



1982

## Edward A. Burns of Bowman: Japan, World War II

Edward A. Burns

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# PRISONER OF WAR

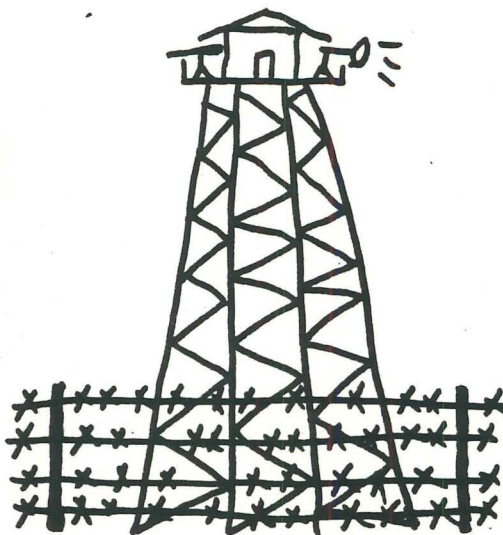
## A TRUE STORY

BY: EDWARD A. BURNS

BOWMAN, N. DAK

AMERICAN PRISONER IN  
PHILIPPINE PRISON CAMPS  
WORLD WAR II 1941-1945

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EX-PRISONER OF WAR QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name: EDWARD A. BURNS

Current Address: 803 West 2nd Street, Bowman, ND 58623

Address at time you went into service:

Bowman, ND 58623

Birthday: Sept. 29, 1917

2. Family: (spouse and children)

Opal, my wife. Children: Thomas Allen, 29; Shannon Michelle Burns Johnson 27; Candee Kay Burns 25; Elizabeth Lee Burns 23; Peggy Lee Burns 22; Patricia Kay Burns 20; Gayl Allyn Burns 19.

3. Work and educational experience prior to going into service?

Graduated from high school in 1936, 1 year of college at Grand Forks (UND) and 1 year in the CCC's in Washington State.

4. Dates and place of entry into service?

Enlisted in the Army on May 22, 1941 and went to Angel Island from Ft. Snelling on May 26, 1941 and on to the Philippine Islands on June 21, 1941.

5. Summary of events from time of entry into service and until just prior to capture or entering status as a POW?

I was in the Philippine Islands from June of 1941 until our capture, serving in the Medical Dept.

6. Unit, Country, time, area, weather, etc., at time event occurred which resulted in POW status?

Medical Dept. in the Philippines, at Bataan, and it was the dry season there.

7. Describe military or other events that resulted in your POW status?

See the enclosed sequence of events as my wife had me relate them on a tape recorder several years ago. The first paragraph is applicable to this question.

8. Following your capture, describe what happened. How many men were involved? Where did you go? How did you go? What type of personnel (military or civilian) took control of you?

Approximately 160 officers and enlisted men in the Medical Dept. We were taken by truck together with all our hospital equipment by Military personnel.

9. Were you able to hide or escape? If so, tell what happened. Where did you hide? Food? Clothing? Water? Weather? Sleep? etc.

No,

10. How did your escape end? Returned to U.S. control? Discovered by enemy?

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11. Could you describe in sequence the various places you were interrogated and the methods of questioning the enemy used?

We were not interrogated.

12. Did you have a weapon on yourself when you were captured? Did it effect your treatment?

No.

13. Were you at any time considered a civilian or an enemy spy or a wrong nationality? If so, how did this effect your treatment?

Yes, we were the wrong nationality - because we were Americans, therefore made POW's.

14. When captured or escaping, what clothing or equipment were you wearing? What changes did the enemy make in your clothing?

Just U. S. Army issue. They made no changes in our clothing.

15. What was your first food you received after your capture and what was your food from that date on?

Rice

16. Did your nationality, religion, or race have a bearing on your treatment from the enemy?

Nationality made the difference because we were Americans.

17. What was your impression of your captors? Were they arrogant, considerate, professional, troubled, confused, anxious, etc.?

We had some of each description above. Some were VERY arrogant and others wanted to try to treat us decently.

18. Were you alone or with others? How many? Same unit? Other units? Other services? Other nationalities, etc.?

I was always with others in the Medical Dept, same unit, approximately 250 or so.

19. At time of your capture, did you have higher or lower ranking persons with you? Did the difference in rank effect you?

No.

20. Following your capture, how did you feel about your family at home, and at what point or time did you feel they probably knew about your POW status?

I thought of them all the time and wondered how they were getting along, I had no idea if they received the few cards we were able to send and I didn't know until I arrived home that they had received a card about 18 months after our capture.

21. When did you receive your first letter, package or information that your family knew of your capture?

In about 1944 I had a letter from my brother Donald and I learned my parents had moved to Denver, that was all the information I received during those 33 months. I never received any packages from my family because they didn't know anything about my whereabouts or if I was even alive.

22. In regards to your interrogation or questioning--was this conducted formally at a special camp or location? Did you have special or skilled interrogators? What did they want to know? How long were you there? Then where did you go?

No interrogation.

23. How did you feel the war was going when you were captured?  
Just the way the U. S. Government wanted it to, fighting England's war first, and then fighting their own. They wanted to get into the war so badly, they neglected to decode the messages sent that Pearl Harbor was going to be bombed, and we all knew this at the time.

24. Did you think you would eventually get home?

Yes, I did.

25. Did you have an opportunity to observe the enemy in combat, training, camp, or moving from one place to another?  
We saw them moving from one place to another.

26. Did you suffer any injury at the time of your capture? What was done about your injury or illness following your capture?

No.

27. At your permanent camp or camps, would you describe your conditions. Food? Living area? Beds? Food ration? Health? Water? Weather? Number of men? Guards? Size and location of camps? Organization in camp by enemy and by U.S. forces?

See the attached narrative referred to in question 7.

28. While in your permanent camp, did you know what was going on in the war? What did guards say about the ending of the war?

Yes, we had a secret radio.

29. If you worked in camp or lived in work camps, please describe your daily transportation, work, food, punishment, etc.?

I worked in the hospital, assisted with surgeries, patient care, regular hospital routine work.

Our food consisted of rice.

30. Was your camp or camps ever bombed or damaged by the enemy or friendly military action?

No.

31. Could you describe your roll call or counting procedure in camp?

We had roll call every morning and we had to count off in Japanese.

32. What type of guards did you have? Age? Rank? Weapons? Number? Service, etc.?

Good and bad guards, I suppose most of them were approximately in their middle 20's, thereabouts., maybe early 30's.

We had two we referred to as Big Speedo and Little Speedo. Big Speedo was a good guard; little Speedo was arrogant and mean. He was always slapping someone around.

Most guards were privates.

Weapons were guns and billy clubs



33. Could you describe your camp? Size? Fences? Guard towers? Latrine? Ration distribution? Hours? Lock-up? Heat? Recreation, etc.?

Refer to the narration I have included.

34. Could you describe the men close to you or the men you knew best? How did you get along with them?

Since I worked in the hospital,  
I was closely associated with the doctors, and got along with them very well. I might add that I thought they did a great job for not having any equipment or much in the line of medication for their patients.

35. Could you tell about epidemics or sickness in camp? What were the medical facilities? How were you medically treated in camp?

Dysentery, diphtheria, malaria, beri beri.

Medical facilities were about nil - we finally got shots for diphtheria, but there was not much you could do for the rest, of our health problems.

36. Were any prisoners killed in camp or taken from camp and disappeared?

Yes, prisoners were shot in front of all of us for trying to escape from camp. There wasn't much escaping being attempted since we were counted off in units of 10 and if 1 escaped, they shot the other 9.

37. Could you describe the ration or food distribution system? How much? Fresh, canned, stale, dried, etc.? Local foods, Red Cross parcels, parcels from home, trade with guards or civilians?

Ration - 439 grams per person per day, cooked. The Philippines tried to get food to us in prison camps with little success.

I got 1½ packages in 33 months from the Red Cross.

No parcels from home or communication of any kind until shortly before the end of the war, about August of 1944.

38. Describe the type of work or responsibilities you were assigned within the camp from friendly or USA prisoners?

See question 34., and 29.

39. What were some of the things that kept you going while in camp? Your health? Age? Faith in U.S. Armed Forces? Religion? Family? Aid from other prisoners?

Rice, and I suppose my age. I always felt I was going to make it. I think that and faith in the U.S. armed forces helped, we had a secret radio someone made and knew how things were going the last year and a half of the war.

40. Did any prisoners become mentally sick or irrational in camp and were they removed?

Yes, some went crazy and they were locked up in a ward for the duration of the time we were prisoners, which was in January of 1945

41. Did you have any secret radios, newspapers or outside news sources in camp from which you received information? What information did the enemy give you?

Yes, we built a radio in camp that we could get Treasure Island on. We had that radio from late 1943 on.

The enemy told us that the Japs had taken San Francisco and were 50 miles from Chicago, but we didn't believe them. They had no idea of the distance between the cities.

42. Did you have any serious illness in camp?

Beri Beri, Malaria, Dysentery, Jungle Rot and Avitaminosis.

43. Did you have any riots in camp?

No, damned right you didn't..

44. How did you first know that war was coming to an end?

Our secret radio and the planes flying over our camp.

45. What were some of the tricks you played on guards?

The Japs wanted to learn English so we taught them nursery rhymes and someone got the idea of teaching them the words to "God Bless America". This went along fine until the Jap went on a weekend leave and had to show how smart he was to the other Japs, one of whom could speak English and outranked him, so he beat the hell out of the Jap who was singing "God Bless America" and when he returned to camp all beaten up, someone asked what happened to him and he said, "God Bless America, no damn good."

46. What about escape procedures and methods used by you or others that you have knowledge of or direct information about?

Escape was about nil because they had included 10 of us in each group and if 1 escaped the other 9 were shot.

47. Were you ever bombed by friendly or enemy aircraft?

No, we got a few shells once in a while by the Americans toward the end of the war.

48. Describe any special train or ship trip you took while a prisoner?

*None*

49. When were you close to death or felt all was not worth living and you probably would die or be killed?

Never did.

50. Could you tell about any special religious observances by the enemy or special occurrence when they relaxed or tightened security rules?

None by the Japs, they allowed us to have services without intervention.

51. Would you describe in detail any particular holiday, if observed, by enemy or prisoners, such as, New Years or Christmas.

They allowed us to observe a few, such as Christmas, Easter and the 4th of July. I financed a Philippino, who was a POW, who sneaked out to Capas and stole two ducks among other things, so the next day we cooked and ate 1 of the ducks, the other one we had tied out behind the barracks and we were going to keep him for Labor Day which was about a week ~~away~~ away, and in the middle of the afternoon, the Philippino came in with the duck all dressed and ready to cook, so I said, "Joe, how come you killed the duck today?" and he said "but sir, he was thinking of leaving" and I asked him how he knew that, to which ~~he~~ he replied "but sir, he was looking over the fence and "plopping" his wings."

A prisoner financed me to arrange for food for him, but he died before the food was brought into the camp.

52. How did you feel about food in camp? How did enemy food agree with you? What was food? What were utensils? What did you make to eat with? Pots, pans, cups, plates?

See narration.

53. Were you aware of any other American or Allied POW camps in your area? Civilian camps?

Yes, we knew where they were.

54. In reference to your mind or yourself, how do you feel you held up in camp? Did you suffer periods of depression, crying, hysteria, headaches, loss of memory, etc.? How about the other men in camp? How do you feel you and others were able to live without nervous breakdowns?

Keeping busy in the hospital and sleeping as much as I could. It wasn't hard to keep busy in the hospital.

55. How do you feel other American POW's behaved or acted while in enemy hands? Please do not name an individual by name if you feel their behavior was not correct or up to the standards you set for yourself.

I felt most of them behaved quite well. You had to, or you'd have been killed.

56. Towards the end of the war, what were first signs that the war was coming to an end in our favor?

Planes overhead, most of them which of course were ours, and our secret radio reports, which as I said before, gave us pretty good coverage when we could hear Treasure Island.

57. How did the enemy guards or administrative personnel treat you towards the end of the war or when it was apparent the enemy would lose the war?

About January 4, 1945 all the guards and guard detachments ~~w~~ left and told us as long as we stayed in camp, we would be safe, but if ~~we~~ we left camp, we would be treated as an enemy soldier and that another group of Japs were coming in to guard us.

58. Could you describe how your POW status ended?

See narration. It happened very suddenly and without much fanfare. The Rangers knew where we were for a long time and had everything very much under control.

59. When or where did enemy guards leave? Did guards say or do anything at the end of the war?

See No. 57

60. What did the American staff at the camp do at the end of the war?

They left camp with the rest of us.

61. At the end of the war, where did you move? What was your food? Your health? Your morale?

I went to Lettermen General Hospital in San Francisco, then to Denver to visit my parents who had moved there during the war, and then I went back to North Dakota and South Dakota.

I had a regular diet when back in the States.

My health? - I was so very happy to be alive and free and was not too concerned about spending much time in a hospital. I wish now I had, since my health problems are applicable to those years and yes, I do not get an service connected disability. Any records kept on us seem to have "disappeared".

My morale was always high, I felt, I would make it home, and that's probably what got me back.

62. Could you describe some of the confusion that took place when you were liberated at the end of the war? Time, place, friendly or enemy forces involved, food, health, morale, POW discipline in camp, contact with U.S. military forces, etc.?

See enclosed material.

63. After liberation or the war ending, what happened? Did you move as an individual or group, go by foot, train, bus? Where did you go, to another U.S. camp?

We left the POW camp on foot about 35 miles to our lines, and then by truck to Lingavan, where we flew to Alandea in the East Indies by plane, and then on a ship for 27 days to San Francisco.

64. What happened at your camp prior to returning to the States? Did U.S. military officials interrogate you, examine you physically, give you food, clothing, etc.?

No examination, we were given food and clothing.



65. How, when and where did you arrive back in the United States? Did you stay at some camp? Did you go home by train?

I arrived in San Francisco by ship, and they flew me to Denver where my parents lived.

66. What things today remind you of prison life in your day to day living?

My wife heckling me to get this done - seriously, not HAVING DYSENTERY.

67. Do you have any complaints about how you have been treated since your POW days?

Yes, I think the POW's got a raw deal, - Secretary of State Dulles said "our boys don't want anything" when the Japs paid other POW's, and the law said or says currently that our health problems should be applicable to those years in prison camp - you can't starve a person for nearly 3 or more years and not expect something to show up.

68. Do you have a picture of yourself prior to being a POW, preferably a picture in uniform? Do you have a picture of yourself following the war? Do you have a picture of yourself and your family recently taken, or taken within recent years? Any or all of these pictures would be appreciated. They will be returned to you after we have made copies of them.

Enclosed. The picture of me was taken in 1941 in Manila, the ambulance is behind me. The other picture is a fairly recent one of our entire family.

69. Do you have any copies of telegrams from the War Department or the U.S. Government regarding your becoming a POW? Or your release, or war time status as a POW? These or copies of these would be appreciated. If you wish them returned, they will be sent back to you.

70. Do you have any letters or copies of letters you sent home or received from home during war or during period you were a POW? These or copies of these would be appreciated. They also will be returned if you so indicate in your reply.

3 postcards enclosed which were sent to my family.

Please return all the material which I am sending.

I am also enclosing my Japanese war bond which we were required to buy. In the Medical Dept, we were paid 8 yen a month and we had to invest 4 of that in war bonds.

71. A few POW's were able to return to the U.S. or home with a few articles they may have made, been given or in some way secured in POW camp. Some of these could be: paper notes, camp regulations, clothing, cigarette lighter, insignia, hand made pans or pots, special cans used in camp, small tools, etc. If you have any of these, we would appreciate a picture of them. If you desire they could be sent with this report and we will take a picture of them and return them to you if you so desire.

I am enclosing a pipe I made in prison camp - and smoked it when I could get tobacco, which was very rare.

72. The above questions or suggestions are limited and you may write or explain many items not included; therefore, feel free to express yourself in any manner you desire.



TAKEN AT Ft WILLIAM MCKINLEY  
1941

I enlisted in the Army in May of 1941 and requested the Philippine Islands as my station. I arrived there in July of 1941 and was stationed at Fort William McKinley where I served until December 8, 1941. Then we went to Bataan with #1 General Hospital in Little Bagio, and on April 8, 1942, our commanding Officer Colonel Duckworth read an order that came out from General Wainwright that all troops of Bataan would surrender to the Japanese the next day and that anyone who did not surrender would be classed as a deserter and would be court martialed after the war. Two other men and I had made arrangements to live with some Philippino tribes in the mountains, but did not do so with the threat of a court martial, we weren't given much choice but to surrender with the rest of our unit.

We were transferred to Camp O'Donnell in Central Luzon in July of 1942. This camp was once one of the worst disease ridden death traps on earth. You could smell it for miles depending on which way the wind was blowing. The camp was infested with malaria and dysentery and the ground was covered with human feces from the dysentery in the camp. The water was pumped from the river, which of course was contaminated. Camp O'Donnell had been a Philippino army camp before World War II and there were approximately 100,000 Philipinos there when we arrived, who were dying at the rate of about 400 a day and the Americans were dying at the rate of 50 a day. This was from plain starvation and the diseases resulting from malnutrition such as dysentery and Beriberi. It was one of the worst malaria areas in the Philippines.

I got malaria in August of 1942 and by chance got ahold of some liquid quinine to get rid of the malaria. If there is anything worse in the world to take than liquid quinine, I don't know what it would be. I had malaria 6 or 7 times while in the Philippines. I got dysentery in November of 1942, but it so happened the Japanese gave us some Red Cross packages and some American medicine. I had a few shots of some vitamins from these supplies plus some meat and other edible articles. They also shipped over some canned meat and supplies of that kind which the Japanese gave us a little of, and this seemed to clear up my dysentery for the time being.

The first thing that caught my eye when we came into Camp O'Donnell was the long line of starving men standing in the tropical sun waiting to get to the water faucet to get water. The line was at least 3 miles long winding back and forth between the bamboo barracks. They carried every describeable type of container which would hold water. Hour after hour this went on all during the daylight hours and at sundown the water was turned off, and if you hadn't gotten to the faucet for your supply, we went without. There was only the one faucet in the middle of the camp.

Before we left Camp O'Donnell, 1,400 Americans and 40,000 Philipinos had died of Malaria, starvation, dysentery and Beriberi.

In January of 1943 we were moved to Cabanatuan. There were about 6,000 Americans who were dying at the rate of about 50 a day. This camp was somewhat cleaner than Camp O'Donnell because it was all Americans and they had made quite an effort to get the camp cleaned up, but with the constant starvation, dysentery and malaria, it was a losing battle. By this time I had started to suffer from Beriberi. We got a few more Red Cross supplies and the Japanese doled out a little Red Cross medicine.

The food was rationed by the Japanese, 450 grams of rice per man per day. This was cooked in about 10 kitchens into a kind of rice gruel. You got a half a canteen cup for breakfast, the same for lunch and for supper. Once a week they allowed the Americans to butcher one caribou or water buffalo as we call them in the United States. Spread out among 6,000 men this made a little gravy to put on your rice to make it a little more edible, so the vitamin supply as far as the prison camp was concerned, was practically nil.

The Japanese had taken over a thousand acres of land just south of Cabanatuan and put it into garden, which is where the Americans worked 12 hours a day, going out before daylight and coming in after dark. The Japanese were very cruel to the Americans who worked in the garden. They had to work the garden barefooted and they made them pull the weeds, but they could not bend their knees, they had to lean over the way the Japanese did. This was pretty tough going for the Americans who weren't used to doing that type of work bending over without bending their knees. If they caught you bending your knees, they beat you

with almost anything, and they usually carried a big club to do the job.

We had our first salt issued to us at Cabanatuan and that was the first salt the Americans had since being taken prisoner. I watched some of the prisoners eat a half canteen cup of salt just taking it out grain by grain, sitting there eating the entire half cup full. That's how short the salt supply was.

In April of 1943, a couple of fellows and I got ahold of some springs out of a hospital bed, so with the little short coil springs, we made rat traps to catch rats to supplement our meat supply, which was our main meat source. We tried skinning them and then frying them, but that wasn't very good, so usually we just boiled them and ate them that way.

One time we were out in the garden and killed a 19 foot long python, sliced him up and ate him for meat -it wasn't too bad eating.

The Americans didn't mind working the garden too much since they thought they might get something to eat out of it. They gave us a little egg plant once in a while, and when it was time to harvest the carrots, they took the carrots and gave the Americans the tops to eat, which we boiled for greens. We got a few sweet potatoes once in a while, but as far as the food supply that came out of the garden was concerned, the Japanese loaded up their trucks and hauled the produce into Cabanatuan to sell because there was a good demand for any type of food or vegetables, so the food we got from the Japanese was, they hoped, not enough to keep us alive.

The dysentery continued and with the straight rice diet and the fact that no medicine was available, things didn't improve. The only thing that would keep a person alive at all was to drink all the water you could stand and eat charcoal from the wood burning in the mess hall.

The weight loss was one of the worst things in the long run, but then all of the men lost from 40 to 100 pounds during the first 6 months of our internment. Beriberi which is a vitamin deficiency, is almost unheard of in the United States, but was most common in prison camp. It shows up in many forms. I had what was called dry Beriberi which causes weakening of the muscles, including the heart. It varied in intensity according to the diet, and the

few vegetables we ever got from the garden were not enough to make any showing on our vitamin deficiency problems.

By this time the camp had dwindled down to probably 1,500 men. A lot of men there ahead of us had died from starvation and the Japanese had contributed to the dysentery, malaria, and Beriberi, but most of it was caused by just plain starvation. They made the boast that none of the Americans would get back to the United States because the Japanese would starve them to death, and they did a pretty good job of it. The rice they issued each man per day most of the time I was in Cabanatuan, furnished approximately 750 calories per day per man. Once in a great while they got generous and gave us a little more, but generally speaking, it was less than a half canteen of rice.

No one would have any idea of what it would be like to be hungry constantly for a period of 30 months or more at one stretch.

The Japanese shipped out a lot of men to Japan to work, so by the end of 1944, there was approximately 1,000 men left at Cabanatuan. The first of January of 1945, they shipped out the last bunch of men leaving around 511 men left in the camp, of which I was one. The Beriberi disappeared when I got back to eating American food, but the damage had already been done. The lack of calcium in our diet caused the total breakdown of my teeth, which resulted in dentures, which isn't surprising after suffering from the disease continuously from about October of 1942 until long after I was back in the States. From about the first of January in 1942 until February 1, 1945, I suffered from malnutrition. That plus the bouts of Malaria and dysentery, the many times I went without water and the months without any salt, I believe certainly accounts for my present heart condition. I was rescued by the 6th Army Rangers on January 28, 1945. We got back behind the American lines on January 30, 1945, and I had the first full meal I had had since December 8, 1941. I think if you will check the records, you will find that most of the fellows who were prisoners of the Japanese tell approximately the same story as mine.

The Japanese boast of starving us to death was quite accurate, since only about 10% of us returned home.

From: Name *Edward A. Burns*

Edward A. Burns

Nationality American

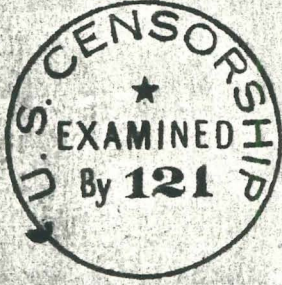
Rank Sergeant

Philippine Military

Camp Prison Camp No. 1



俘虜郵便 (Prisoner of War Mail)



To: Mrs. Thomas S. Burns  
Box 30,  
Hill City, South Dakota

U. S. A.

さかには郵便

From: Name See DES PMS

Edward A. Burns

Nationality American

Rank Sgt.

Camp Philippines Military  
Prison Camp #13



To: Mrs. T. S. Burns  
Hill City

South Dakota

U. S. A.



さかには郵便

From: Name *Edward A. Burns*

Edward A. Burns

Nationality American

Rank Sergeant

Camp Philippine Military Prison Camp # 1



俘虜郵便 (Prisoner of War Mail)

To: Donald J. Burns,

Bowman, North Dakota

U. S. A.

さかには郵便

10331  
U.S. CENSOR



IMPERIAL JAPANESE ARMY

The Philippine Military Prison Camp No.

1. I am interned at \_\_\_\_\_
2. My health is — excellent; good; fair; poor.
3. I am — injured; sick in hospital; under treatment; not under treatment.
4. I am — improving; not improving; better; well.
5. Please see that \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ is taken care of.
6. (Re: Family); Love to all the family.
7. Please give my best regards to Don and Happy.

IMPERIAL JAPANESE ARMY

Philippines Military Prison Camp #13

~~Camp O'Donnell, PH~~

1. I am interned at ~~Camp O'Donnell, PH~~
2. My health is — ~~excellent~~; good; ~~fair; poor~~
3. I am — uninjured; ~~sick in hospital; under treatment; not under treatment~~.
4. I am — ~~improving; not improving; better~~; well.
5. Please see that nothing  
\_\_\_\_\_ is taken care of.
6. (Re: Family); Send my regards to Don and Happy
7. Please give my best regards to Red and Pat

IMPERIAL JAPANESE ARMY

1639  
The Philippine Military Prison Camp #1

1. I am interned at \_\_\_\_\_
2. My health is — excellent; good; fair; poor.
3. I am — uninjured; sick in hospital; under treatment; not under treatment.
4. I am — improving; not improving; better; well.
5. Please see that \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ is taken care of.
6. (Re: Family); Am O.K. Love to all.
7. Please give my best regards to the folks.

軍事郵便貯金通帳

原簿管 下關貯金支局

記號番 戦ぬに05/26

名氏	住所	要摘
ブルヌ イトワルド 殿	呂宋島 大仔房收容所	Edward A. Burns, Sgt. MD. US ARMT.

造製局耐印閣内

制のあらまし

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即時 拂

(一) 原簿所管廳の「現在高證明」のある通帳に對しては、何處の郵便局所でも、其の證明金額の範圍内ならば現金の支拂を致します。

(二) 「現在高證明」のない通帳に對し現金の支拂をする限度は

(イ) 預け入れた郵便局所では其の局所に預入した金額の範圍内、

(ロ) 他の郵便局所では一日三十圓、同一月内百圓迄であります。

一部拂のときの注意 貯金の一部を拂戻すときは、通常拂でも即時拂でも拂戻金額に十錢未満の端數を附けず且五十錢以上を残して置いて下さい。

拂戻の豫告 多額の拂戻は資金の都合ですぐには應じ兼ねる場合もありますから、豫め拂渡郵便局所へ

利 お申出下さい。

子 毎年三月末を區切つて元金に組入れ、通帳をお出しのとき之に記入いたします。

繼續通帳 通帳に餘白がなくなつたり通帳を亡失、毀損又は汚斑したときは、繼續通帳を發行致しますから、其の旨を郵便局所へお申出下さい。

再度通帳 内地郵便局では前記繼續通帳に對しては預入又は拂戻の取扱をいたしませんから、内地歸還後は原通帳及繼續通帳をなるべくはやく郵便局にお出しになつて、新通帳と引換の請求をして下さい。

讓 貯金は親族間又は遺言に依る場合の外は個人間の讓渡は出来ません。

轉 届書に通帳を添へて郵便局所へお出し下さい。

改 居 届書を郵便局所又は原簿所管廳にお出しになると共に、通帳に記載してある住所を訂正して下さい。

無効處分 十年間預入又は拂戻なく或は利子記入、檢閲等の爲に通帳を一回もお出しにならないときは、其の貯金は無効になることがあります。

尚此の貯金に就てお申出になるときは、通帳の記號番號をお知らせ下さい。

# FORT LOGAN MAN BRINGS BACK GRIM THOUGHTS OF CABANATUAN

Sergt. Edward Burns, 27, on Arrival in Denver After 33 Months a Prisoner, Tells How 2,600 Died.

(Continued From Page One.)

not expecting him until Sunday and no one but newspaper men and photographers were at the airport to greet him upon his arrival.

However, Sergeant Burns and his family were reunited Saturday evening when he went to their home immediately after reporting at Fort Logan and receiving a pass until Monday. Sunday the family get-together will be augmented by the arrival here of Sergeant Burns' brother, Donald, from Bowman, N. D. Whether another sister, Mrs. Andrew Britton, who lives in Michigan, will be able to come here in the next few days has not been learned.

Tales of deprivation challenging the imagination flowed from the sergeant's lips, once he started to talk. His voice, so low as to be barely audible, lacked any trace of bitterness against his captors.

"I enlisted, I volunteered for the Philippine service," he said. "It was an experience I'd never want to live thru again, but I don't regret it. Just being free to go where I want to, eat what I want . . . just knowing that I am free—that offsets anything else in my mind."

Burns told that his fellow prisoners, who ranged in number from 300 to 7,000 during the two years he was at Cabanatuan, and he were given for food fish fertilizer which the Philippine government previously had sold at \$3 a ton.

"It's hardly necessary to say that the stuff wasn't fit for animals to eat," the sergeant said. "Finally I just quit eating it entirely, and so did most of the others."

Another delicacy offered the prisoners, he said, were the leafy part of sweet potato tops, bitter as gall.

Japs kept the choice of these for themselves, fed the next

best quality to the pigs, and the third grade to American prisoners," Sergeant Burns said. "Our rice quota, from 250 to 300 grams a day, was always just a little short. We were always underfed just enough to induce malnutrition and to cause an endless gnawing pain of hunger."

A caribou or brahma steer was issued twice a week—sometimes with 4,000 or 5,000 men to be fed, he said, so each person got scarcely more than a smell. The only humane gesture he recalls was at Camp O'Donnell prison north of Clark field on Luzon.

## JAPS OPENED UP ON THANKSGIVING

Burns was held there six months and Bataan three months before being taken to Cabanatuan where his term lacked just one day short of two years when Col. Henry A. Mucci of Denver led the raid liberating more than 500 prisoners Jan. 30.

"The Jap colonel 'opened up' on Thanksgiving day that year and gave us a caribou for dinner," Burns said. "That, from a Jap, is real human kindness."

He told that the men would find their own, and other prisoners' pathetically brief postal cards to relatives, given to their captors to be mailed, swept up in the rubbish that they had to handle.

"So we never knew whether our mail went out," he said. He received five or six letters from his family, which consists of his parents, three sisters and a brother, and he sent out a dozen or so cards in all, but doesn't know whether any of them reached their destination.

Burns, who landed March 8 at San Francisco after a plane flight from London, enlisted June 22, 1941, and arrived in the Philippines July 1942.

He wears the Presidential Citation with two Clusters, the Purple Heart for "excessive hardship endured," the Bronze Star, the Asiatic and Pacific ribbon, the Philippine liberation insignia, the navy Presidential Citation, pre-Pearl Harbor badge and the Defense of the Philippines ribbons. His family moved to Denver from the east while he was in service, he said, and he is looking forward to living here where he has visited on previous occasions.

Ruthless Jap tactics in discipline were apparent, the sergeant said, in their method of putting prisoners in groups of ten. If one in the group escaped, the other nine would be shot. Honor of the Americans prevented any of them from taking the risk of subjecting their buddies to such hideous penalties so there were no attempted breaks after the first one was preceded the "honor" punishment.

## JAP GUARDS SHOWED THEIR COWARDICE

Cowardice of the Jap guards was indicated by their precaution of walking their beats between two secure fences so shutting off the Filipino and American prisoners.

A well at Cabanatuan provided good water, Burns said, but sanitation was indescribably bad.

The men lived in bamboo quarters, with beds made of bamboo slats. Such mattresses and other softening agencies as they put on were stolen from their captors.

A raid on Jap warehouses Jan. 7, just three weeks before the prisoners were liberated, netted many cases of canned milk, rice and some other food supplies, Burns said. The raid developed when Jap soldiers took over as guards replacing some Formosa soldiers.

"The new guards didn't know what they were supposed to have in stock," Burns said, "so no punishment was imposed on us."

## GOT SIX CIGARETS EACH WEEK

Magazines and books were provided by the Red Cross, he said, cigars were rationed at six a week to each prisoner.

"They were Jap-made—and rank," Burns said.

He received the equivalent of \$8.50 a month as a member of the medical corps from the Japs, he said, but there was nothing to spend even that on.

Of the raid itself which liberated him and more than 500 others, Burns had little to say.

"Two rangers came and told us to go the the main gate," he said. "We were out before we knew what was happening. It was around 8 o'clock at night, but we walked twenty miles that night to a camp inside the American lines and we were given our first decent meal in nearly three years. And it was a honey!"

DENVER  
POST

To know 2,600 men had died of the  
breath of life under conditions as adverse as any confronting  
civilized men, had died of fever, malnutrition, or dysentery  
while all were Japanese prisoners, was the bitterest of many  
grim facts for Staff Sgt. Edward Burns, 27, for two years

and nine months a prisoner in the  
Philippines.

A surgical technician in the med-  
ical corps, Burns arrived in Den-  
ver by United Air Lines plane late  
Saturday.

His breast covered with citations,  
the rangy Irish sergeant, 5 feet 11  
inches tall, related that he weighed  
130 pounds, compared with his  
usual 170 pounds, when released  
by the American Ranger and Fili-  
guerrilla raid on Cabanatuan  
prison camp in the Philippines  
last 30.

Because of a mixup over tele-  
grams, Sergeant Burns' parents, Mr.  
and Mrs. Thomas Burns of 2944  
West Holdeñ place, and two sisters,  
Mrs. Ida Reynolds and Mrs. Carl  
Reynolds of the same address, were

(Turn to Page 8—Col. 5)

*Our family*

*Standing - Peggy, Tom, Candee, Elizabeth, Shannon*

*In front - Gayle, Opal, (Edward) Allen & Patricia*



# Hostages for 'rest of their lives'

By **RON BELLAMY**  
Of the Register-Guard

After he was free, after he had survived the Bataan Death March and three years as a prisoner of war, Bill Mattson found that he really wasn't free at all.

He was still imprisoned by the experience, and by the physical and psychological effects of the experience that remain to this day.

So it will be for the 50 American hostages in Iran, imprisoned by student militants for more than 150 days now, Mattson says.

"The effects of what's called the prisoner-of-war-stress syndrome, those things will be irreparable and will be with them for the rest of their lives," Mattson says.

"Being away from your family, from your wife and children, under stressful conditions, has an effect on you that needs to be rehabilitated gradually, in an understanding way, from both parties."

However, Mattson says that increased awareness of the phenomenon of "POW stress syndrome" will result in the hostages receiving — when they are finally released — far better and

more sophisticated counseling than Mattson and other prisoners received after World War II.

"We weren't counseled; we didn't have the knowledge, and our parents and spouses had no information on how to treat us," says Mattson, 57,

## Veteran of Death March comprehends all too well the plight of the hostages

a retired teacher who lives on a small farm on Hall Road west of Cheshire.

"They just stumbled into it and naturally bombarded us with very touching words and so forth, and got all sorts of different reactions because of the effects of our imprisonment."

The effects of that traumatic experience remain, 35 years later. That, in part, is the reason for the existence of the American Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor, a recognized veterans' group. From Thursday through Sunday, the West-

ern States Chapter of the organization will conduct its annual convention at the Rodeway Inn in Springfield.

More than 150 veterans and their wives from the eight states in the western chapter and from the four states in the northwestern chapter will attend the convention, which is not open to the public. Although the group will elect officers, will listen to speakers and will make some policy decisions, Mattson says there's a deeper reason for the convention.

"A big part of our reason for existing is what I call POWship, or fellowship," he says. "We feel a dire need to get together to visit, to reminisce. You can't forget the years or the events that happened, so we all feel that it's better to talk about it, sort of like a relief valve.

"I do know some POWs who refuse to come to these get-togethers, and most of them are suffering various mental disorders — they tend to keep everything within them."

Mattson says the ex-prisoners are "very close. It almost surpasses family ties, the bond of mutual comradeship that we have."

**Turn to HOSTAGES, Page 2B**

# Hostages

Continued from Page 1B

*Learn from  
I forgot*

For Mattson, war and capture are seared on his memory like a brand. He arrived on the island of Luzon in the Philippines in the fall of 1941, part of a tank company. Within two weeks after Japanese bombers struck at Pearl Harbor, 26,000 U.S. troops and 70,000 Filipino soldiers were retreating down the Bataan Peninsula.

Finally, the Allied troops were pinned on the tip of the peninsula. The fighting raged for several months. The American soldiers were short on rations and weakened by disease. In April 1942, the Allied troops — including 15,000 to 20,000 Americans — surrendered. Mattson, a youngster from Minnesota, was 19.

Over the next two weeks, the Japanese began marching their prisoners northward — five days across 70 to 90 miles of rugged jungle and mountain territory, without adequate food or water. An estimated 5,000 to 10,000 U.S. troops, as well as Filipino soldiers, died in the march; others contracted diseases that

killed them later.

Mattson worked as a forced laborer and spent some time in a prison camp hospital before being transferred to a prison camp in Japan, where he spent the rest of the war working in coal mines. It was from that camp that, in August 1945, that he saw a mushroom-shaped cloud rising from the city of Hiroshima, 80 miles to the south.

The atomic bomb had been dropped, and, soon, the war was over.

But only officially. For the ex-prisoners, especially, the war still goes on, in their minds and in their bodies.

Mattson spent almost a year in military hospitals and then went home to Minnesota.

"Everyone wanted to have me over to dinner, to hear about it, 'Bill, what was it like?'" Mattson recalls. "It was just too much. I couldn't talk about it. I could to someone who had experienced

it, because they were one of us; they had gone through it, too.

"I went to dinner with my folks (at friends' house) one night, and I just got so much that I shot up from the table and left and went home, and embarrassed my folks."

Mattson left for California, where he spent some time with an uncle in Santa Barbara, relaxing on the beach, "hitting the bars," talking about the experience only when he wanted to. Later, he returned east, enrolling in Augustana College in Illinois in the fall of 1946. In the summer of 1947, he married Joyce, who had been a nurse in one of the military hospitals.

The war inside him continued, however. He'd have nightmares. He was constantly on the verge of quitting school.

"I had no fear," he says. "I would fight at the drop of a hat. I think I could have murdered someone without any

reason. We lived with death for so long — it was a part of our lives for so long. That scared me to some extent, and I know it scared others.

"It was a long process of rehabilitation to find ourselves, and some of us never did."

Mattson credits his faith and his wife. He's also been deeply involved in two veterans' groups, the American Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor and the American Ex-Prisoners of War.

Mattson says his experience is shared, in one form or another, by the other prisoners. He says the Veterans' Administration estimates that 26,000 soldiers were captured in the Pacific theater in World War II. "They figure over half died in captivity," he says, adding, "there's probably not more than 1,300 to 1,500 of us living nationwide now." About a dozen survivors of Bataan and Corregidor live in the Eugene-Springfield area, he says.

"Our problems are pretty universal," he says. The physical effects of malnutrition and disease linger. "We're all suffering from the same stress reactions that can manifest themselves in different ways," he adds.

In his case, for example, Mattson says he suffers intestinal problems, which occur under stress, that forced his early retirement from teaching. He can't tolerate noise, and has trouble following the thread of a single conversation in a room filled with other conversations.

And he suffers from claustrophobia, traceable, perhaps, to the 21 days he spent in a bamboo cage for stealing food and to the 24 hours he spent — at the order of an American officer — in the psychiatric ward of the prison hospital for trying to visit, without a pass, a friend who was near death.

Mattson spends his time on his farm now, "doing what I want to do." He's

made two nostalgic trips to the Philippines and is planning another. He devotes much of his time to the ex-POW groups, which help the ex-prisoners obtain counseling and other benefits from the government.

"We were the first (American) prisoners to be captured by enemy forces in any large group (in World War II), and probably at the bottom of the line in receiving benefits," Mattson says. "They (officials) didn't know what to expect, and, being anxious to get out of the service, we got out on common rather than medical discharges. The doctors just didn't realize the diseases or the (long-term) effects of incarceration and interrogation and brutality and those things."

Mattson says the efforts of the ex-POW groups have led to better counseling and care for prisoners of subsequent wars, and to the establishment of a government-run center for POW studies in San Diego. Those advances will ultimately benefit the hostages in Iran, he says.

"It's going to be very difficult for them to talk about their experience," he says. "Each one's going to have to go at his own rate."

# After Pearl Harbor,

## Mariano Villarín

It happened a long time ago, but I still remember the details. The sneak attack on Pearl Harbor 37 years ago triggered the war in the Pacific that lasted 3½ years. That attack also sealed the fate of 15,000 American troops on the Philippine Islands and their 80,000 Philippine Army counterparts.

Maj. Gen. Edward King's surrender on April 9, 1942, of more than 76,000 men on the Bataan peninsula, including 12,000 Americans, was the greatest capitulation in U.S. military history. We buried our small arms and just stood there waiting for the Japanese to come. A few soldiers were waving white handkerchiefs. A wave of horror ran through us as we saw the first enemy infantrymen with fixed bayonets approaching our group. Then came a dozen tanks with machine guns trained on us.

After considerable roughing up and beatings, we were assembled into a long procession of tired, bedraggled captives to be marched to an unknown destination. A lot of faces were slapped, mainly because the prisoners did not understand what the Japanese were trying to say. A Japanese soldier would pick a POW that struck his fancy from among the marchers and toss him around to the amusement of his fellow soldiers. They were having a ball practicing their judo at the expense of Filipino and American POWs. The Japanese preferred to pick on the Americans, especially the 6-footers, to impress

their fellow countrymen that the bigger the POWs were, the harder they fell.

On two occasions I saw the enemy drive his truck deliberately into our marching groups, killing one or two POWs and injuring several others. Invariably, the driver would speed away in order not to be seen by any Japanese officer, and the Japanese soldiers riding in the rear would laugh at us in sadistic fashion. One of them pointed at me and made a motion with his other hand across the front of his neck as if to say he'd be glad to chop my head off, too.

For four days we saw nothing but ruins in Bataan province. When we entered Pampanga province we finally got our first food supply from the townfolk of Lubao and Guagua, who thronged the road to see us. There were tears streaming down their faces as they saw the defeated POWs marching in captivity. They risked their lives to throw all kinds of food to the marchers. The Japanese swung their rifles at them. We enjoyed the food with such relish that we disregarded the rifle butt blows from the guards. Every time we went by an artesian well, there was a mad scramble for water. More blows came from the guards. Some POWs were even shot.

We left our surrender area with a laundry bag containing our worldly belongings, like mess gear, shaving kit, a blanket and underwear. Each time the Japanese searched us at some stopping point, they would take a couple of things away from us — wrist watch, money, sun helmet and so on. It was a common sight to see Japanese soldiers with all kinds of wrist watches strapped on both arms up to their elbows, and even around their legs, all POW property. By the end of the march most of us had nothing but the clothes on our backs. There was a heavy downpour one night and we were freezing.

The prisoners were formed into groups of 75 to 100, with about 15 guards to each group. We would be accounted for every time we left a checkpoint. Upon arrival at the next checkpoint, they would count us off again. For every POW the Japanese thought was missing, one would be picked from the group and taken away to be shot. In the meantime, a few would drop by the wayside, unable to go any further. Malaria, dysentery, the hot sun, thirst and starvation were taking their toll.



Mariano Villarín





Americans and Filipinos at Camp O'Donnell carried the bodies of fellow POWs to burial in mass graves.

The guards warned us to stay away from those who could barely march. It was survival of the fittest. Those who could not make it were shot or bayoneted. Hundreds of bloody, decaying corpses littered the main road to San Fernando, not to mention those who died while marching from the jungle trails onto the main road. There were headless corpses, too. I remember seeing a Japanese with his deadly samurai sword decapitating a Filipino POW who was in a kneeling position.

We eventually learned from experience how to deal in situations where some marchers managed to escape. We would make the counters at the next stop understand that the missing POWs had dropped dead along the way. Books written by survivors and historians disclosed that from 7,000 to 10,000 POWs died on the death march, including about 2,330 Americans, from malaria, starvation, exhaustion, beatings or execution.

We finally reached San Fernando after a six-day march on a practically empty stomach. Some groups made it in 10 days, depending on the guards. The distance averaged 65 miles, depending on where the POW was captured. At San Fernando we were herded into boxcars and our

destination was Camp O'Donnell. The irony of it all — Camp O'Donnell had been our maneuver campsite in pre-war days.

Of the approximately 76,000 men who started the march, only 54,000 reached the camp. No one will ever know the exact death toll, since many of those unaccounted for escaped.

Since razors and blades had been taken away from us, I had grown a beard. I lost a bit of dignity one day when a Japanese soldier, in a mood for practical jokes, got ahold of my beard and pulled me around the compound. He'd go sideways, then up and down. I followed him, like a dog on a leash, without resisting while the so-and-so kept giggling throughout my ordeal.

As a result of the increasing number of POW escapees from the camp, the Japanese took retaliatory measures. They built an open-air enclosure exclusively for captured escapees. The prisoner would be made to stand between two poles, virtually naked, facing the sun. His hands would be tied to each pole, at an elevation above his head. If another captured escapee was brought in while this torture chamber was occupied, he

was fortunate. He was shot.

I don't know how many days the captured escapees lived through this torture before they died. We didn't dare look, but we couldn't help but hear their cries of agony. They would go out of their minds, screaming their heads off. Later in the day they would be so weak that their faint cries were hardly audible. They died like rats. The more mature men suffered in silence. They died like martyrs.

After about eight weeks, the torture enclosures no longer had customers. With a diet consisting of a ball of rice and salt twice a day, with a sweet potato on occasion, the POWs, aggravated by dysentery and malaria, were too weak to walk, let alone jump over a barbed-wire fence and run into an open field. In the American sector, for every American in a group of 10 who escaped, the remaining nine would be executed.

The burial detail was the worst assignment a POW could get. Besides digging a pit large enough to accommodate 20 corpses at a time, we took turns picking up the dead from various areas. We would tie the hands and feet to a bamboo pole and two of us would carry the pole to a grave-

yard, dump the corpse into the pit unceremoniously and go back for more. Although the corpse was just skin and bones and didn't weigh much, we were walking skeletons struggling with the cadaverous load for distances varying between 300 and 1,000 yards. How we succeeded in excavating a deep hole on a starvation diet and in our sick condition will always remain a mystery to me. There were times when the dead were being brought in at a faster rate than the digging. The corpses would just be piled by the side.

I saw men apparently strong enough to make the burial detail, digging or staggering with the malodorous form. A couple of days later, I recognized them, hanging from a pole, being put away by others who would later be taken away in the same fashion. Everything was hopeless. I was just awaiting my turn. Out of sheer despair and in that kind of environment, I was no longer afraid to die.

It was difficult to tell the living from the dead. The advanced cases of dysentery remained motionless, with their eyes popping from their thin faces — eyes that had been drained of all vestiges of hope. They were almost buried alive because when the burial detail picked them up, they didn't move or say a thing. They thought they were being taken to the hospital until they landed in the pit with the corpses. Instinctively, they would show signs of life and would be retrieved.

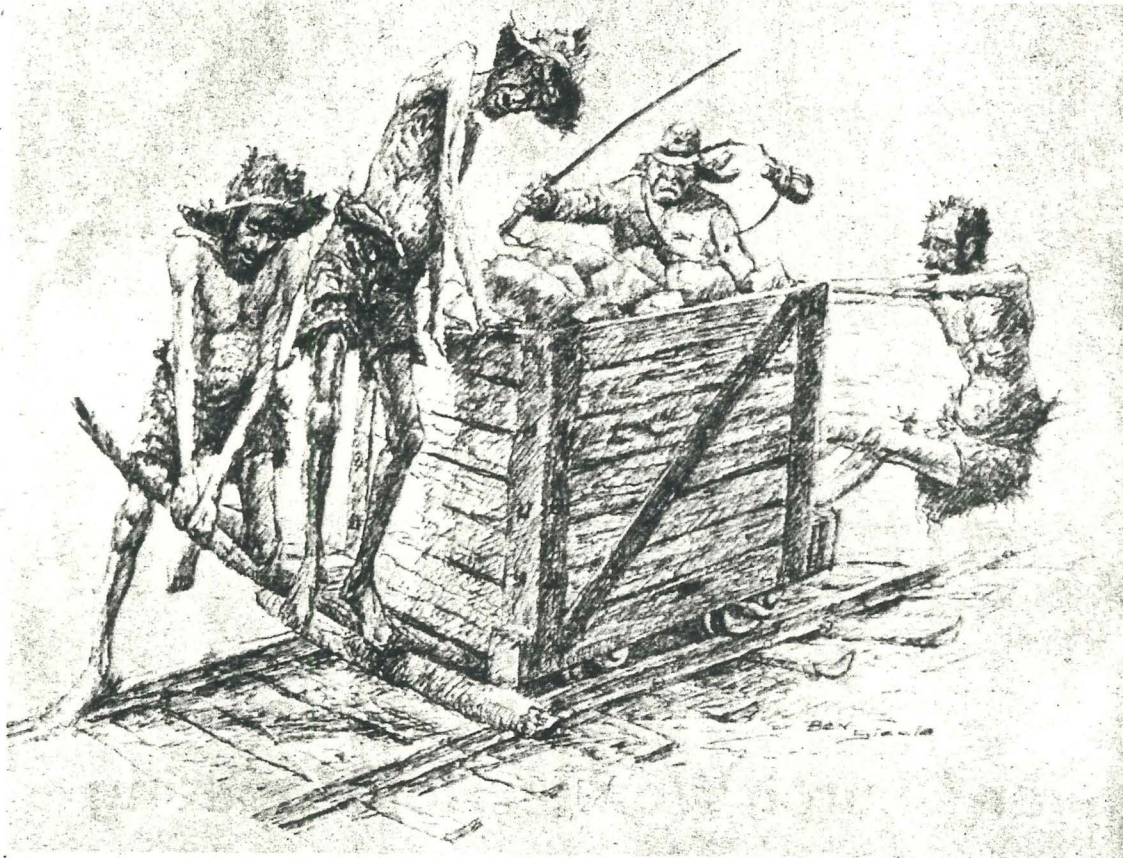
The death rate during the first two months at O'Donnell reached a peak of 500 Filipinos and 50 Americans daily. Conditions improved after that when Red Cross supplies and medicines, presumably intercepted by the Japanese, began to trickle in. But it was too late. The damage had been done. The appalling and incredible figure of 32,000 Filipino and American POWs who died in the prison camps will remain etched in the memory of those of us who survived.

Mariano Villarín was a second lieutenant in the Philippine Army when World War II broke out. When the war began, the entire Philippine Army forces were sworn into the U.S. forces in the Far East under Gen. Douglas MacArthur. After the war Villarín transferred into the American army and later made Minnesota his home. He lives in Bloomington and is an auditor with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

# death marched through Bataan

## After Pearl Harbor,

Minneapolis Tribune



few survivors.

#### Conclusion

The horrible things that happened to these men, and realizing that only about ten percent came back, should make us vow that this will never again happen to any of the men who serve our country.

The Geneva Convention of War was not observed at all, and I think it is amazing that after all the time my father spent in prison camp, I have never heard him say a really bad thing about the Japs - he does say that they are a kind people, and it was the military people who were so cruel. I think if I had been in his position, I would have a strong feeling against the Japanese.

# Prisoner Of War

by Peg Burns

The purpose of this term paper is to show all the facts and to tell how rotten all the prisoners of war were treated.

In the spring of 1942, a night of terror opened up for many Americans who were over run by the Japanese on the Bataan Peninsula on the Island of Luzon in the Philippines!

More than 78,100 American and Filipino troops were captives of the Japanese Army. My father was one of those men.

#### My Father, EX-POW

My father, Edward Allen Burns, enlisted in the Army in May of 1941 and requested the Philippine Islands as his station. He was stationed at Ft. William McKinley and was there for eleven months. On January 2, 1942 they were taken to Bataan and on April 8, 1942, his

and feet. The men found the best relief of the pain by soaking their feet in cold water.

Dysentery was one of the major problems or disease. Dysentery is a very severe case of diarrhea, and since they had little or no medication at all, they lived with the situation. The only cure they had for this was eating several spoonfuls of charcoal a day.

Malaria was the other disease that claimed many lives, and many of the men who survived, have Malaria attacks to this day.

There were many more diseases, but those were the most common ones.

After he left Camp O'Donnell, fourteen hundred Americans and forty thousand Filipinos had died of starvation, dysentery, Beriberi and Malaria.

men, it only made a little gravy to put on the rice to make it edible.

This didn't keep the men going, so a couple of fellows and my father got hold of some springs from the hospital beds and they made rat traps. They trapped some rats and they either skinned them or fried them, neither was any good, but it was something to eat, and it was their main source of meat. One time they were working in the garden and the men killed a nineteen foot long python, sliced him up and ate him. My father had some of that python.

The Americans didn't mind working in the garden because the Japs might give them something to eat. This seldom happened. They sometimes got sweet potatoes, but not very

Commanding Officer, Colonel Duckworth, read an order which said that all troops of Bataan must surrender to the Japanese the next day. This was a terrible thing to happen to anyone, and these Americans were heart-broken to receive such news. They had known that surrender was inevitable, but this did not make it any easier to accept, and for these men such an order was most difficult to accept.

The thought of the future must have been first of all, terrifying and secondly, most depressing, I know my father said it gave him an awful sick feeling inside when they took down our flag and he wondered when, if ever, he would see it fly again.

Two men and my father had arranged to live with some Filipino tribes in the mountains, but with the threat of a court martial at the end of the war, they didn't have much choice but to surrender with the rest of the troops.

#### Life At Camp O'Donnell

They arrived at Camp O'Donnell on July 5, 1942. This camp was one of the worst disease ridden death traps on the face of the earth. You could smell it for miles if the wind was blowing in the right direction.

Camp O'Donnell was a Filipino camp since World War I, so there were approximately one hundred thousand Filipinos there, and they were dying at the rate of four hundred a day.

There were also many Amer-

#### Escaping Was Impossible

At Camp O'Donnell they had two 12 feet high barb wire fences all the way around the prison. Other camps had barb wire fences and then a big wall all around it.

One of the reasons they starved everyone was so that everyone was so weak and couldn't attempt to escape since they were physically unable to do so.

For even more security, the Japanese put the Americans in groups of ten. They were called blood brothers or shooting groups. If one of the ten men would escape, the other nine would be shot. It almost goes without saying that the honor of these men prevented any of them from taking the risk of subjecting their buddies to such hideous penalties, so after the first attempt, the Japanese came up with this system, and there were no more escape attempts.

This particular camp was flat and cleared for the purpose - of keeping prisoners. If one's attempt to escape had been successful, there was not much chance of survival once you made it to the jungle, since you would have no way of knowing which way to go, the threats in the jungle were almost as great as remaining behind in the prison camp. Certainly the Japanese knew this, and didn't worry about escape too much, but this didn't stop them from their constant surveillance.

When they harvested the carrots, the Japs let them have the tops and the Americans boiled them for greens. This was not the usual procedure, however. Most of all the vegetables the Americans took care of in the garden, were hauled away when harvested.

The loss of weight was maybe the worst thing of all. Most of the men lost from forty to one hundred pounds. My father weighed one hundred seventy pounds when he enlisted in the Army and when he was released, he weighed one hundred thirty pounds, but he can remember when he was sick, he only weighed about one hundred ten pounds.

By the middle of 1944, the camp's population was down to about fifteen hundred men. The rice per man was about seven hundred fifty calories per day. The Japanese boasted that none of the Americans would get back, and only about ten percent of these men did return home.

My father did not spend too much time at Camp Cabanatuan #2, as he was moved to Camp Cabanatuan #1 a short time after his arrival at Cabanatuan #2. This camp was a little bit better, but not much.

The men lived in bamboo quarters with beds made of bamboo shoots or slats. Such mattresses and other softening agencies as they put on the mattresses, were stolen from their captors.

They still weren't getting enough food, and since they

icans dying - at the rate of fifty a day. Life in these camps was about as primitive as it could possibly be, and such facilities as they had were next to nothing.

Death became such a common thing that men went on eating their meager starvation diet at the same time a death detail was passing by. All these deaths were sad, but perhaps the most sad of all, was living through the entire ordeal of three years or more, and then die just before rescue - to look forward to release from prison camp was all that kept a lot of the prisoners alive at all. It almost seems that it would have been kinder had they died earlier in the war so they could have been spared the harsh treatment of prison camp life.

There were many ways of dying. Probably the most common was just plain starvation.

There was also wet Beriberi and dry Beriberi. Wet Beriberi is when your body became bloated with edema. This begins in the feet and moves upward to the head. The men were extremely helpless and unable to move. Sometimes the edema could be controlled by removing all salt from their diet.

Dry Beriberi is when your body becomes very thin. Their chief complaints were severe lightning like pain in their legs

#### Food Was Scarce

On January 31, 1943, my father was moved to Cabanatuan # 2. This camp was much cleaner than Camp O'Donnell and the Americans made an effort to keep it that way. By this time my father had had malaria six or seven times and had dry beriberi that weakens your muscles, including the heart.

Cabanatuan had a very good supply of uncontaminated water. Anything was better than the water at Camp O'Donnell, where you had to stand in line - a line that was about three miles long - just for a container of water, and if you didn't get water before they turned off the one faucet they had in camp, you went without. There were many men who spent the entire day waiting in line, only to be turned away by a laughing Jap who delighted in turning off the faucet as you approached to get your small container of water for the day. Many men collapsed each day while waiting in the hot sun for the line to move.

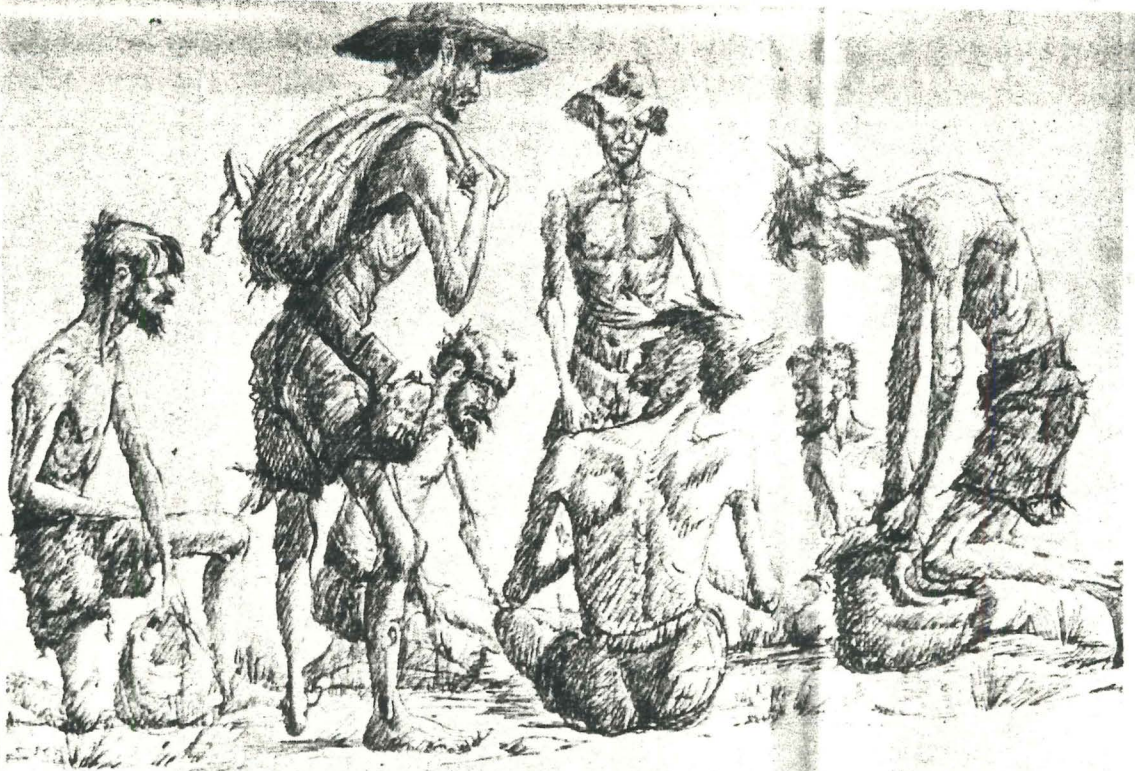
At this camp you got about 450 grams of rice, per man, per day. This amounted to about a half canteen for breakfast, the same for lunch and for supper. (My father still likes rice). Once a week they would butcher a caribou or brahma, but then this was to feed over six thousand

didn't have much to lose, on January 7, 1945, they raided a warehouse and ripped off many cases of canned milk, rice and some other supplies that the Japs had. As it turned out, they staged their raid when the Japanese soldiers took over as guards replacing some soldiers from Formosa.

The new guards didn't know what or how much food they had in stock, so no punishment was given.

#### Home At Last

The last bunch of men, of which by that time, there were about five hundred eleven of them, were rescued on January 31, 1945 by the 6th Army Rangers. They had known for some time that their rescue was imminent, since American planes had been circling their camp for several weeks and they saw planes which weren't even made when they entered prison camp. Rescue, when it came, was very quick and the Rangers had them out of there in no time. My father was back in the United States on February 8, 1945 and had his first full meal since December 8, 1941. He arrived home on St. Patrick's Day, March 17, 1945, and for my Irish father, this was the happiest day of his life. He had been a prisoner of war for 34 months and was one of the very



# Prisoner Of War

By Gayl Burns  
May 14, 1978

## Introduction

The purpose of this term paper is to show all who are interested just what it was like to be a prisoner of war, as my father was, and just how his release came about.

On April 8, 1942, approximately 27,000 Americans were taken prisoners of war by the Japanese in the Philippines. Only ten percent of these men, or about 27,000, came home. My father was one of them. General Wainwright had issued an order that anyone who did not surrender would be classified as a deserter and would be court martialed after the war. Therefore plans to escape ended right there.

## Life In Prison Camp

My father, Edward Allen Burns, was a prisoner of war for 34 months in the Philippine Islands. Life was very hard for them, and many thousands starved to death. The nightmare began with taking down the American flag, and they wondered when if ever, they would see it fly again.

Most of the men had malaria. Many had beriberi and dysentery. Some were wounded and

their wounds would not heal. The soldiers were forced on a terrible Death March- a forced march of one hundred miles with very little food and water. Any soldier who couldn't keep up was bayoneted or clubbed to death by the Japanese- in full view of the others. It was a horrible ordeal.

The prisoners received about 450 grams of rice per man, per day. This was about half a canteen for breakfast, lunch and supper. I would like to add that rice is still a favorite food for my father. Of course this amount of rations didn't keep the men going, and consequently accounted for the high death rate. The reason given why very few of the prisoners passing through these prison camps ever made any effort to take their own lives, even though they were starving, and seemingly, suffering hopeless situations, was summed up as follows- "they were all too busy concentrating on survival to think about suicide."

This has given an idea of how horrible living conditions were, and why so few lived to see their release from their endless "Hell

on earth" approximately three years later. The remainder of this paper will deal primarily with their release.

## Freedom At Last

Five hundred twelve survivors of the Bataan Death March located by a Filipino guerrilla in a Japanese prison camp- after three years!

All they had to do was invade 40 miles of jungle and broken country smothered by Jap patrols, elude the Ilocano and Tagalog informers thick as pox, break through to a prison camp in a Jap troops and supply concentration depot area- smash the gates, kill the enemy before they murdered the prisoners, release 500 sick and dying men and then take them back cross country over a couple rivers patrolled by enemy craft and fight off any pursuing troops, with nothing heavier than automatic weapons.

After all this was accomplished, the Rangers threw the gates open and went pouring in hugging the fence and firing as they entered. Some of the Rangers were to cut the telephone wires, others blasted a path to the radio

shack and kicked the door open. There were three Japanese soldiers inside, the Ranger took dead aim at the first Japanese soldier and shot him in the throat.

No one had spotted any prisoners yet, and it was feared that they were all pulled out earlier and killed or put where no one could find them easily. As flames swept toward the river, they heard the first voice-sobs and moans begging for help. Most of the prisoners were too dazed to understand. They hovered at one end of the long, foul smelling room. It was dark, with only a spotlight outside and the dying fire, plus distant lightning in the area. A Ranger yelled, "Where's the light?" No one answered. They were like sleep-walkers. The Rangers acted quickly to move these survivors out of the camp. The rescue took about 20 minutes, and they tried to make the prisoners move fast. The Rangers were urged to hit the prisoners, as it was the only way to get them to move faster, as they were accustomed to this type of treatment. The prisoners moved fast for a time, then began to straggle. The prisoners had nothing left. Officers ran along the lines of the column, cursing, begging, shoving and somehow kept them going. Prisoners who dropped were dragged to their feet by the Rangers and told the terrible things the Japs would do, and then pushed them back into the mass of men. Even the superbly conditioned Rangers began to weaken; some dropped, rose with enormous effort and stumbled along. Jap armored cars were spotted a couple of miles away and the column was swung off the road. They had to drive the prisoners hard, and they resisted when the pace was stepped up. It was their denial of possibility of another miracle, a wish to end their suffering right there. Their leader in desperation said suddenly in a shouting voice "Leave them here, let's bug out!" The Rangers understood and started to run, hoping the prisoners would follow, but the liberated men stood numb, unwilling to move. The Ranger in charge was about to have his men return to the prisoners for a last try, when he heard a shout. One of the prisoners did the one thing he knew would make the others move. Standing apart from the group, he shook his fist and yelled: "Hayaku, hashiro...baka!" Like laboratory guinea pigs, they responded in a swift, mechanical gesture of terror...a command they associated with

whips, kicks and gunbutts crashing into their slack faces.

The Rangers watched in amazement as the prisoners followed the shouting man, staggering, driving their racked bodies. The waves of men thrashed across the short grass, trying to reach cover before the scan of the Jap headlights hit them. They fell and wrenched themselves up, ran ceaselessly toward the curving palm trunks, and kept moving once safely inside the grove of trees.

They reached a barrío that night. A barrío is like a little town. Advance units were contacted and food and ambulances were to be dispatched to the rendezvous. Filipino women brought them rice cakes and tapoy, the native whiskey. The Rangers had taken along two big boxes which had cigarettes and hard candy for the prisoners, with orders to not give them any other kind of food. Their stomachs would not take it and the Rangers knew this. The Rangers were in more need of the food or rations than the prisoners at that particular time. **My Father's Recollections Of His Release From Prison Camp**

For about a month they were seeing American planes flying very low over their camp and they knew the American lines were only about thirty miles away from the prison camp. The Sixth Army Rangers made their dramatic rescue because they knew the Japanese were going to kill all the American prisoners.

At exactly 8 o'clock P.M. on January 31, 1945, some of his fellow prisoner friends and my dad were standing by a large barracks facing the guard house which had a couple of Japs inside. An American Ranger came in from back of the barracks to look at the guard house and then the lights went out, and a shot was fired on the Japs side. The Ranger raised his gun and shot the Jap guards in the guard house. The Ranger was carrying a light machine gun. By that time the other Rangers had started to shoot rockets into the sheds that housed the Japs and their tanks. My father said they had never seen rockets used in combat. In fifteen minutes the shooting was over.

The Rangers had killed all the Japs. They told the men to go to the main gate because they were taking them out of prison camp. They marched all night, which was about twenty miles, and then the American trucks came in to pick the men up, together with the ambulances needed for

many of the men. They were taken to a school house which had been made into a barracks. When the men got off the trucks to walk into the school yard, General MacArthur was standing there to shake hands with the prisoners who made it out of prison camp. He said to my father, "Hello, Sargeant Burns, glad to see you made it," much to my father's astonishment. He had met General MacArthur on one occasion when the war began, but how he remembered my father, three years later and many pounds lighter, and without his uniform, has always surprised my father. They had no identification on them, and the Rangers did not know who would be brought out of the prison camp, so there was no list that could have been given to the General.

After they left the school house, they went by boat to San Francisco. My father arrived home on February 8, 1945 and enjoyed his first full meal since December 8, 1941. He arrived at his parent's home on St. Patrick's Day, March 17, 1945, and for my Irish father, this was probably his most happy St. Patrick's Day. **Why Escape Was Out Of The Question**

The prison camps had 12 foot high barbed wire fences all the way around the prison. Another reason was poor health, everyone was so weak from starvation, escaping was unthinkable, but even more of a reason was the American's concern for each other. The Japanese put the Americans in groups of ten, which they called blood brothers, or shooting groups, and if one of the ten men would escape, the Japs would shoot the other nine Americans, so it is apparent why there was almost no attempts to escape, the honor among these men prevented any of them risking the lives of their fellow prisoners. In the event of one's escape, the chances of survival were almost nil. They would not have known where to go, the jungles were so very dense and the threats in the jungle were almost as great as remaining behind in prison camp, if such could be possible. Certainly the Japanese knew this, but they still kept their constant surveillance.

Continued  
On Page 3

# Prisoner Of War And Release Cont.

## **The Prisoner Who Slept Through The Night Of The Rescue**

My father tells of the "ornery" Englishman who slept through the rescue!! They tried to get him to leave when the Rangers came that night, but he went back to sleep instead of getting up and leaving. The Rangers thought they had gotten everyone out of the camp, but the next morning some of the Philipino guerillas came to see what there was to loot because they knew the Japanese would, and they found this fellow cooking his ration of rice for the day. This fellow who my father said was so ornery, he couldn't get along with anyone, really lucked out. The Philipinos used their two-way radio to contact the Rangers and a small plane was sent back which landed in the rice paddies to pick him up. His sleeping paid off for him, no walking did he do!

## **My Father's Return To The Philippines**

My father made a sentimental journey back to the Philippines just a year ago this month, accompanied by my mother and a plane full of other X-POW's. President Marcos had declared a "Reunion For Peace" at this particular time. It marked the 35th anniversary of the Fall Of Bataan, which was a very dark day in the history of our nation.

The reception given these men and their wives by the Philipinos was really beautiful, according to my parents. The hospitality was unbelievable. The Philipinos had fought and died beside the Americans during the war and now it was their turn to attempt to show some gratitude, my parents say it was truly a trip to remember. A lot of people told my mother they thought the trip would be too hard on my father to return to the place that held him captive for so long and would stir up too many unhappy memories, but my mother remembers that he has always talked of returning to the Philipines because he also had happy memories there before the war,

~~so this is the way it turned out.~~ The Philippine Government hosted them at every turn, and perhaps the high light of the tour was a long trip beginning at five in the morning and involved a long bus ride over the infamous Death March with Philipinos waving to the Americans from their barrios, the road is now paved and it is marked every dilometer- those people, as well as the X-POW's will never forget.

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Added note received May 12, 1980

On August 12, 1970, after years of working toward this goal by the X-POW's, and 25 years after their release from prison camp, our government passed Public Law 91-376 which said that any conditions due to nutritional deficiencies which became manifested at any time after these X-POW's had been discharged from the service, were to be considered to be service connected.

This was good news to these men, but most of them were turned down for this disability when they applied for it, saying that it was ridiculous for them to presume their present health problems were related to the years they spent in prison camp and starvation, hence, very few benefits from this law, and do not receive any disability, including Mr. Burns.

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The Pioneer would like to take this means to thank the Burns family, and especially Allen, for their time and efforts on this subject.

We appreciate all they have done, all the memories which have been renewed, and their timely release of the articles.

With the hostages in Iran, and all the former Prisoners Of War, their plight and feelings are more clearly felt by those who have read these articles.

Again our thanks!

Pioneer Staff



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Wednesday, April 30, 1980

## The Death March Of Bataan

BY ALLEN BURNS

Editor's Note: The following article was requested by the Pioneer. With the captive prisoners in Iran, and with the article which appeared in our paper last week, concerning POW's and the Death March of Bataan, we realized many of us have forgotten the suffering of these men.

The following story will help explain Mr. Burns' personal situation, and in the two week's following, you will be able to continue to explore his happenings, through papers done by his daughters, Gayle and Peg.

Our thanks to the Burns' family, and especially Allen, for sharing this experience with us, the readers.

\*\*\*

### Enlistment-Surrender

I enlisted in the Army in May of 1941 and requested the Philippine Islands as my station. I arrived there in July of 1941 and was stationed at Fort William McKinley, where I served until December 8, 1941.

Then, we went to Bataan with #1 General Hospital in Little Bagio, and on April 8, 1942, our Commanding Officer Colonel Duckworth read an order that came out from General Wainwright that all troops of Bataan would surrender to the Japanese the next day, and that anyone who did not surrender would be classed as a deserter and would be court martialed after the war. Two other men and I had made arrangements to live with some Philippino tribes in the mountains, but with the threat of a court martial, we weren't given much choice, but to surrender with the rest of our unit.

### Transferred-Deaths

We were transferred to Camp O'Donnell in Central Luzon in July of 1942. This camp was once one of the worst disease ridden death traps on earth. You could smell it for miles, depending on which way the wind was blowing. The camp was infested with malaria and dysentery and the ground was covered with human feces from the dysentery in the camp.

The water was pumped from the river, which of course, was contaminated. Camp O'Donnell had been a Philippino army camp before World War II and there were approximately 100,000 Philippinos there when we arrived, who were dying at the rate of about 400 a day and the Americans were dying at the rate of about 50 a day. This was from plain starvation and the diseases resulting from malnutrition such as dysentery and Beriberi. It was one of the worst malaria areas in the Philippines.

I got malaria in August of 1942 and by chance, got a hold of some liquid quinine to get rid of the malaria. If there is anything worse in the world to take than liquid quinine, I don't know what it would be. I had malaria 6 or 7 times while in the Philippines. I got dysentery in November of 1942, but it so happened the Japanese gave us some Red Cross packages and some American medicine. I had a few shots of some vitamins from these supplies plus some meat and other edible articles. They also shipped over some canned meat and supplies of that kind which the Japanese gave us a little of and this seemed to clear up my dysentery for the time being.

The first thing that caught my eye when we came into Camp O'Donnell was the long line of starving men standing in the tropical sun waiting to get to the water faucet to get water. The line was at least 3 miles long winding back and forth between the bamboo barracks. They carried every describable type of container which would hold water. Hour after hour, this went on all during the daylight hours and at sundown the water was turned off, and if you hadn't gotten to the faucet for your supply, you went without. There was only the once faucet in the middle of the camp.

### Death Tolls High

Before we left Camp O'Donnell, 1,400 Americans and 40,000 Philippinos had died of malaria, starvation and dysentery and Beriberi.

In January of 1943 we were moved to

Cabanatuan. There were about 6,000 Americans who were dying at the rate of about 50 a day. This camp was somewhat cleaner than Camp O'Donnell because it was all Americans and they had made quite an effort to get the camp cleaned up, but with the constant starvation, dysentery and malaria, it was a losing battle. By this time I had started to suffer from Beriberi. We got a few more Red Cross supplies and the Japanese doled out a little Red Cross medicine.

The food was rationed by the Japanese, 450 grams of rice per man per day. This was cooked in about 10 kitchens into a kind of rice gruel. You got a half a canteen cup for breakfast, the same for lunch and for supper. Once a week they allowed the Americans to butcher one caribou or water buffalo as we call them in the United States. Spread out among 6,000 men, this made a little gravy to put on your rice to make it a little more edible, so the vitamin supply as far as the prison camp was concerned was practically nil.

The Japanese had taken over a thousand acres of land just south of Cabanatuan and put it into garden, which is where the Americans worked 12 hours a day, going out before daylight and coming in after dark. The Japanese were very cruel to the Americans who worked in the garden. They had to work the garden barefooted and they made them pull the weeds, but they could not bend their knees, they had to lean over the way the Japanese did. This was pretty tough going for the Americans, who weren't used to doing that type of work bending over without bending their knees. If they caught you bending your knees, they beat you with almost anything, and they usually carried a big club to do the job.

We had our first salt issued to us at Cabanatuan and that was the first salt the Americans had since being taken prisoner. I watched some of the prisoners eat a half canteen cup of salt just taking it out grain by grain, sitting their eating the entire half cup full. That's how short the salt supply was.

#### Rat Traps And Snakes

In April of 1943, a couple of fellows and I got ahold of some springs out of a hospital bed, so with the little short coil springs, we made rat traps to catch rats to supplement our meat supply, which was our main meat source. We tried skinning them and then frying them, but that wasn't very good, so usually we just boiled them and ate them that way. One time we were out in the garden and killed a 19 foot long python, sliced him up and ate him for meat- it wasn't too bad eating.

The Americans didn't mind working the garden too much, since they thought they might get something to eat out of it. They gave us a little egg plant once in a while, and when it was time to harvest the carrots, they took the carrots and gave the Americans the tops to eat, which we boiled for greens. We got a few sweet potatoes once in a while, but as far as the food supply that came out of the garden was concerned, the Japanese loaded up their trucks and hauled the produce into Cabanatuan to sell because there was a good demand for any type of food or vegetables, so the food we got from the Japanese was, they hoped, not enough to keep us alive.

The dysentery continued and with the straight rice diet and the fact that no medicine was available, things didn't improve. The only thing that would keep a person alive at all was to drink all the water you could stand and eat charcoal from the wood burning in the mess hall.

The weight loss was one of the worst things in the long run, but then a" the men lost from 40 to 100 pounds during the



first 6 months of our internment. Beriberi which is a vitamin deficiency is almost unheard of in the United States, but was most common in prison camp. It shows up in many forms. I had what was called dry Beriberi which causes weakening of the muscles, including the heart. It varied in intensity according to the diet, and the few vegetables we ever got from the garden were not enough to make any showing on our vitamin deficiency problems.

#### **Only 1,500 Left**

By this time the camp had dwindled down to probably 1,500 men. A lot of men there ahead of us had died from starvation and the Japanese had contributed to the dysentery, malaria and Beriberi, but most of it was caused by just plain starvation. They made the boast that none of the Americans would get back to the United States because the Japanese would starve them to death, and they did a pretty good job of it. The rice they issued each man per day most of the time I was in Cabanatuan, furnished approximately 750 calories per day per man. Once in a great while they got generous and gave us a little more, but generally speaking, it was less than a half canteen of rice.

No one would have any idea of what it would be like to be hungry constantly for a period of 30 months or more at one stretch.

The Japanese shipped out a lot of men to Japan to work, so by the end of 1944, there was approximately 1,000 men left at Cabanatuan. The first of January of 1945, they shipped out the last bunch of men, leaving around 511 men left in the camp, of which I was one. The Beriberi disappeared when I got back to eating American food, but the damage had already been done.

The lack of calcium in our diet caused the total breakdown of my teeth, which resulted in dentures, which isn't surprising after suffering from the disease continuously from about October of 1942 until long after I was back in the States. From about the first of January in 1942 until February 1, 1945, I suffered from malnutrition. That, plus the bouts of malaria and dysentery, the many times I went without water and the months without any salt, I believe certainly accounts for my present heart condition.

I was rescued by the 6th Army Rangers on January 28, 1945. We got back behind the American lines on January 30, 1945, and I had the first full meal I had had since December 8, 1941.

I think if you will check the records, you will find that most of the fellows who were prisoners of the Japanese tell approximately the same story as mine. The Japanese boast of starving us to death was quite accurate, since only about 10% of us returned home.

Edward A. Burns

I am enclosing this because Jim Burns is my first cousin and was a POW in Europe.

*We also had us  
the Las Vegas for  
them at the course*

# The Garden City Telegram

# \*Peop.

## Purple Heart

By DONNIS HARNESS  
Staff Writer

May 21, 1943.

Air Force Sgt. Jim Burns and fellow crew members were aboard a B17 bomber, on their eighth mission over Germany. Their plane encountered trouble. Burns, who parachuted aground, was the sole survivor of the 10-member crew.

Sustaining broken ribs and foot, Burns landed into the hands of the enemy. After being found and treated by Germans, he spent the next 25 months of his life as a prisoner of war. It was not until June, 1945 he was returned to the allies.

He was promised a Purple Heart medal for his endurance and bravery, but never received one. Promises for a medal were never fulfilled.

Military officials asked for witnesses to Burns' experience. There were none, Burns said.

Receiving a Purple Medal has been an untouchable dream for the Garden Citian the past 37 years. He and his wife had written for acknowledgement of the medal for almost 20 years, but their efforts were fruitless.

Burns' memories as a POW in World War II were resigned to the past until two weeks ago.

In a ceremony July 21, Byron Jim Burns was awarded a Purple Heart medal before more than 1,500 ex-prisoners of war at Las Vegas, Nev.

The former Air Force gunnery sergeant stood stunned as Maj. Gen.



RUTH AND JIM BURNS, 812 Evans, proudly display the Purple Heart medal and recognition certificate...what they have sought for 20 years.

*"It (Purple Heart) is not the highest honor in the world, but it means a lot to me."*

*—Jim Burns, World War II veteran.*

picture in  
your while  
action!

le

The article was wrote a little  
wrong but you know newspapers  
Jim say you don't get the medal  
for burns!

# Heart

## ...a 37-year hope finally fulfilled

Kelley presented him a certificate and medallion recognizing Burns for "wounds received as a result of hostile action while in the service of his country."

Herman E. Molen, national commander of American Ex-Prisoners of War Inc., is given credit for accomplishing what Burns had been unable to do through correspondence. But Burns still had no idea he would receive the medal. Molen kept the presentation a secret — which added a special element to the award ceremony.

"I was completely surprised," said Burns.

The recipient doesn't remember his reaction during the ceremony which was witnessed by many dignitaries.

He was in the limelight before the national commander, the governor of Nevada and the mayor of Las Vegas. The officer who presented the medal is present commander of Nellis Air Force Base, where the Garden City veteran and ex-POW took his gunnery training 38 years ago.

Describing his feelings in retrospect, Burns said, "It (the Purple Heart) is not the highest honor in the world, but it means a lot to me."

It apparently also meant a lot to five particular men who traveled to Las Vegas for the meeting. They came to learn now Burns got his Purple Heart after all these years. They are attempting to get their medals.

Burns received the medal during the 33rd annual convention of American Ex-POWs, along with other new members of the organization from Southwest Kansas. Burns and his wife, Ruth, were delegates along with Norman and Rose Eatinger of Lakin, who were responsible for organizing the Western Kansas chapter last April.

Eatinger is commander, Burns, vice-commander, Rose Eatinger, adjutant and Ruth Burns, chaplain. Other officers include Edwin Kleeman, Lakin, service officer, and board members John Hawk, Garden City, Ernest Swanson, Leoti, Roy Robinson, Ulysses, and Mary Nell Oringderf, Sublette.

One of three Kansas chapters of American Ex-POWs, the Western Kansas group boasts 28 members who are ex-prisoners of war and their spouses.

Burns recalled war-time experiences that had been blocked out of his thoughts for years.

In his eighth mission over Germany, he was injured by flak. He parachuted from the B-17 bomber and was the only survivor of the 10-member crew.

Burns' injuries were treated by a German doctor as Burns became prisoner. It was a misfortune of war that he was to endure for 25 months. Most of the time in confinement at Stalag 17 until he was recaptured by American Forces June 5, 1945 at Salzburg, Germany.

Burns said he learned at the national convention that ex-

prisoners of war had lots to talk about and he found "it was good to get it all out."

Stalag 17 POW veterans numbered nearly 300 at Las Vegas. It was the biggest delegation of any prison camp represented. They shared memories.

Burns considers himself one of the fortunate prisoners. He lost more than 50 pounds during his confinement and endured 40 continuous days of enforced marching toward the end of the war, railroad travel in a crowded boxcar, interrogations, and the threat of destruction during bombings.

He said not so fortunate, whose health was broken by prison camp experiences in Europe and Asia, the organization of American Ex-Prisoners of War Inc. is seeking ways to "Help Each Other," — their motto. Organized in 1947, and with a renewed surge of interest in recent years, the organization has grown to an exclusive membership of more than 10,750, with a goal of twice that.

Burns says Commander Molen who showed him what that motto means. Now the Garden City ex-POW has his Purple Heart medal to prove it.

Enthusiastic about the organization's aim to "work for our buddies," the Garden Citizens will help plan another meeting of the Western Kansas chapter scheduled for Sept. 20, at 7 p. m., in the Memorial Building in Lakin. It's open to all ex-POWs.



# Bataan / It was 100 miles, step by step, for columns of 'walking dead'

Thirty-nine years ago this month, Japanese forces captured the Bataan Peninsula, one of the last two bastions of U.S. strength in the Philippines in the early years of World War II. Corregidor, a fortified island in Manila Bay, fell a month later.

About 10,000 Americans and about 60,000 Filipino soldiers were taken prisoner on Bataan. Already weakened by three months of fighting on inadequate rations, they were marched from different parts of the peninsula — anywhere from 60 to 120 miles — under tropical sun and with almost no food, water or medicine, to Camp O'Donnell in the north. About 2,000 Americans died on the march, and about 2,600 more in the three months they spent in O'Donnell afterward. About 23,000 Filipinos died.

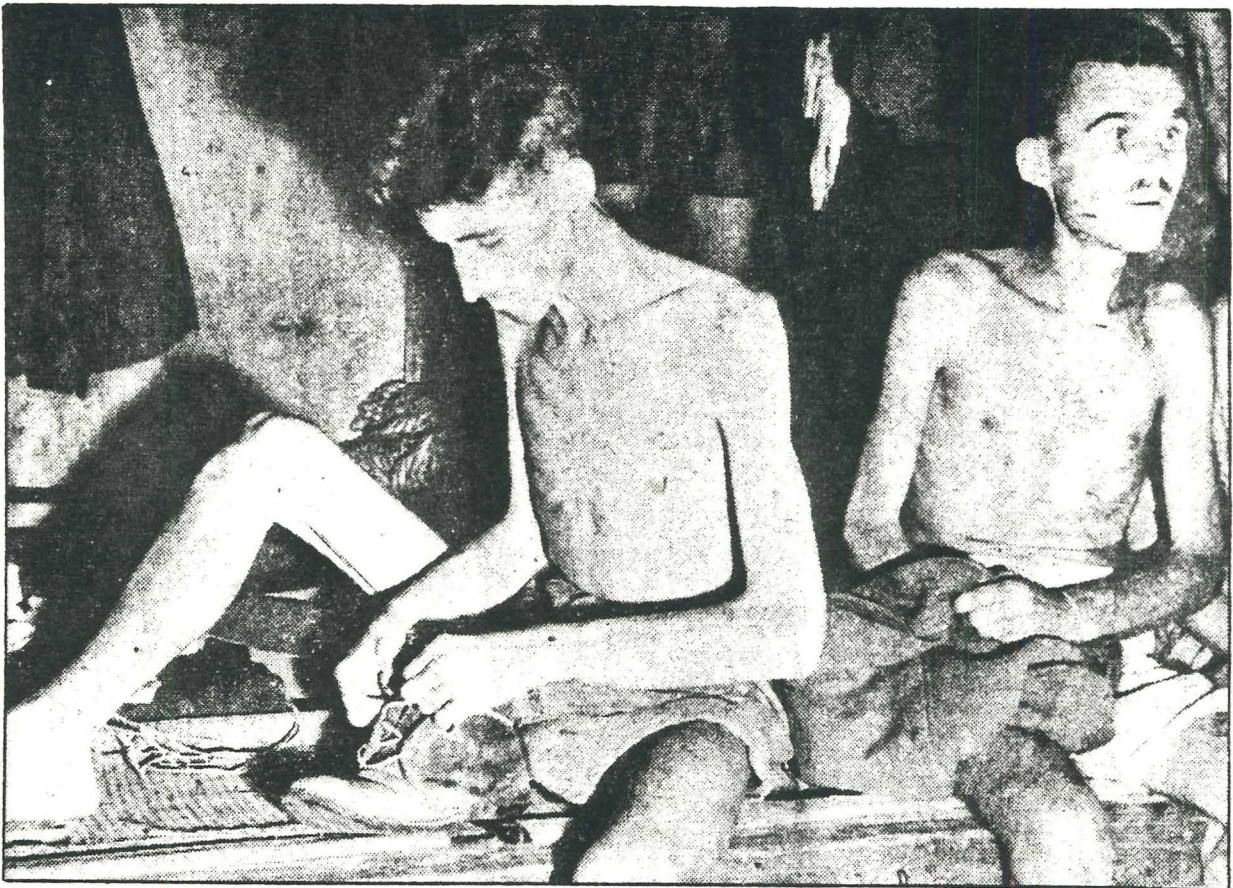
One of the survivors was Bernard T. FitzPatrick, a Minnesotan serving with the 194th Tank Battalion from Fort Ripley, Minn. He was in a group that marched about 100 miles over 10 days to get to O'Donnell.

FitzPatrick stayed in contact with other Bataan survivors after the war. He has spent the past 10 years interviewing comrades and writing a book, in collaboration with Minneapolis resident John A. Sweetser, about life as a Japanese prisoner of war. Sweetser, who



American and Filipino soldiers starting the "death march" near Mariveles on Bataan.

3



Allied prisoners of war prepared to leave the Aomori camp near Yokohama, Japan, after their liberation Aug. 29, 1945.

# After Many Years, Many Beers

Franklin Roosevelt ordered MacArthur and his staff to leave the Philippines and fly to Australia, where the remnants of the American Navy and air force were regrouping. MacArthur left the islands on March 11, vowing, "I shall return," and Gen. Jonathan Wainwright assumed command of the now-decimated forces. The peninsula was taken by the Japanese on April 9. A few of the defenders managed to retreat to the temporary safety of the island, but not for long.

On May 6 the Japanese established a beachhead on the island and Gen. Wainwright surrendered to save the lives of the men who remained. The southern Philippine Islands capitulated a few days later.

## Medal of Honor

Gen. MacArthur was later awarded a Medal of Honor for the "gallant" defense of the Philippines.

No one knows how many Americans were killed or captured. But not many of the men who were there came back.

That's the way the history books tell it.

But if you ask someone who was there on Bataan, the peninsula, or on Corregidor, the island, they'll tell you a somewhat different story.

Every year a few of the men who were there, a few of the ones who came back, get together for a reunion.

This year 12 men from the

Northwest chapter of the Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor met at the Missoula Elks Club to have a few beers, to see some old friends from the war and to remember.

## No Hero

Take MacArthur, for example. A lot of people may think the late general was a hero, they'll tell you, but the men who served under him didn't.

They called him "Dugout Doug" because of the bomb shelter he had in Manila. According to Hugh Branch of Cut Bank, "We always kind of figured he ran out on us."

Branch, a sergeant in the 19th Tank Battalion, was captured on Bataan and took part in the infamous "Bataan Death March," the 100-kilometer forced march without food or water from Bataan to a prison camp. Stragglers were killed on the spot.

Branch doesn't like to talk about the march too much.

Charles Montgomery of Brigham City, Utah, a private in the 19th Bomber Group on Luzon, said MacArthur flew out of the Philippines with his wife, his son, his furniture and his Chinese "amma," or servant, and then wired the troops left behind to "fight to the last man."

"Hell," Montgomery said, "we didn't hardly have any guns!" And the ones they did have, Montgomery said, were Enfields and 1906 Springfield and old relics the Spaniards had used against Admiral Dewey in the Spanish-American War of 1898.

his hands with his fingernails.

Malaria was something everyone had. Most of the men say they can't live in the tropics or the malaria will eventually come back.

## Teller Beaten

Teller said he was beaten by the Japanese after he "smarted off" to them during an interrogation about an escape from the camp. The Japanese beat him with a piece of stovewood, he said, and cracked one of the vertebrae in his back.

There was never enough food. Cecil Cunningham of Spokane said he weighed 195 pounds before he was captured. He weighed 98 pounds when the war ended.

Elliott and 1,200 other men, Gen. Wainwright included, were later sent by ship to China and then by rail to Mukden in Japanese-occupied Manchuria to work in a factory. The Japanese tried to keep the prisoners alive, Elliott said, but prisoners who got sick got half rations. The rations consisted of soybeans and cornmeal mush and occasionally some rice, barley and radishes. About 300 of the prisoners died the first winter in minus-40-degree temperatures, Elliott said.

## Sent to Japan

Some of the other Americans captured in the Philippines were sent to Japan. Teller tells of spending 96 days on a ship to Japan, a ship where each man was allotted six square feet of space in the hold. Every day the Japanese crew had to throw the body of an American over the

in the steel factory, and leveled the city. The prisoners were sent out to fight fires. When they came back from fire-fighting on Aug. 15 they were told there would be no work the next day, or the next. The Japanese commander told the men an armistice had been signed and revealed that two bombs had destroyed the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The prisoners disarmed the commander and took over the camp, Teller said, and waited to go home.



Lewis Elliott Today

When he got to San Francisco, Teller said, he kissed the dock. He had spent three years, three months, three weeks and five days in prison.

## Earthquake Helped

To this day the men who were in Japan when the atomic



# Bataan, Corregidor Still Vivid A

By GORDON DILLOW  
Missoulian Staff Writer

"No matter what you read about that, well, it was actually much worse," one of the survivors said.

It was 35 years ago this spring that a small force of American and Filipino soldiers made a last-ditch stand against the invading Japanese army on a small peninsula on the island of Luzon in the Philippines.

The Japanese had first struck the islands on Dec. 8 — Dec. 7 in the United States, the same day they bombed Pearl Harbor in Hawaii— and managed to destroy half of the Americans' planes on the ground at Clark and Iba fields. Japanese troops landed on Luzon on Dec. 10 and the main assault began Dec. 22, 1941.

## Gen. MacArthur

The commander of the combined American and Filipino forces was Gen. Douglas MacArthur, first in his class at West Point and son of Arthur MacArthur, who helped capture Manila from the Spaniards in 1898. Douglas MacArthur had governed the Philippines in preparation for their independence and in 1937 had resigned his American commission and become a field marshal in the Philippine Army.

On Jan. 2, 1942, Manila, capital of the Philippines, fell to the Japanese; MacArthur and his men retreated to a small peninsula on the southwest side of



## Prisoner

Lewis Elliott, kneeling at left, shortly before his release from a Japanese POW camp in Manchuria in 1945.

Luzon and to a small island near the peninsula.

The situation was hopeless, of course. Japanese planes con-

trolled the sky and Japanese ships the sea. The Japanese forces were well supplied with arms, ammunition, medicine

and food, while the American and Filipino defenders were starving and ill.

On Feb. 22, 1942, President

### Wainwright Praised

"Gen. Wainwright's the one that saved our ass," Montgomery said, not MacArthur.

They've all got stories to tell. Leighton Teller of Corvallis, a former sergeant, and a few others later escaped from Luzon on a Filipino boat, the "Mayon," and after dodging Japanese bombers reached Mindanao in the southern Philippines — for a while anyway.

Lewis Elliott of Missoula was on Corregidor when Gen. Wainwright surrendered. He said the Japanese came ashore and lined the Americans up on an airstrip. Those who didn't go out on work details where they could scrounge some food, Elliott said, didn't get anything at all to eat. That lasted for a week or so and then they were taken to Manila, and later to Cabana Tuan, a prison camp.

Montgomery was on Mindanao when Wainwright surrendered and he said "it was kind of a relief" to hear the fighting for them was over.

"Nobody'll ever realize what conditions we were under," Montgomery said.

### No Supplies

They didn't have guns, they didn't have medicine, they didn't have food; maybe some of them could flee to the hills to avoid capture, Montgomery said, "but where the hell could you escape to?"

Teller spent two and a half years in a Philippine prison camp; while he was there he got beri-beri, as did most of the other prisoners, to one degree or another. Teller said he first got "wet beri-beri," which made his legs swell up with excess water until the skin split. When he presses his flesh with a finger the depression in the skin remains for a long time, a reminder of the way it was. Teller ate weeds for vitamins B and C for the wet beri-beri; that helped some, but he also got pelegra, a skin disease, and he said he could scrape the skin off

side. Five men were allowed "topside" at a time, Teller said, to use the box latrines perched on the ship's rail, but since most of the men had dysentery it didn't matter much whether they got to the latrines or not, because it was almost always too late.

His ship finally landed at Kobi, Japan, Teller said, and the prisoners slept in stock pens while waiting to be shipped out to factories.

The prisoners made steel for 17 hours a day, Teller said, but he added the prisoners tried to sabotage the steel any way they could, usually by putting copper in the molten metal to weaken it.

Jim Young of Billings likes to tell how prisoners were made to walk past a Japanese shrine every day on their way to work in the factories. They were supposed to say a prayer.

"What we prayed for was more B-29s," Young said.

The B-29 bombers were making daily bombing raids on Japan by that time and the prisoners thought that was great, because it meant the war would have to end soon; they thought it was bad, too, because they could be killed in the raids just like the Japanese.

"You're rootin' for 'em and then again you're not," Teller said.

### Kept Faith

One thing the prisoners never lost was faith. They all said that if you lost your faith in getting home alive you'd be dead soon.

"If you gave up, you died," Montgomery said.

The ones who didn't give up kept telling themselves, "They'll have us out of here in three months," and then another three months, and another. "The Golden Gate in '48" was the saying they had, and even though 1948 was years away the saying gave them hope.

And that hope paid off. In August 1945, Teller said, hundreds of B-29s flew over Toyama, where he was working

bombs were dropped don't think the bombs ended the war so much as an earthquake that leveled several Japanese cities on Dec. 8, 1944. The industrial strength of Japan was destroyed by the earthquake, they say, and Teller remembers the prisoners shouting, "Give it to 'em God!" when the earthquake hit.

Elliott and the men in Manchuria were liberated by the Russian army on Aug. 11, 1945. The Russians had declared war on Japan only a few days before, when it seemed victory was certain, and swept into Manchuria with little resistance. The Russians let the American prisoners take the samurai swords from the Japanese soldiers and Teller still has his today. Elliott

### No Hard Feelings

For all the suffering they endured, the survivors don't seem to carry any lasting hatred for the Japanese people. They still call them "Japs," as did everyone during the war, but they blame the Japanese government, rather than the people, for their hardships.

Some of them said they owed their lives to Japanese who gave them food when they were starving. When the war was over they gave blankets to homeless Japanese.

Teller seemed to sum up the feeling when he said, "I'm glad my mother and sister and relatives weren't subjected to the horrors of war as were the Japanese and Filipino people."

After a few more beers and a few more stories the meeting ended. Teller, Elliott, Montgomery, Young, Branch, Cunningham, William White of Ralston, Wyo.; Phillip Cameron of Helena; William Arnold of Billings; Lester Raymond of Plains; Gerald Kelly of Sheridan, Wyo., and Walter Wheeling of Helena all said they'll be back next year, to see their old friends, have a few beers and to remember what seems to them to have happened only yesterday.

## Japanese Prison Camps of World War II

The stark reality of life in a Japanese prison camp still lives with all the ex-/prisoners of war, even 16 years since their release.

It was there at Bataan that 20,000 American soldiers were taken prisoners and put in their first camp, Little Baguic.

Not long after their capture on December 8, 1941, they were marched to Camp O'Donnell. This later became known as the Death March. Along the way many could not endure their pain. Soldiers for the first time saw their friends, relatives or just their fellow man drop to the ground and meet death.

To know 20,000 men, each trying to help the other cling to the breath of life under conditions as adverse as any confronting civilized man, had died of fever, malnutrition or ~~dysentery~~ dysentery while all were prisoners, who didn't know the bitterness of many grim facts yet to come. But after almost two years and nine months they learned the Jap tactics of discipline and brutality and understood the word freedom.

The surgical department which was the biggest and greatest experience at prison is shared between just a few who now remain.

Consisting in these operating hospitals was many difference doctors for special cases. Commander Smith worked mostly on serious fractures, Captain Roland on abdomen cases, Captain Buffarante on arm and leg wounds; Colonel Schuck as dentist; Lieutenant Chamberlain on plastic jaws and face work, and Colonel Adams and Captain Weinstein worked a great deal on brain, bladder, chest and abdomen wounds.

The hospital was very well equipped with needles and other surgical necessities. The hospital area lay about a half mile long. Things such as this could be heard at any distance, coming from the operating room. "Look at the worms crawling out of his guts. That loop of guts is dead. How are you going to hook up the cut ends? Side to side would work best. Quit stalling. Are you going to take it off or leave it on? You killed that last one fumbling around in his chest.

Their nerves were high strung and there were so many other cases to do that their case had to be decided upon immediately without any thought. Of course, going like this for 16 to 20 hours a day was in itself beyond endurance.

The Japs soon blew this adequate hospital. Few lived to see things such as human limbs from ~~from~~ bodies lodged in a tree branch.

Their diseases became incurable. Not just because of their unsanitary and unequipped places but because these diseases were not curable. The worst diseases being pellagra which was caused by the lack of nicotinic acid obtained from meat and fish. Beriberi which was water logging of all tissues, or to the destruction of the nerves. One disease they all shared was dysentery. Their greatest physical health upswing was around Christmas.

A man can go a long time without food, but he goes raving mad in a couple of days without water. Thirst crazed men drank water they knew to be polluted, from carabeo wallows and stagnant mountain pools. At least 30% of them had vacillary dysentery, 10% amoebic dysentery, and the rest some variety of warm infection of the bowel.

Their rice quota, from 250 to 300 grams a day, was always just a little short. A carabeo or brahma steer was issued twice a week, which was to feed 4 to ~~5~~ 5,000 men, so many of them got scarcely a smell.

They were always under fed, just enough to endure malnutrition and to cause an endless gnawing pain of hunger.

Many of the prisoners ate the leafy part of sweet potatoes, papaia plants - which were bitter

as gall.

The Japanese kept the better choice of food for themselves, fed the next best to the pigs, and the third grade was feed to the American prisoners.

They talked food, they argued about the best ways food should be cooked. They dreamed about food - it haunted them in their working hours and plagued them in their sleep.

The Red Cross sent seven tons of oatmeal but the Japs fed it to their horses.

They were issued 6 cigarettes a week from the Red Cross, but they were really Jap made. Smoking was an effective way of curbing pangs of hunger.

Starved, exhausted, beaten men who lacked food, shelter, clothing, medicine, and not infrequently the will to live suffered ravagiously. Heartbroken by defeat, bodies broken by Japs on the march, hungry, overwhelmed by their isolation, with no hope of immediate release, with nothing to look forward to but more thirst and starvation, it was easy for men to turn their faces to the wall, refuse rice and water for 48 hours and pass away. Sanitation at times became so bad that it would never be believable today. They had no fuel to boil the heavily contaminated river water used for cooking, nor any water to cleanse cooking utensils nor did they have screens to protect the food from flies, no soap to wash clothes, bodies and floors for which they were heavily soiled. There was nothing at all to sustain life except a blinding hatred for the Japanese.

For some their faith was strengthened but they felt as if God had forsaken them.

Sunday was a day of rest for the entire camp. Using the reverse side of milk can labels as a hymnal and the congregation sitting on the ground before an altar made from a barrel, the services were simple. Their services usually began with "Where 2 or more are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

There was one priest, who had broken his back, which did a great deal for those who knew no Saviour. It seemed that God's word was accepted more after deaths and diseases decreased. To many it was through their parents whose courageous faith and devout prayers made it a vital factor to their return from the valley of the shadow of death.

The Japs used a method which they put ten men in a group. If one in the group escaped, the other 9 would be shot. This, of course, prevented any of them from taking the risk of subjecting their buddies to such hideous penalties, so there was no attempted breaks after the first one.

Every two or three days Jap Guards on the farm detail beat a prisoner without killing him. He got his face slapped for his pains which he couldn't endure. The beaten men recovered from their injuries and went back to work.

One prisoner who was so overcome by the sun, had fallen into a furrow between the rows of tall corn. On his hands and knees he was crawling to camp. After the Jap guards finished with him, they carried him back; his thigh bone mashed, belly full of bayonet wounds, skull crushed. The last that was seen of him he was being buried.

Several had attempted to commit suicide. One tall lad had unsuccessfully attempted to gouge his eyes out with a fork. In a second attempt he cut his throat with a sharpened mess kit knife. When roll call was taken, instead of returning to the ward he straggled toward the barbed wire fence. With a Jap guard on the watchtower, he climbed the fence and disappeared in the tall grass. He deliberately exposed himself to rifle fire to end his life.

Another means of punishment was putting the prisoners in sweatboxes. And that is just what they were. They were made of tin and big enough to put a human being in. They were put in there until they just about died. Of course, this would take them awhile to recover but before they were completely restored to health they would be put back to work.

Packed in crowded barracks, they lacked privacy more than anything else.

During these years they gave barrack parties about once a month to help break the monotony. Once they smuggled a hindquarter of carabao into camp and made it into stew for their party.

The barracks proved to be grass shacks where ninety men slept shoulder to shoulder on hay or long shelves which ran the length of the building in two tiers.

Their duties consisted such as fence repair, latrine digging, gravel hauling, wood cutting and burial detail.

The burial detail was no more than just a huge pit about the size of a house foundation and a few feet in depth. These burial pits were dug each day for the following days burial. At the beginning between 400 and 500 men were buried a day. Several crosses were placed on each burial plot. At the conclusion they would gather around and listen to a few words of prayer. A doctor went around every morning and checked the prisoners to see if they were alive. Then he would give the command for the burial detail to go to work. Thus in the afternoon the burial detail would report back to the doctor. One day as the doctor asked how things went the head manager of the burial detail stated "one guy kept brushing the dirt off his face." Yes, they even buried people alive because those were the orders and if they weren't carried out they would be beaten.

They lined up the sick and the well, the blind and the weak. They were then marched out into the heat to dig ditches and damps in designated farm areas. Some prisoners were too ill to stand, therefore were beaten. The Japs said the prisoners weren't sick because of lack of food but because they needed more exercises.

Vegetable gardens were divided into plots about 12 feet square. Around was barbed wire fences. They planted corn, peanuts, and rice. Tobacco was the medium of exchange. Their clothing of course, were rags and heavily soiled. They wore shoes of those who died if they were in better condition than those they had on.

They dreamed of food, soft beds, clean linen, and all the medicine they needed to make the well.

It later became very difficult to find men strong enough to carry the corpses out of camp and dig their graves. So bodies were always lying around the camp. Most of them died of malaria, dysentery and starvation.

Just one night was ever remembered that they sang songs of which they loved and closed by singing "God Bless America." For one night, many men forgot they were in a miserable Japanese prison camp seven thousand miles from home.

Secretly they smuggled in parts of radios under armpits and places that the guards wouldn't suspect. Then at night by the candlelight they would put them together. They connected the to the batteries which were used in the operating room, which were the only lights that existed. News was more than food and drink to them. It sustained them, it was their very life. The Japs told them that Japan was winning the war, but they knew better but pretended as if they didn't.

Men, who during prewar days were alcoholics and on narcotics found themselves unable to obtain the ~~fix~~ flowing cheer for the first time in their lives. The drug addicts sold the little medicine they did have and smuggled in the rest. But after a year they got better, so for them it might have been the best way for them to stop their habit.

During the evenings they sat around and talked about food they were going to eat when they were freed. They knew the lives, prejudices, hopes and fears of their close neighbors. They became manical when their friends again began the same old story of who they were and what they had done.

Out of boredom they played games. Such as marbles, checkers and any kind of a game they could make out of what they had. They then smuggled in a guitar and trumpet. They composed their own music and put together a little jazz orchestra. When this became boring they then began having little stage acts. They made them up and some of them became very humorous.

Everyone in camp who could walk or crawl turned out for these performances.

Their mail consisted of only a post card. There was little they could say except to fill in the blanks on a card that said: I'm interned at \_\_\_\_\_. My health is \_\_\_\_\_. Give my best regards to \_\_\_\_\_. Your loving \_\_\_\_\_.

If they didn't put on these cards that their health was excellent the cards wouldn't be sent. During the 3 years of which they were at camp, they sent only 6 post cards like the above.

Whether these cards ever reached their destination will never be known. They received letters from home once in a great while. Of course they all had to be read by the Japs first. In 1943, 1000 men were sent on the Japan detail. It took them 30 days to go from the Philippines to Japan. While on the way they had to stand because they were packed so tight in the ship. These, our American soldiers, had to stand up for 30 days, without anything to eat but rice and water which they called "soup". There they laid rotting because of the intense heat their bodies broken out with a heat rash. These men what were left of them, later returned to Cabanatuan. Things during that time had improved considerably.

At Christmas they were each sent a mess kit from the Red Cross. They actually played with these as if they were little girls who had just gotten a new doll. In these kits they got 3 Readers Digests which were very precious to them. Also there was food and cigarettes.

All the while they were there they received 3 Red Cross kits.

A Jap commander, Eate, whom they all liked did a great deal for them at Christmas. All the prisoners liked and respected him.

Thus if one Jap had a birthday they would all have a birthday and all became a year older. This was merely a Jap tradition.

They learned to cuss fluently in English, Tagalog, Spanish, Italian and Yiddish. It wasn't surprising to find many of them cussing while others would be praying. As long as they could hear someone swearing they knew everything was alright.

About a year and a half later things began to pick up a bit. Only one man died a month and sanitation had improved considerably. But by no means was it fit for any human being to live.

Prisoners that worked on the farm detail later were the only ones who received very many beatings. The Jap guards would demonstrate their abilities to yield a pickax handle on the backs of the prisoners. There was never any beatings in the hospital detail because the Japs were scared stiff of contracting diseases.

As they got stronger, riots broke out between the men. There was only 1 serious one which laid up a few of them a few days.

Prison camps dragged on for another goodyear and 9 months.

On January 28, 1945, they had their first sign of release. There in the harbor about sixty miles away they heard bombs dropping on the Japanese. At that very moment freedom drove into them like a needle shooting penicillin into their veins.

The Jap guards panicked and ran for the mountains. There they were by themselves "free". But they couldn't go anywhere because they didn't know where the Americans were going to drop the bombs. So they thought it best just to stay at camp.

On January 28 at 1800 hours Lt. Mueci, commanded that the 6th Rangers do two marches of 25 miles and assemble 5 miles from the prison camp and strike at 1729 hours.

The Rangers traveled fast and light. They were largely pistol packing farm boys picked for just a job. They wore no helmets but each carried two pistols, a knife and one canteen. Their orders were not to eat or drink what they had in their canteen, as it was for the men they released. There was 150 Jap guards still there and 121 Rangers so knew that they could make it.

At H-hour, as the Rangers lay by the road ready to strike, the Japs moved a full division past them and the operation was delayed 24 hours. On the 30th they struck.

Throwing grenades ahead of them and carrying their knives in their hands, they went in. Their instructions were to go inside and do a knifing job, but no American in the camp was to be killed.

Human emotions cannot be strained that far without it having an effect. These men had adopted a kind of muteness, for long ago they had seen what happened to those who rebelled or protested or tried to escape. And so they pressed closely into the brown soil of trenches or lay face down on the bamboo floors of their barracks when sounds of battle came to them. Finally they began to understand that these were Americans, coming to their rescue, when strong hands hustled them to their feet.

The Rangers commanded the prisoners to get to the main gate. There was nothing the prisoners wanted from Camp Cabanatuan but their lives. They were given a pistol, knife and told that they were again American soldiers.

Not in 3 years had the ghosts of Bataan known what gentleness was. Their shouts were joining the soldiers and things such as "They are Americans" "They're here" "Are we glad to see you" could be heard far above everything else.

The Job was half done, the difficult part was yet to come. The prisoners were weak but liberty and freedom was like a blood transfusion. They wanted to walk and be American soldiers again, therefore the Rangers couldn't help them at all.

2000 Japs were sent up from the nearby village but the ~~P~~ Filipino guerillas were waiting for them. The Filipinos showed them that they were the better soldiers and won the attack. It is said that no Ranger will accept congratulations on a job well done without saying "thanks, but don't forget those Filipinos. We broke into camp but the Filipinos got us through." That same night they marched thirty-five miles to get across American lines.

Their gaunt faces and their thin thighs showed the marks of 3 years of near starvation in prison. They were given cigarettes to help them realize that their ordeal was over.

The Rangers also were very moved by all of this that they handled the prisoners like small children and patted old men on the shoulder and asked "how's it now, Dad?"

From the mouths of every man you could hear them say "sure can't wait to see the States again."

Men who had never cried before in their lives sobbed like babies who had just gotten spanked. Better than food was the God sent feeling of safety. Terms like "freedom of speech" trial by one's peers" was no longer a series of words that came from the tongues but was like music to their ears. They stated that they would never forget the significance of freedom.

Out of 36,000 prisoners only 2700 was left to call their families and report that they were coming home.

It took them about 27 days from the time they were released until they landed at San Francisco.

On their way home aboard the U.S.S. Rescue they saw the first white women since 1942. They watched the nurses as they worked. To see the soft wavy hair, long eyelashes, the poise of their heads, and the rustle of their skirts, was like music to them. They hadn't seen lipstick and makeup for a long time. They hadn't smelled perfume. It seems odd but they appreciated the sweetness of womanhood all the more for having been deprived of it. But the longing and hunger for femininity still persisted.

The prisoners now wear the Presidential Citation with two clusters. The Purple Heart for "excessive hardship endured" The Bronze Star, The Asiatic and Pacific Ribbons, the Philippine liberation insignia, the navy Presidential Citation, pre-Pearl Harbor badge and the Defense of Philippines Ribbons.

The American Battle Monuments Commission has dedicated its World War II American Military Cemetery and Memorial in Manila on December 8, 1960. The ceremony was for the 36,279 men and women missing in action, lost, or buried at sea, or died at prison camps.

It was reported in 1960 that the cemetery at Camp O'Donnell where 29,000 Filipinos and 2,000 Americans died has become a jungle of weeds and a national shame. The Philippine War Shrines Commission was supposed to erect a memorial at O'Donnell but no work has ever been started as yet.

The marks that have been put on these men's lives will never be forgotten.

# Local Woman Honore

(By Edna Kneisel)

Mr. & Mrs. Henry Meier (the former Lt. Rose Rieper) departed from San Francisco aboard the maiden voyage of the Philippine Airlines 747, April 5, 1980 to attend the unveiling and dedication of a bronze memorial plaque for 101 nurses, who became known as "Angels of Bataan and Corregidor". They arrived in Manila April 7, where they received a large military reception of high City officials, Filipino Military, U.S. Army, Navy, and Air Force officers. Aboard the plane were 15 other nurses, their relatives, and approximately 200 others, including Army Veterans and families.

April 8 they boarded coaches for Bataan, and en route attended the unveiling of the Statue of General MacArthur. They then laid wreaths at the Filipino Cemetery and also at the Manila American Cemetery. Later they covered the route of the Bataan death march.

April 9, they were taken to Mt. Samat, Bataan for the unveiling and dedication of a memorial plaque for the "Angels of Bataan and Corregidor", where the Honorable Richard W. Murphy, American Ambassador to the Republic of the Philippines gave the dedicatory speech. Ambassador Murphy gave recognition to the nurses who quote: "came to Bataan where they found no modern hospital, and very limited supplies and equipment. They worked with scrub brushes, soap and water, and set up shop in old barracks and even in the jungle. The hospital at Limay originally had 500 cots placed so close together that the nurses could hardly move about. Soon there were 16,000 patients with more arriving daily. The cots were converted to double deckers and later to

triple deckers to provide more bed spaces. The nurses climbed up and down ladders to reach the patients in the upper bunks. When bombs and shrapnel fell, those off-duty nurses dived for foxholes, while those on duty remained at their posts with their patients. In no time white uniforms were exchanged for steel helmets, Khaki shirts and trousers, and so many remember, far too big! As the enemy came closer, patients were put in casts so they could endure the jolting over rough roads in all types of commandeered vehicles. From Limay you all went southward to "Little Baguio" to the dusty buildings which once served as garages and were mostly open sheds. Amoebic dysentery, diarrhea, scurvy and beri-beri were rampant, and worst of all, Malaria. Within 3 months there were a thousand new cases of malaria each day."

Mrs. Meier (then Lt. Rose Rieper) contracted beri-beri and malaria, and while ill, the laundry was bombed, causing her to lose all her clothing, except the underclothes she was wearing, even her shoes were stolen from under her bed.

Ambassador Murphy further stated: "Orders were received by the nurses to evacuate to Corregidor, which was difficult for them, since they had to leave their patients behind in care of the doctors and corpsmen. The trip to Corregidor ordinarily took one hour, but it was 16 hours amid constant shelling from the Japanese. In the tunnel at Corregidor the shellings, roar of the bombs, and noise of the mechanical warfare was unspeakable. Food was at a minimum, medical supplies were few. The concrete walls vibrated and shook with dust rising in choking clouds, forcing the nurses to cover the patients' and their own faces

with wet gauze. Two weeks before the liberation, food and medication became more scarce and many died."

At the conclusion of Ambassador Murphy's remarks, the National Anthems of the Philippines and the United States were played, after which the Ambassador's wife and Capt. Ann Bernatitus unveiled the plaque.

April 11, during a tour of Corregidor, they again took us to the Malinta Tunnel, which is still in shambles. Upon returning to Manila, a party was held in General Santo's home for the group.

April 12: After a day of short tours in Manila, the nurses had a private dinner party at the Army and Navy Club.

April 13: They visited Santa Tomas, where they had been held prisoner for almost three years. It brought back memories of the fact that 500 women used one bathroom, the beds were like benches with a thin pad for a mattress, and 16 beds to one room; roll call at any time of day or night, forcing the internees to stand for one hour or longer, although many were very weak.

The next few days were spent in sightseeing tours of Baguio, Clark Field, etc. The tour included the memorial of those on the Death March. Returning to Manila the group were honored by a banquet by the Mayor of Manila, who called each nurse by name, giving them special recognition.

After 15 days of memorable sightseeing tours, and renewing of acquaintances, they left for San Francisco. Mr. & Mrs. Meier say they can never forget the wonderful hospitality shown them by the Filipinos, who are so grateful for the United States assistance.



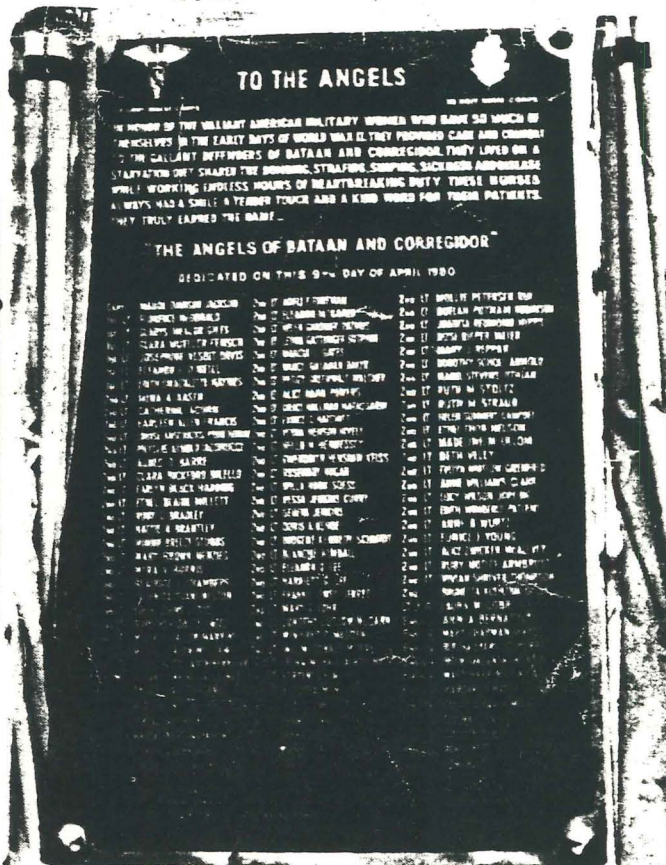
# ed As WW II Heroine



**ROSERETURNS:** Rose and her husband, Henry Meier, take a moments rest during their recent return to the Phillipines. In 1942 Mrs. Meier was a member of the US Army Nurse Corps. She was a prisoner-of-war from 1942 through 1945 when the Phillipines were in the hands of the Japanese.



**LT. ROSE RIEPER:** (Mrs. Henry Meier) in 1945, one month after her liberation from a Japanese prisoner-of-war camp. Thousands of American soldiers had died in the "Death March," but Rose miraculously survived. Although sick herself with Bari-Bari and Malaria, she saved the lives of many of her comrades through her tireless work.



**PLAQUE TO THE ANGELS:** The highlight of the Meiers return to the Phillipines was the dedication of a plaque to the "Angels Of Bataan." Mrs. Meier's name appears on the plaque in the third row, fourth from the top.

*Burns*

# Medical Opinion & Review

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Saving Lives Barely Begun

JAMES E. DRORBAUGH, M.D.

Agents, Applicants, and Examiners

MYRON R. SCHOENFELD, M.D.

The Missing Ingredient

ANNE R. SOMERS

Mechanics of Medical Decision-Making

C. ALLEN HANEY, PH.D.

The Stochastic Nature of Neurons

MICHAEL T. MCGUIRE, M.D.

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Common and Uncommon Malformations

MARY ALLEN ENGLE, M.D.

From Guerrilla to P.O.W. in the Philippines

EUGENE C. JACOBS, M.D.

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# From Guerrilla to P. O. W. in the Philippines

Eugene C. Jacobs, M.D.

*The illustrations for this article were originally drawn by Dr. Jacobs while he was a prisoner in Cabanatuan. Before his transfer in 1944, he rolled up the sketches, put them in Mason jars, and buried them. When MacArthur's Rangers liberated the camp in early 1945, the jars were dug up; one year later, Dr. Jacobs recovered the sketches at the Pentagon. Since they were somewhat damaged, he has re-drawn them.*

For many months at Camp John Hay, we had anticipated war with Japan but had no idea how, when, or where it might begin. The camp was pleasantly located in Baguio, the summer capital of the Philippine Islands. Its mile-high elevation offered a delightful climate for military personnel and their dependents who desired temporary escape from the intense heat of the lowlands, yet, it was only some twenty miles from the sand beaches of the Lingayen Gulf.

Camp Hay had no real military value, so we felt quite secure, never dreaming that, within five hours of Pearl Harbor, Camp Hay would be the first target in the Philippines to be struck by Japanese bombs. The Japanese didn't surprise many unsuspecting military and naval personnel on week-end leave, because all personnel had been restricted to their duty stations by a general alert.

However, United States fighter

EUGENE C. JACOBS is Staff Physician, Health Service, University of Maryland, College Park, and a Colonel, MC, USA, retired

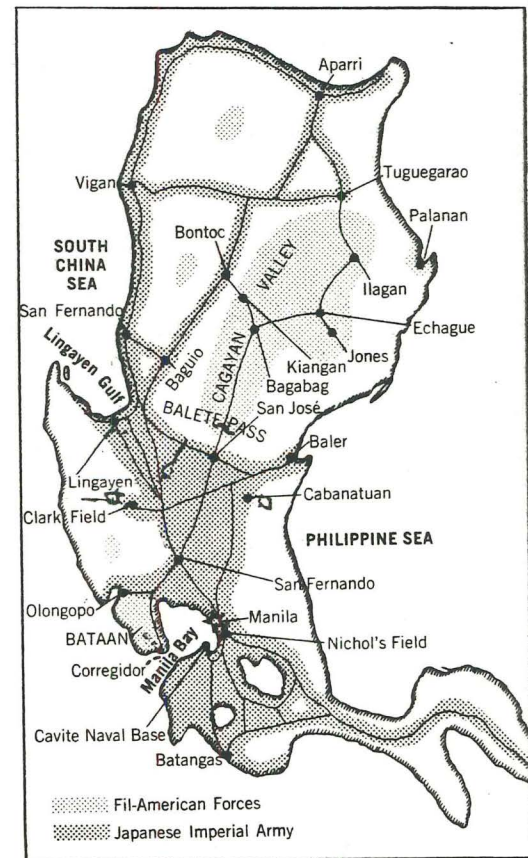
planes were successfully diverted to Camp Hay, while the Japanese bombers blasted Clark and Nichol's fields and the Cavite Naval Base.

In the days that followed, while we buried our dead and patched up our wounded, about a hundred enemy ships quietly assembled in the Lingayen Gulf. On the morning of December 22, some 100,000 seasoned Japanese troops swarmed ashore between Vigan and Lingayen. Two recently recruited divisions of the Philippine Army (PA) made a defense on the beaches, but when the big guns of the destroyers opened up, the recruits soon broke and, badly disorganized, ran for the mountains.

As the Japanese Imperial Army advanced toward Baguio, we received orders from General MacArthur: "Evacuate Camp John Hay and proceed to join American Forces in Bataan." We quickly transferred our wounded to a civilian hospital and prepared to move out. Our battalion of the 43rd Infantry literally ran over rugged mountain trails for five days trying to out-flank the enemy. Instead, we ran

head on into Japanese troops just North of San José. Several soldiers got through to Bataan, but most of us were entirely cut off from the main forces. The enemy had occupied the entire valley and were making the civilians in the cities quite uncomfortable.

Major Everett Warner, former Provost Marshall at Camp John Hay, rounded up hundreds of the

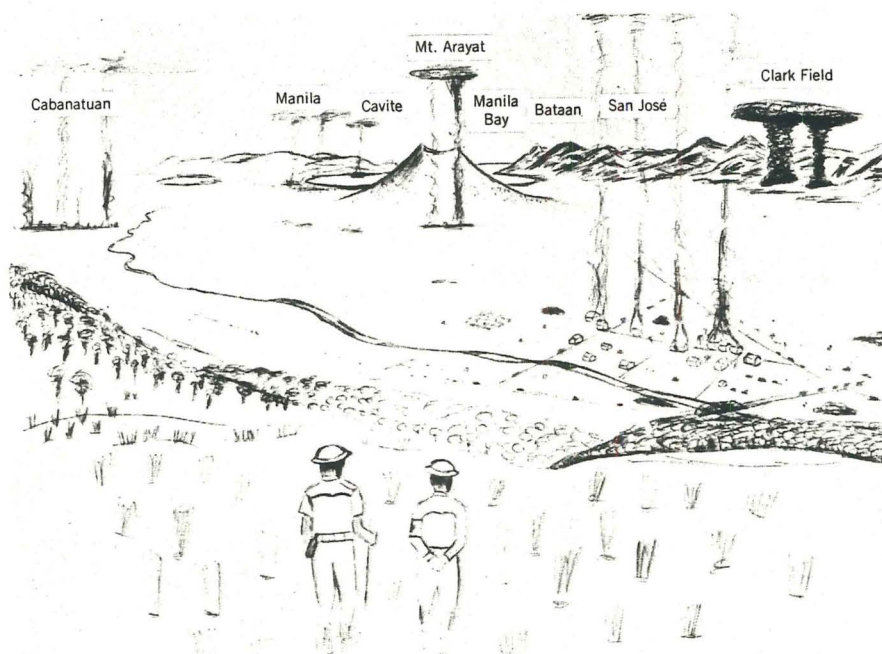


*Areas on Northern Luzon controlled by the guerrilla forces just before the fall of Bataan in April, 1942.*

tired and hungry and bewildered troops and formed a battalion of infantry. One company under Lieutenant Enriquez, PA, was left to occupy and guard Balete Pass; the other companies marched north to Bagabag to establish a bivouac. Our guerrilla forces harassed the Japanese infantry and cavalry trying to push through the pass, but we lacked the strength for a direct encounter. As the Japanese forces advanced, Major Warner moved the battalion headquarters farther back in the valley to Jones. New members continued to join until our numbers reached 1,500, and United States Armed Forces in the Far East (USAFFE) designated us MacArthur's First Guerrilla Regiment. We had two battalions of infantry under Major Guillermo Nakar, PA, and Captain Enriquez (the former Lieutenant), and one squadron of cavalry under Captain Warren Minton of the 26th Cavalry, Philippine Scouts (PS).

### Making Contact

Cooperative farmers, politicians, and rice-mill owners supplied food, clothing, equipment, and even a hundred horses—all on receipt—enabling us to set up a supply system. Captain Arnold of the Air Warning Service located a two-way radio and had it carried over 100 miles of mountain trails to Jones. He soon made contact with the USAFFE Headquarters at Corregidor, and set up a regular hour for communication. In addition, we used the radio to gather news and print a paper, the *Bataan News*, which was distributed to the civil-



*December 29, 1941. To obtain a view, a medic and I climbed a mountain. In the valley below, San José and many villages were in flames. As far as we could see, smoke was pouring into the sky—over Cabanatuan, Manila, and Cavite. Dense black smoke from oil fires rose over Clark Field.*

ians who were watchfully waiting for some sign that Uncle Sam had not abandoned the Philippines.

All permanent regimental outposts were connected by a relay telephone system. And our troops plus volunteer civilians constructed two airstrips that were adequate for light planes. We concealed their purpose by keeping small portable buildings on them.

As former Surgeon of Camp John Hay, I became responsible for establishing a medical service. With four medical officers of the Philippine Army serving as assistants, we organized a dispensary at Regimental Headquarters and two hospitals—out of bombing range—in abandoned schoolhouses in neighboring barrios. We rode horses to visit the

hospitals. As I rode along the trails, little Filipino boys, noting my King George V beard, frequently amused me by doffing their straw hats, bowing, and saying, "Buenos Días, Padre." Often, for security reasons and to keep rumors to a minimum, our hospital rounds were made at night.

In the absence of a regular source of medical supplies, the service we offered our guerrilla regiment was many times quite primitive. We were able to get some medicines and surgical instruments from local hospitals, but only after the Japanese had rather thoroughly raided them. Local physicians and Filipinos gave freely of their medicines and time.

Since malaria was prevalent in

our men, we quickly consumed our antimalarial drugs, but, under the guidance of our medical officers, we learned how to strip the bark from tall cinchona trees and boil it in water. The resulting concoction alleviated active malarial symptoms for a few days to several weeks, and then would have to be repeated. We made a similar potion from the bark of the guava bush; it was supposed to ease diarrhea. Fortunately, the Filipinos seemed to have considerable immunity against tropical diseases, and our mortality rates remained low.

### Collaboration

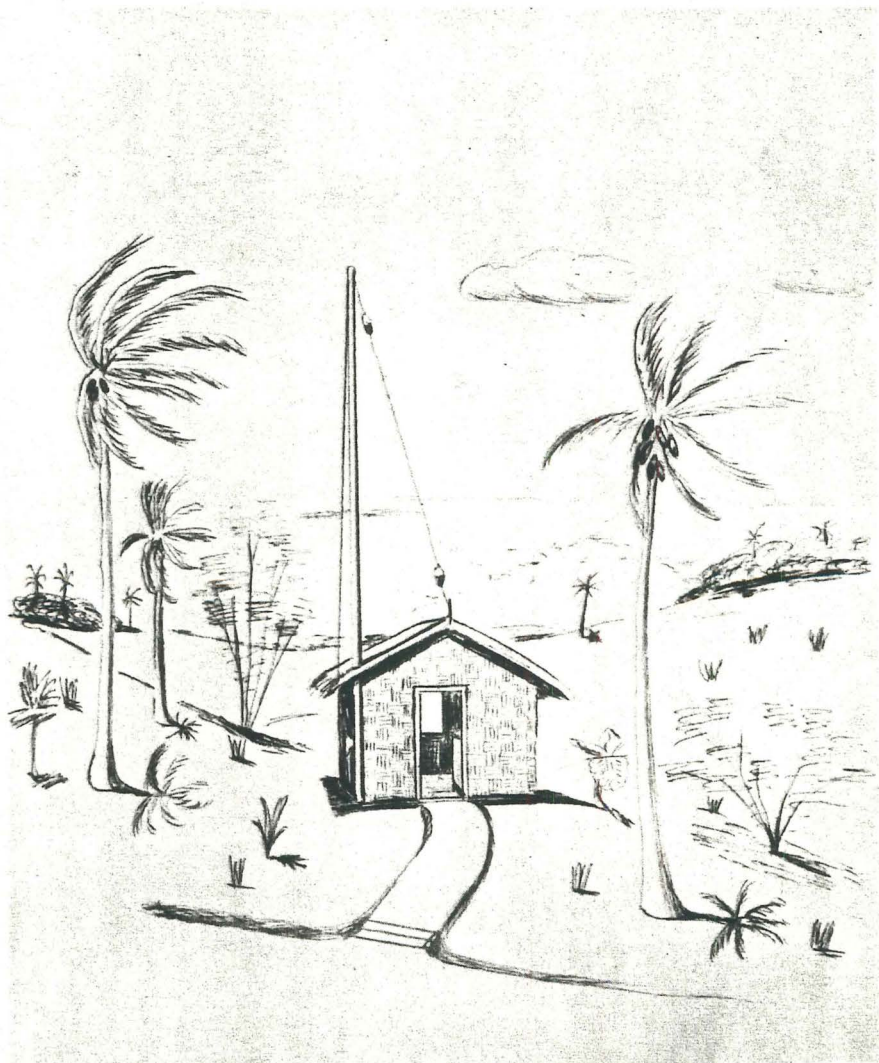
Medical aides, carrying small amounts of medicine and bandaging, went along with patrols going out on the "prowl," but our forces used local physicians whenever possible. The civilians were very good to our sick or wounded; in spite of severe threats from the Japanese, they took the casualties into their homes and cared for them until they could travel again. We, in turn, made every effort to care for all sick or wounded civilians in our areas of operation. Our medical officers travelled many miles to care for the sick in the evacuation camps that had been established for the refugees. We found that this effort paid dividends in many ways—it certainly eased food, clothing, transportation, gasoline, and medical supply problems.

Our diet was good, we got food from the fertile farms and haciendas in the valley. When possible, we obtained water from the deep wells of the towns; otherwise we boiled

river water from crude sand filters, made by digging shallow wells a few feet back on the river banks. Pit latrines were dug whenever a patrol remained in an area for more than a few hours. We had no venereal problem.

Our outposts harassed the enemy in the valley until they withdrew late in March. On one occasion, Captain Warren Minton selected some twenty outstanding soldiers

for a patrol to be made with similarly selected groups from several other guerrilla organizations. Under the cover of darkness, Minton and his men surrounded a Japanese barracks at Tuguegarao and killed about one hundred of the enemy as they emerged; they also destroyed two planes on the ground at the airport. Our patrols also made raids on enemy-held barrios; they cut telephone lines and attacked the en-



April, 1942. Radio shack of the 14th Infantry, PA, Jones, Isabella.

emy detachment. We procured rifles, ammunition, equipment, and some food from each raid.

During our brief existence as a guerrilla army, we met frequently with Filipino governors, mayors and government engineers to discuss our activities. We helped them police their areas; they helped us get supplies. When a politician became jittery, worrying about what the Japanese might do to him if he were captured, we had to replace him with a new officer. We received permission from President Quezon, who was on Corregidor, to print emergency money to pay the troops and purchase supplies.

### Ready and Waiting

On April 1, our guerrilla regiment received a new designation—the 14th Infantry Regiment, PA. USAFFE had learned that guerrilla-type fighting was not in accord with the rules of land warfare. We now controlled the Cagayan Valley from Tuguegarao to Balet Pass and from Kiangan to Palanan on the east coast. Since Palanan would make an excellent beachhead for any Allied landing, Colonel Warner took a hundred men across the rugged Sierra Madre Mountains to the harbor of Palanan. There, with the assistance of local labor, they built a pier suitable for landing a small supply ship or a submarine. After the completion of our pier, we quickly requested equipment, ammunition, clothing, and medical supplies from USAFFE. But none came. None were available.

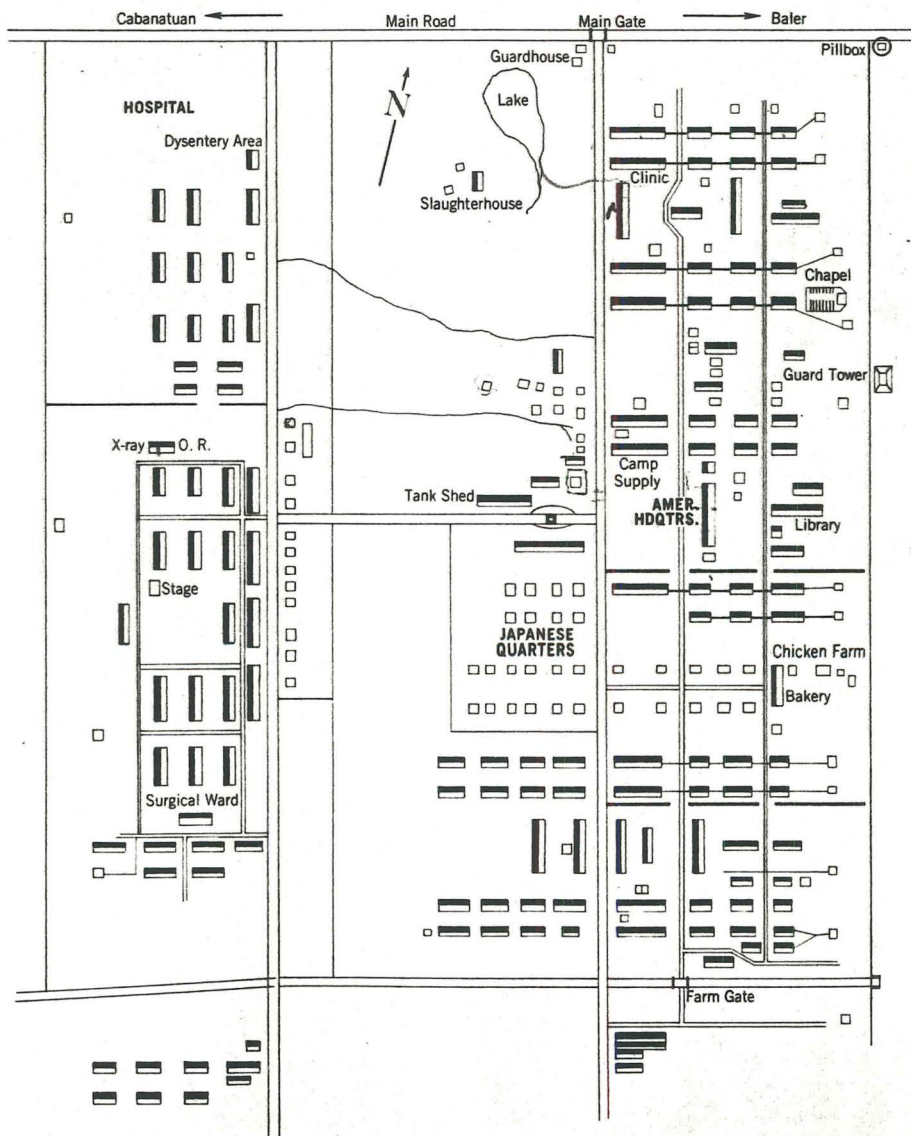
However, on two occasions, a single P-40 from Bataan dipped

down over our airstrip and dropped a box of ammunition, a few pairs of shoes, and a box of medical supplies. These air drops did more for our morale than for our warehouses.

By April 9, starvation, disease, heat, and the ubiquitous enemy had brought about the collapse of Bataan, thus ending any possibility of

further supplies. Our patrols now averaged three rounds of ammunition per man. Shortly, we received orders from USAFFE to cut our regimental strength to 600. Three thousand Japanese troops were massed at San José. Our patrols kept us posted as they moved north into the valley.

On May 6, the big guns and the



Japanese Prisoner of War Camp Number 1, Cabanatuan.

radio on Corregidor were silenced, and we found ourselves unable to contact any ally. Within a few hours, however, we picked up the voice of General Wainwright on a Japanese radio in Manila: "We are 7,000 miles from Home. There is no hope of reinforcement. Further resistance and bloodshed are useless. I hereby order all Fil-American Forces in the Philippines to lay down your arms and to surrender."

Colonel Nakar called a staff meeting and announced: "We will surrender two companies at Bagabag. The remaining soldiers will go home, grease and hide their rifles, and become farmers until the invasion of the American Forces. I, myself, will not surrender. I have a mission to accomplish; I must contact General MacArthur in Australia and maintain communication with him until the American invasion of the Philippines."

Within several days, Colonel Warner returned from Palanan and

told us that the Japanese had a bounty on each of our heads. The rainy season was starting and food was scarce. Any Filipino who helped an American was to be executed.

The same day, General Wainwright's emissary, Lieutenant Colonel Theodore Kalakuka, arrived by plane from Manila; he informed us that the Japanese intended to annihilate all the prisoners they had captured on Bataan and Corregidor unless the Fil-American Forces surrendered. He said: "There are thousands of American prisoners in the camps; they are extremely sick and in urgent need of medical care. Any Americans who don't surrender will be considered deserters by the United States Army."

On June 20, Colonel Warner officially surrendered the 14th Infantry Regiment to the Japanese. Shortly, six of us Americans found ourselves sleeping on the concrete floor of the guardhouse of a Japanese cavalry squadron that was oc-

cupying the old Constabulary Barracks west of Echague—the town where Colonel Nakar and I used to have our conferences with the Filipino government officials. We were just ten miles from the regimental radio shack where Colonel Nakar was still trying to get a message to General MacArthur.

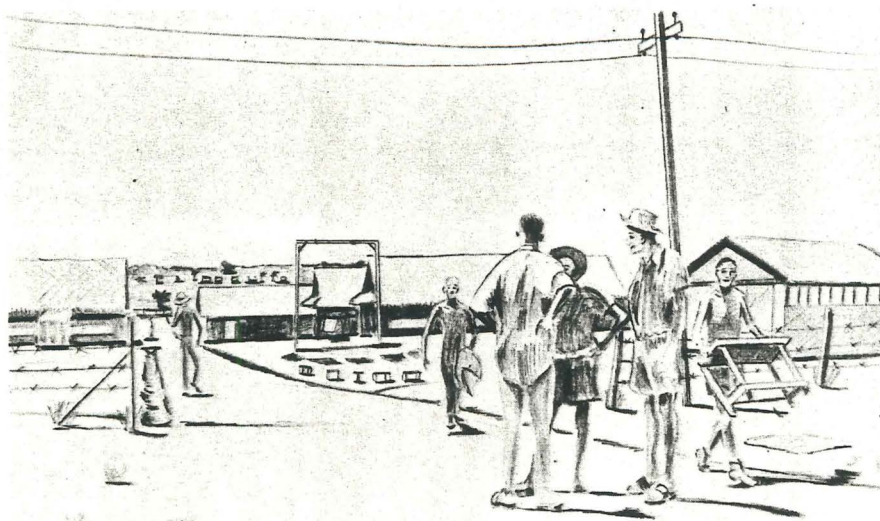
For one month we were assigned to all the unpleasant chores of the squadron—pumping water by hand, preparing vegetables, burying garbage, and the like. We were pleased when we heard through the "bamboo telegraph" that the Japanese had accepted the Filipino government officials we had appointed. We knew they were and would remain loyal to the United States.

#### *Signal Message*

On July 5, Nakar finally succeeded in contacting Australia. I quote from General MacArthur's book, *Reminiscences*:

"After the fall of Corregidor and the southern islands, organized resistance to the Japanese in the Philippines had supposedly come to an end. In reality, it never ended. . . . Unfortunately, for some time I could learn nothing of these activities. A deep black pall of silence settled over the whole archipelago.

"Two months after the fall of the Manila Bay defenses, a brief and pathetic message from a weak sending station on Luzon was brought to me. Short as it was, it lifted the curtain of silence and uncertainty and disclosed the start of a human drama with few parallels in military history. . . . The words of that message warmed my heart. 'Your



*October, 1945. Main Street, Cabanatuan.*

*victorious return is the nightly subject of prayer in every Filipino home!"*

We were to learn later that Colonel Nakar had been betrayed by a disloyal Filipino. The Japanese captured Nakar and the regimental radio in a mountain cave near Jones. He was taken to the old Spanish

the reassurance he needed to plan his campaign in fulfillment of his pledge to the Filipino people: "I shall return!"

The activities of the guerrillas in the Cagayan Valley had produced a much needed diversion for General MacArthur, during his dire days on Bataan and Corregidor. These

eral Tomoyuki Yamashita, "The Tiger of Malaya." In September, 1945, the Tiger was amazed and chagrined to find his veteran troops surrounded and beaten in the Cagayan Valley and in the Northern Mountain Province by these forces. Although the Filipinos had not faced up to the big guns on the destroyers in Lingayen Gulf, they thoroughly enjoyed twisting the tail of the Tiger.

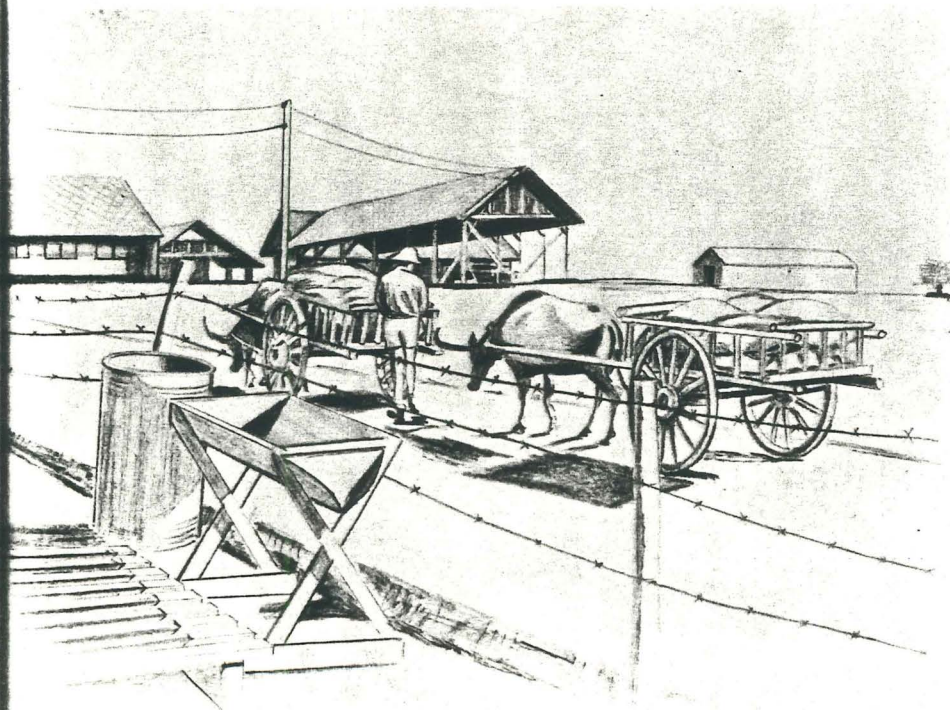
On July 20, 1942, the six of us from Echague plus another American prisoner were trucked to Japanese P. O. W. Camp No. 1 at Cabanatuan, on the central plains of Luzon. About one mile before reaching the camp, we suddenly became very aware of a horrible stench—dysentery and death.

#### *Condemned*

Surrender, to the Japanese, was a violation of military morality. Moreover, the Japanese never approved, either in theory or in practice, the Geneva Convention concerning prisoners of war. They also were not prepared for the large number of sick, starving, and diseased troops that they would capture on Bataan and Corregidor. The Japanese Imperial Army did not recognize the Americans as prisoners of war, but designated them captives with the status of criminals awaiting trial.

The Japanese system of discipline, enforced by frequent beatings, plus the language barrier, led to much brutality toward the captives.

As we drove up to the gate, made of slender poles and barbed wire,



*Spring, 1945. Food caravan of carabao-drawn carts.*

fort (Santiago) in Manila, where he was thrown into a dark dungeon to face starvation, thirst, water rats, and ingenious systems of torture. He was cruelly questioned and eventually beheaded. Yet, he adhered to his "belief in God" and to his concept that "the many rights of a free people are a very precious commodity." His short war was not fruitless; his "brief and pathetic" message gave General MacArthur

same guerrillas, who had been organized, trained and guided by Colonels Warner and Nakar before being sent home to be "farmers," later served under the brilliant leadership of Colonel Russel Volkmann, and gave tremendous assistance to General MacArthur during the invasion of Lingayen Gulf on January 9, 1945. They also played an important part in the ultimate defeat of Japan's distinguished Gen-



I immediately recognized the camp as one built a few months prior to the war for a Philippine Army division. It was located on several hundred acres of treeless wasteland (formerly rice paddies) near the foot of the Sierra Madre Mountains. It contained some one hundred cantonment-type bamboo barracks with roofs of cogon grass and walls of sawali or nipa. Within the barbed-wire enclosure, many of the 6,000 half-naked prisoners slowly milled about the camp. In the several guard towers along the fence, the sentries closely scrutinized the movements of the prisoners.

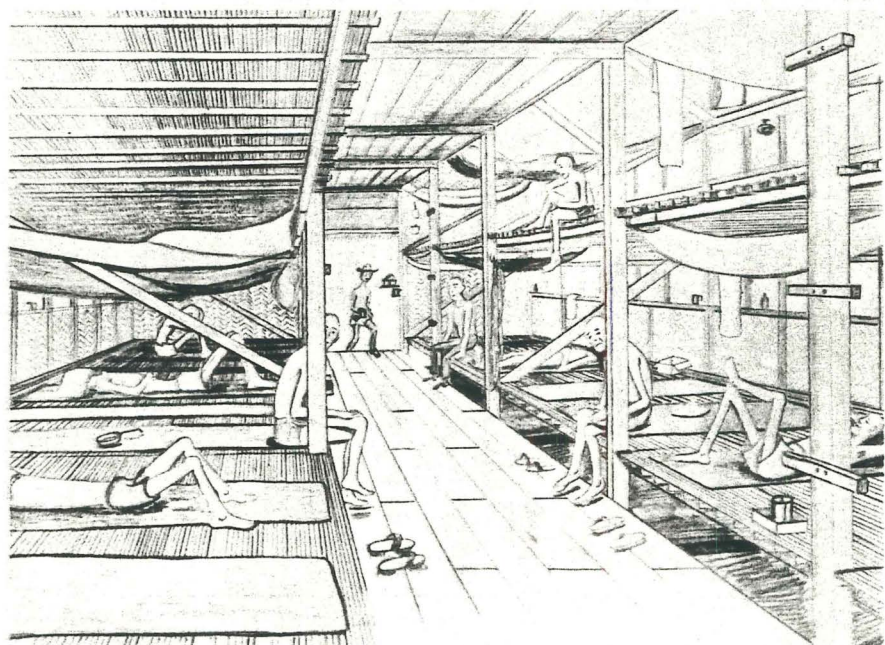
### *Up for Grabs*

The arrival of our old truck and its handful of new prisoners was scarcely noted in camp. Our few earthly possessions were quickly placed on blankets spread out on the ground. Guards, gesturing and grunting, carefully computed the value of the various articles. They were quick to snatch up watches and fountain pens suitable for ownership. They took my little black medical bag—my most valuable possession.

Soon, I was in a dark shack, the office of the Camp Medical Officer, Colonel James O. Gillespie, an old friend and my former Chief of Medical Service at the Sternberg Army Hospital in Manila. We had a short chat. He told me a few of his experiences as a hospital commander on Bataan, and I related some of my adventures as Surgeon for MacArthur's First Guerrilla Regiment in the mountains of northern Luzon. I spotted my bag on his table.

"Is this yours?" he asked. As I nodded, he handed it to me and said, "Our soldiers are starved and exhausted. They are dirty, unshaven, pale, bloated, and nearly lifeless. They stagger and stumble, uncertain of their balance. Some of their limbs are grotesquely swollen to

"Our camp is divided into three group areas and the hospital. Each group has a commanding officer, a staff, and a dispensary. You will be Medical Officer in charge of the Group 2 Dispensary. Later on, I want you to be Chief of Medicine at the Camp Hospital. There is very



*October, 1944. Cabanatuan Hospital, Ward 7.*

double their normal size. It is the saddest sight I have ever seen.

"Most of them have malaria. Many of them have beriberi and dysentery. Some are wounded; their wounds will not heal. The soldiers from Bataan have just completed a terrible Death March—a forced march of one hundred miles from Bataan to Camp O'Donnell at Tarlac, with very little food or water. The soldiers who couldn't keep up were bayoneted or clubbed to death—in full view of the others. It was a horrible ordeal.

little medicine. Stretch it as far as you can.

"Gene, we are happy to have you aboard."

The Group 2 Dispensary proved to be a two-by-six-foot area on bamboo slats in a small shack. This was to be my home for the next two months. Although my weight was down to 125 pounds (from 165) because of amebic dysentery, I was still very active and in relatively good health. How lucky I was to have been spared the starvation, the disease, and the battles on Bataan,

and especially to have escaped the Death March.

✓ The first shortage of which I became aware was water. The camp's deep well required a diesel engine to pump the water to a central tank, from which it went to several outlets in the hospital and in each group. Since there was always a shortage of diesel fuel, there was always a shortage of water. By standing in line for thirty minutes, one could obtain a canteen of water—strictly for drinking purposes only.

Baths were available only on rainy days. Fortunately, when I arrived in camp, it was the beginning of the rainy season. It rained almost every afternoon, and we got a "bath" by standing under the eaves of the barracks roof. There was no soap.

The evening meal was my introduction to the diet, if one could be so generous as to call it a diet. I had been forewarned that I would need

only my canteen cup for dinner. After waiting in line for some time, I received a half cup of *lugao* (a watery rice soup) and some bad-tasting greens—a very skimpy meal compared to those I had had with the guerrillas: chicken, eggs, vegetables, pork, and the like. As the days went by, I discovered that the meals did not improve, just *lugao* and greens day after day. On rare occasions, a small helping of mungo beans or corn might be added. About once each month, a carabao (water buffalo) was killed and added to the soup for 10,000 prisoners. We were lucky to find a few threads of meat in the soup.

✕ Our captors reasoned that slow starvation would make the prisoners too weak to attempt to escape or resist authority. To further insure our subservience, the Japanese divided us into groups of ten, called blood brothers. If one prisoner escaped, the remaining nine were

severely punished. Recaptured escapees were paraded around the camp for some twenty-four hours and then used for bayonet practice.

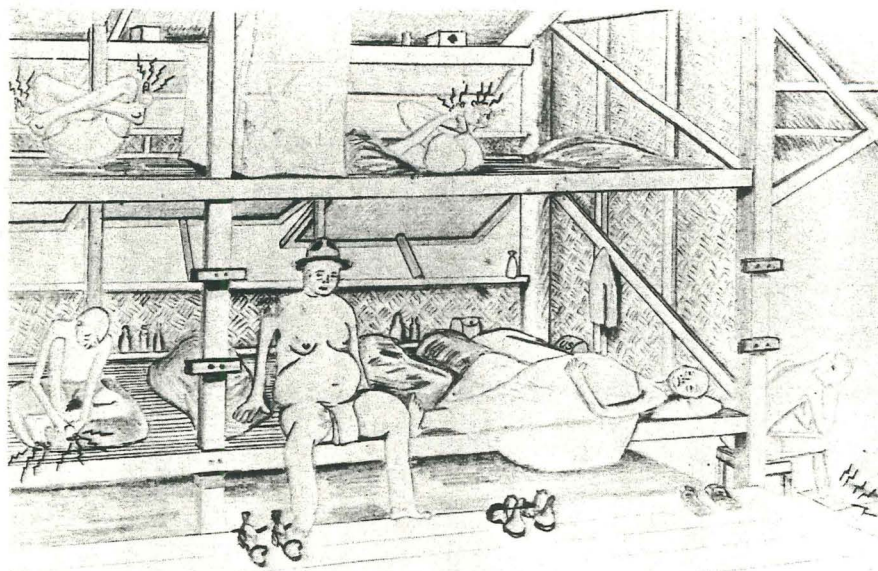
During my first night in camp, I spent several hours walking under the stars, just thinking. Was I right to surrender? I had certainly eaten much better when I was with the guerrillas, and I had been free to go to many places not occupied by the Japanese. What was done, was done. There wasn't much I could do then to change my situation. There was no question that the prisoners in Cabanatuan urgently needed medical care. From that point of view, I was in the right place.

#### Apparitions

The next morning some three hundred pathetic, skeletonized human beings lined up in front of my dispensary, hoping for miracles. Some of the patients recognized me from Manila, where I had treated them in the 57th Infantry or the 14th Engineer regiments of the Philippine Scouts. But, with their shaven heads and great loss of weight, they were not easy to place.

One by one, we tried to help them solve their problems. Since there was very little medicine to give out, most of the therapy had to be improvised. My little black bag was now quite exhausted.

✕ Those with dysentery were told to get some charcoal from the kitchens and to eat a spoonful several times a day. They were advised to sleep on the right side so as not to irritate the sigmoid colon. In spite of the water shortage, they were told to wash their hands after each



November, 1942. Patients with beriberi.

visit to the latrine. Malaria patients were given quinine, but only enough to keep their symptoms under control. Insufficient supply prevented any attempts at cures.

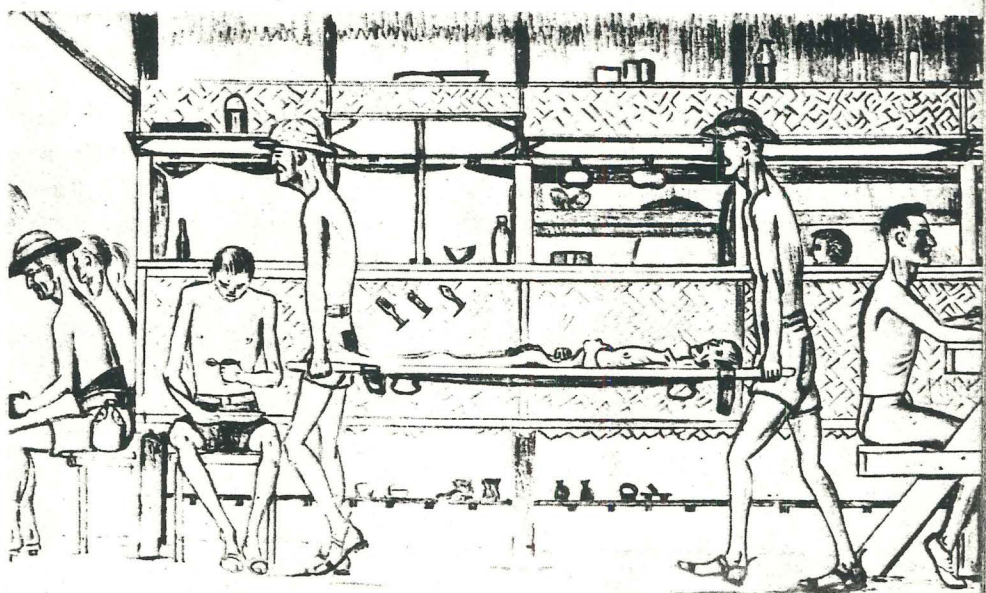
Both "wet" and "dry" beriberi were prevalent. There was no therapy. We tried to make some medicine by growing yeast cultures, but the process was too slow, and we could not see that it did any good. On one occasion, we received a 1,000cc bottle of ticki-ticki. It served one purpose—the injection was so painful that it quickly separated out the goldbricks. We could not see any other beneficial action. Hundreds of beriberi cases went on to die each month. The arrival of Red Cross food packages just before Christmas of 1942 allowed an adequate diet for several weeks. We had three packages each.

Scurvy came on suddenly in large numbers of prisoners several times each year. An issue of one or two limes brought remarkable results; it stopped the hemorrhaging temporarily.

### *Nightly Toll*

All seriously ill men were transferred to the camp hospital daily, in the hope that they could get some of the extra food available there in small quantities. In spite of the daily transfers, each night would bring the death of several prisoners in the barracks.

Sanitation was a serious problem from the beginning. Flies were ubiquitous, including blue and green bottles. Maggots thrived in the latrines, weakened the walls, and caused cave-ins, which sometimes



*August, 1942. From Zero Ward to the Morgue.*

engulfed a prisoner. Daily rains further weakened the walls.

Most patients had diarrhea or dysentery. Many were too weak to reach the latrines and soiled the ground near the barracks. The lice were eventually brought under control through the steam sterilization of clothing.

By September, 1942, I was chief of the medical service in the camp hospital, and had some 2,000 patients on twenty wards that had originally been built to hold forty men each. Each patient was allotted some two-by-six-feet of space on the bamboo slats of an upper or lower deck. We attempted to keep the more seriously ill men on the lower decks.

I visited each patient daily. There was actually very little that I could offer them except some hope for a better tomorrow. The patients all suffered from multiple diseases.

Many had lost from one-third to one-half their body weight. Most of them had one or more vitamin deficiency disease. Nearly everyone had beriberi. The men with the "wet" type were bloated with edema, which began in the feet and progressed upward to the head. A patient with edema of the legs during the day frequently awakened the following day with edema of the face. Patients with extensive edema became nearly helpless and unable to move about. Tropical ulcers, which continued to weep as long as the edema was present, developed on their legs. At times, the edema could be controlled by removing all salt from the diet.

Those with dry beriberi were usually very thin. Their chief complaint was severe lightninglike pain in their feet and legs. The dry patients found the best relief from pain by soaking their feet in cold

water. Many sat up all night with their feet in pans or buckets. On rare occasions, a patient with dry beriberi would become edematous; as the edema developed, the pain in the feet would lessen. Most of the men who survived the dry beriberi still have neuritis in their feet and legs, despite many years of vitamin administration.

We saw beriberi heart disease rather frequently. The heart became enlarged with edema and its beat was often irregular. Some of these patients were afraid to lie down; their heartbeats would stop when they did. Sudden death was a frequent outcome. Although beriberi heart disease is often considered reversible, many of the survivors still suffer the irregularity of heartbeat.

Pellagra was common and manifested itself in many symptoms—conjunctivitis, glossitis, amblyopia, angular stomatitis, and geographic tongue, and scrotal dermatitis of varying degrees. These conditions improved only when the diet did.

#### *Adventitious Aid*

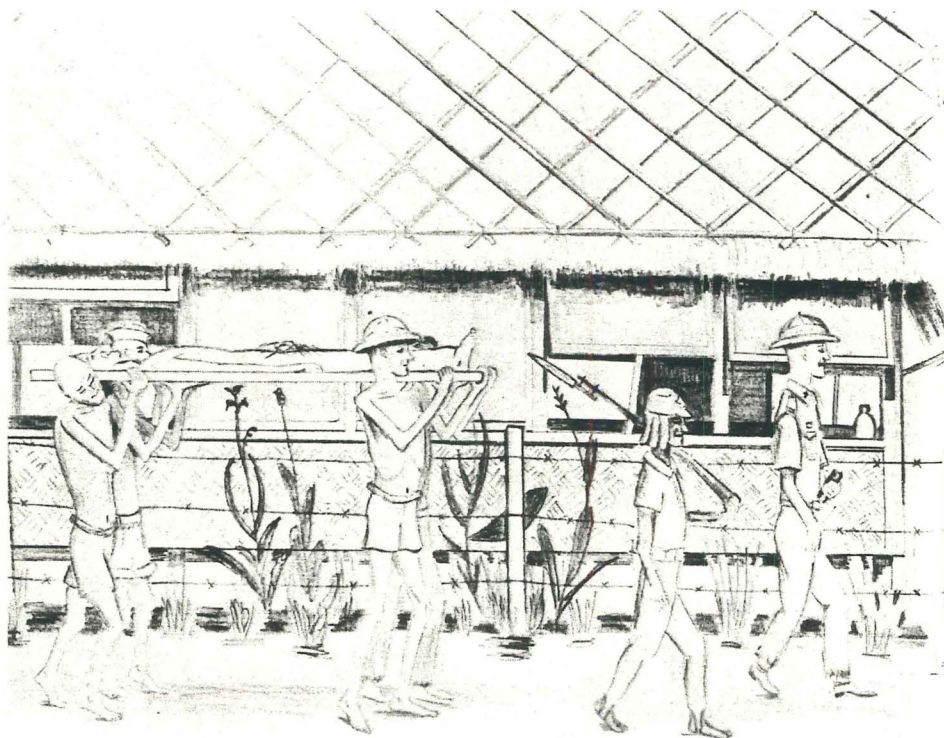
Xerophthalmia and optic neuritis frequently did permanent damage to vision, and in a few cases resulted in complete blindness. As in the camp at large, cyclical epidemics of scurvy—bleeding gums and minor subcutaneous hemorrhages—were quickly stopped with limes, and 300,000 three-grain tablets of quinine enabled us to keep most of the active cases of malaria under control. Occasionally, cerebral malaria was seen. In spite of intensive therapy, 50 percent of those in-

fectured died. Some 425 cases of diphtheria developed. Of these, 123 patients died before the Japanese got us a limited amount of antitoxin. Patients with diabetes mellitus also caused me much concern. There was no insulin, but starvation seemed to solve the problems of diabetes.

Several times during our forty months of incarceration and starva-

lasted for several weeks to several months.

In normal health, the liver inactivates any excess of androgen and estrogen. In a state of starvation, the liver becomes impaired and cannot inactivate the excesses produced by a sudden increase in food intake. The gynecomastia appears and lasts until the estrogen and an-



*September, 1942. The naked dead, carried on window blinds to burial.*

tion, we received Red Cross food packages. Each time we had this extra food, several hundred cases of re-feeding gynecomastia appeared. As our diet returned to starvation levels, the gynecomastia slowly disappeared. Again, after liberation, when food became and remained adequate, there were many instances of re-feeding gynecomastia that

drogen are reduced to their normal levels.

Some 1,000 patients with dysentery were cared for in the ten to twelve wards of the dysentery section under the supervision of a separate staff of medical officers and corpsmen. This section had a tremendous sanitary problem. Many of the patients were too weak to

leave their wards, or they passed out on the way to the latrine.

Zero Ward—an empty building with wooden floors—was located in the dysentery section of the hospital. It received its name when it was discovered that it had been missed when the wards were numbered. Here, patients were sent to die. The ward usually contained thirty to forty extremely debilitated patients lying naked on the floor, frequently in their own vomitus or dysenteric stool. Flies walked casually over the leathery skin of the dying men. Rarely did one arouse himself sufficiently to threaten a fly. In fact, most did not desire to be disturbed and typically responded: "I have suffered enough. Just go away. Let me alone."

Exhausted and sick corpsmen slowly moved among the dying, trying to keep them clean and giving them food or medicine when it was available.

#### *Dire Economy*

When the camp was but a few weeks old, the Japanese had issued several cartons of condensed milk for the benefit of the seriously ill. In spite of this extra nourishment, most of the recipients died rather promptly—taking the milk with them. We learned our lesson quickly: "Don't give extra food to dying patients." This, of course, was a far cry from the teachings of Hippocrates, and the practice of medicine in the States, but from then on, the extra food went only to patients who could possibly recover and to those who had a will to live.

During the first six months of

camp, patients died at the rate of thirty to fifty each day. They were promptly removed to the morgue. Each afternoon, many gaunt prisoners formed lines at the morgue to carry the naked bodies to the cemetery. Following brief religious ceremonies, the skeletons were laid in common graves. On rainy days, the graves filled with water; it became

was starvation that reduced the prisoners' chances of recovery to zero.

When Graves Registration researched the Cabanatuan cemeteries shortly after the War, they found and disinterred 2,637 bodies. Many others had died on labor details and in other camps.

The camp had not been in operation many days before the Japanese



*July, 1942. Cabanatuan Cemetery.*

necessary to hold the bodies down with poles while dirt was shovelled on top of them. Sometimes, the rains uncovered the bodies, and animals ate away the flesh.

Deaths totalled some 2,400 during the first eight months of camp. The Japanese issued documents certifying malaria, beriberi, or diphtheria as the cause of death, but it

requested labor details of various sizes for work within and outside the camp. Although an occasional group would be commanded by a cruel guard and unbelievable brutality occurred, the men in the labor details often received extra food and remained relatively healthy.

On good days a group went to the forests to gather firewood for

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**Warnings:** Patients who operate cars or machinery should be cautioned of possible impairment of physical and/or mental ability. In pregnancy, use only when necessary.

**Precautions:** Use with caution in angina patients and in patients with impaired cardiovascular systems. Antiemetic effect may mask signs of overdosage of other drugs or symptoms of other disorders. An additive depressant effect is possible when used with other C.N.S. depressants. Prolonged administration of high doses may result in cumulative effects with severe C.N.S. or vasomotor symptoms. If retinal changes occur, discontinue drug.

**Adverse Reactions:** Mild drowsiness, dizziness, mild skin reactions, dry mouth, insomnia, amenorrhea, fatigue, muscular weakness, anorexia, rash, lactation, blurred vision, and hypotension. Extrapyramidal reactions (motor restlessness, dystonias, and pseudo-parkinsonism) may occur and, in rare instances, may persist. Agranulocytosis, thrombocytopenia, pancytopenia, anemia and jaundice have been extremely rare.

**Other Adverse Effects Reported with One or More Phenothiazines:** Some adverse effects occur more frequently in patients with special medical problems (e.g., mitral insufficiency or pheochromocytoma).

**Grand mal** convulsions; altered cerebrospinal fluid proteins; cerebral edema; potentiation of C.N.S. depressants, atropine, heat, and phosphorus insecticides; nasal congestion, headache; nausea, constipation, obstipation, adynamic ileus, inhibition of ejaculation; reactivation of psychotic processes, catatonic-like states; cardiac arrest; leukopenia, eosinophilia; lactation, galactorrhea, gynecomastia, false positive pregnancy tests; photosensitivity, itching, erythema, urticaria, eczema up to exfoliative dermatitis; asthma, laryngeal edema, angioneurotic edema, anaphylactoid reactions; peripheral edema; reversed epinephrine effect; hyperpyrexia, pigmentary retinopathy; with prolonged administration of substantial doses, skin pigmentation, epithelial keratopathy, and lenticular and corneal deposits. EKG changes have been reported, but relationship to myocardial damage is not confirmed. Sudden discontinuance in long-term psychiatric patients may cause nausea, vomiting, dizziness and tremulousness. Sudden death has been reported although a causal relationship to phenothiazine administration has not been determined.

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the camp kitchens. A rice detail drove some ten carts pulled by carabao to Cabanatuan several times each week to get sacks of rice for the mess halls. At times, the Filipinos hid notes, medicines, and money in rice sacks addressed to certain prisoners. This underground system saved hundreds of lives, before the Japanese discovered it.

After many months, a sanitary detail—consisting mainly of former Engineers—succeeded in building deep septic-tank latrines that were cave-in proof. They made efforts to control maggots and flies by daily applications of lime. Gradually, all buildings and walks were bordered by ditches to provide drainage and to prevent quagmires from forming during the rainy season. Many details went to various parts of Luzon to repair roads, bridges, and airports, or to work as stevedores.

### *Sow and Reap*

Some of the prisoners suggested to the Japanese that a successful farm would supply extra food. The farm was started and expanded rapidly; many groups of one hundred men each were marched—barefooted—to spend the day on the farm. The farmers worked under severe conditions, they had to work bent over from the waist; they were never allowed to squat. Despite a very hot sun, they got only one five-minute rest break in the morning and one in the afternoon.

Nearly every day, the Japanese insisted that larger and larger numbers of patients be returned to duty, to work on the farm. To my surprise, many very sick patients who

were returned to duty status became rather husky farmers within a few weeks. Also to my surprise, the Japanese soon found that they could make some extra money by selling the farm products to civilians in Cabanatuan. Many prisoners started small gardens of their own to get extra food. Any produce had to be carefully watched, as it was apt to be stolen.

### *The Beginning End*

In September, 1944, we saw the first evidence of American military activity—thousands of planes coming over from the East—and the Japanese ordered us to make a health survey of the camp. The sickest patients were to remain in camp (they were repatriated by the Rangers of MacArthur's invading army following the landing on January 9, 1945). In October, the healthiest prisoners were taken by trucks to the Old Bilibid Prison in Manila for shipping-out to Japan. On December 13, 1944, 1,619 starved prisoners were marched five miles to the Port of Manila and transferred to the "Hell Ship" *Oryoko Maru* for the long and tragic trip to Japan, and on to Korea and Manchuria. Less than 400 survived.

Before we left Cabanatuan for Manila, I asked the camp psychiatrist, Colonel Stephen Sitter, why very few of the prisoners passing through Cabanatuan ever made any effort to take their own lives, even though they were starving and, seemingly, suffering hopeless situations. He answered, "They were all too busy concentrating on survival to think about suicide." END

# Memories of Bataan Death March live on

The Bataan Death March in the early stages of World War II involves a chapter of American history that many Americans today know little about. But memories of that march linger vividly in the minds of at least five area residents and others of that era. Forum staff writer Jim Baccus interviewed those five area residents for the following recounting of the march as the nation pauses this Memorial Day weekend to honor its war dead and enjoy the holiday outings that those who are no longer with us helped to ensure.

By JIM BACCUS  
Staff Writer

On Dec. 7, 1941 — "that day of infamy" — Japanese aerial fleets crushed the U.S. Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, while Japanese diplomats appeared to be negotiating in Washington.

Far to the west of Hawaii, in the Philippine Islands, Japanese armies poured onto Luzon, the northernmost island in the chain.

According to the Japanese master-plan, the Philippines were to become the base for campaigns to the south and to Australia.

American and Filipino forces in the Philippines were trapped and captured. Until America could rearm, there was no hope of rescue. When U.S. and island forces were subdued, they were forced to take what became known as the Bataan Death March to prison camps in the north. They were the darkest days of World War II.

Because of their weakened condition after their four-month defense, and because of the brutality of the delayed and frustrated Japanese soldiers, thousands of GIs and Filipino soldiers perished along that route. Some starved, some died of wounds and some were put to the bayonet.

The forces of Nippon had for years been demanding more living room. Their rulers had devised a plan to conquer the Dutch East Indies, the Philippines and Malaya. The first step would be the capture of Hong Kong, Wake

tal to success. That problem was the small band of defenders of the Philippines.

On Dec. 8, 1941, the islands of Guam and Wake were to be taken. The Gilbert Islands were scheduled for Dec. 9. On Dec. 10, Japanese, 100,000 strong were to be invading the Philippines, especially Luzon, the largest island, site of Manila, the capitol. On Jan. 2, 1942, Manila surrendered. Although declared an open city, it was bombed again and later burned.

But the Americans and Filipinos, instead of surrendering, retreated slowly, moving into Bataan Peninsula which together with a few tiny islands, including one called Corregidor, controlled the entrance to Manila Bay.

"They have the bottle, but I have the cork," Gen. MacArthur said. Slowly he retreated from north and south, pulling his forces back into Bataan's finger.

Frustrated by the delay, anxious to use Manila as a shipment base, the Japanese threw everything they had at Bataan, known in the language as Land of Youth, attempting to drive the defenders into the sea. They wanted to clear the harbor before the spring rains.

Corregidor, three miles off the Bataan coast, was the cork. It had seven miles of tunnels, driven into rock, which led to the Americans' nickname for it, the Rock. At the end, the Rock was being bombed hourly.

After a month, infantry on barges tried to invade the island. The Americans leveled anti-aircraft guns and repulsed landing parties.

On March 11, 1942, MacArthur and his party left the Rock on orders of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, arriving in Melbourne, Australia, March 17.

Just before Bataan fell, on April 9, a high-ranking Filipino, Carlos Romulo, was flown from Bataan in a daring rescue, with a North Dakota farm boy, Lt. Roland J. Barnick, at the controls of a rebuilt plane.

Here, then, are some recollections of five of the thousands of heroes who were left behind, to be driven like cattle to Bataan, North

of the Dutch East Indies, Singapore and Burma.

The warlords were rather sure that the U.S. would not fight for the Philippines. The United States had promised those islands their freedom by 1946.

The defenders were about 72,000 in all, including a few thousand Americans, and the Filipino Scouts, all under the training of Gen. Douglas MacArthur, who had been in the islands for some time and whose family had extensive holdings there.

In addition, the numerous Philippine islands were defended by only 100 prop-type planes, 100 old tanks and 34 bombers.

Both antagonists, hurled into conflict by the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor, faced enormous distances from their homelands.

Tokyo was over 4,500 miles from Hawaii and 3,000 miles from the Solomon Islands. The United States was as equally far away.

By April 1942, however, when the Japanese announced their Co-Prosperity Sphere, they felt they controlled one-third of the earth's circumference — from Hawaii to Ceylon.

There was one minor problem, though, delaying the planned schedule of the master plan, the keeping of which was considered vi-

inside the tunnels of Corregidor.

## Brownell Cole

Brownell Cole, 31st Infantry, 2nd Battalion, H Company, once of Lisbon, N.D., says a Divine Providence saved him from death several times.

"A Filipino and his family knelt and prayed for me when I had given up ever making it on that hike from the tip of Bataan to Camp O'Donnell and Camp Cabanatuan, near Clark Field. I thought of their prayers later," he says.

"Later on Bataan National Road, prisoners were jammed into a rice granary overnight — a round tin warehouse. I hid in high grass under a dry-well deck. The warehouse was another Black Hole. By morning, some had suffocated.

"On a prison ship, the Noto Maru, we were packed in the hold for 20 days. I managed to keep alive with coconut that I had grated on a tin can and stored in a sock. POWs who were wounded or got sick were finished off.

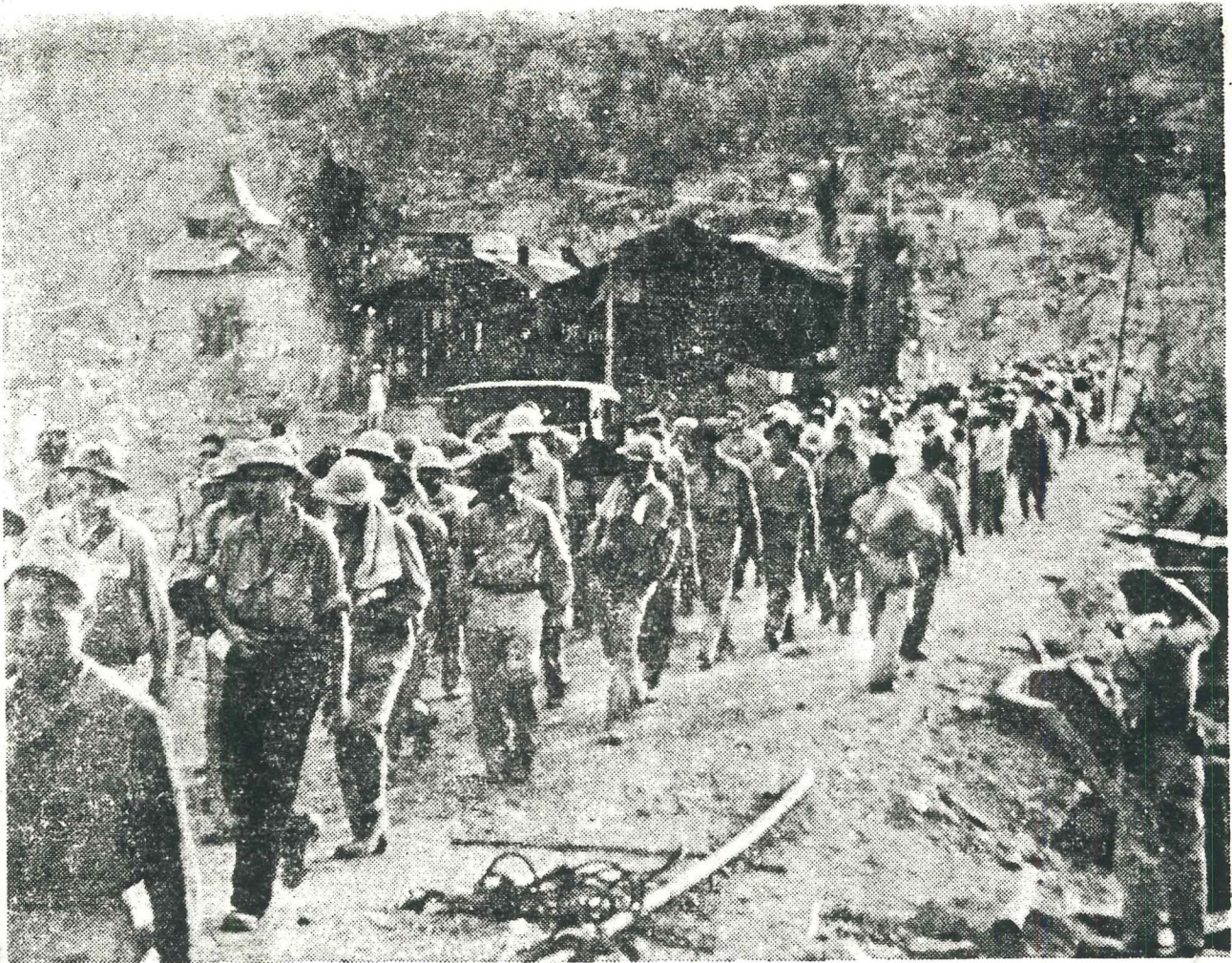
"In Japan we were paraded through the streets, before Japanese angry at the bombing of their country under Jimmy Doolittle.

"And after 13 months in a copper mine, I



Survivors of Bataan Death March carry comrades on improvised stretchers as they approach Camp O'Donnell. (AP)





Captured Japanese photograph shows beginning of Bataan Death March. (AP)

don't think I could have made it another day if the war hadn't ended," Cole recounts.

He's not sure for what reasons his life was spared.

About those Filipino prayers, Cole says he gave up along the Death March road. Bataan was in flames; there was no water or food.

"I told my buddies, I can't make it. Some guy along the march screamed, diverting the guard's attention. Under the shadows of mango trees, I dropped out and into a ditch full of water. The Japs were trying to keep us in blocks of 45.

"Later, that Filipino, who turned out to be a missionary from the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, found me, fed me and treated my feet and later prayed for me, he and his whole family."

Cole decided to rejoin his buddies and finally made it up National Road to Camp Cabanatuan, as the Japanese soldiers grew tired and surly, bayoneting civilians and soldiers alike.

In his last letter from Bataan, Cole had told his mother, "You won't be hearing from me

off the deck, eating the barley they gave us and keeping alive on that coconut," he says.

On Japan's Honshu Island, there were 13 months grueling labor in a copper mine, along with 45 Englishmen and 600 Yanks.

"They always sent Americans and Koreans to the bottom of that mine, 1,300 feet down," Cole recalls. "Finally I was at was the end of my rope."

On Sept. 20, 1945, after the enemy's capitulation, the mine's guards at that isolated mountain stronghold began to act strangely.

"The big guards left and in their places were a bunch of kids," Cole says. The prison commander made a speech:

"Your loving country and the Nipponese Empire," he said, "have agreed to a peace. You will be returned to the United States and to your loved ones. You will now be turned over to your officers to await orders. Very soon American planes will come with food and medicine for you."

Eventually Grummon torpedo planes did arrive, to drop news and supplies.

"It was wonderful to see that star on the wings of those planes," Cole remembers.

It was wonderful to get back to the U.S., via the hospital ship "Mercy," and through Letterman General Hospital and the Army Medical Center in Clinton, Iowa.

Later Cole became the postmaster of Valley





**BROWNELL COLE**  
Valley City

for a long time." It was what he calls a void of silence — three and one-half years.

Two and a half of those years were spent in that camp near Clark Field. The POWs built gun emplacements and worked on farms.

In August 1944, Cole was transferred with others to Bilibid Prison in Manila for a 30-day wait and then was placed aboard a prison ship, bound for Japan and more work.

"There were bad conditions on that ship. I managed to tie myself to a bulkhead and keep

of fate.

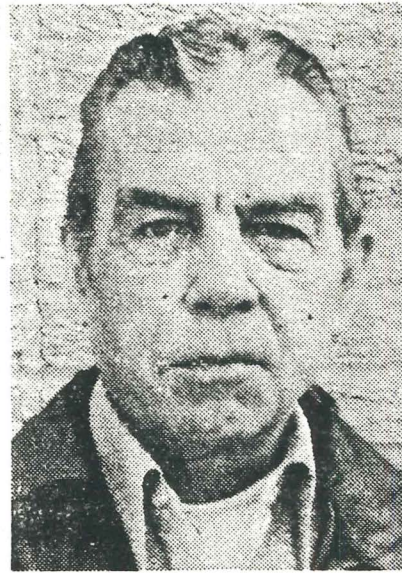
"When we first got to Manila Bay, there were 50 of us unassigned. A few of us were kept in Bataan. The rest were sent to Hickam Field, in Hawaii. Most of them died there."

## Robert Brunton

Robert Brunton grew up in Lisbon, N.D., just two blocks from the home of Brownell Cole, whose father was register of deeds for Ransom County.

When he was 22, Brunton enlisted and was assigned to the 60th Coast Artillery, an anti-aircraft unit. That was in February 1941. In April he found himself on Corregidor, that small Philippine island that was to become a focus of world attention.

His mother, Emma, found her sons, all six of them, scattered over the world: Neil and Bert were in the U.S. Navy; Barney, a member of the 776th National Guard Tank De-



**ROBERT BRUNTON**  
Lisbon

stroyer, in Europe; Fred and Tom in the Air Forces, Tom a B-24 gunner. There were six sisters in that family, too.

"I didn't realize what was going on until I hit the Philippines," Brunton recalls.

One year after he landed on Corregidor, Brunton was driven back into those island tunnels, with food and water rations cut in half.

"I think our guns brought down from 300 to 500 planes. Their bombers were concentrating on a strip four or five miles long and a couple of miles wide. Now and then a sub would sneak in with some provisions. But that was all."

When the island finally capitulated in May, 1942, the holdouts were ferried across the bay and ordered to walk to Manila.

What happened back on Corregidor is sometimes brushed over by survivors. There were 70 U.S. and Filipino nurses on the Rock when

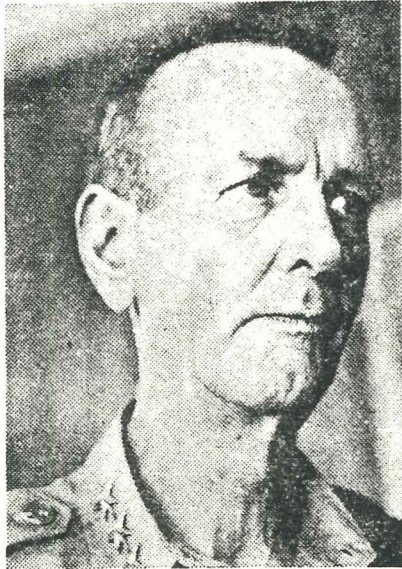


(Continued from Page F-1)

it fell. The U.S. public later saw pictures of a sick and ragged Gen. Wainwright surrendering to Gen. Homma

Filipino soldiers were paraded along the road from Bataan to Capas Tarlac, dying, some said, at the rate of 350 to 500 a day. The Americans, including Brunton, many of them sick and ragged like their Gen. Wainwright, were paraded down Dewey Boulevard on their way to Bilibid Prison. There were mass cruelties and individual cases of torture.

After two days in Bilibid Prison, Brunton walked 11 miles to a big camp where about



GEN. JONATHAN WAINWRIGHT

6,000 others were held. From there healthy Americans were taken to Honshu Island in Japan. There Brunton spent two and one-half years in forced labor, building a huge dry-dock and other port facilities.

"When we got off the ship at Nagasaki and took a train to Osaka, we saw some beautiful country," he says. "When we went back after the war that area had been bombed flat as a table-top."

During these movements of POWs, the Japanese used a group system. Men were divided into units of 10 and were told that if one man attempted to escape, the other nine would be shot immediately.

"I've witnessed shootings," Brunton says. "And I've had plenty of beatings." Once he met briefly with Brownell Cole in a prison camp.

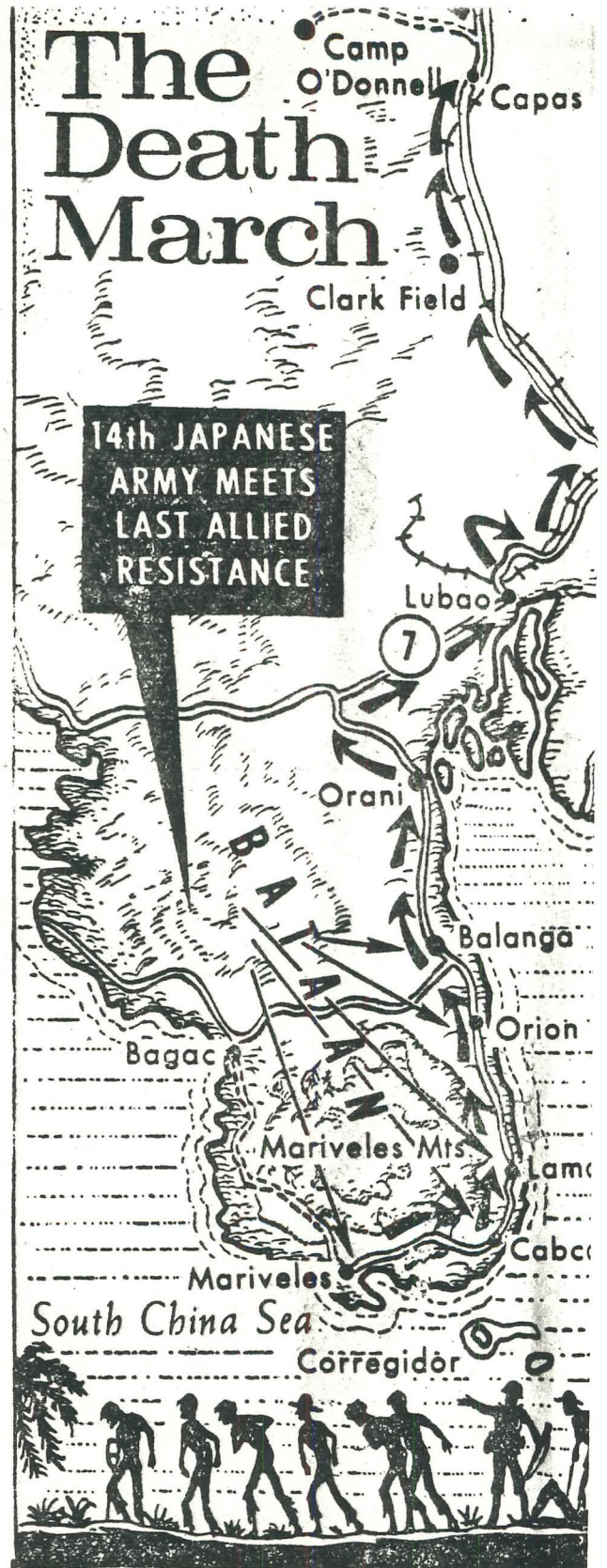
"He had gangrene in one foot," Brunton recalls. "Cole looked bad."

After being routed through the same U.S. hospitals as Cole, Brunton was granted an all-expense-paid furlough. He took his mother and a sister to Chicago. Then it was back to Lisbon; he's been there ever since.

The way Brunton sees it, the Japanese made a serious blunder in stopping for almost five months to clean up the Philippines and open Manila Bay.

"They should have by-passed Luzon and plunged south as they did over their hold-out

# The Death March



## Chronolo

Here is the day-by-day chronology of the battle of the Philippines which led to the Bataan Death March:

1941

Dec. 8 - Japanese bombers strike at Mindanao and Luzon.

Dec. 9 - Japanese troops establish first landings on Luzon.

Dec. 22 - 100,000 Japanese troops land in

## Peter Retterath

At 11 a.m., May 6, 1941, Peter Retterath, a Lidgerwood, N.D., native, was inducted into the Army.

On May 6, 1942, at high noon, Retterath became a prisoner of the Japanese Imperial Army. He remained prisoner until Feb. 4, 1945 and was discharged in September, 1945.

During that time a series of harrowing adventures befell him — narrow escapes seemingly so accidental and so wildly random that today (like Brownell Cole) Pete wonders why God spared him.

A member of the 803rd Aviation Unit — actually an engineering unit attached to the Air Corps — Retterath was at Clark Field when the Japanese invaded Luzon.

"We saw these big strings of Japanese war planes going over us," he says. "They were headed south." On Dec. 10 Philippine time, the Cavite Navy Yard near Manila was a mass of death and destruction.

Like Cole and Brunton, his fellow North Dakotans, Retterath had an advantage. He, like them, was familiar with the area around Manila. He'd had his dose of malaria or dengue fever and had gotten acclimated. And he was a motor sergeant with a vehicle to

force at Lingayen, Luzon, earlier attempts wiped out by American and Filipino soldiers.

Dec. 27 - Manila savagely bombed, after it had been declared an open city.

1942

Jan. 2 - Japanese occupy Manila and Cavite naval base.

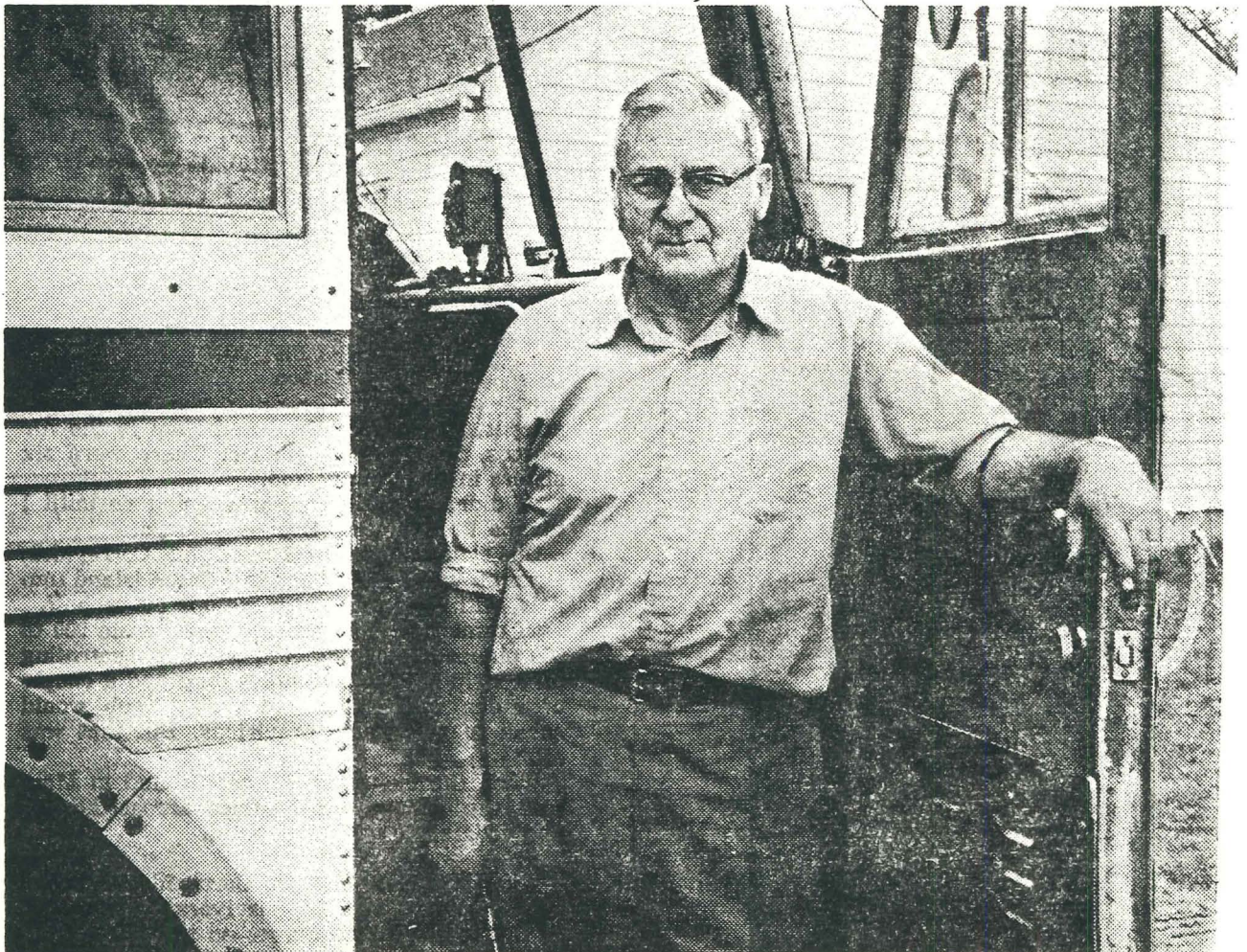
Jan. 3 - Siege of Bataan peninsula begins, as American-Filipino forces consolidate new positions north of Manila.

Jan. 3-6 - Corregidor repulses four-day bombing attacks by large Japanese air fleets.

drive. Before the retreat, he toured Manila, scrounging everything he thought was usable.

The orders to move south came soon and the 803rd's Company 3 went to Corregidor Island, where Retterath and the others withstood the weeks of bombing. When that terrible period was over, Retterath found himself the last living American on the Rock. It happened this way:

"I started maintaining all the small diesel electric plants on the island," he says. "After we were captured the Japs realized someone with know-how had to keep those little plants in operation. I was kept on the island, when (as far as I know) all the others were eventu-



Peter Retterath of Lidgerwood, N.D.

## Michiel Dovernich

The Japanese captured Lt. Michiel Dovernich, 2nd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, a former resident of Ironton, Minn., and a North Dakota State University graduate, as Bataan fell.

But they couldn't hold him. Ten men, with careful planning and an audacious boldness, walked away from a prison camp, made it to the sea coast, joined the guerrillas and were finally evacuated via submarine.

Dovernich, now a Fargo resident, says it happened because:

- He and others were Marines, well trained and hardy and jungle-wise.

- He had served in China, protecting the American colony in Shanghai and had had some experience with the Japanese then in China and making trouble.

Early in 1940 the Minnesotan was an Army Reserve lieutenant, stationed at Ft. Lincoln, near Bismarck, N.D. He then was offered a Marine commission, accepted and was sent to China.

By Christmas 1943, he was in Washington, able to recount an incredible story. As with Cole, Retterath and Brunton, it's a story studded with the wildly improbable, the seemingly accidental turns of fate that time after time saved Dovernich's life.

Just a few days before Pearl Harbor, on Nov. 27, 1941, the Marine regiment was evacuated from Shanghai and delivered to Corregidor, that tadpole island off Manila Bay.

"We sailed on the S.S. Harrison and were halted for several hours on the high seas en route to Corregidor by Japanese vessels," Mike Dovernich remembers.

"We were not boarded and it should have been a tip-off to Pearl Harbor and Washington. But nobody realized the Japanese fleet was on the way to Hawaii."

Early in December the Marines landed in the Philippines and by Dec. 13 Japanese bombers had flattened Cavite, the Manila navy yard. By the middle of January, Dovernich and a platoon of 45 had set up a defense perimeter around MacArthur's headquarters, from which the defense of Bataan was directed.

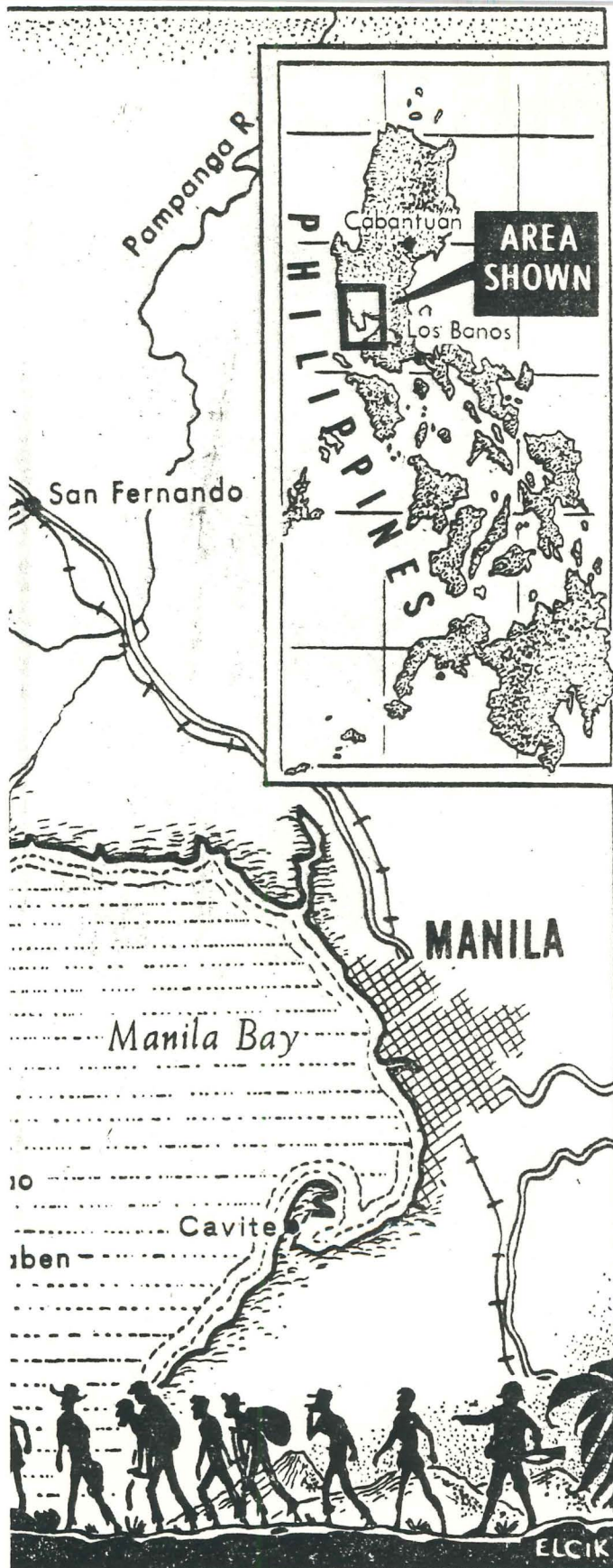
Dovernich thinks the Luzon strategy was faulty. Most U.S. supplies were piled in Manila, instead of being stored in Bataan Peninsula. When Army and Filipino vehicles evacuated Manila, they arrived within the peninsula empty and in a hurry.

Dovernich and his platoon were sent up the west coast of Luzon to hold back Japanese forces plunging south.

"We were told we were expendable," he continues. "But at the last moment MacArthur decided to save every man."

It was another of those crazy turns of fate.

When Bataan fell April 9, Dovernich ordered all arms and all Japanese souvenirs destroyed. On the Death March of 85 kilometers, to Camp O'Donnell, the captives were searched. Those with Japanese souvenirs were finished off with



## gy of battle

Jan. 11 - Attack on MacArthur's right flank fails; U.S. forces inflict heavy losses.

Jan. 25 - MacArthur's strategic counter-attack routs Japanese right, checks enemy drive.

Feb. 26 - Sudden thrust by MacArthur's

at  
Fili-  
af-  
and  
be-  
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air

as MacArthur's tiny air force sinks three transports.

March 9 - Yamashita, conqueror of Singapore, succeeds Japanese Gen. Homma, reported to have committed suicide over his failure to conquer the outnumbered Philippine defenders.

March 17 - Gen. MacArthur takes over supreme command in Australia; Gen. Wainwright takes over Philippine defense.

April 1 - Japanese launch all-out offensive against Wainwright's forces.

April 9 - War Department discloses that defenders have been overwhelmed.

ally evacuated to Bataan and northern prison camps."

Before the island fell, Retterath circulated busily among the plants, including Fort Drum, Fort Hughes and Fort Frank, just off of Corregidor. Occasionally he met a restless Gen. MacArthur, patrolling the lines, and the two fell into an acquaintanceship.

"He was very friendly," Retterath says. "Not the imperious top officer you might think. You could talk to him. MacArthur knew early in the game that he would be pulled from the island before it fell."

For 18 months, Retterath was a forced laborer on Corregidor. But he had freedom to move among his tiny generating plants. Because of his specialized ability his captors did not mistreat him, he says.

Then Retterath was stricken with appendicitis and the Japanese ordered him taken to Bilibid Prison for treatment.

"It was jack-knife surgery, all right," Retterath says. "But I lived through it." His appendix was removed.

In Manila Retterath was assigned to a carpenter detail, working on freighters being fitted out as POW transports bound for Japan and those copper mines.

In the process of dismantling a roof near the prison, Retterath suffered a broken neck and collar bone, and damaged back and kidneys. The injuries plague him today.

"They didn't put me into a cast," he explains. "I was lying on a board. The POWs in the prison took care of me, got me up off that board."

When the armistice came there were 500 bed patients in that prison dispensary; only 17 were able to walk out to meet members of the First Cavalry who wheeled into Manila. What followed was another turn of fate.

"There were orders to shoot all of us in the prison before the Japanese evacuated," Retterath says. "We knew it; the Japs knew it.

"But the commander decided not to do it. He said he'd told his troops not to molest us. Then he put his cadre of officers and prison guards on a vehicle and pulled out through the south gate.

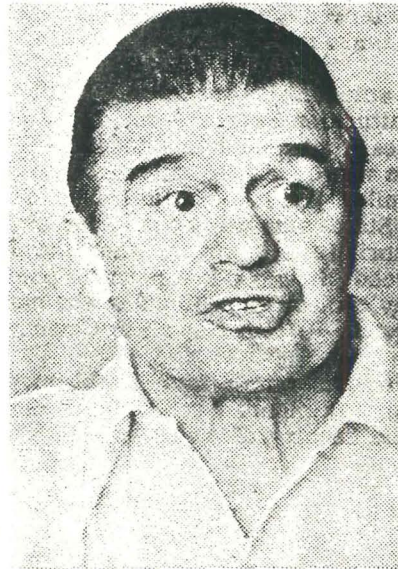
"Three blocks from the prison they ran into a U.S. tank, hidden behind a building. The tank opened fire and killed them all."

grace. We were 'captives' for six weeks and then became officially prisoners of war. But the enemy never signed the Geneva Convention regarding treatment of POWs."

In the camps, Americans knew they had perhaps six weeks to live, after their ordeal of the Death March, with no food or water and with malnutrition and disease threatening.

Americans died at the rate of 100 to 200 daily; Filipinos at the rate of 450 to 500. The Americans used mass graves on what they called Boot Hill.

"Once, six escapees were captured, brought back and hung at the main gate," Dobervich



MICHAEL DOBERVICH  
Fargo

says. "The natives were invited to beat them. After a few days the POWs were cut down and shot."

After time in Camp O'Donnell, Bilibid Prison and Camp Cabanatauan, Dobervich said he was a farmer (he's actually an engineer) and was transferred to Mindinao, where a plantation contained a penal colony for Filipino criminals. Others, who signed as professionals, were sent to Manchuria, where most died.

At that Mindinao penal colony, he was among a squad of 10 prisoners assigned by the Japanese into a "shooting squad," those in which all would be shot if one tried to escape. Dobervich worked on escape plans with two other Marines, a Navy commander, three coast artillery men and three Air Corpsmen. They spent three months preparing for their escape, rehearsing their moves, making rudimentary navigation equipment and saving their American Red Cross food packages.

When they bolted, their native guide got lost and the 10 wandered for three days, not far from the camp, near-victims of swamp-crocodiles, snakes, wild water buffaloes and dangerous jungle bees, as big as your thumb.

At last they met friendly native guerrillas who guided them through head-hunter country to a few Americans on the Mindanao coast. After seven months of guerrilla action against the enemy, Dobervich was evacuated to Dar-

# Bataan March

FARGO-MOORHEAD  
May 28, 1978

1-7

(Continued from Page F-2)

win, Australia, via the submarine Narwhal and a PB4Y four-engine plane.

Even that wasn't the end of the random mischances between life and death. The Narwhal was almost torpedoed by a Jap sub as it maneuvered to torpedo a passing Japanese freighter.

Between Brisbane and the U.S., Dobervich had a chance to transfer to a new B-19. He stayed with the old aircraft. Later he learned that the B-19 was lost at sea on the flight.

## William Near

Bill Near of Moorhead also can testify that kismet, or blind fate, seemed to be throwing the dice during the years he was a prisoner of the Japanese. There were near-misses all along the way.

After he survived the Death March and time spent in Bilibid Prison and Camp Cabanatuan, Near weighed 98 pounds.

"I had everything," Near says, "beri-beri, dengue fever, malaria, dysentery. O'Donnell was a rough camp. The rear echelon Japanese soldier was a lot more brutal than the first-rank Japanese Marines."

But when Hospital 1 unit, captured on Bataan, arrived at O'Donnell, the camp's medical treatment improved.

En route to O'Donnell, the men of the air base group who evacuated Nichols Field had a pail that would hold water. Regularly, two men risked death to collect water along the death road.

As Bataan fell, Near and his buddies were scheduled to go to Corregidor. But there were no more boats. Near was spared the months of pounding taken by the Corregidor defenders.

"I was with the last 90 Americans to leave O'Donnell," he continues. "We built a big prison in Manila."

In the spring of 1944, when Near was moved to the Kyushu Island of Japan, three ships in that convoy were sunk by American submarines. Near's ship made it.

In a final twist, after the war's end, there was word that the Kyushu steel mill, where Near toiled with 1,200 other POWs, was to have been the third target of U.S. atom bomb attacks, following Hiroshima and Nagasaki. But after the destruction of those two cities, the Japanese surrendered.

"Our B-29s did drop incendiary bombs on that mill," he says. "That was bad enough."

Near says GIs in the Philippines, long before Pearl Harbor, fully expected war to start and



Bill Near of Moorhead holds the family pet dog, Windsor.

he can't understand why Pearl Harbor and Washington were not responsive to warnings which he says were sent.

"Beginning in late November (1941), we were restricted to the base," he says. "There were bets about the chances of war, but no takers."

When it was all over, Near decided to stay in the service. He joined the Air Force and served in Denver, Georgia, Chicago, New York -- and Japan. His final tour was with the Air National Guard in Fargo.

Cole, Dobervich, Retterath, Brunton and Near are part of a company of much-decorated Bataan survivors who still ask themselves why they survived while others perished.

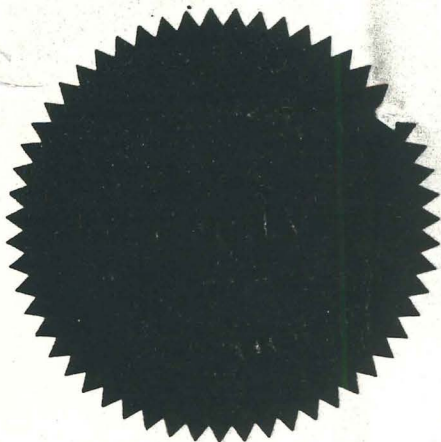
Other survivors in this area are Anton Cichy, New York Mills, Minn.; Clarence Larson, Fergus Falls, Minn.; Arvid Danielson, Gary, Minn.; and Sam Sortland, Crosby, N.D.

There were many others who served; who were captured; and who never returned.

WAR DEPARTMENT  
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C. :

CITATION FOR BRONZE STAR MEDAL

Staff Sergeant Edward A. Burns, (then Sergeant), Medical Corps, demonstrated the highest qualities of self-sacrifice, endurance and devotion to duty while a prisoner of war at Camp No. 1, Cabanatuan, Luzon, Philippine Islands, from June 1942 to January 1945. In addition to his regular duties as Operating Room Technician and Ward Attendant for a five hundred-bed hospital, Sergeant Burns, though weakened by illness, malnutrition, fatigue and nearly intolerable living conditions, without thought for his own welfare, put forth every effort by day and night to improve the morale and well-being of his fellow prisoners of war.





# Round the Community

By Harold E. Roberts



Malcom Amos

"The day I arrived at Camp O'Donnell for a second stay as a prisoner of war we buried over 500 other prisoners. All of us lived in constant fear we were going to die from one of the diseases or be murdered by one of the guards." Those are the comments of Malcom Amos, a longtime resident of the Afton community and a P.O.W. held by the Japanese and one of those who felt the terror of the horrifying Bataan Death March during World War II.

Malcom was born at De Nova, Colorado on Feb. 18, 1922, one of four children of Iva and Rex Amos. A brother Bill lives north of Afton. His

helped in the field and with the harvesting.

"We had a big garden and mom canned a lot from the garden, also we butchered and she canned plenty of meat. In those days we burned wood, had kerosene lights, outdoor plumbing and something we treated as a real luxury was a battery powered radio. The folks never had electricity until after I left the farm."

What about recreation? "We played our share of cards and read quite a bit. We also gave a lot of time to hunting, fishing and swimming."

What about bedtime? "Generally we were in bed pretty early--after all we

my place--and he did."

"I joined the army in June 1940. They sent me to Camp Ord, Calif. for basic and I stayed there after basic as a company clerk in the headquarters of the First Medical Regiment until July 1941. Then they transferred me to Fort McKinley, north of Manila in the Philippines--I continued in the same type of work. I was there until war broke out with the bombing of Pearl Harbor. They transferred me to Manila where I had charge of a truck battalion which hauled medical and other supplies. I was on that job until sometime in Jan. 1942 when the Japanese came into Manila--all roads were blocked and terror was everywhere you looked. They killed so many people that blood ran down the gutters of the streets. When the Japs raided Manila everybody ran, but they didn't really have any place to run because there wasn't any shelter. I got out of Manila on a PT boat--it came into the dock fast, we jumped aboard and headed for Bataan.

"I was assigned to General Hospital No. 2. This didn't really resemble a hospital as we know them. Ours had beds with jungle cover--the

meat, pineapples and other available fruits."

"After three or four months they shipped us back to O'Donnell. The day I arrived they buried over 500 Philippine and U.S. P.O.W.'s. The surviving P.O.W.'s who were well enough either dug the open graves for at least 20 bodies or helped bury the dead.

"All of us lived in constant fear of dying from beriberi, dysentery, malaria, malnutrition or being murdered by one of the brutal guards. Being confined by the Japanese was a hell--we existed on practically nothing. A thin rice soup for breakfast and a small portion of rice at noon and in the evening--all the rice was cooked in the morning. It was moldy, buggy and had maggots--for awhile we used to pick that stuff out, but we finally started eating it--some joked we got a little protein that way.

"They gave us a small piece of cloth to cover our privates, also a half blanket to either lay on or cover ourselves with at night. Sleeping wasn't easy--the weather was tropical and temperatures of 100 were commonplace, in the rainy season the temperatures dropped a few degrees and even though it was still hot we'd get the chills--combine this with the bed bugs and lice in the camp and you could see why sleeping was difficult.

"Almost 100 percent of us



(Robert) McDonald of Cincinnati, Iowa and Mrs. Paul (Mary Ann) Smith of Shannon City.

Malcom said, "De Nova, which is no longer on the map, was located south of Akron, Colo. The folks had 320 acres and dad's main crop was wheat, although the way dad told it—he thought sage brush was the crop. The area was in the sand hills of Colorado. When I was one we moved to a farm near Atlantic and a couple of years later we moved to a 200 acre farm 5½ miles north of Afton—and Afton has been home ever since."

"We had a general farm operation and the folks started all of us kids off doing something as soon as we were old enough. I was milking cows and doing other chores before I was five."

a.m. to start the chores. After the chores were completed we always had a good breakfast—pancakes, eggs, pork chops and various other things."

What about school days? "I attended Sunnyside No. 8 through the eighth grade—the school was less than a mile away and I always walked. During my first two years of high school I stayed in Afton—after that I started driving or walking. I graduated from Afton High in 1939."

Did you work while attending high school? "Yes, I started working at the United Food Store in 1937. I was a jack-of-all trades: stock boy, handling produce, candling eggs, carrying groceries out, unloading freight and sweeping the place. I stayed with them until 1940 and I told the boss I was taking time to be

Japs knew we were there and bombed us even though we were caring for the sick and wounded. They captured us in April 1942 and we went on a death march (forced march) to Camp O'Donnell, 89 miles northwest. All of us had been on half rations and about everybody was sick with malaria. Those who couldn't keep up with the march were stabbed by Japanese bayonets and left along the road to die.

"It was a six day march to O'Donnell and on the fourth day three of us escaped. Two days later we were recaptured and sent back to Bataan on a work detail. We were there for a number of months loading Jap trucks with reinforced steel. They didn't provide us anything to eat. We had to find food on our own—they had moved all natives out, farmers, too. So

lost half our body weight or more during our P.O.W. days. I weighed 205 when I was captured and around 90 when we were rescued. To give an idea of how bad it was about 50 percent of the prisoners died at Camp O'Donnell.

"Later they released the Philippine prisoners and sent us Americans to Cabanatuan, northeast of Manila. We were on a farm complex and they had many of us using picks and shovels to plow and cultivate the soil. Others were on a wood detail chopping wood. We always dreaded being called to work on a Jap airstrip—that is when the guards got real brutal, clubs and pick handles were used quite a bit.

"I was transferred to a guerrilla camp to help with medics. I was there about a year and then they

camp No. 1 for more of the same old brutal treatment—where the Japanese slogan was, "No work, no eating." It didn't make much difference because the eating was next to nothing. I stayed there until Jan. 30, 1945—that's when the Sixth Ranger Battalion filtered in and surrounded our camp. They killed all the Jap guards and rescued us. Many who would have been rescued died when Jap boats transferring prisoners to Japan to work in steel mills and mines were sunk by American planes and ships (they never knew Americans were aboard). When the Rangers rescued us we were about 100 miles behind the enemy line. We had to walk six miles and hauled 27 miles in carts before U.S. troops with trucks got us out of there. We were flown to the Island of Leyte and stayed there for a couple of days before they put us on a Liberty Ship."

"We weren't out of danger yet, "Tokyo Rose" vowed that our ship would be sunk before we got home. And our trip home was the long way. Southwest to Borneo, then jogging in between islands before hitting the open sea and heading far south of the U.S. before coming up the coast to San Francisco. I will never forget sailing under the Golden Gate Bridge on that April day in 1945. The trip to the U.S. took a long time and during the time we were fed well—I gained back 30 pounds. After a short stay in the hospital I was given a three month recuperation leave—then it was on to Lake Placid, N.Y. for more recuperation time. I returned to S.F. where I was discharged from army service in October. The people of San Francisco really were good to us, they gave us a royal welcome."

On Oct. 22, 1945, Malcom and Loraine Nielsen (also from Afton) were married in S.F. They returned to Afton and opened a grocery business on the southeast part of the square in 1945. Loraine and Malcom have seven children: Mark, Lanae, Blythe, Cindy, Mick, Shelly and Jane.

Malcom said, "We bought the grocery store from Louis Kessler and operated the store until 1976. I retired in 1974 because of health reasons and Loraine continued until the closing. We always had a real good business, thanks to people of the community."

What about retirement? "We have found plenty to do. I enjoy fishing and we've had some mighty good times traveling. We've had reunions in the Philippines and I've been back for three of them. At the last one, President Marcos of the Philippines (also a prisoner at Camp O'Donnell) was there—I had the privilege of knowing him during that time. Also the mayor of Manila, who was also a prisoner, hosted us day and night—we had a fine time. During our stay we dedicated a monument in memory of those who served in the Philippines."

We asked Malcom about buying a Toyota or any other Japanese product today. "I have no intention of buying one of their products if I can help it. I just can't forget the treatment they dished out to

me and the other prisoners."

Malcom, who this past Sunday was elected Commander of the Iowa Chapter of the American Defenders of Bataan-Corregidor has also provided other services along the way. The Afton School Board, The Afton City Council and The Union County Supervisors are among them.