P E A R T ' S J O U R N A L

by

Cecil Jesse Peart

USN

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PEART'S JOURNAL

Prepared from notes kept on a Prisoner of War Odyssey from Bilibid Prison, Manila, P.I., to Manchukuo, via the Prison Ship S.S. ORYOKU MARU, by-

Cecil J. Peart, a Pharmacist's Mate of
the United States Navy

Presented by the Author, to the Hospital Corps Archives, for the records and papers of the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, relating to Bilibid Prison and Prisoners of War.

Cecil J. Peart
Chief Pharmacist's Mate
United States Navy

Washington, D.C.

PEART'S JOURNAL

Archivist's Memorandum

The story recounted in the following pages is one of the rare treasures to come from the prison camps. Peart has set down in matter of fact sentences the things which he saw, did and experienced. He called a spade a spade. All through the narrative the one thing which he wrote about was "chow" - and after "chow" came the terrible afflictions of the sick. When a shipmate, or an officer, used skulduggery to get more "chow" to line his own belly, Peart wrote about it. When he himself scraped the swill pails for a few extra grains of rice, he jotted it down.

The journal shows some evidence of editing, as he translated his hieroglyphic notes into words and phrases. Here and there, as he recalled items he had not originally jotted into the notebooks, he doubtless made a few additions to the original notes.

By processing his notes, kept through all his suffering and starvation, into a narrative history of his experiences, he has made an outstanding and unique contribution to the Hospital Corps Archives.

BEN F. DIXON, LT. HC USN
Archivist

DEATHS RECORDED BY CECIL PEART IN HIS JOURNAL:

The following list is extracted from the text of the journal because of definite information given of the deaths of the thirteen prisoners of war mentioned. Twelve of the thirteen were members of the Medical Department.

NAME		DATE OF DEATH	PAGE OF JOURNAL
1. BOONE, James Daniel,	Lt-C MC USN	1-23-45	16
2. DUNN, William Dwight	PhM3c USN	1-19-45	15
3. EDWARDS, George Dudley	PhM2c USN	1-30-45	19
4. GOMES, Abel Oliver	CPhM USN	1-23-45	16
5. HASTINGS, Edward Warren	CPhM USN	1-26-45	17
6. LAMBERT, Gordon Kenneth	Lt-C MC USN	1-20-45	15
7. MacDOUGALL, Daniel	PhM1c USN	1-21-45	15
8. MORGAN, Jack Payne	PhM1c USN	2- 8-45 (At Moji Japan)	22
9. SANDERS, Fred Richard	PhM3c USN	1-13-45	12
10. WADE, Ernest Marion	Lt-C MC USN	1-22-45	16
11. WELCH, Cecil Charles	Lt-C MC USN	1-25/6-45 "during the night"	17
12. WRIGHT, Edgar Baird	PhM1c USN	1-20-45	15

*****

13. KELSEY, Jack (Not otherwise identified) 3-15-45 (At Moji) 31

CC:

13 copies to BuPers, POW Records.
13 copies to BuMed, Physical Records.

Ben F. Dixon

BEN F. DIXON, LT MC USN
Hospital Corps Archives

CECIL J. PEART'S JOURNAL

BILIBID PRISON TO MANCHUKUO

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Ho-ten, Manchoukuo,

Friday, 13 July 1945

This date I start rewriting the account, not exactly a diary, of our unfortunate draft's trip from the Philippines to Japan, which took place between December 13 and January 31st - may there never be another trip so horrible.

I didn't begin the writing of this account with the beginning of the trip, but waited until Fred Sanders urged me to keep an account of it while we were tied up to a pier in Takao, Formosa. Our intimate friendship was a great comfort during those awfully long, unoccupied days when hunger was driving many men mad and all were continually painting pictures of home-cooked meals and soda fountain treats. Like the others, Fred and I discussed these subjects also, and to an abnormal extent, but afterwards we would always laugh at ourselves and bolster up one another's spirits with talk of what we would do when it was all over. As I look back now on those days, I deeply regret Fred and I didn't talk of more important things than were discussed; still, regretting is a vain occupation, and we did the best we could with what we had. Who could have thought then that one of us was so soon to be dead and the other left adrift with only memories to cherish out of what formed the rarest of friendships.

December 13th, 1944

This should be the last Japan draft to leave the Philippines - if we get away. Though some preparations for our departure have been under way for a month or more, only last night were we officially informed that we'd be leaving Bilibid this morning. As we worked all night, collecting our possessions, and eating up what little extra food we had, such as mango beans and sugar, we kept hoping the Americans would raid this morning and cause our draft to be cancelled. No such luck, and so by noon, out of Bilibid's gates marched some 1619 of us. The march through Manila's outskirts to Pier 7 was work for most of us, struggling along under weighty packs filled with what we possessed of food, clothing, and personal items. Of course I carried my albums, 15th Century Prayer Book, and a collection of note books containing lists of books, excerpts from books, verse (my own and otherwise), etc. Fred carried little else than a few clothes and half our food supplies. He left a letter to Nellie, as well as the mail he'd received from her, in the hands of Bill Horn, an Army Corpsman, remaining in Bilibid.

Approaching Pier 7, all of us were anxious and glad to see the results of our Navy Bomber raids. Many ships rested on the bay's bottom, and no few of them were warships, which pleased us immensely. We stood lined up on the pier most of the afternoon while Japanese civilians, women and children and merchant marine men, went aboard a nice looking passenger and cargo ship bearing the name Oryoku Maru.

The groups of approximately 300 to which most our Naval Medical Personnel, coming out of Bilibid, were attached, boarded the Jap ship around 1500. After we had settled ourselves, rather crowdedly, in a forward hold of the ship, we were served a mess kit full of steamed rice on which was spread a couple spoonsful of small tasty fish, cooked in a sweetened Soy sauce. Attempts were made to give all water, but actually only a very few sections (of 20 men each) received same.

December 14th

Few, if any, slept much during the night as there wasn't space enough for lying down comfortably. Those who slept best I presume, were those who had sacks of rice to sit on, as we occupied this forward hold along with a considerable cargo of rice, soy beans and I know not what else. We got underway from Manila early in the morning, but not early enough. At least I thought I heard the air raid siren sounding in the Manila City Area before we were out of hearing distance of it. Sure enough, by 0800 we knew our planes were overhead, and eyeing us, by the rapid firing of AA guns from the topside of our prison ship. Obviously the main target most of this day were other ships in our convoy or we'd have been quickly sunk. There were several raids during the day, but our ship continued, though slow, on its course. Of course several were wounded. McCurry, a PhM. was badly hurt in the knee from shrapnel. Dr. Wade and I received little cuts on the head. No telling how many were wounded in other holds. We received two meals of plain steamed rice during the day, but of water, we only received two spoonsful. Sometime during night, the ship evidently stopped long enough to unload most of her women and children cargo.

December 15th

Attacks by U.S. planes resumed this morning at approximately 0700, and continued until 0900, during which time our ship continued on her course. Several near misses evidently convinced those in charge of our ship to make for shore - certainly the near misses were having their effect on us down in the hold with but a single ladder leading out. Every time a dive bomber pointed her nose at us, it seemed her eggs were going to land in our particular laps. What a relief to hear an explosion far enough away to only make the ship tremble a bit and limp on. The Japanese in charge of us, a certain Lt. Tushino, and an interpreter by name Mr. Wada, were conspicuous by their absences during these raids, but finally, as the raids abated, Mr. Wada's freakish head and bust appeared above us at the edge of the hold. In his usual idiotic manner, he urged us to "Hurry! Hurry!". This time, we were to abandon ship, wearing only our trousers with equipment belt carrying only canteen and mess kits.

Abandoning ship no sooner began, than the raiding planes returned and began strafing. Panic seized those who were already up on deck and many simply hurled themselved over the side into the sea. I understand a good many difficulties arose when what life boats remained aboard ship were being let over the side.

Fred and I took our time scrambling up out of our hold. Fred was for hurrying, but I kept urging him to wait for me, and I preferred to linger awhile in the event our planes returned. I had visions of being strafed above deck, whereas some protection existed in the hold.

A few in our hold received shrapnel injuries. McCurry, the PhM who got hit quite badly yesterday in the knee was among them, and they had to be helped up on deck. I had a small piece of shrapnel strike me in the head but did not realize it until Fred withdrew my white hat and showed me a hole in it, as well as a splotch of blood.

Fred and I had no sooner than reached topside, when sure enough, three American planes suddenly appeared threateningly overhead. Fred set the pace at stripping off clothes, unloading what we planned to carry ashore, and jumping overboard. I wasn't too slow following his example. Just before I departed from the deck, I glanced up at the planes, and my departure was hastened by what I saw. One of the planes was beginning to peel off from the formation, and head down toward us. When I emerged from my plunge, all three planes were flying relatively low across the waters of Subic bay, through which most of us prisoners were swimming, heading for the nearest shore. Shore lay about 350 or 400 yards off our port side. Upon arriving topside I had recognized where we were, and it was a strangely comforting feeling to be so near as familiar a land mark as the Olongapo Naval Reservation (at least what once was one of our Reservations).

As quickly as we climbed out ashore, Jap guards rounded us up and led us over to an old tennis court fenced in by boards and chicken wire. It was growing late by the time we had all been accumulated in the tennis court, and so began the checking of our roster to ascertain how many had survived. Nearly 300 were missing; many of them being out of our particular outfit (Navy Medical Department).

No food this date except for the fortunate few who hadn't left the ship in such a hurry that they neglected to roam around on the upper decks looking for something to eat. Several obtained items of food out of the Ship's Stores recognizable as Red Cross Food. This only went to prove what we had already suspicioned, that the Nips were living off our Red Cross Food parcels!

December 16th

Entire day was spent within confines of old tennis court without the least bit of food and little water. Navy dive bombers returned today and strafed local defenses - also finished sinking our ship, ending any hopes I held of getting back on the ship to recover my album and ancient Prayer book. Our planes must have guessed who we were, else why didn't they strafe us who were laying and sitting out on the open concrete deck of the tennis court, with absolutely no protection against them?

Lt. Col. Beecher, 4th Marines, in charge of our draft, asked for food and clothing from Japanese. They stated such requests were being made in Manila area. Late in evening we did receive two bags of rice grain which were to be distributed among us as it was, uncooked, but it was too dark to pass it out tonight.

December 17th

Another day spent under the open sun in confines of tennis court. Japs permitted us to breakfast on one tablespoonful of raw rice again. Burial detail was called out to plant several who had died during the night, Lt. Hogaboom among them. Another spoonful of rice to munch on for evening meal. Limited amount of water obtainable during day. Roll call repeated again this date. Many Pharmacist's mates among the missing - Bjurling, L.C. Compton, "Peso" Jones, Schweich, Darling, Mayberry, Slipsager, and Dr. Nelson are gone.

December 18th

My 29th Birthday. Fred expressed regret he couldn't do as much for me this day as I managed to do for him on 30th July, his 29th.

A few ragged articles, called clothing, received this date from Manila - not near enough to go around. I was given a pair of khaki shorts with the seat practically out of them. These, with the light khaki shirt and a pair of regulation shorts I swam ashore in, made up my wardrobe. Fred was no better, if as well, off. Only a few were fortunate enough to have swam ashore with a complete uniform on. Most were bare-footed and bare-assed.

Today's menu consisted of two spoonsful of raw rice. Water limited as usual.

December 19th

Three spoonsful of rice grains to chew on for breakfast this morning. In the afternoon, Japs finally granted us permission to move from tennis court out to the shade under nearby trees, a thing I understand Lt. Col Beecher has been requesting for the past two days. Evening saw us back in court with three more spoonsful of rice grains served to each person for his supper.

December 20th

Four spoonsful of rice grains served to each at breakfast. Half of draft ordered to stand by for convoy of trucks expected during morning. Approximately 20 trucks arrived at noon and shortly afterwards left with around 35 men to a truck. We that remained behind were curious as to where the other half may be going. Manila?

About six spoonsful of raw rice to chew on this evening, in addition to approximately 1 spoonful of dried fish and a salt issue given to us. This salt a rare treat after all these days of doing without.

December 21st

Four spoonsful rice grain again this morning. Fred and I spent a while this A.M. talking about what we'd do once back in Bilibid. Trucks arrived approximately 1230. We were crowded in, forced to sit down - almost an impossibility - and then began the rough journey inland from Olongapo.

Arrived in San Fernando, Pampanga about 1730 where we were confined inside an old theater. Concrete decks again, slanting this time. Understand other half of draft being held in some local jail.

Issued approximately one third canteen cupful of cooked rice with water and salt tonight before retiring.

December 22nd

All day confined in theater. Plenty of air activity audible to us on the inside. Some claim to have seen our planes enroute to Clark Field. Preparation of food turned over to our group, so we had two fairly decent meals of steamed rice with camotes and some type of tasty (so I thought) sea weed mixed in this day.

December 23rd

Thought we'd be returning to Manila today when our cooks were ordered to serve us two meals of steamed rice and some raw camotes before 1000, but we were still in the theater when evening came. During the early part of night, several severely wounded and sick loaded on truck and moved to Bilibid. Among them, PhM McCurry and Colonel Freeney.

December 24th

Got up early this morning in preparation for leaving but didn't clear the theater before 0800 when we marched approximately one-half mile to railroad station. A train of box cars awaited us. The first half of draft to leave Olongapo were already aboard. We boarded some crowded cars, others took seats atop the cars.

Fred and I separated for the first time when we failed to get atop the same box car. Journey northward began about 0900. American bombers, large flight, seen attacking Clark Field in distance. A dog fight between American and Nip plane was going on fairly close overhead as we pulled out of San Fernando.

We were warned to wave our arms and shout if American planes approached train and started strafing. Nice physical and mental condition to begin our journey in.

Traveled north all day - saw many Jap planes hidden in vicinity of Clark Field, and many Japanese preparing for future air attacks. None knew where we were headed. When it was obvious we weren't going to Manila, many hoped our destination would be Cabanatuan, but eventually that became an impossibility.

Rolling northward into a chilly night, sitting out on top of a boxcar where one could get all the wind, and with a stomach that had received no food or water all day -- how shall I ever forget this Christmas Eve.

Passing several little towns during the night I noted how little Christmas Eve was being celebrated by the Philippine inhabitants residing along the tracks. Into the many windows that I quickly glimpsed in passing, only one revealed a Christmas Tree, decorated in little colored lights.

December 25th

Arrived chilled to the bone and hungry in San Fernando La Union, in the northern part of Luzon, approximately 0400. After crawling off the train, Japs assembled us in our respective groups and made us sit down. I had a difficult time locating Fred in the dark, but couldn't rest until I did. We all huddled together on the station platform, trying to keep warm and sleep the remainder of the night.

With dawn we were ordered to fall in and began to march through the town, proceeding to the eastern outskirts of San Fernando, where we came across a trade school. We entered here and formed in groups about one of the buildings, which was unoccupied. Another building on the compound was serving as a barracks for some local Japs. An emergency aid station, and what consisted of our hospital, set up in the empty building and soon pharmacist's mates and Army corpsmen were standing duty over the ever growing list of sick men.

Food was brought into us twice during our short stay here, making for us two meals of steamed rice. Water had to be carried some distance in the typical Jap wooden buckets, and so was somewhat limited, though ample for drinking purposes.

Shortly after finishing the evening meal we were ordered once more to fall in, and once again, we were on the move. This time we marched from the school yard to the beach (I'd call them the "San Fernando Sand Dunes"), a distance of at least four kilometers. Most of us were barefooted and the hike over gravel roads was a most unpleasant performance. Both Fred's and my feet were sore as hell by the time we reached the beach. Forming in our respective groups and going over the roster again, we were finally allowed to lay out on the sand dunes -- and thus we spent the night. Fred and I half buried ourselves for warmth.

December 26th

Up in the dawn to receive a rice ball per man which had arrived for us. I managed an extra one and offered it to Fred, but he would only take part of it. He tried the same trick, but it didn't work, and I guess it was just as well since it turned out that there were not sufficient rice balls to go around. Many went without. During the morning our groups, by turns, were allowed to wade out into the ocean water about up to our waists. This was our first bath since leaving Manila. I seized on the opportunity to use the toothbrush I carried in one of my pockets, unclean as the surf may have been.

No food or water all day, in spite of requests made by Lt. Col. Beecher. Finally in the evening, the Japs produced a bag of rice, and some water was allowed us. The rice amounted to one spoonful of the raw grain, the water amounted to a couple of spoonsful per man.

And another night we spent uncomfortably on the sand.

December 27th

On our feet early again this A.M., and we began moving toward the wharf area of this peninsula. Short advances and long halts were kept up to such a frequent extent, it got quite monotonous, but by 0900 we were at the wharf and being transported by landing barges out to some ugly freighters. Plenty to observe around us in this port. The Japs were unloading all kinds of supplies and troops from several ships laying off the coast. We were the object of much scrutiny by the Nip forces pouring ashore. On the other hand, we were keen observers of their landing technique.

Most of the draft went aboard one vessel, but approximately 236 of us were, at the last minute, put aboard another ship of about the same size. This latter ship carried many Japanese patients, yet no Red Cross or other protective signs were visible on the ship.

Our ship got underway as soon as the last of our draft was aboard, joining several other ships. We were ordered down into one of the forward holds before the size of the convoy could be ascertained. No food or water all day. A few men endeavored to secure a drink of the water leaking out of the winches on the main deck before we were driven below, but very few succeeded, and they risked getting struck by the thoroughly disapproving Taiwan Guards that stayed with us.

December 28th

Most uncomfortable night spent trying to sleep on the cold steel deck of the hold we were in. Men lay as close together as possible for warmth. Fred and I joined a group of other pharmacist's mates, and we all slept huddled together. When it got too cold for sleeping, we would take turns rubbing one another briskly, stimulating the circulation.

Assumed from action aboard ship; firing of AA guns, running about, and shouting above deck, that a submarine attack or scare was undergone during the morning. Naturally, we all felt somewhat nervous, but once we realized that there wasn't anything we could do, we fell to talking about food and other subjects. Food became the main topic of conversation since all of us were continually hungry.

We were all given a small ration of cooked rice this evening, but no water.

December 29th

Still under way, and obviously going due north, judging from the cold which is increasing. Intermittent naps during day, otherwise chatting -- yes, about chow. Practically no food at all today, and a very limited amount of water. The rice we get, if and when we get it, usually consists of the leftovers from our Taiwan's rations, and since we've only got about six Taiwan guards, it doesn't go very far among our 300 plus.

December 30th

Mostly a repetition of yesterday, as far as our activities are concerned. Many officers and men, like animals, scramble for the cigarette butts tossed into the hold by the Taiwan guards and curious Jap patients, passing by above us.

We presume we were the object of two submarine attacks during the night, judging entirely by the ship's crew's action, the firing of guns, dropping of depth charges, etc.

Again, a few spoonsful of cooked rice allowed us today. A better deal on the water than usual; we were permitted about one-half canteen cupful this evening.

December 31st

Arrived off some presumably southern port in Formosa about noon. Yes the port is Takao, Formosa. Judging from the noise above us, I estimate we are very close in to shore -- maybe even alongside a pier. No water all day, and only one spoonful of cooked rice per man (the guard's left overs again).

New Year's Eve, and what a horrible one!

January 1st, 1945

New Years, and a fortunate day for us. There was some kind of party above deck last night, and this morning all the Jap patients are absent from the ship. We presume it was through them that we were given five hard tack biscuits per man this A.M. All were deeply thankful for what was the largest issue of chow since this nightmare began. In the evening, we were allowed four spoonsful of water each.

January 2nd

We were looking forward this A.M. to some more biscuits, but there were none. Instead, the Taiwan guards passed on to us their leftovers. It figured out to a couple of forkfuls apiece. No water. Since neither Fred nor I had any mess equipment, I traded off my Parker fountain pen, ruined by the sea water when I swam ashore at Olongapo, for a complete mess kit and a canteen.

January 3rd

Presumably, two short air attacks or scares this morning. We could hear no planes, but there was plenty of Anti-aircraft fire from above, and the ship's crew seemed quite excited. No food today, and only four spoonsful of water per man.

January 4th

Better bill of fare today, drawing much comment, but then, every time we receive a little extra, our hopes are renewed for better treatment -- then the days that follow prove how wrong we are. Today they gave us two-thirds canteen cupful of cooked rice, plus eight spoons of water.

Fifth or sixth (problably the latter) American died this A.M. Few were sorry since he was a thief and had degenerated mentally more than the rest of us. Oh yes, it's obvious that we're all degenerating under these terrible circumstances.

One-half canteen cupful of hot water this morning. Later in the day we received about three-fourths cupful of steamed rice and barley gumbo -- most tasty. Rumor persists, we will soon transfer to other ship where larger draft is, but we haven't moved yet.

Spent many hours during the day talking about state-side chow -- how we like our eggs fried, our favorite flavor of ice cream, etc; Fred's favorite being chocolate, also chocolate cake, whereas my favorite, looking back on it, was strawberry and angel food, and other such things.

Fred and I spoke of going into business; say opening a fashionable malt shop, bakery or delicatessen some place in Portland once we get back. Another idea was our buying a farm together. I would live on it, work it, and give Fred his share of the earnings, while he and Nellie lived, most likely, in some city where he'd work as an X-ray man for some hospital or clinic.

January 6th

Damn cold this A.M. Received one-third cup of water per man, and one loosely packed cup of steamed rice before leaving ship at about 1330. Sure enough, when we went above deck, we discovered we were tied up to a pier. Up and over the side via a Jacob's ladder found us none too strong. Lack of food and exposure to cold are definitely beginning to tell on us. We were transferred by tug and barge to other ship (number 2), anchored out in middle of a land-enclosed bay, alongside a most impregnable looking mountain fortress. I remarked to Fred how I'd hate to see the Americans try to take this place by sea or land.

All of us aboard Number 2 ship by 1600. Here in the evening we received one-half cup more of steamed rice, one-fourth cup of a fair cabbage soup, and approximately one-sixth cup of tea. Best rations in many a day.

Fred and I in upper hold forward of bridge, with approximately 450 others of our draft. Below us, in the same hold are approximately 900 others. Looking down on them, they look mighty small and terribly crowded.

January 7th

Japs called up the 30 odd British and Dutch prisoners that had come with us from Bilibid (survivors of a former bombing, when the Americans first hit the Philippines September 21st, 1944), and took them ashore. Never saw or heard of them again. There have been something like 46 deaths up to date (since leaving San Fernando, La Union).

Two meals again today. In the morning and in the evening, one-half cup steamed rice, one-fourth cup cabbage soup, and one-half cup of weak tea. The working parties, picked out by Lt. Col. Beecher, make out much better on chow and water.

January 8th

Our guards ran us all out of the hold today, particularly all the 900 men out of the lower hold, as they had prepared for and began the loading of sugar on our ship. While above deck, most men warmed themselves in the sun and drew in frequent deep breaths of fresh air. Men tried to obtain drinking water from the winches, but as many were struck by rifle butts -- no action seemed to irritate the guards more than this one.

One-half cup of steamed rice, one-fourth cup of cabbage soup and one-third cup of weak tea served us this morning.

Once the loading of sugar into the lowest decks of Number two hold completed and hatch covers secured over same, the Nip guards began driving us below again. Half the draft this time were put into the very deep number one hold while the other half returned to the upper part of number two hold. There was a great amount of confusion amid calling of roll and answering of names as men filed below. Fred spoke up once, inquiring whether or not we should go into number one hold. I urged him not to (at date of re-writing this, I wonder if Fred would still be alive if we had entered number one hold) and he seemed willing enough to return to our former compartment.

Our ship was tied up alongside another ship of similar design and construction, only the other ship was a tanker. There were plenty of ships in the harbour, all mounting AA guns. One or two appeared to have undergone some severe raids and definitely weren't being used.

Settled back in our hold, we were naturally more crowded than ever, but it wasn't long before the arrival of something sweet to eat (sugar) compensated us. Of course we were severely threatened along with a warning to stay away from the sugar, but the men were in such a state that they'd die attempting to get some of the precious stuff. An evening meal, mere repetition of the morning chow, was given late in P.M.

January 9th

We would have had a pretty fair breakfast this morning, rice soup, and tea, but most squads of four men had only received their one-half cup of rice per man when the ship's AA guns opened up on American planes that put in a sudden appearance. Food meaning everything to us, most refused to budge just because of another raid.

Fred and I were completing our rice, gulping it down in a fearful hurry, when a bomb landed near enough on the ship to send the hatch covers tumbling down upon us. I was struck on the shoulder, left buttocks and head. Thought I was a goner - pinned beneath the steel girders. Instantly realizing it was not the steel girders falling, but the plank hatch covers that struck me, I dragged myself along on hands and knees to shelter, as much as was offered, under a partial steel deck.

Fred was evidently struck on the head or abdomen. He wasn't able to flee the falling debris. It all happened so fast, I can't say exactly what occurred. As soon as it was over, I forced myself to rush back to Fred's side and he seemed perfectly unhurt, merely stunned. I got some Captain to help me carry him into what little shelter existed from further strafing, beneath the bridge, but he never seemed aware of what was going on.

As the raid and danger threatened on, Fred spoke only a couple of coherent lines. Once he said, "Cecil, I've shit myself". Another time he said, "I'm sick, Cecil". No urging on my part would bring forth more than jumbled mumblings, with a constant increase in physical writhing and contortions, from him. Not before evening, such damage and confusion reigned in our hold, could I get him over to where the emergency hospital had been set up. It was a hell of a hospital -- more simply an accumulation of dead and dying bodies. There wasn't anything to work with. It was difficult securing a doctor interested enough to even look at him -- most of them nursing their own wounds or the wounds of their closest friends. I could do naught for Fred but sooth his brow and beg of him to rally, nor could the doctors or anyone else do more.

I feel terrible tonight -- the loneliest in my life, knowing the best friend I ever had may well be dying and I can do nothing about it. I understand the loss of life and wounded in the forward hold are much worse than ours. My God!

Surprised as hell to see the Japs feed us at all tonight. One lightly filled canteen cupful of steamed rice to three men. Water, which we need urgently after today's trials, especially for such as Fred, impossible to get.

Father Cummings, a Catholic Chaplain, whom I've never liked, made an unusually expected speech tonight. Whatever the talk and prayer, everyone seemed thankful someone had mentioned God's name. For all we knew, we were existing in Hell.

Settled down with Harvey Riederman for the night. He realized how miserable I felt about Fred's condition, and shared his protective mat with me. Spent most terrible of nights, sitting up, huddled together like sheep, under hatchway.

January 10th

Fred still breathing this morning, but no change in general condition -- still unconscious. According to Bill Dunn, who was wounded in shoulder yesterday, and spent the night beside Fred at the other end and side of our hold, Fred spoke nothing all night.

One-half cup rice per man, plus one-sixth cup tea and one small spoon of Jap pickles did for chow this A.M. Fred unable to take any food. Will not respond to anything. Pulse very feeble, but body quite warm. Breathing O.K.

There is a hopeful rumor that we may leave this ship today. We all sincerely hope so. Perhaps on the beach something can be done for Fred. Obtained some sugar this A.M. from a couple PhMs who risked going below our hold for some.

Japanese Army Med. Corps members came aboard this afternoon with a few sterile looking medical supplies. They did quite a bit of first aid work for the minor injuries in our hold, undoubtedly doing some good. I passed through the lineup myself, getting some red looking stuff applied to my badly cut toe and the shrapnel hole in my buttocks. Hardly think it was iodine or merthiolate however, so doubt if it will do much good.

Fred, like many others, received not so much as a glance from the least important of our Jap Medical delegation. God, if only I could do something for him. Both Comdr. C.M. Smith and Dr. Barrett assured me nothing was possible, and that it was a blessing he could not be feeling the terrible hunger and cold that the rest of us are being exposed to. Forward hold is reported to have had around 252 killed and many severely wounded out of an approximate 400.

One-half cup steamed rice, one-fourth cup cabbage soup, one-fifth cup tea plus one-fifth cup water issued tonight. The hospital groups wouldn't issue Fred any rice or liquid rations tonight. It is true he cannot take food, but I like to try putting the liquids down him. Dunn tried to force some cabbage broth down him tonight, but no use. Pulse very feeble, but body still warm.

Japs have permitted us to partly cover hatch tonight, so it shouldn't be quite so damn cold. Spent the night out under the hatch with Reiderman.

January 11th

Fred still breathing this A.M., pulse feeble and fluttering. I went to Comdr. Joses to see why Fred shouldn't rate soup and tea from hospital mess, even though the Army doctor in charge might begrudge him the food because of his unconsciousness. Comdr. Joses offered no help, so I went to see Dr. Barrett and Comdr. Carey Smith, both of whom promised to try securing Fred rations as long as there were sufficiently interested friends of his to endeavor to put it down him. Dunn and I tried getting some cabbage broth down him this morning, closer to noon than morning but I fear Fred is too far gone, unable to swallow anything, perfectly unconscious.

One-half cup rice, one-fourth short cup of cabbage soup, and one-half short cup of tea this morning. Tea was delayed until afternoon because of working party removing the dead and decomposing bodies. Something like 44 or 45 bodies removed out of our hold this A.M., and approximately 260 bodies taken out of forward hold. They suffered much greater casualties than we.

This evening another one-half cup of rice per man, a couple small salted fish (lookout, you first bowl of goldfish, if and when I ever get home!), one spoon of fresh cabbage leaves and one-half short cup of tea.

Fred still alive tonight but that is all.

January 12th

Another mighty cold night spent sitting and shivering, crowdedly, out under the open hatch. Consistently pray to Almighty God to ease Fred's suffering, the sufferings of all of us, and to spare the remainder of our desperate party worse misfortune. Fred still alive this morning, no change. Spoke a while to Dr. Daniel Boone about him, but he said nothing could be done.

One-half cup steamed rice, one-fourth cup cabbage soup and one-third cup tea for this morning's chow. Have managed to obtain regular chow issue for Fred now, the rice and soup part of which Dunn and I trade for sweetened tea or water. It is most important that he not become dehydrated during his coma. The Colonel in charge of our wounded doesn't expect Fred to last the night. God, if they'd only take us ashore, maybe something could be done for Freddie (my constant prayer).

One-half cup rice, one-third strongly stocked cabbage soup, and one-third cup of tea tonight. Traded my tea ration for one-half ration of rice. Dunn traded Fred's and his ration of rice for simple syrup. Dunn claims he's able to get little bits of it down Fred.

I defecated this evening, the first time since leaving Manila.

January 13th

Just a month ago today, we got under way from Bilibid. What a terrible month -- the worst, undoubtedly, in all our lives.

Fred died this morning, about 0600, according to Dunn who has been sleeping beside him. His body had been hoisted over the side before I got into the hospital area, which I guess is just as well. Dunn, badly in need, took Fred's under and outer shirt. Fred's body will probably be cremated over on the Formosan beach today.

Yesterday and today there were men assigned to a working party whose duty it was to rid our ship of its dead. They have been hoisting them up out of the holds with heavy lines, depositing them on barges and departing for the beach.

Traded my soup ration this morning for three fourths of the rice ration, the soup being only a short cup between 5 men. So with more rice than usual, and the one half cup of tea, that we received, I concluded my morning meal.

Fifty men working detail left ship this A.M. for cleaning up the holds in other ship. It is rumored we will follow later. Goodness but I hope so. The sooner we resume our journey toward Japan, I should think the better.

We departed our ship about 1300 for another ship, marked Number one. A small and older vessel. Transfer made on barges. This new ship being rigged for carrying troops offered us more room. We occupied Number Three and Four holds which opened into one another. Wounded and other patients were laid out in center of hold, while less sick, and others of us, were assigned to so called bays, with the usual double tiers. In the hold were to be found some straw mats and life jackets which were quickly seized upon, but the life jackets were finally collected and turned over to Japs - some tried to hold on to theirs for future use as pillows and covering against the cold. Mats were not sufficient for number of men so the usual bickering and jealousies were re-kindled.

Very cold. Officers and men with anything to trade found some guards that offered little cans of meat or a cup of water for West Point or Annapolis graduate rings. No food or liquids tonight.

January 14th

Under way this morning, we trust to Japan. From the men going on topside to urinate I understand there are at least seven other freighters and five tin cans in this particular convoy. I helped about the hospital area this A.M. for six hours, though my left foot, badly infected from the cut I received on the broken glass at the time I drug Fred out from under the timbers is bothering me terribly.

The Army Medics came in as usual and ousted what Navy Corpsmen were on duty and refused to give us any extra chow for the watches we had stood. I had a very small ration of rice this morning, and as yet, no water or tea. Officially there's been no liquids issued, still many of the Army Corpsmen are resorting to their canteens occasionally.

It is growing constantly colder and we are becoming less able to withstand it. Sanitary conditions remain horrible. Those who have the strength and can hold their bowels or urine must go topside and climb out into box-like heads slung over the ship's port side. Others resort to buckets, wooden ones, which are let down and hoisted out of the hold via lines - often these are overloaded and much of our waste comes back at us either in the form of a shower or something we must walk through. At night it is practically impossible to prevent men, who are ill, from defecating or urinating just wherever they get the urge.

I was transferred to Squad Number Three, along with Chief Kerbow and Wright. We occupied a terrible cold little bay all way aft on portside. One third cup steamed rice per man this evening. No fluids all day.

Went topside for defecation before bedding down like an animal. Decent enough stool, but the wind was so strong the stools of others was blown all over me. The ocean looks much like pictures of the North Atlantic in winter.

January 15th

Jack Kerbow and I slept miserably cold in one another's arms trying to keep warm. We'd sit up every so often to briskly rub one another's limbs, hoping to obtain warmth from stimulated circulation. One half loosely packed cup of rice with small portion of fish paste given us twice today for "this day's bread". One fourth cup hot water this evening for today's fluids.

Traded a few vitamins for a mat to sleep under. Cold all day. Pray to God for protection against colder weather and any submarine attacks. Pray also that God has taken Freddie unto himself.

January 16th

Still under way this morning. Didn't sleep at all during night, just half sat, half reclined, and thought, mostly about home, and prayed that I might return to it. Still with Freddie gone, what matters!

Short one half cup of rice, one spoon dried fish and one fourth cup of watery soup for chow this morning. This evening another light two thirds cup, of steamed rice per two men plus one short cup of tea to four men.

Vessel evidently halted during night.

January 17th

Must have resumed our movement north early this AM, at least we're under way again. It was very cold sleeping even under two mats, bundled up close to Kerbow. Two thirds cup of rice per 2 men and short cup of tea per four men this A.M.

Early in the evening ship halted again. Going topside to urinate I saw another ship lying to, near us, as if she'd been hit aft by a torpedo. A couple destroyers were standing by her but I failed to understand why we should have come to a halt. Don't like this laying to. Pray we get underway again soon. Water is very muddy, indicating we're close to China's rivers. Small islands are visible on wither side. Another bitter cold night.

January 18th

Underway but towing the crippled vessel, thus making about half our former speed, presumably. Today's chow has been considerably reduced. One light cup of rice to three men - served twice today, but only a short one fourth cup of hot water for our daily liquid intake. God! but it seems travelling north all the time, and we must be, judging from the increasing cold, we'd be arriving someplace soon.

Late this evening I was able to get my canteen full of hot water. Am I lucky! It didn't last but a minute though, among the group of pharmacist's mates I joined tonight working in the hospital area. As much as the Army tried to hog the work which brought them extra chow - too many were becoming sick and we were asked to help out.

January 19th

Stood watch between 2400 and 0600 this morning over the wounded and sick and dying. My left foot hurt a good deal from being on it constantly -- being barefooted made it all the worse. I'm keeping my eyes open for a pair of heavy socks or old shoes that someone may die and leave for the taking. Otherwise the watch was little harder to stand than attempting to sleep and merely freezing.

Only one-fourth cup of rice per man this A.M. (slight compensation for last night's watch), but we did get a cupful of salty water per man. Our ship has been under way, obviously north, all day. This time without towing the crippled ship, and as I understand, with only one tin can for escort.

This evening the Japs fed us again. This time we of the duty status in the hospital rated better, getting one loosely filled cup as compared with the one-fourth cup of rice issued the others. One-fourth cup of salty water per man this evening, and is it salty! I wonder if it does any good to drink it. Indeed this brackish water, limited as it is, the little food we're getting, and the exposure to cold, is contributing to many deaths -- as many as 35 and 40 are dying per day.

January 20th

God! How damn cold this last night was! If God wills, may this next one be warmer for the benefit of all. We didn't keep under way all last night, nor were we very early getting under way this A.M., with a crippled ship in tow again.

In the hospital area this morning we received one light cup of rice per man and about one-half cup of bilge water. Terrible water; I don't see how it will sustain us. Dr. Lambert and PhM. Wright died this morning from diarrhea, the cold, the lack of food and water. Many are dying every night now. My left foot is gradually getting worse and there remains nothing to do but pray and wait.

January 21st

I damn near died of thirst as we continued under way all night. If dawn had delayed another hour I would have died, I believe. I salvaged a pair of old long pants off some poor old officer who had died during the night. Everyone's doing it, and by Christ there's no sense to throwing them away with the body. They were saturated with feces. I've rinsed the worst of it out with a little salt water sent down for purpose of cleaning around the hospital, but can't get them dry. Dare not leave them laying around for an instant or someone will take them.

One lightly filled cup of rice per man in our staff group as compared with one cup per four men otherwise. We also got a short one-half cup of hot salty water early this morning, with a repeat just before noon on the water.

Chief McDougall died today -- just one of many friends I cannot help. Jap planes are flying low over us every so often, so I guess we are approaching our destination (I hope). Tapscott asked me to note Dunn's death around 1700 on the 19th. Too many are dying, and too frequently, for us to keep track.

Had a good cup of steamed rice tonight, but so far no salty water. We got no water of any kind tonight and we're all badly in need of it. Deplorable condition! Please God, ease the pain in my foot tonight. Rumor has it we may dock someplace tonight or tomorrow.

January 22nd

Ship underway until about 0400 this morning. Have no idea what part of the Jap world we're in, but we must be near Japan, must be. My foot is terribly sore this morning. I positively will not be able to go on watch at midnight tonight. Am planning to ask Tybur to take my watch for one-half of my evening rice ration.

Had a light cup of rice this A.M., plus the first real fresh water we've been issued, and what was strictly one short cup to four men -- just a few spoonsful apiece. Tybur accepted my watch for one-half my rice ration. We had another hot water issue tonight, comparable to this morning's. Not much, but better than none.

Am becoming acquainted with a hell of a nice kid by the name of Godard. He comes from New Mexico and makes that state seem like a paradise, or a blending of Arizona and Oregon. Someday perhaps I can look further into this. Godard, like Freddie, likes Chocolate cream pies, prefers chocolate cakes and ice cream. We talked about the wonderful things to be grown on little farms back home.

Dr. Wade just died. Oh, dear God, spare the rest of us -- so many have been taken. May the Lord see us to our destination soon, no worse off than we are at present.

January 23rd

Ship continues underway. Tybur stood my watch this morning. My foot isn't improving a bit, so I'm resolved to stay off it all I can, even if I must give more than half my rice ration for someone else to stand my watch. Mighty skimpy rice issue this A.M., as was the tea (one-fourth cup per man), but at least the liquid wasn't as salty as usual. The sleet or rain that's been falling up topside renders us cold enough to allay some thirst, thank goodness.

Dr. Daniel Boone and Chief Gomes were among those who died today. God, but may we speedily arrive to wherever we're going, else there will be no survivors.

January 24th

Ship still underway. Terribly cold. No land in sight this morning. It's snowing, and we have one tin can escorting us. Again divided rice ration with Tybur for standing my watch. Foot is getting much worse, throbbing pain. Can only hope and pray to God we arrive shortly at our destination. It's growing colder each day and night. I'm reminded of Aunt Alice and her fear of intestinal flu. My intestines feel like ice, and when I cough my abdomen is very painful.

Tybur complained of difficulty sleeping, so he wouldn't take my watch tonight. I pursuaded Tapscott to take it however, offering him a good half of my rice ration, and the use of a pair of shoes I was able to borrow. Foot still painful as hell, but gradually localizing on top. Don't know whether I could get one of the doctors to look at it or not, they've all got themselves to worry about. Guess I'll let nature take its course, maybe it will break soon.

Ship following a slight south by southeast, rather than northerly direction, according to several who've been topside. The ration was one-third short cup per man tonight, but I guess I'm getting enough liquids since I urinated quite a bit this evening when Maxwell brought me the can.

Merciful God, protect those remaining on this terrible vessel, and speed us to a worthwhile destination. Surely we deserve a break.

January 25th

Ship stopped again during the night. Under way again about daylight. Size of islands, and growth thereon indicate we're in Japanese home waters. Perhaps we'll be getting into our port soon.

Ph. M. Tapscott stood my watch this A.M. for half my rice issue. Gee, I hate cutting down on my ration, but I simply can't stand up, much less get around to helping the others. The rice ration continues to be a very lightly filled canteen cup per man, on hospital staff; tea, one-third cup per man. Guess the others aren't even making out that well. Sun is shining today, and those able to get to go topside for their natural acts say its fair looking weather out.

Localized points on infected foot broke during the night. Sickly and painful ordeal getting dirty pus-soaked sock off and having Major Williams look at foot. He took forceps and scissors, trimmed away much bad flesh, swabbed up considerable drainage and exposed some ugly, rotten-looking holes in the top of my foot. He put a very little Sulfanilamide powder over the sores, and covered with a fairly decent piece of gauze that had been used before. Some Army Corpsman was kind enough to give me a codeine tablet. I've just got to continue staying off the foot, they say, and trust we get there soon.

Tapscott wouldn't take my watch for me, so I asked Tybur. He considered it in view of the rice ration, though I think Tybur really means to help. Rice ration lighter than usual today, but it did have a few tiny dried fish mixed in. No liquid issue yet tonight.

Japs held "tenko" (count) on us today, a difficult job considering the frequency of deaths, and utter confusion. Hope this indicates our arriving somewhere soon.

May the Lord not cease from looking after us, and granting us some comfort if such a thing is possible.

January 26th

Ship layed to again last night, then got under way early this morning. Dr. Cecil Welch died during the night, leaving our Navy Medical Officers pretty damn scarce. Tybur stood the watch for me this morning, and gained more than just part of my rice ration. He seems to have gained some clothes while on watch. Well, he needed them, but then, don't we all! Still, I'm thankful for the chow I do get, and the filthy rags I have to wear.

Old Ed Hastings (CPhM), who once taught me bandaging in Corps School, and a damn fine Chief, died today. O God, I cannot see why we do not arrive at some port soon. Surely we've been under way, and under hardships enough.

January 27th

Tybur wouldn't stand my 2400 to 0600 watch this A.M. He returned his ration of rice late last night with that decision. I couldn't do anything, it was too late for getting anyone else to stand by, so Sgt. Burns told Jack Istock and Myers to handle the watch between them -- that is stand watch over the entire area, just the two of them. Naturally Istock kicked, but he's getting my duty ration of rice for it.

There seems to have been a couple steampipe explosions topside during the night, so that at this writing (approximately 1600), we are just getting our first meal of the day, with no prospect of tea. Last tea or fluid served was late last night. Have been cuddling up close all day to whoever wanted to cuddle for warmth. It's so damn cold.

Spoke to Sgt. Burns about getting out of duty section, hospital, because of my inability to stand watches, but the Sgt. says there's no need of my moving. Rice issue was not only light, but cold. We did get some fluid today, but slight.

January 28th

Ship must have layed to during night, but got under way about 0400 this morning. Some say we were attacked by subs during the night. Unusually cold this morning. We got a little hot water issued before the rice this A.M. Usual light hit on rice, but then the hospital workers got seconds. I made out fairly well since Myers and Cook didn't want theirs and gave it to me.

"Tenko" (roll call) today shows only about five-eighths of the original number to leave Bilibid are still alive. Rumor has it (in fact Mr. Wada is supposed to have told Colonel Beecher), we'll arrive at our destination tomorrow, and there may even be a clothing issue before we leave the ship.

Had another rice ration given us this evening, making two meals for today. Some difference from yesterday. Cook is not feeling well tonight. Couldn't eat his rice, but wanted water, so I offered him my water issue for what rice he couldn't eat.

January 29th

Ship presumably had sub scare last night, but continued under way until about 0200 this A.M. We are apparently in a small port. Maybe this is our destination.

Before we could get down the little rice ration this morning, the Japs started us through "glass rod" line. I tried to get up topside for taking the rod, but couldn't make it. Most of the day taken up with passing the rod on everyone.

We all hope to God we'll not be kept aboard this death ship any longer. We want off now, today.

Despite the rumor all day of a clothing issue, there was none that I know of and it's now too late to get off this stinking vessel tonight.

As we were getting a little more rice this evening, the ship got under way again. No, dear God, let's not go any farther in this ship.

An American Red Cross Ship is rumored to have left this port about the time we entered it.

We tied up along side a dock in this port. I trust we'll find our shipmates, who left Bilibid last October, around here.

Lt. Tushina, Jap officer in charge, and the hunchback interpreter, Mr. Wada, showed their faces tonight.

January 30th

Early this morning, a few who were able to get topside, and get them on, were issued Japanese clothes. Many could not, I for one, so I simply continued filthily clad in dead men's rags, and numb with cold. It was reported by some of the men who got topside for clothing issue, that a few men died even while they were struggling to cover their nakedness with Jap army uniforms.

The transfer from ship to shore was a horrible ordeal. Cold as we were, the Japanese had to spray us with more cold, disinfectant of some sort. None walked from ship to the old auditorium ashore very well by themselves. Most men had to support one another. Many simply had to be carried or dragged.

With our being turned over into new hands, our treatment improved. We were even given, eventually, little packages of hot steamed rice with pieces of fish, pickled vegetables, sea weed and ginger. Also we had access to water such as we'd never experienced on the entire trip. Of course this was the undoing of many, for the water was like ice, yet the dehydrated men poured it down unthinkingly. CPhM. J.P. Morgan for one, went insane over the abundance of water. He'd attempt to drink three or four canteens full at a time.

Hagstrom helped me ashore, for my foot simply wouldn't take my weight. I joined a group of approximately 115 others who were directed to stay together as patients. Among them are almost all of what remained of Navy Medical Officers, quite a few Army Medical Officers, some Chaplains, and even Capt. Wermuth, with, as usual, nothing wrong with him that I can see. No doubt he's attached himself hoping to receive more food and better treatment. J.P. Morgan, Stamp, Edwards and myself comprised the only Navy Medics in this group. All others that can be considered alive fell into more well groups. Judging from the different groups formed and "tenkos" being taken, we're all going to different places.

It was terribly cold sitting around on the wooden deck all day waiting for the Japs to sort us and dispose of us as though we were cattle. Some died during all this waiting. It was late in the afternoon before ambulances came for those of us considered patients, and then we had to wait until later, and colder, into the night. Morgan, Edwards and I were on the last ambulance. Edwards died before we arrived at our destination.

January 31st

We didn't get out of the city evidently. Moji, they say it is, but we are out aways from the steel mills and industrial area, which were duly impressive to some of us. As soon as we got to this Jap Army Hospital, we were fed hot lugao (watery rice, porridge-like consistency). Japs are obviously going to care for us after all, but as yet no medical attention. My foot is driving me crazy, I can't control the tears the damn thing brings. Have had to unwrap my dirty, adhering dressing and show my foot to several Jap doctors, but still no treatment or clean dressing.

We ate three times today. Good food -- lugao and cabbage soup with meat (fish, beef) stock.

February 1, 1945

Nights are severely cold. We've eleven or twelve heavy blankets, enough to choke a horse, but still can't keep warm. Jap doctor ordered us separated into two different wards, surgical cases in one end of building, and all dysentery, diarrhea, etc., in the other end.

Captain Wermuth has certainly taken over on his side, especially as concerns the chow. One Army Major, Van Oosten, and a couple of his pals, are in charge of the rest of us. I'm in surgical. Supposed to get a dressing on foot today, but no one came around. Lord, but it's sickening to look at.

Three meals today -- lugao and soup -- OK.

February 2nd

Snowing this morning -- much too cold. Most of us are so skinny it's impossible to rest on these hard straw ticks that lay on the floor and serve as mattresses. Bed sores are inevitable -- some have them already.

With effort, I made a laborous, slow trip to the head for defecating and urinating. My God, but my body looks hideous. Foot was dressed today, but not at all with the care I'd expect, even at the hands of a Jap, and it was a Jap doctor too. God, I hope wounds heal without decent attention, otherwise I'm sunk. It's all too obvious they aren't going to waste much time or equipment on us. Many could not help screaming out in agony when the Jap Doctor dressed their wounds.

Three meals again today, but falling off in quantity. We "no like".

February 3rd

My foot kept me awake all night. Dressed as light as it is, there's still too much pain. Snow and cold continue. For a while it appeared the sun might break through, but the winter won.

Can't make the head today, must urinate in a bottle. At least I'm not urinating in my canteen and defecating in my mess kit like some. Of course I realize they can't help it -- most of them are crazy.

Broke out an old letter from Helen Davis; one which I'd eaten my rice out of, enroute from Manila. Reread it and bawled. It's dated 16 August, 1943. Just think, it came from God's own country, Oregon. Lord, but I'm homesick for so many people, expecially Freddie Sanders. His absence makes itself felt more each day. Damn, he meant so much!

Three fair meals of lugao and soup today. Less meat in the soup these past two days, and more powdered egg. American officers in charge of serving are definitely getting more to eat than the rest of us. Jap doctor says International Red Cross has been asked for food and medicine for us.

We were given an extra blanket tonight, and some hot water to fill our canteens, making hot water bottles out of them. This is certainly no small courtesy

February 4, 1945 (Sunday)

Again it looked as though the sun might battle through the clouds and triumph this morning, but it kept up the snowing and freezing -- certainly near freezing anyway. So cold we could do nothing but cuddle under our weighty, lousy blankets all day, getting out only long enough to urinate, etc. We've gotten a little steamed rice with our lugao the first two meals today.

Chaplain Taylor, Army, recited the 21st Psalm and led us in the Lord's Prayer this afternoon. Somebody had better do more than pray. They say over in the diarrhea side of this building, under Capt. Wermuth, our men are dropping off like flies. Comdr. Carey Smith, our senior, and about only medical officer, Navy, left, is supposed to have signed for the Japs, 1001 death certificates of men we lost between December 14, 1944, and the day we got to Japan.

I'm getting a bit more to eat than usual. Morgan and Condon (Pharm) whom I lay between, do not want their food, so I eat it. This noon, I actually couldn't eat up all their scraps.

Some Jap Colonel in the Quartermaster Corps made an inspection this afternoon. We're all curious to know why, but hope it concerns the future receiving of some Red Cross Food.

February 5th

The nights are terribly long when all you have to do, day and night, is lay flat on your back under weighty, lousy blankets on these hard straw, or brish, ticks

Quality, as well as quantity, of food is falling off plenty fast; besides, the Major in charge of our ward is getting mighty piggish about the distribution of chow between those of us who are patients and the six classified as heavy workers. The men are grumbling about it, but he pays no attention. Naturally, he's only looking out for himself.

Nothing happened except the little Jap Corpsman came around to do some dressings. I had mine changed, painful though it is. Believe it looks some better, but why shouldn't it -- I'm staying off it. Only wish it would heal to an extent that I could be transferred to the American Work Camp -- there's too many dying around here. The chow is going from bad to worse, and there's no indication of our receiving any Red Cross food boxes.

February 6th

Day break is forever coming, and then it seems an eternity until we are fed what <u>might</u> be considered a breakfast. If so, it's a breakfast that's depreciating in value each day. Nothing eventful all day. If I didn't have the chow Morgan refuses to eat in addition to my own I'd die. Morgan is delirious and will shortly pass on, leaving me hungrier than hell. Some begrudge me his chow, but I don't let little things like that bother me any more; besides, I'm the only one who tries to make him eat. We had a fish apiece at the noon meal, very small, and the rest of our chow was worse than usual, so no one benefitted unless it was the Major, and a couple of his old cronies.

February 7th

Little table-like cabinets were moved into our ward today, one being placed at the foot of each mattress, so we can stow our miserably few belongings, clothes, etc. Jap doctor did the dressings this morning. I estimate there has been some improvement in most of the wounds. I'm surprised at the rate mine is improving, although it's a long way yet from being healed.

Chow mighty low today. Don't know what I'd do without Morgan's ration of lugao. The lugao ration that the worse sick are getting is more food actually than the dry rice and soup ration, or so it seems to me. We had a surprise tonight; bean soup -- soy beans, really good too, only there weren't more than a table-spoonful of beans in each serving -- not enough to do anyone much good.

February 8th

Could hardly sleep all night. Reason -- body lice. "Grey-backs" - something terrible. I hadn't noticed how fast they were multiplying, and now I have thousands. Furthermore, there appears no way of getting rid of them during this cold weather except by picking them off. I nearly turned into ice attempting to rid myself of only the worst of them.

Morgan kept crying for fruit during the night, imploring someone to give him an apple or orange. His breathing has been laborous and loud for sometime now. He died this morning. Morgan was a peculiar fellow. At times, in Shanghai, before the war, when he was perfectly sober, and talking with me along intellectual lines, I thought he was exceptionally brilliant. No Masonic burial here.

The Japs have stopped giving us lugao, and the steamed rice they're giving us instead is raising hell with our stomachs. It snowed all day, and is very cold. No soup, only a small piece of fish with our rice tonight. Some got pretty nice pieces of fish though.

February 9th

One month ago today we were bombed in Takao Harbor, Formosa, and my dearest friend, Fred, was hit. God how I miss that kid.

Body lice still multiplying and making our simple existence more miserable. Can't seem to get enough picked off to make any difference. Today's chow continues without lugao, so it looks as if we'll have to get used to steamed rice and soup. We've all asked the Major to do something about equalizing the distribution of food, but he remains dumb to our pleas. He has given us the word that he rates more than any of the others simply because he's our Commanding Officer, and as our Commanding Officer he must get back in order to report this terrible experience.

It is still snowing, though not as windy and cold as yesterday.

February 10th

Today continues cold, with no improvement in the chow, although I notice everyone in the room is eating the steamed rice now, and we're not letting the Japs take any of it back. Japs issued us, of all things, a single tangerine this A.M. Poor Morgan should have lasted a little longer.

Too cold to delouse this afternoon. Spent most of the day conversing about food, exchanging rare recipes, some undoubtedly original, with the twenty other patients in the ward. Within the first ten days of our being at this place, at least 75 out of our approximately 115 have died.

February 11th

Jap holiday. Anniversary of the founding of their hideous empire. We were reminded how much older this than our Christian civilization. We were given a couple of tiny cakes (monju), courtesy of the Emperor (the bastard). I thought they were quite good, stuffed with a candied bean paste or something. Also, we were given lugao again, starting at noon. Today's dinner then of steamed rice, lugao, a piece of fish, small serving of soup and the two monju cakes, made us something of a feast. Too bad we weren't fed cakes like that every day. I'll bet there's plenty of food value there. We were all issued a small practically frozen apple this evening. Hurt teeth to bite into it, but gee, it tasted wonderful

February 12th

Uneventful day so far (P.M.). Japs have had all available working men washing dirty clothes and blankets. They are finally realizing how messy blankets can get when people die in them. Also, Major Van Oosten has called their attention to our lice. Had some kind of small fried fish at noon. We all feel better whenever there's fish. Evening ration of chow was small again. We're all wishing for a change for the better.

February 13th

Two months ago today we left Bilibid -- and we thoughtwe were bad off there. Goes to show! The usual day, with not enough chow to satisfy anyone. There was a serious quarrel and bit of dissention between the twenty of us tonight concerning the chow. None are satisfied with the issuing of it except those issuing it. There seems no way of correcting this since the Major and his henchmen are senior officers. Capt. Speck speaks up for the most of us however. In every way, Speck appears to be a damn fine officer.

February 14th

Valentines Day an uneventful day. Talk continues on topic of food. When we aren't criticizing the distribution of it, we're all joined together in a friendly escape of trading receipes, originating them, etc. Chow about the same, with exception of a little fish at noon. My dressing was changed by one of the little Jap orderlies. Drainage is still continuing, but by golly, there's new tissue forming, and it's slowly filling up.

February 15th

The Jap doctor had a rather official sick call this morning. Looked at all the dressings and wrote up our charts. Also he questioned us on our ability to eat steamed rice or lugao rice. Balfanz and Jack Kelsey were transferred out of our ward to Ward 4 (dysentery). The Jap doctor's attention had been called to some blood in both their stools. My throat has been gradually getting sore, but I hesitate to say anything about it. It may pass in a day or two.

February 16th

Throat continues sore. In fact it's terribly sore, but there's nothing to do for it but gargle with plain hot water.

Soup at noon was pretty good, with a little beef and fat in it, but as usual, it was too small a ration. We had a very well-liked soy bean soup tonight, but still too small in amount -- more like a teaser than a serving. Usual arguments about the distribution.

February 17th

My throat continues sore. In fact it's growing worse. I've started gargling a little more conscientiously as it has me worried. It feels like it's swelling up inside, so I can't breathe. Afraid it's more serious than I originally thought. Most difficult to talk.

Our nights of late have been utilized to a person talking on some subject he's familiar with for the enlightening and entertainment of the rest of us. Jack Kelsey is missed from the ward because his talks were truly different and interestin

February 18th

As my throat gets worse, I have difficulty eating, drinking, or doing anything, and I notice a tendency on my part to get hysterical about it. Got some more gargling preparation from one of the Jap orderlies; also a swabbing with mercurochrome.

Fish and a kind of pickled turnip, in small quantity, provided us with extra for this noon chow. Towards evening my throat felt better.

February 19th

My throat a bit better since gargling and swabbing with Iodine today. It's still difficult to swallow my food, but I'm reminded of J.P. Morgan's refusing to eat, so I force it down. Besides, there's not so much to force down anyway.

Japs issued us a small face towel, tooth brush, package of tooth powder and some Benjo (toilet) paper.

Major Van Oosten called the doctor's attention to my sore throat this evening, and since a patient died over on the other side last night of a septic sore throat, I was immediately sent to the other end of the building for isolation. L. Stamp, PhM. 1c., who also has been bothered with a sore throat joined me in isolation. Jap doctor swabbed our throats with Iodine. Mine seemed worse. During the night I was given three injections of what I supposed to be diphtheria vaccine. Dislike being away from usual companions, though Stamp and I found enough to talk about. Didn't feel like talking much anyway, throat so sore. Chow issue here is no good.

February 20th

Spent a terrible night scratching lice and worrying about whether or not I'd die with this sore throat. Jap doctor came in this A.M. and swabbed Stamp's throat. Looked at mine but didn't swab it -- just as if I were too far gone to waste iodine on. Or maybe it's improved, and doesn't need it.

Mighty small rations of chow from Capt. Wermuth's mess, but I did get a couple pieces of meat in my noon soup, and we did have beans tonight. Goodness, if only they'd give us a ration of just beans sometime. They taste so good.

Throat is feeling some better tonight. Hope I don't have to stay isolated like this too long.

February 21st

Jap Doctor swabbed Stamp's and my throat this A.M. The doctor tried to explain to us that we're both improving, though I'm making a less rapid recovery. Chow continues in too small amounts of plain lugao and turnip soup without meat stock. No one feels as if it were beneficial to eat this type of food. Still, I guess it could be worse.

February 22nd

Jap doctor took cultures from Stamp's and my throat. He seems quite pleased with the improvement I'm making. Seems to associate it somehow with the injections I've been receiving. About twice a day I've been getting something injected by a Jap orderly out of a weird looking syringe, which stirs me up inside and flushes my chest and face -- or seems to.

Food rations continue mighty poor, although Stamp and I did get seconds on soup this morning. Wish they'd give us some more fish, but then I wish for a lot of things.

February 23rd

A very liquid stool this morning. Must be from the lugao, yet I'm surprised enough ever accumulated to make a defecation. Stamp and I both hit lugao and soup seconds this morning; some help after last night's miserably short ration.

Jap doctor didn't come around to see us today, but he seemed quite busy with some other work which obviously effects us patients. It is reported he took notice of the noon ration and promised to do something about it; however, I've heard that before. In fact tonight's ration showed no improvement, and is proof enough for me they have no intentions of giving us more. There was a bit of meat in the soup tonight, however, and I was blessed with three pieces about the size of a lump of sugar, in my serving.

Jap doctor is working around here late tonight, taking the number, rank, name and age of at least half the patients.

February 24th

The doctor came in and examined both our throats (Stamp's and mine). Swabbed us as usual with iodine. Day busily spent, particularly this afternoon, getting a draft of some sixteen patients off to another camp. Captain Wermuth headed the group, which got around to including Stamp. That leaves me alone in isolation. Japs wouldn't permit Stamp to wear his Jap issued woolen pants, or one of his flannel top shirts out of this camp, so as soon as he left, I snatched on to same. Also cleaned up Stamp's mess.

Had good chow for a change tonight, and more of it, because of the drafts leaving after the food had probably been taken out for them. Changed my lousy clothes this evening late for some cleaner ones that Stamp had been forced to leave behind. They weren't exactly clean, but they had hung out in the cold, and no lice were on them. Then I turned all my blankets around, remade my bed of the hard tick, and placed formerly outside blankets inside so the lice wouldn't get on me too soon.

February 25th

Another good deal on the chow this morning, probably for same reason as last night. Jap doctor came in and swabbed my throat, but didn't say anything about my moving into Ward Number 4 where a few patients unable to make the draft remained. But the day isn't over yet.

This afternoon those few patients that were in Ward Number four were transferred up to the other end of building joining the ones under Major Van Oosten, and I was put in their old ward. No advantage to this occupying of a whole ward by myself. Nip doctor just can't see my returning to the fold yet, darn him.

Marine Gunner Ferrell brought around my ration tonight, explaining it was a large helping. One thing I'm thankful for, I got all steamed rice for once. If it doesn't throw me, I think I'll be feeling better. It's definitely lonely in here -- hope it isn't for long.

February 26th

This being isolated isn't so good, but I don't know but what I fair better on the chow because of it. Gunner Ferrell takes out my ration, and I think he makes some compensation for my being alone in here. Have had steamed rice every meal today, and according to Ferrell, a better ration than most. Got seconds on soup twice today.

Doctor stopped by and had an orderly swab my throat. I stood quite a while out on the sun porch this afternoon, talking to Gunner who was sorting some dirty bandages for the little Nip corpsman. It's been thawing all day after a couple days of piling up snow.

February 27th

Steamed rice ration isn't holding up in quantity. Gunner says I'm receiving as much as anyone though, and he's so fine about everything, I guess I shouldn't kick. Spent a good part of the forenoon out on the sun porch again, picking lice out of my clothes, one by one.

Was given the rind off two small oranges by one of the Japs this morning. He also did a couple of dressings for me. We finally received fish again at noon. Had another orange peeling and an apple this afternoon. Everyone had an apple. Seems one of the Jap orderlies took money out of his own pocket and bought them for us. Had a cigarette today also; the first in months.

Gunner forgot me on chow tonight, but it so happened a ration of lugao was left uneaten on the ward, so they gave it to me. Poor substitute for steamed rice, but no use making Gunner feel any worse for having forgotten. I can manage until morning, though I fear the night will pass slower than usual.

February 28th

The Jap doctor didn't stop by to see me at all today, but I guess he saw me sunning myself as he passed by on his way to the other ward. I stayed up practically all afternoon, delousing my clothes and taking the air into my pores. I'm certainly skinny. Folks at home would weep to look at me. Hope by staying up to spend a better night sleeping. Cleaned up and remade my bed which should also induce sleep.

Chow ration continues lower than necessary for our needs. We had beans again tonight. They're always good, just don't get enough.

The Jap doctor has us all on two multiple vitamins, two B1 tablets, and two sulfadiazine tablets three times a day. This should help us, although it seems to me he could give us fewer pills, and thereby make them last longer. I said as much to Comdr. Carey Smith; however he says he'll take all he can get (he's coming by and giving them to me), and not worry about when we run out. Guess that's good enough for me.

Who says there's no Santa Claus? A little Nip soldier came in to see me tonight and gave me a rice ball and three pieces of pickled turnip. Arigato!

My God, see us into a fairer month tomorrow, in many ways.

March 1, 1945

As humiliating as it was to scrape the empty chow buckets for scraps this morning in front of the Japs, it paid. One of them went out and got me a whole bowl full of steaming hot rice, which is the only way to start the day. Doctor stopped by and looked at my throat. Seemed satisfied, yet gave no word to have me moved in with the others. Expect him to do so about tomorrow -- if not, I'll ask him.

Guess if there's any one thing I've had plenty of today, it's rice. Had several handouts from Nip guards. Of course, it cost something in personal pride. This, however, isn't the time or place to worry about pride, not when you're hungry.

March 2nd

The morning got set and the afternoon let go with all it had. Rain, and plenty of it. Rather expect rain this month though. Doctor stopped by, seemed to think my throat was O.K., and said I could rejoin the other patients in a couple more days. Made out fairly well on the rice today, though not as well as yesterday. Guess I've got a lot to be thankful for, however; three meals a day and a fairly decent shelter from the rain.

March 3rd

This morning didn't start off so well as concerned getting a gift of rice from the guards, but the little Nip "Santa" came through with another rice ball and some pickled turnips, much to my surprise. I've put the touch on a couple others for as much, but it remains to be gained.

Dr. Fraleigh shaved me this afternoon after a Nip clipped all my hair off. I feel quite naked. It's been the 12th of December since I've had either haircut or shave. The Japs have no sense of humor, and laugh to see me bald on face and head; refusing, or pretending not to recognize me without my beard and long hair.

A long, cold, dreary day. Nor did I gain the rice I refer to above.

March 4th

Made out well on the rice this morning. One of the guards gave me a full mess kit full, besides my regular ration. Guess that's the end of any extra rice though if I join the other patients today, and that was more or less what the doctor promised me.

Moved into Major Van Oosten's ward once again this afternoon, and did I notice the difference in the chow ration. Still, it's good to be back in the fold and hear some conversation in the evenings.

March 5th

A cold miserable day. I spent a good part of it cleaning up the ward and performing odd duties for patients less able to help themselves. The chow ration isn't going to be adequate though, I'm thinking, for very much work. Time passes faster, however, in this environment.

March 6th

The Japs had an air raid last night, and this morning they're all busy bailing the rain water out of their fox holes. Been on my feet all day; even worked outside for the Japs a little while this afternoon, scooping out water from their air raid shelters.

We had a bit of fish for noon chow today. The first meat of any kind in six days. I am trying to get Major Van Oosten to put me on heavy worker's ration since I'm doing more work all the time, but he won't consider it. Part of my duties consist of emptying the "benjo buckets" and filling the patients canteens with hot water, which they use as hot water bottles to help them keep warm.

Lt. Allen has improved enough to start getting around, and he and I are joining in the performance of several duties.

March 7th

Spent the usual day up and around, waiting on those still too ill to do for themselves. There's always some one who wants something; a bed remade, a urinal emptied. Dr. Smith's shoulder has been bothering him, and he appreciates a massage once in a while. It was a cold, ugly day, and though I placed both my canteens full of hot water in between the blankets, hoping to get in and get warm, I never got the chance all day.

Made out on chow fairly well. Lt. Allen and myself have insisted on receiving a little extra in view of our work; and because we happened to catch our own officers pulling a damn dirty deal on all the other patients as concerns the chow, (They were taking out the solids, and adding plain boiling water to make up the difference. Of course, they split the solids among themselves), we're getting a slight consideration. Nevertheless, I told Capt. Speck what Lt. Allen and I had seen.

March 8th

Imperial Rescript Day. The day on which all Jap papers (not that we get any, but we know this is true) republish their Declaration of War on Great Britain and the U.S.A.

General airing of bedding and cleaning up of ward this afternoon. Pharm. Condon simply whimpers around and won't cooperate when it comes to cleaning up around his bed. Lots of work, which really wore me out, carrying blankets out to air and back again later. Plenty tired tonight. The guards gave me a little extra rice tonight, so I got Lt. Allen aside and split it with him. After all, the Major and his pals are getting theirs.

Listened to an interesting talk on food in New Orleans by Dr. Fraleigh, USN, tonight. His is just one of many topics we all indulge in each evening. Kelsey delivers a nice speech every now and then, especially on New York restaurants.

March 9th

Two months ago this morning, we were bombed in Takao Harbor, Formosa, and Fred, my dearest friend, began slipping out of this world. Guess I should thank God he hasn't lived to go through these last two months.

Spent the day emptying the benjo buckets and filling patients' canteens with hot water. Swept down, and performed the other little duties of my indoor job.

March 10th

It must be a Japanese holiday or something for we had fish at noon, and then soup. I continue up and about, working inside as usual, but with less and less in the way of a compensating chow ration. Several patients bathed today, under adverse conditions.

March 11th

Had a bath and a change of clothes this morning. First bath in three months unless one considers our swim ashore in Subic Bay, and our few minutes in the ocean at San Fernando, La Union, bathing. This bath was taken in the half barrel which Japanese furnished us. All of us can't have fresh water as it requires much too long to heat it. I think I was about third in the water today. Pharm. Condon is one person who surprised me. He is going to have to be forced to bathe! He used to be so clean in Bilibid, and now he doesn't seem to know the word. Also, I shaved myself -- the first time since 12th December. Certainly feel better for cleaning up.

Up and about all day, working both inside and out. If it wasn't for what little food I get off the guards, I don't think I could do it. Major Van Oosten and Gunner, as well as a couple others, are sore at me for hanging around the guards during their meal times, insinuating that I'm hungry, but I've explained to Dr. Smith and Capt. Speck how it benefits me once in a while, and they say I've as much right to be on the lookout for food as the Major is.

March 12th

Washed clothes today. Quite an ordeal considering my strength. This is the first time I've washed any clothes for well over three months -- since the days when I used to wash both Fred's and mine, and had a little soap at least. Usual day in every other way; routine duties, routine chow rations -- most inadequate.

March 13th

A fair day, both in weather and treatment. We had a little fish at noon. I spent several hoursin bed with a couple of hot canteens, sitting up, sewing buttons on some old clothes. Capt. Speck and I carried on a pleasant conversation on the subject of books -- non-fiction books of course.

Promised Dr. Fraleigh and Gunner Ferrell that I'd discontinue hanging around the guards, anticipating extra rice, since they object so strenuously. All the same, I know they're just endeavoring to make out better themselves by cutting me out.

March 14th

The big event today was our receiving one small box of Red Cross chow between three men. We knew the Japs had this chow, for the other night they had a celebration and some of them, after achieving an inebriated state, came in the middle of the night and woke us up to torment us with walking by and dropping a single raisin or two into our mouths. One or two of the Japs gave Major Van Oosten and Ferrell considerably more -- enough for these two men to reliably report to us that American Red Cross Food was in camp, whether we ever got it or not.

This small box of food between three men is certainly a poor amount as compared to the 4½ boxes we averaged in Bilibid, December 1943. Each of these boxes contained approximately one can of Prem, one can Mor, one can Corned Beef, one can Pate, one can jam, three cans butter, two bars chocolate, one box cheese, one box raisins, 1 lb. sugar, one pound powdered milk, one small can soluble coffee, two bars toilet soap, and two packages of gum. We had only six cans salmon in the seven boxes allotted to our group, and four extra cans of butter, so we threw these into general mess today at noon. Just as well too, since the Japs denied us the fish issue today. They also cut our soup and rice rations accordingly, so I guess we'd better eat up our Red Cross food and let the Japs learn that we're out, in order to get back our former ration.

The Japs took all the American cigarettes out of the seven food boxes, and then issued five packages of Chesterfields between the twenty-one of us -- a far cry from what we want and have a right to expect, but I guess we should be thankful to receive anything. So many of our shipmates that left the Philippines with us aren't alive to receive even this much.

It's been cloudy all day with a little rain, but not very cold. Jack Kelsey has taken a turn for the worse. Unusually sick all day, he's even got the Jap doctor anxious. Bet it's Cardiac Beri-Beri.

(One night lately, can't remember definitely which, the Japanese doctor rushed in and called for Major Van Oosten. They spoke in the doctor's office or somewhere near, for we could partly make our their conversation. Later Major Van Oosten entered the ward and explained the Jap doctor's order. Seems as if the Nips have bombed Chicago, Washington, D.C., and New York with great strato-bombers, and now they're expecting retaliation raids. We are to remain quietly in our beds in the event they raid this vicinity. If we do otherwise we'll all be taken out afterwards and beheaded. No foolin!)

March 15th

Jack Kelsey's condition is most serious this morning. Dr. Smith is strictly observing, as are the Jap doctors. No doubt it's beriberi of the heart. Gunner Ferrell and Lt. Balfanz are both attentive as Jack is close to the both of them.

It's a cold morning, so besides performing my regular chores in the ward, I assisted the heavy workers outside in moving Jap furniture and debris -- trying to keep warm.

Jack Kelsey died mid-morning. I wonder now what becomes of the manuscripts he's been accumulating all these years in prison for a book we were all looking forward to the publishing of: "Of Rice and Men". Perhaps though, he left them up in Cabanatuan or somewhere in the Philippines. In fact, he must have, for he never mentioned losing them on his trip enroute from Manila.

Low ration of rice this noon, but we did get some pretty good soup which contained dumplings. Immediately after chow, things began to happen. Representatives from Prisoner of War Camp Number 22 called for us. We were told we'd move. We were to be allowed to take only a change of clothes, then, to make it worse, only what we were wearing and our equipment (canteens, mess kits and remainder of Red Cross food). We traveled via an ambulance to a railroad station where after waiting a while, we boarded a fairly nice passenger coach. At this time, Gunner Ferrell, "Slim" Shroat, Beaumont and Blackie, the four men who were not classified as officers of medical department, were given huge overcoats and separated from us to await transportation to another camp. It was a difficult task helping the patients to and from the train, and we had to change trains about the middle of our three-and-a-half hours journey.

Amazed at the efficiency of Japanese railroads. They apparently run on excellent timing; and to think -- conductors, brakemen, even more responsible jobs on these trains are filled by mere women and youngsters. Noticed countless plots of fine gardens along the railway line.

About 2000 we arrived at our destination and began a long, dark and difficult walk to our camp. I had practically to carry Lt. Balfanz, though he earnestly tried to help himself -- which is certainly more that can be said for Mr. Condon, who Dr. Smith, ill as he is, helped from the train to the camp. Arrived in a camp of about 91 Australians, 9 Dutch and the 14 Americans who left our hospital a couple of weeks ago, the 24th of February, to be exact. We were fed a bowl of steaming hot rice, and a full bowl of soup. So to bed with hot water bottles, courtesy of the Japanese

March 16th

Reveille in camp at 0500 with a hot bowl of thick lugao, heavily mixed with leftovers of last night's soup and other vegetables. The Aussies call it "Pap". It's good. My only objection is in it's being served so darned early. Looked forward all A.M. to an issue of clothing and a steam bath, but this didn't materialize all day. Took a walk up to the hospital and met an Aussie named Bill Slattery. He seems a nice kid, is from Sidney (captured at Singapore).

Spent a good part of today in bed. Nothing else to do. Noon and evening bowls of rice and soup eaten in room since Jap doesn't want us eating in the mess hall until we've bathed and changed clothes. This camp is called Fukuoka Number 22.

March 17th

A very cold morning, but with the hot "pap", and cup of soluble coffee with milk and sugar, which I made to drink and finish off with a Chesterfield (all of this taken in bed), a lot of harshness was taken out of the weather. Reported to hospital this morning, not for duty, merely to observe the routine. Stamp is head corpsman and recommends I don't report for duty too soon. Easy to guess why!

Clothes issued this morning. I received an Australian Army overcoat, as I wanted, in preference to the British coat. Took a steam bath, and oh Lord, it felt good. Helps one's morale 100% to get cleaned up and changed into new clean clothes.

The Dutch doctor in charge of the hospital introduced me to the Jap Medical Sgt. and I start on duty tomorrow morning. Am to receive the regular camp worker's ration. Helped around the hospital this evening, and shared the last of my soluble coffee with Stamp, Bill Slattery and another Aussie I recently met called "Mickey". Late to bed tonight with two hot water bottles for companions.

March 18th

We had a couple air raids during the night. Another one immediately after we'd had our morning "pap" with "back-ups" (seconds in the vocabulary of those from the land below the wind). Guess we spent a couple hours in the air raid shelter -- really an inadequate, cold, damp place.

No "back-ups" for this noon's chow, because someone broke into the galley last night and stole about 25 men's ration of bread. First I'd heard of their baking bread for us. Had it explained -- it was an experiment on bread, to see if they could issue it to prisoners. Immediately after our noon chow, air raid went again and we had to stay in the most uncomfortably cold shelter all afternoon.

Plain boiled fish in tonight's soup, which was as cold as it was thin. I finished the last of my Red Cross butter and Klim today. Have been trying to stretch it out over a period of time, but in doing so have lost part of it through theft. Evening spent filling hot water bottles for patients in hospital, making "Tenko", and getting myself warm.

March 19th

Got up this morning as "Bango" bell rang (0500). Fair "pap" with "back-ups". Had an air raid soon afterwards, though it didn't last as long as yesterday. After the secure from air raid blew, the Japanese guards held a "shake down" in our rooms, and obviously took some Red Cross food from some of the Americans. Also they shook us down personally. I only lost a pencil, but came so damn close to losing this diary it "ain't funny". Actually the Japs took diary, but I stole it back.

Capt. Speck got me to split his can of Mor between Lestner, he and I for noon chow. We have only a can of corn beef left between us. Did some heavy work this afternoon, so Bill Slattery is taking my night duty tonight. Also, I got a shave and took a steam bath this P.M. Received the clothes back which I wore into this place, and believe me it's something to have a change of duds. We received a rumor today that Tokyo is getting bombed. Well and good.

March 20th

"Pap" with "back-ups" this morning. The stuff is quite tasty, but the same old story, we don't get enough of it.

Assisted Dr. Smith on round of wards this morning, performing dressings. Japs don't allow us much in the way of medicines or dressing equipment, but at least we're getting along better than a month ago. Jap doctor was here today, collecting information on us new medics. He doesn't impress me as being as kind or intelligent as the doctor in the last place.

Capt. Speck, Lestner and I divided our last can of meat (corn beef) this noon, and it was delicious with the "pap". When evening "tea" (as these Aussies have us saying) rolled around however, I regretted not having saved a part of my one-third can of the beef, for the evening soup was terribly thin and we got but very little of rice.

Because of rain, no one went after the soybean milk, which has proven to be a treat for us the couple times we've had it. Seems they must go some way after it, hauling the cans on a hand cart. When it rains like it has today, the wheels mire in the mud. Part of the time, a couple of prisoners are allowed to go after it; other times it is brought to our camp by Jap girls from the soybean factory.

Am really tired tonight after being on my feet all day. Foot still bothers me if I have to stay up on it for long. Feel pretty blue tonight also, thinking of home, which I long to reach, and Freddie, whom I miss more and more. God, but may this blasted war end this year.

March 21st

First night on night duty. Don't think it will be so bad, although it would mean a lot to have a bite to eat during the night. Did dressings and assisted in one of the wards as usual, all day, with exception of about three hours in the evening when I laid down for a nap.

Had an unusual lunch today; bread made from millet flour which was slightly stale, soybean sprout soup and soya milk. Not many liked this meal, but I thought it was fine. In general, I like this food. The only thing is, we never receive enough of it. The Japs issued four packages of cigarettes to each enlisted man, and five packages to each officer. Understand this is usual every ten or twelve days.

Talked with some Aussies tonight regarding living in Australia. They're all for Yanks coming down to their country. They're quite as stuck on their land as a native son is on California, and they laud it like a Texan does his state.

Washed out some old rags I'm using for handkerchiefs while on duty tonight. Will I never get over this queer cold? Never have been without it since the Diphtheria trouble, and it's most embarrassing to eat when I can't keep my soup or rice from returning through my nostrils half the time I try to swallow it.

March 22nd

Wasn't a bad watch I just completed, if only I hadn't lost my cigarettes this morning. At 0430 this A.M., when I went down to our room to wake Weisner and Lestner, I carried some clothes I had marked during the night, and my cigarettes, and placed them on the shelf at the head of my mattress. I placed the three packages of cigarettes in my empty canteen carrier and tossed some clothes over the whole thing. When I returned to the room immediately after "pap", the cigarettes were missing. Obviously stolen during the short time between tenko and chow down. Capt. Wermuth or Capt. Mead. Anyway the tobacco is gone. An Army medic, Rogers, was caught stealing chow or something out of the galley last night (around 2100), and he's now in the guard house. Since they never let him return to our room, he definitely is cleared of lifting my cigarettes.

Slept only a little today. Spent most of my time cleaning up the room we American corpsmen occupy. No one else seems to care enough about keeping the place even half clean, so I guess I must. Thought the noon and evening soups were quite good.

March 23rd

Good "pap" with "back-ups" this morning. Worked all day in the larger ward, number three, where there are mixed Aussie and American patients. There isn't too much to do, mostly routine ward work. Of course having only one urinal to a ward, and on a diet of rice, there's plenty of leg work expected. Stamp is becoming unfriendly as heck. He has recently begun bossing and exerting his authority as master corpsman. He's particulary anxious to pick a quarrel with me.

The Aussies are on the whole, quite friendly. Have recently brought a paper into camp which informs us of the great news that Americans are fighting in the city of Manila, and have been since February 7th. Gee, that means all those we left in Bilibid are probably home by now. Hope Dr. Zundell got my books and mailed to next of kin. Hope Horn got word through to Fred's and my folks that we'll be a little late getting home -- only Freddie can never go home, but how is Horn to know?

But maybe Fred **is** home, and with his folks already.

March 24th

Another routine day on Ward Number Three cleaning up the patients eating gear, straightening their belongings on the shelfs at the head of their beds, sweeping and swabbing down, carrying of bed pans and urinal. Routine as all hell, with only the meals to look forward to. Yes, I look forward, anxiously, to each meal, despite the fact I know it's only rice and soup. I like rice and soup; only I wish I could get all I wanted of it just once. When I get back to the States, I'm going to boil approximately a gallon of rice, get a case of Van Camp's vegetable soup, mix them, then sit down and eat and eat.

Rogers was let out of the guard shack today, and has reported back to our room for sleeping. The rumor is he'll not come back to work here in the hospital.

The Australian Chaplain came around and reported the receiving of some new books in camp today. I immediately put my name on the reservation list for two or three. One in particular I want to read is "The Outline of General Forestry", since if Fred Sanders and Shumway had lived, the three of us would probably have said to hell with the Navy and gone back to school, to Corvallis, and studied forestry.

Received forty cigarettes out of the fifty owed me by an Aussie Sgt. whom I traded an extra canteen cup and spoon to. Other Aussies warned me about the Scotch habits of the Sgt., and told me I'd probably get stung, but I think I drove a pretty good bargain.

March 25th

Duty on ward went better today, and I actually got a chance to sit down and read a bit of "Australia, My Country". A most interesting introduction to what must surely be an interesting country, written by some Australian naturalist. There were "back-ups" on "pap" this morning, but noon's and tonight's chow seemed mighty low in both rice and soup.

Rogers told today he is no longer attached to Medical Staff, but will begin working in the mine (coal) instead, once he is strong enough. Personally, I don't thing he'll ever be strong enough; so few are. Why, even these Aussies and Dutchmen aren't strong enough. They're every last one of them losing weight at a terrific pace. Hell, they don't get enough calories to maintain health at light work, much less coal mining.

March 26th

Back-ups on "pap" this morning, plus some extra, via Mickey. Kept busy all morning on ward, but did manage to finish Charles Barrett's "Australia, My Country". Had a good ration of rice at noon, after which I returned to ward and straightened it up before leaving it to Bill Slattery while I took off for a shave and bath, change of clothes, etc. Haven't rested all day, yet I have the duty tonight. Well, perhaps I'll sleep that much better tomorrow; and I do have a washing to do which will prevent me from dropping off to sleep tonight. Fair soup tonight, and a piece of half raw fish on top of our ration of rice.

March 27th

My hands are quite sore this A.M. from scrubbing clothes during the night. Had no difficulty staying awake, however. Hung clothes outside for drying before going to bed; then, when I went to bed, I had no more than fallen asleep when the air raid sounded and I had to rush into some clothes and down into the air raid shelter with everyone else. All clear didn't sound until afternoon. I tried sleeping again afterwards, but only dozed off now and then. Never obtained any real rest.

Received first library book since I've been here. "An Outline of General Forestry", by Joseph S. Illick. It appears to be exactly what I wanted for an introduction to the profession I am in no small way interested in. Air raid tonight, and we all had to hightail it down to the shelters. Could hear planes passing over quite distinctly.

March 28th

We remained in the air raid shelters until 0100 this A.M., listening to the planes and the loads they dropped in the distance. They must be dropping some terrible loads. The men didn't seem inclined to shoot the breeze or smoke during the night raid as they usually do during the daylight raids. Maybe most of them were trying to go on with their sleeping. It was much too cold and damp and cramped for me to sleep.

Usual morning in the ward. Light rations at noon of soup and rice. The sun is out bright and clear, giving us one of the warmest days since we arrived in Japan. Have a chance to trade a khaki shirt and blue Filipino denim jumper to an Aussie (Frank Thompson) for a good pair of Jap socks, which I really need, and a hell of a nice Dutch Military blouse, a lovely forest green, well tailored, which I covet for a souvenir.

Bill Slattery and Mickey, the two Aussies helping out in the hospital, are in on some kind of chow deal, via the Jap orderly, and, I suspect, the galley. Suspecting the galley crew, however is dangerous, as certainly they all seem most honest and above board.

Have read more concerning forestry today than I ever knew. It's an extensive field. The miners got a nice hit on rice tonight, but no change in our rations. Of course the miners are still yelling for more, and rightly deserve it. Hope there's no air raid tonight as I'm out on my feet with sleepiness.

March 29th

Mickey's birthday (24th). The cooks gave him their back-ups on pap this morning, which, with our tables usual back-ups, afforded quite an appreciable ration. Mickey passed out among the rest of us orderlies some of that which the kitchen gave him.

Harry H. Mittenthal of Pasig, Rizal, P.I., hasn't been able to eat the regular chow because of his diarrhea. Since I've been waiting on him hand and foot, even to washing his bed clothes, which he frequently messes, I'm not against accepting the part of his chow he can't eat. I'm taking chances on catching his own individual breed of diarrhea I guess, but so what. One has to eat, and eat all they can.

A quiet day with mild temperature and sunshine. Evidently the Japs think it is Spring, for they have collected all the hot water bottles from us. Also searched our rooms during "chow-down" at noon, and I lost my mess kit. Of course I don't need it, eating as we are, out of these bowls.

Miners are complaining again tonight as concerns their rice ration, but have been told the national shortage of rice prevents any increase in rations even being considered. Received an issue from Japs of one bottle of Chili pepper powder this evening. Came in mighty handy for me as someone had just stolen my last half bottle.

There is a rumor that 100 Americans are to start work in the mines as of the first of April, but they're not to be stationed in this particular camp.

March 30th

Quiet A.M. No actual air raid, though the Japs sounded their alert signal. Never secured it, yet in the afternoon, they sounded it again. Had two good back-ups of pap this morning. Beautiful day. Frank Thompson sewed up the cuffs on the Dutch Colonial blouse he's trading to me. I traded a Yank web belt for an Aussie leather one. Also traded my last seven cigarettes for two issues of "mizu paste". It all depends on how long off from the last cigarette issue, whether you get a good deal for a few cigarettes or not. This mizu paste. I can't figure out how it's made, but it certainly improves the taste of rice or soup.

I did well on noon and evening chow since Mittenthal couldn't eat much of his rice. Evening ration of rice about half of noon's ration, but the soya soup this evening was "bloody good". Also had two rations of soya milk tonight, though one was quite sour. I drank mine and anybody elses who didn't like the sour taste. I've already got diarrhea, so needn't fear much from the soya milk.

March 31st

Usual morning on ward. I washed clothes for a couple of Aussie patients. Air raid sounded at 1000. Even before we could reach our shelters bomb detonations could be heard in the distance. A hell of a big raid, possibly on some large airdrome near by. Secure went a little after noon, just in time for us to get some chow.

Took a short nap after 1500 in preparation for night duty. Rice ration lighter tonight than usual, but soup better as if to compensate us. Some bowls of soup even had small pieces of meat in them.

I approached the galley crew tonight and asked for a little cupful of leftover soup so I'd have a bit to eat about 2400. As I was asking for it from one of the crew, who was about to refuse me, another came up and offered me the soup. Of course I accepted and thanked them. Why shouldn't they give me some? They are frequently sending over large amounts to Slattery and Mickey. These two get extra food every night they stand a watch, and often they receive extra during the day; which, I've been tipped off to by one of the galley members, is supposed to be divided between all of us corpsmen. Neither Slattery nor Mickey have been splitting it with us. On the other hand, they sneak about trying to consume it without our knowing.

Read further into the subject of Forestry on watch tonight as the patients were relatively quiet.

April 1, 1945

Easter Sunday. The water was off all night, so what washing I managed on watch had to be done after 0400 this A.M. To bed fairly early after pap, and I slept well with exception of three or four times I had to get up for defecating, etc

This afternoon I hung out my bedding to air in the sun and swept and cleaned up the room. Got my head clipped, a shave, and then bathed. Before evening "tea" I could hardly get around, cramps having struck me severely. It was all I could do to get to my bed before tenko, wait around for tenko on the ward, then get to the head. Cramps and diarrhea are terrible. Finally got permission to fill my canteen with hot water and get off to bed. Christ, let's not have an air raid tonight, I could never make it down to the shelter.

April 2nd

My cramps kept up most of the night, giving me almost more pain than I could stand. Thank God there was no air raid. Turned in my "Outline of Forestry" for "Preston John", by John Buchan. Took it fairly easy on the ward this morning. Washed out a couple soiled garments for Lt. Mittenthal, and then did my own washing in the afternoon. "Mitt" ate all his chow today. Obviously he's feeling better. Most of his trouble has been due to his lack of teeth, but the Jap doctor finally approved of his having pap three times a day instead of steamed rice at noon and in the evening.

Nice hit of rice at noon, but lighter this evening. About eight American officers, and the camp officers (Australian), received considerably extra rice this evening. Everyone is asking why, since they are only camp workers, the same as we are. Had a little dish of fish tonight. Quite insignificant really, just enough to make it possible for the Japs to say they fed us fish.

Received "The Best of Carlyle" from library today, making two books I have out now. Don't think I'm supposed to have more than one at a time, but if the little Aussie Chaplain can't keep track of his charge, I should worry. Some of the Aussies can't understand the concern many of us Americans have for food. They say they're sick of listening to our complaints about the rations, but I notice the very ones who talk against us the loudest are the ones who are getting something extra, by hook or crook.

April 3rd

Evidently the cook I spoke to before going to bed last night about the extra chow coming over to the hospital and being seized on by Slattery and Mickey, reported my conversation and disapproval to the boys, as they were plenty sore this morning, and have remained so all day. "Mick" tried to make a scene at the table this A.M., but I refused to reply to his insults. Johnny Porter, a hell of a fine Aussie, who did feel like standing up for me, caught a hell of a bawling out.

Usual hard day on ward. Rinsed summer uniforms the Japs issued us yesterday. in boiling water, endeavoring to shrink them, for they're much too big, but they wouldn't shrink enough. Started "Preston John" today, but not much time for reading unless I stay up evenings to do it.

Reported to Comdr. Smith about Slattery and Mickey's dealing with the extra chow sent over to the hospital. He took me before Lt. Flynn, an Aussie Officer in charge of the Commissary, and ordered me to repeat the story. I asked Lt. Flynn to promise to handle the situation in such a manner as would harm none, before I let him in on it. He said he would. Of course, Mickey and Bill Slattery can't help being hurt to the extent they lose out on all surplus food they've been getting.

April 4th

Bill Slattery and Stamp drew back-ups on pap in the ward besides their usual mess hall seconds. I inquired of Stamp the whyfore, etc. He told me to mind my own business. Said he and Bill had simply scraped out the pap bucket after serving the patients. He wondered at my begrudging them any extras.

Read most of "Preston John" this afternoon, after cleaning up the ward. It wasn't so warm today, being slightly overcast.

We were delighted to hear of a truck of Red Cross food parcels arriving around noon; but this afternoon we learn there were only 30 large boxes, which means only 120 small boxes. Our camp is 129 so there won't be quite a box apiece. No one yet knows how they'll be distributed, or if they will, though several people are already planning on how they'll trade this for that.

The Jap doctor was here all day, and this afternoon, the Dutch doctor called Stamp and I into conference. Informed us we were to trade jobs. Stamp to take over Ward 3, and I am to be in charge over all the wards with duties of dressing station and medications. Neither of us desire the change. I know I was perfectly content to mind Ward 3. At least I could get a little reading now and then. And Stamp, he can't stand to think of working under me. Furthermore, I know he won't work, but the Dutch doctor has taken a disliking to Stamp and won't trust him. I'll probably be in the same position soon.

Anyway, being the head corpsman now, I moved bed and belongings up into the ward where Stamp has been staying, and told him to move his things below. Naturally he didn't like this, but it's warmer now and he shouldn't mind sleeping down in our little room.

April 5th

Busier than hell all day doing dressings, cleaning up dressing room (I don't think Stamp has cleaned the dressing room for a couple of weeks), giving out A.M. medications, making sick call with Comdr. Smith, and helping him give three I.V. injections of glucose. This afternoon there were cough powders to weigh out and wrap in individual papers, sulphur ointment to make, more medications to draw from the Jap medical Sgt. and give out.... Anyway, I worked all day. Only had one chance to sit a while on my bed and rest.

My diarrhea is letting up, no doubt due to the Bismuth powder and sulfaguanadine I'm getting from the Dutch doctor. We had a small side dish of fish with tonight's tea, as well as a few tiny fish flavoring the soup. No ideas about camp as to when the Red Cross food boxes will be distributed, but it's pretty definite they are 9 boxes short, and distribution would have to be something like 12 boxes for each 13 men. Read a little from Carlyle before retiring tonight.

April 6th

Not quite so busy a day as yesterday. Drew half a cup of "thirds" on pap this morning and saved it for eating around 1000, at which time I added hot water and pepper sauce. This is a habit most of us are getting into -- saving our back-ups until a little later in the morning because pap is served too darned early.

Washed some clothes this afternoon. Stamp took quite ill, collapsed dramatically on the ward this afternoon, and has been admitted as a patient.

Had a better tea tonight than usual since Stamp, who was unable to eat his rice, loaned it to Dr. Smith who, in turn, loaned half of it to me. This will render it easier paying back, not stripping us of our full ration. I traded 5 cigarettes for some mizu paste, and using my last 1½ bottles of dry, ground up, red peppers, I made a delectable sauce for seasoning my soup.

Lt. Allen shaved me this evening. I intended bathing before tea, but got so interested in tearing up paper I stole from Japs for notebook use, tea time arrived before I got around to it.

By cutting cards with the others in my group, I won ½ bar of Jap issued toilet soap, but lost out on the tooth powder. Returned "Carlyle" to library and drew out "My Family, Right or Wrong", by John Philip Sousa III, which I began reading before retiring.

April 7th

Kept busy enough all day, so time sped by pretty fast. Washed out some filthy used dressings (which the Japs won't even furnish soap for), and drew some medical supplies from Jap Medical Sgt. Made sick call as usual with Dr. Smith, giving out medications and performing a few dressings. Stamp is becoming irrational, and I gather from talking with Comdr. Smith, he may be in danger of losing his mind.

Managed to read a bit and get a good hot bath this afternoon. We had a nice ration of rice for tonight's tea, also some sweet soya milk. In fact all of today's meals have been fair. It is reliably reported that the Japs have already broken into one of our Red Cross food parcels.

April 8th

Morning passed quickly enough, though it proceeded at a snail's pace until 0900 when the night shift came in from the mine. I'd already put my dressing equipment away and cleaned up my place, so I had only to reset enough equipment out to do the necessary late dressings, then I was free to begin my washing.

Dr. Smith's arriving a little later, ready to make sick call, interrupted me, but I finally got the washing out by noon. There wasn't much sun today, so laundry didn't dry completely. Had a couple terrific coughing spells today that have me worrying. Surely they're an aftermath of the Diphtheria I had. It's not safe, or at all comfortable to try drinking liquids, they about choke me -- at least bring on a seizure of coughs that render eating impossible. Also my voice has changed. I can hardly talk, and when I do, it's with a very nasal quality, like some little kid with bad adenoids. Dr. Smith says it is a post- diphtheric paralysis which I may never get over. So help me God, I'd almost rather die if I can't recover from i

Finished J.P. Sousa III's "My Family, Right or Wrong". Found it a fairly humorous, good book. Received Will James' "Smoky" tonight, which I started before going to bed.

April 9th

Bataan fell three years ago today. We haven't gone very far since then. We are still prisoners of war, with little chance of ever getting home, but damn if I expect to be a POW by this time next year.

Thought we'd have an air raid last night, but only the alert sounded. The pap was awfully thin this morning, but we did get back-ups on it. The Jap doctor specified Mickey wasn't to stand any more night watches, so I'll have to go back on, and darn if I'm not going to see if I can't get Weisner assigned to night duty. He's no worse than the rest of us.

"Mick", the barber, was ill today, and I went out of my way to help him, but when it came around to my buying some mizu paste off him, he demanded the usual five cigarettes. It wasn't a very pleasant day with the light drizzling rain. Rice ration fair both at noon and tonight, but both soup rations were mighty watery.

"Smoky", by Will James, is proving more interesting than I had expected it would be. Still no dope on when or how Red Cross food parcels will be issued. Of course, we're all very much concerned, and impatient.

April 10th

Poor pap this morning, but at noon we had pap again -- fresh pap with the vegetables in it, not overly cooked, and we got back-ups on this. An ordinary day otherwise. Read more of "Smoky" and began Biddle's "Mr. Justice Holmes". Fair soup tonight, but mighty poor rice ration. I've had pretty bad cramps this evening and they're not letting up.

Rumor has it the Red Cross food parcels may be issued tomorrow. At least tomorrow is not destined to be just an ordinary day, for reveille is to be at 0630 instead of 0500, with breakfast at 0700 instead of 0530, and all the miners will be off duty. Cigarette issue tonight; officers 50, the rest of us, 40.

April 11th

"Yasume" day -- no one worked at the mine today. Night and day crews swap shifts. A new Camp Commander, some Jewish looking 2nd Lieutenant, mustered us all outside today and made a speech, in his own language, which even the interpreter couldn't get across to us, his English was so poor. It concerned shortening the working hours, and increasing the rations, but expecting the same amount of work, if not more, from the men. Nothing was said concerning the Red Cross food. According to our officers, the Japanese Commander has to get authority from higher up before he can issue the food boxes. Seems as if he doesn't need much authority before appropriating a box now and then for his own use though.

Rested some this evening in preparation for the night long watch. Finished "Smoky" while on duty.

April 12th

Stayed up only long enough to do dressings, and get dressing room tidied up (0700), then to bed. Got up about 1030 and ate the back-ups I'd saved from this morning's pap. Again to bed until noon, and after chow to bed again until about 1400 when I got up, bathed and changed clothes. Took it easy all day and refused to get excited about a damn thing except food. Fair rations today, but nothing extra.

April 13th

The 13th, and a Friday. The pap was very poor this A.M., utterly tasteless. Soon as I finished the dressings and gave out medications, I washed my dirty clothes, which required most of the morning. Aired bedding this afternoon, and took a short sun bath. It has been a beautiful day, and all the patients were taken, or asked to move, outside for a sunning. Noon rations very poor, but the evening rations were better considering the bit of fish we had.

Stamp is feeling better. Must be, for he's interested in collecting the rice rations he's loaned out, particularly from me. Haven't heard him demanding any of it back from Dr. Smith who owes him a good deal more than I do. I payed him back half of what I owed him this evening. Will finish paying him with tomorrow noon's ration.

Have defecated about six times today. Wonder if it's the result of the broth I ate last night; a broth I made by boiling up a lot of left over fish bones.

April 14th

Got back-ups on pap this morning and saved until 1000 for eating. Japs searched camp quarters for 12 missing Red Cross food boxes -- evidently hoping to avert suspicions they must be aware are directed toward them from all of us. After all they're the only ones who have access to the storeroom where the Red Cross food is kept. This afternoon the Japs moved all food parcels out of our camp over to the Jap Commander's quarters.

Capt. Moore, the Australian officer heading our camp, was directed to tell us the Red Cross food will be saved for an emergency -- in case of a food shortage resulting from bombings or an invasion. If this last is true, we'll never see them again. What wouldn't the Red Cross delegates give to know how these food parcels are being handled?

Finished paying Stamp's rice back. The soup tonight had some kind of dumplings in it, but was totally without flavor. Japs issued us two little bottles of dried red pepper. Read more of "Mr. Justice Holmes" tonight. Most interesting story of a great man.

April 15th

Back-ups on pap went around twice at our table this morning. Wish we had as much every morning. The morning was pretty well filled with doing dressings, cleaning up the dressing room, giving out medications, and making sick call with Dr. Smith, at which time there were more dressings to do. Dr. Smith says he feels quite sure my inability to speak plainly of late is due to post-diphtheric paralysis alright, but if I ever get on a decent diet again all will be O.K. It worries me.

Afternoon passed fast enough with the weighing of everyone in camp. Everyone is losing weight. I now weigh 46.6 kilos, as compared to 47.4 kilos of last month. Of course I'm only 30 pounds underweight. Some are as much as seventy-five and a hundred. All the same, I've gotten to feeling mighty weak of late. My hands and feet are beginning to feel numb. There is a constant feeling of going to sleep in them. The fingers are definitely losing their sensitiveness. Hope we don't have to wait too much longer for the end of this war and more food.

The Japs told us today that President Roosevelt died from a stroke, and our new president is a fellow named Truman. Never heard of him. Everyone is sorry to learn of Roosevelt's passing. We almost refuse to believe it, yet it might be so. We all feel he'd have done so much more for us once this thing is over, and we're recovered, than any other man could or would do. May his policies remain intact at least.

On night duty tonight. Finished Francis Biddle's "Mr. Justice Holmes". Enjoyed it enough to read again some day.

April 16th

Saved back-ups from this morning's pap, and got up around 1000 to eat it. Had pap again this noon. The noon pap had much more flavor and weight to it than that which we get of a morning. Japs issued us some dried red peppers at noon, so Dr. Fraleigh, catching me up at that time, gave me the American enlisted men's ration, and told me to divide them up and issue. I counted them out and gave to the respective persons. Cut my own up real fine with a pair of surgical scissors and made a hot sauce out of them by adding water.

Got a shave off "Mick" this afternoon, and took a steam bath. Am letting my moustache grow again. This has been a beautiful day as far as the weather is concerned. Received E. Stanley Jones' "Christ of the Indian Road" from the library today and started reading it tonight. I remember reading his "Christ's Alternative to Communism" years ago.

April 17th

The night shift from the mine got in early this morning, and were able to sit down to pap with us. Kept busy all morning, partly because of a washing I had to do, and partly because of helping out on a ward. Lestner took a turn for the worse and couldn't work, and there wasn't anyone else to assign his job to.

Had an air raid at 1500 which kept us in the shelter for a couple hours. Again we could hear the concussion of the bombs. Some objective was surely catching holy hell, though this wasn't apparently as great a raid as the last one we heard so distinctly.

Good rice ration tonight, and pretty fair soup, which is more than can be said for the noon chow. One thing that certainly helps out is the soya milk, and we had a sizeable helping today due to the girls from the soybean factory bringing some in, as well as our own detail going out after it. Prisoners of war located in a camp near the soybean factory, got word to our men today that they had received their Red Cross food parcels. Thanks to our Jap Commander, we'll probably never see ours again. Still, one can never tell.

April 18th

Lots of pap this morning, so we had double back-ups. Didn't get a chance to eat mine until after 1100 because of the air raid which kept us in the shelter from before 0800 to after 1000. During these two hours I managed to get in a position where enough light entered to render reading possible, and I read Jones' "Christ of the Indian Road". Because of the air raid, no vegetables were secured this morning, and so at noon we had no soup, only a little rice and a ration of mizu paste. Nor was tonight's soup any great improvement or attempt to make up for us the lack of vegetables at noon -- merely onions, radishes and water. Lestner being ill and turned in on my bunk, has kept me busier today.

Attended Memorial services in honor of our late President and Commander-in-Chief. Services ordered held by our Jap Camp Commander, as if we needed such an order. Was ashamed to see how few Americans and Australians attended this service. They may not all realize it, I doubt if the world does, but I'd swear on my life we've lost one of the greatest of men.

April 19th

Spent a goodly portion of the morning conversing with Major Jacobs, Army doctor. Tried to give Slattery a hand cleaning up the large ward, but he behaved as though I couldn't do the job well enough, so I shoved off. Jap doctor showed up today and made round of wards this afternoon. I didn't stick around, didn't even wait for the Jap medical Sgt. to issue the medicine for the patients. I sought a place to lay down and rest, preparatory to going on night duty.

Lestner being fairly ill, and occupying my bunk up on the ward, I moved myself and things back down to the little isolated room. I intend in future to spend more time down here too. If they want me for anything, let them hunt me up. I might just as well stay down here where it's quiet and read.

While on duty tonight I finished reading Jones' "Christ of the Indian Road". I also cooked up some stolen white rice for an Aussie, which he split with me. It tasted pretty good at 2400. Had to be most careful boiling it up in the sterilizer. Would not have paid to get caught. Don't think I'll risk it again.

April 20th

Was a bit sleepy during wee hours of this A.M., so knocked off reading and got busy with my hands, cutting up some red peppers for my hot sauce. The pap this morning differed quite a little from the usual pap in that it contained no greens, and tasted strongly of fish; nor was there much (the worst of it). After pap I gave out medications, did a few dressings and returned a book to the library. Collected a couple issues of mizu paste that some Aussie owed me, and then went to bed.

Fred would have laughed to know I took Luminol for sleeping -- some I lifted out of the Dutch doctor's box of medicines. First Luminol, or drug I've taken since the old days in Bilibid when our "circle" was forever experimenting along those lines. Slept right up to "mess parade" (1200). The soup was unusually good for noon chow.

Cleaned up room, straightened out my gear and bathed before reporting up to hospital for giving out medications. Stood by in the evening for Dudley, an Aussie corpsman on Ward 1, so he could take off and get a little nap. He has the watch tonight. There is an issue of two Chesterfield cigarettes per man tonight. Most men have already received theirs. Dr. Fraleigh hasn't come around yet however, with the enlisted mens' ration.

April 21st

We Americans weren't included in the ration of 2 Chesterfields last evening. They were only for the Aussies and Dutch, being from the Red Cross boxes issued to these two groups long before we came.

Air raid went fairly early this morning, and lasted until after 1000. For the first time, I remained on duty in the hospital instead of going to the shelter. Usually the Jap doctor only allowed Mickey to remain in the hospital. Time passed faster this way, with something to do instead of squatting and waiting in the dark for secure to blow. Guards caught one air raid shelter group smoking, so a thorough search was made for all matches and means of making lights. Guards in the hospital went through all our personal things as usual, taking our bottles of pepper sauce, any empty tins, etc. The group of 30 men caught smoking were punished by going on half grain rations at noon and tonight. Noticed Capt. Wermuth and Dr. Fraleigh had pretty drawn faces tonight. Evidently they were among the thirty.

I worked on Ward 1 today since Dudley rated being off, due to his watch last night. The ward work plus my other duties, left me plenty tired tonight; besides, I did a washing. No time for sitting around and reading today. Fair rations, all meals.

April 22nd

Up at 0430. Good ration of pap this A.M. With sick parade over I turned to cleaning up my instruments, cleaning up the dressing room and helping out in Ward 2. Most of the American officers in this ward are big babies, more in need of sympathy than anything else, unless it's good food. Helped to carry most of the patients out for a sunning this afternoon, and took a sun bath myself. Pretty fine day.

Received a cigarette issue tonight, but I'm not smoking anymore. Instead I'm trading my smokes for mizu paste or pepper sauce. Rice ration low this evening, but there was a little bit of meat in the soup.

Captain Wermuth was called from tea tonight down to the Jap Offices. Later he came over to the hospital, where he's ordinarily not allowed because of his record of shady dealing with the patients, and began checking on the names and numbers of most of us. We are wondering -- are we going to be moved, paid, or what?

April 23rd

Up early as usual. Routine morning. Received only a fair ration of pap and I can really feel it. Getting back-ups on the food spoils one. At noon we had pap again, this time it was heavy with greens, and there were back-ups.

Returned a book to library and drew out Robert W. Frederick's "How to Study Handbook", but I'm much too tired and hungry to read tonight, even if I do have the watch. My feet are growing more numb all the while, getting so I can hardly navigate. It must be beri-beri. Traded 20 cigarettes for three rations of mizu paste and some peppers tonight.

April 24th

I had a hard time remaining awake through last night's watch. My feet ached terribly, which helped some. I was sleepy enough to retire early this morning, just as soon as I had eaten my pap and given out the morning medications.

It didn't seem any time at all before I was awakened by Capt. Wermuth. In fact it was just a little past 1000, and I was told I was on a list of Americans to leave this camp tomorrow morning. Wermuth wanted me to get up immediately and start turning in all the clothes and equipment of patients and myself to the Japanes They had to be turned in by 1500. We are to be allowed to take with us only what we wear. I'm figuring out how I can get my Dutch blouse and a few extra duds past the guards. Wermuth says the Japs threaten to cut all our rations if anyone tries to put anything over on them as far as getting more out than we can wear; but I notice he and Capt. Mead, as well as several other officers, are accumulating all the clothes they can.

This evening I find several items which I realize there's no use hoping to take with me. I'm trading them off for mizu paste. It is rumored we'll be given a piece of bread to carry as a traveling ration. Where in the hell can we be heading now? The American forces must be getting ready to invade. Maybe there is something to the rumor we had sometime ago concerning a landing on one of the main Japanese islands.

April 25th

Left Fukioko Camp Number 22 about 0900 by truck, one truck for the 20 of us, and it was damn crowded. There were several who demonstrated "cabin fever" on this ride. With us went three half-loaves of steamed sour-like bread per man, rations for the next three meals. Our truck took us through some beautiful mountainous country. I couldn't help noticing the reforestation, being done on a tremendous scale.

Arrived in a fairly large town around noon. Estimate it as being Fukioka. Here we were joined by prisoners from a couple other camps. "Slim" Strout, Gunner Ferrell and Beaumont joined us, coming from a camp number 17. I learned from Gunner that Lynch, Tappy, Hagestrom, Istock, Vernon, Rogers, Rapp and Mr. Crews (Navy Medical Department) were still alive and fairing pretty well. Going out into a kind of park on the beach, we were told to take it easy, lay down and rest. While we were here, most of the afternoon, more groups of prisoners joined us, coming from everywhere it seemed, among them English, Dutch and Australians.

While we were here we ate a couple of our rations, and our camp definitely had the least food among us. Some of the camps even had Red Cross food boxes; unbelieveable almost. Most of the men from the other camps (Numbers 11 and 17 included) admitted to us they had been getting the Red Cross food issued to them via their general mess. It is quite obvious who has been getting the dirty deal in chow.

Around 1800 all the prisoners moved out of the park down to the docks. I don't have any idea how many there were of us, but I know we walked an awfully long time before we got to our destination. Some had to be transported in trucks, but no one seemed to note my condition, and by God I liked to have not made it. Dr. Fraleigh and some one else definitely had to slow down and help me. My feet were just as if they were dead. Each foot seemed to weigh a ton, and almost killed me to lift it. Once my weight shifted to this or that foot however, which I managec by some miracle to get ahead of me, I could feel nothing. I couldn't help crying all the while I walked. Truly, I never expected to reach the end of the march.

I did arrive however, and with all the others waited for what seemed hours on the dock before marching single file up on the deck of a trim built little vessel which looked capable of doing 20 or 25 knots. After boarding and storing our packs, we flopped ourselves down on the mats to sleep, but were just dropping off when an air raid sounded and we were all hurried out onto the dock again.

Ran into Dr. Langdon, R.E. Thompson, Fast, and C.W. Cook, who weren't looking too bad. Cook and Tommy gave Stamp and me some cigarettes.

April 26th

Spent at least until 0400 this A.M. squatting and flopping on the hard wharf, trying to get some sleep. It was cold, so most of us just sat and huddled together for warmth. Eventually we went aboard again. Had a small box of steamed rice with sea weed and soy beans served to us for breakfast. By 0900 our little ship got underway. At noon we were served a third of a canteen cupful of steamed rice, with a little dipper of curry gravy over it.-- a very small but wonderful tasting ration.

Under way until approximately 1630 when we docked at a port we assumed to be Fusan, Korea. We've guessed by now that we're headed for Korea or Manchuria.

From port area we marched a short distance to a big theatre building where we were told we'd spend the night. Water was made available to us, and an evening meal served, consisting of a little box of steamed rice, and a side box of sea weed, soy beans and a pickled something or other.

Bedded down on mats -- not bad, best treatment so far. Col. Beecher's outfit of mixed prisoners stayed with us in the theatre only until about 2030, when they were moved out to the depot next door. We understand they have but a twelve hour train ride ahead until they reach their camp. We have been told we'll begin something like a 36 hour train ride to our camp in the morning. Obviously we're headed for Manchuria tonight.

April 27th

An uncomfortable night spent in the theatre. Up at 0500, and I actually got close to enough water to wash the sleep out of my eyes. Breakfast delayed until we had all moved out of the theatre, over to the depot and boarded our train. We were placed on a pretty nice string of cars. Coaches; the upholstery wasn't bad, and in many ways, this was the best transportation we'd ever been furnished.

The train pulled out about 0830, while we were eating our breakfast box of steamed rice with side box of soybeans and seaweed, with a little fish mixed in. All day we traveled through beautifully terraced Korean valleys, spotted here and there with straight, fresh leafing, poplar trees. We followed the course of a rather large river, and several times crossed streams. All this country in here seemed beautiful to me, and is apparently a well developed agricultural area.

Many trains pulling cars of soybeans passed us, heading toward the coast. Also some flatcars loaded with tanks, truck mounted artillery, etc., were seen to be headed in a southerly, coastly direction. Japs tried to get us to draw the shades on windows whenever we passed through a military zone, but we nearly always managed to glimpse something.

Noon meal at 1330 was excellent; a box of rice with cut up pieces of chicken, pork, beef, and eggs. An extra box, allotted to each five of us, contained dried fish, fish eggs, and sea weed. We have never eaten like this, not since the surrender. The evening meal consisted of plain steamed rice with barley, and the side box contained a slice of egg, a piece of ham, something called "akimonos" and more seaweed. Mighty fine!

Tenko and water issue tonight, then try and go to sleep. Four men to a double seat compartment is pretty rough sleeping.

April 28th

A pretty poor night's rest. Still, because the chow has been so good, I feel much better this A.M. We were supposed to breakfast around 0800, but the train was late a couple of hours when we arrived where we were supposed to pick up the chow, and the Japanese doctor, one Juro Oki, upon inspecting it, condemned it. It was 1400 before we ever got fed. By that time we arrived in a fairly large place, and a double ration of food was awaiting us. Two boxes of steamed rice, and two side boxes of dried fish, fish roe, and seaweed. Did we eat; and although the fish was terribly salty, it tasted grand to all of us.

Today's ride hasn't carried us through as fertile or well developed an agricultural country as yesterday. Probably the difference is that this is Manchuria. Saw more train loads of soybeans and military equipment bypass us today. Lots of activity up in this country.

Evening meal was a "binto" box of fried rice with a very few vegetables, given to us about 1830. Strange to say, but I wasn't particularly hungry for once. Was awfully thirsty though, and there was strictly limited water today. In fact, several tonight are complaining of thirst due, no doubt, to the salty fish. Took a couple phenobarbitals for aid in sleeping tonight.

April 29th

Since this is the Emperor's Birthday, we should have a treat or something today. Changed trains about 0100 this A.M., in Mukden, but didn't get under way for the prison camp until after we'd been served a little cloth sack of hard biscuits and a few little lumps of candy-like sweets for our breakfast.

Arrived at site of prisoner of war camp, Hoten, Manchoukuo at 0830, after approximately ½ hour ride out from Mukden. Cold rainy day. Had some trouble walking the distance to camp from rail line because of my damn beri-beri feet. Some were given transportation, but I volunteered to try it afoot. Lots of delay getting sorted into our respective groups according to race and rank, but eventually we received our numbers (mine is 2012), and were taken over into the big brick barracks and assigned our billets.

Here we were given one of the tastiest meals I ever ate. Just plain soybean and onion soup, with two corn bread and maize biscuits. The evening meal was also good; carrot, onion, and potatoe soup, with a little flavoring of goat meat in it. Tenko at 2030, to bed by 2130 (regulations of camp). Our beds weren't too bad. Straw stuffed ticks and five blankets -- warm, but not very comfortable.

April 30th, May 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 1945

Been in this Number 14 Hoten Camp a few days now and can say its okay. At least the best place I've been in since leaving Shanghai back in November 1941. We're having considerable rain, and it's cold, but according to the boys that have been here since 1942, this is unusual weather for this time of year. Perhaps it's the last rain before the spring begins in earnest.

The chow has been fine; that is, to us. The older ones say it's rotten and monotonous. On alternative mornings we usually have corn meal mush, maize mush, or maize and potatoe soup for breakfast, also a corn meal biscuit. Noon meals consist usually of soybean and maize soup with two biscuits; and the evening meal is usually more beans in a mixture of carrot, potatoe and maize soup, with another two biscuits. Officers only get three biscuits a day, as compared with the five a day enlisted men receive because they are in a working status. It irritates the officers immensely, but they can't do much about it.

I've run across several of the old 4th Regiment boys, and a few Navy, who are most anxious to help me out with food. All of us, on arriving here, must have struc these men as looking terribly emaciated, for almost to a man they're turning to help us; giving us extra biscuits, articles of clothing and personal items. It's a damn shame the way some of our group, especially the officers, are taking advantage of this kindness. Some of these same officers were once in a position to help the very men who are helping them now, at a time when they needed it in Cabanatuan, and didn't do it -- yet they have the guts to go asking for extra food, etc.

I was most happy to run across "Al" Lemon, Carl Herron, Gerro and "Ma" Leggitt in this camp, having known them in Shanghai before the war, as well as served beside them on Corregidor. They've offered me food and cigarettes, towels, soap, and toilet gear. They've been wonderful and forced on me what I really needed.

There must easily be 600 men in this main camp. Groups of 150 others are working out at various other camps such as a tannery, textile mill, steel mill, lumber mill, and so forth. Most of the fellows in this camp work at nearby machine shops, M.K.K. and T.K.K., they're known as. Have been given to understand that much fine sabotage has gone on in these places due to our boys.

All of the boys are friendly and in excellent spirits. Most healthy, optimistic bunch of P.W.'s I or any one else have ever run across. Of course, they've been on a much better diet than those of us in the Philippines or Japan. In addition, since November, they've been receiving Red Cross food. They have used up something like eleven food parcels since then, and have six or seven boxes still due them. However, here's what they're doing: The men themselves have petitioned their American Commanding Officer, a Major, to petition the Jap Colonel in charge to give the remainder of their Red Cross boxes to us. What a group of men. It makes you proud to see and be with these kinds of Americans once more. I'm afraid our hardships have made us all pretty selfish and suspicious of one another. Looks like we're in for a decent orientation.

Understand from some of the boys, we newcomers are to receive our first daily issue of Red Cross food today. The rule here has been that the Japs issued the Red Cross food out by articles; one can of meat for two men per day, or one can of milk per two men, etc.; though such articles as butter, pate, jam, chocolate bar, and other small items are issued per each man from day to day. They have apparently tried in the past to spread a single parcel, or rather two parcels for two men, over a period of thirty days. Most of us will be so thankful to receive anything at all, we don't care much how they do it.

The men here have quite comfortable quarters. Everyone has his own straw tick, a place at the head of it to stow his duds and personal items; and everyone eats at tables right near the foot of their beds, there being no general mess hall. It wasn't always so good though. The first year here in Manuchuria, many men died of starvation and exposure. They didn't have such quarters and rations as now.

They've had two air raids here, the last one being December 7th, when 90 and a hundred B29s came over to hit an airfield and munition factory near by. They got their objectives alright, but accidentally dropped a couple bombs within the compound, killing 19 outright, and wounding approximately 30. The evidence is still visible, both to the compound and on the amputees.

The chow has been so rich and plentiful these past few days, I've been sick to my stomach, and have been bothered with diarrhea ever since arriving. I think my stomach trouble and gas has been due to the sour dough biscuits, and the fact that I'm not used to such heavy, rich food. However, I guess I'm slowly improving. This morning for instance, I was able to eat three biscuits as compared with the one I usually have difficulty getting down. Guess my stomach was shrunk.

We are supposed to get deloused and bathed today, but so far, nothing has materialized along these lines. Certainly hope things start happening soon so this quarantine we're under will be lifted, and we will be free to mix with the rest of the camp. I have many friends on the other side of these barbed wires whom I want to visit with -- unmolested.

Got weighed today. Weight 52 kilos, which is better than the 47.6 kilos I weighed at Fukioko Number 22, though I fear much of this gain is only edema. No Red Cross Chow issued us today, despite the rumors. Also, we weren't allowed to bathe or steam our clothes.

May 4, 1945

Looked this morning as if it might be a perfect day, and we'd be deloused, but the A.M. passed with nothing more being accomplished than the Jap interpreter collecting money from everyone that had any. This particular Jap is pretty cocky and Pro-Jap, although he received his schooling in the States. The sun has lost all resemblance of warmth this afternoon, and now rain is threatening.

We received one-half can of butter, and a dozen Vitamin C Tablets from the Red Cross food parcels tonight. Looks like our promised issue has started. Tomorrow we are supposed to get one-fourth can of meat per man. I am getting so keen an appetite now, it's hard to imagine I gave several bowls of beans away recently. I can't get enough beans and buns now.

May 5, 1945

Assisted Fast with the sick we have segregated from the rest, and are treating with the help of the Jap doctor and two Army Corpsmen from the camp's hospital. I'm not much help due to the cramps and numbness in my hands and feet. It's been a nice morning, but still our delousing program hasn't started.

Received an issue of one can of Prem per four men, and one package of American cigarettes this A.M. Ate half my one-fourth can of Prem at noon, saved remaining one-eighth can for tonight's meal. Had a nice baked potatoe loaf along with the bean soup and buns this evening.

One of the sections got to bathe tonight, courtesy of the boys across the fence who were willing to carry buckets of water into this restricted area after working hours. Mighty cold tonight. I should like to retire early each evening because my hands and feet bother me so, but tenko not being until 2030 prevents me.

May 6, 1945

Been cold, windy and dusty all day. Perfectly miserable weather.

Received one-half can of butter, one can soluble coffee, and two lumps of white sugar on today's Red Cross issue. Have seen the schedule of how we're to be issued this extra food, and it is to be spread out until the 28th. Not bad with approximately one-half can butter every other day, and one-fourth can of meat. In between, however, we are not to receive any milk, pate, salmon or raisins, and only one-third package of cheese, and one-half bar chocolate. Also cigarettes, in total which we will receive, amount to only two and one-half packages.

Got interested this afternoon in compiling several lists of Navy Medical Department personnel -- Doctors and Pharmacist's Mates living and dead -- so the afternoon passed quickly. R.E. Thompson, Fast and Cook helped immensely in recalling names, faces, etc.

Had three pretty nice cups of coffee tonight out of the morning's issue.

May 7, 1945

Helped Fast again this morning in the temporarily set up 30 bed hospital. He gives out the medications, sweeps down, etc. I only stand by to assist patient to the "benjo box", wash a few patients' dishes and light work such as that. I only work every other day. On the days between Fast's and my working on the ward, R.E. Thompson and Cook have the duty. Cook just helps Thompson out like I do Fast. He is also pretty sick and disabled with beri-beri.

Weisner, the unpopular Army medical man, has been doing night duty, but hasn't been staying awake. Commander C.M. Smith, recognizing his undependableness had Cook stand the watch last night, and has asked me to take it tonight. I think I'll stay on for a week if I can get permission.

Received two lumps of Jack Frost sugar, and one-fourth can Mor meat today, as daily issue of Red Cross food continues. I use my sugar with a bit of coffee in corn meal mush for breakfast. The Mor I divide and use on buns, half at noon and half in the evening. When I learned about having night duty tonight, I tried to arrange with the bakery to secure a couple extra biscuits for munching at 2400, but the Navy ship's cook in charge there explained he's not in position to help as much as he might like to.

Have a June 1, 1944, Red Cross News sheet to read on duty tonight. Ensign Levitt lent me Lin Yutangs's "With Love and Irony" to begin reading tonight, and Ensign Beale gave me a U.S. Army overcoat to wear while on duty.

Rumors are thick and persistent tonight that the Japs are going to observe the coming 15th as a National Holiday. There will be prayers, etc. Seems that in some way it's connected with Germany's reported signing peace with the Allies in Europe. Maybe the Japs are considering peace proposals themselves and are going to pray for an honorable surrender or something. Anyway, we're all anxious and waiting to see what occurs on the 15th.

May 8, 1945

Was mighty sleepy around 0400 this A.M. All I could do to stay awake. After breakfast, at which I ate my usual corn meal, sweetened and flavored with coffee, I hit the sack and went right to sleep. Got up at noon, ate one biscuit, then back to bed. Not so much sleep as just rest this P.M. Got up for Red Cross issue just before supper. Received two lumps Jack Frost sugar, one-half can of butter, and a couple small bars of toilet soap.

Divided my butter between evening and midnight meals. I saved a couple buns today by eating only one at noon, and one again this evening. Now that I'm on night duty, I plan to restrict myself this way so I can have a couple buns to munch on about 2400. Get mighty hungry about then.

Continued reading Lin Yutang's "With Love and Irony".

May 9, 1945

Again the early hours found me sleepy -- too much so to get my reading done. Breakfast was late, at least ½ hour after the factory workers had shoved off to work. Got a fair day's sleep. Red Cross issue today was one-fourth can corn beef. Ate part of it with the evening meal, at which time we had a corn meal pattie, and saved the rest for eating with my two biscuits tonight.

Japs issued us a bar of laundry soap this evening, which came in quite handy. Washing clothes is torture, the water in the taps is so damn cold. A quiet night for the duty. Read further into Lin Yutang.

May 10, 1945

Didn't get so sleepy this morning on watch because I made it a point to wash out some clothes between 0330 and 0530. The darn water was so cold it made my hands more numb than they already are with beri-beri. As a result, I wasn't able to do a very good job on the clothes. To bed around 0800, after a corn meal breakfast, with usual flavoring of coffee and sugar. Slept well all morning, getting up just in time for good soybean and maize soup with a biscuit.

Red Cross issue today consisted of one-third brick of cheese, one-half can of butter, and 2 lumps of Frost sugar. Though the issue was made in plenty of time for dinner, I didn't use much of it at noon. Ate one-half the cheese with tonight's soup and biscuit. The rest of the cheese, and most of the butter, I saved for tonight's 2400 meal.

Finished "With Love and Irony" and began a strange novel by William J. Locke, "The House of Baltazar".

May 11, 1945

Darn if I don't think I actually dozed on watch this morning. "The House of Baltazar" simply wasn't exciting enough to hold me awake. 0600 finally came, however, and after tenko, the time passed more quickly. Just before I got ready for bed, I was called out to a window over in number 2 barracks, where I spent some time talking with a sailor who I used to know on the U.S.S. AUGUSTA. He recognized me, not I him. He gave me a biscuit before leaving for the factory.

The sun came out for the first time in days, so before going to bed, I hung out the washing I accomplished the other morning. Slept well up to noon, then issuing of Red Cross food woke me. We received today one-fourth can of Prem per man. Since the noon soup of beans was fairly thick, I saved the meat until evening, at which time I mixed it into a paste with some beans and spuds out of the evening soup, and used as a spread on my biscuit, saving enough for midnight buns.

Just before supper tonight, I arranged to secure a couple buckets of hot water, via some friends on the other side of our barbed wire enclosure; and so I took a bath -- a marine bath--, and changed clothes. First clean up since leaving Japan. In spite of my persistent, rotten cold, which I've never been without since catching it on the journey up from Manila, I really feel the better tonight for having bathed and changed. Nor is my change such a bad looking outfit; the Dutch blouse which I managed to get through with from Fukioko No. 22, and a pair of pants made out of an old Marine blanket by someone here in Mukden Camp, and given to me by "Ma" Legitt. Read more into the "House of Baltazar" tonight.

May 12, 1945

Made it a point not to get sleepy this morning by undertaking a washing between 0200 and 0400. By 0500, despite the many interruptions by patients and guards, I had my clothes out on the line. Hope they'll be dry by the hour our section comes up for delousing. By breakfast time the weather had become pretty inclement and the delousing program was postponed again. Got to bed soon after eating. Slept well until noon.

Red Cross issue for today was one-half can butter, and one package of cigarettes. Back to bed after dinner, and slept until about 1530 when I got up and sewed buttons on some clothes before the evening chow. Fine thick soup tonight -- beans, potatoes and carrots. I removed some of the solids for mashing up into a paste with my portion of butter. It makes a fairly tasteful spread for the biscuits and makes the two biscuits at midnight more of a meal. Since I'm getting low on my coffee, I only had one cup today.

Lots of good rumors this evening. The best and most reliable concerns some high rank (Generals, Colonels and Navy Captains) moving into this camp within the next few days. Other rumors concern chow ration increases, more Red Cross issues, our quarantine being lifted shortly, and that forty-six different nations have demanded Japan's surrender by the 25th of this month. We expect many changes for the better, and soon. At least the end of the month sould prove how authentic some of these rumors are.

Besides reading more of "House of Baltazar", I spent a grand time thumbing through an interesting cook book, "Magic Chef", tonight.

May 13, 1945

Delousing and bathing began in earnest this morning. Word was first passed that the hospital and our section, Number 6, would be first, but the order was changed. We are to proceed in numerical order, which places the patients and us enlisted men last. I slept therefore, during the morning, and for the first part of the afternoon. It was late in P.M. by the time we had finished bathing and collected our clothes and blankets from the sterilizing process they'd been put through (steam). We didn't manage to get back the same blankets we'd turned in, or all our clothes, but in most cases, something was found to replace the loss, even if the last men to gather up their things were short.

Red Cross issue consisted of one-fourth can Spam per man. I saved mine for the evening meal, mixing it into a spread with some of the solids I'd saved from the noon soup. No night watch tonight as all patients, following their delousing and bathing, were transferred to the camp hospital.

May 14, 1945

Brown, one of the Army boys, working as a medic up in the hospital, dropped around to our barracks this A.M., and reported that the Japanese papers had oficially admitted Germany's surrender to the Allies as of 1100 May 8th. So Japan is in this war alone now! I'm thinking she can't hold out against the world much longer. Fast and Thompson started to work up at the hospital this morning. Cook and I are due to begin in a few days if the Jap doctor will approve of having us, semi-sick as we are.

Late breakfast of maize mush this morning. One-half can butter, and 12 Vitamin C Tablets comprised Red Cross issue today. Did a washing, a large one, today since I was able to get hot water for it. Only half a ration of soup tonight, because of having a baked soybean pattie. Now I'm not standing any more night watches, I am not saving biscuits, so have the regular two for noon and evening meals. The Japs collected one of our blankets today, leaving us four, but it hasn't been quite so cold of late, and the four should suffice.

May 15, 1945

Yasume Day. Early breakfast for a change, and the factory workers didn't go out. Instead, everyone turned to and held field day in barracks, for inspection. Japs issued two packages of their own brand of cigarettes to each man this morning. Good bean and maize soup at noon. Red Cross issue of ¼ can of Prem and 4 small lumps of sugar today. Inspection didn't come after all.

Sat out in the wonderful sunshine this afternoon and finished reading "The House of Baltazar", a fairly interesting book. Evening soup was pretty thin, and served so early, that by late evening I was hungry again. Haven't been getting as much or as good a chow of late, which may be the cause. To bed early tonight. It is rumored we may move to another barracks soon.

May 16, 1945

Again the early breakfast -- maize mush and a bun -- which makes for a long morning. About noon our restriction was lifted from us, and we were free to wander over into the rest of the camp, enter the other barracks, etc. I dropped around to the galley where I had some marine friends working and shot the breeze. Was given some biscuits right out of the oven, a couple, and raw carrots to eat. Dropped around into barracks later and visited "Al" Lemon and Dunapus.

All Navy personnel, officers and enlisted men, got together this afternoon for a friendly association. There were about 80 of us. Several talks were made, music played and coffee was served. Good supper this evening. Besides the soup and buns, there was a vegetable bake (potatoes, carrots and onions).

Went to bed early tonight. Having walked all around the compound in a brisk wind most of the afternoon, I was plenty sleepy.

May 17, 1945

Immediately after tenko this morning, I and another fellow out of our section went up to the galley to draw our breakfast rations, buns and corn meal mush. Visited with Al Lemon some more this A.M., before he went out to the farm to work. Also spoke awhile to Dunapus before he retired. He's on night duty in the galley.

Red Cross issue today -- one-fourth can corn beef, and four lumps of sugar. As usual, I mixed the beans out of my soup with the corn beef for spreading on my buns. Talked with "Hunkie", one of the Army boys working as a medic up in the hospital, about Cook's and my going to work there. Later I spoke to Dr. Smith about same. Meanwhile Cook and I worked on different lists of Navy medical personnel, checking names with one another for correcting.

This evening Comdr. Smith came around to tell Cook and me he thought we'd be going to work up at the hospital shortly. He also told Gunner Ferrell that he'd go to work up in the hospital as maintenance officer. Cook and I are pleased about this, for Ferrell will undoubtedly eat with us, thus assuring our group an equitable distribution of rations.

All officers moved from topside barracks Three over to topside barracks Two. English officers moved down to first deck, barracks Three, and our group of sixteen enlisted men moved up into section 30 (topside barracks 3), along with a bunch of "dog robbers" for the "rank" due in about Sunday.

Tonight Ferrell, Cook and I received notice to report to the hospital for duty in the morning. We're to draw only our noon rations at the hospital to begin with. Satisfactory chow this evening -- bean and potatoe soup, maize and potatoe bake, and the usual buns. I had a couple extra buns tonight, thanks to Dunapus. Certainly helps out. Held our tenko outside this evening first time since arriving.

May 18, 1945

Sufficient quantity but might poor quality of potatoe soup for breakfast following tenko this morning.

Ferrell, Cook and I reported before the Jap doctor, Oki, at 0900, when he greeted us quite formally and explained how we'd probably only be going to work temporarily, but he'd recommend to Japanese Hdqtrs. that he be permitted to make our jobs permanent. Cook started to work in Ward 2, and I started on night duty, so I was off all day.

Dropped around to chat with the "Russian" Dunapus, before trying to get some sleep. He gave me a couple buns again. I told him I didn't want them if they might cause him trouble, but he explained how he had access to extras. Ate noon chow with Sec. 30 as I'm supposed to do. My breakfast and evening chow I'm to eat up at the hospital. Slept pretty well considering the noisiness of the section.

Tonight on watch "Sammy" Small and "Jock", an Englishman and a Scotchman, cut me in on the dope. There isn't too much to do at night except for the dysentery cases. Not even enough work to keep one from getting sleepy.

May 19, 1945

Got to bed about 0830, Slept fairly well. Up for noon chow as usual, then back to bed until about 1545. Took a bath up at the hospital this evening. Much better facilities for bathing (steam bath as in Fukioko No. 22). Drew some hot water out of steam bath and put my dirty clothes to soak in a foot tub. Good soup tonight with the buns. Got interested in "History of our Civilization" on duty tonight, which made the old time speed by pretty fast.

May 20, 1945

Did a rather big washing between 0200 and 0500 this A.M., which prevented me from going to sleep. Also around 0300 Sammy Small made a quick trip over to the galley and returned with three nice rations of potato soup. For once I had all I could eat. Had to rinse clothes and hang out on line before I could turn in, so it was nearly 0900 by the time I got to sleep. Up at noon for chow, then back to bed. Didn't sleep very well this afternoon, but stayed in bed until 1600 when I got up, secured clothes from line, folded and stacked them away at the head of my mattress.

To hospital around 1700 where I enjoyed a hearty supper. Had a small helping of spinach greens with the soup and buns tonight. Read more history tonight on duty

May 21, 1945

I fear the little bit of evening soup the galley saves us for midnight chow sours by the time we get it, for my bowels have started running again. Went about ten times during the night, also have slight cramps. Went to bed early (0730), but had to get up four times for defecating. Also had to get up several times this afternoon. Red Cross issue today, one-fourth can Spam. I intend to eat only this and my buns for the next couple days, and see if I can stop my diarrhe

320 officers and men came into camp this afternoon. They include Generals, Colonels, Lt. Colonels and Navy Captains. About 30 American enlisted men, "dog robbers", came in with them. Navy Captains include Capt. Hoeffel, Lowman, Davis and Roberts, the latter being three Medical Department Officers. Fourth Marine Officers I recognized were Colonels Howard and Curtiss, although I understand Howard is a General now.

All these men are very optimistic concerning the length of the war. Colonel Curtiss says we'll all be home for Thanksgiving. Me, I'd say we'll be doing damn well to get there by Christmas.

May 22, 1945

Began a story, "Marshal Lyautey", by Andri Manrois, on night duty this morning. Diarrhea still bad. Even after going to bed with practically nothing to eat in the last thirty-six hours, I've had to get up frequently to defecate. Got up at noon and forced myself to eat my last noon meal with section 30. Beginning tomorrow, I draw all my rations at the hospital. This means I'll have to get up, dress, and go up there to draw it, or trust another to draw it for me, and then I'll eat it later.

Usual afternoon, spent partly asleep and partly awake. It is impossible to sleep well with all the noise that goes on in section thirty. There are simply too many "dog robbers" running back and forth in the performance of errands for their officers. Continued reading "Marshall Lyautey" tonight.

May 25, 1945

Worked on a list of Navy Medical Department Personnel for Capt. Roberts (MC), USN, this A.M. before tenko. Corn meal mush for breakfast, of which I tried eating a bit, chewing it well, in the hope of discontinuing my diarrhea tendencies.

Looked "Russian" up this morning and gave him a coffee can full of cigarette butts which I've been accumulating for him. Cigarettes are sometimes few and far between, so no one wastes any tobacco. Had to get up several times again today for defecating. Had last of "patties" this evening, according to a rumor. It seems the Japs aren't going to issue any more soybean oil, so there will be no more fried vegetable combinations.

One-fourth can Prem, Red Cross issue today. Red Cross issue should start soon on a larger scale, and for the entire camp, according to rumor. Finished "Marshall Lyautey" tonight on duty.

May 26, 1945

Washed out some rags early this morning which I am using for handkerchiefs, having a terrible running cold. Ate a couple good bowlsful of corn meal mush about 0400, and retired early. Slept fairly well during most of the day, though the flies are getting bad, and continually awaken me.

Got up around 1500 this P.M., and came up to the hospital for bathing and shaving. Put my dirty clothes to soak. I intend to wash them in wee hours of the morning when I start getting sleepy.

Commissary issue of cigarettes, two packages, and one box of Camels to everyone today, but Fast, Cook, Thompson, and myself. Something screwed up and prevented our receiving the issue.

May 27, 1945

Washed clothes all morning, getting them out on the line before I hit the hay around 0900. Factory workers didn't go out to work today.

Beginning at 1330, the Navy group in the compound had a get together. Served coffee and sang songs. Talks by Ensign Levitt and Lt. (jg) Michael on the participation of the U.S.S. HOUSTON and the U.S.S. POPE during the Java Sea Battle, all interesting. All the Navy Captains and Marine rank were present. The former Governor of Guam, a Navy Captain, addressed us also at this time.

Went on duty plenty sleepy tonight.

May 31, 1945

Here it is 0515, the last day of May. I cannot accurately remember what all has taken place during the last few days. The important thing is that we've all gotten enough to eat and the Japanese haven't stopped fighting. I've been sleeping fairly well during the last few days, making it a date to get up on sunny afternoons and get out for a little sunning and exercise. My feet and hands aren't improving as I'd expect them to, considering the far better diet I've been on since arriving in this camp, but Dr. Smith says it takes a long time to recover from beri-beri. My fingers are so bad now I can't even feel a patient's pulse, so of late I've been radioing them on the Jap charts.

Have been reading Henry David Thoreau's "Walden" the past few nights, and find it quite as beautiful a book as I've always believed it would be. The Japanese issued us a light pair of summer clothing yesterday -- and I mean light!

June 4, 1945

0400. Just finished reading Alexander Woolcott's "While Rome Burns", which is a book I must own someday. Had it borrowed from an Australian Captain.

The Japs have collected heavy underwear and uniforms from us, and issued light-weight clothes which have me worried, for it's been raining the last couple of days, and it's certainly too cold for changing uniforms now.

On the 2nd of June, Red Cross issue for the entire camp began with an issue of one-half can coffee, one package of American cigarettes, and two lumps of Jack Frost sugar. Today I understand we're to receive one-fourth can Klim and two more lumps of sugar.

Sammy Small, returning from the galley with a small bucket of corn meal mush this morning, ran into a Nip guard who got quite excited over discovering food leaving the galley so early in the A.M. Wonder if this means an end to our "arranged" early breakfast rations.

June 6, 1945

Had a chance to send a hundred word message to the States today, so I chose to compose one to my sister Margie. Hope the Japs are sincere about letting this one get through, though I doubt it.

Have begun reading Husley's "End and Means". It's difficult comprehending on this diet, however. The numbness of my fingers is becoming too much for continuing even this diary. I simply can't hold a pencil well enough to make the necessary small entries.

IN CONCLUSION
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In the latter part of July my hands improved to the extent that I could feel pulses again and use a pencil, so I began re-copying this diary which had been kept in a small address book. Entries had been written in a very abbreviated form with Japanese, German, and medical words with abbreviations, helping me conserve writing space whenever possible. It was necessary I begin re-copying it before I disremembered what some abbreviations and foreign words meant. And so it occupied most of my time during July and August; days which flew by, since I had returned to day watches at the hospital and was pretty busy.

Rumors were thick and persistent during those last days, and enough reliableness was attached to the rumors, via a paper or occasional Jap admisson, to restore much in the way of confidence and anxiety among us.

It all happened swiftly when it began. On the 14th of August, a rescue team of paratroopers was dropped into the Mukden Area from a B24, and in a short time we knew the war was over. The Russians actually liberated us on about the 17th or 18th, and then began the arrival of the American processing teams, and American chow, dropped to us out of B29s. Of couse we gorged ourselves, and in a short while we were once again as full and dissatisfied as normal Americans.

We left Mukden on September 11th, going by train to Dairen, thence to Okinawa by ship. To Guam then, also by ship, and later to Oakland, again via ship. (We'd been promised a flight back).

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* H O M E *
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I arrived in San Francisco October 19, 1945 -- exactly 75 months (6 years, 3 months) from the date I left the city back in July 19, 1939.

WAS I GLAD TO BE HOME!

Salty CWO Retires

Cecil J. Peart, CHMEDSERWRNT enlisted in the Navy in 1938, and, following graduation from San Diego Hospital Corps School in October 1938, was assigned duty at the Naval Hospital in Mare Island. Unable to resist the urge of the Orient, Peart requested Asiatic duty, where he got caught up in a maelstrom of incidents which kept him from returning home for six years and three months.

Pre-war record includes duty at the old Naval Hospital in Cañada, P.I., duty aboard the USS Augusta, flagship of the Asiatic fleet, and a tour with the old 4th Marine Regiment stationed in Shanghai, China. Evacuating Shanghai with the 4th Marines on the eve of our entry into World War II, Peart was caught in the Philippines. Participating in the battles of Bataan and Corregidor, Corpsman Peart was recommended for the Silver Star, and received three bronze stars, a purple heart, and the Army distinguished Unit Emblem with oakleaf cluster.

Captured by the Japanese in the Fall of Corregidor on May 16, Peart was interned as a prisoner of war in the old Bilibid Prison, Manila. Following approximately two years of performing typical Naval Corpsman duties on the patients of Bilibid, Peart was sent from Manila to Japan and finally to Manchuria, where he was "actually liberated" by the Russians.

Peart is one of the very few survivors of the famous "Hell Ship," the SS Oryoko Maru, which departed the Philippines in December 1944 with 1619 officers and men, and was bombed and sunk by allied airmen before it could get out of Philippine waters. Survivors were transferred to a Japanese animal freighter at Linguayen, which was subsequently bombed and sunk (by allied airmen again) in Takao Harbor, Formosa. Peart was then, along with the other half-naked and starved prisoners, placed aboard a third ship for the remainder of the winter trip to the "Imperial Japanese Homeland," where less than a quarter of the original group arrived alive. Corpsman Peart was awarded three Bronze Star Medals for heroic actions during and after the sinking of the Oryoko Maru.

During this unusual odyssey, Peart managed to keep a sort of diary which, following liberation, he rendered into a 58-page journal for the War Department. The Bureau of Medicine and Surgery later published a limited number of these journals, and a copy is catalogued in the Library of Congress.

Following repatriation, Mr. Peart acquired a wife and a commission. He has since served with distinction as an officer of the Hospital Corps and, more recently, of the Medical Service Corps at the following activities: Naval Station Anacostia; Naval School of Hospital Administration, Bethesda, MD; Naval Ordnance Test Station, China Lake, CA; Naval Hospital, Oakland, CA; University of California at Berkeley; MSTSNOR-PACSUBAREA, Seattle, Washington; Naval Hospital, Guam, and, lastly, here at Long Beach, where he has performed duty as Health and Sanitation Officer and Medical Finance Officer.

Mr. and Mrs. Peart, and their five children will be residing in Weaverville, California, where Mr. Peart has received an appointment as Superintendent of the Trinity General Hospital.