "they can't understand us".

If the team, in their hotel room, got no sleep that night, neither did the men in the prison camp. According to Major Edward Mason, captured at Negros Island in the Philippines, half of the prisoners spent the night celebrating the end of the war and the other half spent it trying to convince the celebrants that the war wasn't over yet. Perhaps Colonel Matsuda slept that night, his sangfroid is reported to have been remarkable.

The following morning, the Japanese guards called for Major Hennessey with the truck. No one talked much on the way to the camp. Hennessey was saving his voice for the arguments certain to come when they arrived in Matsuda's office.

"Well Colonel," Hennessey said, "I still want to see the senior American officer present. Is he General Wainwright?" Matsuda replied in Japanese, Hennessey waited while Kido translated. "You cannot see General Wainwright, he is not here. General Wainwright is at a special camp for senior officers at Hsian 160 miles from here. The senior officer here is Major General George Parker. Colonel Matsuda is asking him to come to this office now. We are to have a conference to discuss what will happen to the camp."

Major Hennessey tried not to show his surprise. Matsuda had apparently overcome his lack of authority, or else he had decided to bow to the inevitable.

LaMar was standing by the door when General Parker entered. "The General", he said later, "came in with his eyes on the floor, he didn't look up. He couldn't see who we were. And then he bowed to us, he bowed very low. I can't seem to phrase exactly how it felt, but it felt wrong, an American General Officer bowing. It was like hearing your father crying when you were a small boy. It shocked me. Later we learned that the Japanese made all the prisoners bow to all of them, rank didn't matter."

It was Hennessey who spoke first to the General. "General Parker", he said, "I am Major Hennessey. We have just come from Free China to tell you that the war is over, Japan has surrendered and we are to make arrangements to bring all of you back home as quickly as possible". The General hesitated. "What did you say your name was?" he asked, as though confused. Hennessey told him.

Gradually General Parker appeared to realize that what he had heard was true. He drew himself up. "Thank you, Major", he said, "Thank you very much."

A conference then began between Parker, Matsuda and Hennessey with the others listening. It was decided that General Parker would assume immediate command of the former prison. The Japanese would keep their arms to guard the outside of the compound, not to keep the prisoners in, but to keep everyone else out. Then Colonel Matsuda admitted that a lot of mail had accumulated for the prisoners which he had refused to distribute, some of it dated back to 1942. None was more recent than 1943. This was brought to the office to be distributed. The Red Cross supplies which also, had largely been kept from the prisoners, were also to be put out immediately. Major LaMar was to go immediately to the prison hospital to prepare a list of the more seriously ill for immediate evacuation. Starz was to set up his radio and communicate the most pressing needs of the camp to OSS headquarters so that the proper supplies could be flown in. The prisoners were no longer prisoners. The conference was over.

Major Hennessey and Leith ran from the office to the main prison yard where a number of the internees were standing. Leith managed to speak first. "Hey fellows", he shouted to them, "it's over. The war's over. You're free."

The prisoners looked up slowly, they still saw the Japanese guards with their rifles. They were still not convinced.

"It's all right," Major Hennessey said. "The war is over, General Parker is in command of this installation, you're going home". Slowly at first the prisoners gathered around Hennessey and Leith, while others flocked out from the barracks and in from other parts of the yard. For the first few seconds no one seemed to know what to say. Then a voice piped up, "Say, who won the World Series in 1942?"

That broke the ice and everyone was laughing and crowding around, firing questions at Hennessey and Leith. "How much does a buck sergeant make now?", when do we go home?"

While Starz and LaMar busied about their assignments, the rest of the mission spent the day answering questions about the 3 years and four months that had been lost from the lives of these men.

By the following morning the new camp administration was functioning and Starz had made radio contact with OSS headquarters. The first messages to base, which brought to an end the anxious wait of OSS officers there. He asked for a plane to land at Mukden to evacuate the litter cases and bring in supplies. Among the supplies requested were high protein food, clothing, magazines and newspapers, motion picture equipment and real gut strings for the camp band bass fiddle, which the prisoners had spent eight months building.

But General Wainwright and the other Senior Officers and the Hsian camp had not yet been freed. Hennessey dispatched LaMar and Leith to Hsian to accomplish this phase of their mission.

Matsuda provided a guard for their protection, a Lieutenant named Hejikado. Hejikado was a Cambridge graduate. He had returned to Japan for a visit in 1940 and had been slapped into the Japanese Army immediately. He, with the surgeon mentioned previously, were by contrast, the favorites of the prisoners. He had smuggled in food from the city and news of the world and overlooked many camp "offenses". Once he had been caught by a superior officer failing to punish properly an American Colonel who had not bowed to him. Hejikado was taken to Military Police Headquarters, beaten and starved.

After that he fell more nearly into the accepted pattern. "But he was a good guard", Leith said. "he worked hard for us on that train trip to Hsian. It wasn't an easy job explaining away the presence of two healthy Americans. You see, nobody knew the war was over."

Once a Manchurian soldier sat down opposite the Americans. When he saw them, he looked guiltily at his own uniform and spoke, "It wasn't my fault. We couldn't help it." Mejikado translated for them.

The POW camp at Hsian stood by itself on the top of a hill, remote and isolated. Here were kept in complete segregation the highest-ranking prisoners of the Japanese, sixteen officers and civilians and eighteen enlisted men who served as their orderlies. In the past six months they had had no contact at all with the outside world. They were never allowed outside the electrified wire fence of the camp. They had no recreation and each man had to eat by himself. There was nothing for them to pass the time with but hard manual labor, tending a garden for the Japanese, herding goats and reading the books in a meager YMCA library. These books had been read so often and so carefully that their margins were filled with scribbled notes amplifying the texts. The accumulated bits of knowledge of the internees at Hsian covered a vast variety of topics. Among the prisoners were the Governors of Hong Kong, Malaya and the Netherlands Indies as well as their top military chiefs.

The prisoners at Hsian had been told the day before LaMar's arrival that two important visitors were expected on the following day. They had not been told that the war was over and the regular forced labor schedule had been continued. "We thought it was probably the Red Cross", Technical Sergeant Carroll, Wainwright's orderly, said later. "They'd come once before and the Japs cleaned up one of the rooms and showed it to them. Then they fixed up the mess hall tables with plates of meat and vegetables and plenty of fruit and showed them that. As soon as the Red Cross visitors left, they took it all off the tables and we got weevil bread as usual."

After this visit there would be no more weevil bread. LaMar and Leith arrived at 04:30 on the morning of August 19th and decided to wait until the regular waking time in the morning to see General Wainwright. They slept the remaining hours in the Japanese officers' quarters, a Japanese on each side. "I took everything off", Leith said, "except my forty-five".

Sunday morning at nine o'clock LaMar asked to see General Wainwright. "I didn't know what to expect", LaMar said. "I sat there waiting at the door, lighting cigarettes and preparing speeches. Then he came in....and there was nothing to say."

When General Wainwright, so long accustomed to Japanese trickery, realized that this was the truth he took a deep breath. Major LaMar", he asked, "do the American people censure me for surrendering at Corregidor?" "General", LaMar answered, "the American people look on you as one of the real heroes of this war". General Wainwright seemed somewhat relieved, but the humiliations of the three and a half years undoubtedly weighed on him. Two hours later he spoke to LaMar again, "Major LaMar", he said, "you weren't just saying that to make me feel good?"

Meanwhile, Leith had broken the news to the other Hsian prisoners. They conducted their regular Sunday morning service, which during their entire captivity, the officers had taken turns in leading. On that morning, a British officer served as Chaplain and read from the 124th Psalm, "Out of the Wilderness, He hath delivered us". It was a personal message for the little group at Hsian.

There was trouble ahead, however, LaMar could not get through to Mukden on the telephone to arrange transportation for the evacuation. None was available at Hsian. To get transportation someone must return to Mukden. At lunch, an incident demonstrated the need of keeping a mission member at Hsian. Lunching with the Allied General Officers, LaMar had been served a handsome platter of beef and vegetables. The former POWs were given their usual ration of rice and bread. To the Japanese there was still a difference between free Americans and prisoners, a difference that LaMar feared might be dangerous if the former prisoners were left alone. So Leith stayed at Hsian and LaMar set off for Mukden alone.

That was the afternoon of the 19th of August. That morning the Russians entered Mukden. On the afternoon of the 24th, the Russians arrived at Hsian. Leith had been ordered to remain at Hsian with the camp intact until LaMar returned with a train to conduct the evacuation to Mukden. But the Russians suggested the prisoners go to Mukden by truck convoy.

General Wainwright's journey to freedom began in a battered Russian truck, over impassable roads. The prisoners were all in a weakened condition (Wainwright himself had just recovered from a three months siege in bed). The 165 mile trip took 58 hours and only the courage of the prisoners and the patience and linguistic ability of Leith made it possible. Trucks broke down and were replaced. Bridgeless rivers were forded. At one point, the entire convoy bogged down on a steep grade, hood deep in mud. Chinese coolies solved that one. They cut trees from the surrounding woods, laid a corduroy road a mile long straight up the side of the mountain. When Wainwright insisted on paying for the work, the coolies refused. "They don't want pay," Leith translated for the General. "They say we gave them their freedom. They want us to have the road".

Six hours after the truck convoy had left Hsian, LaMar arrived from Mukden with his special train and found nothing but the Japanese garrison. The Japanese Commander informed him that the entire camp had been removed by the Russians. He did not know exactly where they had gone. LaMar had to take an empty train back to Mukden. That night OSS headquarters received the most upsetting news since the mission left Kunming. "Special train arrived Hsian. Wainwright and entire camp gone with Russian convoy. Whereabouts unknown".

But just before midnight the following day, Leith found the stewing mission at the Yamato Hotel. He hadn't slept for three days, but he'd brought the Wainwright party safely to Mukden. The last twenty miles on a commandeered train. LaMar went immediately to the station and asked Generals Wainwright and Moor to return to the hotel to assist in preparing the list for air evacuation the following day. "I might even find a beer,"

Some incentive was needed to get through Mukden that night. The city was thronged with rioters and looters. The red glare of burning buildings formed an angry backdrop for the constant crackle of small arms. With the Russian occupation, the Chinese of Mukden had turned on the Japanese who had so long starved them. They looted the Japanese stores, banks and homes carrying off what they could and burning the rest. Shinto temples made the best fires. Department stores made the best looting grounds.

No one was safe on the streets of Mukden that night. LaMar breathed freely only after he had herded his valuable charge into the hotel room and locked the door. "Did you say something about a beer?".

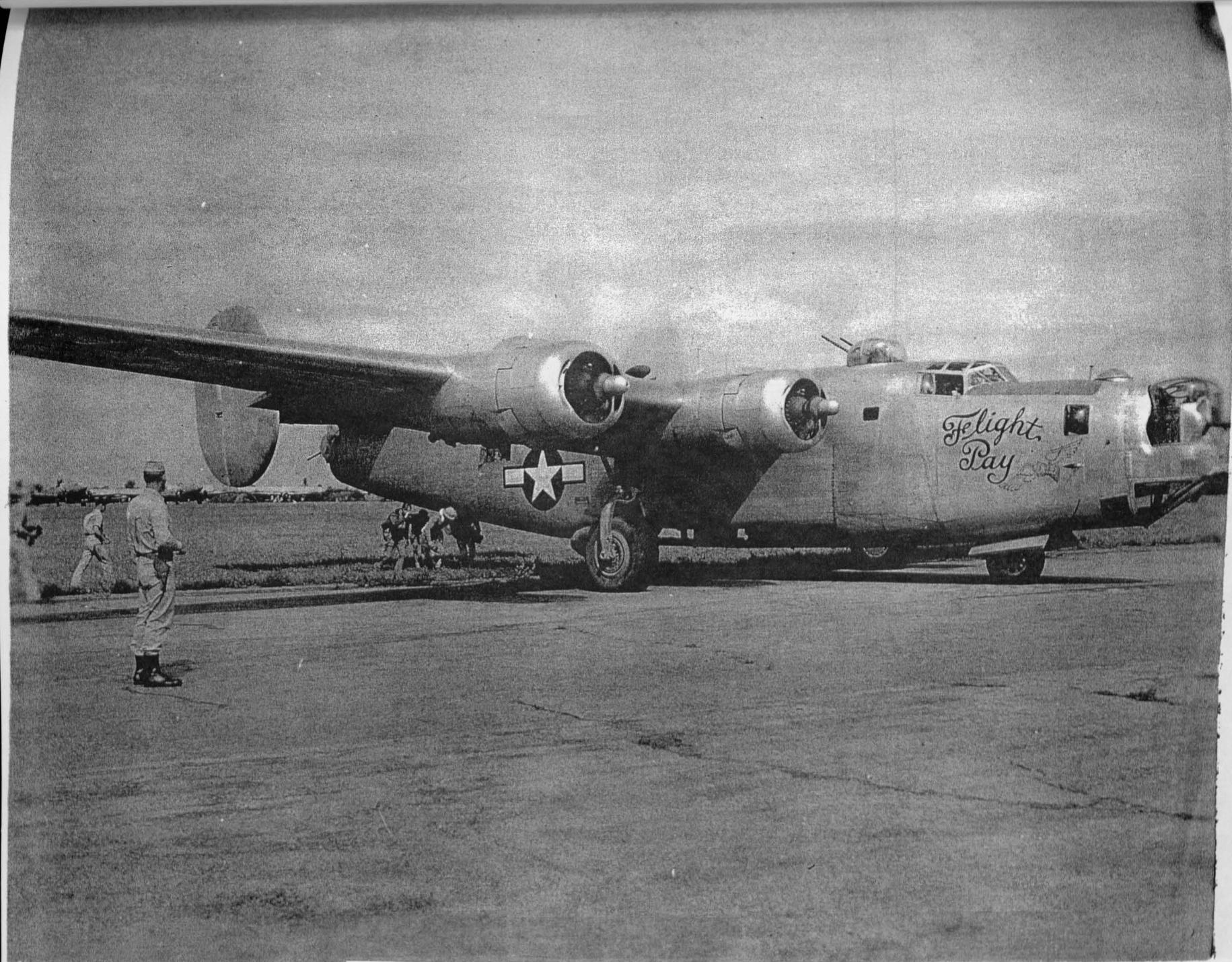
After General Wainwright had been put up for the night, LaMar and Hennessey told Leith what had been happening in his absence. They had had their hands full. The Japanese had used the arrival of the Russians as an excuse for forbidding the landing of American supply planes on the Mukden airfield. After having arranged these landings with the Japanese, Hennessey had found it necessary to do it all over again with the Russians. Looting and burning made transportation through the city all but impossible. Surrendered Japanese troops far outnumbered Russians in the city. The Manchurian puppet troops, two days before, a part of the the Japanese army, now wore Russian armbands and were trying to control the looting.

During LaMar's absence at Hsian, The Russians had officially taken Colonel Matsuda and his garrison prisoner. They had come out to the camp and lined up the former prison guards on one side of the yard, the Allied internees on the other. On command, the Japanese dropped their arms, then a detachment of the Allies stepped forward and picked up the arms. They marched inside and a gate in the barbed wire was swung shut and locked. Allied guards with loaded rifles marched up and down on the outside. This was the moment for the revenge that these men had been dreaming of for so long. But only two of the 1700 former prisoners so much as shouted. The Japanese may have humiliated their prisoners, but they did not succeed in changing them into their own image.

Also, Hennessey told LaMar, arrangements had been made for regular supply drops to the prison camp by B-29s based on Okinawa. A team of specialists was expected in from China to bring the Americans' records up to date and to arrange for their mass evacuation to the United States. Two plane loads of seriously ill were to leave the following morning from the airstrip along with the Wainwright party. However, a last minute change was made to have General Wainwright and his party remain for a later flight to Chungking. "And, oh, yes", Hennessey added, "the Dutch and British officers have given each of us a scroll thanking us for dropping in on them and General Parker has put us in for the D.S.C.", he told me. "That's fine", LaMar said, rolling over in bed. "We can go home."

In the morning, driving a car that someone had taken over from the Japanese, LaMar and Hennessey took General Wainwright and other members of his party to the airfield. There they met the truck from the camp with the former prisoners who were in the worst physical condition to be evacuated back to China. For most, this was to be their first airplane trip. For all, theirs was the first B-24 they had ever seen. LaMar watched them examine the ship before boarding it. One ran his hand along the shiny fuselage. Another looked at the motors, a third asked one of the crew members the speed of the plane and it's range. LaMar noticed the look on their faces, a look of happiness and pride - pride in their own faith in their country and their eventual deliverance. Majors Hennessey and LaMar watched as the B-24 (Flight Pay, piloted by Lt. Hallberg) and another B-24 took off back to Hsian, China with the former POWs.

"Well, Hennessey", said LaMar, after the planes had taken off, "you wouldn't swap all the medals in the world for a chance to see that look."



B-24 Plane "Flight Pay" That Flew the OSS Team into Mukden.

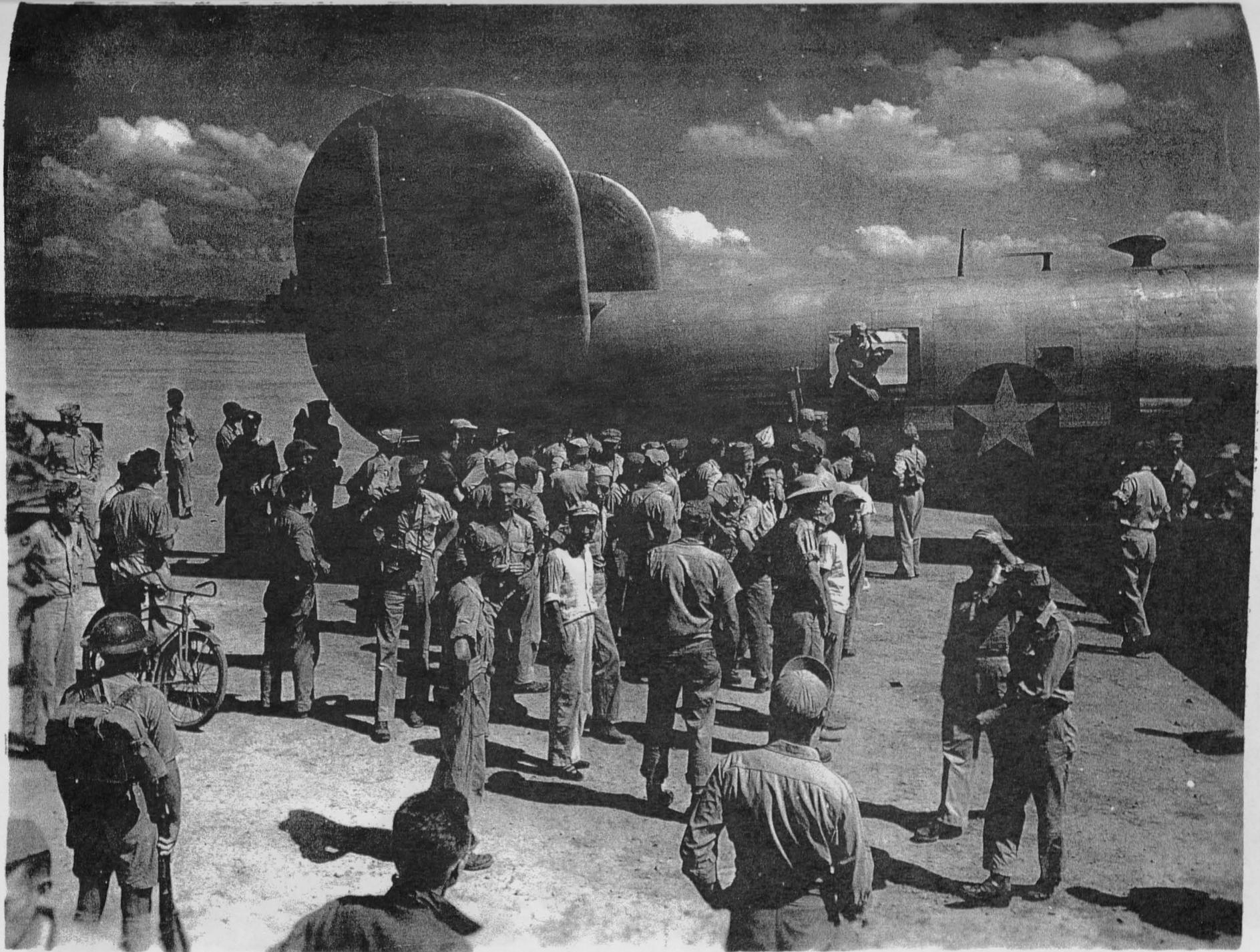


A Few of the Former Prisoners of War at the Mukden Camp



Work Detail of Former Japanese Guards











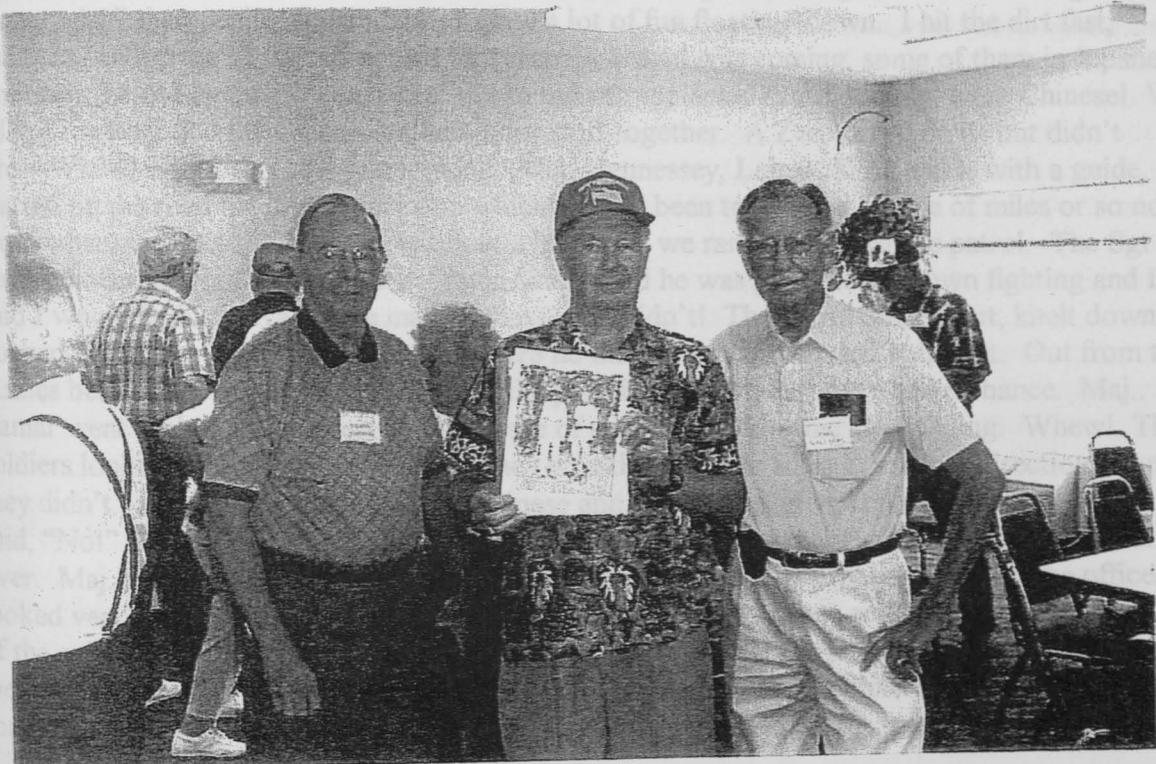








0430 AM--We took off from Hsi-An headed for Mukden (Shen Yang) in a B-24 to parachute
 in--6 of us. We were Maj James T. Hennessey, Maj Robert F. Lamar (doctor), Sgt Edward A
 Sartz, Sgt. Punico Kido, Cheng Myself and Hal Leith Hal Leith. Scenery was beautiful, the
 plains of North China very fertile. He wrote the "Mukden Diary"
 Manchuria. We put on our chutes. At 10:45 AM the pilot told us we had 20 mph winds but we
 decided to jump anyway. The jumpmaster said "Go!" and I was the fourth out. We went out
 through a hole in the bottom of the plane. I had the feeling of floating rather than falling then



Myself with Hal Leith and Paul Halberg
 Paul Hallburg piloted the plane that the
 Mission and Hal Leith parachuted from

Appendix II

The following is a report by Hal Leith on his part of the OSS Mission of parachuting five Americans and a Chinese interpreter into the City of Mukden in attempt to keep the Japanese officers and guards from harming the POWs on learning that the Japanese High Command had surrendered and that the war was over.

Mukden Diary

(Hal Leith)

16 Aug 1945, 15th in the US

0430 AM---We took off from Hsi-An headed for Mukden (Shen Yang) in a B-24 to parachute in---6 of us. We were: Maj. James T. Hennessey, Maj. Robert F. Lamar (doctor), Sgt Edward A Starz, Sgt. Fumio Kido, Cheng Shi-wu and myself (S.Sgt Hal Leith). Scenery was beautiful, the plains of North China very fertile. We crossed the Gulf of Pohai, saw our first glimpse of Manchuria. We put on our chutes. At 10:45 AM the pilot told us we had 20 mph winds but we decided to jump anyway. The jumpmaster said "Go!" and I was the fourth out. We went out through a hole in the bottom of the plane. I had the feeling of floating rather than falling then, "happy day" the opening shock. It was quite a lot of fun floating down. I hit the dirt fast, tumbled, spilled the chute and got rid of it fast. A crowd was coming, some of them in Japanese uniforms (before landing, I could hear the sound of "applause"). All, luckily, were Chinese! We all got together and the Chinese gathered our stuff together. A Zero dived on us but didn't fire---Whew!---probably was just looking. Maj. Hennessey, Lamar, Kido and I, with a guide, started up the road for the prison camp which we had been told was a couple of miles or so north from where we landed. After going about a half mile, we ran into a Japanese patrol. The Sgt in charge hollered "Halt" and we did. Major Lamar said he was going to go down fighting and I said I would let him have it if he made a move. He didn't! The patrol fanned out, knelt down, cocked their rifles and aimed them. We were no little scared but couldn't show it. Out from the bushes beside the road stepped the rest of the patrol. We wouldn't have had a chance. Maj. Lamar went back to get the rest and the three of us were led to some Hq building. Whew! The soldiers looked determined---we wished they would point their rifles in another direction---but they didn't. One of the Japanese knew Chinese and I asked him if he knew the war was over. He said, "No!" Maj. Hennessey asked what the Japanese said and I said they don't know the war is over. Maj. Hennessey cursed a bit. At this small Hq we were questioned some and the officer looked very nasty. After much waiting, we were blindfolded (whew) and led into a vehicle. One of the soldiers kept saying in English---"No talk!" We were driven to another place where we met the others and, in a blinding rainstorm, we were driven to the Kempeitai Hq. We were soaked. At the Hq, about 2:00 PM the Colonel in charge gave us some sake and English

whiskey. He told us we were guests and prisoners of war! He also said he had heard something on the radio about the war ending but he had no orders so he would contact Tokyo for instructions. So, we were the last persons captured and first set free. After a good deal of waiting, we were taken to the POW camp. As we were getting on the back of the truck to go there, the Japanese who had been saying 'no talk turned to me and asked---"Hey, I'm from L.A., I wonder if you know my brother?" No little excitement was caused by our ride through town. At the camp the C.O. wasn't too sure about turning over the camp to us and would not let us enter the camp. I signaled to prisoners upstairs looking out the windows the "OK" sign and waved to them. We told the Japanese Colonel we would be back tomorrow. We were put up that evening at the Yamato Hotel---a palatial place. We all had private rooms with baths---the best!

17 August 1945

We had breakfast at 8:30 AM and went immediately to Kempeitai Hq where the Colonel in charge surrendered to us and offered to commit Hara Kiri. We declined and just asked him to keep order with the Japanese troops---the troops taking us out to the POW camp were told to protect us. We were back at the POW camp at 9:30 and everything was rosy. The highest ranking American was Major General George M. Parker. He was called into the C.O.'s office, knocked and bowed as he entered---then he saw us. We told him no more bowing, the war was over and we were there to get the prisoners home. He was very thin and undernourished but perked up a good deal. We asked if it was OK to go talk to the rest of the prisoners. I ran outside into the prisoner yard and, at first, the prisoners were almost afraid to speak. I was the first free American they had seen in 3 years 4 months---ever since Bataan. They later referred to me as the heavy-set redhead. I waved at them and told them the war was over. In a few moments I was surrounded by a crowd of the happiest guys I have ever seen in my life. "How did the 1943 and 44 Rosebowl games end?---Was Roosevelt really dead and from what? Who was President? When was the war actually over? Who was Prime Minister of England? Was Queen Whilhemina of Holland still alive? How much pay did the different grades now get?" Dozens of questions! There are American, English & Dutch prisoners. No foolin', it was one of the happiest days of my life. I made a tour of the camp---this camp was the main one and one of the best---as best goes. Conditions were crowded, fleas were prevalent, beds were straw mattresses on long flat boards. Everybody tells us we're heroes---Nutz! It's such a pleasure seeing them walk like free men again. The Nip guards are somewhat disillusioned. We tried radio contact with headquarters in China but couldn't get through. We met with the Japanese Colonel in charge of the camp and found that General Jonathan M. Wainwright and all the other high officials are in a different camp in Hsian, about 150 miles Northeast from Mukden. Plans were made for me and Maj. Lamar to go the next morning to Hsian to get those people free. We then went to our hotel.

18 Aug 1945

We got up at 5:30 AM and left with Maj Lamar, Lt Hijikata and a special guard for the train to go to Hsian to get General Wainwright and party. We waited in the station from 6:40 AM until 2:40 PM before an engine came and we started off. The countryside is very beautiful---the further NE

the more mountainous and green. People look very healthy---we left a trail of excited Chinese and puzzled Japanese. We saw two Russians (white) and engaged them in conversation. They were puzzled and finally asked me what nationality I was. I told them American and they asked what I was doing there and I said we were tourists. It was a terrific surprise to them and soon they were beaming all over the place. Before more conversation the train pulled out and we parted wishing each other well. Our Japanese guards and officer saw to it we were comfortable in a 1st class accommotation---not too bad. We arrived at Hai He K'ou at 9:00 PM where we got off to change trains. While waiting I talked with the RR employees a while and got some Manchurian and Japanese money. At 11:30 PM we got on a train---they put an entire car on especially for us. Arrived at Hsian at 3:00 AM and went to the prison camp where the C.O. (Lt Marui---University of Oregon) had supper waiting for us. By 4:00 AM we hit the hay---at last!

19 August 1945

Got up at 8 AM, had breakfast and then saw General Wainwright, General Percival (British defender of Singapore) and Tjarda Von Starckenbergh Stachower---Gov. General of the Netherland East Indies (N.E.I.)(Java). General Wainwright was quite thin and getting deaf. After that, I went to the enlisted men's quarters and told them we had come to get them out and on the way home. There are American, English and Dutch---swell guys. One American was very unpopular---too good a relationship with the Japanese. What a happy bunch of guys. We've been together all day talking---many have given me souvenirs of interest. Red Cross supplies were handed out today! Most everybody is underweight. Had church service for all this morning. At this camp there is a Japanese army interpreter who was born in San Francisco---and most unhappy now. The first time I saw him he was walking down the hall away from me. He walked differently from the other Japanese. I called out to him and when he came over to see me I asked him what part of the states he was from. He said, "Aw, I ain't from the states". Actually he was from California and when vacationing in Japan from California a few years before, he was drafted into the Japanese Army. He has been nice to the prisoners. Most of the guards have left. I hope we can get everyone out of here as soon as possible.

20 August 1945

Got up at 7:30 and had breakfast with the fellows. We tried twice to get phone calls through---the first time we had bad conditions and couldn't hear. The second time we got through to the hotel but our group had left for the POW camp. Maj. Lamar left for Mukden at 10:15 AM to find out what to do. I asked to stay at the camp until we all could leave. Granted. At noon we had a very excellent meal in the kitchen. A civilian Japanese sneaked some saki in and gave it to us. He has been very good to the fellows and gave all of them food out of the warehouse whenever possible. Lt. Marui, the commander here put a stop to it as much as possible. Poor fellow (this civilian) was most unhappy. Using Japanese, Chinese and English he said he liked Americans but was afraid Japan had no more friends---quite true. I do hope people like him won't be hurt. The Nisei guard/interpreter from S.F. came in and is scared stiff and sad. He is afraid the Japanese will kill him, can't go to the U.S., doesn't like Japan. I spent part of the afternoon telling different people what I know of current events for the past three years. I wish I had paid more attention. At supper I listened to Gielkins tell of the occupation of Java. They

were brutal stories but true, I know. He said in Tokyo the people were wonderful to them---felt very sorry for the prisoners. While on a hospital ship from Formosa to Japan, carrying Japanese hospital cases from Saipan, the Japanese injured always were afraid of the Americans, British, etc. They bowed to them. Here in Hsian the past few days, the local Manchus have been giving the fellows the "thumbs up" sign. The fellows here knew we were coming but we (Lamar and I) were described only as "two very important persons". Hmmm. They thought we would turn out to be another inspecting group like the others before---through here like a dose of salts. They were not allowed to stop and talk and required to turn in a "good" report. It was my pleasure to tell them---"It's all over fellows---you're going home". And so to bed---in the enlisted quarters.

21 August 1945

I got up at 6:30---these fellows are used to getting up at 6:00 AM for the past 3 to 4 years. Had breakfast and began waiting for THE phone call. Gen. Wainwright gave me his autographed picture and a silk ribbon attached to a surrender demand. He's a regular fellow. He was quite concerned that the American people despised him for surrendering. I said no---Americans look on him as a hero who did what he had to. He was hesitant about being called a hero. We talked politics until noon. He also gave me his memo to all the other prisoners dissolving his "Wainwright Razor Blade Sharpening Factory". His job was to sharpen razor blades for everybody. I tried a phone call to Mukden but was unable to make any long distance calls. The phones are out of commission or something. Damn! I had hoped the fellows might all leave today but no hope for it. We can only wait.

Slept until 3:00 PM and at 3:30 we had some cake---first cake for some fellows in over 4 years---really good! While eating it a couple of the guards passed through and the fellows called them and gave them some cake too. I had a bath "a la Nippon". It felt good! I heard a rumor that the Russians are in Mukden---Marui confirmed it. Seems they have made the Yamato hotel their Hq. Marui said we need a Russian permit to travel on the RR. Supper---then went to see Gen. King and had a very nice talk. He was worried for the safety of the fellow here whom the other fellows suspect as pro-Japanese. He doesn't believe it. Gen. King also asked me to put in a good word for him to allow him to return to the states in the same group as his men. He said it was he who surrendered at Bataan and so he couldn't return home in an easier or quicker manner than his men. Swell guy. I borrowed a chess book from Sir Mark Young. He autographed and gave it to me later---I obviously needed to study the book! I read it a bit but talked mostly. I told Williard I would see to it for his safety on his return home (pro-Japanese?). I arranged with Lt. Marui to settle accounts the next morning at 9:00 AM. To bed.

22 August 1945

I spent most of the morning talking again. I played a game of chess---found my opponent (Sir Mark Young) to be an expert. Had pumpkin pie for lunch. Gen. Wainwright invited me in at 3:00 PM for tea and do-nuts. He read me a letter (wire) from Pres. Roosevelt. Gen. Wainwright said it was the only thing that kept him from getting discouraged about having to surrender. He told me the whole story of Bataan and Corregidor. He did his best---even more. He was interrupted by Sgt Carrol. There was trouble in the kitchen---our cook (American) had drunk too much and started a row with Lt. Marui. Whew! Spent most of the afternoon getting that

straightened out. Damn! Why can't some fellows use good sense---an American too. This evening Generals King and Moore had me tell them all the facts about the problem in the kitchen---both our side and the Japanese side. It definitely was the cook's fault. He was removed from the kitchen to where we can keep an eye on him. There still is no news from Mukden. We're all anxious to get going.

23 August 1945

It is Gen. Wainwright's birthday---62 years of age. I promised to get him a bottle of scotch later---I hope the boys at Mukden don't drink it all and make me break my word. I took pictures of the General, Sgt Carrol and Carrol took a picture of the General and me. I talked to Marui about phoning but we can't get through. He said that also Hsin Ching and Mukden radio stations have stopped broadcasting. The Japanese supply officer asked me in to identify what looked like the fin of an American bomb??? Don't know for sure what it looked like---a bomb or flare? There was no crater where it was found. Everyone is getting impatient to move out. I swapped a silver dollar for a 2 ½ guilder piece this afternoon.

I had a long talk with Gen Wainwright. Everyone here is thirsty for news---small wonder after all these years. The General hadn't heard about the rocket plane. I went for a walk with Gielkins this afternoon and saw a Chinese at the back fence who motioned to us that he wanted to talk. He said he had some white wine but I said it wasn't allowed here now. He used to work for the camp. I asked him what he did for work. He said almost no one had any work now. I asked him when he had last eaten breakfast---so Gielkins got him a handful of potatoes and we gave him all we had in the kitchen. He said he could get us some eggs and asked if we had any more clothes left. Yes, we made a date for 9:00 AM. Poor guy. I was not hungry so I skipped supper. I spent the evening talking with Gov. Smith---and so to bed.

24 August 1945

What a day! Morning was normal as usual until suddenly we could see in the village a truck moving along with a Chinese and Russian flag on it. In a few moments a Russian motor column moved into town. I got the camp commander and a guard and went to see the Russians---a tough looking bunch! The Russian commander was a two star general and, after talk about transportation (using the train), we were ordered to go with some Soviet soldiers by bus. The Russian commander was not happy that I was not a POW and had arrived several days before they had. Two old busses and two old trucks (charcoal for fuel on one) were "requisitioned" and off we went toward Mukden at 6:15 PM. At 10:30 PM we arrived at Hsi Feng and "requisitioned" some gas. The town welcomed us and we were wined and dined while waiting for the gas. Many Chinese spoke Russian. Got a Manchouko flag there. We left around midnight.

25 August 1945

We drove all night---the roads were horrible, trucks and buses broke down constantly. There were no road bridges---when we had to cross a river, we had to get the busses and trucks up on a RR bridge, have everybody cross on foot, carefully drive over the RR bridge and then get back onto the road. At 7:00 AM we had to abandon one truck with all its baggage. We had no room to transfer the baggage to the remaining vehicles. We had rain from time to time and the entire day was a succession of getting stuck. Late in the afternoon we came to a real, real steep hill. It

took several hours to get over it---we kept slipping off the road. We had some road repair to do and needed two jeeps with chains plus a crowd of coolies to get up over the hill. Stuck, stuck, stuck! We really got stuck finally and were out of gas near a RR track. We flagged a train and started for K'ai Yuan. After a half hour's travel, the train engine was derailed by flood sand on the tracks. There was nothing to do but wait for a train to come from the other direction.

26 August 1945

At 3:00 AM a train came and we transferred baggage and personnel. What a train---narrow gauge, two-bit, beat up little old train. After two hour's travel it stopped. The engineer had forgotten to put enough water in the boilers---we could go no further. One of the Russian guards wanted to shoot him---he thought the engineer did it on purpose. One of our Dutchmen knew trains and he checked it out. So, we waited for another train and it finally came. We took the train engine and hooked it to our train and off we went again. It, too, had little water. Ten minutes from K'ai Yuan it ran out of water, but another engine was available. We arrived at K'ai Yuan at 10:30 AM, transferred our baggage to the platform and waited in a huge station. By that time General Wainwright had made me his "aide-de-camp". It was a funny spot to be in---a corporal in complete charge of all these generals and high officials. But, Wainwright backed me up all the way. We had a banquet at 2:30 PM, given by the Russian Lt. Col. Lada, who was in charge of our Russian escort. I had to translate all the speeches from one language to another---phew, what a job. Lada did not know how to keep it short to make it easier for me to translate. About 4:30 we got on the train and a couple of fellows had gotten real tight---too much saki/Kaoliang wine (Bai Gar---white lightning). Then we had to wait about three hours as we needed special permission to take a special train into Mukden---no regular service anymore. At long, long last we arrived in Mukden at 12:30 AM.

27 August 1945

At 12:30 AM, the Russian Colonel, a guard and I walked to the hotel---Lamar and Hennessey were still up drinking. They were surprised but glad (?) to see me. They told me a special train arrived in Hsian to pick us up just 4 hours after we left! After a good deal of fuss, Lamar and I went down to get some of the Generals---couldn't find the train. While we were looking about the train yard some character shot twice over my head. We found the train and soon some of the Generals were on their way to the hotel.

I lay down to sleep but something came up and I didn't get to---I had to see why an engine had hooked up. It pulled away leaving some heavy baggage on the platform, a Russian guard and me. It turned out they moved about a mile out into the yards. At 6:30 AM I finally got everyone together, 30 lbs of baggage apiece for whoever was going to leave by plane and headed for the hotel. We waited around, had breakfast and took a truck for the airport where a C47 and a B24 waited. We got the Generals and VIPs off. General Wainwright complimented me to his staff saying in bringing them safely from Hsian, I had done the job as well as any Major could have done. Swell General! I returned to the hotel---both my room and all my clothing were gone---thanks to the Russians! They're a tough bunch and not nearly so friendly as one reads in the papers. I got another room, luckily. I went to the camp and paid off the Chinese

drivers---\$300.00 gold and 5,000 yen. Picked up some clothing and came back to the hotel. I had supper and after 3 sleepless nights, I finally got to bed.

28 August 1945

Woke up at 8:00 AM, had breakfast, wandered down to the RR station to look around---nothing doing. I had lunch and went to check on American property. I got two swords and one pistol---a Mauser, came back to the hotel. The American property was too dirty to live in. I met a couple of civilian internees. A Colonel told me this afternoon we were to get the Distinguished Service Cross, and English and a Dutch medal. That would be swell. I got a certificate from the British today for valor and Kido has one from the Dutch for heroism, etc. I had supper, did a few magic tricks and then washed socks. So to bed. Oh yes, was made Staff Sgt.

29 August 1945

I got up around 6:30, had breakfast and did nothing until 10:30 when we went out to camp. I got some provisions and about 15 Japanese scrolls. I talked to people at the camp until 3:30 PM. I caught a truck back to town. The POW camp is located about a mile east of the old walled city of Mukden. The new, Japanese, city is a few miles West of the walled city. Some fellows from Kunming had come---Public Relations men came to get our story. I found out our mission was the only really successful one and the most spectacular mission---thank heavens for the success! At 11:30 PM Maj Lamar knocked on the door---was stinko and wanted to talk! He talked about the mission and told me I'd saved the Hsian part of the mission by offering to stay there and in bringing them back. Lamar practiced throwing my M8 knife at the hotel room door. He finally stuck it in and was happy. He then went to bed with his geisha girl which he had brought into the hotel. To bed.

30 August 1945

I spent the morning planning a souvenir hunt and left at 1:00 PM. I went in a horse carriage to a large dump (?) but to no avail. I found an old non-com sword in a police station. I went to the RR station but to no avail. I got sunburned so skipped supper and went to bed. I heard that a bunch of our fellows went to a geisha house where all their weapons and watches were taken by the Russians---our "wonderful" allies. All they do is loot---and they don't stick to looting from the Japanese. Some Russians have as high as 10 watches. They have looted from dozens of the prisoners here---Americans, English and Dutch. I have met some very nice Russians but they are about 1 in 10.

31 August 1945

Did nothing all morning. Went souvenir hunting with a Russian but met Frank (?). We got no souvenirs as the arsenal gave us the run around. Frank wanted to loot Japanese houses but I was against it so we didn't. I went home and so to bed.

1 September 1945

Most of the day was uneventful. However, I did get a copy from General Parker, Headquarters, Camp Hoten, a citation for all of us---except the Chinese member of the group--a citation for the Distinguished Service Cross. (A nice citation although we ended up later getting Soldier Medals instead---since our operation took place officially after the end of the war.) In the late afternoon,

Frank Friendly, a newspaper reporter for CBI Roundup, came up to interview me. He said we are heroes and headliners. I wonder---Lamar and Hennessey were roaring drunk again (yet). After supper Kido brought in 5 geisha girls---they were cute but I left the "entertainment" and went to my room where Friendly was typing up his story. I want no part of the geisha girl stuff. I talked with Fred a while and went to bed. He hit the hay on the floor on my mattress. I used my chute for a blanket. Wish I could see Helen.

2 September 1945

I went to the airport about 10:00 AM and saw two B24s leave. Makes me wish I could be going home to Helen. I got a few clothes, PX supplies and gun cleaning equipment. I ate dinner there. The B29 drops have improved the food situation 200%. I am really glad. I hope the signing of the peace treaty will step up getting the men home from here. They need to go home! I waited all afternoon for transportation to the hotel. Had more Russian trouble. They took one of our rooms tonight. I demanded another room tonight and got it. They've caused more deliberate trouble. They are constantly around stealing and being aggressive. I'm getting sick of it. Major Watson brought some pistols back from Dairen tonight---I'm supposed to get one. Cleaned my Mauser---yawn.

3 September 1945

I went to camp to exchange money---no luck. I waited at the hotel for the fellow to come---no luck. I slept from noon until 2:00 PM. I got a Nambo pistol from Maj Watson today and cleaned it. The rest of the day was similarly uneventful. Two C46s came in. They can carry 40 people each. Hsian (NW China) says it can only carry 20. Hsian doesn't have enough rooms for the POWs. The bastards back at Hsian---these people here need to be gotten out fast. There is entirely too much stalling around!

7 September 1945

I got up at 8:00 AM, had breakfast, went for a walk toward the RR station. Crowds of Chinese were on the streets---looting, breaking things, acting like crazy people. I bought a small abacas (Japanese style), a choop (t'u chang). I had a picture taken with 2 Russians and walked back to the hotel. The Chinese mobs had killed some Japanese---beaten them to death. The corpses were horribly mutilated---"savagery" is only skin deep. There was a good deal of shooting. It was mainly Russians either stopping looting or "getting first choice". The Russians here have earned the hatred and distrust of the Chinese here. I returned from the hotel again, only this time with a .45 pistol in my pocket. About 2 blocks from the RR station, I found a mob of Chinese trying to kill a Japanese child---maybe 12 years old. I don't like the Japanese but such treatment I won't stand for. The boy was terribly beaten and his throat was partially cut. His head was swollen about twice original size. He couldn't speak Chinese, English or Russian. I bawled out the Chinese mob (called them turtle eggs and said they were as bad as the Japanese!) Some of the Chinese took my side and some commented on my good Chinese.

I picked up the little Japanese boy and asked where the nearest hospital was and carried him that way. I met a Japanese near the hotel who spoke a smattering of Chinese and he led me to the hospital. I turned the boy over to the hospital authorities. The Japanese doctor did not speak

English but thanked me for bringing the boy in. Will people never forgive---inhumanity for humanity?? Must there always be violence? Someone always wants revenge---is no one willing to just plain stop this senseless brutality? Damn the stupidity of some people!! I was really mad---went back toward the RR station and waded into the Chinese mob and took their clubs away from them and broke them against the curbing. I never thought of using my pistol which stayed in my pocket. How I got away with it I will never know. I broke the mob up and sent the people home. Being an American who spoke Chinese I guess made the difference. The people in the mob all commented on my being an American and on my good Chinese. A number of Chinese sided with me and bawled out other Chinese. The 8th Route Communist Army arrived yesterday---what will happen when the Central Government troops arrive? More war?

8 September 1945

The # 1 proclamation of the Communist party appeared today---signed by Chu Teh. Chiang K'ai-shek had been caught with his pants down. I wonder if Chu-Teh is here now? I spent the morning in the vicinity of the RR station looking and "speech making" (to the Chinese telling them to get wise and cut out the looting and murder before the world is down on them like on the Japanese. I broke up another bunch of clubs. I saw the body of a looter---dead! Starting this noon, the enlisted men at the camp have their own mess---at our instigation. Our officers were "pains"---not very nice. One visiting officer tried to get me to cheat a Chinese merchant on money exchange but, since the officer didn't know what I was saying, I told the Chinese not to let him get cheated so he took my advice and refused. I spent the afternoon at the home of the Smirnoff's---White Russians and very nice. They're afraid of the possibility of war here between the Chinese. They're so tired of unrest and war. They would like to go to the US. Supper time.

9 September 1945

I went out to the camp at 8:00 AM and at 10:00 AM I headed out to see the 8th Route Army. I saw my first Communist soldiers soon and found out where their Hq was. I found the Hq in an old school building and they asked me in. They didn't know what to make of an American speaking Chinese. There are about 5,000 8th Route soldiers here. They came by rail with weapons and uniforms mostly Japanese---no Russians weapons. Train transportation was furnished by the Russians. Some wore Chinese uniforms and were well disciplined, healthy, looked in better shape than Central Chinese troops and were very self confident. I saw a bayonet drill---exactly like the Japanese. The troops appear to follow Japanese drills. They brought their own money (Communist) from China. I got back to camp about 1:30 PM and found out that the boats in Dairen can carry our troops out as fast as we can send them there. Back to the hotel. At 5:00 PM some Russians came and told us a big story (completely false) and said we had to move out in 10 minutes. "Arrangements had been made for us at another hotel. A Russian General gave us one hour. When we got to the next hotel, no one knew we were coming and we had to get a written permit. Finally we were put three to a room in a tiny, Japanese style room. Went to bed at 10:30 and heard a long drawn out scream outside and then a machine gun---silence!

10 September 1945

Moved out of that hotel! 750 fellows left for Dairen.

11 September 1945

The balance of the POWs left for Dairen---the camp is deserted. When are we going home?

19 September 1945

Lt. Konstantin Nikolayevich Metkin (liaison at the POW camp) gave me a real good camera! It is German and worth at least \$150.00---Whew!---a dream. Metkin likes Americans and he's a Russian I really like. He was from Stalingrad and had been there during the siege by the Germans. I had commented how helpful he had been and how much we appreciated it. Metkin made the statement that soldiers are diplomats representing their own country. I commented that a lot of the Russian soldiers were not representing their country very well. He said, "Well, there are good diplomats and bad diplomats."

20 September 1945

I moved to the BAT (British American Compound) near the French Consul General's House. Major Brady had come by this time and is a very nice guy. We got some Chinese servants---Tsui Pei-chou was number 1 boy and we had a good cook. Had a swell meal tonight.

5 October 1945

General Kovtun-Stankevich, the Russian Commander, accused us of spying and gave us a choice---leave immediately or a free trip to Siberia. Departed Mukden with French Consul General and family at 4:00 PM on a C46, Captain Bemis was pilot. When we went to pick up the Consul General we had trouble with some Russian soldiers. I chewed them out and they called for their officer, a Lt. He sneered and said "nu---Amerikantsy!" with a very unpleasant tone. After some argument, he let us in and the family left with only what they could carry---they had to leave all their belongings! Sad. At the airport, we put sugar in the tank of our jeep---we didn't want to leave anything useful for the Russians---any more than we already had. We arrived in Pei-p'ing at 7:30 that evening and checked into the Liu Kuo Fan Tien (6 Country Hotel)---very nice.

6 October 1945

Our people in Pei-p'ing talked with us and began to believe what I had been saying about the Russians. A number of our people in Hq in Kunming/Shanghai aren't too sure I know what I am talking about. Met with the Renner family and they gave me a Chinese carved ivory ball with stand---their name is carved on the stand. A nice gift---much appreciated.

7 October 1945

I had found a Polish guy who knew gemstones and he offered to help me buy a couple of pieces of jade---for Helen and me. We went to the jade street a couple of blocks south of T'ien An Man gate. The first place we stopped showed a stone in a very fancy box. The polish guy picked up a nice looking stone and said---"glass!" The merchant said---"Oh, you know jade." I had not let on to anyone, including the Polish guy, that I spoke Chinese. We looked and looked and in the afternoon found two pieces of Imperial Jade and we bargained, drank tea, bargained---. Finally, one of the Chinese noticed I seemed to be following the discussion closely and asked if I spoke

Chinese. I said "Shih-te" (Yes) and they all burst out laughing. I got the two pieces of Imperial Jade for about \$5.00 each. A bargain. I spent the next few days sightseeing in Pei-p'ing.

14 October 1945

I left Pei-p'ing at 2:30 PM and arrived in Hsian, N.W. China, at 5:30.

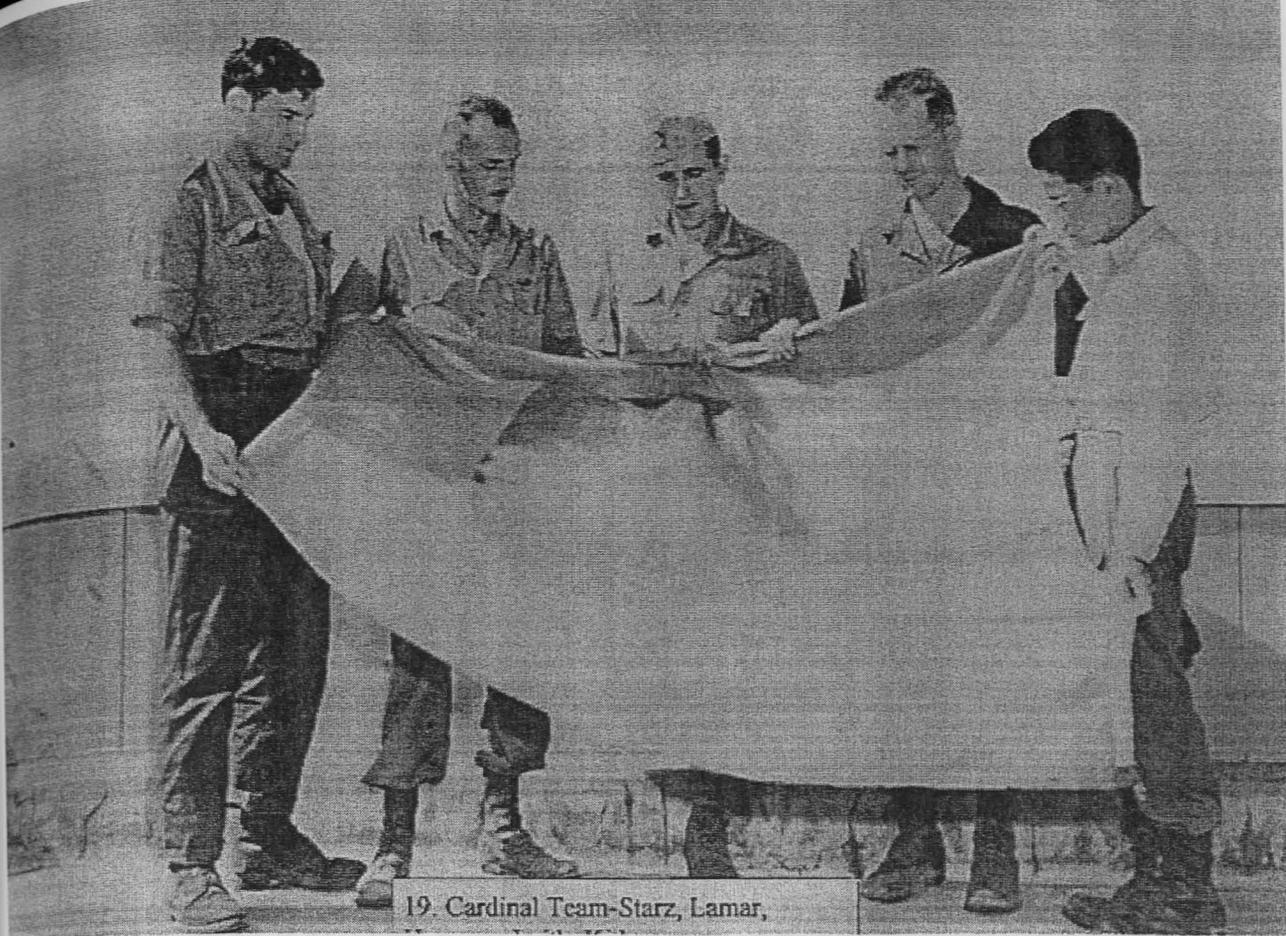
15 October 1945

I left Hsian at 9:30 AM and arrived that afternoon in K'un-ming at 1:30.

The Following 12 Pages Of Pictures Were Taken Mostly In The Mukden Area By-----

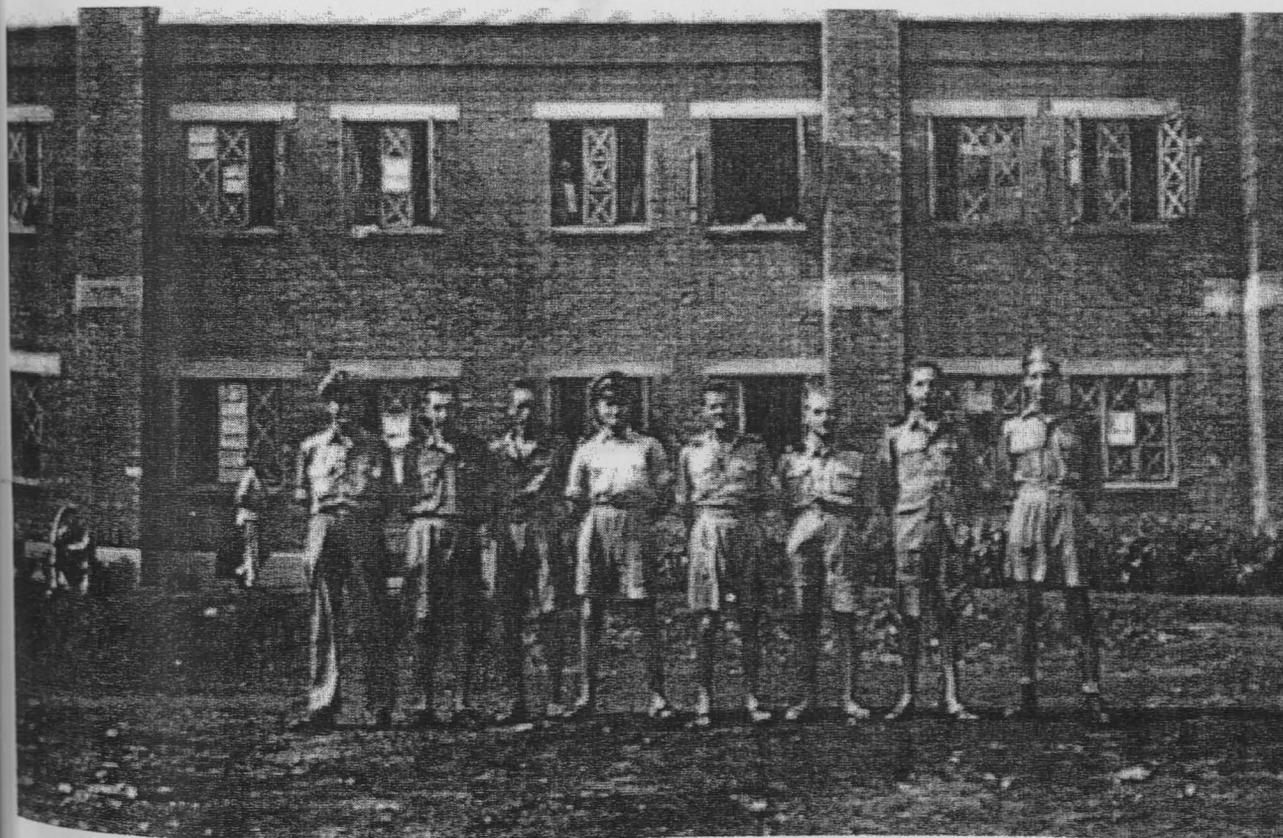
CORPORAL HAL LEITH
(Linguistic Expert on the OSS Team)

Stars, Lamar, Major Hennessey, Leith and Rida
The OSS men that participated in Mukden and
probably saved our lives.

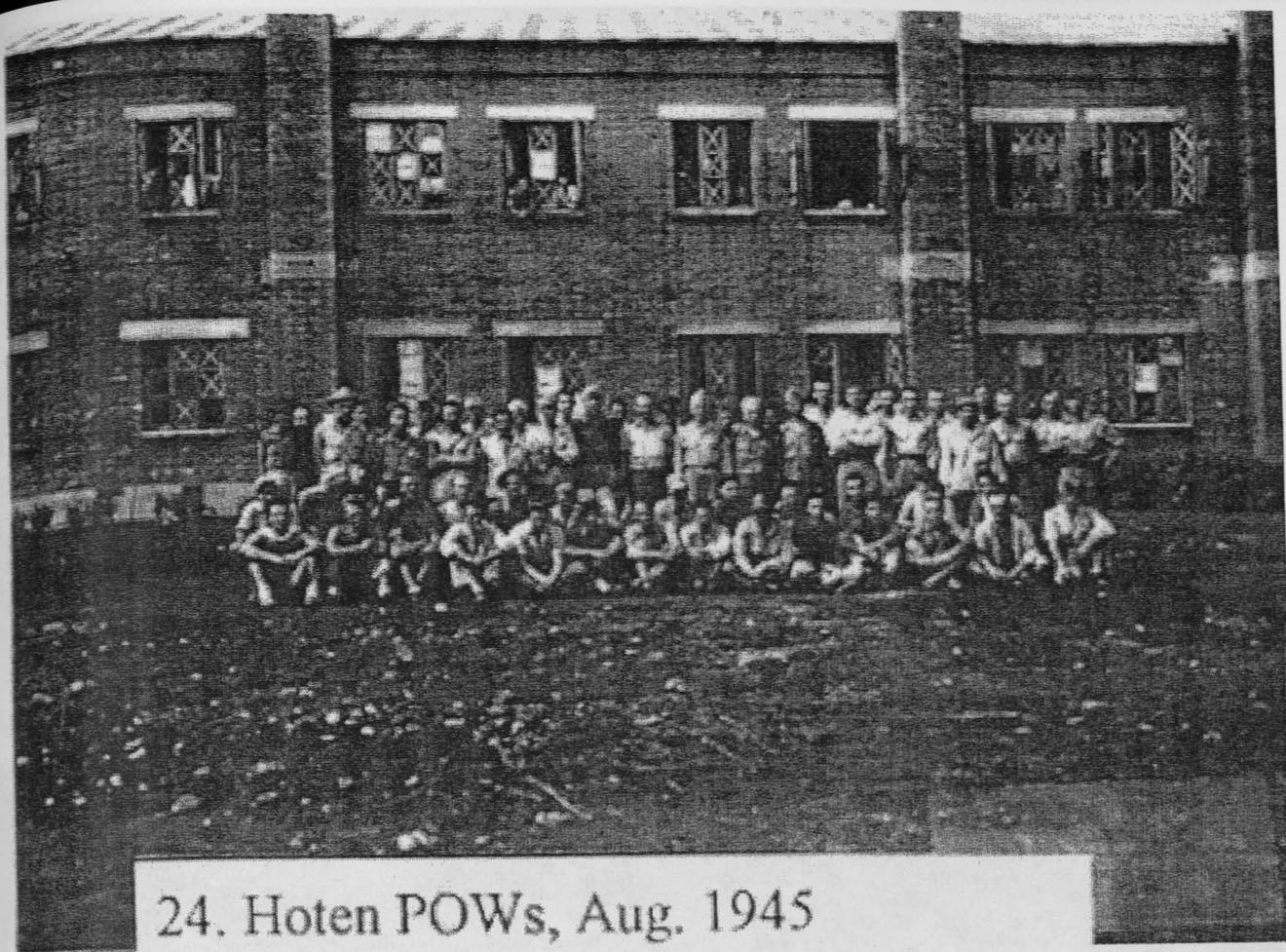


19. Cardinal Team-Starz, Lamar,

Starz, Lamar, Major Hennessey, Leith and Kido
The OSS men that parachuted into Mukden and
probably saved our lives.



Mukden. American, British and Dutch POWs



24. Hoten POWs, Aug. 1945

Front Entrance to Morden Prison Camp



26. Hoten-Side/rear entrance



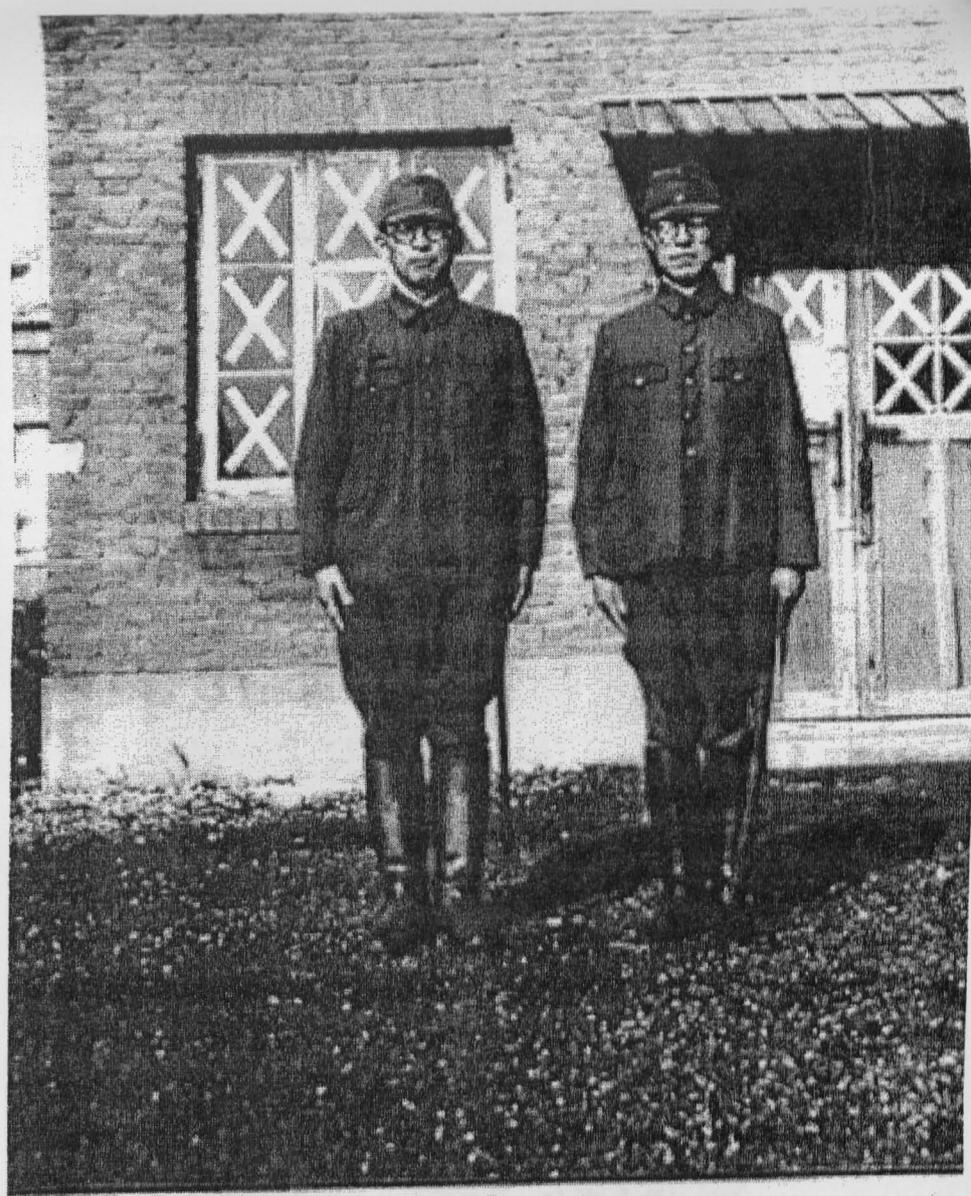
Front Entrance to Mukden Prison Camp



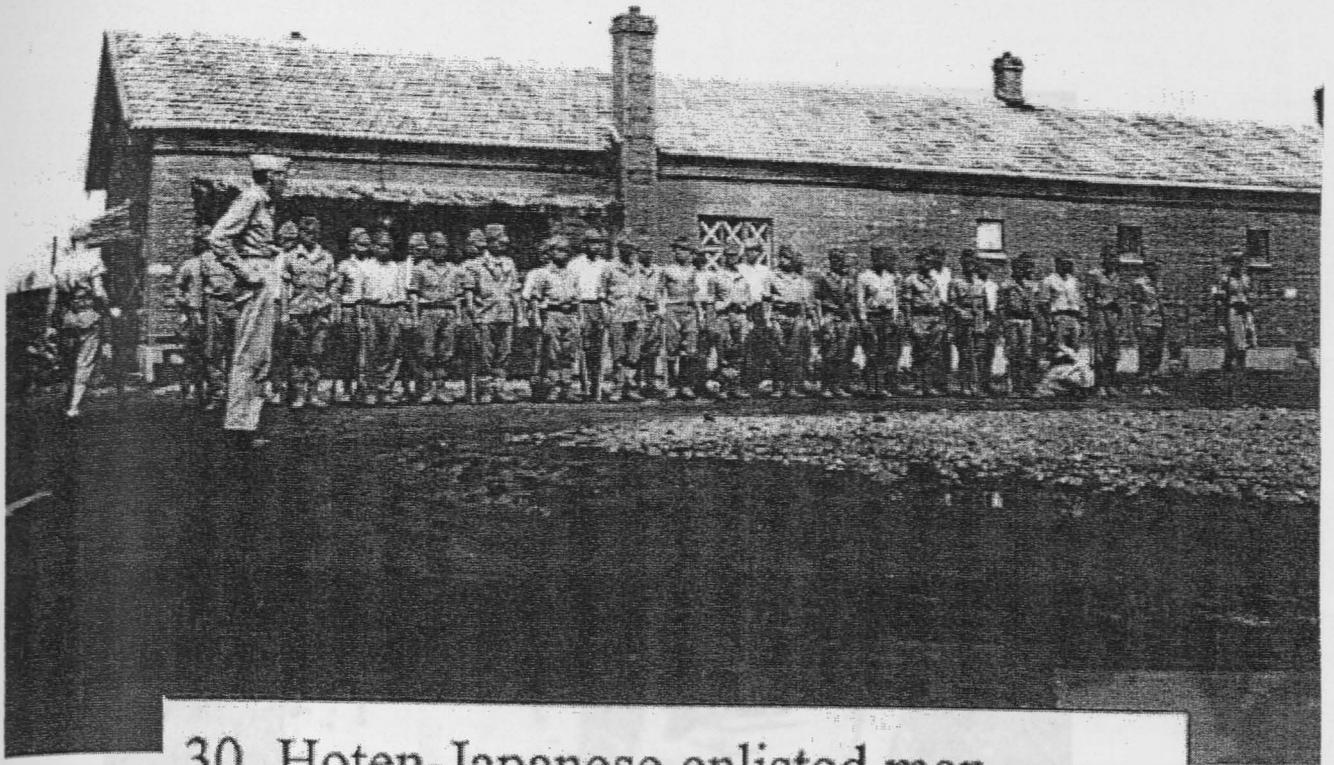
28. Hoten-Japanese officers (Matsuda)



35 Russians & Americans



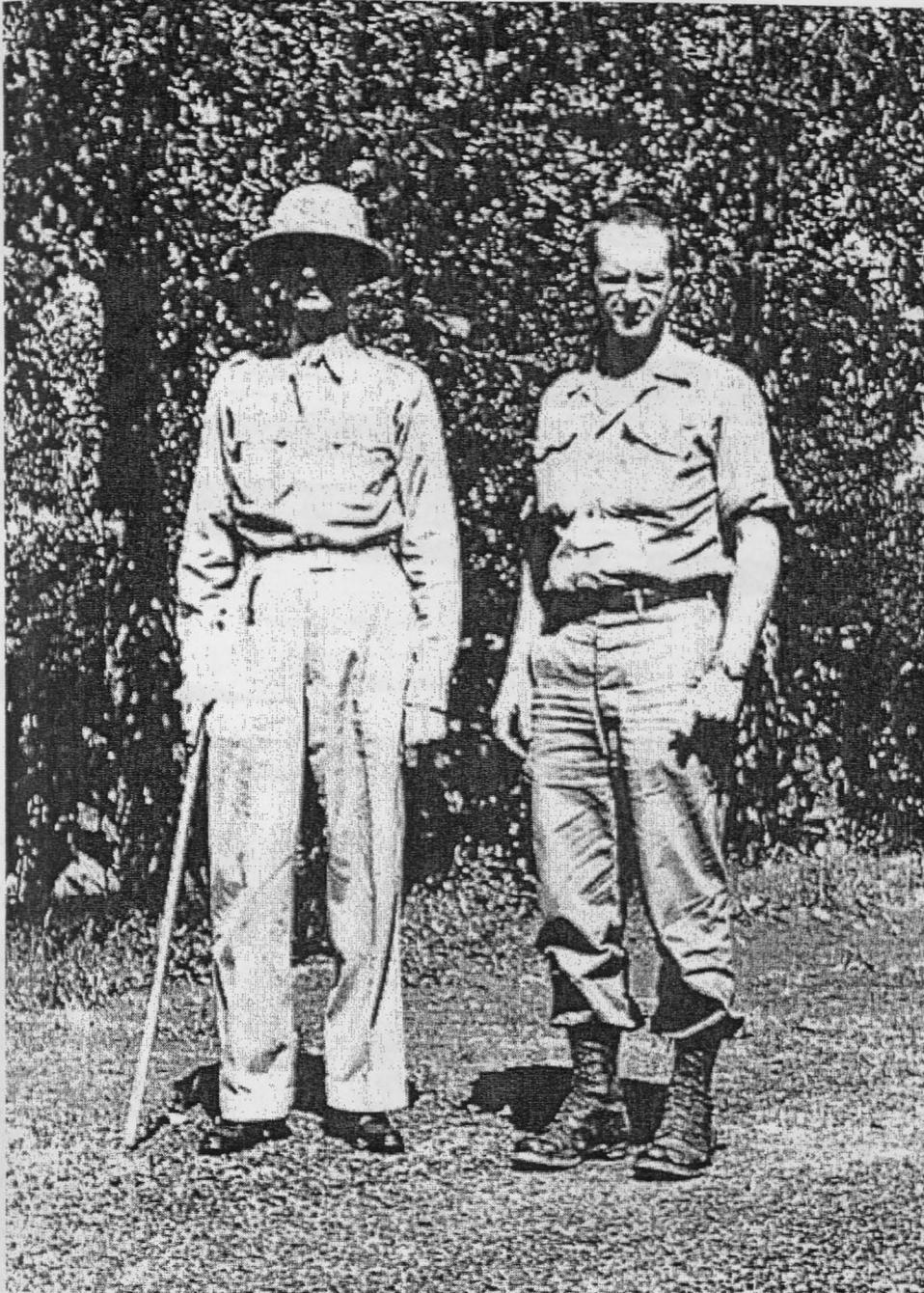
Hoten-Dr. Oki, Matsuda 29



30. Hoten-Japanese enlisted men



37. Aerial view Japanese part of Mukden



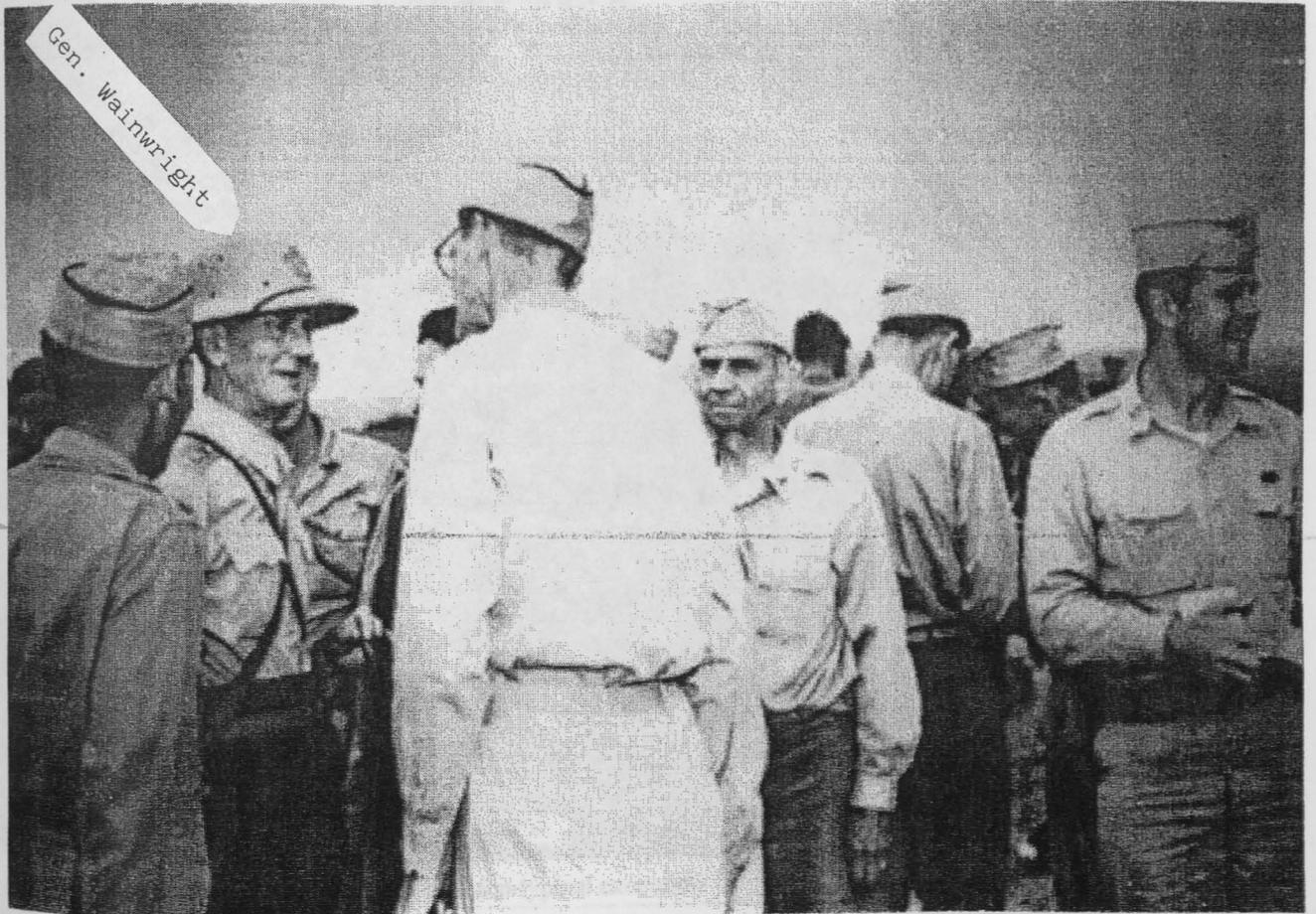
General Jonathan M. Wainwright and
Corporal Hal Leith



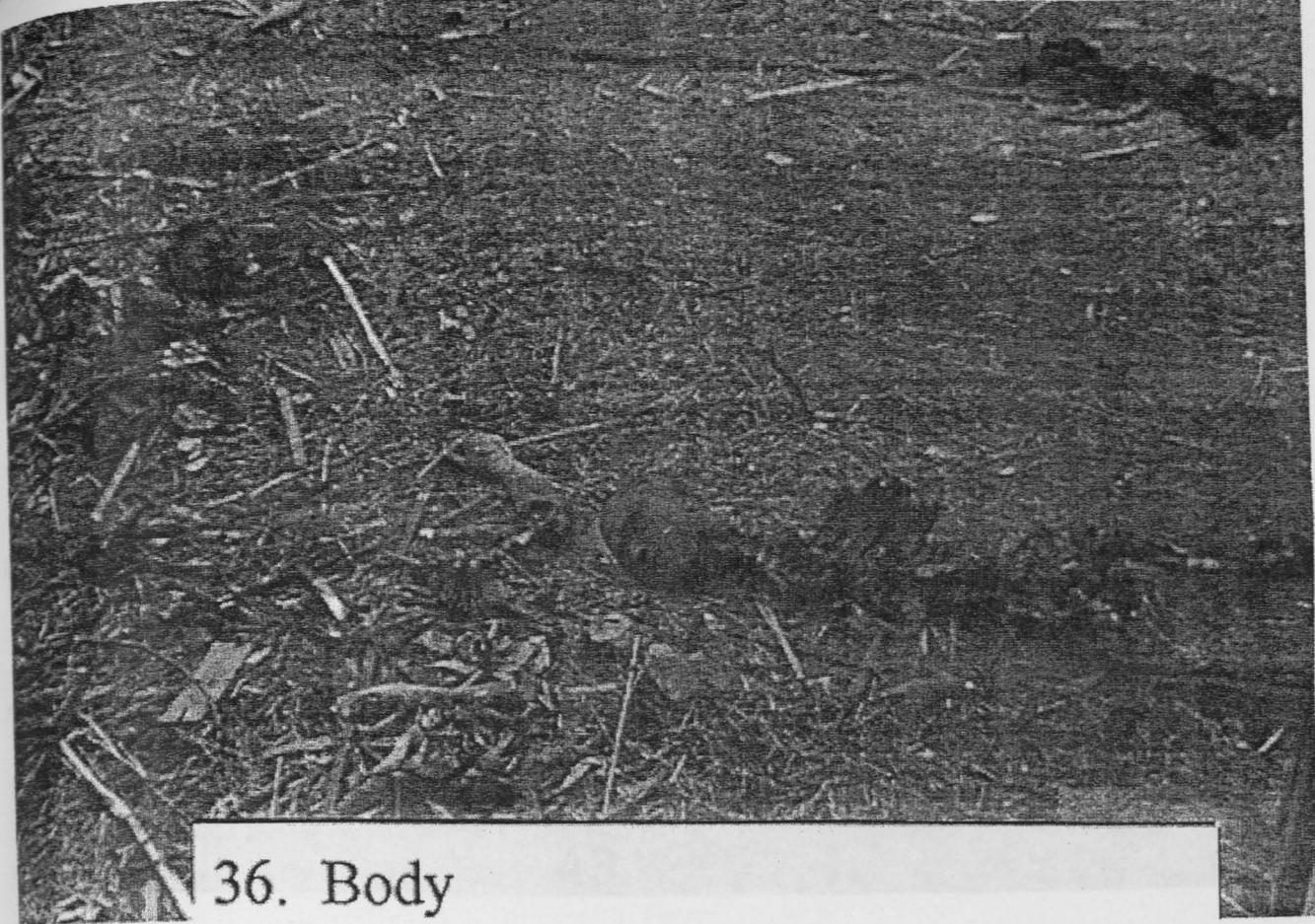
36 Bod

41. Mukden-street scene

Mukden-When an elderly person was sick or no longer wanted they would sit somewhere and die.



Gen. Wainwright



36. Body



45. Mukden-typical execution



43



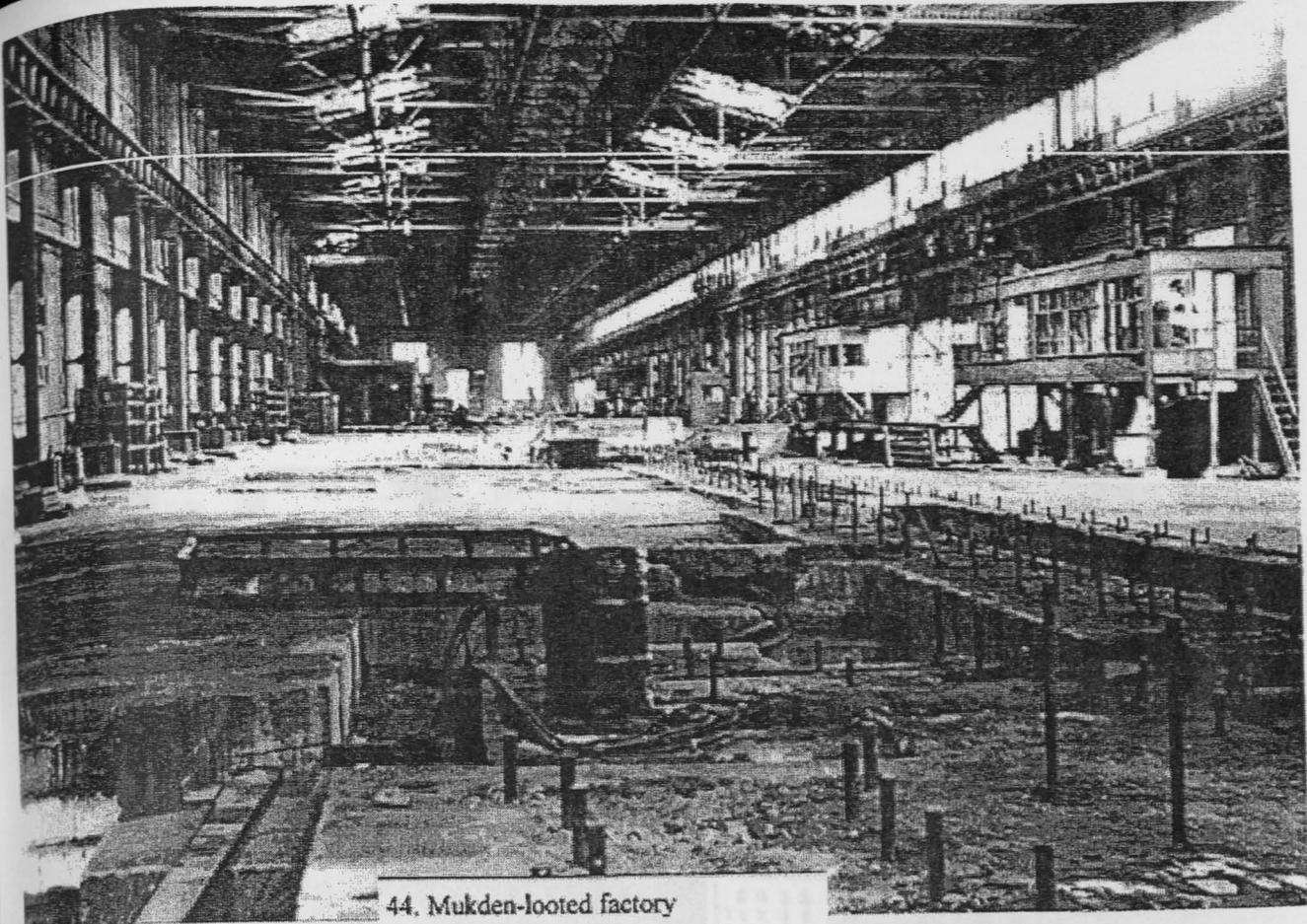
46. Mukden-Russians



Russian Tank 48



47. Mukden-Russian nurses



44. Mukden-looted factory



16. Mukden POW Camp 1 yr later

Appendix III

The following is a first person account of another survivor of the Death March. He tells of his atrocities after the fall of Bataan. He was in the 27 Bomb Group and went over to the Philippines on the same ship, the "President Coolidge", as I did. He was a pilot and he eventually told his story to General MacArthur who told him that the people would not believe



Hoten POW Cemetery 31

lips attacked, our squadron was given four new P-40Es and I really found new. The gun-sights still were filled with cosmoline (heavy grease).

All of us were young, some only a few months out of flying school. At 25, with about five years' flying behind me, I felt like a veteran. I sometimes kidded the fellows that I had been flying twenty-one years, on and off. This had a foundation of fact. In the summer of 1917 I had sat on the lap of my father, Judge Richard T. Dyess, during a flight in the first plane I ever saw. It was a World War I De Havilland, piloted by a barnstormer whose troupe gave an air circus for the home town of Albany, Texas. Everyone knows the heroic tragedy of Bataan. Up to the time its gallant defense crumbled under sheer weight of numbers, bombardment, disease and starvation, this story will skip the oft-printed details and give you a few highlights of my experience there. I'll never forget the little Filipino on Bataan who had set up an air-cooled

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The March of Death

By Lt. Col. W.E. Dyess

USAAF

(United States Army Air Force)

I told this story first to General MacArthur in his Southwest Pacific headquarters last spring (of 1943). When I had finished, the General stood up and shook my hand. Then he said: "Captain, I'm afraid the people back home will find it hard to believe you. I believe you because I know the Japs." After I had been flown home from Australia I reported to the war department. And from each of my superiors came the warning: "The public won't believe it." Perhaps not. But the story I am about to tell is true. It begins with fifteen minutes spent in group headquarters at Nichols Field, near Manila, P.I., on December 6, 1941, two days before the Pearl Harbor attack, which for us came on December 8, far eastern time.

At mid-morning, we were summoned to headquarters by the late Brig. Gen. Harold H. George. He looked at us in somber silence as we walked into the long room. Then he spoke: "Men," he said, "you are not a suicide squadron yet, but you're damned close to it. There will be war with Japan in a very few days. It may come in a matter of hours." I had been in the Philippines a little over two weeks, reaching there November 20, after three weeks' voyage from San Francisco with thirteen pilots of the 21st Pursuit Squadron, of which I was Captain and Commander. On arrival, my squadron was issued some well-worn P-35s. We flew these until December 4, then began receiving P-40s which transports were bringing in from the United States. None of the guns had been fired. We had to install and boresight them. On the day the Japs attacked, our squadron was given four new P-40Es and I really mean new. The gun barrels still were filled with cosmoline (heavy grease).

All of us were young, some only a few months out of flying school. At 25, with about five years' flying behind me, I felt like a veteran. I sometimes kidded the fellows that I had been flying twenty-one years, on and off. This had a foundation of fact. In the summer of 1929 I had sat on the lap of my father, Judge Richard T. Dyess, during a flight in the first plane I ever saw. It was a World War I De Haviland, piloted by a barnstormer whose troupe gave an air circus for our home town of Albany, Texas. Everyone knows the heroic tragedy of Bataan. Up to the time its gallant defense crumbled under sheer weight of numbers, bombardment, disease and starvation, this story will skip the oft-printed details and give you a few highlights of my experience there. I'll never forget the little Filipino on Bataan who had set up an air-cooled

machine gun and was peppering Japs on the crowded beach far below. At each burst he shrieked with laughter, beat his helmet against the ground, lay back to whoop with glee, then sat up to get in another burst.

During February, through March and up to the fall of Bataan, we flew reconnaissance, brought in medical supplies and dropped supplies to our guerrillas who were fighting in the mountains of Luzon. In addition, we went on bombing missions. A warrant officer, now a prisoner of the Japs, built ingenious bomb releases for our planes. We were eating lizards, monkeys and anything else that came under our guns. We set off dynamite in the water in the hope of getting fish, but the blasts usually burst the fishes' floats and they sank. The life expectancy of anything that walked, crawled or flew on lower Bataan was practically nil.

(Colonel Dyess on March 3, 1942, had a score for the day of one 12,000-ton transport blown up and sunk, one 6,000-ton vessel burned, two 100-ton motor vessels sunk, a number of barges and lighters destroyed, a vast amount of supplies and material blown up and burned, plus a large but undetermined number of Japanese killed in the sinkings and repeated strafings of Grand Island.---The Editor.)

There was a prank note written by a newspaper correspondent which had been ominously prophetic. The note, addressed to President Roosevelt, read: "Dear Mr. President: Please send us another P-40. The one we have is all shot up." Our planes were grounded on April 7 and 8, the last two days before Bataan was surrendered. On each of the last few nights Jap warships pulled in close and shelled us with everything they had. On the 8th their shells found our bivouac area and made a shambles of it. I took the men remaining on Bataan field and, with our guns and such food as could be rustled up, we started for Marivales where we were to reorganize as mobile infantry.

The Japs continued to bomb and shell the area without letup. Filipino men, women and children were huddled in dazed groups along the road or were running wildly about. Our party headed out of town to rejoin the ground crews who had the guns and food. We had covered about two miles and were ascending a steep, ledge-like road when we came face to face with three Jap tanks blocking our way. A Jap officer, standing erect in one of the turrets, pointed and automatic at us. We were prisoners. We were kept beside the road, near the scene of our capture, all afternoon and that night. There still was plenty of fight left in us. We were prisoners, but we didn't feel licked. I don't know what we would have felt had we known that this was only the first of 361 days to be filled with murder and cruelty such as few American soldiers have endured since the Indian wars of Colonial days. It was the start of the Death March of Bataan.

The dust that enveloped Marivales field was being stirred up by trucks and gun carriages. Jap artillery was preparing to open fire on Corregidor from the protection of sunken rice paddies and nearby ridges. From the pall of smoke and dust new prisoners - American and Filipino soldiers - emerged in lines and groups to join those of us already there, awaiting the pleasure of the Imperial Japanese army. I noticed that the Japs, who up to now had treated us with an air of cool suspicion, were beginning to get rough. I saw men shoved, cuffed and boxed. This angered and mystified us, for we were not resisting. A few ranks away a Jap jumped up from a pack he had been inspecting. In his hand was a small shaving mirror. "Nippon?" he asked the owner. The glass was stamped: "Made in Japan." The soldier nodded. The Jap stepped back, then lunged,

driving his rifle butt into the American's face. "Yaah!" he yelled, and lunged again. The Yank went down. The raging Jap stood over him, driving crushing blows to the face until the prisoner lay insensible. A little way off a Jap was smashing his fists into the face of another American soldier who went to his knees and received a thudding kick in the groin. He, too, had been caught with some Japanese trifle. We were shocked. This treatment of war prisoners was beyond our understanding. I still didn't get it, even after someone explained to me that the Japs assumed the contraband articles had been taken from the bodies of their dead. I was totally unprepared for the appalling deed that came next. Too far off to witness it personally, I saw the victim afterward. We had known him.

A comrade who had stood close by later told me the shocking details. An air force captain was being searched by a 3-star private. Standing by was a Jap commissioned officer, hand on sword hilt. These men were nothing like the toothy, bespectacled runts whose photos are familiar to most newspaper readers. They were cruel of face, stalwart and tall.

"This officer looked like a giant beside the Jap private," said my informant, who must be nameless because he still is a prisoner of war. "The big man's face was as black as mahogany. There was no expression in his eyes, only sort of inseeing glare. "The private, a little squirt, was going through the captain's pockets. All at once he stopped and sucked in his breath with a hissing sound. He had found some Jap yen. "He held these out, ducking his head and sucking in his breath to attract notice. The big Jap looked at the money. Without a word, he grabbed the captain by the shoulder and shoved him down to his knees. He pulled out his sword and raised it high over his head, holding it with both hands. The private skipped to one side. "Before we could grasp what was happening, the black faced giant had swung. I remember how the sun flashed on his sword. There was a swish and a thud like a cleaver going through beef. The captain's head seemed to jump off his shoulders. It hit the ground in front of him and went rolling crazily from side to side between the lines of prisoners. The body fell forward. The heart continued to pump for a few seconds and at each beat there was another great spurt of blood.

The white dust around our feet was turned into crimson mud. I saw that his hands were opening and closing spasmodically. Then I looked away. When I looked again the big Jap had put away his sword and was strolling away. The runt who had found the yen was putting them into his pocket. He helped himself to the dead man's possessions."

The thing that almost drove me crazy was the certainty that the officer couldn't have taken those yen from a dead Jap. He had been in charge of an observation post far behind the lines. I doubt that he ever had seen a dead Jap. This was the first murder. In the year to come there would be enough killing of American and Filipino soldier prisoners to rear a mountain of dead.

Our Jap guards now threw off all restraint. They beat and slugged prisoners, robbing them of watches, fountain pens, money and toilet articles. Now, as never before, I wanted to kill Japs for the pleasure of it. The American and Filipino soldiers were all grades and ranks. They were dirty, ragged, unshaven and exhausted. Many were half starved. Swirling chalky dust had whitened sweat-soaked beards, adding grotesquerie to the scene. We stood for more than an hour in the scalding heat while the search, with its beatings and sluggings, was completed. Then the Jap guards began pulling some of the huskiest out of line. They were assembled into labor gangs, to remain in the area. As the remainder of us were marched off the field our places were taken by other hundreds who were to follow us on the Death March. We turned eastward on the

national highway which veers northward through Lamao, Balanga and Orani. Ordinarily, the trip from Marivales to Cabcaben field is a beautiful one with grandeur of high mountains and a view of the sea. But on this day there was no beauty. Coming toward us were seemingly interminable columns of Jap infantry, truck trains and horse-drawn artillery, all moving into Bataan for a concentrated assault on Corregidor. They stirred up clouds of blinding dust in which all shape and form were lost. The Japs made no move to feed us. Few of us had had anything to eat since the morning of April 9. Many had tasted no food for four days. We had little tepid water in our canteens, but nothing else. The ditches on either side of the road were filled with overturned and wrecked American Army trucks, fire-gutted tanks and artillery our forces had rendered unusable.

At intervals we saw mounds of captured food, bearing familiar trademarks. These had fallen almost undamaged into Jap hands. As we marched along I rounded up the 110 officers and men of the 21st Pursuit Squadron. I didn't know yet what the score was, but I felt we should be in a better position to help one another and keep up morale if we were together.

The sun was nearing its zenith and the penetrating heat was rapidly taking the strength out of us. To make matters worse, the road now began rising in a sharp zig-zag. At the top of the hill lay Little Bagio and the blackened ruins of Hospital No. 1, which had been bombed heavily a couple of days before. Among the charred debris, sick and wounded American soldiers were walking dazedly about. There was no place for them to go. Here and there a man was stumping about on one leg and a crutch. Some had lost one or both arms. All were in need of fresh dressings. And all obviously were suffering from the shock of the bombing. They looked wonderingly at the column of prisoners. When the Jap officers saw them, these shattered Americans were rounded up and shoved into the marching line.

All of them tried to walk, but only a few were able to keep it up. Those who fell were kicked aside by the Japs. The Japs forbade us to help these men. Those who tried it were kicked, slugged or jabbed with bayonet points. For more than a mile these bomb-shocked cripples stumbled along with us. Their shoulders were bent and the sweat streamed from their faces. I can never forget the hopelessness in their eyes. Eventually their strength ebbed and they began falling back through the marching ranks. I don't know what became of them.

The road became so crowded we were marched into a clearing. Here, for two hours, we had our first taste of the Oriental sun treatment, which drains the stamina and weakens the spirit. The Japs seated us on the scorching ground, exposed to the full glare of the sun. Many of the prisoners had no covering to protect their heads. I was beside a small bush, but it cast no shade because the sun was almost directly above us. Many of the men around me were ill. When I could stand the penetrating heat no longer, I was determined to have a sip of the tepid water in my canteen. I had no more than unscrewed the top when the aluminum flask was snatched from my hands. The Jap who had crept up behind me poured the water into a horse's nosebag, then threw away the canteen. He walked on among the prisoners, taking away their water and pouring it into the bag. When he had enough he gave it to his horse. Whether by accident or by design we had been put just across the road from a pile of canned and boxed food. We were famished, but it seemed worse than useless to ask the Japs for anything.

An elderly American colonel did, however. He crossed the road and after pointing to the food and to the drooping prisoners, went through the motions of eating. A squat Jap officer grinned at him and picked up a can of salmon. Then he smashed it against the colonel's head, opening the American's cheek from eye to jawbone. The officer staggered and turned back toward us, wiping the blood off. It seemed as though the Japs had been waiting for just such a brutal display to end

the scene. They ordered us to our feet and herded us back into the road. We knew now that the Japs would respect neither age nor rank. Their ferocity grew as we marched on into the afternoon. They no longer were content with mauling stragglers or pricking them with bayonet points. The thrusts were intended to kill. We had marched about a mile after the sun treatment when I stumbled over a man writhing in the hot dust of the road, a Filipino soldier who had been bayoneted through the stomach. Within a quarter of a mile I walked past another. This soldier-prisoner had been rolled into the path of the trucks and crushed beneath the heavy wheels. Huddled and smashed figures beside the road eventually became commonplace. The human mind has an amazing faculty of adjusting itself to shock. In this case it may have been that heat and misery had numbed our senses. We remained keenly aware, however, that these murders might well be preliminary to our own, if we should falter or lag.

I had gone only a few steps when a violent blow on the head almost sent me to my knees. My steel helmet jammed down over my eyes with a clang that made my ears ring. I pulled it clear and staggered around to see a non-commissioned Jap brandishing a club the size of a child's baseball bat. He was squealing and pointed to the dented helmet. He lifted the club again. I threw the helmet into the ditch and he motioned me to march on. Like many of my comrades, now I was without protection against the merciless sun.

At dawn of the second day the impatient Japs stepped among and upon us, kicking all into wakefulness. As we stumbled into the road we passed a Jap non-commissioned officer who was eating meat and rice. "Pretty soon you eat," he said to us, grinning. The rising sun cast its blinding light in our eyes as we marched. The temperature rose by the minute. Noon came and went. The midday heat was searing. At 1 PM the column was halted and Jap noncoms told us we might fill our canteens from a dirty caribou wallow beside the road. There was no food.

During the afternoon traffic picked up again. Troop-laden trucks sped past. A grimacing Jap leaned far out, holding his rifle by the barrel. As the truck roared by he knocked an American soldier senseless with the gun's stock. Other Japs saw this and yelled loud approval. At 2 PM we were told it would be necessary to segregate the prisoners as to rank; this separated all units from their officers and afforded opportunity for another hour of sun treatment. There was no mention of food. The line of march was now almost due North. We reached Balanga, about twenty miles from Cabcaben Field, at sundown and marched into the courtyard of a large prison-like structure, dating back to the Spanish days.

We were told we could eat, then spend the night there. At one side of the yard food was bubbling in great cauldrons, rice and soy sauce boiling together. Jap kitchen corporals opened dozens of cans and dumped Vienna sausage into the savory mess. The aroma that drifted over from those pots had us almost crazy. While we waited we were given a little water. We imagined the rice and sausages were for us. After drinking the water we were ordered into line for what appeared to be a routine search. When it was finished an officer shouted something and the attitude of the guards swiftly changed. They ordered us out of the patio and lined us up in a field across the road. As we left, grinning Japs held up steaming ladles of sausage and rice. The officer followed us, then began stamping up and down, spouting denunciations and abuse. When he calmed enough to be understood, we heard this: "When you came here you were told you would eat and be let to sleep. Now that is changed. We have found pistols concealed among three of your

officers. In punishment, you will march to Orani (five miles North) before you sleep." This was a lie. If a pistol had been found, the owner would have been shot, beaten to death or beheaded on the spot. Many prisoners began falling out now. They went down by twos and threes, some of them trying to rise. They were moaning. Others lay lifelessly in the road. Observing that the guards paid no attention to the fallen ones, I wondered why. I soon had an explanation. There came a sharp crackle of rifle fire behind us. Bringing up the rear of our contingent skulked a "clean-up squad" of murdering Jap buzzards. The bodies were left where they lay, that other prisoners who marched behind us might see them. Orange flashes and thudding shots followed us through the night, always just a few paces behind. At 3 AM, we arrived half dead at Orani.

That thirty-mile hike over rough and congested roads has lasted from dawn to dawn. Considering our condition, I often wonder how we made it. I knew men who never could remember reaching Orani. They were like zombies - the walking dead of the Caribbean.

Near the center of the town the Japs ordered us off the road to a barbed-wired compound. It had been intended for 500 men. Our party numbered more than 600. Already in it, however, were more than 1500 Americans and Filipinos. The stench of the place reached us long before we entered it. Hundreds of the prisoners were suffering from dysentery. Human waste covered the ground. The shanty that had served as a latrine no longer was usable as such. Maggots were in sight everywhere. There was no room to lie down. We tried to sleep sitting up, but the aches of exhaustion seemed to have penetrated even into our bones. Jap soldiers told us there would be rice later in the morning. We paid no attention. We not only didn't believe them, we were too miserable to care.

As the sun climbed higher, Americans and Filipinos alike grew delirious. Their wild shouts and thrashing about dissipated their ebbing energy. They began lapsing into coma. For some it was the end. Starvation and abuse had been too much for their weakened bodies. Brief coma was followed by merciful death.

When it was observed that men were dying, Japanese officers entered the compound and ordered the Americans to drag out the bodies and bury them. We were told to put the delirious ones into a thatched shed a few hundred feet away. When this had been done the grave digging began. We thought we had seen every atrocity the Japs could offer, but we were wrong. The shallow trenches had been completed. The dead were being rolled into them. Just then an American soldier and two Filipino were carried out of the compound. They had been delirious, now were in a coma. A Jap noncom stopped the bearers and tipped the unconscious men into the trench. The Japs then ordered the burial detail to fill it up. The Filipinos lay lifelessly in the hole.

As the earth began falling about the American, he revived and tried to climb out. His fingers gripped the edge of the grave and he hoisted himself to a standing position. Two Jap guards placed bayonets at the throat of a Filipino on the burial detail. They gave him an order. When he hesitated they pressed the points hard against his neck. The Filipino raised a stricken face to the sky, then brought his shovel down on the head of his American comrade who fell backward to the bottom of the grave. The burial detail filled it up. For many of those taken into the shade of the thatched shed, the respite came too late. One by one their babblings ceased and their bodies twisted into the grotesque postures that mark a corpse as far as it can be seen. During the long afternoon, stupor served as an anesthetic for most of the prisoners. There was no food. Toward evening the Japs allowed a few to gather canteens and fill them at an artesian well. It was our first good water. Dawn of April 13 seemed to come in the middle of the night. Its

magnificent colors and flaming splendor meant to us only the beginning of new sufferings. We averted our heads as the coppery light flooded our filthy prison. There was a stir at the gates at 10 AM. Guards filed in and began lining us up. Out of one dirty building came kitchen corpsmen, dragging cans of sticky, gray rice which they ladled out - one ladleful to each man. Those of us who had mess kits loaned the lids to men who didn't. Some of the prisoners had to receive their dole in cupped hands. The portion given each man was equivalent to a saucer of rice. The most of us passed the afternoon in stupor. In the twilight we were ordered to our feet. It still was light as we were marched out of the compound, toward the road. We looked at the artesian well, but the Japs warned us not to try to fill our canteens.

During the next four hours of marching we were tortured by the sound of bubbling water. Artesian wells lined the road. It seemed to me I could smell water. At about midnight rain started falling. It was chilling, but it cleansed the filth from our stinging bodies and relieved the agony of parched dryness. Those with mess kits or canteen cups held them up as they walked. The rain lasted about fifteen minutes and we shared the water with those who had no receptacles. We were refreshed for a time, but as the grinding march continued men began falling. The energy derived from the morning rice had been depleted. When I saw the first man go down I began counting the seconds. I wondered whether the Jap buzzard squad was still following us. A flash and the crack of a shot answered my question.

Just before daybreak the guards halted the column and ordered us to sit down. While it was the cool of the morning, my throat remained afire with thirst. And just across the road bubbled an artesian well. Its splashing was plainly audible and the clear water glistened in the morning sun. I have no doubt that the Japs were expecting the thing that happened now. A Filipino soldier darted from the ranks and ran toward the well. Two others followed. Two more followed these, then a sixth broke from the ranks. Jap guards all along the line raised their rifles and waited for the six to scramble into the grassy ditch and up within a few feet of the well. Most of the Filipinos fell at the first volley. Two of them, desperately wounded, kept inching towards the water, their hands outstretched. The Japs fired again and again and again, until all six lay dead.

From then on I practiced detaching myself from the scenes about me. I have no doubt this saved my sanity on more than one occasion. We were at the outskirts of Lubao before mutterings about me brought me back to earth to look upon a new horror. I saw that all eyes were directed toward an object hanging on a barbed wire fence paralleling the road. It had been a Filipino soldier. Bayoneted, his abdomen was open, the bowels had been wrenched loose and were hanging like great grayish purple ropes along the strands of wire that supported the mutilated body.

This was a Japanese object lesson, of course. But it carried terrible implications. The Japs apparently had wearied of mere shootings and simple bayonetings, which served only to whet the barbaric appetite. Our next stop, just outside the city of Guagua, came near being a permanent one for me. At a long, muddy ditch we were allowed to dip up drinking water. After canteens had been filled I determined to soak my aching feet in the ooze. The order to resume the march was sounded unexpectedly. Putting on my shoes delayed me a few seconds. I heard a guard shout in my direction, but I continued to struggle with the foot gear. When I looked up the guard was raising his rifle. I snatched my shoes and plunged toward the column of prisoners, dodging from side to side with a prickly feeling all over my back. But the bullet didn't come.

We neared San Fernando during the afternoon of our fifth day's march. It was here, according to rumor, that we were to be put aboard a train and carried to a concentration camp. From among the 600 or so Americans and Filipino military prisoners who had started with me, many familiar faces were missing. We had come almost eighty-five miles with nothing to eat except one ladle of rice given to us more than twenty-four hours before. We could have entrained an hour previously and I doubted, therefore, that the railroad figured in the Jap's plans for us. I was becoming certain that this was to be a march to the death for all. The sun was still high in the sky when we straggled into San Fernando and were put into a barbed wire compound, seated in rows for a continuation of the sun treatment.

At dawn of the sixth day we were kicked to our feet and ordered out of the compound. The Japs did not even make a pretense of giving us food or water. Our canteens had been dry for hours, only muddy scum inside them. We were marched to a railroad siding several blocks away where stood five ancient, ramshackle box cars. None of these could have held more than fifty men in comfort. Now 115 men were packed into each car and the doors pulled shut and locked from the outside. We stood jammed together because there wasn't sufficient floor space to permit sitting.

As the sun climbed higher the heat grew to oven-like intensity. The air we breathed seemed to scorch our throats. The only ventilation was from narrow, screened slits at the ends of the cars. A large per cent of the prisoners were suffering from dysentery. The atmosphere was foul beyond description. Men began to faint. They sagged down as far as space permitted and dragged in the filth that covered the floor boards. The train started with a jerk and a jolting, rocking ride began. Many of the prisoners in my car were seized by nausea, adding to the vile state of our rolling cell.

The ride lasted more than three hours. Later I heard that a number of men had died in each of the five cars. I was too far gone to notice much.

My first view of O'Donnell prison was from atop a rise about a mile off. I saw a forbidding maze of tumble-down buildings, barbed-wire entanglements and high guard towers, from which flew the Jap rising sun. Sharp commands by the Jap guards aroused me from my reverie. We started moving. The long line of prisoners straggled through the eastern portal. Gates in the Barbed-wire barricade closed behind us. Our guards marched us up a hill and seated us in the blazing sun near the Japanese military headquarters. We were given to understand we shortly would be "welcomed" by the captain commanding the prison.

During the searing 45-minute wait I studied the bleak reservation which stretched to the South, West and North of the hill upon which we were seated. The camp covered probably several hundred acres, divided by barricades into several large, square compounds. A sluggish, muddy stream snaked its way across the prison area. Finally the Jap captain appeared; a gnarled, misshapen creature, as grotesque as anything supposedly human I ever have looked upon. We learned he had been retired, but called back to duty at the start of the war. He had squint eyes. He roared at us with a pomposity reminiscent of Mussolini. But the loose-lipped vacuity of his expression was like that of an idiot, as he mounted a low platform and stared at us. Beside the dais stood a fat Filipino-Japanese boy, holding a straw hat in both pudgy hands. The captain began to speak. After each long burst of gibberish the fat interpreter translated for us in a purring, lackadaisical monotone while the captain glared up and down our ranks. "He say America and Nippon enemies," the interpreter told us. "Always will be enemies. If Nippon do not defeat America this time, Nippon fight again and again until America defeated. Always will

be war until America belong to Nippon." And now came the part of the "welcome" which was of most significance to us. "Captain, he say you not prisoners of war. You are sworn enemies of Japan. Therefore, you will not be treated like prisoners of honorable war - you will be treated like captives. Captain, he say you do not act like soldiers, you got no discipline. You do not stand at attention while he talk. Captain, he say you will have trouble from him." Some of us, indeed, actually had our backs turned toward this agent of the Son of Heaven. As to his threats of trouble, we figured he would have to be a genius to cause us any more trouble than we'd already had.

With twenty-two other officers of the air forces I was assigned to a tumble-down shack 14 feet wide and 20 feet long. The unfinished roof was open in the center, admitting the burning sunshine and the rain. There were neither cots nor mats. We pulled grass and weeds to lie on in dry weather. When it rained we crawled under flooring. Many other prisoners had no shelter whatever. There were no lights in the barracks but plenty of them around the camp at night, searchlights at headquarters and atop the towers trained along the barbed-wire. Walking patrols were abroad at all times. Escape seemed impossible.

When we had been at O'Donnell about a week, the death rate among the Americans was twenty a day. Filipinos were dying at the rate of 150 a day. Within two weeks fifty Americans were dying each day and the Filipino death toll had soared to 350 each twenty-four hours. It was difficult to find men among us strong enough to dig graves. Regulation burial was unknown. Shallow trenches had to serve. Into these ten or twelve bodies were dumped - often without identification tags - and covered by a thin layer of earth.

New prisoners arrived daily. Most of them were sick and all were in varying stages of starvation. The ramshackle structure that passed as a hospital soon was packed. Men were laid shoulder to shoulder on the bare floor. There were no blankets. A large number of the sick and dying were naked. When all floor space had been taken, the patients were laid out on the ground beneath the floors. The stench of the place was beyond description. The Japs provided no medicine.

American doctors in the camp were given no instruments, medicines or dressings. They were not allowed sufficient water to wash the human waste from the sick and dying men. When all "hospital" space was gone many American soldiers lay out in the open, near the latrines, until they died. There were no latrines or other sanitary facilities at first. There were flies by the millions, droning all day long, settling alternately upon the filth, then upon the containers of gray rice issued to the prisoners. When the Japs at last gave us shovels for digging latrines, most of the men were too weak to use them. Starvation was everywhere. Men who had weightd 200 pounds now weighed ninety or less. Every rib was visible. They were living skeletons, without buttocks or muscle.

On seeing a man asleep, it was difficult to say whether he was alive or dead. The most common causes of death were malaria, dysentery and beriberi. Many of us were afflicted with all three at once. Mosquitoes descended upon us in clouds. Frequently, inspecting the wretched area, the Japs promised us medicines. They never delivered them, except on one occasion when the Red Cross was permitted to send in quinine from Manila. We never learned how much was sent. Although thousands were sick and dying of malaria, the Japs issued just enough quinine to take care of ten cases. Suffering was worst among the hundreds afflicted with

beriberi, a disease resulting from a deficiency of vitamins. Feet, ankles and legs were swollen almost double normal size. Faces were puffed up like balloons. When the condition affected the heart, death followed quickly. There is no need to describe here the anguished deaths of the dysentery victims.

During the first week the Japs began pressing the prisoners into labor gangs, despite our appalling physical conditions. Each day the guards led out the details of men, half of whom were unable to stand, let alone work. Oftener than not, these men failed to return in the evenings. There were deaths by the dozens in the barracks each night. In two months more than 2200 American war prisoners died. The Filipino death toll was many times greater. The Philippines were a land of plenty. In addition to their own food supply, the Japs had vast stores captured from the Americans and had access to the bountiful natural resources of the islands. Therefore, the conclusion is inescapable that the Japs deliberately set out to starve us.

Our diet was chiefly rice, served three times a day. They gave us meat twice in two months. On these occasions less than a fourth of the men got any meat whatever and the portion for those who did was one piece, less than an inch square. Once in a while they gave us inferior sweet potatoes, which often were too rotten to eat. Nevertheless it was necessary to post our own guards at the garbage dumps to prevent starving men from eating what had been thrown away. The sweet potato ration per man was usually one spoonful, boiled with their skins on and mashed with a two-by-four timber in a 55-gallon oil drum.

The filth that pervaded the camp was not absent in the kitchens, which were shacks with dirt floors. They hummed with flies and mosquitoes. There were no cleaning facilities. Each American kitchen was provided with two cauldrons, a shovel for scooping up rice and the 55-gallon drum. There was no water for washing either these utensils or the food; it was available only for cooking and drinking. I was in O'Donnell thirty five days before I had a bath - in one gallon of stolen water. My clothing was unchanged and unwashed for six weeks.

The stream that meandered through the reservation was befouled from the dysentery epidemic. Delirious men had to be restrained forcibly from drinking its vile waters. Several Filipinos eluded the self-appointed guards, drank from the stream and were dead in a few days. Our talk and thoughts were almost continually of food; food we had enjoyed in the past; food we craved now and food we intended to enjoy upon our release. At first I wanted steaks; big Hereford steaks from Shackleford County, Texas. Then my fancy turned to eggs - I wanted them fried and by the platter. I dreamed of them. Sometimes it seemed I was wallowing in gargantuan plates of eggs, smashing the yellows and absorbing them through my pores.

But there were plenty of things to occupy our minds. Sick and hungry prisoners straggled in almost every day. These prisoners were preceded by hundreds of rumors. One was that the conditions of the American surrender stipulated that all prisoners taken on Bataan and Corregidor should be sent back to the United States. Our hopes really soared when we heard a report the steamer Blackhawk was lying in Manila Bay being painted white to effect the transfer. A day or two later a Filipino smuggled in a package of cigarets which contained a note: "Be brave! You will soon be free." Although I didn't allow myself to believe it, I stopped throwing cold water on our hopes.

To many, in much worse condition than I, the rumors provided a stamina that kept them alive. One of these was a technician who had been in my squadron. When Bataan fell, he was one of the finest specimens I have ever known. Yet when I went to look for him in the so-called hospital, I passed him by without recognizing him. Then I heard my name called in a husky

whisper. I looked at the man a full minute before I knew him. It was too late for food, or anything we could do. He was finished. "Ed," he whispered, "what do you think of the rumors that are going around?" I looked as cheerful as I could and said: "I don't know what all you've heard, but I'll tell you that those reports about the Japs agreeing to send us home and about the Blackhawk being painted white for the trip, sound pretty good to me." He brightened up. He said it sounded swell and he was glad I thought the the rumors were true. I told him to pull himself together so he would be in shape for the voyage home. He said he would. He died the next morning.

There were rumors that we were to be transferred to another camp about June 1, although we wondered if any of us would live that long. It turned out the reports were true. It was announced officially we were going to Cabanatuan, a camp for Americans only. We were told that this time we were to ride in trucks. The Japs overloaded every one of them, packing prisoners in until there wasn't room to move. We didn't care, however. We were riding. When we first saw Cabanatuan prison camp we were overjoyed. As with O'Donnell, it had been built as a Filipino army camp, but it was a much better one and looked as though it had been completed. Our part of the camp was divided by barbed wire from the rest.

There were five American soldiers caught receiving cigarets through the fence from a Filipino. The six were flogged the remainder of the night and all the next day. At sundown they were taken just outside the camp and shot. Repetition of occurrences like this finally brought about two days so bloody they could be believed only by one who saw them. Two lieutenant colonels of the Army and a Navy lieutenant determined they would escape even if they died in the attempt. They were so desperate that they made the effort in the daylight. It was planned to crawl on their bellies down a drainage ditch to a small opening beneath the barricade. They started inching their way through the filthy ditch that reeked of human waste. The noon sun blazed down on them.

They had taken nothing with them - no water, food or maps. They were weaponless. As they were nearing the fence someone caused a noise and the Jap patrol heard it. In a second or two there was a hullabaloo of shrieking and chattering from the runts outside the fence. Japs ran from all directions toward the ditch and the three Americans were hauled out. When I saw the three standing under guard before a Jap officer I thought I knew what was coming, but never could have imagined the things that now took place.

The ragged, faded and torn uniforms were stripped off the prisoners. The naked men were marched through the glare of the steaming prison camp. Near the western gate, they were flogged almost into insensibility. Bleeding and dazed, they were led outside and their hands tied behind them. Additional ropes were tied to the fastened hands and secured to cross pieces some feet above the victims' heads. This forced them to stand always erect, almost on tip toes. The posture was agonizing. A short two-by-four timber was placed near by. As Filipinos approached on the road, the Jap guards, their eyes glittering, forced the passerby to pick up the timber and smash each of the three officers in the face. The first few blows broke their noses. As the men revived slightly from each clubbing, guards laid on with whips. Every blow could be heard down in our barracks. Every blow brought a flow of blood. The burning sun rays dried the blood in black clots. It stuck to the officers' legs and backs like tar. This was all taking place in view of

the other prisoners. We could hear the crunchy sound as the timber, swung by unwilling Filipinos, crashed into the faces - now almost unrecognizable. Again and again, between blows, would come the slither and slash of the whips. Seeing this go on, hour after hour, put into me a feeling I cannot define. It was not hatred, as such. I had been hating the Japs for months. This feeling was a combination of cold disgust such as you have for a rattlesnake and a physical, sympathetic suffering for those three victims.

Night came and they still were there. The sun went down. Lights were visible out by the gate. And intermittently we could hear, above noises of the camp, the sound of the whip. I prayed that night that those men could die soon. I had no hope that they would survive. The next day passed as had the first. By its end there was no conversation in camp. We watched these men in their Gethsemane and could find no words. There were the floggings and the blows in the face with the timber. Everyone who came down that road of horror had to take his turn at slamming the blood-soaked timber in the smashed faces. On the third day a typhoon swept in. The victims stood naked and shivering in the downpour. The rain cleansed their wounds and bodies at times, but the guards opened new wounds with the whip as often as they could do so without killing. At length the rain ceased. There were commands and a stir among Jap non-commissioned officers. We stood, wet and bedraggled, watching through the barbed wire. In the last flogging, a slash of the keen, hissing whip had severed one colonel's ear, except for a strip of flesh that kept it attached. The ear now hung down on his shoulder. Eventually, one colonel and the naval officer were shot. The Jap officer did the other colonel of the United States Army "the honor of beheading him personally".

In October, one event gave me my first real understanding of the Japanese. A half dozen of us were sitting on the bamboo in the barracks. A Jap soldier entered. We snapped to attention as he started going through anything he could find. Suddenly he let go an angry yell and held up a watch he had found. He pocketed the watch and looked us over. I was the tallest man present. He hopped over and walloped me in the face first with his right, then with his left hand. He stood roughly five feet, his head coming about to my breast bone, but he was stocky and strong. By the time he had socked me twenty times of so, I was practically down to his size. It would have been suicide to resist. He took a final punch and walked out. The little slugger's choice of the tallest man for his abuse illustrates the Jap inferiority complex. He always feels inferior in the presence of the American. The Japanese are a nation of houseboys. This is particularly true in their army.

It has been said their army is the best disciplined body of men in the world. There is discipline there, but it is one of fear. The Jap soldier fears his own officers far more than he does the enemy. Jap soldiers must submit to beatings with the fists or slugging with gun butt when they displease a superior officer. We learned never to look a Jap in the eye - even the lowest one-star private. No Jap may look a superior in the eye and they were quick to club us down and kick us when we forgot we were captives and not honorable prisoners of war.

In October, things were astir in Cabanatuan. Not long before, the Japs had searched out 400 men with technical knowledge and put them aboard a ship bound for Japan, where they were to be factory slaves.

I will end Colonel Dyess' story here as this is where I was included in the 400 and was shipped out of Cabanatuan and put on a hell ship and brought to Mukden, Manchuria to work in a machine tool plant. Colonel Dyess' story continues to relate how he was picked to be sent south to the Davao prison colony on Mindanao Island, the work he was made to do there, how he eventually escaped from that work detail and under orders from the United States became a guerrilla to harass the Japanese. He eventually returned to the United States and arranged for the publication of his story, which was delayed for military reasons. Colonel Dyess was killed in a plane crash in California in December of 1944.

your church or synagogue. It flies, too, from your own porch, in your backyard, on the Scout camp pole.

Yes, you recognize the Stars and Stripes. But is it saying something to you? Doing something for you? Are you angered when you see it defiled or ridiculed? Does your heart throb? Do your eyes glisten with tears when you behold it unfurled in the breeze? Or is patriotism perhaps like religion? You don't know if you've "got it" until you need it?

I was once a young American, too, and no more or less patriotic than you. I pledged allegiance to the flag and I sang "The Star Spangled Banner," as best I could. Until... Hitler raised a heavy hand and smashed his fist into the heart of Europe... until Japan directed a savage attack on our shores. I was catapulted into a wartime world I could never have imagined.

I became soldier, sailor, airman, marine. My brother, my buddy and I followed our flag as it billowed against the gray sky and sea and battleship. We saw the color ground into the sands of North Africa, shredded on the coral of Corregidor, bloodied on Omaha Beach. My brother raised that flag on Iwo Jima! My buddy cried when he sighted the flag over his England air base as he and too few of his comrades, returned from a raid. A brother keeps his eye on a tattered flag from battle to battle until his battles were no more. And for a buddy it was the last blanket to cover his body before it was buried in foreign soil or slipped into a watery grave.

And I....I watched our flag until it was no longer there to watch. I parachuted from a flaming B-17 over Germany, was surrendered to an overpowering army on Bataan. I was marched along at bayonet point. I was transported like an animal to a "stalag" or a jungle camp. Guarded, wanted, barricaded - I was a prisoner of war. For days, months, and year after endless year, I existed under a flag that boasted either a rising sun or the Nazi swastika.

What my captors failed to realize is that although they shaved my head, starved my body, deprived my soul and denied me basic human rights, an American flag fluttered on in my heart. Hide in what the "red, white and blue" stands for buoyed my spirit. God watched over me, my compatriots sustained me... and I survived.

Can you understand what a blessed, beautiful sight that flag was to me when I viewed it at last in New York? San Francisco? Why that flag WAVED to me from sea to shining sea, beckoning me back to my farm, my shop, my career, my family. That flag **CRIED OUT** "LOOK... LOOK... I am flying still... I always will!" I did look. I wept. I thanked the Lord above for returning me home to this good land.

And now, my young American friend, will you do something for me? Take another look.... a good hard look... at that flag!

An Ex-Prisoner of War

Appendix IV

The following is a letter from a World War II Prisoner of War written to a student by an anonymous person.

Dear Young American:

This is your flag. You know that, of course. You salute it in your classroom. It flies over your school, over your public buildings, your parades, parks and playgrounds. You honor it in your church or synagogue. It flies, too, from your own porch, in your backyard, on the Scout camp pole.

Yes, you recognize the Stars and Stripes. But is it saying something to you? Doing something for you? Are you angered when you see it defiled or ridiculed? Does your heart throb? Do your eyes glisten with tears when you behold it unfurled in the breeze? Or is patriotism perhaps like religion? You don't know if you've "got it" until you need it?

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And now, my young American friend, will you do something for me? Take another look.....a good hard look.....at that flag!

An Ex-Prisoner of War

Appendix V

This appendix includes various information sent to my family by the United States government while I was a Prisoner of War, copies of General Orders relating to leaves from the military for recuperation, the military reserves as an enlisted man and as an officer, Tulane University AROTC, R & R in Miami Beach sponsored by the military, active duty discharge, enlisted reserve discharge and Officer's reserve discharge.



ARMY AIR FORCES
Certificate of Appreciation
FOR WAR SERVICE

ERWIN R JOHNSON

To you who answered the call of your country and served in its Armed Forces to bring about the total defeat of the enemy, I extend the heartfelt thanks of a grateful Nation. As one of the Nation's finest, you undertook the most severe task one can be called upon to perform. Because you demonstrated the fortitude, resourcefulness and calm judgment necessary to carry out that task, we now look to you for leadership and example in further exalting our country in peace.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Harry Truman

COMMANDING GENERAL
ARMY AIR FORCES

CERTIFICATE TO ME FROM
ARMY AIR FORCES
LETTER TO ME FROM
PRESIDENT HARRY S. TRUMAN

ARMY AIR FORCES

Certificate of Appreciation

FOR WAR SERVICE



TO

ERWIN R. JOHNSON

I CANNOT meet you personally to thank you for a job well done; nor can I hope to put in written words the great hope I have for your success in future life.

Together we built the striking force that swept the Luftwaffe from the skies and broke the German power to resist. The total might of that striking force was then unleashed upon the Japanese. Although you no longer play an active military part, the contribution you made to the Air Forces was essential in making us the greatest team in the world.

The ties that bound us under stress of combat must not be broken in peacetime. Together we share the responsibility for guarding our country in the air. We who stay will never forget the part you have played while in uniform. We know you will continue to play a comparable role as a civilian. As our ways part, let me wish you God speed and the best of luck on your road in life. Our gratitude and respect go with you.

A large, handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be "H. Arnold", is written over a faint, large star-shaped stamp. The signature is fluid and cursive.

COMMANDING GENERAL
ARMY AIR FORCES

CERTIFICATE TO ME FROM
ARMY AIR FORCES COMMANDING GENERAL
HAP H. ARNOLD

WAR DEPARTMENT
SERVICES OF SUPPLY
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
WASHINGTON

JAU

IN REPLY
REFER TO

AG 201 Johnson, Erwin R.
(6-23-42) EB

July 1, 1942.

Mrs. Cecil Johnson,
1412 Alvar Street,
New Orleans, Louisiana.

Dear Mrs. Johnson:

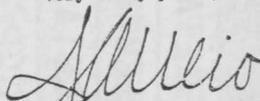
According to War Department records, you have been designated as the emergency addressee of Private Erwin R. Johnson, 14,017,289, who, according to the latest information available, was serving in the Philippine Islands at the time of the final surrender.

I deeply regret that it is impossible for me to give you more information than is contained in this letter. In the last days before the surrender of Bataan there were casualties which were not reported to the War Department. Conceivably the same is true of the surrender of Corregidor and possibly of other islands of the Philippines. The Japanese Government has indicated its intention of conforming to the terms of the Geneva Convention with respect to the interchange of information regarding prisoners of war. At some future date this Government will receive through Geneva a list of persons who have been taken prisoners of war. Until that time the War Department cannot give you positive information.

The War Department will consider the persons serving in the Philippine Islands as "missing in action" from the date of the surrender of Corregidor, May 7, 1942, until definite information to the contrary is received. It is to be hoped that the Japanese Government will communicate a list of prisoners of war at an early date. At that time you will be notified by this office in the event his name is contained in the list of prisoners of war. In the case of persons known to have been present in the Philippines and who are not reported to be prisoners of war by the Japanese Government, the War Department will continue to carry them as "missing in action," in the absence of information to the contrary, until twelve months have expired. At the expiration of twelve months and in the absence of other information the War Department is authorized to make a final determination.

Recent legislation makes provision to continue the pay and allowances of persons carried in a "missing" status for a period of not to exceed twelve months; to continue, for the duration of the war, the pay and allowances of persons known to have been captured by the enemy; to continue allotments made by missing personnel for a period of twelve months and allotments made by persons held by the enemy during the time they are so held; to make new allotments or increase allotments in force to certain dependents defined in Public Law 490, 77th Congress. The latter dependents generally include the legal wife, dependent children under twenty-one years of age and dependent mother, or such dependents as have been designated in official records. Eligible dependents who can establish a need for financial assistance should be advised to approach their local chapter of the American Red Cross who will assist them in obtaining any benefits to which they may be entitled. In the event dependents require financial assistance and are eligible to receive this assistance the amount allotted will be deducted from the pay which would otherwise accrue to the credit of the missing individual.

Very truly yours,


Major General,
The Adjutant General.

CLASS OF SERVICE

This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.

WESTERN UNION

A. N. WILLIAMS
PRESIDENT

1201

SYMBOLS

DL = Day Letter

NL = Night Letter

LC = Deferred Cable

NLT = Cable Night Letter

Ship Radiogram

The filing time shown in the date line on telegrams and day letters is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination

NSA 206 NL PD=NEWORLEANS LA 28

1945 AUG 28 PM 11 52

J W GRANFORS

1122 WEST KINGS HIGHWAY SAN ANTONIO TEX

RECEIVED TELEGRAM FROM WASHINGTON ERWIN WAS FOUND IN CAMP
HOTEN MANCHURIA WILL INFORM YOU AS FURTHER INFORMATION IS
RECEIVED

CECEIL AND JOHNNY

No. P25366	To Mrs H
By Lg 40070	T. to mail

CECEIL

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

United States Army



Air Corps Technical School

Be it known that

Erwin R. Johnson

14017289, Private, 2nd Mat Sq, 35th Air Base Gp (R), GHQ AF, Savannah, Georgia
has satisfactorily completed the prescribed course for

Airplane Mechanics

as prescribed by the Air Corps Technical School and Given by

DALLAS AVIATION SCHOOL and AKA COLLEGE

In testimony whereof and by virtue of vested authority I

do confer upon him this

DIPLOMA

Given on this eleventh *day of* June

in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and forty-one.

Rust Lincoln

Brigadier General, U.S. Army
Commandant, Air Corps Technical School

714
PRESIDENT-

AIR CORPS MECHANICS SCHOOL



Class #1

Barlow	Eller	Alfred	Walker	Cloutier	Bralett	Mullis	Viller	Williams
Jason	Houston	Mayeux	Johnson	Davison	Manner	Hoskins	Harold	
Bellemin	McCalla	Barnes	Griffers	Devills	Boyd	Allen	McIntyre	Stroope



Honorable Discharge

This is to certify that

ERWIN R JOHNSON 14 017 289 CORPORAL
48TH MATERIEL SQUADRON MCKINLEY FIELD PHILIPPINE ISLAND

Army of the United States

*is hereby Honorably Discharged from the military
service of the United States of America.*

*This certificate is awarded as a testimonial of Honest
and Faithful Service to this country.*

Given at

SEPARATION CENTER
CAMP SHELBY MISSISSIPPI

Date

20 JUNE 1946

ARCHIE SORENSON
MAJOR AUS

**ENLISTED RECORD AND REPORT OF SEPARATION
HONORABLE DISCHARGE**

1. LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL JOHNSON ERWIN R		2. ARMY SERIAL NO. 14 017 289	3. GRADE CPL	4. ARM OR SERVICE AC	5. COMPONENT AUS
6. ORGANIZATION 48TH MATERIEL SQ MCKINLEY FLD RI		7. DATE OF SEPARATION 20 JUN 46	8. PLACE OF SEPARATION SEP CEN CP SHELBY MISS		
9. PERMANENT ADDRESS FOR MAILING PURPOSES 1412 ALVAR ST NEW ORLEANS ORLEANS LA		10. DATE OF BIRTH 19 OCT 21	11. PLACE OF BIRTH NEW ORLEANS LA		
12. ADDRESS FROM WHICH EMPLOYMENT WILL BE SOUGHT SEE 9		13. COLOR EYES BROWN	14. COLOR HAIR BROWN	15. HEIGHT 5'10"	16. WEIGHT 160 LBS.
17. NO. DEPEND. 0	18. RACE X WHITE	19. MARITAL STATUS X SINGLE	20. U.S. CITIZEN X YES	21. CIVILIAN OCCUPATION AND NO. STUDENT HS X-02	

MILITARY HISTORY

22. DATE OF INDUCTION 17 SEP 40	23. DATE OF ENLISTMENT 17 SEP 40	24. DATE OF ENTRY INTO ACTIVE SERVICE 17 SEP 40	25. PLACE OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE BARKSDALE FLD LA
26. REGISTERED X YES	27. LOCAL S.S. BOARD NO.	28. COUNTY AND STATE LOUISIANA	29. HOME ADDRESS SEE CONVOYANCE OFFICE
30. MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY AND NO. AIRPLANE MECH 747		31. MILITARY QUALIFICATION AND DATE (i.e., Infantry, Signal, etc.) Boo-NONE 9 Feb 69	
32. BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS PHILIPPINE ISLANDS; SOU PHILIPPINES; LUZON		33. DECORATIONS AND CITATIONS AMER DEF SV RIB WITH ONE BRONZE STAR; ATO MED; APTO MED; PHILIPPINE LIB RIB WITH ONE BRONZE STAR; PHILIPPINE DEF RIB WITH ONE BRONZE STAR; GOOD COND MED; DISTINGUISHED UNIT BADGE WITH TWO (2) OLC'S;	
34. WOUNDS RECEIVED IN ACTION NONE			

35. LATEST IMMUNIZATION DATES			36. SERVICE OUTSIDE CONTINENTAL U.S. AND RETURN			
SHALLPOX NOT SHOWN	TYPHOID	TETANUS	OTHER (specify)	DATE OF DEPARTURE	DESTINATION	DATE OF ARRIVAL
37. TOTAL LENGTH OF SERVICE			38. HIGHEST GRADE HELD 28 CPL	1 NOV 41	APTO	20 NOV 41
CONTINENTAL SERVICE		FOREIGN SERVICE		8 OCT 45	US	28 OCT 45
YEARS	MONTHS	DAYS				
1	9	6	3	11	28	
39. PRIOR SERVICE						

JUN-22-46 00066 - A HIS 0.25

40. REASON AND AUTHORITY FOR SEPARATION AR 615-365 CONVN OF GOVT RR-1 (DEMOBILIZATION)		41. SERVICE SCHOOLS ATTENDED AIRPLANE MECH SCH DALLAS TEX 28 WKS JUNE 41	42. EDUCATION (Years) Grammar 8 High School 4 College 0
--	--	--	---

43. LONGEVITY FOR PAY PURPOSES		44. MUSTERING OUT PAY	45. SOLDIER DEPOSITS	46. TRAVEL PAY	47. TOTAL AMOUNT, NAME OF DISBURSING OFFICER
YEARS	MONTHS	DAYS	TOTAL	THIS PAYMENT	NONE \$ 16.10 135.53 H N ELKINS JR MAJ FD
5	9	4	300	100	

48. IMPORTANT IF PREMIUM IS NOT PAID WHEN DUE OR WITHIN THIRTY-ONE DAYS THEREAFTER INSURANCE WILL LAPSE. MAKE CHECKS OR MONEY ORDERS PAYABLE TO THE TREASURER OF THE U. S. AND FORWARD TO COLLECTIONS SUBDIVISION, VETERANS ADMINISTRATION, WASHINGTON 25, D. C.					
49. KIND OF INSURANCE U.S. Govt.	50. HOW PAID Altitima	51. Effective Date of Allotment or Continuation 30 JUN 46	52. Date of Next Premium Due (One month after 50) 31 JUL 46	53. PREMIUM DUE EACH MONTH \$ 6.67	54. INTENTION OF VETERAN TO X Continue

RIGHT THUMB PRINT	55. REMARKS (This space for completion of above items or entry of other items specified in W. D. Directives)	
	<p>NO TIME LOST UNDER AW 107 * (33) WORLD WAR 11 VIC MED LAPEL BUTTON ISSUED ASR (2 SEP 45) 121 SEPARATED FROM THE SERVICES ON A PARTIAL SERVICE RECORD AND AFFIDAVIT FROM THE SOLDIER.</p>	<p>SOLDIER ENLISTED THIS DATE IN ENLISTED RESERVE CORPS</p>
56. SIGNATURE OF PERSON BEING SEPARATED <i>Erwin R. Johnson</i>		57. PERSONNEL OFFICER (Type name, grade and organization - signature) N H SENN CAPT AGD <i>N H Senn</i>

40 FORM 53-55
September 1944

This form supersedes all previous editions of WO AGO Forms 53 and 55 for enlisted persons entitled to an Honorable Discharge, which will not be used after receipt of this revision.

G. L. Brown & Johnson

70 DAY FURLOUGH REPORTING DATE 1946

R E S T R I C T E D

ARMY SERVICE FORCES
EIGHTH SERVICE COMMAND
Headquarters, Brooke Hospital Center
FORT SAM HOUSTON, TEXAS

SPECIAL ORDERS
NUMBER 181

E X T R A C T

6 November 1945

2. Under the provisions of Par 11f (8), AR 615-275, the following EM, atchd to Det of Pats, this hosp, are authorized convalescent furloughs, effective 7 November 1945, in the number of days indicated, and will report to the Receiving and Evacuation Office before midnight of the reporting date.

→ 70 DAY FURLOUGH, REPORTING DATE, 16 JANUARY 1946

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ASN</u>	<u>RANK</u>	<u>WARD</u>	<u>AUTHORIZED TO VISIT</u>
Adams, Berdin	6282384	Cpl	RC-1	Gen. Del., Nacogdoches, Texas
Adams, Jessie M.	18048939	Sgt	RC-1	Box 314, Woodsboro, Texas
Aleman, Juan C.	38026155	Cpl	RC-1	Gregory, Texas
Alvis, Delos L.	18015223	Cpl	RC-1	Gen. Del., Roby, Texas
Anderson, Walter R.	20813003	S/Sgt	RC-1	1418 Ave D., Lubbock, Texas
Bagley, William R.	18014460	Sgt	RC-1	514 Dallas St., Big Springs, Texa
Bain, Francis G.	38054698	S/Sgt	RC-1	5310 Lindsay St., Houston, Texas
Barham, Horace P. Jr.	6932953	T/Sgt	RC-1	719 Court St., Conway, Ark.
Barker, Truman M.	38030743	S/Sgt	RC-1	Gen. Del., Jacksonville, Texas
Barnes, Gordon W.	18038690	Cpl	RC-1	Box 524, Blum, Texas
Bendele, Wesely H.	6260650	T/Sgt	RC-1	Box 484, Hondo, Texas
Berry, Cecil A.	6250182	T/Sgt	RC-1	336 Soneeville, Bosier City, La.
Bird, Cecil C.	6292935	T/Sgt	RC-1	1001 Halecenter, Texas
Birkinsha, Harry E.	17010417	S/Sgt	RC-1	Lake Vedington, Fayetteville, Ark
Bobbitt, Arthur L.	6275768	S/Sgt	RC-1	Box 1203, Brady, Texas
Bolt, Charles R.	38068619	Sgt	RC-1	Box 392, Paducah, Texas
Boyd, Jack	6231584	T/Sgt	RC-1	Rt. 1, Box 15, El Dorado, Ark.
Brady, Dumont W.	34078346	S/Sgt	RC-1	812 Georgia St., Monroe, La.
Britton, Kay D.	18015216	Cpl	RC-1	Box 533, Kermit, Texas
Burdue, John M.	17013697	Cpl	RC-1	Louisville, Ark.
Burk, Loyd S.	18038595	Cpl	RC-1	Rhame, Texas
Barrola, Joseph M.	20843294	S/Sgt	RC-1	3004 Frutas St., El Paso, Texas
Burton, George W.	38011866	Sgt	RC-1	Box 385, Lawn, Texas
Bussey, Hez J.	18052467	Sgt	RC-1	124 N. Broadway, Shawnee, Okla.
Canfield, Leslie L.	6273251	T/Sgt	RC-1	412 Burdick St., Stillwater, Okla
Cannaday, Joel G.	18063107	Cpl	RC-1	Gause, Texas
Carter, Howard W.	6294751	Cpl	RC-1	Ashfork, Ariz.
Celusniak, Louis B.	38030820	S/Sgt	RC-1	Rt. 3, Marlin, Texas
Chism, Aubrey L.	17014160	S/Sgt	RC-1	Rt. 2, Hollygrove, Ark.
Choate, Rufus R.	20813981	Sgt	RC-1	1042 Locust St., Abilene, Texas
Clements, Carl C.	38038658	Cpl	RC-1	Rt. 3, Bonham, Texas
Cleveland, James E.	18051616	Cpl	RC-1	1324 W. Wyandotte, Sulpher, Okla.
Coffman, Raymond	18000402	Sgt	RC-1	Box 128, Rt. 3, Texarkana, Texas
Coker, Lawrence E.	6296798	S/Sgt	RC-1	Kemp, Texas
Cook, Robert G.	20814005	Cpl	RC-1	1526 N. 6th, Abilene, Texas
Cooper, Perry E.	6262192	S/Sgt	RC-1	Gen. Del., Converse, La.
Cordova, Richard B.	18048983	Cpl	RC-1	417 Furnish, San Antonio, Texas
Cox, Woodrow T.	38020773	S/Sgt	RC-1	RFD 2, Tishomingo, Okla.

R E S T R I C T E D

Cpl. Erwin R. Johnson

70 DAY FURLOUGH, REPORTING DATE, 16 JANUARY 1946

Crawford, Thomas O.	18042257	Cpl	RC-1	Rt. 3, Nacogdoches, Texas
Crehle, Benn L.	6259275	S/Sgt	RC-1	P. O. Harrisburg, Houston, Texas
Cunningham, Burl M.	18038605	Cpl	RC-1	Gen. Del., Rufe, Okla.
Curry, Oscar B.	18042292	Cpl	RC-1	Rt. 2, Elkhart, Texas
Cutrer, Hugh E. Jr.	7000480	T/Sgt	RC-1	415 Louisiana, Bogalusa, La.
Dendy, Carl T.	17010433	Sgt	RC-1	Rt. 1, Box 115A, El Dorado, Ark.
Donaho, Eddie L.	20815352	Cpl	RC-1	Rt. 3, Corsicana, Texas
Dumas, Manson	6270487	S/Sgt	RC-1	Rt. 6, Magnolia, Ark.
Earnest, Malcolm	6930009	S/Sgt	RC-1	617 Wall St., Shreveport, La.
Elmore, Edward O.	18048924	Cpl	RC-1	220 W. Pierce St., Del Rio, Texas
Fair, Cecil G.	20812989	M/Sgt	RC-1	1818 4th St., Brownwood, Texas
Fender, Joe G.	38038634	S/Sgt	RC-1	3452 Burdue St., Dallas, Texas
Finch, John C.	6823732	M/Sgt	RC-1	Conway, Ark.
Fletcher, John A.	1806315	Cpl	RC-1	Star Route, Era, Texas
Flippin, Theodore N.	18014485	Cpl	RC-1	Seagraves, Texas
Foster, Ivan W.	6235170	S/Sgt	RC-1	Gen. Del., James, Texas
Frazier, Clifton L.	18038709	Cpl	RC-1	4018 Pierce St., Denton, Texas
Fredieu, Louis	38055298	Cpl	RC-1	1192 Gilbert St., Beaumont, Texas
Free, Edward J.	6289530	Cpl	RC-1	328 S. Edgefield, Dallas, Texas
Gann, Homer L.	18041398	S/Sgt	RC-1	Rt. 1, Lake Waco, Waco, Texas
Gavito, Valentin F.	18048986	S/Sgt	RC-1	222 Jefferson St., Brownsville, Tex.
Gentry, Adrion D.	18033943	S/Sgt	RC-1	Gen. Del., Leonard, Texas
Gilliam, Farris F.	20813962	l/Sgt	RC-1	2702 Pine St., Abilene, Texas
Gonzales, Rene W.	34076409	Cpl	RC-1	1116 N. Dupre St., New Orleans, La.
Gonzales, Robert W.	18010449	T/Sgt	RC-1	2830 Magnolia, Beaumont, Texas
Greenman, Garald K.	19014233	Cpl	RC-1	1805 St. Charles, New Orleans, La.
Griffin, Dale F.	38021716	Cpl	RC-1	Gen. Del., Arkoma, Okla.
Hall, Kenneth C.	6953088	Cpl	RC-1	5200 S. Walker, Okla. City, Okla.
Hampton, Elbert T.	14014946	Cpl	RC-1	Rt. 2, Box 13, Winnsboro, La.
Hanks, Horace E.	20814014	Cpl	RC-1	1758 Cypress St., Abilene, Texas
Hanna, Homer H.	6281797	S/Sgt	RC-1	1113 W. Elm St., Breckenridge, Tex.
Hargett, Leo	20816790	Cpl	RC-1	1806 La. St., Houston, Texas
Harrell, Hubert E.	6266945	T/Sgt	RC-1	Rt. 2, Box 105, Henderson, Texas
Harrell, Nathan D.	39011396	S/Sgt	RC-1	Rt. 1, Box 90, Rule, Texas
Harrington, Lawrence	14014766	S/Sgt	RC-1	Box 43, Vinton, La.
Harris, Joe V.	18000431	S/Sgt	RC-1	Gen. Del., Seymore, Texas
Helton, James T.	6285339	T/Sgt	RC-1	316 Lincoln, Sand Springs, Okla.
Herring, Douglas D.	7000454	Sgt	RC-1	Gen. Del., Talisheek, La.
Hicks, Irvin L.	6957228	Sgt	RC-1	2046 Ida Ave., Wichita, Kansas
Hill, Carl P.	6264004	S/Sgt	RC-1	Gen. Del., Heavener, Okla.
Huerta, Trino C.	38031569	Cpl	RC-1	1411 San Fernando, San Antonio, Tex.
Hunt, Hugh D.	6971014	S/Sgt	RC-1	Box 241, Carthage, Texas
Johnson, Erwin R.	14017289	Cpl	RC-1	1412 Alvar St., New Orleans, La.
Joiner, Winifred	19000282	l/Sgt	RC-1	124 N. Sunset, Banning, Calif.
Jordan, Murry G.	6243898	M/Sgt	RC-1	Rt. 3, Colorado, Texas

BY COMMAND OF BRIGADIER GENERAL BEACH:

ROBERT S HAWTHORNE
Major, MAC
Adjutant

OFFICIAL:

Robert S. Hawthorne

ROBERT S HAWTHORNE
Major, MAC
Adjutant

DISTRIBUTION:
File (83)
1st Sgt, Det of Pats (210)

Cpl. Erwin R. Johnson

ARMY SERVICE FORCES
EIGHTH SERVICE COMMAND
HEADQUARTERS
BROOKE HOSPITAL CENTER
FORT SAM HOUSTON TEXAS

11-3-45

(Date)

CPL ERWIN R. JOHNSON.

(Name)

CERTIFICATE NO. I

This is to certify that the above named has been confined at Brooke Hospital Center, Fort Sam Houston, Texas, since 11-5-45, having been evacuated from the JAPAN, as a patient for the purpose of receiving treatment for illness, etc., contracted outside the continental limits of the United States and has been granted a convalescent furlough beginning on or about 11-7-45 and ending on or about 1-16-46 for the purpose of visiting his home to recuperate.

It is further certified that travel by air will not be detrimental to the health or physical well being of the individual named in this certificate and that he has been notified that he may be removed enroute short of destination for a higher priority traffic.

The individual named above has been informed that transportation will only be furnished to that point on regularly operated routes which is nearest to the final destination of the individual requesting this transportation.

This certificate becomes void 1-17-46.

**THIS MAN IS A LIBERATED PRISONER OF THE JAPANESE.. PROJECT J....
ONLY THREE COPIES OF THIS PRIORITY WERE ISSUED...**

Emmett C. Hannes

EMMETT C. HANNES

Capt., AC

AAFFDC Hospital Liaison Officer

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

ARMY SERVICE FORCES
FOURTH SERVICE COMMAND
1473 SCU RECEPTION STATION 5
Camp Shelby, Mississippi

SC 62
(DVE) 228

SPECIAL ORDERS
NUMBER 62

E X T R A C T

4 March 1946

15. Fol EM (W male) (PROJECT J) having ret US and rptd this Hq ICW auth appearing below names, WP to address indicated. and upon arrival will be granted one hundred four (104) days TDY for rest and recuperation upon expiration of that period EM will resume compliance with this order and will ret to this station or before 17 June 1946, for further disposition. Two(2) days tvl time atzd. EM atzd to visit points other than address named at no additional expense to the Govt. In accordance AR 35-4810 FD will pay in advance alws for subs a/r \$1.00 per meal for four (4) meal for four (4) EM. Upon compl of tvl three (3) cents per mile in lieu of transportation fr this sta home address shown and ret this orgn and commutatio n value of garrison rat payable for excess auth time ever that required for tvl by common carrier. TDW TCS Tra 301-1 432-02,03 212/60425. Auth: WD Ltr AG 383.6 (17 Aug 45) OB-A-11 (Short Title POW) dtd 17 Aug 45, as amended and 1st Ind Hq AAF dtd 6 Nov 45, to Ltr, Subj: "Housing Facilities for Project J & R Personnel at Miami Beach, Fla.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>RANK</u>	<u>ASN</u>	<u>BR</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>
Knex, Leslie	T/Sgt	6378276	AC	Box 38, Pollock, La
Lary, Henderson D	T/Sgt	6971076	AC	PO Box 645, Greenwood, Miss.
(ICW Par 33, SO 16, ASF Hq Brooke Medical Ctr Ft Sam Houston Tex dtd 28 Feb 46)				
Myers, Johnny S	Sgt	14014806	AC	Route 1, Sicily Island, La.
(ICW Par 50, SO 16, ASF Hq Brooke Medical Ctr Ft Sam Houston Tex dtd 28 Feb 46)				
Johnson, Erwin R	Cpl	14017289	AC	1412 Alvar St., New Orleans, La.
(ICW Par 29, SO 13, ASF Hq Brooke Medical Ctr Ft Sam Houston Tex dtd 25 Feb 46)				

16. Fol Off(W male) having rptd this Hq ICW auth appearing below names. reld fr atchd unasgd this sta and WP to address indicated, for release fr AD with TD enroute at Separation Center, this sta, as required for processing, UP WD RR1-1 25 Jan 46. CO Separation Center this sta will publish order granting terminal leave, if any, showing date of release fr Separation Center and effective date of separation. ICW Auth showing below names. EDCAR: 4 March 1946.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>RANK</u>	<u>ASN</u>	<u>ASR</u>	<u>BR</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>
HOLT, JACK L.	1st Lt	01112223	68	CE(Avn)	254 College St., Shreveport, La.
(ICW Par 67, SO 12 ASF 4th SvC 1473 SCU Reception Station 5 Camp Shelby, Miss. dtd 12 Jan 46 as amended by Par 11, SO 35, this Hq dtd 4 Feb 46.) (Auth TWX WD TAGO WDGAP dtd 15 Jan 46.)					
EDWARDS, CHARLES J, JR.	1st Lt	0535494	64	MC (Avn)	3138 Drummond St. Vicksburg, Miss.
(ICW Telegram ED 4584 Hq ORD Greensboro NC, dtd 21 Feb 46.) (Auth: Msgform A-3F-210, Hq AFPDC Louisville, Ky, dtd 5 Feb 46.)					

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED



HEADQUARTERS
 AAF PERSONNEL DISTRIBUTION COMMAND
 OFFICE OF THE COMMANDING GENERAL
 830 WEST BROADWAY
 LOUISVILLE 3, KENTUCKY

Cpl. Erwin Q. Johnson,
 4212 - Alvar St.,
 New Orleans, La.

Cpl. Erwin Q. Johnson
R. 213
2PA
6/10 PM
 27 March 1946

Dear Cpl. Johnson:

EXTRACT

In the establishment of the Miami District, AAF Personnel Distribution Command, Miami Beach, Florida, it was the desire of the Commanding General, AAF, that Army Air Forces personnel such as you, recovered from Japanese prison camps and returned from overseas, after a period of rest at their homes, be received at this installation for a continued period of relaxation and recuperation.

Here an effort is made to accomplish the assigned mission without the traditional atmosphere of a normal military post. The facilities and comfort provided for your enjoyment are costly, the recognition of a generous and appreciative nation for the meritorious services rendered by you. No doubt there will be publicity in the local and national press in regard to your stay at Miami. This, combined with the fact that you are former Japanese Prisoners of War, will cause people to be especially observant of your actions in Miami. You will appreciate, therefore, the importance, in your deportment and in the wearing of the uniform, of upholding the highest standards of the Air Corps on this vacation trip as you upheld the highest standards of combat in the Pacific. Only the memory of those who have given their lives for the cause for which we all fought stands higher in the affection of your nation than do you who continue to wear the AAF uniform.

With the above concepts in mind, it is with a sincere interest in your future welfare that I take this manner of welcoming you to this well earned holiday as the guest of the Army Air Forces.

Cordially,

H. R. HARMON
 Major General, USA
 Commanding

(Asgd Camp Goodwin, Ark, PP 21 30 51, Camp Goodwin, AR, 20 Feb 46)
Present TDY address: 406 Bardick St, Stuttgart, AR
Sgt Ray F. Hopper, 14036552, AC Project "J" Reporting date: 27 Apr 46
(Asgd Ft Lewis, Wash, PP 2 30 42, Ft Lewis, Wash, 10 Feb 46)
Present TDY address: Box 33, Harlan, Ga
Sgt John G. Graham, 14036552, AC Project "J" Reporting date: 20 Apr 46
(Asgd Greensboro, NC, PP 7 30 38, Ft Ingg, NC, 7 Feb 46)
Present TDY address: 335 Fairplay St, Seneca, SC.)
Sgt Clinton H. Whiting, 7003409, AC Project "J" Reporting date: 29 Apr 46
(Asgd Camp Shelby, Miss, PP 20 30 51, Camp Shelby, Miss, 20 Feb 46)

R E S T R I C T E D

HEADQUARTERS
ARMY AIR FORCES PERSONNEL DISTRIBUTION COMMAND
Louisville 3, Kentucky

*Cpl E. ...
Ri ... 13 ...
2PA
6/0 PM*

PP Per paragraph
SMOP So much of paragraph
TCENT Transportation O will furnish the necessary transportation
HRDH Having reported for dy at this hq
AAFERS Army Air Forces Redistribution Station
VOCG Confirming verbal orders of the Commanding General
For other symbols and abbreviations, see AR 850-150, 18 Sep 44

SPECIAL ORDERS) 27 March 1946

NO 61) E X T R A C T

* * *

2. The fol named EI, asgd stas indicated, at present on TDY for rehabilitation recuperation, and recovery at the addresses shown, WP from their TDY home addresses to Miami Bch, Fla at such time as will enable them to arrive thereat on the dates specified, reporting upon arrival to the CO 1020th AAF Base Unit, Thomson-McKinnon, 2809 Collins Ave, on TDY for period of approximately fourteen (14) days for purpose of further rehabilitation, recuperation and recovery. Upon compl of this TDY EI WP from Miami Bch, Fla to their original TDY home addresses and at the proper time will comply w/the par and SO shown below their names.

Govt messing and housing facilities will be provided at Miami Bch, Fla. In accordance w/AR 35-4810 the FD, Miami Bch, Fla will pay each EI monetary alws in lieu of subs a/r \$1.00 per meal for number of meals indicated (journey going and returning). Payment of 3¢ per mile auth for any portion of journey when transportation is not furnished by the Govt.

Tvl by rail and/or privately owned conveyance is auth. The Transportation Corps will furnish the necessary transportation upon request.

Tvl by commercial acft and/or mil acft is auth those names indicated by #. (When commercial acft is used tvl by air is auth under the provisions of par 3b (2) AR 55-120, 26 Apr 43).

TDW 601-1 P 432-02 A 212/60425 3 99-999.
AUTH: AG Ltr 385.6 (17 Aug 45) OB-S-A-SPGAI-II as amended; TWK AFPMP-9A 2663, 20 Sep 45; and TWK AFPLIP-9A 5095, 31 Oct 45.

#T Sgt Leslie L Canfield, 6275251, AC Project "J" Reporting date: 27 Apr 46
(Asgd Camp Chaffee, Ark, PP 21 SO 51, Camp Chaffee, Ark, 20 Feb 46
Present TDY address: 406 Burdick St, Stillwater, Okla).

#S Sgt Ray F Hopper, 19201587, AC Project "R" Reporting date: 28 Apr 46
(Asgd Ft Lewis, Wash, PP 81 SO 42, Ft Lewis, Wash, 11 Feb 46
Present TDY address: Box 30, Marion, Oregon).

#S Sgt John G Graham, 14036532, AC Project "J" Reporting date: 20 Apr 46.
(Asgd Greensboro, NC, PP 7 SO 38, Ft Bragg, NC, 7 Feb 46
Present TDY address: 333 Fairplay St, Seneca, SC.)

#S Sgt Clinton M Whiting, 7000409, AC Project "J" Reporting date: 29 Apr 46
(Asgd Camp Shelby, Miss, PP 28 SO 51, Camp Shelby, Miss, 20 Feb 46
Present TDY address: 930 Marigny St, New Orleans, La).

R E S T R I C T E D

Par 2 SO 61, Hq AAF Personnel Distribution Command, 27 Mar 46 - Contd.

Pvt John L. Crown, 20433816, AC Project "J" Reporting date: 8 May 46
 (Asgd Ft McPherson, Ga, PP 1 SO 43, Ft McPherson, Ga, 12 Feb 46
 Present TDY address: 1683 Banterbury St, Jacksonville, Fla. Four (4) meals)

T Sgt Herbert G. Tyson, 6296897, AC Project "J" Reporting date: 10 May 46
 (Asgd Ft Bliss, Tex, PP 58 SO 49, Ft Bliss, Tex, 18 Feb 46
 Present TDY address: 810 N Kansas St, El Paso, Tex. Twenty (20) meals)

S Sgt Lloyd F. Larson, 6857991, AC Project "J" Reporting date: 1 May 46
 (Asgd Ft MacArthur, Calif, PP 7 SO 74, Ft MacArthur, Calif, 15 Mar 46
 Present TDY address: 416 Hawthorne St, Glendale, Calif. Thirty (30) meals)

Sgt David Rudin, 11010142, AC Project "J" Reporting date: 7 May 46
 (Asgd Ft Devens, Mass, PP 68 SO 43, Ft Devens, Mass, 12 Feb 46
 Present TDY address: 163 Colebrook St, Hartford, Conn. Ten (10) meals)

T Sgt Enos A. Johnson, 6716414, AC Project "J" Reporting date: 5 May 46
 (Asgd Ft Dix, NJ, PP 9 SO 39, Ft Dix, NJ, 8 Feb 46
 Present TDY address: 29 So. Warren St, Trenton, NJ. Eight (8) meals)

S Sgt Irvin L. Abbott, R-77901, AC Project "J" Reporting date: 30 Mar 46
 (Asgd Ft Lewis, Wash, PP 35 SO 63, Ft Lewis, Wash, 4 Mar 46
 Present TDY address: 805 NE 70th Ave, Portland, Oregon. Thirty-six (36) meals).

T Sgt Joseph W. Adamski, 6148580, AC Project "J" Reporting date: 11 Apr 46
 (Asgd Ft Devens, Mass, PP 7 SO 45, Ft Devens, Mass, 14 Feb 46
 Present TDY address: 113 Everett St, Easthampton, Mass. Twelve (12) meals)

Cpl David R. Cruz, 19050407, AC Project "J" Reporting date: 14 Apr 46
 (Asgd Santa Ana, Calif, PP 45 SO 16, Ft Bliss, Tex, 16 Jan 46
 Present TDY address: 1405 Mundy St, El Paso, Tex. Twenty (20) meals)

Sgt Mack D. Morgan, 14027322, AC Project "J" Reporting date: 15 May 46
 (Asgd Ft McPherson, Ga, PP 5 SO 68, Ft McPherson, Ga, 9 Mar 46
 Present TDY address: Route #2, Mayo, Fla. Four (4) meals).

Cpl Erwin Q. Johnson, 14017289, AC Project "J" Reporting date: 13 May 46
 (Asgd Camp Shelby, Miss, PP 15 SO 63, Camp Shelby, Miss, 4 Mar 46
 Present TDY address: 1412 Alvar St, New Orleans, La. Eight (8) meals)

Cpl Dominic R. Ricardo, 33070058, AC Project "J" Reporting date: 15 May 46
 (Asgd Ft Dix, NJ, PP 15 SO 68, Ft Dix, NJ, 9 Mar 46
 Present TDY address: 103 Lincoln Highway, South Langhorne, Penna. Ten (10) meals).

R. J. Erickson

BY COMMAND OF BRIGADIER GENERAL SANDERS:

R J PUGH
 Colonel, AC
 CofS

OFFICIAL:

R J ERICKSON
 Colonel, AGD
 Adjutant General

*Pertains to perm party pers.

DISTRIBUTION: "X"

R E S T R I C T E D

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI)
COUNTY OF (Address)

Johnson Erwin R Cpl 14 017 289 RA
(Last name) (First name) (I) (Grade) (ASN) (Component)

Last permanent organization: 48 Materiel Sqd McKinley Field PI

Present Organization: Athed Unasgd 1473 SCU Camp Shelby, Miss.

Date of Birth: 19 Oct 21 Place of Birth: New Orleans Orleans La.
(City) (County) (State)

Height: 5 ft 10 In Weight: 160 lbs. Eyes: Brown Hair: Brown Complexion: Ruddy

Race: White Marital Status: Single and Age of children: No

Home Address: 1412 Alvar St. New Orleans Orleans La.
(Street and No.) (City) (County) (State)

Person to be notified in case of emergency: John K. Johnson Father

Address: Same

Civilian Occupation: Student

Local Board of Origin: None
(Number) (City) (County) (State)

Enlisted or ~~XXXXXX~~ 17 Sep 40 Barksdale Field, La.
(Date) (Place)

Date and Place of entry into active duty: Same

Prior Service: No Total Years Months Days

Foreign Service: Left U.S. for duty in: ~~APTO~~ on 1 Nov 41
(Theater of Operations) (Date)

Arrived at: Manila on 20 Nov 41 Left: Manila
(Place) (Date) (Place)

For U.S. on: 8 Oct 45 Arrived: Seattle on 28 Oct 45
(Date) (Place) (Date)

Was last paid to include: 31 May 46 PO ~~XXXXXX~~ HN Puckett Camp Shelby, Miss.

AND have received the following Partial Payments since that date: No

I have been AWOL from: No to: incl. since last payment.

I have been in confinement from: No to: incl. since last payment.

I have lost a total of: No days under A. 107 in this enlistment.

The following court: judicial fines have been imposed upon me and have not been collected: No

I have been a: Cpl from 2 Sep 45 and ~~XXXX~~ (have not) been reduced in grade since date of last payment.

(Name) (Address) (Relationship)
 I have authorized a Cl. "B" allotment of 20.00 per month from Jan 42 in favor of
Cecilia Johnson 1412 Alvar St New Orleans La. Mother
 (Name) (Address) (Relationship)
 I have authorized a Cl. "B" Allotment of No per month from _____ for per
 bonds
 I have authorized a Cl. "N" Allotment of 6.67 per month from Jan 42 for 10,000.00
 (Amount)

National Service Life Insurance.
 Remarks Financial No

I have attended the following Army Schools AM School Dallas Texas, 7 Months
 Military Qualifications No
 Campaigns Phil. Defence

Decorations, Service Medals, Citations ATO Rib; AFEO Rib; Good Conduct Medal
Amer Ser. Def Rib; Phil Def. Pres Unit Cit. 2 Clu. Victory Medal 11
 Wounds received in service No

Army Specialty Airplane Mechanic

Section 35 (A) of the Criminal Code (18 U.S.C. 83) makes it a criminal offense punishable by a maximum of 10 years imprisonment, \$1,000 fine, or both to make a false statement or representation to any department or agency of the United States as to any matter within the jurisdiction of any department or agency of the United States.

In the event of overpayment to me on final payment roll, I do hereby agree to promptly reimburse same upon notification from the proper finance officer.

I do solemnly swear that the above answers to the questions propounded to me are true and correct in all respects, to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Erwin R. Johnson
 Erwin R. Johnson
 18th

Sworn and subscribed before me at Camp Shelby, Mississippi, this 18th day of June 1946

UNCAS T. CROCKER 1st Lt. AUS Adj.

I hereby certify that ~~XXXX~~ (only the temporary service record of the above named enlisted men ~~XXXXXX~~ (has) been received at this station.

UNCAS T. CROCKER
 1st Lt. AUS

CLASS OF SERVICE

This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.

WESTERN UNION

1201

SYMBOLS

DL = Day Letter
 NL = Night Letter
 LC = Deferred Cable
 NLT = Cable Night Letter
 Ship Radiogram

W. P. MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

The filing time shown in NSA085 SSB034 ters is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination

NS. LLB032 GOVT NL PD=WUX NEWORLEANS LA 16=

1953 SEP 17 AM 4 04

CPL ERWIN R JOHNSON=1412 ALVAR ST

NRLNS=

V
 LIA

: THIS MESSAGE SENT TO COMMANDING OFFICER 3380 PERSONNEL
 PROCESSING SQ KEESLER AIR FORCE BASE MISS FOR ACTION AND
 INFORMATION TO CPL ERWIN R JOHNSON 14 AF DRAD-3-27703 PAR
 34 SO 173 DIRECTING CPL ERWIN R JOHNSON AF 14 017 289 TO
 REPORT FOR ACTIVE DUTY IS REVOKED=

: COMMANDING GENERAL 14 AIR FORCE ROBINS,
 AIR FORCE BASE GEORGIA 162340Z=..

BY COMMAND OF LEUTENANT GENERAL WHITEHEAD

DOMESTIC SERVICE	
Check the class of service desired; otherwise this message will be sent as a full rate telegram	
FULL RATE TELEGRAM	SERIAL
DAY LETTER	NIGHT LETTER <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

\$
S
E

WESTERN UNION

1207

INTERNATIONAL SERVICE	
Check the class of service desired; otherwise this message will be sent at the full rate	
FULL RATE	DEFERRED
CODE	NIGHT LETTER

W. P. MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

NO. WDS.-CL. OF SVC.	PD. OR COLL.	CASH NO.	CHARGE TO THE ACCOUNT OF	TIME FILED

Send the following message, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to

To Commanding Officer 22 August 1950

Street and No. 3380th Personnel Processing Sq.

Care of or
Apt. No. Keesler AFB Place Biloxi, Miss.

Reference: Special Orders 173 Par 34 Headquarters 14th AF

My present status is 2nd Lieutenant USAFR, AO--1856440, as of
1 June 50. Request the name Cpl. Erwin R. Johnson AF-14017289, be
removed from roster 3510 Plt Tng Wg Randolph AFB, Texas, and above
cited order be amended accordingly. Will report your Hdq
23 August 50, 10:30 AM to confirm this telegram.

Erwin R. Johnson
2nd Lieut. USAFR

Sender's name and address (For reference)

Sender's telephone number

WILLIAM W. JOHNSON
Lt. Col. USAF
Camp Greaser

Continental Air Command

USAF
CERTIFICATE

Be it known that

ERWIN R. JOHNSON

has satisfactorily completed training in

THE COMMUNICATIONS AND OFFICER CANDIDATE SUBJECTS

*as prescribed by the United States Air Force and given at the
Air Force Reserve Officers Training Corps Summer Camp*

at SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE, ILLINOIS

Given at

Scott Air Force Base, Illinois

this 7th *Day of* AUGUST 1949

BY COMMAND OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL WHITEHEAD:

Milton W. Johnson

MILTON W. JOHNSON
Lt. Col., USAF

Camp Commander

Reserve Officers' Training Corps



TULANE UNIVERSITY

(Institution)

New Orleans, La.

(Place)

To all who shall see these presents, greeting:

Know ye, that reposing special trust and confidence in the fidelity and abilities of

ERWIN RAYMOND JOHNSON

I do hereby appoint him a Cadet
Major in the Air Force Unit of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps
to rank as such from the twenty-eighth day of September one thousand nine hundred and forty-nine.

He is therefore carefully and diligently to discharge the duty of Cadet Major
by doing and performing all manner of things pertaining thereto. And he is to observe and follow such orders and
directions from time to time, as he shall receive from those officers set over him, according to the rules and discipline
of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps.

This Commission to continue during the pleasure of the Professor of ^{Air} ~~Military~~ Science and Tactics.

Given under my hand at Tulane University, (Institution)

New Orleans, Louisiana this first day of October (Place)

in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and forty-nine

Official: J. D. Brown

J. D. BROWN, Captain, USAF,
Adjutant.

Frank L. Wood, Jr.

FRANK L. WOOD, JR., Lt. Colonel, USAF
Professor of ~~Military~~ Science and Tactics.
Air

HEADQUARTERS TWELFTH AIR FORCE
BROOKS AIR FORCE BASE, TEXAS

DATE 1 June 1950

SUBJECT: Appointment in the United States Air
Force Reserve under Section 37,
National Defense Act as amended

ASN AO-1856440

TO: Second Lieutenant Erwin Raymond Johnson, USAFR
1412 Alvar Street
New Orleans 17, Louisiana

1. The Secretary of the Air Force has directed me to inform you that by direction of the President you are appointed in the United States Air Force Reserve, Air Force of the United States, effective this date, in the grade and with serial number shown in address above, for a period of five (5) years.

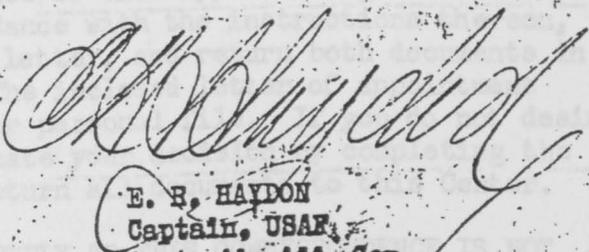
2. There is inclosed herewith a form for oath of office, which you are requested to execute and return promptly to this office. The execution and return of the required oath of office constitute an acceptance of your appointment. No other evidence of acceptance is required. Upon receipt in the Department of the Air Force of the oath of office, properly executed, a commission evidencing your appointment will be sent to you.

3. Prompt action is requested since the regulations require cancellation of the tender of appointment if acceptance is not received within a reasonable length of time.

4. You will not perform the duties of an officer under this appointment unless specifically authorized by competent authority.

BY COMMAND OF MAJOR GENERAL CRAWFORD:

- 2 Incls.
1. Form of oath of office
2. Envelope



E. B. HAYDON
Captain, USAF
Asst. Air Adj. Gen.

Incl 16

HEADQUARTERS
FOURTEENTH AIR FORCE

**AIR RESERVE RECORDS CENTER
CONTINENTAL AIR COMMAND**

3800 YORK STREET

DENVER 5, COLORADO

2 MAY 1955

PERS-A3 a-14 JOHNSON, Erwin R.
AO 1856440

SUBJECT: Indefinite Term Appointment

TO: 2d Lt Erwin R. Johnson, AFRes
9420 South Harvard Boulevard
Los Angeles 47, California

1. Air Force Regulation 36-83 provides for further reappointment opportunity to those Air Force Reserve Officers who previously declined an indefinite term appointment or who failed to respond to the appointment.

2. In view of the foregoing, you are again being tendered an indefinite term appointment as a Reserve Officer of the United States Air Force, in the same grade and with the same service number as your current five year term appointment which terminates on 31 May 1955. This new commission has no liabilities or requirements not involved in your present commission.

3. To signify your acceptance of this appointment, execute the inclosed Oath of Office in accordance with the instructions thereon, complete the indorsement on this letter, and return both documents in the franked envelope provided. The inclosed letter of appointment should be retained by you for your personal file. If you do not desire to accept this appointment, indicate your decision by completing the indorsement on this letter and return all documents to this Center.

4. IN THE EVENT THAT YOUR REPLY TO THIS CORRESPONDENCE IS NOT RECEIVED IN THIS CENTER BY 12 May 1955, IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO CONSIDER YOUR FAILURE TO RESPOND AS EVIDENCE OF YOUR DECLINATION OF THIS APPOINTMENT.

5. If you decline the indefinite term appointment or fail to respond to this correspondence, orders will be published announcing the termination of your Reserve commission and your records will be forwarded to Military Personnel Records Center, 4700 Goodfellow Boulevard, St. Louis, Missouri.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMANDER: _____

Date

Paul A. Newman
PAUL A. NEWMAN
Lt Colonel, USAF
Director, Reserve
Personnel Administration



1 Incl
Ltr of Appt
w/incls

HEADQUARTERS
FOURTEENTH AIR FORCE
Robins Air Force Base, Georgia

4 November 1955

SUBJECT: Appointment as a Reserve Officer in the United States Air Force

TO:

2d Lt Erwin R. Johnson, AO 1 357 140
1711 1/2 Street
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

1. The Secretary of the Air Force has directed me to inform you that, by direction of the President, you are tendered appointment as a Reserve Officer in the United States Air Force, in the grade and with service number shown in address above, for an indefinite term effective on date of acceptance.

2. There is inclosed a form for oath of office, which you are requested to execute and return promptly. The execution and return of the required oath of office constitute an acceptance of your appointment.

3. This appointment is tendered in lieu of your current five (5) year term appointment and in no other way affects your current military status.

BY COMMAND OF MAJOR GENERAL THOMAS:

Harold L. Nadeau
HAROLD L. NADEAU
Colonel, USAF
Air Adjutant General

Retain This Copy For Your File

HEADQUARTERS CONTINENTAL AIR COMMAND
AIR RESERVE RECORDS CENTER

3800 YORK STREET
DENVER 5, COLORADO

PERS-A3 a-114 JOHNSON, Erwin R.
AO 1856440

27 April 1955

SUBJECT: Appointment as a Reserve Officer in the United States
Air Force

TO: 2d Lt Erwin R. Johnson, AFRes
AO 1856440
9420 South Harvard Boulevard
Los Angeles 47, California

1. The Secretary of the Air Force has directed me to inform you that, by direction of the President, you are tendered appointment as a Reserve Officer in the United States Air Force, in the grade and with service number shown in address above, for an indefinite term effective on date of acceptance.

2. There is inclosed a form for Oath of Office which you are requested to execute and return promptly. The execution and return of the required Oath of Office constitute an acceptance of your appointment.

3. This appointment is tendered in lieu of your current five (5) year term appointment and in no other way affects your current military status.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMANDER:

1 Incl
Oath of Office
w/envelope

James T. Quirk
JAMES T. QUIRK
Colonel, USAF
Asst. DCS/P

DD FORM 256 AF

Honorable Discharge



from the Armed Forces of the United States of America

This is to certify that

A/2C EDWIN R. JOHNSON AF 14 017 289 Air Force Reserve, who enlisted 12 September 1949

was Honorably Discharged from the

Air Force of the United States

on the 11th *day of* February 1953 *This certificate is awarded*

as a testimonial of Honest and Faithful Service

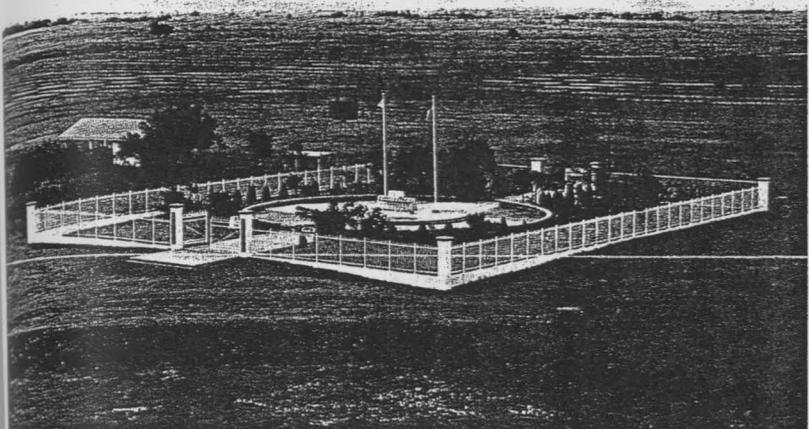
Robert S. Brown

ROBERT S BROWN
MAJOR USAF

The Cabanatuan Prisoner of War Memorial is located in Central Luzon, Philippine Islands, at the site of the infamous Cabanatuan prisoner of war camp. Here, nearly 3,000 American servicemen—veterans of Bataan, Corregidor, and other fiercely contested areas throughout the Philippine archipelago—died of disease, starvation, execution, and other brutality and neglect at the hands of their captors. This was the greatest such loss our nation has ever sustained in any of our foreign wars.

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

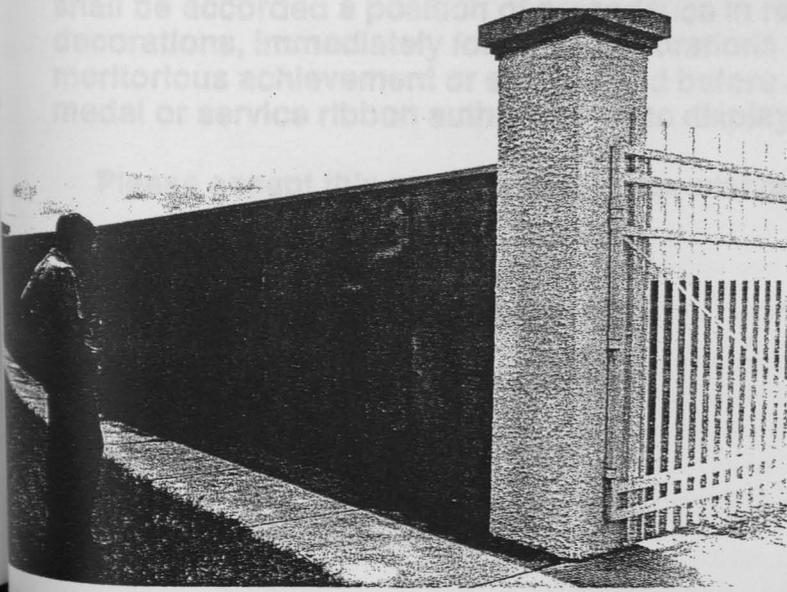
An overview of the Cabanatuan Prisoner of War Memorial.



The Memorial's front entry with the national flags of the Philippines and the United States.



Eastern section of the "Wall of Honor" with names of Cabanatuan's POW dead engraved on its marble panels.



E. C. Aguilar, Jr.
 Secretary of the Air Force



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON 20330

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

MEMORANDUM FOR RECIPIENTS OF THE PRISONER OF WAR MEDAL

In accordance with your request, it is a pleasure to forward the enclosed Prisoner of War Medal.

This medal was authorized by Congress for any person who served honorably as a prisoner of war after April 5, 1917. It is estimated that 142,000 United States Service members were held as prisoners in World War I, World War II, the Korean Conflict, and the Vietnam Conflict. The medal recognizes the special service prisoners of war gave to their country and the suffering and anguish they endured while incarcerated.

The United States Army's Institute of Heraldry was tasked to design the medal. Designs were solicited from the military Services, veterans associations, and private citizens. Over 300 proposals were submitted. A Joint Service Panel reviewed all of the proposals and selected the design submitted by Mr. Jay C. Morris, a civilian employee of the Department of the Army.

On the front of the medal is an eagle, symbol of the United States and the American spirit. Although surrounded by barbed wire and bayonet points, it stands with pride and dignity, continually on the alert for the opportunity to obtain freedom, symbolizing the hope that upholds the spirit of the prisoner of war. On the reverse, below the words "Awarded to," is space where the recipient or next of kin may engrave the prisoner of war's name. Below it is an inscription naming the purpose of the award, "For honorable service while a prisoner of war." The shield is from the coat of arms of the United States of America.

The public law authorizing the Prisoner of War Medal specifies that the medal shall be accorded a position of precedence in relation to other awards and decorations, immediately following decorations awarded for individual heroism, meritorious achievement or service, and before any other service medal, campaign medal or service ribbon authorized to be displayed.

Please accept this medal with my best wishes.

E. C. Aldridge, Jr.
Secretary of the Air Force

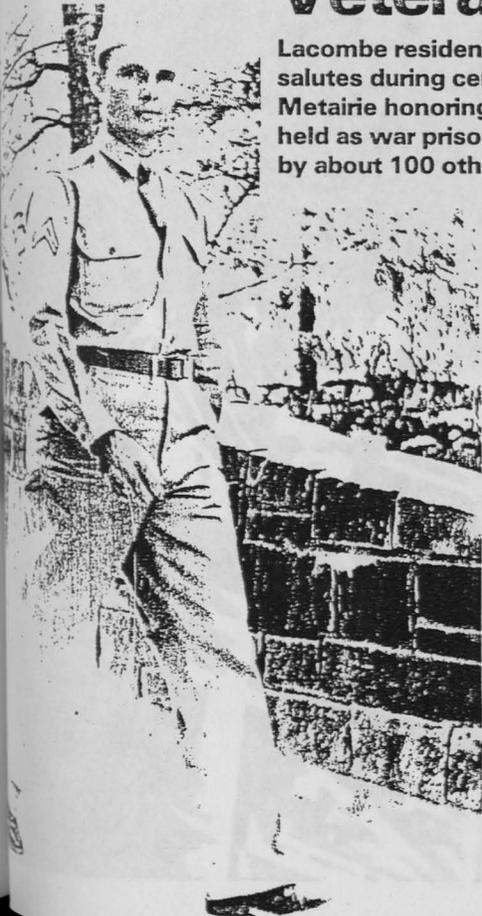
1 Atch
Prisoner of War Medal



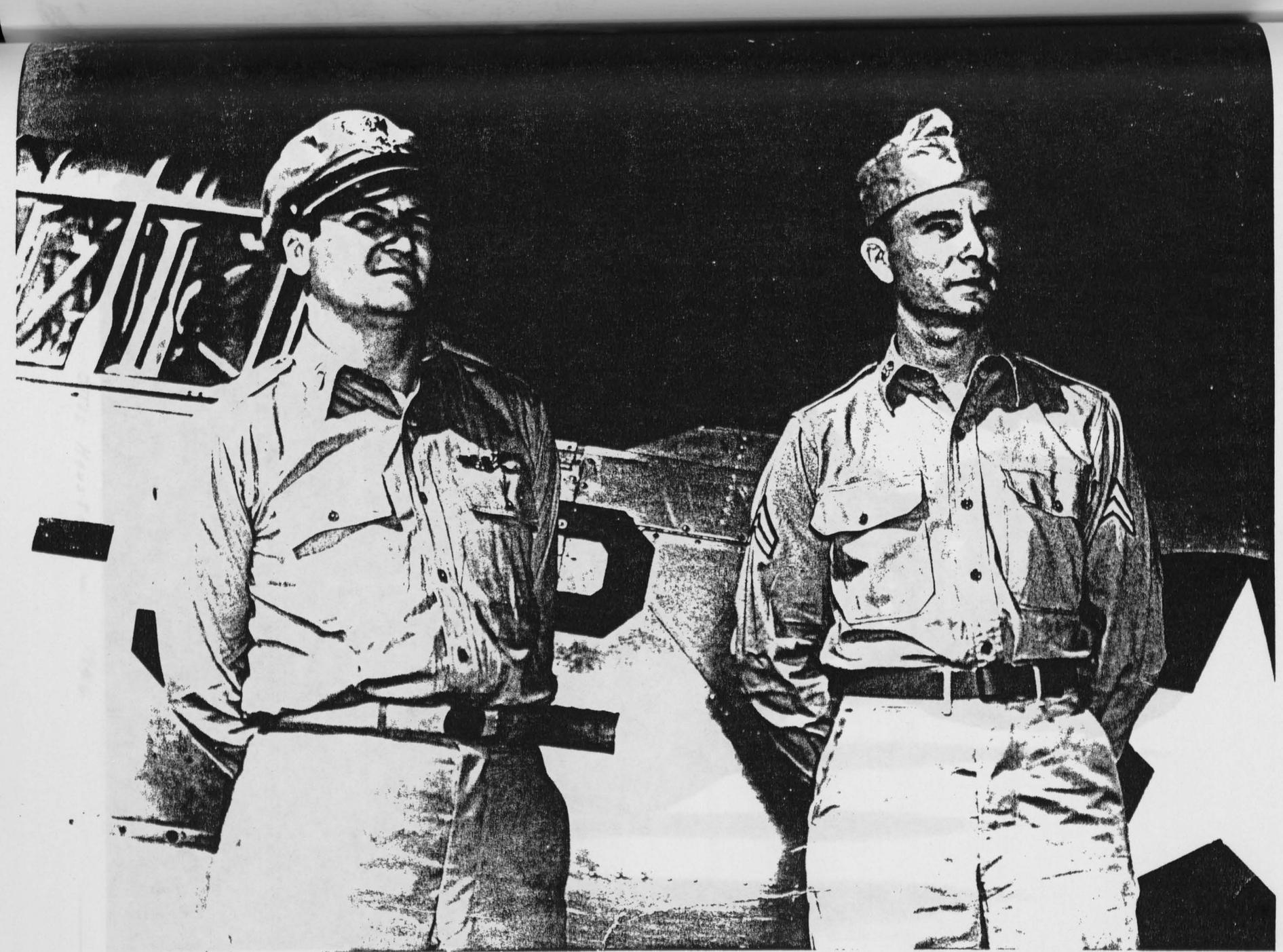
Veterans honored

Lacombe resident Erwin Johnson, a World War II prisoner of war, salutes during ceremonies Saturday at Garden of Memories in Metairie honoring American military men and women who were held as war prisoners or are missing in action. Johnson was joined by about 100 others who paid tribute to veterans.

STAFF PHOTO BY ROBERT LEVINS



Left, Lacombe resident Erwin R. Johnson as he looked in June 1941, and right, Johnson as he looks today.





Erwin Johnson

Ottis Houston - 1946

Horror never stops for Bataan veterans

BY NYLA HUTCHESON

Horror is still vivid, 42 years after the Bataan Death March began. For three local men — two of the infamous march survivors who never surrendered to the Japanese — time has eased the telling of their tales of deprivation and death.

Saturday, Erwin R. Johnson of New Orleans, George V. Marquez of Harahan and Gaston Rabalais of Metairie joined 16 other veterans at Keesler Air Base, Miss.

They received Bronze Star medals for heroism during the months of 1942 when the Philippines, defended by a few and ill-equipped Americans and Filipinos, were falling under onslaught of 200,000 seasoned Japanese troops.

Today, all three are married and have children. Rabalais is a carpenter, while Johnson is an engineer with the Dock Board. Marquez also worked at

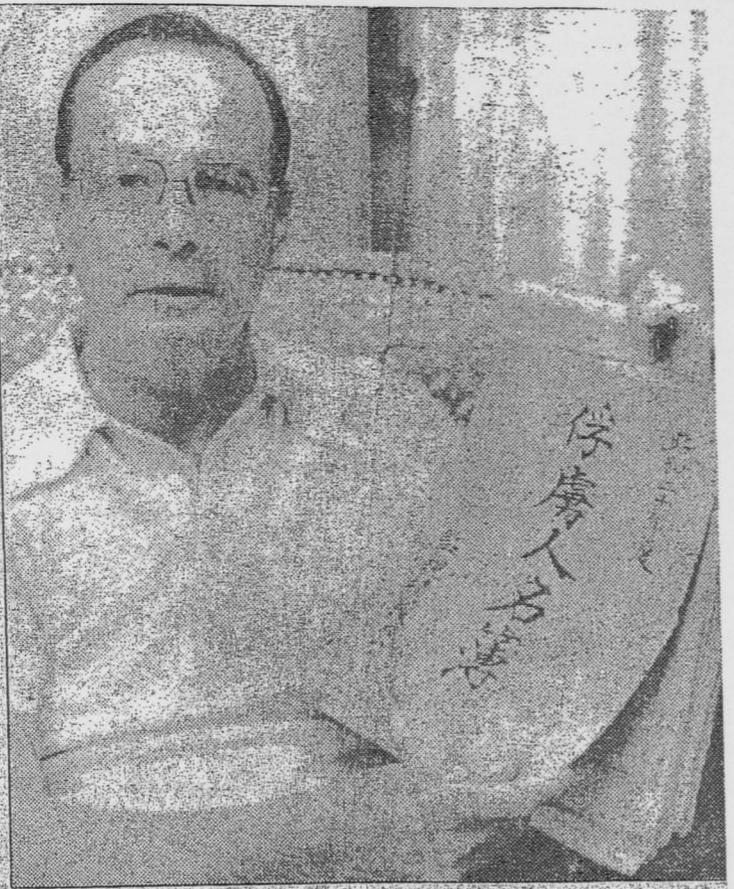
the Dock Board until his retirement.

But on Nov. 20, 1941, Johnson was a 19-year-old private in the Army Air Corps. Rabalais, 23, was a sergeant, and Marquez, 20, was a staff sergeant. That was the day their 27th Bomb Group arrived in Manila on the Philippine island of Luzon as part of a U.S. military buildup in the Pacific.

A ship carrying the planes and equipment they were trained to service was supposed to be right behind them. But on Dec. 7 — it was Dec. 8 across the International Date Line in the Philippines — planes marked with Japan's Rising Sun bombed Pearl Harbor.

"Before daylight the next day, they hit us with raids," Marquez said. "It was sickening to see the hopelessness of the situation. Nobody was even shooting at them."

The 27th's equipment was diverted to Australia, and war-

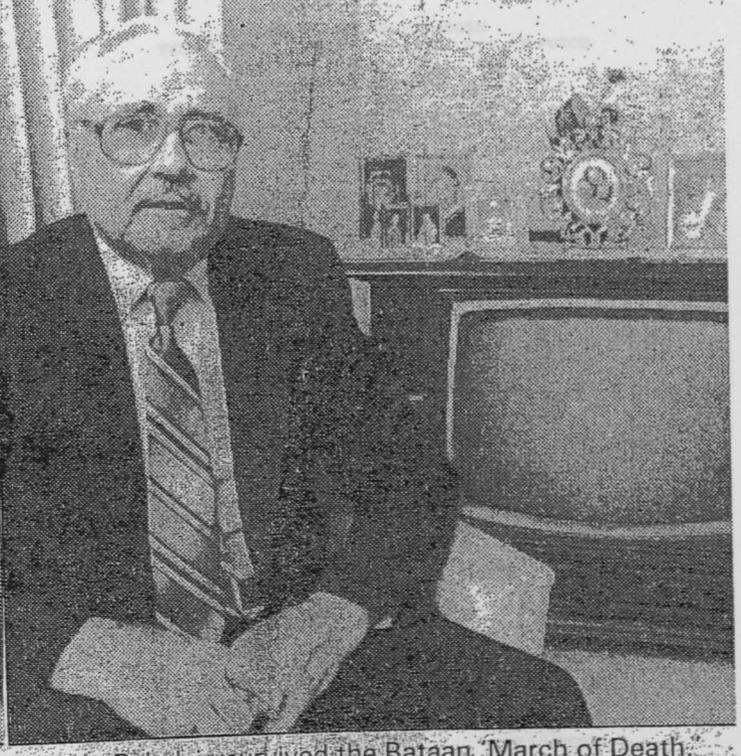


Erwin R. Johnson shows Japanese list of U.S. P.O.W.'s
STAFF PHOTO BY BRYAN S. BERTE

See BATAAN, A-4



George Marquez was never captured by the Japanese



Gaston Rabalais survived the Bataan March of Death

HAPPY

XMAS

AND A

HAPPY 1943

MUKDEN WAR
PRISONERS
CAMP



FROM OUR LEADERS

WHILE WISHING EVERYONE "ALL THE BEST" THIS CHRISTMAS, I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO SAY "DON'T LOOK BACK OR DWELL ON THE PRESENT: LOOK FORWARD."

WHETHER WE HAIL FROM THE UNITED STATES, AUSTRALIA, OR THE BRITISH ISLES WE ALL HAVE HOMES AND LOVED ONES WAITING FOR US, AND WHILE WE ARE HERE IN MANCHURIA WE OUGHT TO BE LOOKING FORWARD AND PLANNING HOW WE ARE GOING TO PICK UP THE REINS AGAIN, FOR WE ALL HOPE THAT 1943 WILL BRING PEACE TO THE WORLD AGAIN.

THE WAR HAS DUG A DITCH ACROSS OUR LIVES WHICH CAN NEVER BE BRIDGED, BUT WHILE WE ARE STRUGGLING THROUGH THE MUD, LET US ALL LOOK FORWARD TO THE DAY WHEN WE CLIMB THE FAR BANK.

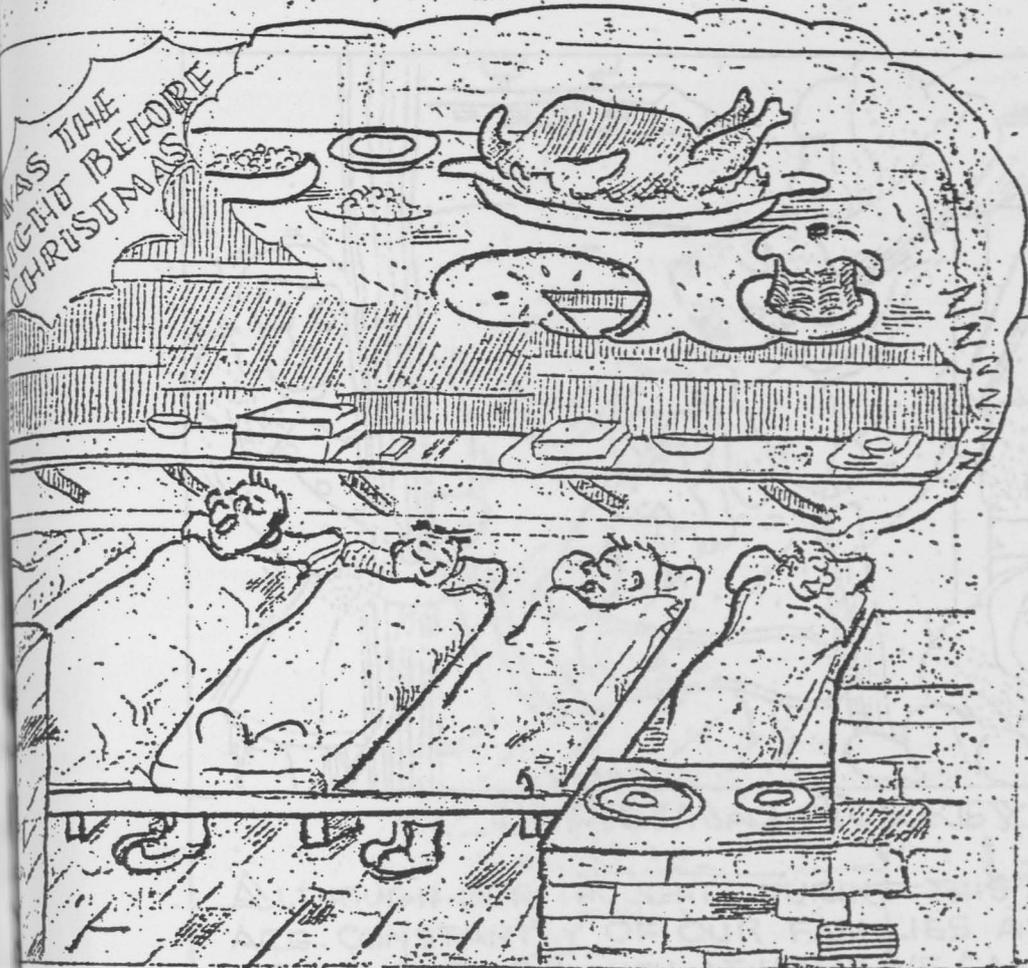
TRY TO KEEP A CHEERFUL OUTLOOK ON LIFE, FOR TROUBLES PASS QUICKLY AND ARE SOON FORGOTTEN, WHILE THE GOOD THINGS IN LIFE LINGER LONG IN OUR MEMORIES. PARTICULARLY IN CASE OF SICKNESS, REMEMBER THAT YOUR WILL TO WIN THROUGH IS MORE THAN HALF THE BATTLE AGAINST DISEASE. THE FOLKS AT HOME WANT YOU BACK AND YOU'VE GOT TO DO YOUR PART TO SEE THAT YOU GET BACK TO THEM AS FIT AS POSSIBLE.

MAY NEXT CHRISTMAS BE IN THE OLD FAMILIAR SURROUNDINGS FOR EVERYONE!

Robert D. Gaty
MAJOR, BRITISH LEADER

WITH THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF CHRIST'S BIRTH, THE EXPRESSION "PEACE ON EARTH, GOOD WILL TOWARD MEN" WAS FIRST USED. THIS ALONE WAS CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION IN THOSE DAYS BECAUSE IT MEANT THAT BETTER TIMES WERE TO COME. HOWEVER SHORT WE MAY BE THIS CHRISTMAS FOR REASONS TO CELEBRATE, WE STILL HAVE THAT SAME ASSURANCE -- IT IS OUR 'STAR IN THE EAST' TO FOLLOW AND RELY UPON.

S. H. Hankins
MAJOR, U.S.A. AM. LEADER

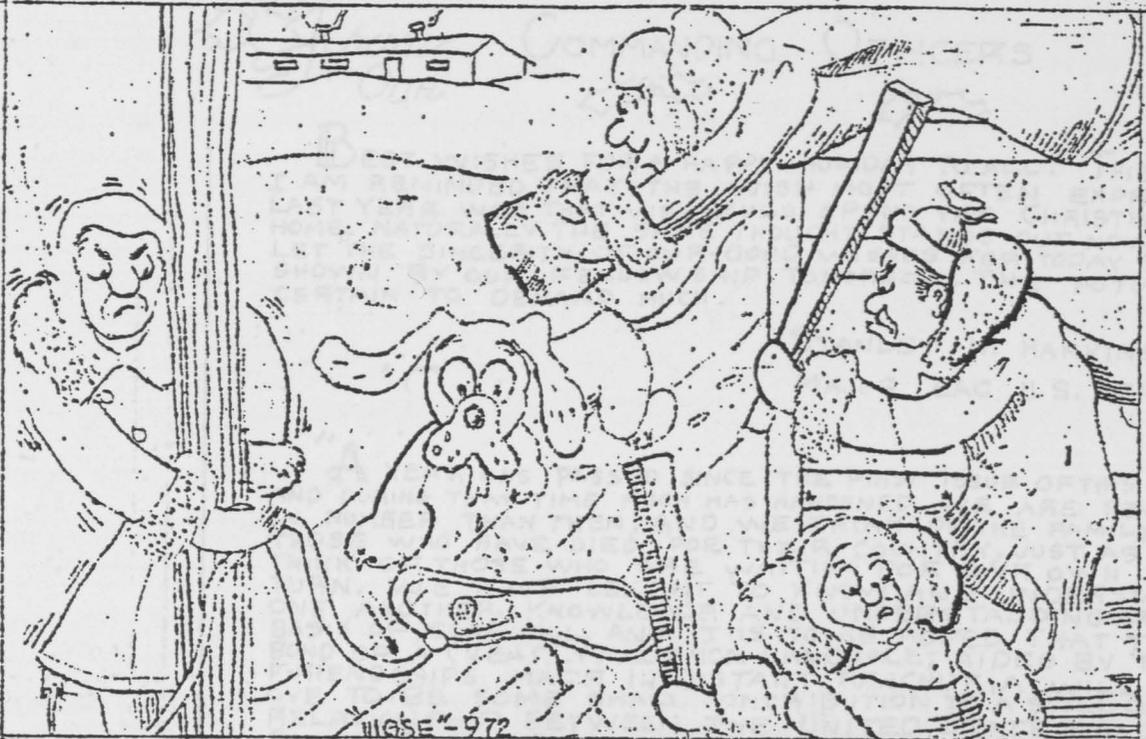


CHRISTMAS EVE 1942

THE NIGHT BEFORE XMAS
 ALL THRU' THE HOUSE
 NO ONE CREATURE STIRRED
 AS A LEAN LONELY MOUSE
 BOBBLED WITH CARE
 STALE CRUST OF BREAD
 SOME SLEEPY SOLDIER
 LEFT ON THE BED.
 CLOTHES WERE ARRANGED
 ON THE SHELF BOARD WITH CARE
 FOR THE BOYS & THE BOYLS, AND
 THE THOUGHTS OF THE MEN
 WERE NOT ON THE DISHES
 THE GOOD OLD HOME COOKIN'
 WAS THEIR UPPERMOST WISHES
 THE GOLDEN BROWN TURKEY
 WITH RICH FLAVORED STUFFING
 AND CELERY AND SPUDS

WE'D ALL SOON BE PUFFING
 TO GET DOWN THE CRANBERRIES
 THE OLIVES AND PICKLES;
 THE SALADS AND SAUCES
 OUR PALATES TO TICKLE
 SO DREAM AWAY SOLDIER
 AND FORGET YOUR CARE
 TOMORROW THE BARLEY
 AND SOUP WILL BE THERE
 CORN MUSH FOR OUR BREAKFAST
 POTATOES FOR LUNCH
 WITH RICH TIKI TIKI
 AND BREAD TOAST TO CRUNCH
 DON'T MOAN FOR THE GOODBIES
 AND ALL THE THINGS NICE
 AT LEAST WHAT WE HAVE NOW
 BEATS LUGAO AND RICE
 OUR NEW RESOLUTION
 (Continued on Last Page)





CHRISTMAS TURKEY 1942

ALTHOUGH OUR THOUGHTS, DURING THIS HOLIDAY SEASON ARE CONSTANTLY OF OUR FAMILIES AND LOVED ONES WE LONG TO BE WITH AT HOME, WE CANNOT FORGET THE CONSIDERATION THAT HAS BEEN SHOWN US IN THIS ALIEN LAND. ACCORDINGLY, WE TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS THE SINCERE APPRECIATION EACH MAN FEELS FOR THE KINDNESS EXTENDED AND THE INDUSTRIOUS EFFORTS THAT HAVE BEEN MADE TO BENEFIT OUR WELFARE BY COL. MATSUKA AND THE OFFICERS AND MEN OF HIS COMMAND AS WELL AS THE OFFICIALS OF THE MANCHURIAN MACHINE TOOL Co. THE CONSISTENT IMPROVEMENT IN OUR LIVING CONDITIONS IS BUT A FORERUNNER OF BETTER THINGS TO COME AND WE CAN ENTER INTO THE NEW YEAR WITH FRESH HOPES AND HIGH SPIRITS. ALL TOGETHER WE JOIN IN WISHING OUR BENEFACTORS "TANOSHII CHRISTMAS AND SHINNEN OMEDETŌ" (MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR)

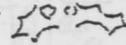
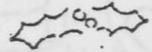
Continued From Page 3

IS NO MORE TO ROAM
AND HOPE BY NEXT CHRISTMAS
WE ALL WILL BE HOME!





COMMANDING OFFICERS



BEST WISHES FOR A HAPPY HOLIDAY TO ALL. THIS YEAR I AM REMINDED THAT THE WISH MOST OFTEN EXPRESSED LAST YEAR WAS THAT WE WOULD SPEND THIS CHRISTMAS AT HOME. NATURALLY THE SAME THOUGHT STANDS OUT NOW. SO LET THE SINCERITY OF OUR GOOD WISHES FOR TODAY BE SHOWN BY OUR FELLOWSHIP TOMORROW. THE FUTURE IS CERTAIN TO DEMAND MUCH.

STANLEY H. HANKINS
MAJOR CAC U.S. ARMY

"A YEAR HAS PASSED SINCE THE FIRST ISSUE OF THIS PAPER, AND DURING THAT TIME MUCH HAS HAPPENED, WE ARE FEWER IN NUMBER THAN THEN, AND WE THINK OF THE FAMILIES OF THOSE WHO HAVE DIED FOR THEIR COUNTRY, JUST AS WE THINK OF THOSE WHO ARE WAITING FOR OUR OWN RETURN. WE HAVE LEARNED TO KNOW AND UNDERSTAND ONE ANOTHER. KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING ARE THE BASIS OF GOOD WILL, AND IT IS TO BE HOPED THAT THE BOND OF A (NEARLY) COMMON LANGUAGE, AIDED BY THE FRIENDSHIPS MADE IN DISTANT MENCHURIA, WILL PROVE TO BE SOME SMALL CONTRIBUTION TO A STILL CLOSER RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE BRITISH EMPIRE."

ROBERT PEATY
MAJ R.A.O.C.

A WORD OF THANKS AS A TOKEN OF OUR APPRECIATION IS DUE LT. ANDO, OUR NEW SUPERINTENDENT OFFICER, FOR HIS PERMISSION TO PUBLISH THIS PAPER AND FOR OTHER FAVOR'S ACCOMPLISHED SINCE HIS COMING HERE. TO ALL APPEARANCES HE INTENDS TO GIVE US FAIR TREATMENT AND A "SQUARE DEAL" ALL AROUND. ON ONE SIDE WE CAN SHOW OUR APPRECIATION BY OBSERVING CAMP REGULATIONS AND AVOIDING TROUBLE BY NOT CAUSING ANY THROUGHOUT THE COMING NEW YEAR.



THE WORSHIP MOST ACCEPTABLE TO GOD, COMES FROM A THANKFUL AND CHEERFUL HEART.

- PLUTARCH

A SMILE IS THE WHISPER OF A LAUGH.

- CHILDS DEFINITION



PROBABLE LOSSES

- 2 MEDIUM BOWLS LOST.
- 3 LARGE BOWLS SLIGHTLY DAMAGED.
- 1 BOWL CARRIER SLIGHTLY DAMAGED
(BITCHING BADLY)

IN REVIEW

TABEMONO

THE LAST YEAR HASN'T BEEN SAD, JUST LOOK AT THE PROGRESS OURS ARE MAKING. LIGHT DUTY WALL HAS BEEN PROMOTED TO "FULL CITY" AND "SICK CALL" CRAWFORD HAS BEEN KNOWN TO SMILE WHEN HE WORKS. "MUCOUS" MORAN IS GETTING BUCKS ON A SOLID BASIS, WHEN HE MEETS THEM, THESE DAYS. "GOOD DEAL" WALL IS EXISTING ON A MEASLEY 80% PROFIT, AND JIMMIE THE "WOP" HASN'T LOST AN OUNCE OR AN ARGUMENT.

THE RUMOR THAT "YARDBIRD" DOWNING ATE ELEVEN BUNS ON HIS BIRTHDAY RECENTLY REMAINS UNCONFIRMED. HE HASN'T BEEN ABLE TO TALK SINCE.

"LIGHTNING" QUICK SEEMS TO HAVE COPPED THE RECORD FOR CORN MEAL MUNCH WITH SOMETHING LIKE SIX BOWLS AT ONE SITTING.

Glimpses of a Phil American on his first state-side liberty.

HANDLE BARS 'OWARI

DUE TO THE REGULATION AGAINST PERSONAL USE OF ROPE, THE HERBST FOUND INSPIRATION TO THE HIRSUITE ADORNMENT ON HIS BEER LIZ, WHICH HAD GROWN UNMANNED FOR 595 DAYS.

"SAY, WAITER, WHERE DO SECONDS START TODAY?"

LEANING OVER TO A NEAR-BY SMOKER, "SAY, BUDDY, HOW'S TO SAVE ME THE ASHES?"

TO HIS FAVORITE BARTENDER - "I'LL GIVE YOU A YEN AND A BUNT TOMORROW MORNING FOR A SHORT RATION OF BEER NOW."

"NOTE:"

"GOD GAVE US REMEMBRANCE SO WE MIGHT HAVE ROSES IN DECEMBER."

TO THE FACTORY OFFICIALS WHO HAVE SO KINDLY SUPPLIED MATERIALS AND FACILITIES FOR MAKING THIS PAPER, WE EXTEND SINCERE THANKS.

Edwin W. Edwards



CHRISTMAS II IN HOTEN

IT WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE XMAS
AND ALL THROUGH THE HOUSE
LITTLE CREATURES WERE STIRRING,
EACH ONE WAS A LOUSE.
ALL THE MEN WERE A SLEEDING
OR WE MIGHT SAY "ALMOST",
EXCEPT FOR THE NIGHT GUARDS
WHO LEANED ON THEIR POSTS.

NO STOCKINGS WERE HUNG
BY THE PETCHKAS WITH CARE
IN THE HOPE THAT ST. NICHOLAS
SOON WOULD BE THERE,
FOR OLD SANTA WAS BUSY,
SO FAR, FAR AWAY,
THEY WERE SURE THAT HE
WOULDN'T BE WITH THEM
THAT DAY.

BUT THE GRIPES AND THE HOLLERS
WERE CERTAINLY FEW,
FOR TOMORROW'S A DINNER
WITH 'TAKUSAN NIKKU',
AND DOWN AT THE 'KAISHA'
THERE'S A SPECIAL TREAT,
A PROGRAM AND SINGING
AND GOODIES TO EAT.

NOW WE'VE COME FAR TOGETHER
THERE'S FAR TO GO YET.
AND WHEN WE GET HOME AGAIN
THERE'S LOTS TO FORGET.
SO 'KYOTSKI' AND 'BANGO'
AND KEEP IN THE RACE,
FOR THE CHANCES ARE
NEXT YEAR
WE'LL BE GONE FROM THIS PLACE.

SECOND ISSUE OF HOTEN WAS PRISONERS PAPER. PUBLISHED DEC.
24, 1943 — SUBSCRIPTION RATES — 1 COPY PER YEAR, 1 BUN
AND 2 FAGS LT. W.D. THOMPSON EDITOR, STAFF ARTISTS { MOSELEY
PHILLIPS
PINSON

State of Louisiana

Edwin W. Edwards
Governor

Proclamation

WHEREAS, August 15, 1995 marked the 50th Anniversary of the end of the war with Japan; and

WHEREAS, Mukden, Manchuria was the location of a Japanese POW camp holding hundreds of American POW's from the Battles of Bataan and Corregidor; and

WHEREAS, the end of the war brought liberation to all American prisoners of war. The Mukden POW Camp is unique in that the POW's were liberated by the Russian Army; and

WHEREAS, all American POW's were subjected to the most inhuman treatment ever experienced by American military personnel; and

WHEREAS, in remembrance of the 50th Anniversary of their liberation, all citizens of Louisiana are urged to stand up and pay tribute to the defenders of Bataan and Corregidor. We should admire their courage and the sacrifices they made in protection of our country. God bless them for they gave their all in the defense of America.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, EDWIN W. EDWARDS, Governor of the State of Louisiana, do hereby proclaim September 30, 1995, as

**AMERICAN EX-POW
MUKDEN, MANCHURIA PRISON
50TH ANNIVERSARY LIBERATION REUNION DAY**

in the State of Louisiana.



Attest By
The Governor

Joseph Keithen
Secretary of State

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set
my hand officially and caused to be affixed the
Great Seal of the State of Louisiana, at the
Capitol in the City of Baton Rouge, on this
the 29TH day of SEPTEMBER
A.D., 1995

Edwin Edwards
Governor of Louisiana



KEESLER TECHNICAL TRAINING CENTER
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER
KEESLER AIR FORCE BASE, MISSISSIPPI 39534

29 NOV 1984

Private Erwin R. Johnson
2203 Napoleon Avenue
New Orleans LA 70115

Dear Private Johnson

I was extremely honored and proud to have presented you with your Bronze Star Medal at our most recent Center Parade. Your presentation highlighted the day's activities.

I've enclosed a photo of your presentation and a copy of our base newspaper which published several articles on your heroic exploits.

You will always be remembered as one who gave your all to your country. I'm honored to have recognized you as a truly outstanding veteran and for the opportunity to thank you for all you have done.

Sincerely

THOMAS J. HICKEY, Major General, USAF
Commander