First Lieutenant James Milton Robb’s manuscript, it is believed, was buried in a canister under floorboards in a building in Bilibid Prison, by Warrant Officer Earl G. Schweizer, who is referred to often in the manuscript and who was apparently a good friend of James’s in the camp. According to correspondence between Mr. Schweizer and James’s father and mother, Walter and Dollie Robb, Mr. Schweizer and a few other surviving friends unearthed the canister after they were liberated and turned it over to Army Intelligence before leaving Manila. Mr. Schweizer subsequently sent a copy of the Army’s receipt for the manuscript to the Robbs. According to correspondence found with the manuscript, Walter, after much effort, was eventually able to obtain a retyped copy of the original, with parts deleted, from the Army. It is interesting to note that only after Walter contacted Dwight D. Eisenhower, whom he happened to know personally, that the manuscript was finally located and a copy sent to James’s parents.

Upon the deaths of James’s parents, the manuscript apparently fell into the hands of James’s brother and sister. James’s daughters, Jannis and Allison, obviously his legal heirs, were unaware of the existence of the manuscript. They first gained knowledge of its existence in 1999, at a reunion of the survivors of Santo Tomas Internment Camp. As a child, Jannis was interned by the Japanese in this camp in Manila, along with her stepmother, Monica Cowles Robb. Tragically, after three years in internment, Monica was killed in the fighting which raged in Manila between the Japanese and American soldiers for a few days after liberation.

Inquiries to government offices brought only denials of any such document existing. We had all but given up any hope of obtaining it, when Ryan Pence, a grandson of Jannis, was researching the Internet for information on World War II and his great grandfather, and found that the document had been for many years in the archives of the University of Dundee in Scotland. We believe that a cousin of ours had attended this university and gave the manuscript to one of his professors. We contacted the university immediately and through the assistance of a wonderful lady named Sarah Chubb, finally obtained the manuscript – some 225 legal-sized pages – along with copies of long-ago correspondence by Walter and Dollie,
showing what they went through to obtain what their son had written during his imprisonment.

Thus, all these many years later, it was through James’s great grandson that the document was finally located and is where it belongs – with his descendants. If it had not been for Ryan, a fine young man of whom James would have been so proud, this manuscript would, in all likelihood, have been lost to us forever.

James Milton Robb was born in San Miguel de Mayremo, Bulacon, Philippines, on December 1, 1910. He received his B.A. degree at Stanford University in 1930 and his L.I.B. degree from Stanford School of Law in 1934. His parents were American citizens who had gone to live in the Philippines early in their marriage, to teach school. Walter later became a journalist and author. They resided in Manila. Walter and Dollie returned to the States shortly before the outbreak of World War II.

James was married twice and had two daughters by his first wife, Audrey Giacomini Robb. During his first marriage, he returned to the Philippines to practice and teach law. They were divorced, with Audrey returning to the States, where Allison was born. James retained custody of Jannis. At the outbreak of the war, he became a First Lieutenant in the U.S. Army and was captured at the fall of Bataan, eventually ending up at Bilibid Prison, after surviving the infamous “Bataan Death March,” or as he referred to it, “The March to Camp O’Donnell.”

Only two months before the liberation of Bilibid, the Japanese rounded up about 1,619 prisoners and loaded them on ships, to send them to work camps in Japan. James was one of these. The conditions on these ships – later to be referred to as “hell ships” – were horrific. It is enough to know that out of the original 1,619, there were approximately 450 survivors. James was not one of them. Among the information Ryan found on the Internet were names of the men who died on the Oryoku Maru, and James’s name was there.

James wrote the manuscript as an unidentifiable observer, careful not to include any personal details that would have enabled the Japanese to trace authorship, in case of discovery. As a lawyer, he described the numerous violations of the Geneva Convention rules regarding treatment of war prisoners, naming names. We believe that he had access to an office and
perhaps worked in some capacity in one. He appeared to have had unfettered access to records of all kinds: food, medicine, supplies and reports of every description. He draws vivid and detailed portraits of the Americans that indicate not only his close relationship with some of these men, but his sincere interest in the lives and backgrounds of those with whom he shared such an unhappy and miserable circumstance. He describes how they tried to maintain their morale – and here he allows a rare, personal interject – describing “Bilibid College,” which he was instrumental in organizing, with its many courses on different subjects (including, of course, Constitutional Law, which he taught).

Clearly, James planned to write one “blockbuster” of a book when he was liberated. The most poignant chapters are near the end, when the prisoners, starved, weak and disease-ridden, are pulled out of sick beds to build roads in the tropical heat and humidity with the crudest of implements. It is painful to read of such cruelty and of the many men who dropped dead where they stood and whose comrades had to carry them to the side of the road, dig their graves and bury them, while their captors looked up only to count how many had died. There is an event in one chapter, however, which rivals almost any description of bravery in war – an event which, by its poignancy and beautiful description of patriotism, shows how even in the midst of the most awful circumstances, the human spirit can prevail.

It is the belief of James’s daughters, that his manuscript, even with the parts excised by Army Intelligence, is, in all likelihood, one of the best written, most complete and documented description of the imprisonment of Americans by the Japanese at Bilibid.

Proudly,

His Daughters,

Jannis Robb Garred
Allison Robb Marks

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CARRY ON

By Lieutenant James Milton Robb

Chapter 1

MANILA

Manila, "Pearl of the Orient," has always been a slow, tranquil sort of place. Nothing very much had happened there since Dewey sailed boldly into the Bay and routed the Spanish fleet, more than forty years before. That was an event of great significance for the Philippines — marking the end of three centuries of Spanish rule and the beginning of sovereignty by the United States, but Manila remained calm and unruffled. The preliminaries to American occupation of the city were carried out in a fitting spirit of dignity and with a due regard to the amenities — the Spanish land forces putting up a proper show of resistance, but capitulating at the point where honor had been upheld and before too much bloodshed could disturb the population. True, there was afterwards an unfortunate misunderstanding with the Filipino patriots who had revolted against Spain and enthusiastically made common cause with the Americans. It seems that the Filipinos believed the Americans would immediately depart and that the Philippines would straightway be an independent country. There was some trouble when it was learned that America intended to hold the Philippines for a while — the insurrectos indignantly turned on the American soldiers and there was some pretty hard fighting before Funston finally captured the wily Aguinaldo, the revolt came to an end and Manila could settle back to the even tenor of its way.

All that was long ago. The Americans were a bit disturbing at first, with their fussy insistence upon cleaning things up, eternally fighting mosquitoes and flies and all, but they weren't bad people — once you understood them. They didn't bother the Spaniards in the Islands and let them keep their lands and businesses. The Catholic Church was unmolested; Rome recognized the new situation and sent out an American Archbishop. The Americans were strong for education and were forever building schools — even universities. The Filipinos liked this and crowded the schools as fast as they were built. The Government at Washington instituted free trade, which meant that the Philippines could sell sugar, coconut oil, copra, lumber and a myriad of other agricultural products to the United States without paying any duty. This made it possible for the Philippines to buy radios, refrigerators, automobiles, etc., from the United States. The Islands were prosperous and, although the new paved streets which began to appear in Manila to accommodate the new automobiles were hard on the feet of the little carromata ponies, were they, after all, so much worse than the cobblestones of "Intramuros"?

Manila, which dominates the Philippines to a far greater extent than even Paris dominates France, waxed fat and wealthy. The First World War bothered her not at all; shipping and insurance rates went up, but so did sugar, to fantastic heights. Some German residents were rounded up and sent to Baguio — the summer resort of the Philippines — for the duration of the war. The post-war depression was scarcely felt, nor was the great depression, which began in 1931 in the United States. In fact, during the years of greatest depression — 1933 to 1936 — Manila witnessed a stock market boom of no mean proportions. There were, for a time, no less than three stock exchanges and the value of shares traded frequently exceeded the New York Stock Exchange total.
Times got a bit hard after that, but never really bad. America, which had always said the Philippines would be granted independence some day, finally, in the Tydings-McDuffie Act, definitely promised independence on July 4, 1946. A Constitution was adopted and the Commonwealth Government came into being in the meantime, with Manuel L. Quezon as President. This was only fitting. Quezon had dominated the political scene in the Philippines ever since 1916, with one issue—Independence. A political record which is likely to stand for all time.

Manila remained complacent through all of the great events which were shaking the rest of the world. Secure in the protection of the United States, she observed with detachment, Japan, her neighbor, turn into a rapacious aggressor nation, devour Manchuria and ferociously attack China. She clucked sympathetically at the tales that refugees from Shanghai had to tell when Japan bombarded that city in 1937. She disapproved, on the whole, of Hitler—was sorry for Poland and France—and was hopeful that England would be able to stop an invasion. She realized, vaguely, that all was not well between the United States and Japan. It was disquieting when Japan joined the Axis nations in the Anti-Comintern Pact, but she felt sure that no real trouble would develop and that, if war did come in the Pacific, the United States would make short work of Japan. Residents assured one another that Japan would never dare to go to war against the United States, which would inevitably also involve her in war with England, Australia and the Dutch West Indies, as well as China. Were not conversations going on in Washington between Secretary Hull and Admiral Nomura, Japan's special envoy to the United States, thus proving that Japan did not want war? It would all blow over. Nothing ever happened to Manila. Nothing ever had.

That was why it seemed so unreal when early risers on Monday morning, December 8th, 1941, turned on their radios and heard in place of the usual morning calisthenics program, excited announcers impart the news that Japan had attacked Pearl Harbor without warning. It couldn't be true! Japan wouldn't dare! But the newspapers confirmed the awful fact, quoting President Quezon, in Baguio: "The zero hour is here," and Lieutenant-General Douglas MacArthur: "The Army has been alerted and all populations are in readiness for defense."

As in a dream, the citizenry hurried down to the Escolta. Troops in uniform were in evidence everywhere, picking up Japanese nationals and carting them off to Internment centers. Rumors flew in mid-morning that Clarks Field in the Northern Province of Pampanga, had been bombed; that Baguio had been bombed; and the flying field at Iba, Province of Zambales! Damage at Pearl Harbor was not announced, but it was admitted that it was extensive. The Japanese were claiming that the American fleet had been virtually annihilated.

Events moved from then on with bewildering rapidity. Camp John Hay in Baguio had indeed been bombed, as had the Iba Field and Clarks Field. That night, Nichols Field, in Paranaque, a suburb of Manila, was heavily bombed. This last raid was well planned in advance; ground flares went up all around the field, directing the raiders to their objective. This evidence of fifth-column activity startled the citizenry more than the raid itself. As one witness expressed it, "There were so many flares going up that it looked like a Fourth of July celebration." In a short while, the people were to learn that with these raids on the airfields, the Japanese had practically wiped out our air force. Most of it had been destroyed on the ground at Clarks Field.
The Japanese were not long in following up the advantage they had gained from the destruction of the defending air force. Transports landed troops almost simultaneously at Paracale, in the Province of Camarines Norte to the south of Manila, and at Aparri, on the northern tip of Luzon; at Vigan, also to the north in the Province of Ilocos Sur. There was also a small landing on the coast of the Province of Tayabas on the east and a small "feeler" landing at Lingayen Bay to the northwest of Manila. Tanks were dispatched toward Vigan, but were hastily withdrawn when a new landing in force (about eighty transports were involved) was made at Lingayen, thus flanking the tanks.

MacArthur's defending forces were a heterogeneous aggregation of American and Filipino troops, most of the latter in various stages of training. There were finally mobilized about seventy thousand Philippine Army troops, including the first Philippine Regular Army Division and ten partially mobilized Divisions. These Divisions had been modeled after the American Army's new "Streamlined Divisions," with two regiments of artillery and one regiment of field artillery, plus an Engineer Battalion, Medical Battalion, etc. It had been contemplated that each Division would eventually number about eight thousand men. They were divided into the Northern Luzon Forces under General Wainwright; the Southern Luzon Forces under General Parker; and the Visayan-Mindanao Forces under Colonel — later Brigadier General — Sharp. The best Filipino troops were the two regiments of Philippine Scouts, the 45th Infantry and the 57th Infantry, mobilized up to 1,200 each. These troops had long been trained and officered by American regular Army officers and were the equal of any in the world. The Scouts also included the 43rd Infantry, part of whom were located at Camp John Hay in Baguio and part at the Pettit Barracks at Zamboanga, in Mindanao. The Scouts also included some Coast Artillery troops on the fortress of Corregidor, at the entrance to Manila Bay.

The American troops numbered about twenty thousand in all and included the 31st Infantry (never mobilized to full strength), two battalions of light tanks — the 194th and 192nd, the 26th cavalry regiment, the 24th, 86th and 23rd Field Artillery and the Harbor Defenses of Manila and Subic Bay Commands. The Far Eastern Air Force consisted of about 35 B-17 heavy bombers of the 19th Bombardment Group and 150 pursuit ships of the 5th Interceptor Command, under General George. The Interceptor Command consisted of the 3rd, 17th, 21st, 34th, and 70th Pursuit Squadrons. Nearly all of these planes, with the exception of the 3rd Pursuit Squadron, were based at Clarks Field. General Bereton commanded the Air Force. Other American forces were four regiments of Coast Artillery and a battalion of Self-Propelled Mounts, mostly "half-tracks," carrying 75s.

About half of the bombers were destroyed in the raid on Clarks Field on that fateful first day of war and the remainder went to Del Monte, in Mindanao, and operated from there. All but a handful of the pursuit ships were destroyed on the ground in the raids on Clarks, Iba and Nichols Fields. With no air force and with apparently no prospect of aid from the United States, MacArthur's hastily mobilized troops withdrew into Bataan Peninsula as speedily as possible, conducting only delaying rearguard action against the enemy. The stand of the Filipino-American troops on Bataan has made history and needs no repeating here.

Meanwhile, during the withdrawal, Manila was really "taking it on the chin." Enemy planes, with undisputed control of the air, had a field day. Raids became practically constant. The population, already unnerved, was driven almost frantic by the air raid alarm system, manned by the Boy Scouts. These youngsters turned on the
sirens whenever the fancy seized them, regardless of whether or not enemy planes were in the air, and generally forgot to sound the "all clear." The boys were finally relieved by soldiers, after a haggard populace had endured several days of this. There were no bomb shelters and no subways. Nichols Field was raided time and again, with many of the bombs falling in Paranaque, particularly in the little “barrio” of Baclaran, adjacent to the field. The slaughter in this area was frightful and would have been much worse had it not been for the fact that the Red Cross had wisely evacuated a large proportion of the inhabitants immediately after the war broke out. The Santa Mesa district came in for its share of punishment when the bombers sought out the fuel tanks of the large oil companies.

While it must be admitted that the Japanese planes confined themselves on the whole to military objectives in their bombing, it was, nevertheless, very unnerving to the Filipinos to witness raid after raid with no opposition from American planes. “Where are our planes?” was the question heard on every hand. Could it be that the great United States of America was helpless in the face of all this? Even when the Japanese raiders missed their targets on the Pasig River and, instead of hitting vessels moored there, planted their bombs on the Intendencia building and the Santa Domingo Church in the Walled City, nothing happened except that the newspapers quoted expressions of sympathy and indignation from various assorted American politicians. The USAFFE communiqués did not afford any comfort and precious little information. President Roosevelt’s message to the effect that “Your Independence will be redeemed” was particularly disquieting. Redeemed? You redeem something that has been lost. Surely the President did not mean that the Japanese would succeed; would overrun the Islands! Or did he?

In the midst of it all, President Quezon left Manila for an undisclosed place, which everyone knew must be Corregidor. He took with him only three members of his Cabinet and left his Secretary, Jorge Vargas, behind at Malacanan, in charge of the Commonwealth Government. The American High Commissioner, Francis B. Sayre, also left, taking practically his entire staff with him. Dr. Claude Buss was left in charge of matters. Finally came the terse announcement from MacArthur’s headquarters that Manila had been declared an open city. What on earth did that mean? What was an “open city?” Open to what? The dread suspicion grew to a certainty that Manila would not be defended — that the Japanese were coming in.
Chapter 2

CANACAO HOSPITAL

The Navy doctors, nurses, pharmacist's mates and patients found by the Japanese at Santa Scholastica College were, nearly all of them, from the United States Naval Hospital at Canacao, Cavite, on the shore of Manila Bay, through the pages of history for the story of the founding and growth of the Canacao Hospital: one of the most interesting and romantic episodes in the history of the Naval Medical Service.

Canacao Hospital is, of course, but a part of the medical activities of the United States Navy in the Philippines. The beginning of these activities was on May 1, 1898, when Dewey vanquished the Spanish fleet under Admiral Cervera. The Spaniards had maintained an arsenal at Cavite, and other military and naval installations in the Cavite-Sangley Point area. There was a small hospital located on Sangley Point. A Catholic Sisters of Charity organization administered this hospital, which was used jointly by the Spanish Army and Navy.

As nearly as can be determined from the records available, the hospital had been located on Sangley Point since about the middle of the 19th Century. It consisted of a ward for European patients, a Sisters' Home, a ward for native patients, storerooms, a Sala de Recreacion (recreation hall), a small barracks for a guard detachment, several service buildings, a “pest house,” a paying office and officers' quarters. The Americans found about four hundred Spanish patients in the hospital and these, together with the attendants and eight of the Sisters, were taken to Manila.

From an American standpoint, the facilities of the old hospital were entirely inadequate. The buildings were old and dilapidated and, more serious; the water supply was almost non-existent. The only source of water was an old cistern or tanque, of a type wherever Spain has left her imprint. (Illustration). Rainwater falling on the roofs of the hospital buildings were conveyed to this tanque by a complicated system of aqueducts and there stored. During the hot, dry months of the year (March through July), the water supply in the tanque was replenished from water towed by barges from Manila. As a breeding place for mosquitoes, this unscreened abri must have had few peers. The venerable old cistern is also said to have fulfilled another function: At the time of the Carlist revolt in Spain in the 1870's – which had its repercussions in the Philippines and other Spanish colonies – many insurrectos were confined at Canacao. It is related that great numbers of them were executed standing with their backs to the wall of the cistern and this legend is borne out by the many holes in the adobe stone of the wall, incontrovertibly made by the soft leaden musket balls of the period. The old relic witnessed many other scenes of death during the revolt of the Filipinos against Spain in 1896. Many Filipino patriotas were confined here, given a “trial” in the house of the Commandants and promptly backed up against the tanque wall and shot.

The venerable old cistern ceased to serve as such soon after the American occupation in 1898. The Americans dug an artesian well, which afforded a good supply of fresh water. The tanque thereafter did duty as a morgue, and later as a storehouse for heavy equipment, garden tools, etc.
The Navy Medical Department commenced activities in the Cavite area immediately after the occupation of Manila and for this purpose a small hospital, or more properly, a Dispensary, was set up in one of the old Spanish structures. This Dispensary was moved from time to time and enlarged as the occasion arose. The Medical Department underwent a crisis when, early in the year 1902, an epidemic of cholera broke out in Manila. The epidemic spread rapidly to the nearby provinces and raged virtually unchecked for many months. Special warnings were issued to all Army and Navy commands and the most strenuous efforts made to protect Service personnel. In addition, the Dispensary lent freely of its facilities to civilians in the little barrios around Cavite during this trying period, advising with the local health authorities and treating patients as far as the limited facilities of the Dispensary would permit.

The Philippines was not a very healthy place in those years. According to the report of the Surgeon General for the United States Army for the year 1902 (the year of the big epidemic), there were 128,000 cases of cholera, with 81,500 fatalities among the native population. By the middle of May, 4,215 cases, with 3,322 deaths, had been reported among Service personnel. The annual death toll from other (and preventable) diseases was: smallpox, 4,000; leprosy, 1,200; malaria, 25,000; tuberculosis, 40,000. We are not here interested in the details of the dramatic and successful fight against disease which was waged by enthusiastic and unselfish doctors of the American Public Health Services, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Philippine Public Health Service, and others during the next few years. Suffice it to say that the Navy cooperated with the Army and civilian health organizations so successfully that it was not very long before the Philippines was regarded as the healthiest spot in the Far East.

In 1905, the old hospital was modernized, equipped and formally placed in commission as a United States Naval Hospital. The Naval Hospital at Yokohama, Japan, was then still in commission, but with increasing requirements of the Asiatic Fleet, more commodious quarters were required nearer at hand. The fact of the existence of a hospital in Japan, however, accounts for the long delay in establishing one in the Philippines.

The newly-commissioned hospital did not, and never has confined its activities to caring for the sick in the Service. During its early days, it afforded care for wounded Russian sailors from units of the ill-fated Russian Fleet at Manila, during the Russo-Japanese War. Soon after its opening, a native clinic was established which furnished medical service for practically all of the Filipinos in the Cavite area. The clinical service was greatly abused, however, and was finally abolished in the year 1924.

Meanwhile, in 1906, a comparatively new building in the Navy Yard on the Island of Cavite, was turned over to the Medical Department and converted into a Dispensary. Three Naval officers, three dental officers and sixteen hospital corpsmen were on duty here. The Dispensary conducted a number of varied activities. Daily "sick call" averaged over 130 patients; physical examinations were given for retired Navy, Marine and Insular Force personnel; dental service was provided for all Navy Yard personnel and visiting ships of the Fleet. In addition, the Yard medical officer acted as Quarantine Officer for the Pan American "Clipper" ships and other planes and vessels arriving and departing from Cavite, and, in conjunction with the local health authorities, acted as sanitary inspector of cabarets, cafes and marketplaces in the vicinity of the Yard.
In 1905, twenty years after the Naval Hospital was commissioned, the Navy Department authorized the construction of a new group of buildings. Work was promptly started, and completed the following year. The buildings were constructed of reinforced concrete and were fireproof throughout. The group comprised a main, or administration building, containing besides the administration offices, treatment rooms of the so-called "specialties," the Eye, Ear, Nose and Throat Clinic; X-ray; Dental Laboratory; Out-Patient Department; Electrocardiograph and Physiotherapy Departments. The surgical operating suites were located on the third floor and patients were conveyed thence by modern electric elevators. There was a Commissary and a Mess Hall, designed in conformity with the other buildings of the group. Two new wards in another building accommodated 120 patients without crowding.

Only one Spanish frame building remained, housing the urological service. There was a detached Isolation Ward and a similar Contagious Ward. The Officers' Quarters could accommodate twenty without crowding. There were separate concrete storehouses, garages and cooks' quarters, barracks for the Hospital Corpsmen, ships' service activities, a chapel, library, laundry, powerhouse, utility buildings and a morgue. In brief, the Navy built at Canacao a compact, practically self-contained hospital situated in beautifully landscaped grounds, covered with lovely shade trees, shrubs and tropical plants. Paved roads traversed the grounds (of 36 acres in extent) and the entire compound was surrounded on the land sides by a wire fence. The sea wall along lovely little Canacao Bay was lighted at night with beautiful storm lamps of native manufacture. There were nine sets of Officers' quarters and a concrete, fireproof Nurses' quarters. Total bed capacity of the hospital was 300, with expansion to 500 readily feasible. A separate Dependent Ward took care of Service dependents.

While the Naval Hospital at Canacao was far and away the most important Naval medical activity in the Philippines before the War, mention should be made of other medical activities which were, in their way, almost as important.

**U.S. Naval Dispensary, Manila:**
This activity was started purely as a matter of convenience to give medical attention for Service personnel and their dependents in Manila. There was one doctor, one pharmacist's mate, and occasionally one Navy nurse. The Dispensary was quartered in the Cuartel de Espana, historic Old Spanish fort, which was also the headquarters of the 31st Infantry. Lieutenant-Commander H.C. Brokenshire was in charge at the Manila Dispensary at the outbreak of the war. You will hear more about him later.

**U.S. Naval Medical Supply Depot, Canacao:**
This is a two-story concrete structure in back of the main, or Administration Building of the Hospital, (illustration). It was built in 1908, as a "Naval Medical Storehouse," for the Asiatic Fleet. The Depot supplied all of the medical needs of the Asiatic Fleet, with the exception of the Naval hospitals at Canacao and Guam, which carried their own supplies. Sufficient medical stores for two and one-half years' normal use was kept on hand at all times. Captain R.C. Davis, as Commanding Officer of the Hospital, was also in command of the Supply Depot, and Pharmacist Shearer was his Executive Officer, at the outbreak of the war.

The Naval Hospital and the Medical Supply Depot were by no means the only Naval activity in the Cavite-Sangley Point area. On the contrary, the hospital reservation
was surrounded on all sides by Naval installations, servicing the Asiatic Fleet. Across the road which ran along the rear of the hospital grounds was the radio station, with its three huge towers stretching more than 600 feet into the air. Adjoining the hospital to the north was the Marine Railway, equipped with powerful winches for pulling vessels out of the water for dry-docking. Farther on to the north was the Pacific Naval Air Base. The Airfield occupied the northern tip of Sanglely Point, the runway extending down to a point almost directly in back of the hospital reservation. To the southeast was located the Pan-American Airways base — home of the graceful clipper ships.

Across Canacao Bay on the small island of Cavite was the Navy Yard, adjoining the town of Cavite. Within the confines of the Yard were all of those installations which would be necessary for maintenance of the Fleet. On the eastern, or Cavite Bay side of the Island, were located the Receiving Ship, Paying Office, repair shops and other facilities for repair of destroyers and submarines, and another marine railway. The ammunition depot was on the Canacao Bay side. In the center of the Yard was located the beautiful old Commandancia, official residence of the commanding officer of the Yard, Rear Admiral J.C. Rockwell. Other installations included the Naval Dispensary (referred to above), the Commissary, Prison, baseball diamond, etc.

All in all, the Naval Hospital was in the center of about the heaviest concentration of military installations that could be imagined. The entire area was a legitimate military objective. This fact was, of course, apparent to the Naval authorities. They knew very well after news of the bombing of Pearl Harbor, that Sanglely Point and the Navy Yard might be raided at any moment. The decision was made at once to evacuate the Hospital. This step, as events proved, not only saved many lives among patients and personnel of the Hospital, but also, by clearing the hospital, all of its facilities were made available for the treatment of bomb victims from the Navy Yard and the adjoining barrios.

On that first day of the war, while Japanese bombers were wreaking havoc at Baguio, and at Iba and Clark Fields, plans were formulated for the tremendous task of moving the Canacao Hospital to Manila. The problem which confronted the staff was not simply that of evacuating the area; it was also necessary to devise some means of promptly and safely moving the very sick patients who could not be discharged, and to move all hospital equipment that was not needed on that spot — in other words, to set up shop in a new location. Remember, the Canacao Naval Hospital was far and away the most important Naval medical activity in the Western Pacific. Fully staffed and equipped for its mission — that of caring for the medical needs of the Asiatic Fleet — medical supplies were on hand for more than two years' normal consumption. All of this had to be made ready, transported to Manila, and there set up again as a going concern, prepared to meet the enormously increased demands of the war. This had to be done with the greatest possible speed, in the midst of all the confusion of war. The people of Canacao faced a real test.

There were 255 patients at the hospital. Naturally, their welfare was the first consideration. Sixty-two of these patients were considered physically qualified for duty and were discharged to their respective organizations. Besides these 62 well patients, there were a number of people undergoing treatment who were not active Service members: veterans of the Spanish-American War, World War I veterans, etc. These so-called "supernumerary" patients, it was decided, would be transferred to the care of the Veterans' Administration in Manila, or discharged where their conditions warranted. A few tubercular cases were sent to the Commonwealth Government's new Quezon
Institute. When all of these discharges and transfers were accomplished, 147 patients remained who had to be somehow transported to Manila.

In the midst of the feverish preparations for evacuating the Hospital, the air-raid siren wailed its grim note of warning. Enemy planes were in the vicinity! It was the first of many such alarms which the Cacacao people were to hear in the weeks ahead. Although there was but one bomb shelter on all of Sangley Point (1) and everybody knew it, they, one and all, from the Commanding Officer down to the newest Hospital apprentice, went about their duties calmly, efficiently and conducted themselves in every way like the seasoned veterans they were to become. The enemy bombers were after another objective this time: they did not drop any bombs in the vicinity of Cavite. During the day, too, gas masks were issued to all members of the staff and all patients and instructions given in their use. Blackout conditions were put into effect, so night preparations for evacuating the Hospital had to be carried on under this additional handicap. Work went on, however, for most of the night and as the exhausted staff dropped into their bunks toward morning for a few hours' rest, they found it hard to believe that only the night before they had gone to bed in a peaceful world.
Chapter 3

BAPTISM OF FIRE

Tuesday, December 9, 1941, was a day of feverish activity. The most vital task was, of course, the evacuation of the patients to Manila, and all hands concentrated on this job. It was hastily arranged with the Army authorities that the 147 patients who were not in condition to be discharged, would be accommodated for the time being in the Sternberg General Hospital – the Army general hospital in Manila. The patients were transferred within a few hours. They went by every available means of transportation – ambulance, truck, private cars, and by the “Mary Ann,” pleasure yacht formerly belonging to Jan Hendrick Marsman, Philippine mining magnate. There was no particular order in their going: the command was “get the patients out,” and get them out, they did. Three times during that hectic day, the siren wailed out its warning, but again the Cavite-Sangley Point area was spared. The evacuation of the patients was carried out without mishap and, as it turned out, none too soon.

The following day began ominously. The Hospital Log records two air raid sirens, one at 1:23 a.m. and the other at 2:45 a.m., but neither of these was aimed at Canacao. Things were quiet then until noon. At 12:35 p.m., while those of the staff who could do so were hurriedly consuming sandwiches and coffee, the siren again sounded. Still no planes were in sight. Another false alarm? It looked like it. “Here. Gimme a sandwich. I’m in a hurry.” But, no! No false alarm this time. “Good God!” Someone cried, “Here they come!”

There were three squadrons of planes that came winging in from the north. Twenty-seven planes to a squadron – 81 in all. Flying in perfect formation, at a height of about 20,000 feet, they utterly ignored the occasional bursts of anti-aircraft fire exploding 5,000 feet below them. They came from the direction of Manila, where, as it later appeared, they had dropped a few bombs on Nichols Field.

The raiders were all bombing planes, for there was little need of any fighter protection after the Japanese successes at Clarks, Iba and Nichols Fields on the first day of the war. The planes came from Formosa. They were an awe-inspiring sight as they came along, the noon-day sun glistening on their wings.

It soon developed that these bombers knew what they were about. All three squadrons, one after the other, flew over the Navy Yard, out across Bakoor Bay and then back over the Yard, deliberately, purposefully, getting thoroughly set for what they were going to do. Then they wheeled slowly and came back over the Yard for the third time. A veritable rain of bombs came down on the helpless Navy Yard on this trip. Over Bakoor Bay again, the Japanese planes turned again and split into two groups. One group dropped more bombs on the eastern portion of the Yard and the other group did the same to the western half. On the third trip across, the two groups dropped strings of bombs outside of the Yard, in the town of Cavite. Then the raiders re-formed into one formation and came back over the Navy Yard, dropping still another load of bombs. Finally, having disposed of their bomb load, the planes winged away, heading northward out over the Bay the way they had come. The entire raid lasted about half an hour; the first bombs were dropped at about 1:10 p.m., and the clock in the Power House – hit on the third run – stopped at exactly 1:40 p.m.
During that thirty minutes, the Japanese bombers did a thorough job of destruction. The Navy Yard was completely leveled to the ground. The first wave did comparatively little damage, with many bombs landing in the water. On this first trip, the raiders got only a few barges in Bakoor Bay, and a few that were tied up in the east pier. The second run, after the planes had split into two groups, was the one that did the most damage. The Commandancia was demolished, as were all of the buildings near it. The Yard Dispensary, Power House, Laboratory Building, Ships Service Stores, etc., grouped near the Commandancia were likewise obliterated. Farther down, the Machine Shop was gutted. There was great loss of life here: the Shop had been going full blast right up to the time of the raid and the workers were all inside, not having heard the air raid siren. The north pier, Puerto del Mar, was undamaged, but the two wharves on the south side of the Yard were razed. The Torpedo Shop, Receiving Ship, Galley and Paying Office on the west or inside wharf, were demolished, as well as the Radio Shack on the east or Bayside wharf. Two submarines that had been tied up for repairs — the "Sea Lion" and the "Sea Dragon" were hit, the "Sea Lion" so badly that she had to be towed out into the Bay and scuttled. The submarine tender "Otus," tied up at the south end of the wharf was hit, but the damage was slight. Two destroyers undergoing repairs at the shops on the west wharf, the "Pillsbury" and the "Perry" were also struck, as were several barges in Bakoor Bay, many of them loaded with ammunition and supplies. Damage to the town of Cavite was almost as great: the City Hall, Courthouse, the Parochial Church, several other public buildings and an untold number of private houses, were blasted to bits.

The destruction of the Yard and of Cavite was completed by the fire, which broke out with the first bombs and raged fiercely for the rest of the afternoon and all that night. There was scarcely a building left standing — the entire area was a mass of charred ruins after the fire had gotten in its works. Smoldering fires were in evidence for weeks afterwards.

Amazing as it may seem, the raiders missed the most important targets in the Yard. These were the Ammunition Depot, located on the north side of the Yard near Puerto del Mar, and the big food storehouses adjacent to it. The hand of God must have intervened here; the Japs knew perfectly well just where everything was located in the Yard and they were certainly aiming for the Ammunition Depot. Had they hit it, not a house would have been left standing, nor a single person left alive for miles around. The concussion from the blast would have been felt in Manila.

The foresight of the Naval Hospital authorities in evacuating the patients to Manila and "clearing the decks" for air raid casualties, was clearly demonstrated on that fateful day. The injured began arriving at the hospital almost before the raid was over. They came by every available conveyance, around "Radio Road" and in small boats across Canacao Bay to the hospital pier. In this crisis, every member of the hospital staff functioned with letter-perfect efficiency. Remember, not one of the doctors, nurses or pharmacist's mates had ever been under fire before, or had ever so much as seen an air raid, yet they comported themselves in every way like seasoned veterans.

The casualties — Americans and Filipinos — were so numerous that it was completely out of the question to keep any sort of accurate records and no attempt was made to do so. The raid came at just the time of day calculated to catch the maximum number of people at the Navy Yard: most of the hundreds of civilian Filipinos workers employed in the Yard had finished their noon meal and had streamed back through the
gate from Cavite where they lived. It was estimated that at least 500 casualties were received at the hospital that afternoon. Several operating teams functioned ceaselessly, performing amputations, setting broken bones, and sewing up wounds. Captain Davis drove into town and arranged with the mayor of the barrio of Caridad (Charity) for the setting up of a temporary hospital in a schoolhouse in the town, and here most of the ambulatory cases were taken after receiving emergency treatment at the Navy hospital.

Some arrangement had to be made for the disposition of the bodies of the bomb victims who died at the hospital, either on the operating table or as a result of their wounds. A Caridad funeral parlor was turned into an emergency morgue, and all afternoon a hospital truck shuttled back and forth, bearing corpses there from the hospital. Distraught Filipinos – mostly women and children – gathered by the hundreds outside of this “morgue,” trying to fight their way inside, to view the bodies, hoping against hope that one of the corpses was not one of their loved ones. Pharmacist’s Mate Phillips was given this dreary detail. He told the author:

“It was the toughest job I ever expect to have, driving that truck to the morgue. I made, I don’t know how many trips, all afternoon and up to midnight that night. It was hell. The Filipinos were jammed around that place for blocks, trying to get in. They would see the truck coming and they would try to climb on and get a look at the bodies inside. Women and children, all crying and crazy with grief.

No, I don’t know how many bodies we carried over there” (in answer to a question). “We just filled up that truck with as many as it would hold each time. There were plenty, though. And the Filipinos were all trying to get inside for a look – wives were looking for bodies of their husbands, kids looking for their fathers and mothers. It was dark as hell – no lights allowed in the morgue on account of the blackout. Nobody could see anything, anyway. They were all lighting matches and peering at the faces of the corpses – where there were any faces. Once in a while one of them would imagine he recognized a body and there would be a hell of a wailing and screaming. All of those people are related somehow, it seems.”

The Navy hospital staff suffered its first casualties in this raid. Although Canacao and Sangley Point were not struck by any of the bombs, several of the pharmacist’s mates were in the Navy Yard at the time of the raid. Dead included O.V. Rich, PhM1/c; K.W. Olson, PhM3/c; G.R. Allen, PhM3/c; E.F. Lyons, PhM2/c; S. Ruchinsky, PhM1/c; and D.A. Laney, PhM2/c. Several others were wounded, more or less severely.

Cavite and the Navy Yard looked like some horrible scene from “The Inferno,” after the raid. The entire area was burning furiously – fire fighting efforts were out of the question – and rescue parties from the hospital demonstrated real heroism by plunging into the area to get out the bodies of the injured. Among other things, remember that it was still by no means certain that the Ammunition Depot would not explode at any moment.

Probably no one will ever know exactly how many people died on the island of Cavite that awful day. As has been mentioned, the Yard was crowded with men. It was the middle of the day and all activities were going at full blast, readying the Yard and vessels of the Fleet for war. However, it is known that 300 bodies were buried in the Yard alone on December 12th, two days after the raid, and that these were only the merest fraction of the total dead. The burial parties did not touch any of the bodies that
had been burned, nor did they, in fact, even enter any of the blackened ruins of the buildings themselves. It is probably safe to say that at least three thousand people were killed in the Navy Yard.* The Mayor of Cavite estimated that upwards of four hundred civilians were killed in the town of Cavite itself. There is little doubt that, taking into consideration the extent of the damage done, the number of people killed, the injured— who ran into the thousands—that raid was one of the worst in the history of warfare, completely dwarfing, for example, anything that the German bombers did to Coventry. There were 81 planes involved in the raid and, allowing an average of two and one-half tons of bombs per plane—which would be about right considering the type of medium bomber used and the distance traveled from Formosa—it can be estimated that about 200 bombs were dropped, most of which found their mark. Admiral Hart, Commander in Chief of the Asiatic Fleet (who spent the raid in a ditch in front of the Commandancia) summarized the raid in a masterpiece of understatement, which was quoted in the Manila newspapers the following morning: "I want to say this about the Japanese bombs," he said: "They work."

A burial party composed of a squad of Marines, a number of Filipinos and three pharmacist’s mates (R.W. Kentner, PhM1/c; D.A. McLendon, PhM2/c; and R.C. Koehler, PhM1/c; under Lt. Commander Strong and Lieutenant G.T. Ferguson (MC) went into the Navy Yard on December 12th to bury the dead. It was a gruesome assignment. Bodies were far too numerous to bury and it was decided that only those bodies which had not been burned (they were comparatively few) would be interred. The burial party split into two groups and combed the entire area, picking up bodies as they went. The intention had been to load the bodies into a truck and convey them to emergency morgues, but it immediately became apparent that this was not feasible. There were so many bodies in such an advanced state of decomposition that the only practical thing was to bury them right there in the Yard. At least 300 bodies were buried that day, in bomb craters and in ditches. Most of the corpses were mangled and unrecognizable and very few of them had any marks or means of identification on them. In fact, most of the bodies were naked, their clothes having been either burned or blown off by the concussion of the exploding bombs. Seventy-five bodies were buried in a bomb crater in front of the Commandancia, 122 were interred in a long ditch at the rear of the same building, and about 45 more were buried where they had fallen, up against the stone wall between the Dental Clinic and Ships’ Stores Building No. 2. No attempt was made to bury the hundreds of charred skeletons lying about in the streets and in the burned buildings. Bits of arms and legs, and assorted parts of bodies were gathered up in a little hand cart and interred. All in all, it was about the most unpleasant detail that could be imagined.

The Naval hospital staff worked, too, all of that afternoon and throughout most of the night. After the immediate and urgent tasks of caring for the injured and disposing of the dead, there was the problem of evacuating the new patients from the bombing to Manila. For no one knew when another air raid would come. Lieutenant Commander H.C. Brokenshire entered the picture at this point. He was on duty at the Naval Dispensary at the Cuartel de Espana in Manila and was ordered to Canacao after the bombing by Fleet Surgeon K.E. Lowman. Arrived at Canacao, Dr. Brokenshire took charge of getting the patients to Manila on the yacht "Mary Ann," (Ensign Newall commanding). The first load left the Canacao pier at 7:00 p.m. that night. The little yacht was crowded to the gunwales, with patients lying about on mattresses all over the decks and even on the canvas canopy above. Several Service dead were on board, bound for the U.S. Army morgue in Manila. Army ambulances met the ship at Manila and took the patients to Sternberg hospital, the bodies to the morgue. Dr. Brokenshire
then went back for another trip, arriving back at Manila at dawn. A third trip was made the evening of the following day — December 11th — with the most seriously injured patients from the raid: Three pharmacist’s mates, R.G. Ware, R.H. Mayberry and McBain, did particularly fine work on this trying job and were afterwards commended by Captain Lowman in a letter to the Bureau of Navigation.

So the Canacao staff met their “baptism of fire,” two days after the start of the war. It was a pretty stiff test: the terrible raid on the Navy Yard and Cavite. A test of nerves, courage and training. The casualties from that raid were very large indeed, but it can be said that the losses in dead and the sufferings of the wounded would have been much greater than they were, had it not been for the prompt and efficient care that was provided at the hospital. The doctors, nurses and staff of the hospital, all of them met this test splendidly and brilliantly.

The presence of mind of one officer at the Navy Yard resulted in the saving of the lives of many men. This officer was Lieutenant Commander Jerry A. Steward, Assistant Public Works Officer at the Yard. Commander Steward had under his command, among other things, the Yard Power Plant, which was crowded with workers — some two hundred of them. Arriving at the Plant after the air raid warning sounded, Commander Steward ordered all but a few of these laborers out of the place and into the far end of the lumber yard, where there were no buildings or other installations. The lumber yard was not hit and these laborers all escaped without a scratch. Commander Steward, who remained in the Power Plant, was severely wounded when the Plant received a number of direct hits. He received the Navy Cross with Palm for his devotion to duty.
Chapter 4

EVACUATION

With the patients safely evacuated to Manila, the next most pressing problem was the transfer of the hospital itself and the Medical Supply Depot. There was no further need for the hospital where it was: the Navy Yard had been thoroughly destroyed by the air raid and fire, and the Navy itself was completing preparations for evacuating most of its fighting ships to the south. Dr. Boone was sent over to the north end of Sangley Point with two other doctors, a dental officer and seventeen pharmacist's mates to set up a field hospital; and three pharmacist's mates were attached to anti-aircraft batteries of the Cavite Marines (see Appendix). With these transfers, the hospital had done all it could for the Navy installations on Sangley Point. Moving started after the medical personnel from the Navy Yard Dispensary — destroyed in the raid — were attached to the hospital staff. (2)

Pharmacist Turnipseed, Maintenance Officer, was given the task of superintending the equipment of the hospital, as well as the vast store of medical supplies carried there. To do this, he had at his disposal a fleet of ten trucks, which shuttled back and forth between Manila and Canacao, a distance of more than twenty miles each way. It was originally intended that the hospital would go to the Estado Mayor, a group of ancient wooden buildings near Sternberg Hospital in Manila. Some equipment was actually moved there and a Records Office installed. The location was inadequate, however, for a hospital and through the efforts of Lieutenant Commander Erickson, the Navy unit secured the use of all of a group of buildings comprising the Philippine Union College, located in Balintawak, a suburb of Manila. (3) Mr. Turnipseed directed his trucks out there and, meanwhile, took charge of preparing the place to receive the hospital. During the next two weeks, pharmacist's mates worked like mad at the College, installing screens, a septic tank, sewer lines, basins and toilet bowls, and a thousand and one other things, besides moving and installing the hospital equipment from Canacao and bringing the patients over from Sternberg Hospital. A local contractor dug an artesian well to a depth of 385 feet.

During all of this time, Pharmacist Shearer was shouldering the task of moving the Medical Supply Depot. It was a gigantic task. Every Naval medical activity in the 16th Naval District, from Chingwangtiao to Manila, including ships of the Asiatic Fleet was serviced from this Depot, which by regulation was permitted to carry and did carry up to two and a half years' supply of medical stores. On the day that war broke out, Shearer and his men loaded a barge with a complete battalion field medical outfit and eight tons of accessory materials, together with about a fourth of the supplies in the Depot. Chief Pharmacist's Mate Henson took this barge to Manila, where he unloaded half of the load and then took it on to Mariveles, at the tip of the Bataan peninsula, where he disposed of the remainder. Henson was caught in an air raid on Mariveles while the unloading was going on. He caught a truck back to Canacao, arriving back there at about midnight.

On the morning following the big raid, Captain Davis instructed Mr. Shearer to move everything that he could before 11:00 p.m. that night and then to lock up the Depot and the Hospital and go on to Sternberg. At this time, there was no one on Sangley Point excepting Radio Electrician Earl Schweizer (whom you shall meet later at Bilibid
Prison), his crew at the radio station and the anti-aircraft batteries. Shearer loaded trucks all day and that night went to Manila and obtained permission to continue the job. “Use your own judgment,” Captain Davis told him, at the same time instructing him to get all appliances out of the hospital equipment and everything in the Depot had been sent to Manila. It had been a terrific job, with Shearer and his men working all day, every day, in constant danger from possible air raids. The men had very little rest during this time, and ate their meals out of tin cans found in the abandoned living quarters on the hospital compound. Twice during this period, Shearer and Henson had to make the trip by car to Manila for one reason or another, and each time, as luck would have it, they were caught in an air-raid on Nichols Field while passing through the barrio of Paranaque, on the Cavite-Manila road. Shearer and Henson were also caught in the raid on Canacao of December 19th.

The enormous amount of medical supplies and hospital equipment which Mr. Shearer and his men moved to Manila, were stored temporarily in a warehouse in the Port Area, from which point another battalion field outfit and the remainder of the field equipment was dispatched to Mariveles. Two of the men were caught in a big air raid on the Port Area while on this job. Then, it was decided to set up a new medical supply depot on Weoraska Street in Manila, and moving of the medical stores to the new location commenced. On December 26th, Mr. Shearer was able to report to Captain Davis that the supply depot was ready to begin issuing supplies at its new location, although hauling from the Port Area continued until the 31st. Some hospital equipment was taken out to the Philippine Union College.

Shearer and his men were just congratulating themselves on a hard job well done, when they were informed by Captain Davis that the Japanese were about to enter the City of Manila. There was nothing for it, but to abandon the new Medical Supply Depot which had just been set up and its huge stock to the enemy. About forty tons of supplies still at the Port Area were turned over to the Red Cross and the general public, and Shearer and the rest of his crew turned in to Santa Scholastica College Manila, where the hospital had moved again from the Philippine Union College.

It was, of course, a big disappointment to Mr. Shearer to be forced to abandon his precious supplies to the Japanese after he and his men had made the almost superhuman efforts just recited, to get the stuff to Manila and set up a new supply depot there. But, it was not altogether futile. As has been mentioned, a lot of field equipment was sent to Mariveles, and came in very handy indeed during the siege of Bataan and Corregidor. Also, the Red Cross got some of it, while some equipment was successfully transported to Santa Scholastica College. From the foregoing recital of events, the reader cannot fail to have been impressed with the importance in the Navy of its warrant officers. In the great crisis which suddenly confronted the Naval hospital with the outbreak of war, the warrant Pharmacists were indispensable. Mr. Turnipseed, the Maintenance Officer, was given the job of superintending the removal of the hospital to Manila, then of preparing the Philippine Union College for occupancy by the hospital and, finally, of moving the whole thing once more to Santa Scholastica College. Mr. Condon, the Personnel Officer, saw to the transfer of the hospital records (many of them of the most vital nature – some dating back to Spanish times) and, under the direction of the Executive Officer, he handled the innumerable details incident to placing men about where they were needed. Mr. Shearer, for his part, had the task of transporting the
medical supplies of the Fleet to Manila and setting up shop there. There were all tasks of the most vital nature, and Captain Davis felt no hesitation whatever in turning these over to his pharmacists. He knew that they would do a good job.
Chapter 5

LAST DAYS

With the evacuation of the hospital at Canacao, the Navy medical unit wrote finis to the mission that, up to the outbreak of war had been its raison d'etre: the servicing of the medical needs of the Asiatic Fleet, and automatically began a new mission. This had long been planned; it was one of the details of the war plans of the Army and Navy High Command. It was anticipated that Cavite would be untenable in the event of war, exposed as it was to air raids, and that the Navy Yard and Canacao would be abandoned and with them, the Naval Hospital. Manila would be the center of all medical activities. Here would be established the great hospitals where the injured from the battlefields would be taken, after receiving emergency treatment at first aid stations and field hospitals behind the lines. In accordance with this plan, the Army medical authorities established in Manila what was known as the Medical Center, under the command of Colonel Percy J. Carroll (Medical Corps).

The Medical Center immediately set about to take over various public and private buildings in Manila, and to convert them into hospitals. Thus, the College of the Holy Ghost, Santa Scholastica College, Philippine Women's College and Philippine Normal School were all taken over and made into "annexes" of the old Army General Hospital – Sternberg. The Jai Alai Building – a new and ornate structure dedicated to the ancient Basque game of "jai alai" or pelota – was also commandeered and eventually designated as the Receiving Hospital and as headquarters for the Medical Center. Outlying hospitals – the one at Fort McKinley and the one at Fort Stotsenberg in the north – were virtually abandoned, except for the minimum equipment and personnel which they would require to function as emergency field hospitals, and their patients shipped to Manila. Meanwhile, the Medical Center rushed preparations to equip itself out of Army medical equipment, which had been stored in Manila for just this emergency, to take care of six thousand bed patients at a time.

Arriving at Manila, the Canacao personnel immediately took its place in the organization and came under the jurisdiction of the Medical Center. As we saw in the last chapter, the patients from Canacao were first taken to Sternberg Hospital. Then the Navy was directed to the Estado Mayor, former Army Infantry barracks which had been hastily converted into a hospital. This place was not suited to the needs of the situation, however. It was crowded – at one time there were 800 patients there – and not too well equipped. Furthermore, it was desirable for the Canacao unit to retain its identity, take care of its own patients, maintain its own records, etc. So, after a day or two, the Navy unit moved out to the Philippine Union College. Commander Jones remained at the Estado Mayor, where a small records office had been set up. Thereafter, whenever the Army authorities wanted any Navy doctors, nurses or pharmacist's mates; they routed their requests through Commander Jones.

Under the new system, Navy medical personnel were dispatched to several of the "annexes" throughout the city. The most important of these was the Jai Alai and there on December 13th, went Commander T.H. Hayes, taking with him two doctors and one dentist. Three nurses, Misses Pitcher, Still and Todd, followed in a few days and several pharmacist's mates were detailed there at various times during the next two weeks. The Executive Officer at Jai Alai in the beginning was Captain Keltz (MC), U.S.
Army; and later Lieutenant Colonel Schwartz. After a few days, Colonel Carroll moved his headquarters there from Stemberg Hospital. The Jai Alai building consisted of three floors built around the central playing court, containing restaurants, bars, a night club, betting windows and assorted paraphernalia. A beautiful building, air conditioned, it was not exactly a conventional site for a hospital, but was chosen for its central location. Besides the Navy, considerable Army medical personnel were on duty there. One ward was set up in the big playing court and in various rooms on the first floor were located the Receiving Room, X-ray and Operating Rooms and Dental Clinic. The doctors, nurses and staff had their meals in the gorgeous “Rainbow Room” on the third floor and everybody except the nurses (who were quartered in the Spanish Club across the street) slept in the “Bamboo Room” on the floor below. It was a very good set-up, but few patients were ever sent there.

Lieutenant Commander C.M. Smith went to Santa Scholastica College, and was joined there three days later by Nurse Ann Bernatidis. Lieutenant Commander C.L. Welsh took two Navy dentists, two nurses and four pharmacist’s mates to Holy Ghost. Other Navy personnel were located at the Army Morgue, at Stemberg General Hospital; the Records Section at the Enlisted Men’s Club; the Marine Detachment at Novalleta, near Cavite; at the Radio Station, anti-aircraft batteries and the Field Hospital at Canacao; and at the Cuartel de Espana (”Headquarters of Spain”) in Manila; as well as at the new Naval Hospital at the Philippine Union College.

There followed a period of quiet, which lasted until December 27th, two days after General MacArthur had declared Manila to be an open city. On that day, occurred the worst air raid on Manila. Japanese planes, possibly in an effort to hit ships and barges that were tied up in the Pasig River nearby, bombed public buildings and parks near both shores of the river. The raid lasted for three hours: the Japanese having no anti-aircraft fire to fear, since the defenders lived up to the open city declaration. On the north side of the river, The San Fernando railroad station was demolished by a direct hit. Over on the south side, in the Walled City, the Itendencia (Treasury) Building was heavily bombed and the area surrounding it. Many panic-stricken Filipinos rushed ashore from the ships and barges in the river, and took cover in a long open park on Magallanes Drive (Illustration). Many bombs fell here and the carnage was frightful. Several Catholic buildings were heavily bombed, with severe loss of life, including the old Santo Tomas University Building, the Santo Domingo Church and Convent, the Santa Rosa College and the Santa Catalina College.

There was a short lull in the raid after which seemed an interminable time and Filipinos poured out of the stricken area by the thousands, terror in their eyes. They streamed past the Cuartel. Seeing them go by, Dr. Brokenshire determined to go down and see what he could do. It was a never-to-be-forgotten experience. Upon arriving at the Santo Domingo Church, on Calle Solana, he found it blazing fiercely. There was a large bomb crater in the front yard. All who had the ability to do so had left the place, but in the courtyard was a Filipino, in a dying condition from multiple chest wounds. Inside the Church lay a dead Chinese man – the Christian temple of worship where he had sought protection had been a poor shelter. Near him was a Filipino with a broken arm. This fellow gave a little trouble: Dr. Brokenshire, lacking a splint, took the man’s bolo out of its wooden scabbard and used it to set the arm. Although suffering from pain and shock, the Filipino paid no attention to his arm, but protested vigorously when Dr. Brokenshire took his bolo. Apparently he believed that the American doctor was going to appropriate the weapon.
The Filipino’s arm had scarcely been attended to when the air raid alarm sounded again. War planes! They were back for another go. Dr. Brokenshire, for some reason he could not explain (for, after all, one place was as good - or as bad - as another) sprinted across the street to the Santa Rosa College. It was a heavy raid, with demolition and incendiary bombs falling all over the area. One bomb fell in the courtyard of the Santo Domingo Church, which Dr. Brokenshire had just left. When this second raid was over, the doctor made his way through the debris to the Intendencia Building. Here the carnage was particularly frightful. Many Filipinos had taken shelter in the old concrete structure and in the streets nearby. The whole area was a horrible conglomeration of burning and twisted automobiles, carromatas (horse-drawn vehicles), paving stones torn up from the streets, building blocks, concrete, glass and assorted debris, wounded, screaming horses - and dead bodies. The dead and dying were all around in various grotesque attitudes. A peculiar thing - many of the dead had no marks on them at all; no wounds. They had been killed by the concussion from exploding bombs.

Dr. Brokenshire was one of the first doctors on the scene and he worked feverishly, patching up the wounded as best as he could, improvising tourniquets and splints for broken bones. Within a very short period, however, ambulances were swarming over the stricken area and many private citizens in risk of their lives (for no one could be sure that the planes would not be back for a third time), had driven into the area in their cars and were carting the dead and injured away. After a trip back to the Dispensary for a change of clothes - he was covered in blood from head to foot - Dr. Brokenshire took Glick and went back to the bombed area, where fires were raging fiercely. The fire department, out in full force, had to confine its efforts to preventing the spread of the blaze. The ancient Walled City of Manila, surrounded by a high, thick stone wall and composed of venerable stone and wood buildings crowded along narrow alleyways, was ready to go up like a tinderbox if the fire ever got out of control. Fortunately, the walls effectively blocked off any wind that might be blowing and there was little danger that sparks would start new fires.

That night, Captain Davis ordered Dr. Brokenshire to move the Dispensary to the Manila Yacht Club on the Manila Bay shore. The old Cuartel was by then almost deserted: the Army had gone to the field. At the Yacht Club, there was little to do except to watch Army personnel and civilians come, pile into the small boats and yachts in the Club anchorage and push off for Corregidor, the island fortress at the entrance to Manila Bay. Finally an Army officer came and announced that all members of the Club would either have to go to Corregidor in their boats, or destroy them. A particularly melancholy incident: employees of a local hotel came with the entire stock of liquor of the hotel and destroyed the same, bottle by bottle, smashing the bottles against the rocks that formed the anchorage. (“I'll admit that I salvaged a bottle or two for myself,” said Dr. Brokenshire). Witnesses of this drastic action were finally convinced that the Japanese were really coming into Manila. A few days later, Dr. Brokenshire and his men turned into Santa Scholastica College.

By December 26th, the medical personnel that would be needed on Bataan and Corregidor had left Manila. The Army Medical Center had evacuated the hospitals at Holy Ghost College and Santa Scholastica College, along with all of the others and the Canacao Hospital Unit out at Philippine Union College was given its choice of these locations. It was decided to transfer the unit to Santa Scholastica. It was understood
that the Japanese forces coming up from the south would occupy Manila within a few days, and attention was concentrated on gathering up all patients in the city for which the Navy was responsible. Manila hospitals were canvassed, and all Navy and Marine patients transferred to Santa Scholastica. Meanwhile, all patients who could be considered fit for duty were sent to the Navy Records Station. On the last day of December, all of the Army patients remaining under Navy care were sent out of Manila on the “Marshal Joffre,” a hospital ship, which successfully made its way to Australia. This exodus (66 Army patients) reduced the patient load of 163.

The last days before the occupation of the city were devoted to last-minute preparations. Doctors, nurses and pharmacist's mates reported in to Santa Scholastica from their assignments about Manila. Supplies were gathered up. Finally, as the New Year dawned, everything had been done that could be done. All personnel were restricted to the Santa Scholastica grounds. At 5:00 p.m., the advance guard of Japanese troops entered the city from the south. The next morning, the main forces marched in.

The foregoing brief recital of events cannot begin to convey the full picture of what the officers and men of the Naval Hospital at Canacao, accomplished during that three weeks from the time that war broke out on December 8, 1941, until the occupation of Manila by the Japanese forces on January 1, 1942. It was a period of strenuous, but orderly activity. The entire unit functioned like a well-oiled machine, just as though everything had been rehearsed in advance. Faced with the necessity of transporting the entire hospital and Supply Depot to Manila, the unit, at the same time, met every duty thrust upon it – succoring the victims of the raid on Cavite and the Navy Yard, manning the first-aid station at Canacao, placing its personnel at the disposition of the Army Medical Center in Manila, setting up the Naval Hospital anew at Philippine Union College, setting up the Medical Supply Depot in Manila, transferring personnel to duty in Bataan, Olongapo and elsewhere and finally, moving the hospital again to Santa Scholastica. All of this was done under constant danger from air raids and in the midst of the terrible confusion that reigned everywhere. Their duty done, and in compliance with orders, the officers, nurses and personnel of the Canacao Hospital waited for the Japanese, prepared to “carry on.” (7)
Chapter 6

SANTA SCHOLASTICA

Santa Scholastica College on Pennsylvania Street in the Malate District of Manila, was a very exclusive school for girls, maintained by nuns of the Order of Santa Scholastica. Most of the Sisters were German. The Army medical authorities occupied the place as a hospital after the war began, using it as one of the Annexes to Stemberg General Hospital. As we saw in the last chapter, the Canacao unit took it over when the Army evacuated Manila. The College was admirably suited to the needs of a hospital and the Navy equipment and supplies, together with those that the Army left behind, made the place as completely equipped as could be desired. The 161 patients still left on the hospital register were almost as comfortable here as they would have been at Canacao.

For diversion, one could always watch the Japanese civilians in the internment center just across the street and from the third story windows, the Nippon Club, where more Japanese civilians were very orderly. One Constabulary guard sufficed at each place and even after this guard was withdrawn when the USAFFE forces left Manila, the Japanese did not attempt to escape. All they had to do was to walk out, but they remained docilely in their enclosures awaiting patiently the arrival of their own troops. They spent their time playing games for the most part, and in the ordinary routine of life. Characteristically, they divided up their work systematically, with groups of them undertaking in rotation the laundry, cooking, sanitary policing, and so on. Still more characteristically, the Japanese internees in both places started vegetable gardens. They acted, indeed, as though they were glad of a chance to rest. The Japanese businessmen, clerks, shopkeepers, bankers and what-not of Manila, never kept the office hours that their white competitors had (9:00-12:00 and 3:00-5:00), and they had had a pretty hard time of it during the year or so before the war, what with export restrictions, retaliatory tariffs and embargoes. Furthermore, these Japanese were, many of them, cultured, well-traveled people. Familiar with the United States and its tremendous production capacity and irresistible potential might, they probably found it difficult to believe that in the short space of three weeks, the Japanese forces had advanced over the length of Luzon and had driven MacArthur's troops into the narrow peninsula of Bataan.

The last days before the Japanese army marched into Manila, were utter confusion. The Armed Forces had gone; the always inadequate police force alone was left to maintain order, with the help - or rather, hindrance of - the "Civil Guard," a rump organization made up in large part of thugs who needed watching more than the harassed civilians they were supposed to keep in order. The hurried departure of President Quezon, American High Commissioner Sayre and their staffs, left nobody representative of the civil government except Dr. Claude Buss at the Commissioner's office and Jorge Vargas — later arch traitor — at Malacanan Palace. Dr. Buss was doing yeoman work organizing the American citizens' preparations to go into internment. Vargas confined himself to issuing cautious statements. Neither had time to give out very much information or to answer any questions.

The city was ablaze in many different places, both from fires started by the retreating Army (oil and gasoline storage tanks, ships at anchor in the Pasig River, etc.)
pursuant to our own "scorched earth" policy, as well as from enemy bombs. The Port Area, where were located the great warehouses to receive and distribute the commerce of the world, was thrown open to the public. "Come and get it." People streamed into the section from all over the city, looting happily, hysterically, in the wild knowledge that the Law not only permitted, but approved (policemen in uniform were looting along with everybody else). They pushed into the warehouses in a shouting, gesticulating mass, fighting to carry away anything and everything that could, by any conceivable chance, be of any value. One Filipino was seen to emerge from the area driving a small truck loaded down with: a filing cabinet; a case of electric light bulbs; two large canvas sails and a case of Haig and Haig Scotch whiskey. Another came out with a carromata load of automobile parts – hubcaps, fan belts, tires, batteries, seat covers, etc. There were probably fifty thousand people in the Port Area on January 1, 1942. They picked the place as clean as the proverbial "hound's tooth," even, toward the end, unscrewing light bulbs out of their sockets. Telephone wires were left dangling in the air as the frenzied looters tore the receivers away.

Everyone during those last days was making his own preparations as best he could for the occupation of Manila by the enemy. Those few stores which were still open for business were quickly sold out of candles, oil lamps and petroleum. The Japanese, it was agreed, would surely destroy the power system. Of course, all food stocks were long since gone from the shelves, but locks sold well and medicines, dressing materials, and so on. The approaches to the city from the north and the south were jammed with people traveling by every conceivable sort of conveyance – car, truck, carabao cart, horse-drawn carromata, and on foot – men, women and children – carrying their most precious (and portable) possessions with them, in the long, hopeless processions made familiar by Hitler's total war. Some were leaving Manila to escape the Japanese, others, who had fled earlier, were hastening back to the city for the same reason. The city streets themselves were a surging, shouting mass of humanity, conveyances and beasts of burden. It seemed as though the entire population of Manila was moving, as families "holed up" together for mutual protection and comfort.

New Year's Eve was a pretty glum business. Here and there a few people more phlegmatic – or drunker – than the rest, made a determined effort to "celebrate," but the gaiety was artificial, the music and laughter hollow. Club stewards issued all of their remaining stocks of liquor to anybody and everybody on the premises, club member or not, without charge. "Here, take it, friend. You might as well have it as the Japs." Most of the night spots were closed and boarded up, but a few people gathered at the Manila Hotel, Tom's Oriental Grill and the Metropolitan Beer Garden, and a dozen or so diehards turned up at the Army and Navy Clubs for a last round or two of drinks, but the depressing aspect of the silent, empty rooms soon drove them home.

The advance guard of the Japanese forces from the south, entered the city on the morning of January 2, 1942. A delegation of city officials met them at the city limits and, after a brief parley; the Japanese soldiers marched in. This detachment went straight to the City Hall, occupying it, the National Assembly Building nearby and all police stations. At 5:00 o'clock that evening, the main forces marched in. They came up Taft (renamed Daitoa by the Japs) Avenue, bicycle and motorcycle troops first, followed by the light tanks, then the motorized troops and, finally, thousands of foot soldiers in column – the dull, stunted, plodding mass of Japanese peasantry in uniform. The Japanese civilians at last got up enough courage to leave the confines of the internment camp across the street from Santa Scholastica College and the Nippon Club, and they
lined up on both sides of Taft Avenue to welcome the grinning soldiers. The banzais that rang out from the multitude were deafening. While the Americans watched from their windows, some of the Japanese soldiers turned off, marched into the internment center and mingled with their admiring countrymen. Beer and saki were produced for the appreciative soldiers and they swaggered around the yard, gesticulating and recounting, in soldier fashion, imaginary exploits during their entirely uneventful progress up the Island of Luzon from the town of Legaspi.

The Naval Hospital people then had probably as good an opportunity as anybody in the city of Manila, to observe the Japanese occupation. The Americans watched the goings-on nervously, each one wondering just what the Japanese were going to do about Santa Scholastica. After all, there was only the unsavory record of the Japanese Army in China to go by. Chapei, the rape of Nanking and the stripping of British citizens at Tientsin were in everybody's minds. Nor was it at all reassuring when Japanese tanks rumbled into the yard of the internment center, guns pointing toward Santa Scholastica, and the Japanese soldiers, hilarious with saki, began to polish their bayonets, laughing and gesticulating towards the Americans across the street. Nothing happened, however, except that towards sundown, four Japanese sentries appeared and quietly took up their posts outside on the sidewalk at the four corners of the school compound. No Japanese entered the college itself until the following morning, January 3rd, when three Japanese Army officers and two interpreters came in.

These Japanese were very courteous, but curious. They were impressed at the layout of the hospital and justifiably so, for as has been mentioned, Santa Scholastica College, already naturally suited to the needs of a hospital, had been converted with the aid of American Army and Navy equipment, into a very good plant indeed. On the other hand, there were relatively few (163) patients and, including medical officers, dental officers, warrant officers and pharmacist's mates, a very large (128 men) staff. The place was equipped to take care of many times that number of patients. The Japanese wanted to know what all of these people were doing here. Specifically, they asked how it happened that so much American Navy medical personnel was left behind when the Asiatic Fleet evacuated from the Philippines and the Army went to Bataan. Captain Davis gave the obvious answer: that all of the Navy's patients who were fit for duty had been discharged; that Navy medical personnel had been dispatched for duty with the American forces in the field; and that the remainder of the Cacacao and Cavite staff remained in Manila with the rest of the patients, pursuant to orders.

Beyond posting another sentry (with a machine gun) at the main gate to the College, the Japanese did nothing further to molest the hospital or its personnel for several days. Then, on January 7th, a party of Japanese officers and soldiers entered the grounds and inaugurated a systematic program of looting the place of its equipment and supplies. First to go were the radios. Then three private cars were taken. Finally, and most serious, the Japs demanded and took nearly all of the quinine on hand. All American guards were relieved and Jap soldiers took over the entire compound, giving strict orders that the Americans must remain inside of the buildings and not loiter near the walls. The Catholic Sisters' quarters were closed off and all communication with them forbidden.

Japanese interference became more marked with each passing day thereafter. There were numerous "inspections" by squads of Japanese Army and Navy personnel. All of these "inspection parties" wanted to see, first the supply of medical equipment and,
next the food stocks. They helped themselves liberally to both. Personal luggage was also carefully inspected and looted. A letter written by Captain Davis, explaining the status of the hospital personnel as non-combatants under the Geneva Convention of 1929* was received without comment, but the fact that the doctors, nurses and hospital personnel were restricted to the hospital grounds in violation of the Convention, was a good indication of what the future attitude of the Japanese was going to be. Any lingering hope that the Japanese would respect the Geneva Convention was dissipated when the looting of hospital equipment began.

The original Convention of Geneva, governing the status of medical establishments and personnel in war time, was concluded between the United States, Belgium, Denmark, Great Britain and several other nations, including Japan, in 1864. In Article 1 and 2 of that Treaty, the High Contracting Parties agree as follows:

Article 1. Ambulances and military hospitals shall be acknowledged to be neutral and as such shall be protected and respected by belligerents so long as any sick or wounded may be therein.

Article 2. Persons employed in hospitals and ambulances comprising the staff for superintendence, medical service, administration, transport of wounded, as well as chaplains, shall participate in the benefit of neutrality while so employed and so long as there remain any wounded to bring in or succor."

The additional Articles, adopted in 1868, contain the following provisions, among others:

"The persons designated in Article 2, of the Convention (sic the original Geneva Convention of 1864) shall, after the occupation by the enemy, continue to fulfill their duties according to their wants to the sick and wounded in the ambulance or the hospital which they serve."

These Additional Articles had, long before the war, acquired the force and effect of an international treaty by general acceptance. The Geneva Convention and the Additional Articles governed the belligerent nations, including Japan, during the First World War. The clear intention of the quoted provisions is that medical personnel and other persons engaged in the care of the sick and wounded shall not be treated as prisoners of war if they are captured, but as neutrals, and that they shall not be molested in the performance of their duties. To imprison the Navy hospital staff in the Santa Scholastica College compound was not to treat them as neutrals, and to confiscate their equipment and supplies, certainly constituted molestation in the performance of their duties.

Further than this, there is the Convention of Geneva of July 27, 1929, which had also acquired the force and effect of an international treaty by general acceptance and which provides, in Article 9 of Chapter III:

"Article 9: The personnel charged exclusively with the removal, transportation and treatment of the wounded and sick, as well as with the administration of sanitary formations and establishments, and the chaplains attached to armies, shall be respected and protected under all circumstances. If they fall into the hands of the enemy, they shall not be treated as prisoners
of war."

And in Article 15:

"Article 15: Buildings and material of the fixed sanitary establishments of the army shall remain subject to the laws of war, but may not be diverted from their use so long as they are necessary for the wounded and sick. However, commanders of troops engaged in operations may use them in case of urgent military necessity if, before such use, the wounded and sick treated there have been provided for."

Violation of this treaty, as well as the earlier Convention, by the Japanese was deliberate and continuous.

On January 17th, the looting program came to a climax, when the Japanese ordered that all supplies, provisions and even personal baggage be taken to the main auditorium where, presumably, the Japanese could get at it easier. At this point, the Americans, realizing that their captors were bent on taking everything, determined to outwit them if they could. There was, for example, the large stock of merchandise of the Ship's Service Store (Naval equivalent of a Post Exchange). Some of the stock had been lost through looting of the Canacao Hospital by hooligans of the Cavite District after the general evacuation, but most of it had found its way to Santa Scholastica.

A raffle was organized among all personnel, staff as well as patients. Tickets were issued every night and drawings were held; the holders of winning numbers receiving "prizes" in the form of watches, jewelry, stationery, candy and what-not from the Store. In this way, the entire stock was distributed. A retail store was also operated and the money realized from sales distributed. Each member of the staff was given twenty pesos in cash when he left the College.

The Japanese were also prevented from confiscating a large part of the food supply, and much of the staff's personnel effects. The Navy unit arrived at Santa Scholastica with about six months' supply of food, most of which had to be stored in the main auditorium, in accordance with the Japanese order. Some canned stuff was stacked around the walls of the mess hall. The Sisters were enlisted in the plans to salvage the food, which was deposited in large amounts every night on their pantry floor, which could be reached from the stairway leading from the galley to the Chinese cooks' quarters on the second floor. The Sisters, working like Trojans, would cart the cases out of the pantry and into their quarters. Then Mr. Pfeiffer, the Commissary Officer, pointing to the now empty shelves in the mess hall, would get permission from the Japs to replenish his supplies from the stack in the auditorium and these new supplies, in turn, would find their way to the Sisters by the same route. The process was continued until eventually every bit of usable food was safely stored away in the Sisters' quarters. Much personal baggage was delivered to these good ladies in the same manner and by them, kept safely until the end of the war. The Japs finally, noticing that the stuff was gone, demanded to know what had become of it, but were satisfied with the explanation that the "Inspection parties" took it all.

The flow of food was by no means all one way. Sister Amadea Bessler, the Mother Superior, learning that the hospital personnel had no fresh provisions, got busy. From time to time thereafter, Mr. Pfeiffer was able to serve such items as roast pork,
fried chicken, eggs and fresh fruit. When asked where he had gotten these things, Pfeiffer always replied that he had "found them in the dungeon." This was true. At the bottom of the small staircase just outside of the office, there was a small, dark recess which was referred to as the dungeon. Here every night, the Sisters would deposit their gifts where they would be "found" in the morning.

The Japanese do not know to this day what happened to that big stack of food. Many a Japanese sentry was thus deprived of one of the grandest opportunities he had had in a long time; for don't let anybody tell you that a Japanese doesn't like American food when he can get it. The guards spent a good part of the day in the galley; they would point out this or that intriguing-looking can or bottle and demand that it be opened and served. Canned butter was a particular favorite; they spread it on half an inch thick. Peanut butter and jam were in great demand, but to these soldiers of the lowest coolie and peasant class, nothing was half so good as canned pineapple, maraschino cherries and such-like fancy stuff. But not baked beans. There were at least fifty cases of baked beans on hand but, try as they might, the Chinese cooks could never interest the Japanese in such proletarian food.

So it went for about six weeks. Increasingly numerous and rigid restrictions, more frequent and more vandalous "inspection parties." The hospital was gradually being denuded of most of its equipment and supplies. Roll-call took place twice daily. This institution, termed Tenko, or Bango (literally, "count off" by the Japanese, was to become a very familiar thing in the months to follow. A few Filipinos (patients or former Navy employees) were taken out. It was later determined that these men were released. There was comparatively little interference with the patients. The Japanese demanded — and got — detailed information concerning the name, service rating, age, religion, next of kin, birthplace and education of all patients and staff personnel. A few men were taken out for questioning. On the whole, however, there wasn't very much activity. Everybody seemed to sense that they were just "marking time" and, though they tried hard to hide it, felt more than a little nervous about what was going to happen. This feeling of nervousness was accentuated when, on January 28th, the Japanese took thirty well patients away to an undisclosed destination.

On February 15th, it happened. Captain Davis was ordered to prepare a draft of three medical officers, one dental officer, twenty-two pharmacist's mates and sixty-two convalescent patients. The Japanese told him, blandly, that these people were to be transferred to another hospital; that it would be absolutely unnecessary to take along any equipment, medicines or food, for all of these things would be furnished at the new place. The hospital to which the men were going was "well equipped," they stated, and in view of that fact it would be pointless for the Americans to pack such items as blankets and mosquito nets. Dr. Brokenshire volunteered to head the group, and Drs. George, Lambert and Wanger (dental officer) were assigned to go with him. Several of the hospital corpsmen were volunteers. The draft left on the 23rd. On Dr. Brokenshire's advice, the Pharmacist's Mates took along their blankets, mosquito nets and such useful items as soap and toilet paper; and they also stowed away in their sea bags goodly amounts of medicines, disinfectants and dressings. The Japanese inspected the baggage, taking whatever met their fancy, but a lot of the stuff managed to get through. The men were sure to have much reason to congratulate themselves on their foresight.

A few days after this last group had departed, one of the first draft of thirty men that had been taken out on January 28th, showed up at Santa Scholastica in the custody
of two Japanese guards. This man, First Class Seaman C. E. Brethold, stated that his
group, as well as the draft under Dr. Brokenshire, had been taken, not to a "well-
equipped hospital," but to a temporary prison camp which had been set up at the Pasay
Elementary School in the suburb of Pasay, east of Manila proper. The school building, a
one-story wood and cement structure of the type seen all over the Philippines, contained
no facilities of any kind for prisoners of war, much less for a hospital, he said. It was
simply a school building, furnished only with the tiny school desks at which Filipino
moppets had learned their ABC's. The only preparation which the Japanese had made
to receive prisoners was to move he school out of the rooms and into the school yard.
There were no beds or mosquito nets, no medicine, very little water. The prisoners there
were being fed rice three times a day, with a thin vegetable "soup" at luncheon and
dinner. Sanitary facilities were practically nil, Brethold confided.

This news threw everyone into a state of gloom, which was relieved somewhat when the
nurses (12) were taken by the Japanese to the big civilian internment camp at Santo
Tomas University. (9) It was understood that thousands of American and British civilians
had been interned there and that they were being well treated. The nurses, it was felt,
would be much better off at that place. As a matter of fact, the nurses were in danger at
Santa Scholastica: a Filipino mess attendant escaped one night and the Japanese, very
indignant, announced that if there was ever another escape, the men sleeping on either
side of the escapee and the nurse in charge of the ward would be killed.

On March 23rd, Drs. Erickson and Kline, medical officers and Dr. S. W. Smith, Dental
Officer, and eleven pharmacist's mates departed for Pasay, and a few days later, Dr.
Lambert arrived from there in search of medical supplies and equipment. The hospital
was by now so denuded of everything that little could be spared. Dr. Lambert confirmed
Seaman Brethold's statement about Pasay, saying that the place was crowded with
prisoners of war who were living under the most primitive conditions. On April 24th, a
big draft of twelve officers, fifty hospital corpsmen, three mental patients and seven of
the Chinese cooks went out and on the 9th of May, nearly all of the remaining personnel,
including Captains Davis, Roberts and Lowman, departed. Prior to the departure of this
draft, the Japanese, as on previous drafts, "inspected" the baggage and looted it of
personal jewelry, watches, cigarettes, soap and sundry items. Most dismaying,
however: a Japanese Naval looting party seized all of the records and reports pertaining
to the Canacao Hospital. Some of these reports dated back to as long ago as 1899, and
most of them were irreplaceable.

The officer in charge of this particular scavenging expedition told Captain Davis
that the records would be taken to the Japanese Naval Hospital in Manila for
"safekeeping until after the war." (10) What there was left in the way of medical stores and
hospital equipment was also commandeered. One doctor, Lt. Com. Silliphant, one
Pharmacist, J.A. Pfeiffer, three Pharmacist's Mates, two Chinese cooks and eight
tuberculosis patients were left at Santa Scholastica and four days later, these patients
were sent to the Japanese Naval Hospital and the rest of the patients and personnel
taken to Pasay. Santa Scholastica was finished. (11)
Chapter 7

PASAY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

In order to tell the story of the Pasay Elementary School, it is necessary to go back to February 23, 1942, when Dr. Brokenshire and his group of three doctors, 22 pharmacist's mates and 60 patients arrived there from Santa Scholastica.

The Pasay Elementary School would not have been considered a "well-equipped hospital" by even the most utterly demented brain. It consisted of an ancient one-story wooden building of eighteen rooms, each about 15 by 25 feet in size, with the whole built in a sort of rectangular fashion around a small yard. The rooms were completely devoid of furniture; the school desks at which Filipino moppets had learned their ABC's, had been removed to one corner of the yard. The 30 patients who had left Santa Scholastica the month before, were there and, besides them and the 60 patients which the Navy men brought with them, there were about 20 prisoners confined to the place.

An open garbage pit had been dug at one end of the yard. The pit swarmed with flies, of course, and it did not smell like roses. Near this pit was a spigot, which furnished water for all of the camp. One spigot. Toilet and bathing facilities were notably lacking. There were two toilets and two urinals for the entire population. That was the entire equipment of the place. No beds, no mosquito nets, no medicine — nothing.

Nevertheless, everyone turned to. The doctors set up a dispensary in one of the rooms and began holding daily sick call on the war prisoners, dispensing what few drugs and medicines they had, while the rest of the rooms they were permitted to use were given over to wards and living quarters. Regular night and day watches were placed on all wards.

Pharmacist's mates erected a lean-to shed out of some scrap lumber about the place and made a roof for a "galley." Here, in big iron cauldrons, the lugao was boiled, three times a day. Lugao is a simple dish, simply described. It consists of rice, watered to a very thin consistency. When a Filipino hasn't got enough rice to prepare in the regular way, he just adds more water than usual and calls it lugao. You can eat an awful lot of lugao and never know that you have eaten anything at all. The Americans ate the stuff for the same reason that Filipinos do; they didn't have very much rice. The ration was three ounces of uncooked rice per man, per day. The Imperial Japanese Army apparently considered that the war prisoners were entirely too fat and should go on a reducing diet.

The microscopic rice ration was just about all there was to cook. Occasionally the Japanese brought in some dried mushrooms and dried shrimp, of an exceedingly ripe vintage. The stuff stank to high heaven, but you could eat it if you held your nose. Just before the Navy men arrived, a small goat, chancing to wander too close to the camp, furnished a much needed meat ration. The bones had been saved and were boiled to make a watery soup. Those poor bones were boiled over and over again for days. Later, at intervals of about every six weeks, the Japanese issued a regular meat "ration" — a quarter of native beef, for the entire population. On one occasion, this meat
issue was supplemented with dog meat. The Japanese guards killed two stray curs and presented them to the galley crew. They were gratefully received. Another time a pig came rooting around and found itself in one of the cooking pots, but that night some Filipino prisoners invaded the galley and made off with the pork. This catastrophe discovered, a search of the camp was instituted and a trail of pork fat was found on the floor of one of the rooms — no pig. Everybody was crestfallen over this; the edible meat stolen could not have amounted to more than two pounds, but pigs, at that time, was pigs.

Camp discipline was very rigid. Posted prominently about the place were printed signs reading as follows:

"NOTICE FOR CAPTURED MEN"

"All captured men should be thankful for the great mercy of the Emperor of Japan and to obey strictly the articles as follows:

1. Obey the orders of the Imperial Japanese Army.
2. Never try to escape from this place.
3. Be gentle and work hard.
4. Never dispute with each other.
5. Never rob anything from others.

(Signed) Headmaster, Pasay Accommodating Place."

In the center of the yard was a flagpole, from which the Stars and Stripes had been hauled down and the Rising Sun substituted. Each morning and evening, all hands were forced to line up facing this flag. The men were required to bow toward it and the officers to salute. On these occasions, also, everybody had to "count off" in Japanese.

A machine gun was mounted in a window in the "office," overlooking the school yard. Originally there had been three of these machine guns, placed about the yard, but by the time Dr. Brokenshire arrived, two of them had been taken down. At one time the Japanese had also built sandbag barricades at strategic points and remnants of these were still lying about. Armed guards patrolled the small area constantly. At night, at hourly intervals, these guards would enter each room, turn on the lights and count the occupants. They seemed to be obsessed by the fear that somebody would escape.

The men had brought very little personal baggage with them. They had been looted before leaving Santa Scholastica and anyway, the Japanese had said that everything would be furnished in this new place to which they were going. Of the scanty effects which they had brought, the men were permitted to have only a few articles with them in the rooms. Apart from a change of clothing, a comb and toothbrush, everything had to be left in one of the rooms set apart for a storeroom. No razors were permitted. When a prisoner wanted to shave, he was required to approach one of the guard stations, bow and ask permission. This granted, he could then proceed to the storeroom, get his razor, shave and then return the razor at once. The same regulation applied with regard to matches. One had to ask politely "matchi kudassi," (match please) whenever he wanted to light a cigarette. Even the wants of nature were similarly regulated. "Benjo," accompanied by a bow, indicated a desire to
go to the toilet. The flush toilets completely baffled the Japanese. There were instructions showing how a modern toilet should be used, but even these aids did not serve to prevent many Japs from squatting on the toilet bowl, face to the wall, and defecating on the floor.

The Japanese guards at Pasay were line soldiers for the most part, young, ignorant and anxiously trying to be tough. Corporal punishment is a time-honored tradition in the Japanese Army and the guards did not hesitate to employ it freely on the American and Filipino prisoners of war. Inasmuch as the prisoners could not understand the guards' commands, given in Japanese, beatings were frequent. One guard they dubbed "Babe Ruth," because he habitually carried a baseball bat about with him, using it to belabor the men when they failed to carry out his unintelligible orders with what he considered proper dispatch.

One American prisoner received a particularly memorable beating before our arrival. This was (first name blanked out) Fargie, a young Marine soldier. Fargie had had some training in electricity and the Japanese gave him the job of fixing the electric lights and telephones about the place. In this capacity, he was dispatched one day to the house next to the school building where the guards had their quarters. They wanted a telephone installed. Fargie installed the phone and then, by way of testing it, called up the headquarters of the Philippine Red Cross, telling them to send fifty beds, fifty mattresses and mosquito nets, and a large supply of food to the Pasay Elementary School at once. Within an hour, a Red Cross truck drew up at the gate, loaded down with the supplies Fargie had ordered. The Japanese were highly exercised; they hailed the entire camp population into the yard and announced that everybody would stand at attention until the identity of the culprit who had made the mysterious phone call was discovered. After about two hours of this, Fargie confessed. Whereupon the guards took him over to the flag pole and mauled him severely.

On another occasion, a 14-year old Filipino boy was singled out for attention. The lad, who had been brought to the camp with a group of captured guerrillas, (Filipino underground fighters) was caught one day attempting to make off with some mattress ticking. The piece was too small to be used for anything, but the Japanese made it out to be a case of stealing. The guards took him out in the middle of the yard that night and beat him unmercifully, threatening him at the same time with their bayonets. The boy's screams pierced the night, but there was nothing anyone could do to help. The guards were drunk and it is probable that they would have killed the lad, had not the sergeant of the guard eventually stopped them.

Another time, two Filipino girls were caught trying to send notes into the camp. The guards beat them up and then kept them tied up in the "office" for several hours. The girls were finally taken away and it is not known what finally happened to them.

One Filipino who deserves recognition for his services to the American prisoners at Pasay, was Captain Blas Alejandro, of the Philippine Army. He seems to have been placed in charge of the camp under the Japanese, although, of course, he was a prisoner of war himself. Alejandro remained steadfastly loyal in spite of all of the blandishments that the Japanese could offer. They even suggested to him that he would be released if he would turn against the Americans, but such offers only seemed to increase his loyalty.
Alejandro frequently suffered himself to be a scapegoat for the Americans. Dr. Brokenshire recalls that the Japanese, finding something not to their liking about the camp, would send Alejandro forth with instructions to bring back this or that American prisoner for punishment. The Filipino, on these occasions, would pretend to search, but would always report back to the Japanese that the person desired could not be found. Thereupon, he got the beating instead.

For an "interpreter," there was a young Japanese who, before the war, had been a houseboy for an American colonel. This fellow didn't know much English, but spoke the native dialect. A system was evolved whereby the American officers would talk to Captain Alejandro in English, who would transmit it to the interpreter in Tagalog (a commonly used Philippine dialect), and he, in turn, would tell the guards in Japanese. The name "Willie the Thug" was the sobriquet applied to him, largely because he demonstrated that he understood more about the principles of practical robbery than a Chicago gangster. Willie's English consisted mostly of two expressions: "Good" and "No Good." Nearly all official conversation was kept within these narrow limits.

When all of the marrow had been boiled out of the goat bones, there was nothing to help make the lugao go down. This is necessary. If you don't believe it, try eating plain lugao yourself some time. Willie the Thug was approached. He brought in a little brown sugar, for which he demanded big prices. "No good," but the prisoners paid his price. Then he brought in a few bananas. Sometimes he would sneak in a little native candy. Finally he made some kind of a deal with one of the guards to let him bring in small amounts of food regularly. The ex-houseboy waxed fat and rich, but high living got him. He came down with a terrific case of gonorrhea and finally dropped out of sight.

And so it went. The Japanese seemed to be intent upon making certain that the American and Filipino prisoners of war were subjected to hardships beyond anything that their own soldiers had to endure. Further, they seemed to enjoy forcing the Americans to live under conditions of absolute squalor. Degradation of the white men, it was hoped, would tend to destroy the prestige which the Americans had enjoyed in the eyes of Filipinos. And, it was apparent that the spectacle of white men being forced to live like pigs in a sty flattered the Japanese ego.

No sanitary improvements were permitted. For many weeks, two commodes in one toilet room had to serve all of the prison population, although there was another room containing three commodes, unused. There was no toilet paper, apart from the one roll that Dr. Lambert obtained on his visit to Santa Scholastica. The open garbage pit was a constant menace to health, but the Japanese would not permit the garbage to be hauled away. There was a pit under the single shower in the yard, but this quickly filled with water as the prison population increased. The Japanese would not even allow the Navy men to dig a trench to carry the water outside. The resulting mess was terrific. Every effort to improve conditions was blocked by the guards. Dr. Brokenshire offered to pay for an iron cauldron for boiling dishes, but he was told that no cauldron could be brought into the camp and further, that boiling of dishes was prohibited.

These and many other regulations had no purpose other than to make the prisoners as miserable as possible. Overcrowding, for example, was deliberately fostered. When the first group of 30 patients came to Pasay in January, they had all been confined to one of the school rooms, although none of the other seventeen were
occupied with the exception of the one room used for an “office,” and another occupied
by the guards during the day. When Dr. Brokenshire's group arrived in February, they
were given two or three more rooms. Prisoners kept on arriving at the camp, both from
Santa Scholastica and from the battlefields of Bataan and Corregidor after those places
fell, but the empty rooms were kept closed and only opened, a few at a time, when
overcrowding had reached such proportions that it was impossible to move about. On
Dr. Brokenshire's advice, the pharmacist's mates who went with him brought mosquito
nets (the patients were not permitted to bring any), but upon their arrival the Japanese
ruled that one net would have to do for six men and that surplus nets must be kept in
the storeroom. The medical officers were allowed a net apiece.

The prisoners at Pasay were among the first that the Japanese had captured
during the war. The yellow men were very proud of the fact that they had Americans as
captives, and there were constant "inspections," which gave many Japanese Army and
Navy officers a chance to see what the American prisoners looked like. They were, one
and all, flushed with victory and certain that the onward march of Nippon could never be
stopped. They would exhibit maps of the Pacific area and Asia, point out territories
which the Imperial Japanese forces had overrun, and assure the Americans that the
United States had no chance whatever to win. "What do you Americans think of your
futures now?" was a favorite question. Photographers were all over the place.

Japanese newsmen often requested interviews, asking such questions as "What
do you think of the Japanese Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere?" and "What are
the reasons for the great victories of the Imperial Japanese forces?" One day, a well-
spoken, slick looking Japanese came and asked whether any of the prisoners would
like to speak over the radio to their folks back home. Some of the men fell for this.
They were taken into town and handed prepared speeches to read into a recording
machine. One speech was made out to be an Army officer declaring that the war was a
mistake; that the United States could not win, etc. This officer was Lieutenant (blanked
out) Kirk, who was already at the Pasay camp when the Navy medical men arrived. He
had not been wounded and since his capture had been severely treated, being kept by
himself for much of the time.

The spirit of the Navy men never faltered in the face of these appalling
conditions. The few mosquito nets permitted the group, were put together to make big
nets, giving some sort of protection to 20 or 30 men each. This was a big help, as the
mosquitoes, always particularly thick in that district, descended on the place in clouds at
night. Dr. Berkenshire supervised things generally. Dr. George took care of surgical
cases in the dispensary, while Dr. Lambert did the medical work. Dr. Wanger was in
charge of the dental clinic. All of these men did splendid work under the primitive
conditions. Machinist Gooding seemed to impress the Japanese with his enormous
size and he was made the liaison officer. All did fine work. Dr. Brokenshire mentions
Pharmacist's Mate Gomes as doing a particularly fine job. Sergeant "Pop" Seal of the
US Army was invaluable, as he had a peculiar knack for fixing the ancient plumbing and
keeping the crotchety toilets running in spite of their diet of newspapers. This little
group was reinforced on March 23rd, with the arrival of Dr. Erickson, Dr. Kline and Dr.
Smith (dentist), with 11 pharmacist's mates from Santa Scholastica.

A few concessions were obtained as the Japanese gradually came to respect
the Navy medical corps. Gooding and Dr. Smith obtained permission to go to market
and buy food for the camp and a little later, Dr. Lambert and Gooding were able to get
in a couple of electric hot plates to supplement the cooking that could be done in the galley. There was still money in the place and, with even these limited amounts of food coming in, things were definitely looking up. All hands, although they did not mention the fact, had realized that they could not live for very long on the lugao diet. The trench was dug to the outside, getting rid of the stagnant water, and finally, the Japanese even brought in a cauldron for sterilizing dishes. Everything had to be done in a roundabout way, taking one thing at a time.

Somehow the patients were cared for, which was the primary thing. Doctors and pharmacist's mates alike, gave freely of their own slender resources to help destitute patients to get extra food that they had to have. One of the patients assisted in this way was Frank J. Weisblatt, Manila magazine editor, who had been severely wounded while covering the fighting in the North for the United Press. He had suffered much at the hands of his captors. Navy pharmacist's mates gave him particular attention, taking him into their own quarters where he could receive constant care, bringing him food, supplying him with clothing, etc. He quickly became a fixture at Pasay and, later, at the hospital which was established at Bilibid Prison in Manila. Of course, nobody got anything like adequate care, but at least they received the essentials necessary to keep them alive.

The Japanese, regardless of the way they treated the prisoners, seemed to have a very high opinion of the skill of the American doctors. They soon began to appear at the dispensary, demanding treatment for various ailments, among which was gonorrhea. The Japanese were grateful for this medical attention and the doctors began to get on more friendly terms with some of them. Dr. Lambert was sometimes called over to their quarters and on these visits, he usually managed to wheedle something for the camp. Once he turned up with an old broken-down phonograph and some records. Gooding fixed the machine so that it would run and thereafter the evenings were enlivened with a little music. Lieutenant Kusomoto, who by now was definitely in charge of all war prisoners in Manila, permitted the phonograph, on the understanding that it would be hidden away from the eyes of inspection parties.

Kusomoto called on the American doctors for help when he, himself, got sick. He called on the telephone one day asking for "one of your best corpsmen. Chief Pharmacist's Mate Derrick was detailed to go to the University Apartments where Kusomoto lived. Kusomoto was cared for and visited by Dr. Erickson. It turned out to be dengue. Derrick treated him, getting instructions from Pasay via telephone and it was not very long before the Japanese officer was back on his feet. Thereafter, Kusomoto insisted that Derrick stay with him at the University Apartments and, at the latter's request, brought Hunt and Istock from Pasay. The three got the best of treatment, with Kusomoto even risking his own neck to permit Derrick to visit with his wife in Manila on occasion and once allowed Istock's girl friend to visit him. Kusomoto also had Dr. Brokenshire out to look at a sick Japanese boy and, on another occasion, Dr. Brokenshire was taken to see a high Japanese Army official who was sick. These things all helped to make for better treatment of the war prisoners.
Chapter 8

FALL OF BATAAN

Bataan fell on April 9th, 1942, and almost immediately thereafter, large groups of prisoners began arriving at the Pasay camp. They would remain a few days and then the Japs would ship them out to prison camps or work details somewhere. The doctors held sick call on these men as they came in, and sometimes the Japs would let the very sick ones stay for treatment. Usually, however, the men were shoved out regardless of their condition.

One of these groups, consisting of 296 men and four officers, came in on May 21st from the prison camp at O'Donnell, Tarlac Province. These men were all in very bad condition. In fact, 18 of them were unable to go on and were admitted to the hospital, with substitutes for them being found among the personnel of the camp. This detail, it was later learned, went on to Tayabas Province, on a road-building project. The brutal cruelty of the Japanese on this detail is unbelievable. At least 60 percent of the prisoners died. (See Chapter 17)

With the arrival of each new batch of prisoners, the camp became more and more overcrowded until the congestion was relieved as drafts went out. At one time, there were 650 prisoners in the little school building. These were in addition to the Naval hospital force. They were packed into the tiny rooms like sardines in a can. The overcrowding and the lack of sanitary facilities were serious matters, in view of the prevalence of infectious diseases among the men, particularly dysentery. The doctors did their best to isolate these cases, but effective isolation was, of course, out of the question. The Japanese as a conservation measure, cut off the water supply except for a few hours each day. The camp population was divided into three groups, with each group being allowed to bathe every third day. "We were a pretty crumby bunch," says Dr. Brokenshire, "and we must have been an interesting sight at meal time, sitting out in the yard at those tiny school desks, dirty and disheveled, eating our luago and trying not to notice the machine guns pointed at us."

Food rations were not augmented when drafts of prisoners came in. The ration was three sacks of rice daily and those sacks it was, whether there were 200 people in camp or 600. The solution, however, was simple. Just throw a little more water in the lugao. Everybody remembers those school desks with distaste. They were small and they were hard. There was no other place to sit. "I'll always remember my sore fanny when I think of Pasay," one warrant officer said.

But there were diversions. Nobody knew anything about what was going on in the outside world – the windows were kept closed at all times, but there were rumors nevertheless. Morale was high at first; no one had any doubt whatever as to the outcome of the war and most people believed firmly that a huge convoy would arrive at any moment bringing soldiers and airplanes to rout the Japanese. Every day there was "fresh" news. MacArthur had said that he would have the Philippines back within three weeks; an enormous convoy had been sighted steaming through the Bernardino Straits, and so on and on. During the day there was nothing to see except the Japanese planes flying overhead and the tops of a few trees, but the stars came out at night and a lovely tropical moon. There was the phonograph. One of the boys had a guitar and
another a mouth organ and in the evenings there was music and song.

From the very beginning, the hospital group stayed together as a Navy hospital unit, and within the limits of their resources, functioned as such and in accordance with the methods of the Naval medical service. Dr. Brokenshire insisted that the pharmacist's mates, while members of the United States Navy, were medical men—non-combatants—whose sole duty was the care of the sick. The doctors and pharmacist's mates under him, he stated, were prepared to look after the sick and injured among the Japanese Army and Navy, as well as for their own people, but they should not be required to perform other labor besides what was immediately required for the maintenance of the camp. The Japanese sent working parties out to Manila almost daily to perform various kinds of manual labor, but Dr. Brokenshire was able to keep his men off of these jobs. He pointed out that, if the Pharmacist's Mates were to take the best care of sick Japanese, they should be allowed to devote their entire time to this task. The Japs saw the point.

A big factor in putting this idea across was the fact that Lieutenant Kusomoto had himself conceived a great respect for the Navy hospital corps from his observations at Santa Scholastica and Pasay, and from the efficient care which he received when he got sick. The Americans served him tea whenever he visited the prison camp, and by degrees he became quite friendly. It finally became fixed in his mind that the hospital corps existed for medical work only. This was of the utmost importance, for Kusomoto's impressions thus gained were undoubtedly a big factor in deciding the Japanese later to keep the unit at Bilibid prison to run a military prison hospital.

On April 24th, another group of doctors, pharmacist's mates and patients arrived from Santa Scholastica. They were headed by Commander L.B. Sartin, who assumed command. Dr. Brokenshire retired from the picture at this point; he came down with an attack of dysentery which laid him low for several weeks. Dr. Erickson and Dr. Kline also got the disease, although their cases were not as severe. By this time, too, several pharmacist's mates had been contaminated as a result of the impossible sanitary conditions.

Dr. Sartin quickly demonstrated the qualities of leadership, which later made possible the success of the hospital unit at Bilibid. Imperturbable, tireless, he set about to secure better living conditions. Daily he confronted the Japanese, requesting of them better food, more medicines and supplies, essential sanitary measures, beds, mosquito nets, everything. He was often refused and insulted. Daily he came back for more. Personal interviews failing, he put his demands in a letter which he presented to Kusomoto. Remember, this was at a time when the Japanese believed that the American war prisoners were fortunate to be alive at all, and that certainly they never could be so impertinent as to make requests on the Imperial Japanese Army, which not only had permitted the prisoners to live, but was actually furnishing them food and shelter. Nobody knew this better than Commander Sartin and nobody knew better than he that his demands might easily bring reprisals down on his own head. Such personal consideration did not deter him for a moment. Dr. Sartin also approved heartily of Dr. Brokenshire's stand regarding sending Pharmacist's Mates out on working parties and continued the policy.

On the 9th of May, the main hospital group came over with Captains Davis, Roberts and Lowman. Captain Davis assumed command, as before. On the 13th, the
last of the staff (under Dr. Silliphant) arrived with the last of the patients at Santa Scholastica, and that place was finished.

The camp had, in the meantime, been gradually denuded of much of the population as the Japs continued to shunt the prisoners out. Strenuous efforts of the doctors to retain at the camp, prisoners from Bataan and Corregidor who were suffering from malaria, dysentery and malnutrition remained unheeded. It was estimated that at least sixty percent of the war prisoners were suffering from beri-beri; the first time that the Navy doctors had seen this malnutritional disease on any great scale.

On May 24th, a group of officers and men arrived from Corregidor. Among them was Captain Hoeffal, Commandant of the 16th Naval District, (name blanked out), Communications Officer at the Navy tunnel on Corregidor, and (name blanked out), Commanding Officer of the USS Mindanao. Information was received from these men relative to advancements in rating of hospital corps. The advancements had been notified by radio from the Navy Department in Washington. Authority was obtained from Captain Hoeffal to advance the medical men accordingly. No better illustration of the “carry on” spirit that pervaded the entire corps from the start, could be found than this fact that in the midst of the appalling conditions and uncertainty at the Pasay prison camp, attention could be devoted to insuring the men their deserved promotions. Under the same authority, six officers were advanced in rank.

On the following day, Kusomoto informed Captain Davis that the entire unit would be transferred to Bilibid and that preparations for moving would have to be started at once. The impression was given that the group would go to a prison camp near Cabanatauan, Tarlac Province, and the instructions were that enlisted men could take with them one piece of baggage, officers two, while officers with the rank of Commander and above could bring three. Preparations for moving continued throughout most of May, with the Japs inspecting — and looting — all boxes, as they had at Santa Scholastica. On the 29th, Machinist Gooding was put in charge of the camp by the Japanese, who seemed to be hypnotized by his huge size (and given the title of Warden).

Gooding was taken to Bilibid on an inspection trip and returned reporting that conditions there were very, very bad — as bad, in fact, as Pasay. In many ways Bilibid was even worse than Pasay, Gooding confided. This news was, to say the least, disheartening, particularly in view of the fact that well-founded rumors had begun to circulate to the effect that the Navy medics would not go to Cabanatauan, but would be retained at Bilibid to set up a hospital. Several of the Japanese began to hint at such a possibility and Gooding himself believed it, opining that Commander Sartin would be put in charge, and that the “Taishas” (Captains) would be sent to another camp, with the Army colonels and generals among the war prisoners. Most discouraging of all, the Japs stated that the new place — presumably Bilibid — was a “completely equipped hospital,” and everybody by now knew what that meant!

The Navy unit, consisting by then of 188 patients, officers and pharmacist’s mates, moved to Bilibid on May 30th. Six Americans did not go along. They had died at the Pasay camp and had been buried in a vacant lot across the street. One of the Americans was Lieutenant Colonel William B. Short, U.S. Army. Colonel Short arrived at the camp on May 24th, with Captain Hoeffel, U.S.N. and the big group of officers and men from Corregidor. These prisoners were forced to march in the boiling sun several
miles from Dewey Boulevard, on the Bay shore, to Pasay. Colonel Short was in a critical condition from heat exhaustion upon his arrival at the camp. He died the next day.

No one who went through the experience of life in the stinking, crowded prison at Pasay would care to undergo it again. Nevertheless, Pasay was important. There it was that the Navy hospital unit was first called upon to succor prisoners of war. There they learned invaluable lessons in doing much with little, improvising makeshifts where even the most elementary equipment was lacking, devising methods of isolating infectious cases where effective isolation was seemingly impossible. At Pasay, the Japanese—particularly Kusomoto—had a chance to observe the Navy medics carrying on in the face of insuperable difficulties and there it was, undoubtedly, that the Japs conceived a deep respect for the Navy hospital corps.

Before Pasay, the Japanese regarded the medical unit as prisoners of war, indistinguishable in any way from the mass of other prisoners. By its work at Pasay, the unit was able to impress upon the Japs that it was an integral medical organization, capable and ready to care for sick and injured prisoners of war. From their observations at Pasay, the Japs undoubtedly were first influenced in their decision to hold the unit together and to set up a hospital for military prisoners at Bilibid Prison. Pasay was the transition point from the comparatively quiet and smooth existence at Santa Scholastica to the tremendous job at Bilibid.

It was at Pasay that the Japanese first came into contact with Commander Sartin. During the period that Dr. Sartin was in command, Kusomoto learned to respect him, both as a doctor and as a man, and to realize that Dr. Sartin was the man to lead the unit at Bilibid in the trying days ahead. The Navy men went to Pasay with training, health, vigor and the eagerness to do their job. They came out of it with all of these qualities, plus experience under the most primitive conditions, the respect of the Japanese, and a leader. And, they knew the meaning of hunger.

Finally, it was at Pasay that the United States Naval Hospital unit acquired a new mission. The mission of the hospital before the war, was to provide medical care for Navy personnel of the Asiatic Fleet and, to a smaller extent, their dependents. This mission came to an end when the First—or the greater portion of it—evacuated to Southwestern Pacific waters. Thereafter, the Canacao Hospital unit had no assignment beyond that of caring for the patients “on hand” and cooperating with the Army and civilian medical authorities in succoring victims of bombing raids in the Manila area. The unit was not sent to Bataan with the Army or to Corregidor; its orders were to remain in Manila and “carry on” there. These orders would not be questioned.

Then the Japanese took over Manila on January 2, 1942, the American and Filipino forces had retired to Bataan, and the campaign for the peninsula and for Corregidor was just beginning. It was in full swing when Dr. Brokenshire’s crew was taken to Pasay in February. The Japs did not have very many prisoners of war then, but with the fall of Bataan in April, they suddenly found themselves with 50,000 American and Filipino prisoners on their hands. Many of these men were sick from war wounds and from malaria and dysentery, as well as from virtual starvation in Bataan. Those who found their way to the Pasay concentration camp were treated for their ailments, to the limit of the Navy’s resources and skill. When Corregidor and the other forts at the entrance to Manila Bay surrendered in May, and sick prisoners from these

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places came in to Pasay, they were also given the best medical care that the Canacao men could give them. The Japs noticed this and were impressed.

About this time, the Japanese began to realize that they would need some kind of a hospital in Manila to take care of sick prisoners of war. While they intended to free the Filipinos (and later did so) and meanwhile planned to establish the American and Filipino prisoners of war to prison camps at O'Donnell and later, at Cabanatauan, the Japanese also were determined to use the war prisoners on labor projects in the Islands. Manila would naturally be the central clearing house for these work gangs. It probably occurred to the Japs that it would be very convenient also to have a hospital at Bilibid Prison, where prisoners who fell ill or became incapacitated while out on a working detail, could go for medical treatment and recuperation.

The Canacao unit had done a splendid job at Pasay, taking hold and actually contriving to provide medical attention of a sort for war prisoners (and, incidentally, for the Japanese guards too) in spite of the primitive conditions existing there. Evidently, the Japanese had decided that the Navy men could and would "carry on" with this work at Bilibid. Thus, the Canacao unit had made its new mission upon which it was to embark. The story of how it fulfilled this mission is one of the most inspiring chapters in the history of the medical services of the United States Navy.
Chapter 9

THE PROBLEMS OF MALARIA AND DYSENTERY

Malaria

One of the most persistent diseases with which the Bilibid staff was confronted – one which claimed the attention of every medical officer from Pasay days to the very end of their imprisonment – was malaria. Few of the doctors had had any experience with this tropical malady before the war. Malaria was, in fact, almost a non-existent disease among soldiers in the Asiatic Fleet. There were two reasons for this: in the first place, malaria is a distinctly local disease, indigenous to definite, easily discernible localities, so that when units of the Fleet were in these malarial areas the personnel were routinely immunized by prophylactic doses of quinine and secondly, the principal bases of the Fleet were free from the disease. Malaria accounted for an insignificant number of cases at the Canacao Hospital.

The City of Manila is malaria free. Nevertheless, thousands of war prisoners were treated for this disease at Bilibid, for the Peninsula of Bataan where the Fil-American Forces made their stand for three months, is one of the worst malaria spots in the Philippines and probably one of the worst in the world. Every USAFFE soldier on Bataan was exposed to this malady, and it is probably no exaggeration to say that upwards of seventy percent of them contracted malaria during the campaign. Thus, while not a single case of malaria can definitely be proven to have been contracted at Bilibid, it constituted one of the major problems at the prison hospital. Of course, when you think of malaria, you think of quinine, and the problem of treating the malaria patients at Bilibid was largely a question of prying this drug out of the Japanese. To a lesser extent, it was also a question of receiving the patients at the hospital soon enough for treatment to be effective before they were so far gone that they could not be saved. And, as it was with everything else, the malaria problem was bound up with food.

The hospital unit, of course, arrived at Bilibid on May 30, 1942, without any noticeable supply of quinine, or for that matter, any medicines. Some of the doctors and pharmacist’s mates had managed to save small stocks of quinine throughout the lootings at Santa Scholastica College and at the Pasay Elementary School, and these constituted the entire supply. Among the thousands of war prisoners confined to Bilibid, there were untold numbers suffering from fever and chills. Presumably this was due to malaria, although with no microscope there was no way of diagnosing their condition with any accuracy before the 19th of August, when Dr. Nogi brought in a microscope.

As we have noted, very few of these prisoners had been classified as patients by the Japanese and admitted to the “hospital.” If a man could stand up, he was considered “well.” As a matter of fact, on June 1st, there were only about 160 patients in the hospital, including those which the Navy had brought with them from Pasay. Nevertheless, through the daily sick call at the pharmacy, “well” prisoners were treated, hundreds a day. And at the end of the first week, Dr. Sartin reported to Kusomoto that there were approximately 344 patients suffering from recurrent fever and chills and who probably had malaria. All prisoners, including Navy hospital personnel, were requested to hand over any private stocks of quinine they might have, and this yielded a tiny supply – 100 5-grain capsules and 250 5-grain tablets, or about enough to treat a dozen
patients adequately. At least 2,000 tablets would be required to meet the demand for as long as one week.

Commander Sartin immediately began to press the Japanese for medicines, including quinine. On the day after the Naval unit arrived, he forwarded an itemized list of equipment and supplies that would be required for ten days' operations. This brought no response. Similar requests on the 4th and 19th of June were likewise ignored and, in fact, the Japs told Dr. Sartin quite frankly that the hospital unit was regarded as prisoners of war, and as such, it could expect very little. A handful of medical supplies was received on the 20th, but no quinine. Again the Commander drew up and submitted a list of medical supplies and equipment necessary for the maintenance of the hospital, including 4,900 5-grain tablets of quinine for one week's requirement, 19,600 for one month – and was again ignored. On the 25th, he wrote requesting permission to obtain indispensable drugs from the former United States Army Field Hospital at Corregidor, but the Japanese refused permission even for the Navy doctors to use American property for the relief of American prisoners of war.

Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that the malaria patients died. Seventeen of them were buried in the prison cemetery during the first weeks of June. That more did not die was due to the fact that the doctors used their scanty supply of quinine only on patients actually experiencing chills or a high fever, and only on them long enough to get them over the period of these symptoms. In this way, they were able to treat a great many malaria sufferers during the active stages of the disease, although these men, of course, suffered recurrences within a few days after the quinine was stopped.

The seventeen deaths recorded at Bilibid during June, do not begin to tell the whole story of the extent of the casualties among the war prisoners due to the neglect of the Japanese to provide a supply of quinine. Many patients were shunted off to Cabanatauan, or out on working details as soon as, their fever and chills subsiding, they were, by Japanese standards, “well.” These poor fellows undoubtedly had recurrences after they left Bilibid and many of them – it will never be known how many – died. Furthermore, malaria was undoubtedly a contributing factor in many other deaths from other causes at Bilibid during this period. It is a terribly weakening disease and there is no question but that many a prisoner who died from dysentery or some other cause, might have pulled through had he not been weakened by malaria and his physical resistance lowered.

The indictment against the Japanese is complete on this alone. Remember, the Japs looted the supply of quinine which the Canacao unit had at Santa Scholastica College; this was, in fact, the first item they took. The supply of quinine thus taken would have been sufficient to meet the need at Bilibid many times over. And at the temporary medical supply depot which Mr. Shearer had established in Manila, there was enough quinine to have supplied the hospital for years to come and this too, the Japs confiscated. The Japanese thus not only violated every instinct of humanity in making it impossible for the Navy doctors to give treatment to the sufferers from malaria, but they also in their looting of hospital supplies, broke Article 15 of the Geneva Convention of 1929, which expressly states:

“Article 15. Buildings and material of the fixed sanitary establishments of the army shall remain subject to the
laws of war, but may not be diverted from their use so ong as they are necessary for the wounded and sick."

On June 26th, Dr. Sartin's efforts were finally rewarded. The Japs sent in a small portion of the medicines that had been requested, but included in this delivery was 10,000 quinine sulfate tablets and two kilograms of quinine sulfate in powder form. It was like manna from heaven and Dr. Sartin was quick to thank Kusomoto in the fulousome style which the Commander had learned was calculated to please the Oriental mind:

"Dear Sir:

In behalf of the staff of this Medical Unit and the sick American and Philippine prisoners, I wish to thank the Imperial Japanese Army for the medical supplies which were furnished us yesterday. These medicines were urgently needed and will be of great value in restoring the sick to health.

I am personally deeply grateful to you for your sincere interest in responding to my urgent request, and I shall not forget your great kindness.

There are many other things needed to provide proper treatment for the sick, such as laboratory equipment, x-ray, bedding, and most of all food and special diets. It is hoped that these things will be provided as the need is great now.

Respectfully,

L.B. Sartin, Commander
Medical Corps, U.S. Army
Medical Officer in Charge"

The 10,000 tablets were quickly used up, but the quinine sulfate held out until July 21st, when 49,000 tablets were delivered. From that time on, the malaria problem at Bilibid was under control, as the Japs continued to supply the indispensable quinine. Nevertheless, as we have said, the disease continued to claim the attention of the doctors as malaria patients constantly kept arriving at the hospital from outside prison camps and there were some deaths almost every month. The Navy doctors who, as we have said, had had comparatively little contact with the disease, learned an awful lot about it in the ensuing months.

Malaria, a disease which claims millions of victims annually in hot countries near the Equator, where the rainfall is large, is characterized by intermittent fever which may occur daily (quotidian malaria), every other day (tertian), every fourth day (quartan), or the fever may sometimes be continuous with a few marked remissions, as in the estivo-autumnal type. Only the second type was encountered at Bilibid in any great numbers, although a few cases of estivo-autumnal malaria were found. Tertian malaria is caused by a parasite, the plasmodium vivax, subtertian, or estivo-autumnal, by the plasmodium falciparum. This parasite develops in the stomach of the anopheles mosquito, and it is the female of this mosquito which bites man and injects the bug into the blood stream of its victim. There the parasite attaches itself to the red blood corpuscles, multiplies
rapidly, not only destroying the red blood cells, but obstructing the circulation of the blood in vital organs and tissues. As less blood reaches the skin, the surface of the body tends to take the temperature of the surrounding air, is cooled and the patient has a "chill" or ague, which may last from a few minutes to an hour or more. The chill is followed by fever, lasting from thirty minutes to four hours, and this is usually broken by a period of violent sweating. Following this last stage, the patient feels much better, usually drops into a refreshing sleep and is often able to get up and move about until the next attack, which comes when a new "generation" of parasites has had a chance to mature, usually within one, two or four days. Eventually, if the patient does not get quinine, the damage to his circulatory system becomes such that it can no longer function properly and he dies.

The tertian malaria encountered at Bilibid was of two types: benign tertian which accounted for 90 percent of the cases, and malignant tertian, which took in the other ten percent. Most of the deaths resulted from the malignant type, although the benign form was found to be the most persistent and harder to cure.

The malignant tertian malaria centers its attack on the capillaries of the brain. The onset is rapid and spectacular, the patient suddenly being stricken down with delirium, which rapidly develops into coma and within a short period, death. At Bilibid, the treatment which was most successful was prompt injection of quinine sulfate into the bloodstream, but this could not be carried out successfully in all cases because frequently patients were not brought into the hospital until they had been in a coma for several hours and it was too late to save them.

Standard treatment for malaria, recommended by the National Malaria Committee in 1918, is thirty grains of quinine sulfate daily for three or four days, followed by ten grains for eight weeks. This was found to be not nearly enough of a dosage in many cases at Bilibid. In fact, in some cases the dose had to be doubled before the malaria was controlled. Relapses, or recurrences, were frequent — in benign tertian sometimes extending beyond a year or more after the quinine treatment was first started. Apparently the malaria of Bataan is a more virulent type than that generally encountered elsewhere. Furthermore, the patients, subsisting as they were on an inadequate diet, did not have the strength to throw off the disease as rapidly as they probably would have under normal conditions. A long convalescence was the rule.

Deaths from malaria became comparatively insignificant at Bilibid after the Japanese began to furnish quinine in amounts sufficient to provide treatment for everybody. There were 21 deaths up to August 30th, and after that the average was about one per month. The number of malaria patients each month remained high, as prisoners were admitted with recurrences.

Dysentery

Dysentery, the other of the two infectious diseases which assumed epidemic proportions at Bilibid, probably accounted for more deaths than did malaria. Precise figures are lacking, not only because the lack of a microscope during the early months made other than clinical diagnoses impossible, but also because an untold number of dysentery sufferers were shunted out of the prison by the Japanese before they had recovered from the disease and, in a number of cases, without receiving any treatment at all. These men, or many of them, undoubtedly died at the places to which they were
sent, for it is certain that during those first months, the outlying prison camps were no
better supplied with dysentery medicines and could furnish the sick with no more
adequate diet than Bilibid. Nevertheless, the figures available show that for the first four
months, dysentery was the biggest killer, accounting for more than half of the total
deaths. Thus in June, 6 out of 13 deaths were attributed to dysentery; in July, 34 fatalities
included 16 from dysentery; 13 out of 22 deaths in August were diagnosed as dysentery;
and 5 out of 10 in September.

As it was with malaria, the problem of dysentery was essentially one of medicine;
when the Japanese furnished or permitted dysentery specifics to be brought into the
hospital, the disease was soon brought under control. Even more than malaria, however,
the problem of dysentery was allied to the food situation.

There are two kinds of dysentery, bacillary dysentery, caused by a bacillus, and
amebic dysentery, which is caused by an amoeba. Both diseases are highly infectious
and, while they have occurred everywhere, are most common in tropical and subtropical
climates. Dysentery is known as a war disease, since epidemics of it have always
broken out in all armies during wartime. The disease ravaged the British armies at
Gallipoli in 1915, and was one of the most important reasons for the withdrawal of the
English from the Dardanelles. Conditions on Bataan, where the troops, fighting as they
were in the jungles were without sanitary facilities for the most part, were ideal for
dysentery and thousands of soldiers of the Fil-American forces were suffering from the
disease by the time of surrender in April, 1942. Conditions in the prison camps at
O'Donnell and Cabanatauan, as well as the various working details in the Islands were,
of course, much worse than they had been on Bataan and dysentery claimed thousands
of victims in these places after the surrender.

The Navy hospital unit did not observe very much dysentery at Pasay, principally
because prisoners were not permitted to stay there for any length of time, but were sent
on their way, sick or well. Nevertheless, there were several cases of dysentery
hospitalized there and by the time that the unit was transferred to Bilibid, everybody was
fairly familiar with the disease.

When the Navy arrived at Bilibid, as we have seen, they found a great many of
the prisoners apparently suffering from dysentery. We say “apparently” because here
again, with no microscope, it was for a long time impossible to make diagnoses other
than on the basis of clinical symptoms - severe diarrhea with stools containing mucus,
pus and blood. The poor wretches were lying about in their own filth, helpless - flies and
maggots crawling all over them. “Worst” cases had been put in the old Chapel Building
and, apparently, completely forgotten.

The most immediate problem, of course, was to clean up these men. Dr.
Brokenshire, who had been put in charge of isolation cases, and a group of pharmacist’s
mates attended to this job as best they could, improvising water buckets out of the cans
lying about and washcloths from their own personal underclothing. Pharmacist Haase
fixed up a mosquito net covering for the men in the Chapel Building, which kept off the
flies pretty well. The next most pressing need was to isolate the dysentery cases before
the infection spread to the entire camp, and the Japanese gave permission to use the
former Execution Chamber (Ward 5) for this purpose. On June 1st, the dysentery cases
were moved here.
After that, for a long time it was just a question of sitting and waiting – waiting for food, medicine, beds, mattresses, mosquito nets, etc. And without these things, it was mostly a question of waiting for the men to die.

Even without medicine, it would have been possible in those first few months to do a lot for the dysentery victims, had there been any kind of an adequate diet available. Dysentery, after all, rarely kills if patients can be given the right food. The food which the Japs furnished was not anywhere near sufficient in quantity or quality to sustain even well men in a fair state of health, let alone permit sufferers from disease to regain their strength. Of course, thousands of words might be devoted to describing the diet at the prison hospital, without getting the full picture across to Americans, accustomed as they are to take food almost for granted. But here is the bald, unvarnished resume of the food ration during the month of June, 1942, as taken from the diary of Pharmacist Shearer, written on the spot:

"June 3rd: Three meals of plain rice this date.
  5th: Three meals of rice only.
  8th: Rice for three meals. Soup from a little meat, onions and tomatoes for two meals.
  9th: Rice for three meals. Thin soup with tomatoes and eggplant for one meal.
 10th: Three meals of plain rice.
 11th: Rice for three meals. Two meals of thin vegetable soup.
 12th: Three meals of rice only.
 13th: Three meals of rice only. There was a food delivery late this afternoon of: Rice – 770 pounds; beef – 350 pounds, frozen; tomatoes – 250 pounds, fair condition; eggplant – 60 pounds, poor condition.
 14th: 726 pounds of rice received. Moldy, dirty, and filled with weevils and worms.
 15th: 726 pounds of rice received. 88 pounds salt. Salt is of native production, from sea water, large, coarse, dirty and wet.
 16th: Ration: 720 pounds of rice.
 17th: Ration: Rice – 720 pounds; beef – 300 pounds, frozen; onions - 100 pounds, very poor condition; evaporated milk – 270 cans.
 20th: Rice – 1,000 pounds; salt – 100 pounds; evaporated milk – 347 cans.
 21st: Ration: Rice - 997 pounds; eggplant – 150 pounds, fair condition.
 27th: Ration: Rice – 825 pounds, very poor condition; caribou and beef – 400 pounds, fair condition; tomatoes – 90 pounds; eggplant – 350 pounds. Last two items completely rotten, with maggots.
 29th: Ration: Rice – 850 pounds, poor condition; eggplant – 150 pounds, rotten; greens – 450 pounds.
The resume of food supplied during the month of June, as revealed by Mr. Shearer's diary, is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POUNDS PER RATION</th>
<th>White Rice</th>
<th>Meat</th>
<th>Vegetables</th>
<th>Fruits</th>
<th>Salt</th>
<th>Milk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RATION PER MAN</td>
<td>16,851 lbs.</td>
<td>2,330</td>
<td>2,700</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>438</td>
<td>447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15,862</td>
<td>1,062</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,062 lbs.</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The foregoing resume includes the rice, vegetables and meat that were received in such poor condition that it was unfit for human consumption. During this period, therefore, the average meal was composed of a serving of rice, a whisper of meat and vegetables and a tiny pinch of salt. Actually, however, meat deliveries were made every three days only and there being no means of preservation, all of it had to cooked at once, making two meatless days between each delivery. (A "coolerator" constructed on the 21st of June out of salvaged materials helped matters somewhat, making it possible to at least preserve some meat overnight). Vegetable deliveries were, as you can see, very irregular, so that at least half of the time it was "rice, rice, with nee." The tiny milk deliveries were turned over to the dysentery patients.

The food situation did not improve during July. In fact, the deliveries of meat and vegetables were lower. It was the same dreary story throughout August, although in that month, the Japs did bring in a few sacks of flour and a little fruit. They also furnished a little more milk and 850 pounds of fish. These latter were of a microscopic size — not more than two inches in length — impossible to scale and eviscerate. Probably these insignificant additions were made so that the Japs could state that they were furnishing the prisoners a "balanced" diet of meat, fish, vegetables, milk and fruit.

On this diet, Dr. Brokenshire and his capable assistant, Dr. Bookman, were expected not only to maintain alive, but actually to cure their dysentery patients. It was impossible. The doctors simply had to sit by and watch their patients grow steadily weaker. It was hard. Dr. Brokenshire's notes made at the time, reveal something of the anguish that a doctor feels when he finds himself completely helpless to aid the sick committed to his care:

"June 3rd: One of my dysentery cases is dying. No food except plain rice, which patients can't eat. Gave my last can of sardines to make a soup for the ward. It's terrible to see them dying for want of food. Dr. Sartin and paymaster and all are working to get some food in camp.

June 4th: Hurrah — got some mango bean soup for my patients. Dr. Sartin and others working for food.

June 5th: Food has come in. Able to get two cans of soup for my isolation patients. Hurrah! If we can only get food — it would stop the sickness and change the whole setup. We are trying to set up a good hospital, but the Japs change things every day. We have no microscope and only a few medicines.

June 8: One room of "Death House" looks fine with white wash. Yard now clean. Toilet working."
June 19:

About 500 patients in from Bataan. Plenty of dysentery cases sent over to me. Rice and watery mongo bean soup for patients. Very little soup. Mostly plain polished rice. Not good enough for life. Rotten vegetables (not eatable) arrived today. Had to be thrown away. Market sweepings. Looks as if Japs want us to die of starvation – not suddenly, but little by little. They then work the men until they get so weak disease gets them. Terrible, uncivilized beings."

The two cans of soup which brought forth the expression of joy from Dr. Brokenshire came from an assortment of food which was purchased from the outside through a Japanese merchant, Y. Ueumura, one of the camp's true benefactors. Pay Clerk Hanson raised the money for the purchase by passing the hat around, and the venture developed in the course of time into a regular "store" within the prison confines. The store was a big factor in restoring the patients to health. In July, Dr. Smith was given the task of establishing a special kitchen, where such extra food as was available could be prepared for the very sick patients. He was able to pick up a little food here and there – left over soup from the galley, some canned food that was brought in by one of the groups of prisoners from Corregidor – and by that time, "profits" from the store were such that he could be given 300 pesos a month for the purchase of eggs, fruit, etc., through Ueumura.

And there was Mrs. Norton. This indomitable lady has the heartfelt gratitude of every prisoner who has passed through Bilibid Prison. A widow woman of Australian birth, she was not interned with the other civilians, the Japanese conceding her her freedom out of consideration for her age, which was probably close to 60. She constituted herself a one-woman organization for the purpose of alleviating the plight of the prisoners of war and, working ceaselessly, collected truly amazing quantities of food, books, clothing and medicines, which she somehow intimidated the Japanese into permitting her to bring in, not only to Bilibid, but to other prison camps. At Santa Scholastica, the Navy first made the acquaintance of Mrs. Norton and there she would appear at frequent intervals with big loads of stuff that she had collected about the town – pastries, candies, fruit – anything at all that she could get. And at Bilibid, she did the same. The Japanese guards always tried to prevent her from delivering her loads of supplies, but the fearless old lady, eyes blazing and wagging her finger under their noses, managed to intimidate the Japs most of the time. She continued to produce life-saving supplies clear up until December, 1942. By that time, medical personnel and officers were receiving pay and the Japanese told Mrs. Norton that her gifts were no longer needed. Not a person in camp, but benefited from her generosity and many an American boy owes his life to her unselfish devotion.
Chapter 10

THE DISEASES OF STARVATION

Far and away the greatest problem at Bilibid Hospital concerned not medicines, hospital equipment and sanitation (although these matters were always present), but food. The prison hospital was not only a hospital, but a prison camp maintained by the Japanese for prisoners of war. Under their benevolent administration, it was from the very beginning, a never-ending battle to obtain enough food to keep the men — patients and staff — alive, and the diseases with which the staff was principally confronted were diseases of simple starvation.

At no time did the diet furnished by the Japanese approach even a maintenance level and, needless to say, the food which the patients were forced to eat did not even remotely resemble what should have been given to them to enable them to fight off diseases. The Japs cannot claim successfully that the starvation diet was necessary. The Philippines is an agricultural country. It has always had a large surplus of agricultural products to dispose of abroad, importing practically all of its requirements in manufactures. Furthermore, Philippine importers of canned foods, foreseeing higher prices and an increasing shortage of shipping bottoms due to the war emergency, had for two years prior to the outbreak of war imported enormous quantities of food, most of which fell into the hands of the Japanese and all of which was under their control.

It is a fact that the Philippines as a whole, experienced very little destruction from military operations during the campaign. Most of the agricultural areas were hardly touched and Manila — declared an open city and undefended by the retreating USAFFE forces — fell into the Japanese hands virtually intact with its huge supplies of food, public and private. Bilibid Prison is in Manila; it would have been no problem to have supplied the hospital, had the Japanese wished to do so. They not only refused to feed the prisoners, but they prevented private sources — only too anxious to help — from bringing in food. The Fargie incident at the Pasay Elementary School, while it was amusing, nevertheless showed graphically that the Red Cross would have helped the prisoners, had it been allowed to do so.

As we have seen, the policy of starvation (for it was a deliberate policy) commenced at Pasay, where the Japs transferred the medical personnel and patients after robbing them of the considerable food supplies which were on hand at Santa Scholastica. The men grew steadily weaker day by day, until by the time Dr. Sartin arrived there in April, the effects of continued malnutrition were already becoming evident among both the staff members and prison personnel. The Commander was not a man to sit by idly and “wait for something to happen.” He immediately protested to the Japanese Commander, Kusomoto, in a letter and in private interviews. These protests, while they were unproductive of better food for the camp, did serve to impress Kusomoto with the worth of Commander Sartin, and were probably an important factor in bringing the Japanese to their decision to put Dr. Sartin in command at Bilibid after Captains Davis and Roberts were sent away. The hard-bitten old Jap soldier could appreciate courage and tenacity when he saw it.

The policy of deliberate starvation begun at Pasay, was intensified at Bilibid. We have described in the last two chapters the appalling situation which the Navy found at
Bilibid: the impossible sanitary conditions, the sick men lying about unattended, and we have described the measures taken to combat the situation. Even at that early date, however, at least 50 percent of the prisoners were showing the effects of the starvation diet imposed upon them since their capture, and recovery of patients suffering from malaria and dysentery was rendered problematical by the fact that the food they had to eat was insufficient to give them strength to fight disease.

At this time, the "hospital" was not very clearly differentiated from the remainder of the prison, and the hospital staff and patients were not treated very much differently from the remainder of the thousands of war prisoners in Bilibid. All got the same ration, which consisted almost entirely of rotting or rotten vegetables and rice. The Japs apparently gathered up the refuse and sweepings from the floors of the public markets for the prisoners of war. This in a city which was amply supplied with large stocks of food.

A survey made on the 29th of June 1942, disclosed that on that day, out of a total patient load of 748 prisoners, 523 or 70 percent, were suffering from malnutrition, and 38 or 5 percent, were already manifesting symptoms diagnosed as beri-beri. The hospital staff had not escaped unscathed. By June 14th, Commander Sartin was informed that members of the hospital and medical corps were suffering from nutritional edema. Most of the patients were from the former U.S. Army Hospital Number One in Bataan, but some of the worst cases came in from a Japanese work detail in Tayabas Province and another work detail at Clarks Field in the province of Pampanga, proving that the Japs were furnishing these men with no better food than the hospital got. Meanwhile Commander Sartin had lost no time in continuing his fight, begun at Pasay, to get more food. On June 6th, as soon as he had completed his organization of the staff and seen the most essential steps taken for dealing with the conditions at the prison, he wrote Kusomoto as follows:

"Dear Sir:

Your attention is invited to the fact that the food allowance is entirely inadequate for proper nutrition and maintenance of health. Malnutrition is widespread among the inmates. A great many of those who are considered "well" and who are able to be up and about and who are used on working parties, are so weak from hunger and lack of proper food that they no longer have the strength or endurance for hard work.

Proper diets for the sick are not provided, and as a result convalescent time is prolonged and mild illnesses become serious due to associated malnutrition.

It is urgently requested and recommended that adequate food be provided to maintain the inmates of the prison in good health.

If it is agreeable to the Imperial Japanese Army, it is respectfully requested that I be permitted to communicate with the Consul of whatever neutral country that has been recognized by the Japanese Government, to look after the affairs of the United States Government, with a view of making arrangements to purchase additional provisions and necessary articles for the health and comfort of United States prisoners of war.

It is also requested that arrangements be made to pay the
salaries of all neutralized persons belonging to this Hospital Group, in accordance with the second article of the Geneva Convention.

Respectfully yours,

L.B. SARTIN"

The foregoing letter produced no response from the Japanese. Another, stronger request for food and medicine made on June 19th was similarly ignored, and the month closed with Dr. Sartin addressing a personal appeal to Kusomoto:

"Dear Sir:

In my previous communications to you I have reported that there are many prisoners seriously ill with malaria, dysentery, malnutrition and wounds. In order to be able to treat the sick successfully, a certain amount of hospital equipment, medicines, dressings and food are essential.

We do not have adequate laboratory, x-ray, surgical and nursing equipment; and, most important of all, a sufficient amount of food has not been furnished to maintain a state of good health. As a consequence, some deaths have occurred and others may be expected if necessary supplies and equipment are not promptly provided.

I believe that if I can be given permission by the Imperial Japanese Army for certain officers of this hospital staff to go into the city of Manila, that I can arrange to purchase additional articles of food and medicines which are so urgently needed.

I respectfully ask for your help in obtaining more medical supplies and adequate foods by whatever means will be agreeable to the Japanese High Command."

The food situation did not improve in July. On the contrary, the Japs actually furnished smaller amounts of meat and vegetables in that month than they had in June. Meanwhile, large numbers of patients had come in from the former U.S. Army Hospital at Corregidor from the infamous work detail at Tayabas and elsewhere, so that the patient load had risen to 973. This in spite of the fact that the alleged "interpreter" Harai, and his crew consistently rounded up large numbers of patients and sent them north to the prison camp. Malnutrition among the patients became even more universal.

In August, with the arrival of Dr. Nogi in place of Kusomoto, everyone's spirits received a slight fillip. The Japanese doctor announced that he intended to improve conditions at the camp to the best of his ability and that, specifically, he would try to get better food as well as medicine. Some of the men, accustomed to Kusomoto's meaningless promises, received this news skeptically, hoping against hope that it was true. Mr. Shearer wrote: "Dr. Nogi stated that conditions here would improve, especially the food. It is to be hoped that this is true. Unless something is done shortly to alleviate the conditions here, many that could be saved with proper treatment and food will probably die."

The new administrator of the camp did not produce the food that he had promised. In fact, meat deliveries during August were actually 50 percent below the
microscopic meat ration of July. A little more canned milk came in, and some flour, a little fruit and a few fish. The food supplied by the Japanese continued in this way for the next few months; furnishing an absurdly unbalanced diet, very high in carbohydrates and almost entirely lacking in proteins and fats. It was not long before all of the doctors were fighting the insidious diseases of starvation – pellagra, xerophthalmia, nutritional amblyopia, and so on, besides beri-beri and plain malnutrition.

Beri-Beri

Although hundreds of cases were diagnosed at Bilibid as “beri-beri,” the Navy doctors do not profess to have more than a general idea of the true incidence of the disease and what percentage of the patients had it. This is not the fault of the doctors or of the hospital records. It is the fault of the disease itself. Any doctor knows that true beri-beri is very difficult to differentiate from such things as nutritional edema, epidemic dropsy, various types of heart disease, pellagra and scurvy. All of these diseases have a definite relationship to an unbalanced, monotonous diet, abundant in decorticated (over-milled) cereals and low in proteins, fats and minerals. In many, if not most of the cases at Bilibid, the diagnosis of beri-beri had to be somewhat arbitrary, after considering and excluding the related deficiency diseases. Since the medical profession as a whole is by no means agreed on beri-beri, its nature, cause, symptoms and cure, it is not surprising that this disagreement should have been reflected among some members of the Bilibid medical staff, so that what one doctor might diagnose as beri-beri, another of the medical officers might consider to be nutritional edema or something else. Precise diagnosis in these diseases is not only often impossible, but always unimportant. They are all essentially related to deficiencies in diet and the remedy is always primarily more and better food. Nevertheless, it is interesting to study these diseases separately to see with what the Bilibid medical staff were confronted.

One thing about beri-beri on which everyone agrees is that it is a very ancient disease. The term undoubtedly arose from an Oriental language many years ago. Subsequent literature of the East contains many references to beri-beri, or to a disease so similar that it cannot be distinguished. In 1642, Jacobus Bontius, the first Western physician to describe the disease, found the natives of Java calling it beri-beri. It occurs throughout the world, among all races, and in all ages, but is especially prevalent in the rice-eating countries: China, Japan, Dutch East Indies, India, Malay Peninsula and the Philippines. As we have said, experience shows a definite relationship between beri-beri and a monotonous diet abundant in decorticated cereals. These diets are deficient in Vitamin B-1, but more than one chemical factor in the diet may be involved. In fact, many investigators believe that the deficiency is B-1, and other factors may simply render the patient susceptible to some toxin or infection, which is the real cause of the disease. There are, furthermore, several types of beri-beri (dry, wet, fulminating and infantile) none of which may be caused by the same chemical substance in the diet.

All doctors agree that beri-beri is a very serious disease. With adults, the onset is usually slow and insidious, commencing with a feeling of lassitude, fatigue and tenderness of the muscles. Sometimes it affects chiefly the peripheral nerves (nerves close to the surface), in which cases it is called “dry beri-beri.” When it is associated primarily with edema or swelling, caused by an accumulation of fluid in the connective tissues of the body, beri-beri is called “wet” and, when the heart is affected, it is called “fulminating beri-beri.” The symptoms can be associated with degeneration of the nervous system – especially the vagi nerves of the heart, the vasomotor system, that
regulates the expansion and contraction of the blood vessels, and the surface nerves of 
the legs, feet, arms and hands — alteration of the gastro-intestinal tract, edema, or 
enlargement and dilation of the heart.

The trouble is that not all of these symptoms may be present in a given patient, 
and the order of their appearance may vary. A patient affected principally in the heart 
may develop trouble in the gastro-intestinal tract, such as vomiting, diarrhea, or a 
distaste for food. He may or may not have peripheral neuritis (severe pain in the 
extremities) and swelling, or edema.

This edema is the most striking feature of the disease. Commander Sartin first 
noticed it at Pasay, where many of the prisoners were observed with swollen feet, ankles 
and legs. The tendency then was to diagnose this condition as “wet beri-beri,” and at 
Bilibid in June, 38 patients were reported as having this disease. Sixty-two patients 
were put down as under treatment for beri-beri in July. Commencing in August, 
however, the policy changed and only those patients who definitely had other symptoms 
of beri-beri were classified as such, those men with simple swelling being diagnosed as 
suffering from “nutritional edema” and classified generally under the headings of 
“malnutrition” or “other medical diseases,” or in many cases, these patients were not 
included under any specific classification. Edema is not a disease in itself; it is a 
symptom characteristic of many disease conditions and “nutritional edema” probably 
results from a combination of B-1 deficiency and low protein, salt and mineral deficient 
diet. It has made its appearance regularly among armies and prison camps, so much so 
that it is often called “war time edema.” By August, it was observed that two-thirds of the 
patients showed edema on admission to Bilibid and this percentage was fairly 
representative throughout.

Most of the cases of nutritional edema responded to the treatment that could be 
given them at the hospital, including vitamin therapy and such “special” food as was 
available. Those patients who did not respond to treatment were those who were 
admitted to the hospital in an extreme condition of malnutrition, usually with an additional 
complication like malaria or severe diarrhea — men, in other words, with three strikes on 
them before they came in.

The cases of “wet beri-beri,” on the other hand, responded much more slowly to 
treatment, most of them requiring many months of slow convalescence at Bilibid. Those 
cases of wet beri-beri with “massive” edema, complications of the gastro-intestinal tract 
and degeneration of the heart muscles all died, which is not surprising since medical 
experience indicates that the outlook for recovery in these “fulminating” cases is very 
poor. Other, less severe cases, got better, but many of them can look forward to chronic 
heart trouble as well as various digestive ailments for the rest of their lives.

In September, 1942, two patients developed severe, almost unendurable pain in 
their feet, to usher in one of the greatest problems at Bilibid — the “painful foot 
syndrome.” For a time it was thought that these men had the typical peripheral neuritis 
of dry beri-beri, and were classified as beri-beri cases. In January, 1943, however, at 
Dr. Nogi’s instigation, a Board of ten medical officers was appointed to study this 
phenomenon. The Board came to the conclusion after much study, that the painful foot 
syndrome was more closely allied to pellagra than to beri-beri, but it cannot be said that 
this was by any means the opinion of all of the doctors on the staff. Many of the medical 
officers remained convinced that they were confronted with dry beri-beri. However,
commencing in January, separate statistics were carried on the painful foot syndrome, which for several months affected almost a third of the patients at Bilibid.

Pellagra

Pellagra is another non-contagious, non-hereditary disease, primarily caused by dietary deficiencies. The term comes from the Italian “pelle agra,” meaning “rough skin.” It is probably as old as man – who has never paid much attention to what he eats, but the disease has not been investigated very closely until fairly recent times. Pellagra occurs in every country. It is high in Egypt, the United States, the Balkan countries, Russia, Italy and Spain. The United States Public Health Service estimates that there are 400,000 cases annually in the United States. As with beri-beri, it is still an open question whether pellagra is exclusively a dietary deficiency disease or whether it is an infection in which diet plays an important part.

Pellagra is easier to diagnose than beri-beri because the observable symptoms are more marked and exclusive. Like beri-beri, pellagra is an insidious disease which develops so gradually that the patient is often unaware of what is happening. After a long exposure to an insufficient diet such as the rice and “garbage soup” diet furnished by the Japanese at the prison camps in the Philippines, a patient begins to notice a loss of strength, particularly in the legs; a change in appetite and usually a great loss of weight. These things he is likely to put down to weakness caused by lack of proper food. Often at this early stage, there is a change of mood or personality, usually for the worse. People who normally have happy, cheerful dispositions become irritable, morose and brooding. They do things which they would not think of doing normally – things which they look back upon with horror when they have recovered. As a matter of fact, pellagra in this early stage is often incorrectly diagnosed as neurasthenia – mental depression caused by exhausted nerve energy.

Glossitis (inflammation of the tongue) and stomatitis (inflammation of the mouth) usually come next, indicating disturbance of the gastro-intestinal tract. The tongue is red and very sensitive. There is a burning sensation in the mouth and usually sores develop around the sides of the mouth. Deep sores may also develop on the tongue and usually the mouth and tongue become so sensitive that the victim is unable to eat many things, particularly acid foods. Patients coming into Bilibid frequently reported that they were unable to eat even bananas: “They burn like fire, doctor; I can’t eat them” After a time it becomes increasingly hard for the patient to eat anything; he experiences difficulty in swallowing even the blandest foods. Some patients coming to Bilibid would chew on a mouthful of rice for five or ten minutes, completely unable to perform the physical act of swallowing. They would have to wash their food down with water. As the disease progresses, severe diarrhea develops, with several watery stools each hour.

After a time, the most spectacular symptom of pellagra usually develops - dermatitis, or lesions – ugly-looking sores. It begins as a redness of the skin, resembling sunburn. Since this is usually restricted to the arms, hands and other exposed parts of the body, most patients actually believe at this point that they have been sunburned. Therefore, these portions become roughened and scaly, blisters form, break and the sores develop. Many of the patients admitted from such hell-holes as the Nichols Field detail were in horrible condition, with raw open sores covering their feet, legs, hands and arms, as well as other parts of their body.
Other effects are common in this terrible disease, not the least of which is a marked decrease in sexual desire and, sometimes, sterility. The most terrible development, however, is the effect of pellagra on the mind. Pellagrins are subject, as we have said, to periods of great depression and apprehension and, as the disease progresses, hallucinations, confusion and delirium, followed by finally – insanity. It is believed that at least 10 percent of the inmates of the insane asylums in the southern part of the United States were admitted because of pellagra. So we have "the four D's of pellagra" – debility, diarrhea, dermatitis and dementia.

This disease first began to manifest itself in patients admitted to Bilibid and among members of the staff as early as September, 1942. In that month, the doctors noticed that some patients complained of sore tongues – one of the earliest of pellagra symptoms. By October, these cases had increased and many men had sore mouths. Three pharmacist's mates had symptoms of incipient pellagra. From November on it was a major problem. Nutritional edema and wet beri-beri, on the other hand, had manifested themselves much earlier, these deficiency states developing, as a rule, faster than pellagra.

Painful Foot Syndrome

This disease was slow in starting. About September, 1942, some of the men coming in from the prison camps and labor gangs for treatment for other diseases, began to complain of a dull, throbbing ache in the bones of their feet. Within a week, these men were in terrible pain; the soles of their feet burned and sharp, darting pains were shooting up from their toes and ankles. The pain was continuous, but most severe after 5:00 p.m. and at night, when the sufferers were in such agony that morphine injections were necessary to relieve them. The pain usually lessened somewhat in the morning, but was never entirely absent. By October, this malady had spread considerably with all of the ward doctors reporting cases of it, and "painful feet" was thereafter a major problem, with 25 percent of the patients being affected with it by December.

The doctors tried everything they could think of to give these poor men some relief. Everything, that is, within the limits of the slender resources available at the prison hospital. Undoubtedly this malady was connected very closely to a generalized vitamin deficiency and the victims were plied with synthetic vitamin preparations, as they were available. There was little or no response to this, nor did calcium injections have any noticeable effect. Indeed, no medication appeared to be of any value. Some of the victims got relief of a sort from soaking their feet in cold water and the wash racks and outside faucets were thronged with men all night. When they were not soaking their feet, the men were walking about, slowly, painfully, setting down each foot as though they were walking on eggs. All night they walked about, went out and soaked their feet, returned to the wards to walk about for a while, then out again to soak and so on, until dawn. Sleep was impossible without massive jolts of morphine, but the doctors had to be niggardly with this palliative, because of the fear of giving the men the dope habit. So, for the most part, these wretches just had to bear the pain as best they could. During the day, when the pain had subsided somewhat, they would lie on their bunks, legs crossed in the air, holding their feet. This grotesque attitude was typical. During the height of the "epidemic" one could walk through the wards and see row after row of "sore feet cases" with their legs crossed in the air this way. The writer asked one of them why he assumed this posture. Did it help? "No, it doesn't help a damn bit," the
One of the measures resorted to in an effort to find some relief for these victims was spinal anesthesia, with disappointing results. A few patients were relieved completely until the anesthesia wore off, whereupon the pain came back as severe as ever. Some men believed that the pain was actually worse after the anesthetic and not a few experienced no relief whatever, even during the period of effectiveness of the anesthetic. Commander Hayes, the Chief of Surgery, reported that he had observed some sore feet cases who, upon being given spinal anesthesia for abdominal operations were completely relieved during the operation, and others who, while they could not feel the surgeon's knife, continued to feel the excruciating pain in their feet.

The Japanese finally took an interest in the "painful foot syndrome," not because they were particularly solicitous about the welfare of the prisoners, but because Japanese soldiers in the Philippines began to get the affliction themselves. That would never do. The disease baffled the Japanese doctors and they apparently decided to use the American prisoners of war and the American doctors to find out about the painful foot syndrome — its cause and cure. Dr. Nogi appointed committees of doctors at the various prison camps, including Bilibid, informing Dr. Sartin that his "Board of Medical Examiners for the Study of the Painful Foot Syndrome" could have every assistance that Dr. Nogi could provide. After a study of several weeks, the Board made its report as follows:

1. The "painful foot syndrome" is clinically and pathologically synonymous with those conditions described as "Somaliland Food," "Scott's Palsy," "Scott's Neuritis," etc., these conditions being, in the light of our more advanced knowledge, no longer tenable as diagnosis entities, but more scientifically classified under the aviteminoses.

2. This syndrome is more closely related to the pellegra elements of the 'B' complex and features consistently with the mouth, skin, eye and intestinal pathology of pellagra, rather than of beri-beri.

3. The condition is not entirely a 'B' complex deficiency. There is every evidence to indicate a polyvitamin deficiency as well as the presence of a marked influencing factor of disturbed metabolism incident to a prolonged carbohydrate — fat — protein imbalance.

Nothing new or important was revealed by this study. Of academic interest, however, was the demonstrable fact that the pathogenesis of pain was not always the same per se. Pain of vascular origin, as well as intimate nerve pain, was evident. Involvement of the sympathetics was an interesting feature.

The outstanding feature of the condition, as found in this study, was its absolute resistance to any and all vitamin drug therapy and its ready response to general increase in amount and variety of diet with an increase in the protein — fat consistency relative to the carbohydrate element. In late January and February, the general diet was supplemented throughout the compound and immediately the incidence of the syndrome declined. The actual monthly statistical figures of camp morbidity revealed a constant and startling parallel in the incidence curves for general malnutrition cases and 'painful feet'.
The only palliative measure of any real value was the administration of morphine, symptomatically.

From information available, the findings of this Board are essentially those of other Boards at other prison camps on Luzon.

The obvious recommendation of the Board, naturally, is: Balanced ration supplemented by vitamin therapy."

In other words, the opinion of the Board was that the "painful foot syndrome" was a disease of starvation; that medicine was no good without food. Fortunately, better food was forthcoming and, while this affliction remained serious, it was at least arrested before every prisoner contracted it. The better food enabled the painful feet sufferers eventually to get well, after a long period of convalescence, and they suffered no permanent ill effects, in contrast to the next group of starvation diseases – the malnutritional eye cases.

The Occular Diseases

With the possible exception of the men whose minds were affected by pellagra and those who suffered permanent damage to the heart as a result of beri-beri, the saddest of the starvation diseases concerned those patients whose eyes were affected. The eye cases were divided into two groups called Xerophthalmia and Nutritional Amblyopia.

Xerophthalmia

In the month of November, 1942, Bilibid Hospital began to receive a new series of cases, mostly from the big prison camp at Cabanatauan. The Japanese shipped 31 prisoners into Bilibid from the hospital at Cabanatauan, and this group was in just as pitiful a condition as any from the Tayabas work gang or from Nichol's Field. Showing the effects of months of subsistence on a starvation diet, these men were caricatures of human beings – emaciated skeletons. The familiar dietary diseases were all represented – pellagra, beri-beri, nutritional edema – but in addition, they had a disease more sinister in its implications. They were all going blind. The best way to describe this disease is probably to quote Dr. Sartin's report of it to the Japanese in the Sanitary Report of December, 1941, translating medical terms where necessary:

"A new series of cases was admitted to the hospital during November, characterized by blindness, superficial corneal ulceration, epiphora, periorbital edema, photophobia, conjunctivitis, xerophthalmia, loss of body weight, impairment of mental acuity, loss of appetite, marked pain and tenderness of the bulbous oculi and the periorbital tissues. Their general appearance on admission is that of marked and prolonged nutritional phthisis. Their most uniform complaints and the physical findings most frequently encountered in the physical examinations, are those listed above and referable to the eyes."

With a few of these prisoners, the disease had already gone too far; they had irrevocably lost the sight of one or both eyes and the Bilibid doctors were by no means sure that most of the group would not eventually go blind. Dr. Sartin reported to the
"The lack of vitamin A is believed to be the cause of the disorders manifest in this group of cases. It is thought that the corneal ulceration and opacities may, in a number of cases, result in permanent opacities of the cornea. Unfortunately, most of these ulcers were of several weeks' duration and moreover were located over the pupillary area. Such opacities as may remain permanent may respond to keratoplasty, but otherwise will result in permanently deficient visual acuity."

After its first appearance in November, Xerophthalmia took its place among the major problems at Bilibid. This disease and the companion eye disorder, nutritional amblyopia, both failed in general to follow the downward trend in the deficiency diseases, which began in February, 1943. There were probably several reasons for this fact. Most important, of course, was the fact that the resources at Bilibid Hospital did not permit giving the eye patients adequate treatment and food. About all that could be done for these patients was to give them systematic treatment of their ulcers and conjunctivitis (in the case of the Xerophthalmia sufferers), such "extra" diet as was available; and cod-liver oil whenever and to the extent that this was furnished by the Japanese.

Nevertheless, most of the Xerophthalmia patients gradually improved after they were admitted to Bilibid. It was a long, slow process with all of them, but they did get better. Only a handful suffered permanent loss of vision and those few, only in one eye. For some inexplicable reason, the ulcers rarely developed in both eyes.

**Nutritional Amblyopia**

The phrase "nutritional amblyopia" is purposely vague. "Amblyopia" means, essentially, impaired vision, whether for any cause. You may have amblyopia for a number of reasons: defective vision due to old age can be called "senile amblyopia," for example. In December, 1942, the prison hospital began receiving prisoners who, while their eyes appeared upon examination to be normal, nevertheless suffered from defective vision. To this group, Dr. C.L. Walsh gave the general term "nutritional amblyopia" or defective vision caused by improper nutrition. Dr. Sartin remarked of this development in his Sanitation Report for January, 1943:

"A type of visual difficulty new to this hospital has been found in cases of amblyopia, admitted in December. Patients suffering from amblyopia complain of photophobia and blurring of vision. There are no changes in the fundi or external signs of inflammation. Such cases are believed to be due to nutritional deficiencies and multiple avitamineses. Four cases of amblyopia have developed among members of the Hospital Corps on duty at this hospital. Three of these Hospital Corpsmen have been on duty with our staff since the staff was first interned on January 2, 1942."

The manifestations of this disease were peculiar. Patients suffering from it were not blind. Blindness, per se, includes inability to see at all; inability to distinguish light from dark. These men could see and get around, but their acuteness of vision was affected. Most of them could not read—the letters blurred, as did everything within their
range of vision. On the other hand, many of them could do tasks that did not require sharp eyesight, such as chopping wood or working with a pick and shovel. They could not stand light (photophobia) and it was necessary to supply them with homemade visors. Dark glasses were at a premium.

None of the Navy doctors had seen these cases of nutritional eye disorders before, although some of them had, naturally, seen duty in tropical and semi-tropical countries. This is something to wonder at, for such things as xerophthalmia and nutritional amblyopia are not common diseases. They were almost unknown in the Philippines before the war. No matter how poor some Filipinos might be, they could always get a hold of a little fruit, coconuts or fish to go with their rice and it does not take very much to enable your body to maintain itself. These diseases are never encountered in the United States or in Europe excepting, possibly, under conditions of appalling mass starvation such as existed in Poland and in some of the Balkan countries during the last conflict. Not very much is known about them, for the reason that where these diseases have appeared, they have arisen under conditions which precluded scientific study and research.

This was true at Bilibid. It was known that xerophthalmia and nutritional amblyopia were caused by malnutrition, specifically by a lack of vitamins, particularly vitamin A, but the facilities of the hospital did not allow any degree of scientific study. The best source of the essential vitamins is, of course, food, and the diet that could be provided fell far short of even a maintenance level, let alone provide for a therapeutic margin in essential vitamins, proteins and fats. Cod liver oil and other fish oils were sorely needed, but the supplies of these items did not allow for more than a fourth or a fifth of what would have been given the patients under normal conditions, and frequently the hospital was without them altogether. Nevertheless, by “pulling together,” portioning out the available medicines and food through the diet kitchen and in other ways, most of the patients did improve, albeit slowly.

From the time that the first eye patients were received from Cabanatauan in November, 1942, Dr. Walsh’s clinic treated an average of more than 100 patients a day and these patients constituted a large percentage of the total patient load. Strangely enough these men were, as a rule, fairly healthy-looking specimens compared with the other diseases of starvation. In general, they seemed to be the strongest of the prisoners, and for that reason they were kept at work on labor gangs until long after they should have been sent to Bilibid. In March, 1943, Commander Sartin, reporting to the Japanese that there were 146 cases of malnutritional eye disorders in the hospital, remarked that . . . “prompt transfer of cases from outlying stations, to the hospital would tend to prevent such eventualities (such as the loss of one eye) in some cases.” This admonition had no effect, however. The policy of the Japanese was always to work the men until they dropped — and sometimes after. They would not send a man to Bilibid who looked strong and healthy, just because he couldn’t see.

While the eye cases — particularly the amblyopias — looked all right, they were easy to distinguish at Bilibid with their slow, halting gait, eyes squinting under their homemade eye shades. Dr. Welch had some signs hung up in his clinic containing the best advice that he could give them:

"EYE PATIENTS
WEAR A HAT OR AN EYE SHADE
WHEN OUTSIDE"
ALWAYS

BUY
EGGS, LEMONS, LIMES, ORANGES,
BANANAS, PAPAYAS, MONGO BEANS”

These admonitions evoked a bit of ribald humor in the American manner, directed at popular Dr. Walsh. One of the feature acts in his weekly shows was the following ditty, sung to the tune of “Thank Your Father.”

“Stop tobacco!
Cut out smoking!
Cigarettes don’t help and, fellows, I’m not joking.
Better spend your dough on beans or on limes;
Stop, stop tobacco!
Cut out smoking!
And you’ll find that it will pay . . . .
If you’ve blurring eyes and sore feet,
Fresh fruit is what you should eat
And cut out smoking today!”

Malnutrition and Avitaminosis

These two formidable words are actually very simple in their meaning. Malnutrition is, essentially, a polite term for starvation. The word was used at Bilibid during the first months, to describe the vast number of patients who, while not actually suffering from any precise deficiency disease such as beri-beri or pellagra, were so emaciated for all medical purposes. Later the significance of the term was narrowed to include only those patients who had more than two forms of vitamin deficiencies, plus a demonstrable lack of proteins and fats. “Avitaminosis”, is simply disease resulting from lack of vitamins in general. Pellagra, beri-beri, xerophthalmia and amblyopia are all avitaminoses and, where a patient had more than two manifestations of avitaminoses, the term given his condition at Bilibid was “generalized avitaminosis.” Separate figures were kept on generalized avitaminosis, beginning in January, 1943. Previous to that time it had been lumped with “generalized malnutrition.”

So there you have the general picture of the diseases of starvation, which confronted the Navy doctors continually from the day that the Navy embarked on its task of caring for the prisoners of war. The diseases developed one by one, starting with the symptoms of “nutritional edema” (first observed at Pasay), followed thereafter with beri-beri, then pellagra, the “painful foot syndrome” and finally, the eye diseases. It is hoped that the discussion of these diseases on the preceding pages has been helpful, but only in a general way for, after all, precise diagnosis and classification is not particularly important. As we have pointed out, starvation is starvation no matter what you may call it and precise diagnosis and pigeonholing of the diseases of starvation is not only difficult, but frequently impossible and nearly always useless. Put a man on a diet of rice and garbage soup for a few weeks or months and he is going to get sick. That is all there is to it and whether the disease will attack his heart or his digestive system, his nervous system, his mind or his eyes, is unpredictable. Put any two men on such a diet and it is unlikely that the same disease will hit both of them or that they will both succumb at the same time. One man may come down within a few weeks with severe
swelling of the feet, legs, scrotum, and with permanent damage to his heart, liver and intestines. Later he may develop the agony called the "painful foot syndrome." The other man may go on for months longer with no visible effects beyond loss of weight and then he might wake up one morning and find himself unable to see. It seems to be entirely a caprice of nature, depending upon a number of factors – inheritance, previous dietary habits and habits of living.

For these reasons it was assumed at Bilibid – and rightly – that the important statistics concerned the dietary disease as a whole, and that the diseases of malnutrition together constituted one problem, which was essentially one of food. Seventy-five percent of the patients at Bilibid in June, 1942, were suffering from malnutrition. In other words, from the very beginning, three-fourths of the patients admitted to Bilibid were suffering from some form of starvation. A truly appalling record!

The Japanese, while maintaining that they wanted a hospital for war prisoners at Bilibid, did not do very much about until July. In that month the Japs began releasing large numbers of Filipino prisoners to their homes or to civilian hospitals. This program was completed, so far as Bilibid was concerned, by September 1st. From that time on, the personnel consisted of American war prisoners and a small number of civilian "militarized civilians." The last of the "well" prisoners were evacuated from the prison on August 18th, and from that time on the hospital was the only activity there, being given the title of "The Bilibid Hospital for Military Prison Camps of the Philippine Islands," with Lieutenant Nogi as Director.
Chapter 11

THE FIGHT FOR FOOD

You have seen in previous chapters that food was far and away the biggest problem that confronted the Navy hospital unit, from the time that it went to the Pasay Elementary School from Santa Scholastica College – that food, or rather the lack of it – played a prominent part in every disease, inadequate diet retarding the recovery of all of the patients. We have seen that the diseases of malnutrition together constituted by far the largest percentage of the ill at Bilibid, affecting on the average, more than 75 percent of the patients and a considerable number of the staff. Certainly, malnutrition was a subsidiary cause of death in all of the deaths attributed to dysentery and malaria.

Nevertheless, the death rate at Bilibid was very low. Up to 1943, there were a total of 116 deaths. Of this total, 69, or more than half, were recorded during the first three months – June, July and August, 1942. Further inspection of the facts regarding these deaths shows that a big percentage of them were not attributable to the hospital at all. For example – 2 out of 29 deaths among patients received at Bilibid from the Tayabas Province road-building project occurred while the men were en route to the hospital. In other words, the patients were already dead when they came in. Similarly, there are 18 deaths recorded among patients brought in from Nichols Field up to July 15, 1943, but all but 3 of these were bodies of men who had died at the Field and had been brought in to Bilibid for burial. Of the 100 deaths remaining, 7 were patients who were already at Bilibid prison when the Navy arrived there on May 30, 1942. These men were already in a dying condition; nothing could be done for them except to clean them up and make them as comfortable as possible. Most of them died within a few days or weeks. Similarly, the men who came in from Tayabas were in a critical condition after a few weeks in that hell-hole and, while most of them were saved, the Japs had done too thorough a job of murder on 27 of them, who expired, some after lingering weeks or even months.

When these things are taken into consideration, the actual death rate at Bilibid Hospital appears very small indeed. It should be remembered, too, that Bilibid, especially during the early months, got only the worst cases. Anyone who could walk (and many who could not) were shipped out to prison camps, over the doctors' protests. The Bilibid record compares very favorably in this respect with what we know of prison camps in the past. I have already referred to the terrific death toll among the British army at Gallipoli during the last war. (Gallipoli was not, of course, a prison camp, but from all accounts, sanitary conditions were as bad or worse than the meanest prison camp).

History records that 13,000 men died at the Confederate prison camp at Andersonville, Georgia, during the Civil War, out of some 49,000 prisoners interned there. As a matter of fact, the Bilibid record looks pretty good even when compared with the death rate at the average hospital in peace time. The rated capacity of Bilibid was 620 beds, a pretty good-sized hospital. As a matter of fact, only two out of the fourteen Navy hospitals exceeded that capacity before this last war. The Navy hospital at Canacao was rated at only 306 beds. Furthermore, this capacity was often exceeded, with the Japs dumping patients in and taking them out at their own convenience, so that the actual patient census averaged well over 620. Even leaving this aside, however, the
death rate at Bilibid figures out to something over 1 percent and after October, 1943, it had dwindled to practically nothing.

I do not mean to imply that the food problem was ever entirely solved at Bilibid. On the contrary, Commander Sartin wrestled with it to the very end. Nevertheless, enough food was gathered together not only to keep the men alive, but eventually to get most of them well. The story of how this was accomplished is a story of shrewd, courageous leadership on the part of Commanders Sartin and Jones, and the unselfish cooperation of every member of their organization to get food for the patients.

At first, it was not only a question of getting food, but also of finding a place to cook that food. The "galley" the Navy first found at Bilibid was out of the question, situated as it was within a few yards of an open latrine and a garbage pit. This made the construction of a new galley imperative and Pharmacist Pfeiffer (Maintenance Officer under the first organizational set-up) was told to attend to this, with instructions to build the galley as far away from Dr. Brokenshire's ward as possible. Pfeiffer and his crew got busy and the new galley was ready for business on June 12th.

This was probably one of the most primitive kitchens ever to serve a hospital. It consisted of fourteen large iron cauldrons mounted on "adobe stone fireplaces." These cauldrons, under a lean-to shed that the maintenance crew built with scrap lumber they picked up around the place, constituted the galley. All of it. Some of the cauldrons were for boiling rice, some for boiling "soup." And, with a few minor improvements noted thereafter, this arrangement continued to serve the population of the prison for the remainder of the time.

The new galley built, Mr. Pfeiffer took over as Commissary Officer, and was given sixteen more pharmacist's mates as cooks. Two of these were Pharmacist's Mates Wallace and Compton. There wasn't very much to cook: rice, and not much of that. There was lugao for breakfast and rice for dinner and supper. The rice was taken around in 5-gallon cans – one can for 50 men. Occasionally, the Japs furnished a little meat and vegetables – very little. From June 13th, when the hospital corpsmen took over the galley, until the end of June is 17 days. For 17 of these days, the Japs furnished nothing but rice. Once they brought in beef, twice carabao, and three times, vegetables. A little salt and a whisper of milk completed the ration list for that month. The "vegetables" consisted of eggplant and "greens" – turnip tops, peanut tops, and pechay. This last item is hard to describe. It is a plant faintly resembling spinach stalks. If you boil pechay long enough, you can eat it, but you won't like it. Apparently the Japs had gathered up the refuse from the markets in Manila – floor sweepings – and sent them in to Bilibid, because the alleged vegetables were all dirty, dried-up things, resembling nothing so much as a pile of weeds. Five of the seven loads of vegetables sent in that month were so completely decayed that they could not be used at all, even for the starving prisoners, who certainly were not over-particular.

It was obvious that the men could not exist for very long on such a diet, and in fact Dr. Sartin, as soon as he had completed his organization of the hospital staff, and had seen a few of the most essential steps for dealing with the situation, wrote to Kusomoto, the Japanese Commander, as follows:
"Dear Sir:

Your attention is invited to the fact that the food allowance is entirely inadequate for proper nutrition and maintenance of health. Malnutrition is widespread among the inmates. A great many of these who are considered "well," and who are able to be up and about and who are used on working parties, are so weak from hunger and lack of proper food that they no longer have the strength or endurance for hard work.

Proper diets for the sick are not provided, and as a result, convalescent time is prolonged and mild illnesses become serious, due to associated malnutrition. It is urgently requested and recommended that adequate food be provided to maintain the inmates of this prison in a state of good health.

If it is agreeable to the Imperial Japanese Army, it is respectfully requested that I be permitted to communicate with the Consul of whatever neutral country that has been recognized by the Japanese Government to look after the affairs of the United States Government, with a view to making arrangements to purchase additional provisions and necessary articles for the health and comfort of United States prisoners.

It is also requested that arrangements be made to pay the salaries of all neutralized persons belonging to this Hospital Group, in accordance with the second additional article of the Geneva Convention.

Respectfully yours,
L.B. SARTIN
Senior Medical Officer"

This letter was ignored by the Japanese, with Kusomoto not even bothering to acknowledge receipt. Meanwhile, the patient census was rising gradually, and with the arrival of 35 patients from the Tayabas Province work gang, and 642 patients from the former U.S. Army Hospital No. 1 ("Little Baguio") in Bataan, the patient load had reached 733 by June 19th, when Dr. Sartin wrote to Kusomoto again, in a stronger vein. This letter was similarly ignored and the month closed with Dr. Sartin addressing still another appeal to the Jap commander:

"Dear Sir:

In my previous communications to you, I have reported that there are many prisoners seriously ill with malaria, dysentery, malnutrition and wounds. In order to be able to treat the sick successfully, a certain amount of hospital equipment, medicines, dressings and food are essential.

We do not have adequate laboratory, X-ray, surgical and nursing equipment; and, most important of all, a sufficient amount of food has not been furnished to maintain a state of good health. As a consequence, some deaths have occurred and others may be expected if necessary supplies and equipment are not promptly provided.

I believe that if I can be given permission by the Imperial Japanese Army for certain officers of this Hospital Staff to go into the City of Manila, and I can arrange to purchase additional articles of food and medicines which are so urgently needed.
I respectfully ask for your help in obtaining more medical supplies and adequate food by whatever means will be agreeable to the Japanese High Command.

Respectfully yours,

L.B. SARTIN

The food ration did not improve in July. On the contrary, the Japs contrived to furnish even smaller amounts of meats and vegetables in that month than they did during June. Meanwhile, the large influx of patients and prisoners had come in from Corregidor (Chapter 9), and also during that month, 205 more from the Tayabas detail. The Japs ordered out large drafts of both prisoners and patients during that month, but the population, even with this, averaged over 1,300 people, including Americans and Filipinos, and by the end of July, Mr. Pfeiffer's galley was feeding 1,260 people, 875 of whom were patients. It is estimated that the rice and weeds furnished by the Japs during July, yielded an average of (blanked out) calories per day, per man, practically all of which were rice calories — carbohydrates. By this time, 81 patients had primary diagnoses of malnutrition, and 14 of beri-beri, or more than 10 percent of the total patient load down with diseases of starvation and malnutrition was a subsidiary diagnosis in most of the other classifications.

The Japs made their deliveries of meat and vegetables about twice a week and at first it was necessary to promptly put all of it into the soup as soon as it was received, because there was no way of preserving food. This invariably made two or three days in a row with nothing but rice. Hospital corpsmen did build a "coolerator" out of some scrap lumber and gunny sacking, which made it possible to preserve meat overnight and this helped a little, although there were still plenty of meals of plain rice.

On July 17th, the Japs presented the camp with an unwanted luxury. Among the prisoners from Corregidor were some 25 Chinese who had been mess-boys, stewards and whatnot for the U.S. Army before the war. They were not cooks in any sense of the word, but the Japs blandly informed Dr. Sartin that the Chinese men would man the galley thenceforth. Kusomoto let it be known that he considered that Imperial Nippon was treating the American prisoners of war very well indeed, thus to furnish them with Chinese cooks. Apparently it was a manifestation of subtle Oriental humor, to give the prisoners starvation rations and at the same time, to ram these Chinese men down the prisoners' throats with talk of "luxury." The Japs seemed to get amusement from seeing these former mess stewards boiling up rice and weeds for the Americans.

After forcing the Americans out of the galley, the Japs took a perverse delight in stirring up as much friction as possible. Harai, the "Interpreter," was forever sneering at the Chinese for "acting as servants" to the Americans, and Japanese officers would stop during the frequent inspection visits and lecture the Chinese, telling them that they should be ashamed of themselves for serving Americans — that Asia was now free from Anglo-American domination, etc. As a result the Chinese men became, to put it politely, very independent. They refused to clean and wash the "vegetables" and rice, with the result that the stuff was always dirty and gritty. Rice and weeds are hard enough to eat without having to take a mouthful of dirt along with it, and Pfeiffer railed at the shiftless Chinese, only to meet with hostile stares and grunts of defiance.
Then there was the rain. It never just rains in the Philippines – it pours! During the first week of July, it rained steadily night and day, until the water stood from 12 to 14 inches deep all over the compound. Firewood was wet (and green anyway), so that the rice was often half-soaked and finally the water rose so high in the galley that it extinguished the fires. At this point, the Japs gave permission to move the galley temporarily to the former location in the upper compound, which welcome not only on account of the water problem, but also because most of the water had been draining down from the upper compound where the Isolation Yard was located; a fact that had been giving Commander Sartin many a restless night. It was a week or more before the floods subsided sufficiently to permit moving the galley back again.

In August came the change of command at Bilibid, with Dr. Nogi relieving Kusomoto. The new commander asked for a conference with Dr. Sartin and Mr. Pfeiffer. The food, Nogi promised, would improve. What did American soldiers and sailors eat? Nogi wanted to know. Could Pfeiffer tell him, off-hand?

Pfeiffer could and did, making out a sample week’s menu at a Naval hospital in peace time. Ham or bacon and eggs for breakfast, with coffee, toast, cereal; meat, potatoes, vegetables, dessert, coffee or tea for dinner and supper – good American chow. Poor Pfeiffer got hungry just sitting there writing it down. Nogi took the piece of paper. He nodded his head, slowly.

“Ah, so! This is peace time. Now will you show me what Americans eat in war time?”

Pfeiffer took the paper and made a few rapid calculations. Only two meat meals instead of three. Fewer desserts. A general cut all around in calories. He handed the paper back. Nogi read it, a puzzled look appearing slowly on his face. He spoke rapidly to his interpreter, Yakushito.

“But this is not the same. Here you have less food for war time than for peace time. How can that be?”

Mr. Pfeiffer explained patiently that in war time the American Army and Navy habitually reduce rations in the field; that the Navy hospital unit had gone on short rations at Santa Scholastica College, cutting down to two meals a day. “We ate only twice a day; a light breakfast at 10:00 o’clock, and a fairly substantial meal at 5:00 p.m.,” he said.

Nogi and Yakushito laughed uproariously at this intelligence. “But that is ridiculous!” the Japanese doctor explained. “Why go on short rations when war breaks out – when you are fighting? The Japanese Army always increases the rations when the soldiers are in the field. That is when they need the food!”

Pfeiffer had to admit that the Japs had something there, but he explained that rations were limited at Santa Scholastica because Captain Davis had had no way of knowing how long they would be there, and food supplies, while fairly ample, nevertheless could not have been replenished once they had been consumed. “We had to look ahead,” he confided. “Captain Davis thought it best to conserve on food.”
The two Japanese chuckled a while longer at the thought of cutting down on the rations of fighting soldiers, but finally let the subject drop and departed, taking with them Pfeiffer's sample menus. Everyone was greatly encouraged. It looked as though the new administrator really intended to do something and that the food would improve at least to the point where men could live on it. Rumors flew about the camp that the Japs had asked for sample menus of meals served American soldiers and sailors during peace time; that Dr. Nogi intended to furnish the same food to Bilibid. Oatmeal, hotcakes, ham, bacon, eggs — even, some asserted — pie!

This anticipatory pleasure was short-lived, however. Nogi announced blandly that thenceforth the food at Bilibid would improve. Each man would get 100 grams of meat and 300 grams of vegetables in addition to the rice. That figures out to a little more than a fourth of a pound of meat and about three-fourths of a pound of vegetables. Split that up between two meals and it works out to about three and a half tablespoons of meat and about ten tablespoons of vegetables each meal. That isn't very much, but it was still just about that much better than the men had been getting under the Kusomoto regime. However, it soon developed that the Japs included bone as meat in figuring the allowance and those carabao bones are heavy. No allowance was made for loss in trimming the meat or for spoiled meat, of which there was a lot. Rotten vegetables were not replaced either and the loss from all of these items easily ran to 35 percent. On top of that, the Japs sometimes forgot to bring in anything but rice, so that, while there were not as many plain rice days as there had been in June and July, they came often enough.

Nevertheless, it was a slight improvement and any increase in food, no matter how small, was welcome. At the end of August, Dr. Sartin began writing his monthly "Sanitary Reports," a complete summary of the conditions of the hospital and in this first report he hailed the improvement in the rations, but pointing out that, while the average daily calories per man increased in August, the diet was still inadequate in proteins, fats, fresh fruits and vegetables. In his analysis of the food supply, he showed that 84.8% of the total ratio was carbohydrates and only 10% protein and 5.2% fat. This ratio, he said, "is not enough to maintain well people in a state of health and is far below the requirements for the sick." As a matter of fact, the Japs had furnished 50% less meat than they had in the month of July, but they had apparently sought to offset this with small deliveries of peanuts (in the shell), coconuts, small green mangos and papayas, and fish; with this latter item in the form of a sort of undersized minnow — "too small to scale and eviscerate before cooking." As a matter of fact, by the time the fish boiled in the soup, they were too small even to find.

That first month of August, 1942, under the new administration, practically set the pattern for the ensuing months as far as food was concerned. The ration never improved to any great extent, the tremendous disparity between carbohydrates, proteins and fats continuing. Occasional increases in one item were usually offset by a decrease in another. For example, in September, 1942, the second month under the Nogi administration, the Japs furnished a little flour (about two ounces per day per man) and 40 carcasses of frozen mutton that they had apparently picked up in some cold storage plant in town. But, in that same month they cut down drastically on the tiny supply of canned milk and eliminated the fruit altogether. The mutton was very "ripe." In fact, 16 carcasses out of the 40 were so putrefied that they had to be buried.
By this time, the deficiency diseases were beginning to assume alarming proportions and Dr. Sartin, in an effort to convince the Japanese that food and food alone was the root of the problem, took 24 of the worst-looking among the malnutrition cases and put them on such extra diet as was available. After two weeks he was able to report to the Japanese as follows:

"Marked improvement was noted in a group of 24 cases, when extra foods containing vitamins, protein and fat were made available in limited amounts for a period of two weeks. This food was given to these two dozen patients because of their extremely malnourished state. The results were exemplary and are indicative of what this hospital unit hopes in the near future to do for the benefit of all patients, if and when a suitable general diet is provided for all personnel. All patients provided this extra food were suffering from either malaria, malnutrition, beri-beri, or a combination of two or all of these diseases.

The gross combined gain in body weight of these 24 patients was 236 pounds during the two week period. Their clinical improvement was so marked as to place them apart from those patients on the regular diet. After the termination of two weeks, the 24 patients were again placed on regular diet.

Such a procedure graphically illustrates the results which could be anticipated if a diet sufficient in protein, fats and vitamins were made available."

Meanwhile, Dr. Nogi had again requested sample menus, such as would be served in an American hospital. He wanted detailed diets, one for "very sick" patients, one for "light sick," and a third for well men. In addition, he asked Mr. Pfeiffer to give him some recipes for creamed soups. Pfeiffer laboriously worked all of this out, being careful to prepare his menus using only food easily available in quantities in the Philippines at that time, but nothing further was heard of it. The ration supply continued as it always had been - rice and soup. Possibly the whole thing was another subtle touch of Oriental humor.

Nogi did produce one very welcome improvement - regular ice deliveries. The pharmacist's mates built an ice-box out of scrap materials and with this, it became possible to preserve food between deliveries. Nogi also instituted regular deliveries three times weekly so that thenceforward Pfeiffer was able to plan his meals to some extent, instead of proceeding on a hand-to-mouth basis, as he had been forced to do under Kusomoto. The regular ration per man which Nogi set up in August and which continued practically unchanged thereafter was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>AMOUNT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RICE</td>
<td>500 Grams (about one pound)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SALT</td>
<td>15 Grams (about half an ounce)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUGAR</td>
<td>20 Grams (about 1 1/2 ounces)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COOKING OIL</td>
<td>15 Grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CORNSTARCH</td>
<td>10 Grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEA</td>
<td>1 Gram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEAT</td>
<td>100 Grams (about 3 1/2 ounces)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VEGETABLES</td>
<td>300 Grams</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
By the end of November, six months after the surrender of Bataan and seven months after the surrender of Corregidor, the diseases of starvation had become a serious problem, 25 percent of the patients at Bilibid having one or another of the deficiency diseases as their principal diagnosis. Pellagra had made its appearance and 31 patients had been admitted suffering from the dread eye disease - Xerophthalmia. In the following month, the Japanese made a gesture toward furnishing the very sick patients with food. A new system was instituted whereby the so-called "heavy sick" patients were allotted 100 grams of vegetables, 50 grams of canned condensed milk, one egg and 30 grams of fruit apiece per day, in addition to the regular ration. The Japanese ordered Commander Sartin to submit daily a list of the "heavy sick" patients at the hospital and this extra food was delivered accordingly, the eggs and milk each day and the other items along with the regular deliveries for the entire camp.

This gesture (for that was all that it amounted to as far as each individual patient was concerned - after all, a couple of ounces of meat and a fourth of a can of milk per day is not going to make much difference in treating a man suffering from a food deficiency disease) did not stop the rising curve of malnutrition. By the end of December, after an exceptionally large number of sick prisoners had come in from Cabanatauan and other camps. 36.2 percent of the patients at Bilibid were hospitalized for some deficiency diseases. Commander Sartin again pounded at Dr. Nogi in his Sanitation Report:

"At the present time (January 1, 1943) the census of this hospital is 854 patients, most of whom are suffering from malnutrition and avitaminosis. Patients suffering from such conditions, in general exhibit such advanced states of the diseases that they are partially or totally disabled for ordinary physical activity and only a few such men are physically able to work.

Judging from drafts of prisoners who have passed through this hospital en route to other stations, and judging from patients received here from other centers for war prisoners, the same malnutritional diseases enumerated above are now prevalent among American prisoners at the other stations. The cause, prevention and cure of these nutritional diseases are well known to medical men, although the treatment for some of them may require prolonged effort before a cure can be effected. Prevention and cure of all of these conditions may be accomplished by supplying an adequate, well-balanced diet. Drug therapy, supplying vitamins in a highly concentrated form, is important, but cannot take place of a proper diet.

Quoted from Cecil’s Textbook of Medicine, the treatment for a mild case of pellagra:

‘Every adult with mild pellagra must ingest and retain a well balanced, high protein diet of at least 4,000 calories per day. The diet should include 1,500 cc. of sweet milk, ½ pound (240 grams) lean meat or liver and eight eggs.’

The following is quoted from Manson-Behr’s ‘Tropical Diseases:

‘The first and most important thing to be attended to in the treatment of a case of beri-beri is the diet. From this, rice, especially white rice, should be eliminated and some article rich in vitamins, such as beans, peas, peanuts, barley, wheat flour (not overmilled), or oatmeal, be substituted.’

During the past four months, the quality and quantity of the ration at this hospital has been improved through the kindly efforts of the Japanese Authorities, and some of the patients have improved under treatment. However,
groups of serious cases continue to arrive from outlying stations and patients who have improved, or who have become symptom-free, have been sent out to replace them. Inevitably, these men will soon have a recurrence of symptoms if they are not given a full, well-balanced diet. At the present time, men who have been under treatment in this hospital for food deficiencies and have been sent out to work details in other sectors, are returning to the hospital after a short space of only a few weeks – again suffering from the same condition."

This appeal produced no effect whatever. In fact, the food ration in January, 1943, fell off considerably from what it had been in the preceding month. There were further heavy admissions in that month and by the end of January, almost 43 percent of the patients had a primary diagnosis of malnutritional disease.\(^{(12)}\)

The trend, which was continuing upward, was finally halted in February, 1943. In that month, fewer patients came in from the prison camps and a smaller percentage of those that did come in were admitted for a deficiency disease. The patient census decreased sharply and the percentage of patients suffering from a disease of malnutrition went down. The Japanese apparently had become alarmed at the very high incidence of malnutrition – it seemed to be out of control – and let go of a little more food. The ratio of proteins and fats to carbohydrates also increased. The special diets for the "heavy sick" were augmented somewhat.

The improvement in the ration continued for a few months and the percentage of malnutritional diseases went down in proportion, although it never again fell below 25 percent. Apparently the Japanese were feeding the prisoners in the other camps better also, because the percentage of admissions due to malnutrition went down considerably.

Even taking into account the increase in the food ration which commenced in December, it is clear that the Japanese did not furnish the prison hospital with enough food, either in quality or in quantity, to maintain the prisoners in a state of good health, let alone to provide the patients suffering from diseases of malnutrition with the diet that they needed to get well. The total calories per man per day averaged around 2,100. This might be enough to maintain a person who is healthy and who is inactive. But the doctors and pharmacist's mates, and other members of the staff who had their regular duties to perform about the hospital, should have received about 3,000 to 3,500 calories per day, and the men who were required to do heavy work such as the carpenters on the maintenance crew and the woodchoppers, probably could have used more than that. As a matter of fact, a considerable percentage of the staff did come down with a nutritional disease of one kind or another as the months went along. Finally, the ration was far short of the 4,000 calories per day recommended by Cecil's Textbook of Medicine quoted above, for persons suffering from mild pellagra. Most of the cases of pellagra received and treated at Bilibid were far from mild and probably should have been given a diet even higher in caloric content.

More serious still, from a dietary point of view was the low vitamin value of the food. The regular ration of a pound of rice per day, plus a few ounces of meat and vegetables per man, was practically void of all vitamins. The rice was "polished," i.e., the hull and the peripheral layers had been removed in milling. Polished rice contains no vitamin B-1; it is all milled away. The diseases of malnutrition with which the Bilibid hospital staff was confronted are essentially vitamin-deficiency diseases. Beri-beri, for example, is associated with a lack of B-1, pellagra with a deficiency in B-2, xerophthalmia.
and nutritional amblyopia with a lack of sufficient vitamin A, and so on, although none of these diseases can be as carefully classified and pigeon-holed, as each of them is probably associated with a general vitamin deficiency — avitaminosis.

What little food values the food contained were to a great extent destroyed in the cooking. All food had to be boiled in the 20-gallon cauldrons, which comprised the equipment of the galley. The meat, "vegetables," fish and all was, perforce, dumped into these cauldrons and boiled in a sort of soup and served in 5-gallon cans along with the rice. You got your rice in your mess-kit and your soup in your canteen cup, if you possessed these utensils, which many of the prisoners did not. Dr. Sartin began fighting early on for ovens and ranges to permit some baking and frying of food.

Various plans were submitted to the Japs. Machinist Gooding drew plans for field ovens made entirely of bricks. Twenty-five thousand bricks would be required. Everybody knew that the Japs wouldn’t stand for anything like that, as Gooding worked over his design, finally getting his brick requirement down to 5,000. The Japs were approached. "No good." Then somebody doped out a design for ovens, utilizing empty 50-gallon oil drums. There were thousands of these drums that working parties had seen lying around in the streets of Manila and along provincial roads, where the Fil-American forces had left them during the withdrawal to Manila. Would the Japanese please bring in a couple of these empty drums? "No good-oh." Meanwhile, Dr. Sartin was reiterating the importance of the matter in his Sanitary Reports, of which the report for October, 1942, is typical:

"The inability of the Occidental to competently handle, from a physiological point of view, a diet deficient in protein, fat and vitamins appears from our experience incontrovertible. A proper diet remains the most important issue in the better care of the patients. At present, an attempt is being made to construct an oven wherein to prepare baked foods for the patients. To date, cooking equipment in the main kitchen, consisting simply of large kettles, has prevented the preparation of anything except steamed and boiled food. The injurious effect on food of prolonged boiling in destroying heat-labile vitamins cannot thus be avoided.

Field ovens of a size suitable to provide bread for all personnel would be greatly appreciated. Almost insurmountable difficulties in making an oven without proper tools are being encountered."

Finally, when it became clear that the Japs had no intention of furnishing anything with which the Americans could make themselves such luxuries as ovens and open-top ranges, one of the pharmacist’s mates, Mr. Wallace, got busy. He found a couple of empty 55-gallon drums lying around someplace in the compound and lugged them down to the galley. Hammering off one end of the drums with a cold chisel, he set them on their sides in the galley on a bed of stones and held them in place with burlap. More stones and burlap was piled around the two drums and kept wet for a time until the mud hardened. A couple of improvised hinged doors on the open ends of the drums and some reinforcing steel rods filched from the Old Hospital Building in the upper compound completed for shelves, completed the "ovens." Then Wallace salvaged a couple of rusty steel doors from somewhere and behold — the galley had two open-top ranges!
There was flour, real wheat flour that the Japs had commandeered from warehouses in Manila. Early in November, they had begun bringing in 150 pounds of flour a day. The galley crew cultured yeast in a cornstarch solution. It was not long before the new ovens were turning out rolls—one for every man in the camp each day. Occasionally, the galley was able to save up enough fruit from the intermittent and microscopic fruit deliveries, to mix with the cornstarch and sugar and bake into popovers, which delighted the population. On Thanksgiving Day, 1942, the improvised range turned out scrambled eggs—a big serving for everybody—Chaplain Cummings having somehow produced the money for the eggs.

The luxury of a roll a day was short-lived, however, as the supply of flour in the Philippines finally ran out. The galley turned out a big turnover for every man on Christmas Day and that was about all of it. Then it was back to the rice and “soup.”

That is the picture of the general ration at Bilibid—the story of the food which the Japanese Government furnished the prisoners of war, from June to the end of imprisonment. At no time did the ration approach even a maintenance level for well men, in calories, proteins, fats or vitamins. Nevertheless, the patients—or most of them—got well, albeit gradually. This was accomplished because the hospital managed to obtain extra supplies of food for the patients, entirely part from the main ration.

Efforts in this direction commenced almost as soon as the unit got to Bilibid. In June, 1942, Commander Sartin detailed Dr. Stanley Smith, a young dentist from Illinois, to set up a “special diet kitchen” to prepare special food for patients needing it the most. There wasn’t such special food—or food of any kind for that matter—or any kitchen, but Pharmacist’s Mate R.E. “Tommy” Thompson, built a little stone fireplace in the yard in front of the former Execution Chamber, where the dysentery patients were housed. Sometimes there was a little “soup” left over from the galley and Thompson would warm this up. Usually he could get a little rice to make lugao with. And that noble woman, Mrs. Norton, often turned up with miscellaneous items of food that she had picked up in Manila—bananas, papayas, biscuits, jam. The Corregidor people brought some canned food with them when they came in, in July, and the special diet department got some of it. With all of these things, however, it was still pretty much of a “hand-to-mouth” proposition, but everything helped. Most of the severe cases of dysentery and starvation had reached the point where they could no longer eat rice; try as they would, they could not swallow the stuff. There is no doubt that the little bits of food that they got from the special diet department kept many of these men alive.

In the latter part of July, Thompson and his running-mate in the special diet department, Pharmacist’s Mate (Andy) Anderson, picked up some old shell windows they found somewhere and threw them together to form a little shed. This became the permanent home of the special diet kitchen, equipped with a stone fireplace and one of the cauldrons from the galley. In that month, too, the enterprise was assigned a regular monthly income of P300 from the profits of the store, which latter enterprise, under Pay Clerk Hanson, was doing a substantial business.

With this new-found money, Dr. Smith and his crew were able to buy eggs, meat and mongo beans for the starvation and dysentery cases. Beginning in August, the Japs began to issue a little milk, all of which went into the making of eggnog for special diets. The ward doctors submitted lists each day of their worst cases and these patients—some 75 or 100 men got about half of a canteen cup of eggnog every morning.
patients received the same amount of mongo bean soup in the afternoon. Lugao was served to those patients who were unable to eat rice and about twice a week, the whole “special diet list” got a little fruit – a couple of bananas, a slice of papaya or something per man. Mrs. Norton’s contributions also went into the pot.

Thompson and Krumhols planted flowers around the special diet kitchen and made it into a sort of garden spot. This seemed to displease the Japs and they would tear the plants down as soon as they began to grow. As fast as the Japs tore down the plants, the boys replanted them. It became a sort of game.

In November, the Japanese finally began to pay all Army and Navy commissioned officers, chief warrant officers and all Army and Navy hospital corpsmen. For the next two months, those in the hospital receiving pay contributed voluntarily to a fund for the indigent sick. The Japanese stated that they would pay salaries for three months back – August, September and October, 1942. This was apparently a gesture in the direction of compliance with the provisions of the Geneva Convention. With this money, Dr. Smith and his crew were able to buy enough meat through the store to make up a good rich stew for the diet list about twice a week. A bigger fillip came in December, when the Japanese inaugurated their “special diet ration” and the Americans took full advantage of the opportunity which the new system offered.

The Japanese required every day that Dr. Sartin submit a list of all the “heavy sick” patients in camp. The milk and eggs were delivered on the basis of this list and, occasionally, a little fruit. The American commander made the list as big as he dared – usually over 200 a day. The eggs and milk thus received were then parcelled out to the most desperate cases – some 75 or 100 of them – usually in the form of eggnog. About 20 starvation cases got from two or six eggs apiece each day in addition, and some of them extra rations of eggnog. The remaining patients on the “heavy sick” list were passed over for eggnog, receiving only extra soup and fruit when it came in. As the desperate cases improved, the amount of milk and eggs given them was gradually tapered off and new patients coming in received the benefit. The whole system was geared to the needs of the individual patients. The Japs had no idea that this was going on. They always insisted that the “heavy sick” patient got his portion of the special diet ration, regardless of individual need. If the Japanese rule had been followed, many of the skeletons that came to Bilibid from outlying prison camps would have died. By thus carefully parceling out the available food, however, most of them were saved.

The Japs kept up these deliveries of eggs and milk fairly well for several months, although allowances always had to be made for “squeeze” on the part of the guards and minor functionaries in the camp. Fruit never came in regularly, however, and in May, 1943, the egg deliveries began to fall off. By July, eggs came in for only about half of the patients on the “heavy sick” list. By this time, however, fewer starvation cases were being admitted and the incidence of malnutrition at the hospital had dropped considerably. Commander Sartin kept his “heavy sick” list high and enough eggs and milk were obtained this way to keep the system going.

The indigent fund was one of Commander Sartin’s biggest coups. On November 25, 1942, the Japanese first began to pay commissioned officers, chief warrant officers and hospital corpsmen. They stated that the schedule of pay would be the same as for the corresponding ranks and rates in the Japanese Army and Navy and set up monthly salaries as follows:

72
Rank or Rate | Pay (in Pesos)
--- | ---
Navy Captain | P310.00
Army Colonel | 
Army Lt. Colonel | 
Navy Commander | P220.00
Army Major | 
Navy Lt. Commander | P170.00
Army Captain | 
Navy Lieutenant | P122.50
Army First Lieutenant | 
Navy Lieutenant (junior grade) | P 85.00
Army Second Lieutenant | 
Navy Ensign | P 70.83
Army and Navy Warrant Officers | P 50.00
Navy Chief Petty Officer | P 32.00
Army Master Sergeant | 
Army Technical Sergeant | 
Navy First Class Petty Officer | P 23.00
Army Staff Sergeant | 
Navy Second Class Petty Officer | P 23.00
Army Sergeant | 
Navy Third Class Petty Officer | P 20.00
Army Private First Class | 
Navy Hospital Apprentice | P 9.00
Army Private | P 6.00

That schedule looked pretty good, although it was a lot less money than the Americans had been getting from their own government before the war. After all, everybody agreed, you could not expect the Japanese to pay more than their own officers and soldiers got. Everybody who was entitled to pay went down to the paying office in high spirits. The first officer — a full Colonel — went in and came out with a fist-full of Japanese scrip in his hand. He counted it. 620,000 in scrip, or three months' pay. The stuff was intrinsically valueless, of course, with nothing behind it, but it could be exchanged at the store for food, tobacco, soap, matches, etc. All that money. Happy days!

Then, suddenly something happened. The Colonel was called back to the paying office. The assembled throng waited anxiously outside. What was wrong? They soon found out. The Colonel came out, looking crestfallen. He still had some Jap paper money in his pocket, but not very much of it. Two ten-peso bills and one five. That was all. Twenty-five pesos. Then it came out. The Japs had worked out a very clever scheme for whereby they could appear to be paying the same salaries as corresponding ranks and rates in their own Army and Navy were paid — saving face, in other words — without actually putting out much money. To begin with, all of the officers were charged P60.00 per month (a dollar a day) each for their “subsistence.” One dollar a day for rice and soup! Then, most of the rest of the salaries of the officers had to be deposited in “savings accounts,” with the local postal savings bank. The ranks from Lieutenant Commander and Major and above were permitted to receive in cash P25.00 in scrip each month to spend. A Navy Lieutenant or Army Captain got P20.50 spending money and so on down to Army Second Lieutenants and Ensigns, who put nothing into
“savings,” and got only P10.83 to spend during the month. Warrant Officers got twice as much spending money as those last two ranks and made no deposits, whereas the enlisted rates were not charged for room and board, but did have to put money into the savings accounts. By the time all of this was worked out, the thing looked like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank or Rate</th>
<th>Pay</th>
<th>“Savings”</th>
<th>Subsistence</th>
<th>Spending Allowance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Navy Captain</td>
<td>P310</td>
<td>P225</td>
<td>P60.00</td>
<td>P25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&amp; Army Colonel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lieutenant Colonel</td>
<td>P220</td>
<td>P135</td>
<td>P60.00</td>
<td>P25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&amp; Commander</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lieutenant Commander</td>
<td>P170</td>
<td>P 85</td>
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<td>P25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>P 42</td>
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<td>P20.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&amp; Navy Lieutenant</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Army 1st Lieutenant</td>
<td>P 85</td>
<td>P 5</td>
<td>P60.00</td>
<td>P20.00</td>
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<td>P60.00</td>
<td>P10.83</td>
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<td>P20.00</td>
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<td>P 32</td>
<td>P 20</td>
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<td>P12.00</td>
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<td>P 23</td>
<td>P 10</td>
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<td>P13.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Staff Sergeant &amp;</td>
<td>P 23</td>
<td>P 10</td>
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<td>P10.00</td>
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<td>2nd Cl. Petty Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sergeant &amp; 3rd</td>
<td>P 20</td>
<td>P 10</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>P10.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Petty Officer</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Private First Class &amp;</td>
<td>P 9</td>
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<td>None</td>
<td>P 9.00</td>
</tr>
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<td>Hospital App.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>P 6</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>P 9.00</td>
</tr>
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</table>

The figures in the last column represent the total cash money given out to each man. Nor was any allowance made on that first pay day in November, for the fact that, as the Japs announced, everybody was being paid for the three months of August September and October, 1942. This fact just made the “savings” deposits larger; it did not increase the cash money given out that day. Everybody got just one month’s spending allowance. Along with it, they were required to sign a “deposit book” — an interesting looking little cardboard folder covered with Japanese characters, in which their deposits were duly noted.

The obvious reason for all of this financial juggling was that the Japs did not want any American to get any more money to spend than the Japanese soldiers got. By charging the officers P2.00 a day for food, (which cost the Japs a tenth of that) and forcing these “savings accounts” all around, the desired result was accomplished, while at the same time the Japanese could claim that they were complying with the Geneva Convention.

Commander Sartin, studying the schedule of pay, charges and “savings,” got an idea. The Japs obviously had for their principal purpose, preventing the American officers from receiving more cash money than the Japanese soldiers got. Would the
Japanese, he wondered, be willing to let loose of a part of the "savings accounts" if they could be sure that the American officers would not get the money? It was worth trying. He approached Dr. Nogi.

"Dr. Nogi, on behalf of all of the officers and hospital personnel who were paid the other day, I wish to thank you. Through you, I also wish to express our gratitude to the Imperial Japanese Army and the Emperor for his boundless generosity." Dr. Sartin was by now an expert in this sort of jargon.

The Japanese officer bowed. "Your sentiments will be conveyed to Major General Norimoto, the Chief of the Prisoners of War Administration."

"We are especially grateful for the provision for postal savings accounts, for in this way the wise Japanese Government has made it possible for the officers to save some of their pay. The officers will have a nice sum of money which they will need when the war is over." Dr. Sartin said this without batting an eye.

Dr. Nogi bowed again, obviously pleased. "This provision for savings accounts was instituted for the good of the prisoners of war," he stated. "The Japanese Government takes good care of the war prisoners and is constantly concerned for their welfare."

"Precisely," Dr. Sartin agreed, nodding his head vigorously. "I am awed by the benevolent kindness of the Japanese Government as shown by these savings accounts. I have only one slight suggestion to make, if I may be permitted...

"You have a suggestion? What is it?"

"Well, the officer prisoners feel a responsibility for the sick prisoners who are enlisted men not members of the hospital corps, and who are therefore not being paid. As an officer of the Imperial Japanese Army," Dr. Sartin added, "you can understand this feeling. All the world knows with what solicitude a Japanese officer regards his men and how carefully he looks out for their welfare."

"Yes, that is true," Nogi acknowledged.

Dr. Sartin came to his point. "The officers would appreciate it as a very great favor, if the Imperial Japanese Army would permit them to donate a portion of their savings accounts to a fund for the purchase of food for the patients who have no money." The Commander watched Nogi's face anxiously. Doubt and not a little suspicion were registered there, as Nogi pondered over the suggestion. Dr. Sartin hastened to fortify his point with argument:

"The American officers realize that this will be a real sacrifice for them, since they will have less money for their wives and families after the war, but the officers want to make the sacrifice in order to help the men," he said. "I feel sure that as an officer in the Imperial Japanese Army, you can understand their sentiments."

The Japanese doctor did not reply right away. He sat for some moments, drumming the desk with a pencil reflectively. Finally he rose. "I will transmit your
suggestion to Major General Morimoto. You will be notified of his decision." The interview terminated.

Dr. Sartin heard nothing more on the subject for several days. Then, just before the third payday, which was January 13th, Dr. Nogi announced that the officers would be permitted to contribute to an "Indigent Sick Fund" as follows: (13)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Contribution to Indigent Fund</th>
<th>Compulsory Savings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Army Colonel &amp; Navy Captain</td>
<td>P50.00</td>
<td>P175.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Army Lieutenant Colonel &amp; Navy Commander</td>
<td>P40.00</td>
<td>P95.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Army Major &amp; Navy Lieutenant Commander</td>
<td>P30.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Army Captain &amp; Navy Lieutenant</td>
<td>P10.00</td>
<td>P32.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Army First Lieutenant &amp; Navy Lieutenant (jg)</td>
<td>P 5.00</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The enlisted grades down to the three lowest (who received all of their salaries) were permitted to deposit P3.00 per month each to the Fund.

This was a very real triumph. The fund, which was turned over to Commander Sartin as Senior Medical Officer, averaged more than P2,100 per month. With this money at hand, Mr. Pfeiffer was able to buy fresh meat and mango beans through the mechanism of the store and thus supplement the regular ration in a very substantial way. "Dry rice days" were practically eliminated.

Cuan Cooking

This is a term which all American soldiers and sailors who served time as prisoners of war in the Philippines understand perfectly. The word cuan (pronounced kwan) is Tagalog dialect for "thing." Whenever a Filipino is at a loss for a word, he just calls it a "cuan" and lets it go at that. Think of our "whatchamaycallit" and you know what cuan means.

To be a cuan cooker is the easiest thing in the world. All you need is a tin can of some sort, a few sticks of wood, some rocks for a fireplace and anything cookable. If all you have is some rice, you cuan-cook that. If you get ahold of some brown sugar, you put a little water with it (or margarine, if you have some) and cuan up some candy. If you have some rice flour, you look around for another cuan cooker who has a papaya, somebody else with salt and baking powder, and someone with some sugar, and the four of you cuan up a pie. Anything and everything has been cooked in the cuan cans of the American prisoners of war in the Philippines. The cuan can is as distinctive and indigenous to those men as the French "forty-and-eight" freight car was to the American "doughboys" back in 1917-18.

Cuan-cooking started at Bilibid as soon as the Japanese began quartering the prisoners there. The men were hungry. Some of them had a little food – a can of beans, a can of combed beef, a little rice or what-not and two or three of them would pool
what they had and cuan-up together. Some of the prisoners had money and they spent it for food which filtered into the camp. The hospital executives recognized that this "outside" cooking was necessary; that the regular ration was insufficient, but at the same time it was clear that the practice had to be controlled. The men could not be permitted to build fires all over the compound.

Pharmacist's mates built an adobe stone fireplace near the showers and here all cuan-cooking was required to be done. At this time, the Japs allowed fires all day, from early morning to night. Later, when the outer compound was opened in the middle of June, another fireplace was built there and when the Infectious Ward was transferred to the cell blocks in Building 16, a small fireplace was erected there. At these places, the men cooked the food that they purchased at the store. Everything went along nicely this way until October, when there occurred a demonstration of the divided authority — or lack of authority — that exists in the Japanese Army. Dr. Nogi had approved of the outside fires and they had come under the scrutiny of countless inspection parties. Nevertheless, Kasobi, the Japanese Army Medical Corps Sergeant, got drunker than usual one day and peremptorily ordered all of the outside fires discontinued. Commander Sartin immediately took the matter up with Dr. Nogi, and after a few days the fires were functioning again. But the drunken sergeant was never disciplined for thus countermanding the order of his superior. In fact, Kasobi did exactly the same thing again in December, on which occasion the fires were discontinued for a week, before Dr. Sartin could get Nogi to issue another order that the fires could go on. At this time, a new, bigger fireplace was built near the galley.

The biggest problem was always firewood. Plentiful at first, the supply got scarcer and scarcer as the scrap wood around the place was used up for fires and in making platforms, bunks, doors, etc. Before long there was no wood at all available for the outside fires and the men were making themselves little individual stoves where they could burn charcoal. A few of the more enterprising individuals even constructed little one-burner electric "hotplates" out of a little resistant wire and scrap materials. Of course, Kasobi banned these along with the big fireplaces, but after some negotiation, Dr. Sartin got permission from Dr. Nogi for a few hot plates in the Staff Medical Officers' and Sick Officers' Quarters. By that time the Japs began to pay officers and medical personnel and the firewood problem was solved. Wood was thereafter purchased from the outside, at first with voluntary donations from those getting paid and later, P300.00 a month was set aside for this purpose out of the Indigent Fund.

Meanwhile, the cuan-cookers had long since been dispossessed. Pharmacists' mates were put in charge of the fires and anyone with something to cook simply brought it over in a can, left it, and returned at a stipulated time when the food was ready. Convalescent patients assisted in this work, taking their "pay" out of the contents of the cans. The final improvement came with the transfer of the main galley to the original site in the upper compound in June, 1943. The big fireplace was moved into the shed the galley had vacated. About this time, too, the enterprise began receiving all of the galley's cooking oil after the fish was fried in it. Thereafter, anyone with something to be fried took it to the Chief Pharmacist's Mate in charge of the outside fire and the cooks did the rest. With this last improvement, the cuan-cookers retired from the scene.

The importance of the outside fires and cuan-cooking to the welfare of both patients and staff is obvious. Without them, the money which the prisoners possessed and the pay received from the Japanese would have been useless. All of this money
was spent through the store, most of it for food, to the tune of between six and eight thousand pesos a month. The supply of canned goods in the Philippines was soon exhausted (the Islands have no canning industry of their own of any consequence. All canned goods were imported before the war cut off the supply), and the food which was bought at the store all had to be cooked somehow.

Of great importance was the making of yeast. When you think of yeast, you probably think of the square cakes neatly wrapped in tinfoil and sold at the grocery store. Occasionally, the advertisements for this yeast mention that it can also be used for baking bread. Or, the word “yeast” might call to your mind a picture of a glass of beer, it being a well-known fact that yeast enters into the manufacture of this beverage. Put all such preconceived notions about yeast out of your head. This yeast that we are going to talk about is like none other that you have ever heard of. There was a little Brewer’s yeast — of unknown quality and potency — connected with the yeast that was made at Bilibid, but very little. Mostly it was brown sugar and that ubiquitous concoction called lugao. That doesn’t sound like much. For that matter, it didn’t look like much. But, it had vitamins in it and for that reason, it was important.

The story properly begins at the prison camp at Cabanatauan. Among the prisoners there was a young cereal chemist from Kansas, First Lieutenant Leslie W. King, of the 60th Coast Artillery. King had a degree from Kansas State College, another one from the University of Minnesota; had worked for General Mills and for the International Milling Company, in which latter capacity he worked on the company’s vitamin requirements for the British Cereals Importing Board. King knew a lot about yeast and a lot about vitamins. Among other things, he knew that yeast will grow in the presence of large amounts of carbohydrate materials (such as rice) with small amounts of nitrogenous substances. One day the Japanese brought 500 eight-ounce bottles of Brewer’s yeast from a brewery in Manila. King and a couple of other Army officers decided to try to propagate yeast. They tried several media — flour, corn starch and lugao, with Brewer’s yeast, sugar and a little bread starter from the Cabanatauan bakery. Lugao was found to be definitely the best, which was fortunate, because if there was anything the war prisoners had lots of, it was lugao — one part cooked rice and nine parts water. The formula selected was felt to produce a substantial amount of vitamin B-1. That was good news. Vitamin B-1 or thiamin chloride, is known as the beri-beri preventing vitamin. Soon yeast cultured in this way was being fed to the entire population at Cabanatauan and King was on his way to Bilibid Hospital to see if the same thing could be done there. (14)

At Bilibid, Lieutenant King had the advantage of the counsel of Lieutenant Commander Silliphant, the staff pathologist and laboratory chief. King arrived on October 22, 1942, and on the 27th, distribution of the lugao yeast began — one tablespoon per man each morning. The dosage given to the malnutrition patients was gradually increased; some of them receiving as much as a canteen cup of yeast daily. The yeast was made in the diet kitchen — four gallons a day at first, which order was gradually stepped up until finally the diet kitchen was turning out 36 gallons every day.

The Red Cross supplies of food, medicine and clothing which arrived in December, 1942, had a tremendous value out of all proportion to their intrinsic value, for the appearance of these supplies convinced the war prisoners that the folks back home had not forgotten. The first distribution of Red Cross food was on December 23rd, when everyone got a hefty, impressive-looking cardboard box, from the British Red Cross,
containing 15 items of food. Bacon, cheese, oleomargarine, condensed milk, apple pudding, "beefsteak pudding," and so on. Imagine, if you can, the effect the receipt of such things would have on these men, who had gone through the siege of Bataan and Corregidor, and eight months of virtual starvation and terrible hardship. If you were to eat nothing but boiled rice and turnip tops for about 30 days and then suddenly sit down to a table loaded with sliced bacon, milk, pudding and steak, you would have some idea of how these men felt.

On January 4, 1943, American Red Cross boxes were distributed — one to a man, also containing 15 items, and on the 11th, more American boxes were given — one to each two men. There were in addition, numerous distributions of canned combed beef and "meat and vegetable ration" throughout January and February, and sporadically until June, 1943. Luxury of luxuries — the American Red Cross boxes contained American cigarettes and tobacco — Camels, Lucky Strikes, Chesterfields, etc. — two packs of cigarettes and a package of tobacco in each box.

The food value of these Red Cross supplies was probably not too great — there was not enough to make much difference in the treatment of things like beri-beri and pellagra. As a matter of fact, the incidence of malnutrition was at its highest at Bilibid during December, 1942 and January, 1943, when the Red Cross food was being consumed. Nevertheless, it was a big morale boost and there is no doubt that those Red Cross boxes which came into the Philippines in December, were as much appreciated as anything that the Red Cross has ever given to anybody, anywhere, in the course of its long history of public service.

The British boxes were marked in large type: "Prisoners' Parcels. British Red Cross and Order of St. John War Organization;" in German "Kriegefranganenpest;" and in French, "Comite Internationale Groix Rouge, Geneve Transit, Suisse." In the upper right-hand corner was the intelligence: "Food 15 packets: Lobensmittel, 15 packchen, The boxes contained:

1. One bar plain chocolate — ½ lb.
2. One 2-ounce box of tea
3. Two small cans white granulated sugar
4. One small can of cheese
5. One can of biscuits — 12-ounces
6. One small can sliced bacon
7. One small can of oleomargarine
8. One small can of syrup
9. One can Nestles condensed milk
10. One medium can of apple pudding
11. One can "Ambrosia" ready cooked creamed rice
12. One can "Hunter's" beefsteak pudding
13. One can of liver pate
14. One can "McGrath's" tomatoes
15. One small cake of soap

Each American box similarly marked in English, German and French, contained:

1. One can evaporated milk
2. One 8-ounce package hard tack
3. One 8-ounce package Borden's cheese
4. One 1-pound can oleomargarine
5. Two 12-ounce cans corned beef
6. Two ½ ounce bars of milk chocolate
7. One small package of sugar
8. One package of powdered orange concentrate
9. One 5-ounce package of dehydrated soup
10. One 16-ounce package of dried prunes
11. One 4-ounce can of "Nescafe"
12. Two packs of cigarettes

Most of the men traded among themselves in true American style, getting almost as much pleasure out of the trading as they did from the eating. The compound resounded for days with cries of "chocolate for corned beef," "coffee for cigarettes," etc.

Not all of the prisoners fared as well in the matter of Red Cross food as did the patients at Bilibid. Apparently the prisoners at the main prison camp at Cabanatauan received about the same amount, but some of the work details were robbed by their venal Japanese guards. Thus, at the Nichol's Field detail, the men received practically nothing.

There were one or two other issues of American cigarettes, but the prisoners of war never did receive more than a very small proportion of the cigarettes that came into Manila for them. Most of the cigarettes were diverted by the Japanese to their own men. Each prisoner received not more than four packs of cigarettes besides what was in the Red Cross boxes, whereas enough cigarettes arrived at Manila to have given every man at least one and probably two cartons. When some of the cigarettes appeared in Manila stores for sale, there was great "face-saving" on the part of the Japanese.

So, with all of these measures – special diets, outside fires, the Indigent Fund, occasional Red Cross packages and yeast – enough food was scraped up apart from the general mess, to pull through most of the cases of malnutrition and most of the other cases, medical and surgical, who came into the hospital, to whom food was almost as important as medicine. It was a constant battle all the way through, a battle of wits and of courage. Commander Sartin, Commander Jones and their aides grew wise in the ways of the Japanese. Mr. Pfeiffer, in particular, in charge of the galley, learned a lot about them.

One of the things Pfeiffer learned was that, although most Japanese look alike, there are good ones and bad ones. One of the bad ones was Nomota, line Lieutenant in charge of disbursing and supply at Japanese Army Headquarters. Nomota hated all Americans. Particularly he seemed to hate the Americans at Bilibid. At any rate, he set himself to see to it that the hospital got the worst food possible – the mouldiest rice, rankest meat, most dried-up vegetables. Pfeiffer felt sure that, if it had not been for this man, the food supply at Bilibid would have been much better than it was. Fortunately, Nomota was not around the hospital very much; he stayed at headquarters in Manila, and his assistant, Conishi, handled things at Bilibid. Conishi was pretty good; he was intelligent, never tried to give the hospital less food than it was entitled to and, in fact, often delivered more than the official ration called for. It was Conishi who went to bat with headquarters and got a regular ration of cigarettes for Bilibid – 10 Japanese cigarettes per man, per week. And this at a time when cigarettes were strictly rationed
to the Filipino public and cost as much as 80 centavos (cents) for a package of vile native makes. Conishi was finally promoted to warrant officer rank, and all of the Americans who had come into contact with him were glad to see him get this recognition.

In immediate charge of supplies at the prison was Murakami, a superior private. Murakami was very intelligent, spoke quite a bit of English and helped a great deal to keep things running smoothly. Murakami was too smart, however, for his own good. He was frequently called upon by Japanese Headquarters to explain details about matters of supply at the prison hospital, which Nomota could not understand. This made Nomota "lose face," the worst thing that could happen to an Oriental, and after a few months Nomota had Murakami transferred out of the supply department and put on guard duty. Fortunately, Murakami’s successor was almost as good.

Worst were Kasobi and Ikito, the pair who had things pretty much their own way at Bilibid until they were transferred in June, 1943. Ikito was always ordering Pfeiffer to sign receipts for food showing larger deliveries than had actually come in. This made for trouble, because Pfeiffer always refused to sign. "No good," Pfeiffer would shake his head. "No sign." "Anataswa Uketori Kakite Nasai!" (You sign receipt), Ikito would insist, his face suffusing with rage. "lie! Dekimagane Nai!" (No damn good), Pfeiffer would cling to his original refusal. These altercations often ended with Ikito striking Pfeiffer. Not hard - this Jap was too small to hit very hard - but hard enough to make Pfeiffer very, very angry indeed.

"Boy, you just wait until I get a chance to do that to you," Pfeiffer a tall, husky fellow from Buffalo, uttered once. "We’ll see if you can take it as well as I have to." This particular occasion took place in the Japanese office. Kataji, the sneaky "interpreter" heard Pfeiffer’s remark and he evidently told Ikito the gist of it, because the latter called Pfeiffer (who had gone out of the office) back and struck him several times about the face again, chattering angrily away in Japanese.

Much of the trouble centered about the big platform scales on which the food was weighed. For a while, these scales were installed in front of the galley, but this arrangement hindered Kasobi and Ikito in their graft, particularly in connection with the eggs for special diets, which were counted by weight — so many eggs in a kilo. The Japs liked eggs — ate them fried, scrambled, boiled or raw, to the tune of about 50 a day and these depredations showed up in the weights which Pfeiffer insisted upon noting in his receipts. Also, Pfeiffer always weighed rotten meat and vegetables separately and made trouble about that, asking that the spoiled food be replaced, etc. So, the scales were moved up to the Japanese office where each delivery day there was an unsightly clutter of assorted vegetables, sacks of rice and so on, to be weighed. The Japs did the weighing themselves. Finally however, they got tired of having doing this and Pfeiffer got his scales back.

Then there were the daily ration reports. Very elaborate affairs, these reports had to show precisely how much in grams each person in Bilibid received each day of rice, salt, meat, fish, cooking oil, and so on, right down through the entire list. Now, the Japs had three classifications: "heavy sick," "light sick" and well personnel. Each classification received a different ration. Also, the caloric values had to be estimated and reported. No allowances were made for spoiled food or for bone and other losses. The reports were based entirely on the allowance, with no consideration being paid to
actual deliveries, although it must be admitted that under Conishi, deliveries were nearly always above the allowance. These reports, which occupied the full time of a trained man to make up were, therefore, absolutely meaningless.

To the Japanese, 100 grams is not always 100 grams. Ordinarily it is, yes, but if they are considering dried fish, 55 grams equals 100. And if it is Chinese ham they are weighing, 60 grams equals 100. Presumably, they are going by the odor of these delicacies, in which case they are dead right. From May 1943, onward, no fresh meat or fish was delivered to the hospital, dried fish and Chinese ham being substituted at these “equivalents” in weight. Thus, a cut in the already microscopic fish and meat ration was effected, without appearing on the ration reports. So, well men get 500 grams of rice, “light sick,” 450 grams and “heavy sick,” 400 grams. The latter classification got a little milk and eggs, as already explained, and the “light sick” an allowance of 100 grams of vegetables, over the prescribed 300.

The Japs were very precise in their instructions as to how the food was to be served. There was to be a precise differentiation as to rice, vegetables, meat and fish between well personnel, “heavy sick” and “light sick” patients. Each man was to get his prescribed ration – no more and no less. Both fish and ham were to be served (with 50 and 60 grams respectively equaling 100 grams) to each man at both luncheon and dinner – his proportionate share according to whether he was well, “heavy” or “light” sick. It would have amounted to between 6 and 10 grams of fish and ham per man. Pfeiffer would have been measuring out the food with a pair of tweezers. In actual practice, of course, these instructions were disregarded, although as far as the Japs knew, they were religiously carried out.

The Japs seemed to believe that as long as they were furnishing everybody with a whisper of something, they were supplying a “balanced” diet. Thus, in Commander Sartin’s Sanitary Report for July, he remarked that no fresh fruit had ever been issued for the general mess; what little fruit the Japs had brought in had always been for the so-called “heavy sick.” Thereafter, the Japs made it a point to include a bushel basket of fruit once a week. Eight papayas, let us say, for a thousand men. And they insisted it was for the general mess; not special diets.

“I’ll just turn this over to the diet kitchen,” Pfeiffer told Murakami.

“Oh, no! No can do. General mess. Everybody get.”

“But what good are eight papayas? I can’t cut that into enough pieces to give everyone a piece, no matter how small I cut it. I’ll give it all to one ward this week, another ward next week . . . . . . .”

“No! No good! General mess,” Murakami grinned. He knew it was ridiculous, but he had his orders. So one morning everybody got a thimbleful of papaya. Thereafter, Pfeiffer chopped the bushel of fruit up into the morning lagao.

Altogether, the business of running the galley at Bilibid under the Japanese was a very interesting experience for Pharmacist Pfeiffer. A highly trained commissary officer, he needed every bit of ingenuity that he could muster in handling the job.
The sad thing about it was that Pfeiffer's training was virtually useless at Bilibid. Since 1936, the Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery has selected pharmacists for special training as commissary officers, and Mr. Pfeiffer was one of the first graduates — later an instructor — at the Commissary School at Philadelphia. He did a tour of duty as Commissary Officer at the Naval Hospital at Annapolis and a tour at the hospital at Philadelphia, before coming out to the Philippines to take charge of the commissary at Canacao, just before the outbreak of the war in the Pacific. In these capacities, Mr. Pfeiffer learned a lot about food and feeding hundreds of sick and healthy men within the confines of a stipulated budget. The Navy allowed $0.70 per man, which is a sum large enough to permit setting a very good table indeed. Most of the commissary officers go below this allowance. At Philadelphia, for example, Pfeiffer averaged around $0.56 per man. For this, he produced good, well-balanced meals, with due attention paid to calories, vitamins and "colors" — green vegetables, carrots, etc. Calories averaged from 3,500 to 4,000 a day, balanced at 65% carbohydrates, 15% protein and 20% fat — a bit different from the meals he was forced to serve at Bilibid.

As a hospital commissary officer, Pfeiffer had never before had to build a galley out of adobe stone and scrap lumber, nor ovens out of 50-gallon oil drums and ranges out of rusty steel doors. Nor did he ever know before that mouldy rice, overripe fish and meat and rotten vegetables were good for anything except as food for hogs. Nevertheless, under his administration the galley produced more than one and a half million individual meals from June 13, 1942 to August 10, 1943, without one single case of food poisoning. He is as proud of that record as he is of anything he has done since he first joined the Navy as a seaman on the transport "U.S. Henderson," 26 years ago.

Mr. Pfeiffer is used to thinking in terms of economy — a Navy hospital commissary officer is not encouraged to waste money, but he says that the Bilibid mess was far and away the most economical in the world. There is no doubt about it. It never did cost the Japs very much to feed the Americans at Bilibid and after the officers and hospital personnel began receiving pay in November, 1942, it cost precisely nothing at all. Thus, the sixty pesos that the Japs charged officers for their subsistence and "quarters" amounted to around six thousand pesos a month, there being usually about 60 officer patients and 40 staff officers at the prison hospital. Mr. Pfeiffer and Mr. Hanson of the store got the Japanese merchant, Ueumura, to investigate at regular intervals, the prices in the open market for the rice, vegetables, salt, etc., that constituted the regular ration, as well as prices for eggs, fruit and milk that went to the so-called "heavy sick" patients. It all averaged out to about twenty-four centavos per day, per man, or just over six thousand pesos a month. Taking into consideration the fact that the Japanese were undoubtedly paying much less than current market prices for the food, it is easy to see that they were, in fact, probably making a little money on the deal.

That P60.00 a month charge to the officers, used to keep Pfeiffer awake at night. Sixty pesos, at the old rate of exchange, is 30 dollars — a dollar a day. That is more money than commissary officers are allowed anywhere in our Army or Navy. You can serve chicken-a-la-king and strawberry shortcake three times a day for that, and still have plenty left over for after-dinner liqueurs, and free cigars and cigarettes all around.
Chapter 12

THE FIGHT FOR MEDICINE AND SUPPLIES

Hand in hand with the fight for food went an unremitting struggle for medicine, supplies and equipment. The food problem was possibly more serious, for most of the diseases which attached the prisoners of war were diseases of starvation, and the lack of an adequate, balanced diet retarded the recovery of patients suffering from other diseases. Food is necessary for the maintenance of life. Nevertheless, you cannot run a hospital without medicines and equipment and for a long time the Bilibid hospital had neither. Always, excepting for a few items, the hospital staff had to conserve, improvise and do without things that are taken for granted in any hospital. Always, with every patient and with every drug and item, it was a double question: "How much do we have?" and "Will we get any more?"

We have seen that the Japanese forces confiscated practically all of the very large supply of medicine and most of the equipment which the Navy unit had brought to Manila from Canacao and installed at Santa Scholastica College; as well as the huge stock from the Medical Supply Depot which had been transported to Manila from the Cavite Navy Yard. The unit was sent to the prison camp at the Pasay Elementary School with virtually nothing and looting continued even there. The Japanese furnished a little medicine at Pasay; so little that it was hardly noticeable. The Navy carried on there, treating hundreds of American and Filipino prisoners of war, as well as the Japanese soldiers, with medicine that the doctors and pharmacist's mates brought with them from Santa Scholastica in their sea bags. (15)

The unit arrived at Bilibid, as we have seen, to encounter a desperate situation. Thousands of prisoners, Filipino and American, were milling around, most of them in very poor condition. Some 115 were confined to Building Eleven, suffering from war wounds and diseases, and other sick prisoners were lying about everywhere. Upwards of 200 men reported for sick call every day and the patient census in the hospital climbed steadily.

The sad thing about it was that there was no "hospital." True, the Naval hospital unit was given, one by one, certain buildings in the Lower Compound, where the sick prisoners could be quartered, and the Japanese referred to this part of the prison area as a hospital, but there was nothing whatever to justify the name. On June 4, 1942, Pharmacist Shearer inventoried all of the medicines and supplies of any description that could be found in the men's bags, as well as all of such items that a public "collection" among all the prison population yielded. Here is a list of the principal items:

**Dysentery medicines:** Bismuth subnitrate, ½ lb; Sulfathiazole, 50 tablets; Paregoric, 1 pint.
**Quinine:** 350 5-grain tablets.
**Vitamin synthetics:** Thiamin chloride, 50 1-milligram tablets, 3 5-cc. ampoules.
**Alcohol:** Nine 1-pint bottles; 3 gallons denatured alcohol.
**Dressing materials:** Gauze, Two 25-yard rolls; Cotton, 23 1-lb. rolls, Bandage, 68 dozen 1-inch bandage; 50 dozen 2-inch bandage; 94 dozen 4-inch bandage; Adhesive plaster, 27 rolls; 9,200 prepared single bandages ("Band Aid").
**Miscellaneous:** Aspirin powder, 27 ounces; Boric acid, 7 pounds; Sodium bicarbonate, 1 pound; Magnesium sulfate, 5 pounds; Benzoic acid, 1/8 pound; Codeine sulfate, 500 1/2 grain tablets; Iron, quinine and strychnine tablets, 400; Aspirin tablets, 2,000; Brown's Mixture tablets, 150; Castor oil, 1 1/4 gallons; Mineral oil, 1 gallon.

With some exceptions, the above list represents all of the medicines and supplies which the Navy unit was able to salvage in the course of its travels from Santa Scholastica to Pasay and from Pasay to Bilibid. In the way of hospital equipment the inventory disclosed:

**Beds and bedding:** Eleven iron beds with mattresses; about 20 sheets; 10 blankets, 8 pillows; 10 pillow cases.

**Nursing equipment:** Three bedpans; 2 urinals; 2 washbasins; 3 pus basins.

**Surgical equipment:** One large Navy Hospital Corps medical pouch; 1 pocket case; several hemostats; 2 pairs dressing forceps; 4 Bard Parker knives with extra blades; several glass syringes (assorted sizes) with 24 needles; several surgical needles with a small supply of suturing material.

**Pharmacy:** One pair scales; 2 mortars with pestles; several medicine glasses; 2 spatulas; 1 pill tile.

With this meager equipment, Bilibid Hospital commenced functioning as a hospital for military prisoners of war. All of the above-listed equipment together would not have equipped a medium-sized first-aid station.

The story of the fight for medicine and supplies can probably best be told by taking each subject separately. In this way, the general picture will be made more clear to the reader than if we were to attempt to deal with the matter as a whole.

**Dysentery Medicines, Quinine and Synthetic Vitamin Preparations:**

These subjects are considered in other chapters dealing with the principal diseases encountered at Bilibid. The first few weeks were the worst for malaria. Practically no quinine was furnished until June 25, 1942, when the hospital got 10,000 3-grain tablets and two kilograms of quinine sulfate. The sulfate in solution was very hard for some patients to take as it is very bitter, and was particularly tough going for the half-starved, fever-wracked nauseated men. The quinine problem was solved, however, on July 22nd, when the Japanese brought in 49,000 3-grain tablets. Thereafter, this necessity was furnished in amounts adequate to take care of the needs of the active cases; although at no time did the supply permit of prophylactic doses which every prisoner who had been on Bataan should have obtained.

The dysentery problem was not so easily solved. For the first two months, the Japs furnished nothing with which to combat the diseases except for a little bismuth and nine bags of powdered charcoal – an utterly useless item. A few courses of emetine and carbarsone came in at very irregular intervals after that, but at no time did the doctors have enough dysentery specifics to permit of giving the men the full courses they should have had. Most of the time the dysentery medicines that came in had to be doled out to the patients sparingly, in only palliative doses, and for much of the time if it had not been for “hidden” supplies of dysentery medicines which the pharmacist’s mates had brought with them, the dysentery patients would have been very badly off indeed. The situation with regard to vitamin synthetics and other medicines for the deficiency cases was somewhat better, due to U.S. Army supplies which came in from Corregidor and a Red
Cross shipment in January, 1943, but here again, the hospital never had enough of these medicines to give anything like the proper doses.

**Surgical Equipment and Dressings:**

Here again, all equipment and supplies of any consequence came from other than Japanese sources. The surgical supplies came in with the U.S. Army hospital unit from Corregidor in July, 1942, augmented by a small amount included with the Red Cross shipment in January, 1943. The same sources accounted for practically all of the dressing materials.

**Beds and Bedding:**

When you think of a hospital, you usually think of beds. In fact, the capacity of a hospital is ordinarily estimated in terms of beds; one speaks of a 200-bed hospital, a 500-bed hospital, and so on. It was different at Bilibid. For the first few months, when the prison population was at its highest, the hospital had the fewest beds. It was five months before the Japanese furnished any beds or mattresses.

All of the patients, therefore, had to be put on the bare concrete floors of the various buildings as they were opened to the hospital. Many of them were in very serious condition, most were without blankets or other covering. It is bad enough for a healthy individual to have to sleep on concrete, and with these sick men there was the ever-present danger that pneumonia would attack them in their weakened condition. The Japanese had permitted the staff to bring beds from Santa Scholastica College via Pasay, for only eleven patients – some tuberculosis cases, two or three very serious orthopedic cases and a couple of paralytics. For the remaining patients, pharmacist’s mates constructed wooden platforms a few inches above the ground. Even this improvement was accomplished without the permission of the Japanese, with scrap lumber filched from the dilapidated Old Hospital Building.

On June 4th, Commander Sartin made up a complete list of the hospital staff, together with a list of necessary equipment and supplies which would be required for the operation of the hospital. Understanding, as he did, the attitude of the Japanese toward the prisoners of war, he limited his requests to the barest minimum throughout. He wanted 100 beds and mattresses "for the seriously ill." For the remainder of the patients, he requested 500 straw sleeping mats. He asked for 1,000 sheets and only 25 mosquito nets.

On June 19th, with the big influx of patients from the U.S. Army Hospital Number One (Little Baguio), Bilibid acquired its first bedding of any consequence. These patients came down to Manila from Bataan in trucks, and the trucks were lined with mattresses – some 800 of them. There were also about 300 metal beds, in very bad condition after four months service on Bataan, but still serviceable. These windfalls provided beds for the most serious cases and mattresses for nearly all of the patients. Then, about three months later, the Japanese furnished the hospital with 300 wooden beds and 350 straw mattresses. Thereafter, every patient had a bed, although the staff members – doctors and corpsmen alike – still had to make do with wooden frames constructed by the maintenance crew.

For a long time, there were no mosquito nets apart from those that the medical staff had brought in with them, but in October the Japanese finally produced 400 nets.
This delivery helped a great deal. Manila swarms with mosquitoes by night and flies by day – mosquito nets are a necessity. These were the only mosquito nets which the hospital ever got from the Japanese, but more nets were gradually acquired as drafts of prisoners and convalescent patients left the hospital for other prison camps. The Japanese functionaries in command at Bilibid always confiscated mosquito nets from these outgoing drafts and turned them over to the hospital for issue.

Bedding remained a major problem until the end. The only bedding ever supplied by the Japanese was in the form of 350 blankets which came in on October 30, 1942. There were no sheets received at the hospital, apart from 100 sheets that the Corregidor group brought in. A handful of pillowcases which came in with this group, constituted Bilibid’s only supply of this item, which was just as well, for there were no pillows. The lack of sheets was serious; the mattresses – old and soiled for the most part when they were first received – naturally became more and more soiled with constant use and it was not long before they were absolutely filthy and crawling with vermin (notably bedbugs) which multiplied in spite of the most strenuous efforts to keep them within bounds. Commander Sartin repeatedly asked the Japanese for sheets, pointing out that the lack of sheets was of great significance “in view of the worn and soiled condition of many mattresses, and especially in the prevention and care of skin diseases.” In his first Sanitary Reports he requested 1,200 sheets, later reducing the number to 500, but all requests were ignored.

**Toilet Paper:**

This lowly material, which Americans are accustomed to taking for granted, was a serious problem at Bilibid. The matter was most perplexing to the men – and there were many of them – suffering from diarrhea, dysentery, pellagra with its concomitant diarrhea, and malnutritional diarrhea. Consider the average American: administer to him a dose of salts every morning for a week or so and at the same time, deprive him of toilet paper, newspapers and mail-order catalogues, and you can appreciate the predicament of these patients.

The situation would have been truly desperate during the first months when no supplies were coming in, had it not been for the fact that, among the things salvaged from Santa Scholastica, were six cases of toilet paper that had evidently escaped the Jap’s notice. With careful conservation, this supply lasted until the Corregidor group arrived in July, bringing with them a few rolls, but by the middle of August there was practically no toilet paper left. Dr. Sartin was sending Dr. Nogi requests labeled “urgent.” No toilet paper was forthcoming, however, until the end of August, when the Japanese sent in 100 11-ounce rolls. Now, the average roll sold in the United States weighs between 16 and 17 ounces; not very much difference if you can run down to the grocery store and get another roll whenever you need it, but a big difference when you can’t. This supply lasted nine days. A further deliver of 193 rolls carried matters along fairly well to about September 23rd, when the supply was again exhausted. So it went. Sometimes there was toilet paper and sometimes there was not, and never was there enough.

For a time, the Japanese announced that the allowance would be one roll of toilet paper for each three men per month. But they failed to maintain this ratio, and in some months produced only one roll for every five or six men. And, the rolls kept getting smaller and smaller, some of them only four ounces in weight. In his Sanitary Report for May, 1943, Dr. Sartin characterized the toilet paper ration as “inadequate to the point of
uncleanliness," and suggested that the weight of the rolls be taken into consideration in the future. The following month the Japanese began furnishing toilet paper of their own manufacture – extremely thin sheets about ten inches square. One sheet per man. Without going into further details about this Japanese toilet paper, let me assure you that one sheet a day is not enough for a healthy person's normal needs, and is nothing at all for a dysentery case. A little later, the issue was increased to two sheets per day per man.

Soap – Toilet Articles:

You would think that it is impossible to run a hospital without soap. Not so. A hospital can get along for weeks at a time with little or no soap. The trouble is that everybody gets dirty. Clothes don't look very clean after a while, either.

Nobody expected that the soap supply would ever run short. If there was anything that the Philippines had plenty of before the war, it was soap, made from coconut oil. In fact, many people believed that the imports of Philippine oil into the United States in competition with American linseed oil in soap manufacture, was one of the big reasons for the passage of the Independence Bill in 1934, putting the Philippines outside of the tariff wall when they should have achieved their independence under the measure in 1944. The long, thick brown bars of laundry soap were a familiar sight in every market and tienda in the Philippines, at about fifteen centavos (seven and a half cents) apiece.

Nevertheless, soap was a problem at Bilibid from the very start. No soap was forthcoming from the Japanese until October 6, 1942, when 267 small bath-size bars came in. That was about enough for one bar for every four men, allowing nothing for washing hospital linens, used bandages, etc. Subsequent issues were equally small and came at very irregular intervals. For a time, the store was able to buy an unlimited quantity of soap through the merchant, Ueumura, but by March, 1943, this source of supply disappeared as the Japanese Army took over all of the soap production in the Islands. Thereafter, the store was able to bring in one small bar per man per month, or even less. Each prisoner required at least one bar per week, to keep himself clean, and to wash his clothes and mess gear. Fortunately, the Red Cross shipment in January, 1943, contained a supply of soap which, with the most careful conservation, supplied the needs of the hospital in the operating room, wards, etc., for several months.

We have been speaking about laundry soap. Of local manufacture, it was strong enough not only to clean the body thoroughly, but to take the skin off as well. Skin irritations were prevalent among all of the population. There was no toilet soap of any consequence furnished; a bar or two per man in 1942, and about three issues of a bar apiece in 1943. As for toilet articles, the Japanese issued, during the entire existence of the hospital, two small paper sacks of tooth powder per man. Three hundred towels came in from Corregidor on July 13th, and the Japanese issued 400 hand towels in April, 1943. No toothbrushes, razors, razor blades, shaving soap or other toilet articles. The only supplies of this kind came from the Red Cross shipment, in the form of American "CCC" kits – boxes of assorted toilet articles (apparently made up originally for issue to Civilian Conservation Camps). (16) These were divided up, one box for two men. This shipment also contained a large number of safety razors; but no razor blades were included. At least none were turned over by the Japanese to any prison camp.
Clothing:
The prisoners were dressed in ragged, patched clothes and were, in many cases, barefooted or with only homemade wooden “skivies” on their feet. The reason is simple; they had nothing else. In the way of clothing, the Japanese issued 400 pairs of white cotton socks in October, 1942, and 1,000 pairs in the following month. These socks were of Japanese manufacture. Without heels, they would fit any foot. Then on two or three occasions they presented everybody with a Japanese “G-string.” Made of a sort of cheesecloth, about a foot wide and two and a half feet long, these “G-strings,” tied about the waist and pulled up between the legs, served as underwear.

That was about the extent of the clothing issues, apart from a few pieces of blue coats and dungarees that had been confiscated from Philippine Army stores and a couple of deliveries of assorted old clothing, apparently donated by private citizens in Manila. The Philippine Army clothing, made for Filipinos, was far too small for most of the prisoners. The coats were altogether useless, and the trousers could only be made serviceable by inserting enormous V-shaped patches in the seat.

In his first Sanitary Report (for August, 1942), Dr. Sartin described the condition of the prisoners’ clothing succinctly as “makeshift, meager and worn.” At that time he asked for 250 pairs of shoes, 200 pairs of socks, 200 suits of underwear, 100 pairs of trousers and 100 shirts. He repeated this phrase in all Sanitary Reports thereafter. The situation was improved somewhat in December, 1942, with a distribution of Red Cross clothing. There were a large number of shirts in this shipment, together with about 70 pairs of shoes and a good supply of hats. The hats were of good quality brown felt, but too small. Most of them were size 6 7/8, with a few size 7’s. Included were garments of little use in the warm climate of the Philippines; a large number of woolen sleeveless “cardigan” jackets. The shipment also contained some khaki shorts and about 150 woolen trousers, which were put to good use.

But still there were no shoes. By January, 1943, Commander Sartin was reporting that there were 100 men in camp with no shoes at all and that a survey disclosed 275 pairs of shoes too worn even to be repaired. About this time, the Japanese installed a cobbler and tailor shop under Pharmacist Crews, but they neglected to furnish the enterprise with materials for the repair of shoes. By this time, too, 500 men needed trousers and 200 were without any underwear. Soon thereafter, the Japanese did bring in some leather, nails, thread, etc., for the cobbler shop and about 400 pairs of shoes were promptly repaired, but the situation steadily worsened as the men’s shoes wore out and by March, 1943, 150 men were without shoes. There was a distribution of 101 pairs of shoes in April, and a few more the following month, but thereafter the only shoes issued were old ones turned in by the prisoners themselves and reclaimed at the cobbler shop, at the rate of about 50 a month. Just a drop in the bucket!

Meanwhile, the tailor shop was struggling manfully to keep the ancient clothing in repair. Most of the prisoners on Bataan and Corregidor had lost all but the clothes on their backs after the surrender. These clothes wore out rapidly under the vicissitudes of life in the prison camp and labor gangs, and under the attacks of strong laundry soap.
Maintenance Supplies:

Under this heading would properly come such commonplace items as brooms, mops, lime and cresol. The Japanese were surprisingly generous with these last two items, particularly cresol, of which they seemed to have a very big supply. These items, however, were all that they furnished in the way of disinfectants. They never brought in any tincture of methylate, formaldehyde, phenol or creosote. Shortage of this latter item was particularly serious in view of the prevalence of bedbugs, which infested virtually all of the beds and wooden furniture in the hospital. Brooms and mops were notable by their absence. Brooms had to be purchased through the store for the most part, and mops were fashioned from old canvas or any other usable material.

The foregoing is a fair summary of the most important items of medical equipment and supplies. While the Japanese did become more generous as time went on, particularly after Dr. Nogi took over as Director of Military Prison Hospitals under the new organization in August, 1942, they never furnished more than a small portion of the needs of the hospital. During the first months, the hospital got practically nothing with which to care for the wounded and sick prisoners, and these were the very months when the need was greatest; when malaria and dysentery were at their height and the death rate was the highest. There is no question that many more would have died during this period, had the staff of the Navy unit (and many of the patients who were in the hospital at Santa Scholastica when the Japanese occupied Manila) not had the foresight to hide medicine from the Japs and smuggle it into Bilibid. These supplies, plus the small amount that the Japanese "officially" permitted the unit to bring over from Pasay, and the few drugs and medicines that Chaplain Cummings and Mrs. Norton were able to get into the prison, undoubtedly saved the lives of many men.

The facts show that most of the supplies and equipment that made a hospital out of Bilibid Prison came, not from the Japanese, but from our own resources. Practically all of the surgical, laboratory, dental, x-ray and pharmacy equipment, as well as much of the medicine came, as we have seen, from the former U.S. Army Hospital Number One on Bataan. Most of the remainder of the supplies were part of the Red Cross shipments.

Mention should be made of the so-called "irregular" drugs which the Japanese presented to the hospital. The first deliveries of these drugs came on the 10th, 14th, 15th and 27th of December, 1942. The Japanese had evidently raided most of the drugstores in the City of Manila. There were all of the familiar brands of patent medicines advertised in the pages of the pulp magazines in the United States, and a great many preparations of which the doctors had never heard. Besides all of the American brands, there were patent medicines from France, Spain, Germany, and most of the other civilized countries of the world. The Philippines has always been a happy hunting ground for the patent medicine vendor. Your Filipino is a courageous fellow when he is sick and he will try anything once, or even twice. Many of these medicines contained formulas and directions for use in several different languages. The printed matter on the boxes was not the same in all languages. Thus, a medicine might claim, modestly, in English that it was a sure cure for diabetes, rheumatism, catarrhal fever and rickets, while in Spanish it would be stated that the same medicine was a specific for mumps, leprosy, heart disease, skin eruptions and stomach ache, and the French section would prescribe it for still another group of ailments. You might get away with taking one tablespoonful three times a day, according to the directions in English, while the Spanish and French would boost you up to four or five spoonfuls three times a day.
All of these medicines, by Japanese order, had to be carefully inventoried and listed alphabetically; a job that took several days. Then it was divided between the three main prison camps – 50 percent to Cabanatauan, 30 percent to Bilibid and 20 percent to Davao. This rule had to be rigidly followed, regardless of the supply of each drug, and consequently, while there were small amounts of really useful items, such as aspirin, the supply that was left after the division was so small as to be virtually valueless. Items of questionable value under the circumstances; a goodly supply of dog medicine, several formidable-looking bottles claimed to possess aphrodisiac properties, a number of vaginal syringes and several boxes of baby pacifiers and bottle nipples.

There were two or three more deliveries of "irregular" drugs, although Dr. Sartin had stated in his Sanitary Reports that most of these alleged medicines were "valueless and cannot be used for any purpose." In each case the same procedure was followed: inventoring alphabetically, division between the three camps. Thereafter, the bottles were carefully arranged on shelves in the supply room – and forgotten.

The important thing about this whole subject of the hospital equipment, medicines and supplies, is that it was entirely unnecessary. It has been pointed out elsewhere that, at the outbreak of the war there was on hand at the Medical Supply Depot, sufficient supplies of all kinds to take care of the requirements of the Asiatic Fleet for two years or more. In addition to this huge stock, the Canacao Naval Hospital itself had over a year's supply. The Naval Hospital was well equipped as a general hospital for the Asiatic Fleet and all of this equipment and medical stores were safely transported to Manila after the outbreak of the Pacific War. The Japanese found a complete, functioning Naval Hospital at Santa Scholastica College, and the Medical Supply Depot virtually intact in Manila. If the Navy unit had been permitted to make use of its own equipment and supplies, it could have operated at the highest efficiency with very little assistance except for quinine and some augmentation of the supply of dysentery specifics. As we have seen, it was incumbent upon the American military and naval authorities to leave the Naval Hospital unit in the City of Manila to take care of the injured and sick who were left behind when the Army withdrew to Bataan. This was a specific obligation under the Geneva Convention. On the other hand, the obligations of the Japanese under Article 15 of the Geneva Convention of 1929 are clear and definite:

"ARTICLE 15: Buildings and material of the fixed sanitary establishments of the army shall remain subject to the laws of war, but may not be diverted from their use so long as they are necessary for the wounded and sick.
However, commanders of troops engaged in operations may use them in case of urgent military necessity if, before such use, the wounded and sick treated there have been provided for."

The establishment at Santa Scholastica, completely equipped as it was, would have been ideal as a hospital for the prisoners of war, and as long as the need remained – and the need was certainly great enough – it was incumbent upon the Japanese to have left the Naval Hospital intact at that place. It cannot be said that there was any "urgent military necessity" which would justify the Japanese in confiscating the hospital equipment and supplies. Manila was an open city by declaration of General MacArthur; it had not been defended and no military operations had ever been conducted within it. There were any number of civilian hospitals which the Japanese could have utilized, assuming that the Japanese Army had brought with it nothing at all in the way of medical
personnel and equipment. As a matter of fact, the Japanese could have availed themselves of the facilities of the hospital at Santa Scholastica for their own sick and wounded, and the U.S. Navy doctors and hospital corpsmen would have freely given of their services, being, as the Geneva Convention describes, "neutralized persons." Giving the Japanese the benefit of the doubt and assuming that there was such an "urgent military necessity" as would justify their confiscation of the hospital at Santa Scholastica and the medical supplies at the Medical Supply Depot, it was incumbent upon them to see to it that the wounded and sick prisoners of war were "provided for." Obviously this means "adequately provided for," and does not contemplate any such provision as was made at the Pasay Elementary School and at Bilibid. Nor did the Japanese "adequately provide for" the patients from the U.S. Army Hospitals on Bataan and on Corregidor, whom they evacuated to Bilibid Prison.

By September, as we have noted, Commander Sartin was reporting that 20 percent of the staff members showed symptoms of malnutrition and this percentage remained constant thereafter. In January, Dr. Sartin told the Japanese:

"Health of the Medical Staff has, among the doctors, been somewhat worse than during November. One doctor is seriously ill, the result of prolonged subsistence on an inadequate diet and concomitant disorders. Two other doctors complained during December of painful feet and legs, considered to be due to avitaminosis.

A survey made recently indicates that the general health of most of the Hospital Corps is good. However, it was found that 27 are suffering from symptoms of food and vitamin deficiency diseases. Seventeen of this number are still able to work and are continued on duty.

Ten show pellagra-like symptoms (including soreness of the mouth and throat, perleche, rhagades, aerotal lesions, amblyopia and xerophthalmia.) Six reveal painful feet characterized by deep bone pain. None of these show paresthesia or reflex changes. Six have mastitis. These cases are of a glandular-nutritional nature and are characterized by firm, tender nodules in one or both breasts.

There is one case of beri-beri and one of sprue among the Hospital Corpsmen. These cases are considered significant, since the symptoms now present among this group may be, and probably are, the forerunners of more serious cases and a more widespread outbreak of deficiency diseases which may appear later, if a more liberal and better-balanced diet is not obtainable.

The Hospital Corps has subsisted almost entirely for several months on only the ration which was issued to the general mess. They were a healthy group of young men and were in excellent physical condition at the beginning of this period of confinement, so that they have been able to withstand longer the lack of a proper diet, than those who were in poor physical condition due to exhaustion and disease."

The death rate from malnutrition was comparatively low at Bilibid, because of the fact that from the very beginning everybody cooperated to the utmost to secure food and medicine for the malnutrition cases. Through such instrumentalities as the special diet kitchen, yeast culture and judicious juggling of special food allowances for the undernourished inaugurated by the Japanese in February, 1943, the patients were given enough food to enable most of them to improve.
Nevertheless, the death rate was high enough, particularly during the first months. Thus, from June, 1942 to January, 1943, there were 87 deaths at the hospital, of which 12 were attributed to beri-beri, 8 were diagnosed as malnutrition and 2 listed as due to pellagra. A total of 22 deaths from diseases of starvation, or better than 25 percent. However, during this period, there were also 52 deaths from dysentery and 26 from malaria, and there is no doubt whatever that in the majority of these cases, starvation played an important part. If the men had not been wasted away by starvation, they would have been much better able to fight their diseases and many of them would have pulled through.
Chapter 13

SURGICAL SERVICE
And
SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

In previous chapters we have discussed the principal diseases encountered at Bilibid; malaria and the so-called infectious diseases, particularly dysentery, the diseases of starvation, and we have gone into the fight for food and the fight for medicine and supplies. These were far and away the most serious problems; the matter of food, particularly, overshadowing everything. Nevertheless, there were other activities at the prison hospital unconnected with these matters; activities of great importance. Bilibid, after all, was a general hospital of quite respectable size. Most of the activities and departments that would be found in any general hospital were in full and successful operation at Bilibid: surgery, X-ray, dental clinic, laboratory, pharmacy, eye, ear, nose and throat clinic, and so on. Most important of these, of course, was the surgical service.

Surgery:

There was, of course, no surgical service at Bilibid during that terrible first month of June, 1942. No surgical equipment had been salvaged from Santa Scholastica. Commander Sartin requested operating room equipment in his urgent letter to Kusomoto, written the day after the Navy unit arrived at Bilibid, and he repeated this request several times thereafter, without result. This was just as well, for even had there been any surgical equipment, there were no anesthetics, no disinfectants and no gauze or bandages. Then on June 19th, came the influx of patients from the former U.S. Army Hospital Number One on Bataan, hundreds of whom were surgical patients, many of them with raw, gaping wounds, many others in casts.

The arrival of these patients from Bataan made an already serious condition desperate. Some of them had not had their dressings changed in several days and after jolting down from Bataan, a distance of over a hundred miles in open trucks, they were in very bad shape, indeed. The tiny supply of dressings on hand was quickly exhausted. In desperation, Dr. Sartin requested and received permission for one of the doctors to go out into town and purchase supplies. We have related elsewhere about the handful of bandages that were purchased and the exorbitant price paid: $12.50 for ten 1-pound rolls of cotton, etc.

Meanwhile, a place had to be found for the surgical patients, who by now numbered more than 300. It was decided to place them in Building 6 which, up to then, had been used as an overflow convalescent ward. Pharmacists' mates had already constructed low wooden platforms in this building and the mattresses which had lined the trucks in which these patients arrived, were laid down for beds. At that, these patients were a great deal more comfortable than the first patients at Bilibid had been – without mattresses and with only the bare, concrete floors to lie on. A few days later, the Japs finally brought in about 400 rolls of bandages of assorted sizes, which relieved the situation considerably.

Thus, Bilibid Hospital acquired a surgical ward before there was any surgical service. The title "surgical ward," however, is pretty euphonious when applied to that
Building 6. There was no hospital equipment such as bedpans, urinals, etc., and most of the patients were completely unable to help themselves. Nevertheless, the hospital corpsmen did manage, by dint of strenuous efforts, to keep these patients clean and give them some modicum of nursing care. But there is a limit to what can be done even by the most skillful and devoted hands, without equipment. Although the doctors and pharmacist's mates worked day and night, changing dressings on the most serious wounds and improvising all manner of makeshift equipment, everybody knew that these were only temporary measures; that something would have to happen, somehow, or many of these patients would die or suffer permanent injuries.

Then, on July 2nd, the former U.S. Army Hospital at Corregidor came in and, with it, complete surgical and operating room equipment including an autoclave, instrument, utensil and water sterilizers and everything else necessary for the installation of an operating room. There was sufficient dressing material to last, with careful conservation, for two years. While the supply of antiseptics that came in from Corregidor was rather meager, there was enough to "set up shop" with.

More important than the supplies and equipment from Corregidor were the Navy doctors and pharmacist's mates that arrived. Foremost among these was Commander Thomas H. Hayes who, in addition to being Regimental Surgeon of the Fourth Marines had, since March, 1942, been the District Medical Officer of the 16th Medical District, with headquarters at the Station Hospital on the "Rock." We have met Dr. Hayes before. On the staff of the Canacao Naval Hospital at War's outbreak, he went to the field hospital at "Jai Alai" in Manila on December 13th, thence to Olongapo to join the Fourth Marines and with the Fourth Marines to Corregidor. With Commander Hayes were Lieutenant Commander Cary M. Smith (who went to Bataan from Santa Scholastica College on December 26th, and served as Chief of Surgery at the Army Hospital Number One until the fall of Bataan); Lieutenant Commander E.M. Wade, from the Fourth Marines; Lieutenant E.R. Nelson from the Station Hospital on Corregidor, and eleven other Navy doctors. There were also five Navy dental officers, one pharmacist and 47 Navy pharmacist's mates. Commander Hayes was made Chief of Surgery in the reorganization of the hospital staff which followed, and he took with him into the Surgical Service, the doctors named above and Dr. Boone from the original Canacao staff.

Then, it was a question of setting up an operating room. The Japs still would furnish no materials whatever (for that matter, it was several days before Kusomoto let it be known that the Corregidor supplies would remain at Bilibid), but the need was urgent and an improvised operating room was set up in one end of Ward 6. The "operating room," commissioned and put into service on July 8th, was just a screened-off space, comprising the operating table, a homemade light and improvised sink, autoclave, sterilizers and instrument cabinet installed, one by one, in the weeks that followed.

The most glaring deficiency was screening, for flies teemed over the Compound. It was many months, however, before the Japs produced the few yards of screening needed and in the meantime, the new Service functioned at full speed. From July 8th through August, 1942, 29 major operations and 7 minors were performed. Of the majors, 4 were abdominals, 2 were amputations, 4 were reamputations and 19 were reconstructive jobs on bones and joints. By the end of the year, 124 operations had been performed or an average of 21 per month. During all of this period, the Service functioned in the little screened-off space, but in December, 1942, enough materials
were gathered together, including wire screening to partition off a fly-proof operating room.

Thereafter, there isn't very much to say about the Surgical Service. Under Commander Hayes' administration it functioned with machine-like efficiency. In the beginning, the maximum number of operations were emergency jobs, incident to immediately indicated treatment of war injuries and major reconstruction operations on bones and joints. As time progressed, abdominal operations and concurrent surgical pathology of everyday life (appendicitis, gastric ulcer, hernias, etc.) demanded more attention. Large and painful hemorrhoids and other rectal conditions were treated by surgery, as well as some genito-urinal cases. Until the Red Cross supplies arrived, the Service was handicapped by a lack of crinoline for plaster bandages and for several months, by a lack of glucose for intravenous use. Always, of course, convalescence of post-operative cases was greatly retarded by the diet provided — it is hard to convalesce on rice and garbage soup.

Nevertheless, from the day of the start of the Surgical Service to the end, there was not one death attributable to an operation. For that matter, there were only four deaths in the entire Surgical Service from any cause. The entire organization is proud of this record. In his Sanitary Report for January, 1943, Dr. Sartin told the Japanese proudly:

"In spite of the meager facilities for general surgery, and the low environmental standard of our location and necessary methods of procedure, and despite the generally poor state of health of our patients and the unfavorable post-operative diets and facilities for post-operative care, we have not had one surgical death."

This record is all the more remarkable when it is remembered that for most of the time the surgeons had to get along without benefit of X-ray. True, a small portable machine was included among the equipment from Corregidor, but there were no films. A few films had been salvaged by somebody from Santa Scholastica via Pasay, but they were soon used up. Thereafter, the Japs brought in, on one occasion, 12 dozen old films, too spotted for any use, and a few more small-size films after that. Then there were no more. The little fluoroscope did yeoman work, but a fluoroscope screen, after all, had its limitations.

The lack of X-ray is the only thing that Commander Hayes admits handicapped the Surgical Service to any great extent. "We really needed some pictures on a few of those cases," he says. "We were just plain lucky sometimes that we didn't run into a lot of trouble." But he is inclined to deprecate the rest of it. "We had everything we really needed," he told me. "Most of the elaborate equipment you find in modern hospitals is unnecessary. Nice to have, if you've got it, but excess baggage."

Commander Hayes insists that the Surgical Service at Bilibid has nothing in particular of which to be proud; that everyone "just did his job." For that matter, he does not believe that anyone in the Philippine campaign has anything very much to his credit; everyone did his job and that is all there is to it. "No more than the taxpayers had a right to expect."
Commander Hayes knew a lot about what the American taxpayer expects for his money. He had been working for him for nearly twenty years, in the course of a career that has taken him over much of the world, and has included such varied jobs as Chief of Surgery at the Naval Hospital at Norfolk, Virginia and running a leper colony.

This last job he recalls as the most pleasurable of his career. That was from 1925-1928, soon after he joined the Navy (after graduating from Medical School at George Washington University, a post graduate course in orthopedics at Harvard and three years in the Public Health Service). Dr. Hayes, then a lieutenant, was sent to the Virgin Islands for a tour of duty. At that time, the Virgin Islands group, which we acquired by purchase from Denmark in 1917, was under the administration of the Navy Naval Governor and Navy officials in every department. One of the activities inherited by the Navy was the leper colony at St. Croix, founded by Iceland’s great leprologist, Professor Ehelers. Dr. Hayes, as Administrator of the colony (110 patients) was medical officer, judge, police chief - everything. His stories of the patients whom he knew there are among the most vivid that this writer has ever heard.

Major Hagen, U.S. Army, who had been on the Corregidor staff, was also retained at Bilibid and put on the surgical staff. These doctors performed most of the surgery. Dr. Nelson, who had had considerable practice in orthopedics in private practice, did much of the bone work and reconstructive operations; Dr. Boone much of the general surgery. Dr. Wade and Dr. Smith did a lot of work, and several of the younger doctors were also given a chance to “keep their hand in.” Pharmacist’s mates rotated in surgery, staying on the job for an average of about three months, which was considered a good training period. Most of the operations were performed under spinal anesthesia; thus, of 375 operations performed up to September 1st, 162 were spinals, 27 ether, 176 local and 2 intravenous anesthesia.

Laboratory:

Bilibid Hospital maintained a fairly good and very busy laboratory. Routinely, pharmacist’s mates, specially trained as laboratory technicians, performed under the direction of the Laboratory Officer, more than 1,000 examinations per month, on the average, including urinalyses, examinations of feces, malaria smears, white and red blood counts, hemoglobins, blood types, etc. Besides this work which was, of course, indispensable in the treatment of disease, the laboratory was able to do a limited amount of research. The extensive yeast program was carried out under the direction of the laboratory men. As with everything else, the story of the successful operation of the laboratory is a story of difficulties met and overcome through hard work, perseverance and ingenuity.

There was no laboratory at Bilibid worthy of the name before August, 1942. There was a very practical reason for this. One of the first essentials of a laboratory is a microscope, and the hospital had no microscope. There were no less than six microscopes among the equipment at Santa Scholastica, but these were among the first which aroused the interest of the Japanese - they took five of them. Somebody managed to salvage the one remaining microscope and get it to Pasay, but on April 4th, a Naval “Inspection party” took that. Thereafter, the Canacao staff had no microscope.

The need was great. Apart from the food deficiency diseases, the great majority of patients at Pasay and later at Bilibid, were suffering from malaria and dysentery and, while these conditions can be diagnosed with reasonable accuracy from clinical
examination, the study of blood and feces under microscope is naturally of the greatest value. Commander Sartin asked in his letter of June 1, 1942, for a "microscope with high and low power and oil immersion lenses" and repeated this request from time to time thereafter, but got no response.

For about an hour, however, there was a microscope in Bilibid. The Japs were completely unaware of this fact. A German Catholic priest, Father Buttenbruch, risked his personal safety, if not his life, to smuggle it in. This priest was interned by the authorities as an enemy alien at the start of the war and was released by the Japanese when they occupied Manila. Father Buttenbruch bore the Americans no ill will for having interned him and as soon as he was released, made his way to Santa Scholastica, where he helped the Americans in various practical ways. The good priest somehow managed to wangle permission to get into the prison compound. This was in July, on a dreary, rainy day. Father Buttenbruch was deeply shocked at the conditions that he found and determined to help, if he could. A few days later, the priest came in again. He appeared to have put on a great deal of weight since his first visit, for his black cassock bulged very noticeably in front. Making his way to the dispensary, the priest, watching for an opportunity when the attention of the Jap guard accompanying him was diverted, lifted up the skirt of his gown and produced package after package of food and medicines, and a microscope. This last item produced more consternation than pleasure. The food could be eaten. The medicine could be hidden until it was needed. But the microscope would be a constant source of danger. It could not be used, for the Japs would be sure to notice the new acquisition and start asking questions. There was only one thing to be done: Father Buttenbruch put the microscope back in its hiding place under his cassock and smuggled it out again.

Finally, on August 21st, the new Japanese commander, Dr. Nogi, produced a microscope. The laboratory was then able to function almost immediately, for the supplies from Corregidor which had arrived in July had included complete laboratory equipment. The Corregidor group had brought with them all of the items of equipment that were small and easily transportable (they had attempted to bring a microscope along, but the Japs confiscated it). As a matter of fact, the Corregidor supplies were sufficient to enable the laboratory to function without replacements up to the end, which was fortunate, for the Japs were thereafter very chary about furnishing the hospital with any laboratory supplies.

Although the Corregidor supplies were very extensive, there was still a shortage in some things, which handicapped the laboratory considerably. Here Lieutenant Leslie W. King came into the picture. Lieutenant King, making good practical use of his training as a chemist, manufactured chemicals from combinations of those in stock. He made, among other things, ammonium and sodium oxylates, and from tin foil and hydrochloric acid, he made staunous chloride. When the equipment and chemicals were assembled, known quantities of substances containing calcium and phosphorous were tested and the results were found to be accurate for blood determinations. Burettes and volumetric bottles were made from graduates and pipettes on hand.

The biggest problem in blood chemistry tests was the lack of a colorimeter: a complicated apparatus by means of which the intensity of the colors of two solvents is matched, as unknown with a known standard. King put one of these together out of scraps of lumber and glass that he picked up around the prison compound. The homemade colorimeter worked to perfection. In the words of Dr. Silliphant (Laboratory
Officer until he was forced to retire on account of illness in September, 1943), the invention "well deserves a place in some museum dedicated to the ingenuity of the American mind, even when limited to materials of scrap wood and glass, with a pocket knife for a tool." With the manufactured chemicals and the colorimeter, the laboratory was able to do blood calcium and phosphorous examinations, and carried out a small research program limited to the possible relationship between the blood chemistry and avitaminosis, particularly in cases of painful feet. Along with this work, mention might be made of the immunization program carried out by the laboratory. All personnel of the hospital were immunized against cholera, typhoid and dysentery every six months, and in addition, anti-plague prophylaxis was given for the first time in September, 1943. The Japanese were generous in this respect; they supplied all of the necessary vaccines with the exception of that used for the first immunizations given in November, 1942, the vaccines for which had been salvaged from the medical supplies at Santa Scholastica.\(^{(18)}\)

**Pharmacy:**

Besides compounding prescriptions and doing the usual things that a pharmacy is expected to do, the Bilibid pharmacy comprised a very active dressing station and issued most of the supplies. This activity, too, is a lesson in ingenuity.

The pharmacy considerably antedated the laboratory, being started much sooner after the Navy hospital unit came under the control of the Japanese. The pharmacy and dispensary was first set up at Pasay under Dr. G.K. Lambert. Here, in one of the schoolrooms, furnished with a glass showcase for drugs, a small sink, a locker, two tables and some chairs, medicine was dispensed daily to some 100 prisoners. The first group from Santa Scholastica under Dr. Brokenshire had been permitted to bring with them a few medicines and some dressings, and pharmacist's mates had stowed more of these items away in their sea bags. There wasn't much, but there weren't very many patients, either, and nearly all of the sick prisoners were attended to.

Upon arrival at Bilibid, a pharmacy and dispensary was immediately set up on the first floor of the Old Hospital Building, where the unit was first quartered. Besides the handful of dressing supplies which were brought along from Pasay, the first inventory showed in the line of pharmacy equipment, one pair of scales, a couple of mortars and pestles, a few medicine glasses, two spatulas and one pill tile. An odd assortment, but all that had survived the numerous shakedowns at the hands of the Japanese Army and Navy. Then, after a few days, the Japanese decided to open a few of the cell blocks in the lower compound to the Americans, and the pharmacy (including the dispensary, for the two were in reality one activity) moved down to Building 7, or rather, into one half of it, the remainder of the building being then used as a storehouse for post office supplies. Here for the rest of the month, things continued much as they had at Pasay, although on a bigger scale.

It was still pretty much of a hand-to-mouth proposition, however, during the first month of June. Lieutenant Commander Cecil Welch was in charge, with Pharmacist Shearer directly under him.\(^{(20)}\) But the man who both of these say was most responsible for keeping things going during that trying time, was Chief Pharmacist's Mate Vernon.

In the first place, Vernon was by all odds, the best smuggler on the staff. He came into Bilibid with an amazing quantity of medicine and even more amazing items of equipment, which he produced from time to time. Vernon had managed to save almost
supplies were practically all gone, Vernon managed to dig up new supplies. He did this by bludgeoning patients and prisoners into giving up their private hoards. A handful of quinine tablets here, some sulfathiazole there, a few first aid packets somewhere else — it all added up to a very considerable stock. Some of the things he dug up were amusing; one prisoner, for example, gave up a gallon jug of castor oil, which he had picked up on Corregidor and lugged with him through all the vicissitudes of the trip to Bilibid.

Most valuable of Vernon’s talents was the fact that he was a congenital miser. At this time, the dispensary was treating more than 200 patients a day at sick call and often, twice that number. There were also several hundred patients in the wards needing medicine. The supplies had to be hoarded and given out pill by pill, drop by drop. Vernon was a good hoarder. He had no favorites. He guarded his precious stock so carefully indeed, that before long he had very few friends — which development pleased him greatly, for it made his job much easier.

The Corregidor supplies made it possible to set up a fairly good pharmacy. Vernon stayed on, losing none of his miserly characteristics, and dispensed supplies as they were issued to him by Mr. Shearer from the supply room. The two thereafter worked together.

There isn’t very much to say about the pharmacy after that. It was mostly the old familiar story of hard work and overcoming difficulties. The figures might convey some idea of the importance of the activity to the hospital: an average of more than 2,500 dressings and treatments and nearly 2,000 medications every month. Around 600 items were stocked.

Mention should be made of the manufacturing activities carried on in the pharmacy. These were very extensive. Besides the routine items (Dobell’s solution, cough medicine, etc.) that any hospital pharmacy makes, the Bilibid pharmacy manufactured thousands of pills. Aspirin, opium, codeine, and many others were turned out with the aid of a homemade pill tile. Short on acacia for binder, the pharmacy crew experimented successfully with syrup, glycerine and glucose. Salicylic acid was compounded from sodium salicylate. Great quantities of soft green soap for ward use were turned out. The testing work should also be mentioned. The Japs brought in, from time to time, medicines in jars and bottles without labels. The pharmacy crew did some very creditable work in cross-testing to find out what the unlabeled medicines were.

X-ray:

Among the items of equipment received from Corregidor was a mobile X-ray unit, which the Japanese indicated could be kept at Bilibid. Pharmacist’s mates cleared most of the assorted post office supplies from the remainder of Building 7, and installed the machine. A darkroom was constructed and by the first week in August, this department was ready to function.

For a time, there were X-ray films; 144 of them salvaged from Santa Scholastica. When these were used up, however, the Japs brought no more in, apart from a few small-sized films, too old and spotted to be of much use. Thereafter, the fluoroscopic screen did most of the work and, while the fluoroscopic examinations were of the greatest value, the lack of X-ray pictures was keenly felt in some of the surgical operations.
Besides fluoroscopy, the little portable machine performed yeoman service in the treatment of various disease conditions. For example, three cases of cancer were treated and apparently successfully arrested, as was one case of epithalomea and three or four cases of mastitis. These things are far beyond the normal capabilities of a machine of this type, calling as they do, for 60 to 70 thousand volts of electricity. In addition, hundreds of routine skin treatments were given. Dr. Cecil Welch, the hospital roentgenologist, cannot praise the little machine—a Picker-Waite—too highly. It performed beautifully throughout, standing up under work that it was never intended to do, and under rough treatment and "kicking around" that it received on Corregidor and in the course of transportation to Bilibid. Some 190 roentgenograms were made before the supply of films was exhausted. Thereafter, an average of about 50 fluoroscopic examinations and over 100 X-ray treatments was performed on the portable machine each month.

The Corregidor equipment included a violet ray lamp with fittings and a heating lamp, which acquisitions made it possible to set up a physiotherapy department. This department commenced operations toward the end of July, 1942. The violet ray machine soon gave out, however, and thereafter the physiotherapy department functioned with heat treatments (one 300-watt bulb) and massage. During the first few months when the patient load was the heaviest, this department gave more than a thousand treatments a month, but this average gradually decreased to about half of that number.

Dental Clinic:

There was a dental clinic of sorts at Bilibid, almost from the very first. This was due to a combination of luck and Machinist Gooding, the first "Warden." It will be remembered that, when the Navy first arrived at the prison on May 30, 1942, they found there a large group of Army doctors, quartered in the Old Hospital Building. These doctors had been brought to Bilibid from the Army Field Hospital No. 2 on Bataan, after the surrender. They had a little luggage with them and when, a few days later, these doctors were moved out, bound for the prison camp at Cabanatauan, Gooding asked one of the Japanese if the hospital could have a little of the Army doctors' equipment, if any. After some argument, the Japanese pointed to a truck where several footlockers were stacked, and said "Okay. You take one." Gooding lifted one of the footlockers off of the truck. Opened, it was found to contain a field dental unit: portable chair, foot drill and instruments.

The portable unit did good service thereafter until the Corregidor group came in, bringing with them two complete and modern electrically operated dental units, one of which was installed in the dispensary. The other unit was installed some months later. Thereafter, an average of more than 300 patients received treatment in the dental clinic each month. Due to lack of materials and equipment for laboratory work, treatment was necessarily limited to fillings and extractions. Lieutenant Commander James C. Connell, in charge of the clinic, was unable to notice any unusual or excessive tooth decay in any of the prisoner patients, in spite of the inadequate diet on which they subsisted. But, the lack of toothbrushes and toothpaste caused a lot of trouble. Dr. Connell said that the Jap guard who used to come around sometimes to have their teeth looked after, were the worst patients he had ever seen. Their vaunted "bushido" spirit was singularly lacking in the dentist's chair; they would cringe at the very sight of a drill and the slightest twinge of pain made them cry out as though they were in the most terrible agony. A Jap soldier was as likely as not to get up and walk away in the midst of an extraction, with a
tooth partway out, and this even though the tooth had been thoroughly anesthetized with novocaine, of which there was a plentiful supply. The Japanese soldiers were not entirely to blame for their fear of dentists. Their own Army dentists are not officers, but are half-trained dental apprentices. They limit their treatment, as a rule, to extractions, usually without benefit of anesthetic.
Chapter 14

THE BILIBID STORE

The Bilibid Store was one of the most important activities at the prison hospital. It was, at the same time, probably one of the most unique merchandising enterprises ever carried on. Its success was due to several features: the initiative of Pay Clerk Clifford Hanson, the support and cooperation of all personnel, and to the accident that three Japanese—two soldiers and one civilian—came from the same Prefecture in Japan.

Our story really begins at Pasay. It appears that the food ration given to the Japanese guards at that place, while much better than the prisoners got, was, nevertheless, far from adequate. The guards customarily pieced out their ration with food purchased from the outside. On at least one occasion, a purchase was made through a Japanese merchant in Manila named T. Ueumura. The merchant did this as a favor to one of the Japanese noncommissioned officers, Sergeant Tokanaga, who was not only his personal friend, but also a native of the same Prefecture where Ueumura had his home. This circumstance, to the Japanese tradition, made them practically blood brothers.

When the Canacao unit arrived at Bilibid on May 30th, they found there two old friends from the Cavite days—Electrician E.G. Schweizer, later to become the prison Warden, and Pay Clerk Hanson. These men, who had come in with prisoners from Corregidor a few days before, were working industriously about the place; Mr. Hanson had gathered up a crew of men and was laying bricks along one side of the old hospital building under the faucets, and Mr. Schweizer was already at work on his first self-flushing straddle trench. The two were, with the permission of the Japanese, taken up on the staff.

In the course of conversations with his old acquaintances—most of which conversations inevitably having to do with the subject of food—Mr. Hanson learned about the occasion when Ueumura had obtained food for the prisoners at Pasay. It gave him an idea. Tokanaga, who had come over from Pasay, was again approached. Would he please see Mr. Ueumura, the merchant, and ask him to buy things for the prisoners. Why, certainly. Tokanaga knew Mr. Ueumura well. A very fine gentleman, too. After all, wasn't he not from the guard's Prefecture?

But, you understand, this must be secret. The Japanese authorities would be very angry if they were to find out, and the sergeant would be severely punished. The merchandise would come in at night and only when Tokanaga was on duty at the gate. Furthermore, everything must be distributed before daylight the next morning.

So it was arranged. The next thing was to get some working capital. This proved to be easy. Hanson began at 8:00 o'clock one night, making the rounds of his friends on the hospital staff, asking each one to give as much as he could afford. Within two hours, 3,000 pesos had been collected, of which 2,800 pesos was turned over to Ueumura. Along with the money, went an order for fruit, sugar, eggs, canned sardines—as much as the money would buy.
Nothing was heard of either Ueumura or the 2,800 pesos for ten days. Hanson began to get worried. Then one night, a truck drove in the gate, loaded with food. Tokanaga passed it through and distribution of the precious load commenced, in one corner of Building 3. On this first distribution, Mr. Hanson, with Commander Sartin's backing, established the policy which governed from then on: every man in camp stood on an equal footing, irrespective of rank and irrespective of the amount that he may have contributed. All had a right to buy an equal amount of food. There were, at that time, about 3,000 people in the compound; the supply was not enough to give everyone all that he wanted to buy and the most scrupulous rationing was essential. One canteen cup of sugar per man was the rule, both for the man who had paid in a thousand pesos, as well as for those who had contributed as little as one peso, and those who had not advanced anything to the fund. And so it went with every other item. There was some grumbling, but the rule stuck.

That set the pattern. After each delivery, Hanson passed the hat, Tokanaga gave the money to Ueumura, and in due time the food arrived. These nocturnal distributions were big events in the lives of the half-starved prisoners. The practice was never discovered. Ueumura always waited with his truck until he received word from Tokanaga that the coast was clear. By morning, every item was safely distributed and most of the food eaten.

After a time, however, the business had grown to such proportions that the hand-to-mouth system of buying had become unsatisfactory. Ueumura's visits were irregular; sometimes he made deliveries two or three times in a fortnight and at other times, two weeks would go by before his truck moved through the gate. However, supplies were still relatively plentiful in Manila at that time, many of Ueumura's loads were quite large (although at no time was he able to bring in all that had been ordered) and Hanson had acquired a considerable stock. The distribution-before-daylight rule was relaxed; Hanson was allowed to keep a stock of food and merchandise, provided that it was kept hidden during the day away from the prying eyes of any inspection party. In the course of events, Captain Kusomoto, the officer in charge of the camp, being apprised of what had been going on, gave his tacit approval to the scheme, on the understanding that the practice of hiding everything during the daytime was scrupulously followed.

And so, Hanson got the first attribute of a store: a stock in trade. Soon after that, he acquired a small space in the end of Building 10, next to the Warrant Officers' quarters, and he had a storeroom. Mr. Hanson then improved the system. Instead of asking few contributions each time, he let it be known that his office was open to receive deposits and that only those who made deposits in advance would be allowed to purchase anything. Only about 500 people responded to this, but, when only those 500 were allowed to buy from Ueumura's next load, there was a rush to make deposits. No cash sales were permitted, for the practical reason that Hanson never had any change. Deposits were made by each man in amounts calculated to cover the estimated cost of his order, and this money was promptly turned over to Ueumura. By this time, the merchant was openly permitted in the compound. He would go to the store and there make his deliveries and receive his order from Mr. Hanson, who was the only person permitted to have dealings with him. By this time, too, the Japanese was making daily deliveries.

Then, finally, Hanson acquired the third customary element of a conventional store - capital. All personnel were permitted to make deposits up to any amount. Any
deposit of one peso was sufficient to open an account, cash sales still being taboo. The enterprise reached maturity with the introduction of credit sales, with Hanson advancing credit in small amounts to responsible persons. In September, Lieutenant N. Nogi relieved Captain Kusomoto. He also gave his approval to the store, which by now occupied a space as large as the Warrant Officers' quarters in Building 10. In the course of time, too, the custom of giving Ueumura the cash to accompany each order was abandoned, with the merchandise being paid for on delivery. It then being possible to make change at the paying windows, cash sales were instituted.

It is impossible to overestimate the importance of the store to the prison hospital. As we have seen, the principal diseases afflicting the patients were those rooted in a pronounced dietary deficiency. The ration furnished by the Japanese was insufficient even for a maintenance diet, to say nothing of affording the nourishment required for patients suffering from beri-beri, pellagra and dysentery. The daily ration was practically devoid of proteins, fats and needed vitamins. To quote Dr. Sartin's words: "Beri-beri, pellagra, malnutrition and so on are just polite words for starvation. We were starved." As we have seen, Bilibid Hospital, under the policies of Lieutenant (blanked out), the Japanese Quartermaster Officer in charge of the food supplies, was for some reason singled out for adverse discrimination in the matter of food. For upwards of two months, the ration consisted of nothing but white rice, three times a day, with occasionally a thin vegetable soup. Sugar, salt and oleomargarine were furnished in minute amounts. While the diet eventually improved somewhat, at no time did it ever approach the maintenance level. Yet, the Canacao men were expected to effect cures in the dietary deficiency cases.

That cures were effected in almost all cases, was due in no small part to the fact that, through the store, vitally needed items of food could be brought into the camp. This supply, while far from adequate, was by no means small. From the very beginning, total sales averaged 6,000 pesos per month. The average population during that time was (blanked out) persons. It is estimated that it cost the Japanese not more than 20 centavos per day to feed each man, which figures out to (blanked out) per day for the entire camp or (blanked out) per month. The prisoners spent each month for food through the store, therefore, more than half what the Japanese expended.

Nor was it by any means, a fact that the benefits of the store were limited to those who had money. From the very beginning, the spirits of comradeship prevailed, those with funds sharing with those who had none. And, as has been pointed out, rationing was so managed that a man with a little money could buy just as much as the man with a lot of money. Furthermore, Dr. Sartin and Mr. Hanson, very early brought the store directly into the business of furnishing food to the indigent sick. Mr. Hanson was authorized to charge a 10 percent mark-up on everything sold and this profit was turned over to Dr. Stanley M. Smith's diet kitchen. In this way, some P300 a month was made available for the purchase of special food for the more serious cases of malnutrition. For a long time, that is, until officers and medical men began receiving pay and were permitted to contribute their savings toward the special fund for the purchase of food for the indigent of the camp, this P300 was the only money available anywhere for this purpose. There is no doubt that many an American prisoner, therefore, owes his life to the existence of this fund. The profit from the store continued to be paid into the special diet kitchen, even after the special fund came into being in January, 1943.
Without the store, the money which officers and medical personnel began receiving as “pay” in November, 1942, would have been virtually worthless to them. It is undoubtedly true that practically every cent of this money was eventually exchanged at the store windows for food and necessities such as paper, pencils, tobacco and matches. Officers and pharmacist’s mates banded together in groups of two or more, to form “messes,” pooling their money and cooking their extra food together. In this way, the pesos paid in to the store went much further. Enlisted men receiving no pay, frequently acted as laundymen or cooks for the officers and were enabled to piece out their ration with the money thus earned.

Hanson’s enterprise did not have all clear sailing. For one thing, the higher Japanese authorities never gave their official approval to the store; it was always a sub rosa affair carefully hidden from the eyes of Japanese inspection parties. Hanson and his crew worked always under the threat that, at any time the business might be stopped. It was not always possible to obtain many needed items, although the faithful Ueumura always did his best to get everything that was ordered, at the best prices obtainable. The store naturally felt the pressure of increasingly stringent conditions prevailing outside.

The Japanese Army early brought all sugar production under a rigid system of control. By far, the greater portion of this staple went into the manufacture of alcohol for motor power in order to conserve Nippon’s precious supply of gasoline. Most of the rest of the supply of sugar was taken for the use of the Japanese Army, so that the public was left with very little of a product of which the Islands had always had far too much in peacetime. Mr. Hanson was never able to get enough sugar; the most that Ueumura brought in any one day was 10 sacks of 100 pounds each, amounting to one canteen cup per man. This was in January, and deliveries dwindled steadily thereafter, until finally the supply of refined sugar disappeared altogether. Now, it was very difficult to eat the watery rice concoction called lugao, served each morning at the prison hospital, without sugar. To fill this need, Mr. Hanson brought in panocha, the small round cakes of brown sugar which Manila cocheros fed their horses. These could be boiled to a syrup which, after it was strained of the dirt, hay and assorted refuse it contained, served as sweetening for the morning lugao. Even this panocha became scarce, however, as the sugar controls tightened and its price rose from 10 centavos per cake to 25 centavos—a prohibitive cost.

Meat was fairly plentiful at first. Eventually the store acquired a Frigidaire, which made it possible for Hanson to stock perishable items, particularly meat. Up to that time, Dr. Cross and Mr. Pfeiffer, who were permitted to go into town under guard for the purpose of buying foodstuffs for the officers, had brought in small amounts of meat on individual order, but with the Frigidaire, Hanson was enabled to stock it in quantity for everybody. Gradually, however, the supply dwindled as the Japanese Army began to take control and finally, by April, Ueumura could no longer find any fresh meat in the city markets. All of it went directly to hotels, restaurants and the Japanese Army. Cigarettes were also relatively plentiful in the beginning, but by March, ordinary native cigarettes costing 10 centavos for a package of 30 before the war, had risen to 75 centavos in the open market and were strictly rationed at that price. Mr. Hanson was, nevertheless, able to obtain cigarettes through the Japanese Army, which he could sell for 25 centavos a package, as long as the supply lasted. Sometimes the Army gave him 1,000 packages a month and sometimes less. Such articles as soap, matches, oleomargarine and cooking oil became increasingly harder to obtain as time went on, with the last two finally
disappearing from the market altogether, when the Japanese Army took over the entire supply. And so it went.

Fortunately, two very important items continued to be fairly plentiful. These were mongo beans and duck eggs.

The mongo bean, indigenous to the Philippines, bears no resemblance to any bean we have in the United States. It is a hard, round object, about the size of a BB-gun shot, and is the fruit of the small, vine-like mongo plant. This plant grows anywhere in the Philippines, at any season of the year, maturing as early as three months after planting. The bean is very rich in protein and has long been used by the natives as a cure for beri-beri. The beans can be covered with water and permitted to sprout, in which case they are generally used as a salad, with vinegar, or they can be boiled. While the price of even this proletarian food rose considerably, it never got out of sight. Fully 30 percent of the sales of the store were accounted for by these mongo beans and related products of the country, such as black-eyed peas, kidney beans and black beans. As for duck eggs — many prisoners after being introduced to them, swore that they had been missing something all their lives; that thenceforth they would eat duck eggs in preference to chicken eggs.

The two men who, more than any others, were responsible for the existence of the store and for its success are Commander Sartin, who gave the undertaking his full support and encouragement from the start, and Mr. Hanson. You may have already assumed that this latter individual is quite a remarkable fellow. He is. He has been, in the course of his career, a farmer, professional basketball player, court reporter and law student, besides rising in a remarkably short time in the Navy, to Warrant Officer rank from the lowest enlisted rating.

Carl Hanson was born 30 years ago in the state of Minnesota. His father was Norwegian, his mother, French. He was the only son in a family of four children. The father, a superintendent of telephone, died when Carl was four years old, and the young widow (she was married when she was 16, the father 18) was faced with the problem of caring for the children. A housewife, she knew no trade or occupation and so, perforce, she had to send each of the children to live with a family of relatives, while she studied nursing at the Swedish Hospital in Huron, South Dakota. Carl was sent to live with his father's mother.

This redoubtable old lady lived alone on a 620-acre farm near Brandt, South Dakota. When Carl went to live with her, she was 75 years of age and as vigorous as most women of 40 or less. She did all of her own work, milking cows, chopping firewood, tending her truck garden and all of the manifold tasks that naturally go with managing a 620-acre farm in South Dakota. She lived to be 99. She adored her grandson and, it must be admitted, probably spoiled him to death during the four years that he was with her.

His mother had, by this time, graduated from her training course at the Swedish Hospital and had married again, this time to a Mr. Longren who owned a laundry in the town of Huron, South Dakota. She called all of her children back. She had some difficulty with Carl; he could speak nothing but Norwegian, which he had learned from his grandmother, while his mother understood not a word of it. After a year, the stepfather fell ill and had to sell his business and take his family with him to a farm near (blanked
Wisconsin. Soon after that, he died and the family moved to Tyler, where the twice-widowed mother again took up nursing.

Carl went through the grade schools and high school in Tyler. At this latter institution, he went in for athletics, particularly basketball and, after graduating, he joined a professional team called the Shamrocks. There was not a single Irishman on the team, which consisted of three Poles and two Norwegians. A year of this life, playing sometimes three games in a single week, in various towns and cities of the midwest, and Hanson and a friend decided to join the Navy.

Like every young recruit beginning his first enlistment, Hanson was first sent to a Naval training station, this one being the Great Lakes station at (blanked out). All recruits go through a three months' training course, after which they are either sent out to duty as Apprentice Seamen, or if they demonstrate special aptitude, they are retained at the training station for a further three months' course of instruction. Following his period of training, Hanson was assigned to the battleship "California," where he served for six years.

Once on the "California," Hanson, who had somewhere found time to master shorthand and typewriting, was assigned to office work and became a yeoman — Naval terminology for stenographers and office men. By the time that he had completed his first enlistment he was a Yeoman, First Class, which meant that he had been examined and had been found able to type at a good rate of speed, and knew among other things, "the regulations governing the handling and preparation of official correspondence; the duties of the recorder of a dock court and reporter of a summary court martial and how to prepare the records; a working knowledge of the promotions and special qualifications available to enlisted men" and that he was "able to keep all personnel records and make up personnel reports." Not wishing to give up the rating he had earned — he was by then a Second Class Petty Officer, Hanson reenlisted and was assigned to duty at the Naval Recruiting Station at San Francisco. This was his first shore duty since enlistment and he decided to take advantage of the opportunity to study law, enrolling for evening courses as Golden Gate College of Law.

After four years of hard work, performing his duties at the Recruiting Station during the day and studying law at night, Hanson graduated, receiving a degree of Bachelor of Laws from Golden Gate. By this time, too, he was a Chief Yeoman, which would correspond roughly to a combined office manager, head court reporter and storekeeper in civil life. He was then just over 30 years old. He was sent to sea duty, however, before he had a chance to take the bar examinations and, after a few months he had already become too "rusty" to risk taking the examination without a "cram course." A lawyer never in his life knows as much law as he does on the day that he graduates from law school. Nevertheless, Hanson determined to get out of the Navy and go into civil life. He did not reenlist when his second enlistment came to an end. A particularly disillusioning experience with state policies in the matter of appointments to public positions caused him to change his mind; he reenlisted and took the preliminary examination for Acting Pay Clerk in the Navy.

The rank of Pay Clerk is a warrant officer rank and the general qualifications demanded are in most respects the same as those discussed elsewhere for Warrant Officers. There are certain important differences to be noted: while candidates for Warrant Officer rank in the other specialties must have been serving as a Chief Petty
Officer in that specialty at the time that he makes application to take the examinations (in some specialties, a Petty Officer First Class, may apply). Any Chief Petty Officer or Petty Officer First Class, in any branch of the Navy may go up for the rank of Acting Pay Clerk. Chief Boatswain's Mates, Chief Pharmacists, Chief Radiomen's Mates, etc., all are eligible equally with the Chief Yeoman. This makes for much greater competition for the rank of Acting Pay Clerk, since as a rule, there are more candidates for this rank, drawn from all over the Navy. The formula used by the examining board at Washington in determining the qualifications of candidates for this rank is also somewhat different: 5 written, plus 2 practical, plus 3 record, divided by 10. This increased emphasis on the written phase of the examination recognizes the fact that a Pay Clerk must perform a larger proportion of clerical duties as compared to other Warrant Officers. As in the case of other warrant ranks, many candidates are eliminated by the preliminary physical practical and written examination. As is the case with Pharmacists, no candidate will be accepted for the rank of Acting Pay Clerk unless his accumulated previous service, together with his possible future service prior to attaining the age of 64 years, will amount to at least 30 years.

The preliminary examination successfully passed, Hanson presented himself for the professional examination, which was held on September 1, 1937, beginning at 8:00 a.m. The examinations lasted seven days, from 8:00 o'clock in the morning to 5:00 in the afternoon, with an hour for lunch. The examinations are described in Section D-6225 of the Bureau of Navigation Manual as follows:

"D-6225. Examination for Acting Pay Clerk.

(1) The practical examination will be conducted with a view to ascertaining whether or not the candidate is a thorough and practical pay clerk, and the Board will endeavor to ascertain his practical knowledge of the following:

(a) Handling a division at physical exercise.
(b) Marching a division from forecastle to quarterdeck and reporting it to the executive officer.
(c) To demonstrate his ability as to his assigned duties at fire, collision and general quarters.
(d) The administration of the financial section of the supply department, including preparation of payrolls, accounts, returns, etc.
(e) Administration of the general stores section of the supply department, including the requisitioning, receipt, custody, care and accounting for supplies of all kinds.
(f) Administration of the general mess.
(g) The ship's store.
(h) Officer-like qualities, as determined by the candidate's general bearing, appearance, alertness, executive ability, and ability to handle men.

(2) The written examination will be based on the following subjects:

(a) Duties of pay clerks afloat as defined by Navy Regulations and instructions.
(b) Official correspondence."
There were 362 candidates for the examination, of whom 20, including Hanson, were accepted. During his first year, a warrant officer is on probation. At the end of that period, the warrant may be revoked if, for any reason, the man is considered incapable of performing the duties of a warrant officer. Many warrants are revoked in this way, and also during the first year, a newly-made warrant officer may resign. Mr. Hanson received his warrant on January 1, 1938, and this was made permanent a year later. After a tour of duty on the cruiser "Northampton" and the battleship "Utah," he was transferred to the Navy Yard at Cavite, as Disbursing Officer, arriving in the Philippines in July, 1940. Mrs. Hanson and his son, Richard, went with him as usual, but had to return to the States in November, 1941, when it became clear that war clouds were gathering in the Pacific.

After the bombing of the Navy Yard on the 10th of December, Hanson evacuated his office to Manila and then to (blanked out). He came back to Cavite on the 27th, to pay the civilian employees of the Yard, and did not get away again until New Year's Day, just ahead of the Japanese forces. He had P45,000 in paper bills stuffed into his shirt when he got back to Mariveles in time to be caught in a big air raid on the Naval Air Station there. Hanson was forced to take cover in the woods, with all of the money still in his shirt. "That's one time when nobody knew where the paymaster was, and nobody gave a damn," he says.

In February, Hanson went to the Navy Tunnel on Corregidor, and took up disbursing duties under Lieutenant (jg) Gunnston. These duties consisted of handling the personal financial affairs of approximately 2,400 Navy personnel on the Rock, as
well as official Naval matters. Hundreds of allotments to dependents in the United States were arranged via radio from Corregidor, and Hanson also conceived the idea of wiring Washington for permission to allot money from the pay of the Navy officers and men, for the purchase of defense bonds. From February to the surrender of Corregidor in May, not less than $750,000 worth of bonds were purchased in this way. Following the surrender, he was brought to Bilibid prison, arriving there a few days before the advent of the Naval hospital unit.

Hanson has had many varied jobs in the course of his career in the Navy, but he never thought that some day he would be given the job of running a store in a military prison under control of the Japanese. He comprehends fully the old saw: "Truth is stranger than fiction."

Modestly, Hanson insists that most of the credit for the successful operation of the store belongs to Dr. Sartin, who gave the project his unstinting cooperation from the start. Hanson says he merely carried out Dr. Sartin's orders, which were to furnish as much food to as many people as possible, at the lowest possible price. He also gives much credit to Ueumura, "one of God's noblemen," and to the men assigned to work in the store (blanked out) Dobbs, (blanked out) "Pop" Guitard, a civilian old-timer in the Philippines, (blanked out) Monroe, (blanked out) Evers, (blanked out) Ebarts, (blanked out) Zimmerman and (blanked out) Simonson.
Chapter 15

FREEDOM LOST

"Prisoner of war! It is a melancholy state. You are in the power of the enemy. You owe your life to his humanity, your daily bread to his compassion. You must obey his orders, await his pleasure, possess your soul in patience. The days are very long—hours crawl by like paralytic centipedes.

Moreover, the whole atmosphere of prison, even the most easy and best regulated prison, is odious. Companions quarrel about trifles and get the least possible pleasure from each other's society. You feel a constant humiliation from being fenced in by railings and wire, watched by armed men, and webbed about by a tangle of regulations and restrictions." (Winston Churchill in "A Roving Commission"

The Japanese in charge of things at Bilibid—whose orders the Americans had to obey, and whose pleasure they had to await—were a variegated lot. Judged by Oriental standards at least, they treated the prisoners in a humane and considerate manner on the whole. That this was true was due, in no small measure, to the fact that the Americans studied the little yellow men carefully and played upon their individual idiosyncrasies with Yankee shrewdness. It was understood that the fate of every captive in the camp was largely in the hands of the individuals in command; and that under the peculiar Japanese system of decentralized authority, the functionaries on the spot had almost unlimited discretion in the matter of treatment of prisoners of war. At no time was a Japanese officer in command with a rank higher than that of captain and, for the most part, Dr. Sartin and his aides dealt with noncommissioned officers, privates, and even a classification called "military civilians."

When the Naval hospital unit was first captured at Santa Scholastica College, and until the transfer to the Pasay Elementary School, there was no semblance of an organization for the administration of prisoners of war. In fact, at Santa Scholastica, Captain Davis was not even certain whether his men were under the control of the Japanese Army or of the Navy. "Inspection parties" of both services visited the place frequently and both looted with equal enthusiasm.

The first Japanese officer appearing to be in charge of war prisoners, was First Lieutenant Kusomoto. He first appeared on the scene at Pasay in May, 1942. A line officer, he stated that he had been put in charge of all prisoners of war in the Manila area. The Pasay camp, as we have seen, was apparently a sort of temporary concentration point for all prisoners of war, Filipinos and Americans, sick and well, gathered from here, there and everywhere. The Japanese had not yet worked out any sort of permanent organization for taking care of the war prisoners. General Wainwright had just surrendered the fortress of Corregidor and all of the United States Forces in the Philippines to General Homma (Bataan had fallen a month before) and the Japanese had not had time to think about what they were going to do with the thousands of prisoners suddenly thrust on them. Prison camps had been set up at Camp O'Donnell, in Tarlac Province, and at Cabanatuan, in the Province of Nueva Ecija, to the north of Manila, to which latter place the American prisoners were being routed.
Kusomoto was not very much in evidence at Pasay. He did make a couple of inspections of the place, but that was about the extent of his intervention beyond calling for — and getting — medical attention from the American doctors. (Chapter 8) He was a young man — 35 or so — a reserve officer. Before he was called up for active duty, he had been a sugar importer in Japan. Kusomoto was decent enough personally, polite and sometimes even affable to the Americans with whom he came into direct contact and often lamented the war, remarking through his civilian interpreter, Osima, that his business had been ruined and that he hoped the conflict would soon be over. The Japanese lieutenant was given on his rare visits, to displaying pictures of his wife and children of whom he was inordinately proud, and he also let it be known that he had been an athlete representing Japan as a discus thrower at the Olympic Games at Berlin in 1936. The husky Japanese admired Machinist Gooding, a tremendous brute of a man and through Gooding, the Americans were able to obtain a few favors, such as the privilege of purchasing food in town. As we have seen, Kusomoto named Gooding as "warden" when the unit went to Bilibid Prison in May, 1942. (Chapter 8)

For the most part the prisoners of war had to deal with the Japanese guards individually — private soldiers of the lowest coolie class — and with the venal ex-houseboy, "Willie the thug," camp "interpreter."

Kusomoto did not appear to be interested in the welfare of the prisoners of war, either at Pasay or later at Bilibid. His interest appeared to be entirely directed toward people whom he knew — Gooding and a few others. He treated Chief Pharmacist Derrick and his men very well at the University Club Apartments (Chapter 8), permitting Derrick to visit his wife in Manila. Gooding, too, was taken out into town and once another pharmacist's mate, Wallace, was taken over to the University of Santo Tomas, where American and British civilians were interned. On two occasions at Bilibid, Kusomoto entertained Commander Sartin, Commander Jones, Mr. Gooding, Mr. Schweizer, Mr. Hanson and others at dinner. When the Americans sought to entertain him and his staff in return, contracting with an outside caterer for refreshments, Kusomoto insisted upon paying the bill — P19.00. But for the prisoners as a whole, Kusomoto did nothing and it was during his regime that the food ration was the worst and fully a third of the total deaths at the prison hospital were registered.

Kusomoto had a motley crew that actually managed things at Bilibid. There was one line sergeant, Tokanaga, who was in charge of the guard. Tokanaga, a two star sergeant, corresponding to a first sergeant in the American Army, came over from Pasay when the Navy unit was transferred to Bilibid. He was a pretty decent fellow and, in fact, it was he who contacted the Japanese merchant, Uemura, and first made it possible to bring food and supplies into camp from Manila. However, Tokanaga was lazy; he never got around to posting his guards on regular sentry post, and the guards — some half dozen of them — just wandered around the compound wherever they pleased and whenever it suited their fancy. Tokanaga was also a hypochondriac. He was firmly convinced that his medium-sized body harbored every known and some unknown type of disease, and he spent most of his time hanging around the dispensary poking into the bottles and bothering the doctors. He wanted injections. Any kind of injections. He would pick up an interesting-looking bottle of something, and, pointing to his arm, would order succinctly, "shoot." Actually, Tokanaga was healthy enough; the only thing that anybody could find wrong with him was a particularly virulent strain of gonorrhea, which is perfectly normal in a Japanese soldier.
For a time during Kusomoto’s administration, there was no Japanese in charge of the food. The Japs just sent in a little moldy rice and market sweepings (which they termed “vegetables”) from time to time, as it occurred to them. Then a first class private named Yamanaga, was made “acting Quartermaster.” Yamanaga was a bad egg. Cruel by nature, he was doubly so when drunk and he was drunk much of the time. When under the influence of liquor, Yamanaga usually made a bee-line for the galley, where he would pick up a knife or a cleaver and brandish it at the galley crew, screaming at them in a high-pitched voice. Yamanaga was almost unique among Japanese, in that he knew how to hit with his fists. Most of the other Japs, while they were very free with their blows, could not hit hard enough to make any impression on the Americans, but somebody had taught Yamanaga how. When he hit, you felt it.

Yamanaga did not always content himself with using just his fists, however. Once while Yamanaga was standing near the old Chapel, a patient passed him and failed to bow quickly enough or low enough to suit the Jap. “Mate mate” (pronounced mah-tee, mah-tee—“wait a while”), Yamanaga ordered the hapless man. While the patient waited, the Jap hastened off to the Old Hospital Building, where he knew there were a number of steel reinforcing rods. Selecting one of these, he came back and proceeded to beat the offender unmercifully with the steel rod. The beating continued for about twenty minutes, with the helpless man lying on the ground virtually unconscious. By the time Yamanaga finally got tired and stopped, the man was bleeding from a dozen places from the rough, square edges of the rod and was covered with bruises from head to foot. For a time, indeed, it was uncertain whether he would live.

During all of this, Tokanaga, who was present, stood by and watched the scene, making no effort to stop his crazed colleague. Later, Tokanaga explained that, while he was a Gunzo, and Yamanaga was only a Jotochei; nevertheless, as a Japanese soldier, Yamanaga outranked any American prisoner and that he had a right under Japanese regulations, to enforce discipline by corporal punishment, if he so desired. Tokanaga was helpless to prevent the incident or even to express his disapproval.

A close second to Yamanaga in utter viciousness, was the civilian “Interpreter” Harai. This man, a “military civilian” employed by the Japanese Army, might have been a better interpreter, had he been able to speak English. In spite of his official title, he understood no more than the few words of English which most Japanese learn in school. Harai was an old-timer in the Philippines. He had been a gardener in Baguio, the famous summer resort, high up among the pine trees of the Mountain Province, where before the war there had been a considerable colony of Japanese truck farmers. Harai’s exact status was a mystery. Although he was not a soldier, he took upon himself a great deal of authority, apparently regarding himself as the chief administrator of the camp. He customarily charged about the compound on a motorcycle, at full speed, never hesitating to run down anybody who got in his way. He carried a gun — a .45 caliber pistol — with him, continually waving it in the prisoners’ faces with menacing gestures and sounds. Harai liked his liquor — he ran Yamanaga a close second in this — and whenever he got drunk, he always sought diversion by beating up the first prisoners who met his eye. It was Harai who “broke out” drafts of prisoners and sent them to the Cabanatauan prison camp — usually in the middle of the night. He would go on a veritable rampage on these occasions, ordering out sick men, cripples, patients on stretchers and surgical cases in casts with impartiality. The doctors would go to their wards on the morning after one of these rampages, to find half of their patients gone.
Nobody knew who had gone, or even how many exactly. Harai was the principal reason for the inadequacy of the hospital records during the first months at Bilibid.

Harai and Yamanaga finally overstepped themselves, however. A visiting Japanese officer found Yamanaga drunk in his quarters one day, with a Filipino woman. That was the last of him. Harai also got in trouble — no one was ever sure just how — but eventually he was fired. The last that anybody ever saw of Harai, he was peddling down the street on his bicycle, with his little bundle of personal effects strapped on behind.

In August, 1942, the Japanese finally got around to setting up a regular organization for the management of the affairs of the prisoners of war in the Philippines. They created the “Philippine Islands Prisoners of War Administration,” under a Major General Ushiro Morimoto. At the same time, Dr. N. Nogi, a First Lieutenant, was put in charge of all hospitals at the various prison camps, and given the title of Director of Military Prison Camp Hospitals. In this capacity, Dr. Nogi was in charge of the Bilibid Hospital. Kusomoto, much to his relief, for the former discus thrower had not relished his job, was transferred.

Dr. Nogi was a mild-looking, bespectacled man of about 40, completely opposite in character to Kusomoto. Where the bluff, old-line officer had been indifferent to the welfare of the patients in the hospital, letting his subordinates run things, Dr. Nogi conscientiously tried to do everything that he could for them and for the hospital staff. Where Kusomoto had been friendly only toward the handful of Americans who had personal contact with him, Dr. Nogi had the interests of all the prisoners at heart. Through Nogi, the hospital obtained some of the most urgently needed medicines and Dr. Sartin got many other things that he had asked for, such as a refrigerator, regular ice deliveries, more food and later small amounts of extra food for the “heavy sick” patients.

In October, 1942, Dr. Nogi decided to hold memorial services in tribute to the American and Filipino prisoners who had died at Bilibid, or had died elsewhere and were interred at Bilibid in the prison burial ground. Nogi told Dr. Sartin, that when a prisoner died, the Japanese Army always set aside a sum of money for the purchase of flowers and for dainties such as candy, cookies and fruit for the comfort of the spirit of the departed in his after-life. This was in accordance with Japanese custom, based upon their Shinto religion. A considerable fund had been built up in this way and Dr. Nogi managed to get it turned over to him. He then used the money for the purchase of items of food which were distributed to the entire personnel of the prison hospital. As a matter of fact, Dr. Sartin suspects to this day, that Nogi thought of the memorial services simply as a means to get this money for the hospital.

In dealing with the Japanese functionaries over them, the Bilibid staff came into contact with the virulent disease known as “reportitis.” This disease is prevalent among the entire Japanese population, but assumes epidemic proportions in the Army. Persons suffering from this malady are subject to an ungovernable passion for reports — reports of every description, covering every conceivable subject. The craving cannot be satisfied — in fact, it increases in intensity with each successive report.

Kusomoto had demanded of Dr. Sartin, every conceivable sort of report, analysis, enumeration, census and summation regarding such topics as the number of blankets in camp, mess kits, eating utensils, canteens and canteen cups, the number of men without shoes and the shoe sizes, and so on. Dr. Nogi continued this custom and
increased the number and extent of the reports. Mr. Condon's overworked staff in the personnel office, was often busy far into the night gathering the required data. The reports were always demanded immediately ("speedo") and frequently new data covering precisely the same subject matter would be requested as soon as a report was submitted. Long after Nogi had taken over and the organization was running fairly smoothly, the Personnel Office was preparing the following reports, on a regular basis:

**DAILY**

1. Classification of all patients by diseases, according to their primary diagnoses.
2. Classification of all patients by diseases, according to their primary and secondary diagnoses.
3. Bango Report. "Bango" is a Japanese word meaning, roughly, roll call. The report included information as to the entire population of Bilibid, as of midnight, and classified according to "Heavy Sick," "Light Sick," "Well Men," Admissions, Discharged, Deaths, and so on.
4. Report of Squad Changes. This had to do with the peculiar Japanese institution known as the Squad System. Under this system, which prevailed at most of the prison camps, the entire prison population was divided into squads of ten. One man in each squad was designated as the "Squad Leader." The whole thing was based upon the Japanese notion of mass punishment, i.e., if any prisoner, whether a patient or a member of the staff, committed any violation of the Japanese prison regulations, the remaining nine members of his squad would also receive punishment. Similarly, the Japanese announced, if any prisoner performed a particularly praiseworthy act deserving of reward, all of the members of his squad would share in that reward. There is no case on record at Bilibid, of the actual enforcement of the system. There were, of course, occasional minor infractions of the rules, but the Japanese always limited themselves to punishing the offender only. Similarly, there is no instance recorded of mass reward of a squad for the praiseworthy act of a member.

Nevertheless, the Japanese insisted that a complete, up-to-date record be kept of all squads, and a pharmacist's mate, perforce, had to be assigned to the job. This man often toiled over his names and figures far into the night, when drafts of convalescent patients and prisoners went out from Bilibid, or new ones came in, resulting in many squad changes. No one knows what the Japanese did with these reports; certainly they were never mentioned.

**MONTHLY**

1. Malaria Report. The Japanese were always more concerned over malaria than any other disease, because their own soldiers on Bataan and elsewhere contracted it in great numbers. On one occasion, 24 malaria patients were taken out of the Bilibid Hospital to a Japanese Army Hospital in Manila for treatment and observation. Every month, Commander Sartin had to submit a detailed analysis of the malaria situation at the hospital, showing the number of malaria cases of each type. The number of malaria patients who had had one recurrence, the number with two recurrences, three recurrences, and so on.
2. Staff Reports. This was a monthly recapitulation of the entire staff, Army and Navy, by ranks and grades.
3. Sanitation Report. This was a detailed summary of every phase of conditions at the
hospital — admissions, discharges, deaths, incidence of disease, analysis of the ration, clothing supply, and so on -- with Commander Sartin’s recommendations. Very complete, much of the material for this book has been taken from the Sanitary Reports.

All of the foregoing was, of course, in addition to the special reports of various kinds that the Japanese asked for from time to time -- "speedo."

Because Commander Sartin and his staff always did their best to cooperate with Dr. Nogi and dealt with him in the strictest honesty, the latter conceived a great respect for the American doctors and supported many of Dr. Sartin’s policies. Thus, as Navy medical officers and pharmacist’s mates arrived at the hospital from Corregidor and Bataan, en route to the Cabanatauan prison camp, Dr. Sartin invariably requested that they be retained at Bilibid for duty, and these requests were granted in almost every case. The cooperation of the Japanese doctor in this respect was of the greatest value to Dr. Sartin, who tried from the beginning not only to keep the original Santa Scholastica group together, but also to assemble all Navy medical personnel at the Bilibid hospital, where they were badly needed. No small part of the success of the Bilibid hospital was due to the fact that it was, in the main, kept together as a unit, under the same officers who had been at the helm before the war began.

Under Dr. Nogi’s administration, also, the opinion of the medical officers as to the condition of prisoners arriving at the hospital on working parties and drafts, was never questioned. If they were certified upon examination to be sick, they were admitted to the hospital, with replacements being provided whenever necessary from among the well patients. The same policy prevailed with regard to outgoing drafts from among the convalescent patients at the hospital. The American doctors designated the patients who were in fit condition to be transferred, and also stipulated such matters as whether or not the men could march or should be provided transportation, and whether or not further treatment would be necessary for their condition. There was no drunken Harai routing out sick men in the middle of the night. The doctors were also given free rein in the matter of dispensing drugs, although an accounting therefor had to be made.

Whenever Dr. Sartin manifested to Dr. Nogi that a patient needed treatment which the facilities of Bilibid did not provide, the Japanese doctor nearly always arranged for such treatment at a hospital in Manila. Several cancer cases received X-ray treatment outside, something that Kusomoto had never permitted. In one case — that of a civilian patient named Harry Cleveland May, who was suffering from a tumor of the upper jaw -- Dr. Sartin made repeated and urgent requests for the man to be taken out for X-ray treatment. All of these requests, Kusomoto refused. By the time Dr. Nogi took over, May was too far gone and although arrangements were made for him to get X-ray treatment, he died soon after the first ministration.

Dr. Nogi continued to be most affable and friendly in his relations with Commander Sartin and the others for some time. Gradually, however, his attitude changed. He became noticeably cool and distant. Whereas before, he had come often to the hospital and stayed late, chatting with the officers and recounting his plans for further improvements; he gradually came to spend more and more of his time at Japanese Headquarters in Manila, only visiting the prison two or three times a week and then for very short periods. Interviews with him which had formerly been conducted on a leisurely basis, had to be short and to the point. All conversations had to be conducted
through the official interpreter, Yakushiji, while formerly Dr. Nogi had frequently been willing to trust his own somewhat limited command of English. There was no particular reason for this change in Nogi's attitudes, no disagreements or quarrel, and it is probable that the doctor had been told by his superior officers that he was treating the American prisoners too well; that he should not be so solicitous in their behalf.

In March, 1943, Commander Sartin, who had long been growing more and more indignant at seeing American war prisoners come into the hospital, starved and nearly dead from diseases of malnutrition and overwork, wrote Dr. Nogi a long letter of complaint. The Commander minced no words in this letter; he complained bitterly about the treatment accorded the prisoners in the labor camps, demanded better food and living conditions for them and, while he was about it, demanded — as he had often demanded in the past — that the Army and Navy hospital corps be accorded the rights guaranteed them by the Geneva Convention. Thereafter, the Japanese doctor became even more formal than ever, if not actually hostile. Nevertheless, Dr. Nogi undoubtedly respected Dr. Sartin for his integrity, devotion to duty and fearlessness in espousing the cause of the American prisoners of war, and the American commander was, by his persistence, able to get from Nogi most of the minimal essentials for the hospital.

Paymaster and officer in charge of the commissary stores (food and supplies) during Nogi's administration was First Lieutenant Momota. Here the hospital was unfortunate, for Momota hated all Americans in general and Bilibid Americans in particular. Unlike Dr. Nogi, who was a civilian draftee, Momota was a regular. In fact he had risen from the ranks. The less said about him, the better. Fortunately, he was not around the hospital very often except when it was his turn to take charge of the guard. After the bully, Yamanaga, left, several individuals had immediate charge of food supplies at Bilibid, before Murakami took over. This intelligent ex-accountant was as good in his way as Yamanaga was bad. The Bilibid staff who came in contact with Murakami, had nothing but praise for him. He was only a "Nitohei" (second class private) and was too intelligent and knew too much about figures. He made Momota look bad at headquarters and the latter had Murakami transferred to guard duty. Before relinquishing his post, however, Murakami carefully instructed his successor, Hiramo, in the way that he should act.

"Bad boys" during the first part of the Nogi administration were Kasebi, a Japanese Army Medical Corps Gocho (technical sergeant) and Ikito, a line Gocho. Both of these were advanced to Socho, (master sergeant) while they were at Bilibid. The exact position of these men in the scheme of things was somewhat indefinite. Both of them bossed the little Formosan guards around and, as both outranked Murakami, they frequently interfered with the food supply. Kasebi, a bibulous little man who walked as though he were just coming out of an epileptic seizure, had no love for the Americans. It was he, who on his own initiative, ordered that the outside fires be stopped and imposed other restrictions on the prison population as he dared. When Kasebi tired of bedeviling the Americans, he would amuse himself by beating up the Formosans. Ikito was the "snooper." His favorite trick was to walk through the buildings at night, unannounced, in the hope of discovering violations of camp regulations.

Ikito and Kasebi were experts at the art of the Oriental "squeeze," or as we know it, graft. This graft took various forms, but most of it had to do with food. For example, Dr. Nogi permitted the "heavy sick" one egg each per day, and a few other items in addition to the regular ration. At first the eggs were rationed out by number — so many
eggs for so many "heavy sick." This system, however, did not allow for the customary "squeeze," and was soon changed. The Americans were told that the eggs would be issued to the hospital by weight — so many kilos for so many "heavy sick." Now, not all duck eggs weigh that much, so there were always more eggs by this method than there were "heavy sick" patients. Kasebi and Ikito kept the difference, although the Americans were required to sign receipts covering the full amount by weight. Of course, Oriental "face" was saved here; Kasebi would assure Mr. Haase, "We will keep the eggs in our icebox and you can get them if you run short," well knowing that there was precious little chance that the hospital would run short, since the number of eggs he let through always exactly equaled the number of "heavy sick" patients in the place.

This went on for some time, until the Japs got so greedy that the Americans had to do something in self-defense. Upwards of 90 eggs a day were being misappropriated for the benefit of Kasebi, Ikito and two other Japs. Each of them would eat two raw eggs for breakfast, 12 were fried with cabbage for lunch, and maybe another dozen apiece for dinner. Finally, Dr. Nogi was informed (diplomatically, of course) that all was not well and the egg orgies stopped.

Kasebi and Ikito lived very well indeed. Flour destined for the galley, often as not found its way to the Japanese kitchen. So it was with sugar and many other items. The choicest cuts from the scanty meat issues were always reserved by Kasebi. The pair enjoyed the opportunity to boss the Americans around. Besides having American soldiers to cook for them in the galley, Kasebi and Ikito used to amuse themselves throughout most of the day and night, bawling out orders to any nearby American to fetch a glass of iced chocolate (made with Red Cross relief cocoa), ice tea (also Red Cross) or what-not. They always spoke to the prisoners in an insulting tone, and even when they spoke to Mr. Haase in Japanese, it was the kind of Japanese which is reserved for inferiors; the language which an upper-class Japanese would use when talking to a coolie, for example. For a long time Kasebi and Ikito smoked American cigarettes from the Red Cross shipments. To his credit, let it be said that the paymaster, Lieutenant Momota frequently remonstrated with Ikito and Kasebi about the manner in which they lived and when Momota was around the two took care to hide away their cigarettes, eggs and other knicknacks.

Kasebi finally overstepped himself. He brought a Filipino woman into his headquarters at the hospital one night and was either too drunk or too reluctant to get her out before dawn the next morning, when she was discovered. He was transferred to another prison camp and Ikito followed him shortly thereafter. Two Japanese Army medical corps Gunsos replaced them. With their arrival, most of the graft ceased. These two men were gentlemen, strict but fair and courteous toward the prisoners. They both made it a point to address Mr. Haase in the Japanese language which is used between equals.

Nogi's interpreter at the hospital was Hataji, a diminutive, slightly bewildered — more than slightly stupid — Japanese civilian. He had acquired a smattering of English as a schoolboy in Japan, where he had been taught by an American schoolteacher from Minnesota. Hataji was an improvement over Harai; at least he did not ride a motorcycle at full speed through the compound and he was too small to think of striking anyone, even a prisoner. Hataji's chief defect as an interpreter, was that he could not speak English. He probably never had known more than a few words, and he seemed to have forgotten even those. Pharmacist Haase, who had by now mastered the language pretty
well, and an American soldier named Boyce, did most of the actual interpreting. Along
with his dumbness, Hataji was sly. He was forever giving ridiculous orders which
eventually resulted in trouble from Japanese headquarters and disclaiming
responsibility. Very often these wrong orders were not due to Hataji’s stupidity, but
rather the deliberate desire on his part to get the Americans into difficulty.

Nobody was sorry when Hataji was finally relieved in 1943 by Kuboda. This
latter individual, another military civilian, and even smaller in stature than Hataji, spoke
excellent English that he had picked up as a small businessman in the United States.
Kuboda frequently spoke reminiscently of his experiences in the States, particularly
Colorado, where he spent some years. He was a traveled man; had been to South
America, Europe – apparently everywhere in the course of his career.

Kuboda was not the only Jap with whom the prisoners came into contact, who
had been to the United States. Yakushiji, an interpreter at the Japanese headquarters in
Manila, had spent many years in Seattle, where, as a matter of fact, he owned some
apartment houses and other property. Yakushiji claimed that he had been completely
surprised by the war; that he had left his family (wife and son) in Seattle, and gone to
Japan on a business trip, where the war caught him. Unlike the (local) interpreters,
Hataji and Kuboda, Yakushiji did not live at Bilibid, coming in only with Dr. Nogi, and also
to “interpret” the Japanese motion pictures which were shown to the prisoners once a
month.

Yakushiji, a suave, handsome Japanese, gave the impression at first
acquaintance of being pro-American. He was very affable, spoke with nostalgia of his
life in the States and often expressed the desire to be there rather than in the
Philippines. Like so many of the Japanese, he also deplored the war. However, as the
Americans came to know this man better, they understood that he was not pro-
American, but was, on the contrary, an exceedingly patriotic Japanese, regardless of the
expressions of admiration for America and Americans that he would drop on the
occasion of his visits to the hospital and at the classes in Japanese which he conducted
for a time in conjunction with Hataji. He demonstrated this completely by his attitude
when radio electrician Schweizer and Commander Sartin first protested to him about the
brutal treatment of American prisoners at the Nichols Field labor detail. On this
occasion, Yakushiji did bring this matter to the attention of higher Japanese officials and
did succeed in instituting an investigation which resulted in greatly improved conditions
at the labor camp. Nevertheless, he did his best to absolve the Japanese from all blame
and showed by his attitude that in a showdown he was, first and last, a Japanese.

The foregoing were the Japanese with whom the Bilibid men came most in
contact. There were a few others, not mentioned, but whom were of minor importance.
There was a Captain Hiroka, who was supposed to be the administrative commander of
the hospital in all non-medical matters, and one or two other commissioned and warrant
officers, but these men showed up at the hospital only on their “duty days,” i.e., on days
when they were supposed to inspect the guard, etc.

Thus, the Japanese had in command at the hospital, a lieutenant of the medical
corps, Dr. Nogi (who spent, on the average, one or two hours a week at the hospital), a
couple of noncommissioned officers, one or two privates, and about 20 Formosan
guards. These soldiers were in charge of one of the most important prisoner activities in
the Philippines: a general hospital with a monthly census averaging more than 600
patients, a staff of nearly 250, and a total population averaging more than 1,000.

Had the American Army been running such a place, there would have been at least a lieutenant colonel in command, a major for executive officer, and a liberal assortment of captains, lieutenants and noncommissioned officers.

**The Front Office Men**

Dr. Sartin's chief aides in dealing with the Japanese were the "front office men," Machinist George B. Gooding, whom Kusomoto appointed warden when the unit came to Bilibid in May, 1942; Radio Electrician Earl Schweizer, who succeeded Gooding in December, 1942; Pharmacist Edward F. Haase; and Gunner Elmer G. Byers. These warrant officers of the Navy were assigned an office in the Front Building adjacent to the Japanese office, had daily and intimate contact with the Japs and executed their commands. They acted as an effective buffer between Commander Sartin, Commander Jones, and the Japs.

Machinist Gooding, a huge fellow with a confident, assured manner, in keeping with his powerful physique, attracted the attention of Kusomoto at the Pasay Elementary School. The former Olympic discus thrower could appreciate a pair of bulging biceps, accompanied by a deep baritone voice, and because of Kusomoto's regard, Gooding was able, as we have seen, to get concessions from the Pasay Camp, such as permission to go into town to buy food. Dr. Brokenshire made Gooding his "liaison officer," which meant that the machinist was the official bullier, cajoler and intimidator of the Japanese. Tokanaga, the Sergeant of the Guard during Kusomoto's regime, also shared the latter's regard for Gooding, and through Tokanaga, Gooding was able to contact the merchant, Ueumara, to mark the beginning of the Bilibid store.

In December, 1942, the Japanese transferred Gooding to a labor camp at Fort McKinley near Manila, and Mr. Schweizer took over as warden. The duties of a warden of a Japanese military prison camp are somewhat vague. Commander Sartin, as chief medical officer, and Commander Jones, as executive officer, managed the internal affairs of the hospital as they would have a Naval hospital in peacetime, but they were under Japanese "supervision." This meant that the Japanese had to be kept informed of everything that was done and, of course, it was necessary to look to the Japanese for everything that the hospital required in the way of medicines and supplies. Dr. Nogi was the ultimate authority. Mr. Schweizer was in reality, the chief liaison man between the Japanese and Dr. Sartin. Through the warden's office were relayed the Japanese commands, requests for reports and for information, etc. Mr. Schweizer, Mr. Haase and Mr. Byers, coming into daily contact with the Japanese as they did, were in a position to do a great deal of good for the hospital. The Japanese, highly impressionable, were inclined to judge all Americans by those few they knew the best.

They liked Mr. Schweizer. Better still, they respected him. They respected him for his honesty, his ability and for his driving energy. On call 24 hours a day, Schweizer never seemed to get tired, nor did he ever lose lost his equable disposition, no matter what the provocation -- and the Japanese could be very provoking at times.

Mr. Schweizer earned the eternal gratitude of the Japanese and Americans alike, in the matter of the daily counts or enumerations of the prison population, called bango. We have noted elsewhere what a burden this institution was during the first months after
the unit arrived at Bilibid; how everybody who could stand up had to line up in the hot sun three times a day, to be counted. These tenkos often consumed in the aggregate, most of a working day. The Japs were never able to get the same figure twice in succession; they would count, recount, and count again, each time obtaining a different total. The only way by which George Gooding could ever get the men dismissed was by “selling” the Japanese a new total each time. Gooding simply outshouted the Japanese soldiers who worked with him on the counting, “persuading” them that his figure was correct. This time patients in the wards were left unattended, food could not be cooked in the galley, and all activities remained paralyzed. Mr. Schweizer gradually began to take a more and more prominent part in these counts. He, Mr. Haase and Mr. Byers, evolved a system of dividing up the task, whereby they could count the entire prison population in a few moments and, what is more, obtain the correct figure every time. Life for the prisoners immediately became more bearable. Soon the Japanese, learning that Schweizer was scrupulously honest in this matter, practically left the tenkos in his hands, accepting his word without question.

The Japanese made extra-curricular use of Schweizer as soon as they learned that he was a radio electrician. General Morimoto, the officer in charge of all prison camps, had quartered himself in the home of an American lawyer in Manila, and desired that the place, already tastefully furnished, be fixed up to resemble the sumptuous home of a Hollywood movie star. He called for Schweizer. His instructions were brief and to the point. “You fix.”

Schweizer had unlimited materials at his disposal, for it appeared that the General intended to loot the homes of interned American and British citizens. Schweizer was put into an automobile with a party of Jap soldiers, and was taken on a cruise about the city of Manila. The Japs had a list of residences of American and British families, and whenever they came to a particularly nice-appearing home, the car would stop, the soldiers would march inside and order Schweizer to pick out what he needed. This went on for several days, and by the time the looters had finished their work, the General had probably the most sumptuous living quarters of any Japanese officer in Manila, which is saying a great deal, for the Japs had taken over the best Manila homes and apartment houses for their use, and looting was by no means original with General Morimoto.

Schweizer was sometimes able to help the hospital on these excursions, and in a very practical way. He had a friend, a Chinese hardware merchant, with whom Schweizer had done Navy business before the war. Learning of his friendship for this man, the Japanese suggested that Schweizer endeavor to obtain from him certain needed electrical equipment for the General’s home. This was an ironical situation – the Japanese asking an American prisoner of war to use his good offices to obtain merchandise from a Chinese merchant. Schweizer did get some things from this man for the General’s home, but at the same time, he seized the opportunity to get from him a supply of electrical equipment for the hospital such as wires, switches, and so on. Among other things, he got a supply of tubes for the fluorescent lights which were installed over the operating table. All of this equipment was so scarce as to be worth almost its weight in gold at the time that Schweizer got it, and the supply finally disappeared altogether. Schweizer paid for it by giving this patriotic merchant a purchase order on the United States Navy, payable after the war.

The warden’s talents as an electrical technician were again in demand when the Japanese decided to erect a high voltage wire on top of the prison walls. Quite naturally
they called Mr. Schweizer and said: “You fix.” He fixed. By this time, he was the official fixer for everything electrical, not only at Bilibid and at the General’s house, but also at the headquarters of the Japanese Military Administration in Manila, being frequently called out to fix an ice-box, a radio, or what-not. The Japanese, soldiers and civilians alike, stood about with undisguised wonder and admiration. Whenever Schweizer was at work on something; they crowded about him watching his every move, frequently leaning forward to touch this or that object, until in desperation Schweizer drove them away. The prison population thus kept pretty well abreast of the news that came over the airwaves.

Regardless of what title they might give him, the Japanese used Mr. Schweizer principally as a scapegoat. Under their plan of organization, he was in charge of everything at the prison which was nonmedical in nature — the buildings, galley, sanitation and so on. They complained to him about anything which seemed wrong to them. There was a strict rule, for example, that prisoners wearing hats should salute the Japanese guards, and that those who were uncovered, should bow. Many of the prisoners neglected this rule, either through oversight or because they simply did not like to bow and salute Japs. Any omissions of this sort were reported at once to Mr. Schweizer, with the admonition that he see to it that it did not happen again. Similarly, there were very stringent rules regarding smoking. The Japanese are the most fire-conscious people on earth — it is bred into them from childhood — and Schweizer was forever being called to task for some violation of these rules by somebody. He always tried his best to carry out the orders of this Japanese masters pro tem, but — and this was probably the principal reason for his success — he never acted as though he were afraid of them; never appeared to be over-anxious to please. As he puts it, “I never took them too seriously.”

Earl Schweizer, the youngest warrant officer at Bilibid, has had a crowded career in the Navy. A radio and electrical technician of the first caliber, he has served in Alaska, has been in charge of one of the three most powerful Navy radio receiving and transmitting stations — Canacao — and during the war, was in charge of the Navy radio station on Corregidor. And certainly, he has never had any ambition to be a prison warden.

Schweizer was born 32 years ago in Honolulu. His father, George Godfrey Schweizer, was a Navy officer in the Supply Corps. The name is Swiss, and George Schweizer had been born in Switzerland. Earl’s mother, Rose G. Schweizer, a handsome, white-haired lady, lives in San Diego, California. Earl was educated in the public schools of San Diego, and upon his graduation from high school, was one of 15 ROTC cadets from his school selected to take examinations for entrance to the Naval Academy at Annapolis. Eleven of the 15 passed the examinations, but Schweizer was not one of them. Determined on a Naval career, he nevertheless joined as an enlisted man.

After the usual training period, Schweizer served on the battleship "Tennessee," the aircraft carrier "Saratoga" (later sunk at the battle of Wake Island), at San Diego as a third-class radioman on Admiral Reeve’s staff, and for five years on the "Gannett," an aircraft tender. The "Gannett" made annual voyages to the Aleutian Islands as a survey ship, with Schweizer acting as a radio operator on the ship and also on airplanes, when the occasion required. Then followed a course of instruction at the Navy radio school at Washington D.C., after which Schweizer was put in charge of the high-power radio station at San Diego. Following this duty, he was assigned as radioman in charge of the
compass station at Imperial Beach, California, in which capacity he was given the job of calibrating compasses up and down the Pacific coast.

Schweizer was made Chief Radioman in 1939, and received his warrant in January, 1940, going to the Philippines three months later. There he was put in charge of the Naval radio station at Canacao which was one of the three largest in the Navy, ranking with Pearl Harbor, Balboa and Washington D.C. Through the facilities of this station, were routed most of the official messages between Washington and the High Commissioner's office in Manila, as well as traffic for relay from Washington to our diplomatic representatives in the Far East. All of this was in addition, of course, to the great volume of Navy traffic.

In his spare time, Schweizer busied himself on the work of calibrating compasses on Navy patrol vessels, and in building a bomb shelter. This latter was the only complete bomb shelter in the Philippines. Schweizer built it on his own initiative of cement and steel construction throughout, and equipped it with an apparatus which made it possible to operate the main radio station itself from within the safety of the shelter's 14-feet concrete walls. Admiral Rockwell and his staff took shelter here during the big raid on Canacao of December 19th, and throughout the raid he was in communication with Admiral Hart in Manila, until a Japanese bomb got one of the radio towers. Even this, however, caused an interruption of only 50 minutes, with Schweizer shifting to the facilities of the Radio Corporation of Manila.

After the big raid on Canacao, Schweizer and his crew went to Corregidor, where Schweizer took charge of the Navy radio station. This station, call letters NPO, was on the air continuously throughout the campaign for Bataan and Corregidor, with the exception of one 15-minute interruption, until the surrender. During all of this time, Schweizer was in communication with Chungking, Perth, Melbourne, Honolulu, the Army Station at Del Monte, in Mindanao and, of course, the United States. All Navy and much of the Army traffic was routed over NPO.

On Corregidor, however, Schweizer had to exercise all of his ingenuity and resources in order to stay on the air. Stray bombs were always tearing the antennae up, and on these occasions Chief Radioman R.C. Bean would go up in a boatswain's chair to repair the damage. Schweizer gives great credit to this man for his courage and daring; raids became so frequent as to be almost continuous, and Bean soon had to stay up there during the actual bombings – an unenviable position.

As the tempo of the war increased, it became necessary to devise some way of staying on the air while damaged antennae were being repaired, and Schweizer constructed an antennae within the Navy tunnel itself. This was, of course, contrary to all radio transmission theory which says that you can't operate an antennae underground, but this one worked, probably because there is very little iron in the soil of Corregidor.

Finally, on April 6, 1942, came the order to surrender Corregidor. The surrender was to take effect officially at noon. Schweizer broadcast all that morning, transmitting important last-minute messages from the doomed garrison, and at 11:55 a.m. he told Hawaii "Goodbye and keep 'em flying." With these words, he and his men took sledgehammers and smashed the transmitters and the windings on the armatures into a thousand pieces, completely wrecking the station. The Japanese were already on the
Rock, and when they stormed into the Navy tunnel and witnessed the ruined radio equipment, they became very angry indeed. In fact, it looked for a time as though they would take out their disappointment on the helpless American prisoners, but fortunately they were dissuaded from doing so.

Mr. Schweizer's right-hand man, and one of Dr. Sartin's invaluable aides in dealing with the Japanese, was Pharmacist Edward F. Haase, the only medical department representative in the "front office." Haase occupied a dual position: the Japanese organizational chart put him in charge of Group B, comprising all activities which the Japanese considered nonmedical functions. In this capacity, Mr. Haase was the "whipping-boy" whenever the Japanese found fault with the medical service; just as Schweizer was the goat for nonmedical activities. More important, however, was Haase's position as go-between for the Japanese and the American command and the Japanese functionaries. It was his job to endeavor to get across to the Japanese what Commander Sartin and Commander Jones wanted to tell them. Haase was eminently equipped for this task, because he could speak Japanese.

Mr. Haase could not always speak Japanese. In fact, up to the time that the hospital unit was captured in January, 1942, he could speak not a word. Haase was with the unit at Santa Scholastica College and in common with everybody else, he had a lot of time on his hands after the Japanese came in. There was no place to go; everybody was restricted to the grounds, so in order to fill in the time, Haase decided to study the language. Besides he had a hunch that it would be a very good thing in the months to come, if somebody on the staff could talk to the Japs in their own language. At this point, providentially enough, Father Brutenbruch, the German Catholic priest who had been interned at the start of the war, but was, of course, released by the Japanese, turned up. He threw several odds and ends of clothing, books and what-not over the wall to the interned prisoners. Among the books was a Japanese grammar, which Haase promptly appropriated.

With the aid of the priest's gift, Mr. Haase soon became able to carry on a simple conversation in Japanese. A particularly valuable feature of the book was that it contained a number of medical terms, which Haase memorized. His new accomplishment quickly became of value when Haase was transferred to the Pasay Elementary School on April 9th. Here a "dispensary" was set up in one of the schoolrooms, and the most persistent patients were the Japanese guards. They wanted treatment for every conceivable ailment, but most often they wanted something done about venereal disease from which, apparently, nearly every Japanese soldier suffers. The Japs were afraid to go to their own doctors for treatment, knowing they would be severely punished.

During all of this time and at Bilibid, Haase continued his study of Japanese, finally mastering a working knowledge of the language and also the three varieties of the written language, Katakana, Kanji and Hiragama. Katakana, is used to express foreign words for which there is no direct Japanese equivalent. Kanji is the basic written language and stems directly from Chinese picture-writing. Hiragama is another supplementary system, used to express words and ideas for which there is no equivalent in Kanji. Kanji is perhaps the most difficult, since each character must be memorized; some Japanese dictionaries will contain 15,000 characters and the average Japanese will know about 8,000. As Haase became more proficient in writing, Hataji and the others began to delegate to him, more and more of the paperwork in Japanese writing, for don't let anybody tell you that a Jap is not subject to the human desire to shove his
work onto somebody else, if he can. Haase's accomplishment was almost indispensable to the smooth running of the hospital. He very early learned about the Japanese "Yes." Now, you would think that there isn't much that can be done with or to this good English word. Yes means yes, and that is all there is to it. But, this is not the case when a Jap utters the word. The most seriously afflicted in this respect was Hataji, the interpreter. His "Yes" usually meant that he had no idea what you were talking about, but hoped you wouldn't stop because if you kept on long enough, he might catch on. Mr. Haase learned to watch Hataji's face and pay no attention to the "Yes." As long as that blank look was there, you had to keep on talking. Eventually, after endless repetitions, supplemented with gestures, the blank look usually gave way gradually to one of comprehension. When this did not happen, it was necessary for Haase to resort to Japanese, but he tried to do this as seldom as possible, since Hataji was very proud of his English and resented any implication that he couldn't understand everything that was said to him. The same problem was encountered in the case of Dr. Nogi, and frequent misunderstandings resulted until the doctor began availing himself of the services of Yakushiji, the interpreter from headquarters.

For Mr. Haase, too, the "tour of duty" as a prisoner of war was the most interesting phase of a crowded Navy career. He was the newest warrant officer on the Bilibid staff. In fact he was not sworn in as an officer until July, 1942, seven months after the start of the Pacific War. Previous to that time, Mr. Haase had performed his duties at Pasay and Bilibid as a Chief Pharmacist's Mate. The big hospital group which arrived on July 2, 1942, from the hospital at Corregidor, brought with them the information that according to radio advice from Washington, Mr. Haase had passed his examinations for pharmacist and had been given his appointment. His wife came to Manila with him in 1939, but was ordered back to the States with the rest of the Navy wives.

Somehow, Mr. Schweizer, Mr. Haase and Gunner Byers, (the latter a young warrant officer, tremendously proud of the Navy and very glad to be in it after a career as a lumberjack, a railroad section hand, a California fruit picker and general handyman) performed the incredible feat of obtaining the esteem of the Japanese without relinquishing for a moment any portion of their primary loyalty to Commander Sartin and Commander Jones. The Japanese understood at all times that these three men were first and last officers of the United States Navy; that they believed firmly that the United States would win the war, and that they hoped that she would lick the pants off of Japan. In fact, on more than one occasion, Mr. Schweizer risked his own personal safety to protest against Japanese mistreatment of American prisoners of war. Nevertheless, one afternoon in August, Dr. Nogi and all officers in charge of buildings at the hospital, brought to the Japanese office, and read out a citation in this wise:

"AWARDING"

"American War Prisoners, Inmates of the
Hospital for Military Prison Camps
Of the P.I."

Radio Electrician U.S. Navy Earl G. Schweizer
Pharmacist U.S. Navy Edward F. Haase
Chief Pharmacist's Mate U.S. Navy Abel O. Gomes

The foregoing persons as personnel of this Hospital for the Headquarters

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of the Military Camp of P.I. have been cooperative, constantly willing and conscientious in their services to the authorities of the Japanese Army. The deeds are hereby recognized as praiseworthy for which rewards are awarded."

The First Day of August
Eighteenth Year of Showa Era

Commanding General for the Military Prison
Camps of the Philippine Islands

(Signed) USHIRO MORIMOTO
Major General
Imperial Japanese Army

Chief Gomes, one of the most popular Chief Pharmacist’s Mates on the Bilibid staff, was selected to receive this distinction as the representative, in a manner of speaking, of the enlisted men.

That night, the General gave an elaborate dinner party at the hospital for Commander Sartin, Commander Jones, Mr. Schweizer, Mr. Haase and Chief Gomes. Roast turkey, no less, was on the menu, and real beer and saki. The Japanese host waxed exceedingly friendly as the evening progressed (Japanese notoriously cannot hold their liquor). Frequently he pointed to Mr. Schweizer and then pointed to his own head, made signs and sounds indicating that he thought the radio electrician was, indeed, a very smart fellow. Finally, the General rose to his feet. He made a short speech, translated by Yakushiji, in which he praised the three men named in the "citation" copied above, for their cooperation and devotion to duty. They should be rewarded, he declared, and the Imperial Japanese Army was prepared to reward them as they deserved. The Imperial Japanese Army never failed to reward properly all persons who rendered it service of such distinguished caliber. With a flourish, the General picked up three packages carefully wrapped in tissue paper and ceremoniously handed one to each of the three Americans. They opened the packages. They contained — ten packages Japanese cigarettes — ten cigarettes to a package. One hundred cigarettes each.

In January, 1943, came the incident of the stolen Red Cross cigarettes. We have already alluded to the fact that the month before a large shipment of Red Cross relief supplies came into Manila — boxes of food, clothing, medicine and so on. Among these supplies was a large amount of American tobacco — Camels, Chesterfields, Lucky Strikes and Roy, plus a good supply of pipe and chewing tobacco. Working parties who were taken to the pier to load the stuff on trucks, stated that there were enough cigarettes to give every prisoner at least one carton. But the Japs liked American cigarettes too and no war prisoner ever received more than two packages, apart from what was in his Christmas box. Before very long, American cigarettes began appearing in stores around Manila, for sale at fantastic prices. Inasmuch as every package was stamped “gift of the American Red Cross,” this state of affairs was not calculated to enhance the prestige of Nippon in the Philippines. Something had to be done, and Bilibid was picked as the "goat."
One day, Japanese Military Police appeared at Bilibid, and began questioning Mr. Schweizer, Mr. Haase, and the Jap officials. Two of the latter, Kasebe, Ikito and the rest were visibly nervous, because, as everyone knew, they had large stocks of American cigarettes stashed away in their living quarters. However, it soon developed that the investigators were not interested in such private hoards. It was the Americans, they insisted, who had been selling cigarettes that were in the Manila stores. Asked how the prisoners could possibly dispose of cigarettes on the outside when they were within the prison walls of Bilibid, absolutely incommunicado, the investigators answered that they were there to find that out. Further, it soon developed that the military police had already decided upon their scapegoat. The picture of a Filipino was produced. Did Mr. Schweizer and Mr. Haase recognize it? Yes, they did. It was the picture of a carromata driver who had been stationed at the prison to furnish transportation to Kasebe, et al. Ah, so. Doubtless, the Japanese asserted confidently, it was through this man that the Americans had been selling their cigarettes.

Schweizer and Haase were taken to Fort Santiago in Manila, where the Japanese had established their version of a “gestapo.” What about those cigarettes? How did this miserable “cochero” contact the Americans? How much did he pay for the cigarettes? How many had he bought? The inquisitors were courteous enough, but “Thank God, I had nothing to hide,” says Haase. The poor Filipino was not so fortunate. He was severely manhandled by the Japanese “gestapo,” and given a long term in the Fort Santiago dungeons, after he had “confessed,” under torture, that he had bought cigarettes from the Americans in Bilibid, for sale outside.

That confession satisfied the Japanese, although it should have been obvious even to them, that the few packages of cigarettes the luckless Filipino might have gotten from Bilibid (assuming that his confession was true) would not have furnished more than a microscopic part of the cigarettes that were being sold in Manila stores. Dr. Nogi called the entire staff of the prison hospital before him, and read them a lecture. The speech merits reproduction in full, as a classic example of Oriental face-saving:

“WARNING”

"Without the permission of the authorities of the Military Prison Camp, some of the war prisoners interned here have sold the cigarettes to the public through the driver of the carriage which has been donated by the Red Cross of the United States of America.

We consider as such articles donated by the Red Cross the Government owned articles which should not be sold or given to others, pursuant to the military regulation, discipline and morale of the Japanese Army, such deed conducted by you deserves a severe punishment. However, the violators were deemed not aware of the military regulation, discipline and morale of the Japanese Army at the time of the violation occurred. We will, on this occasion, overlook this disgraceful incident and not inflict the punishment on the violators.

I call your attention to the following facts. When this incident was exposed by the military police, our men were summoned to their headquarters for questioning and not only they met a bitter questioning, some of them were kept in custody for a week, that caused us humiliation and impairment of our reputation.

I urge you that all personnel interned hereto live up to the rigid discipline, morale and regulation of the military prison camp and pay careful attention to a fair distribution and an adequate handling of such relief goods which we consider as the government
owned articles.

Through the courtesy of the Japanese Military Police, we have this day received P300.00 which was confiscated from the criminal who has, perhaps, produced the said sum of money by the transaction of the above-mentioned cigarettes. We will, therefore, permit you to use the said P300.00 for the relief fund for the entire personnel of war prisoners interned in the Bilibid Hospital.

"February fourth of the eighteenth year of Showa at Manila

First Lieutenant N. Nogi
Director of the Hospital for Military Prison Camp of the P.I."

Soon after this, Dr. Nogi apparently decided to institute the reward system in his dealings with the prisoners of war. He had a notice posted in all buildings in this wise:

March 28, 1943

"The deed of the war prisoner which deserves a reward or a punishment shall be reported in detail by the staff of this hospital, to the director immediately after the occurrence. The reward and the punishment shall be carried out in the light of Japanese Military discipline and regulation."

Naturally, Commander Sartin did not turn any prisoner over to the Japanese for violation of any rule or regulation. He felt that he could handle his own problems of discipline without any help from them. Nor did he recommend any prisoner for any special reward, although the Japanese themselves did select three of the staff for this distinction.
Chapter 16

INCIDENTAL ACTIVITIES

This chapter might well be entitled “Morale.” For, hand in hand with the problem of bringing back to health (or a reasonable approximation thereof) the shattered men who came into Bilibid Hospital — at times overshadowing it, went the task of restoring and maintaining their spirits. As every doctor knows, that elemental, primitive instinct for self-preservation and survival, which we dignify by the phrase “the will to live,” is of paramount importance. With it, miracles of cure are possible; without it, even the most trifling disease becomes serious. All animals have it, for it is Nature’s superb scheme through which she has perpetuated the swarming life forms that crowd this world; maintaining them (with a few unimportant issues by the wayside) intact or slightly metamorphosed for whatever final disposition may be in store.

Man shares this instinct with the lower animals, with the only difference being that Man, a rational animal, has complicated the matter. A comered rat fights without thinking why. He wishes to live because he exists and, when he realizes that survival by flight — which Nature (or God, if you like) intended for him under normal circumstances — is no longer possible, he becomes a thing to be regarded with caution, if not respect. A comered rat will always fight. Man, on the other hand, has to be shown. That unknown action which we call intelligence (for no one on earth can describe the process of thought) prevents him from taking life at its face value; from accepting without question that it is desirable to live. He has classified all things from his own point of view, as good or bad; that is to say, as desirable or undesirable. From this division, he does not exclude even life itself.

Usually Nature has her way and the instinct for self-preservation (which is, as we have agreed, but a vicarious preservation of the species) asserts itself, but not always. It is possible, and often happens, that danger, suffering, frustration or worst of all, wounded vanity, pile up, blow on blow, until Man, viewing their monstrous proportions, becomes convinced that life is no longer a paying proposition, but a burden to be discarded in favor of something better. With respect to this last requirement, the intelligence of Man (how Nature must rail at it!) has provided a wide variety: Mahomet offers white virgins with skin of satin, reclining on velvet rugs. Beyond question, the little camel driver was far ahead of the field, but there are other Paradises, other religions, other Gods (for Man has never accepted a God without his necessary concomitant — a Paradise), and for the most intelligent or most foolish of men, depending upon the point of view, Robert Ingersoll.

Returning, after this digression, to Bilibid, we find that in the nature of things, the doctors had to treat their patients’ minds as well as their bodies. In the nature of things that is, for the life of a prisoner of war is, judge it by any standard you like, undesirable. And the patients at Bilibid hospital were all prisoners of war, a fact of which they were constantly reminded by the high prison walls and the impassive Japanese guards. The lives of these prisoners were in many cases, the epitome of undesirability. They came to Bilibid from labor gangs, after suffering incredible hardships and after having endured for months, the most brutal cruelty. Worst of all — far harder to bear than cold and rain, blistering sun, hunger, kicks and blows — was the uncertainty. The two comforts which even the most enlightened nations commonly deny to prisoners of war, are women and
news. Men, it has been demonstrated, can do without women and often it is to the advantage of both. But, it is hard to go along from day to day, month to month, year on year, without knowing what is going on in the world. Specifically, it is hard to the point of intolerability for a prisoner of war to be denied all knowledge (except the propaganda of his captors) as to how the war is going. More specifically still, a prisoner of war is the most melancholy of all prisoners. Even a lifer is better off for he, knowing that release (barring time off for good behavior or a pardon) is impossible, can resign himself to live out the rest of his years in confinement. Devoid of hope, he is untroubled by any gnawing desire for liberty. But a prisoner of war can expect, in the normal course of events, to be released. Wars don't last forever. Thus, the American war prisoners in the Philippines were condemned to hope. And to those wretched impostors that Hope inevitably brings in her train: expectation, impatience, nostalgia. Life in a Japanese labor gang is, of course, unbearable. But, so also is an indefinite existence as a prisoner of war under any circumstances. And as time went on; as these prisoners gradually weakened under the strain of the kicks and blows and starvation, they, or many of them, began to lose hope. Or, at least, to doubt — which is almost as bad. As they saw men around them break under the treatment, sicken, waste away and die in ever-increasing numbers, these prisoners began to doubt that they, personally, would ever get home again. By the time that they came into Bilibid, they had more than half convinced themselves that all hope was gone; that all they could look forward to was another detail to another labor gang, once they had recovered a portion of their health and strength. One, two, maybe three more labor camps — with death the inevitable end. They had, in short, arrived dangerously close to the point where the intelligence which we have mentioned, was telling them that life was not worth the candle.

**Show Business:**

So, it was a question of restoring hope as well as health. The doctors could not provide this by providing an answer to the question: "When are we getting out of here?" They could offer no clue as to when the prisoner-patients would be able to resume their pre-war lives which, no matter how drab or hard they had been, now appeared from the perspective of Bilibid as roseate, idyllic existences. But, the hospital crew could provide some modicum of diversion for the men; something to take them out of the realities of their situation. Something to make the prisoners believe that their lives were endurable and thus to balance the scales on the side of the will to live. Foremost among the devices adopted to this end, was the weekly show, somewhat euphemistically termed the "Bilibid Follies." Lieutenant-Commander Clyde L. Welsh gets credit for the idea. He decided one day that what everybody needed was laughter, and that there was no chance for very much of that in Bilibid without something to laugh at. The prisoners would have to furnish it themselves. Appointed a committee of one to see what could be done, Dr. Welsh canvassed the compound for talent and, naturally, encountered Machinist Gooding, then the prison "warden." Gooding — big, personable and extroverted, would be delighted to act as Master of Ceremonies (he made a surprisingly good one) and director of the band. Furthermore, it developed, Gooding played an enthusiastic, if somewhat off-key, saxophone. A posted notice dredged up a surprising amount of talent, and the first program was presented on an improvised platform in one of the buildings. Nine variety acts, including band numbers — they put it on twice. It was November 12, 1942. This first program was notable because it produced several stars — Pharmacist's Mate Mayberry, Private Lloyd Griffiths and Lieutenant Clarence J. Kunel, U.S. Army, who were mainstays of the show thereafter. Lieutenant Knight (Dental Corps, U.S. Navy), an accomplished musician, (clarinet) took over the direction of the 6-piece band.
Attendance was so good, that at the next program a week later, the show moved outside where everyone could see it. Dr. Nogi gave the venture the official seal of approval of the Japanese Army by attending in person, with his staff. He awarded prizes (cigarettes) to the best numbers (first prize, Hillbilly Band). On this night, another prop of the future was unearthed – William J. Burns, (Private First Class) U.S. Army. Gooding left about this time to go on a work detail, and the next show was conducted by F.W. “Si” Simonson who, with his keen native wit, was a “natural.” At this time, too, the band acquired a new clarinetist, Robert D. Baldwin, (Private First Class) U.S. Army. These acquisitions virtually assured the success of future presentations. Soon thereafter, the show moved into the Old Hospital Building, where a wooden stage was erected. By this time, the Bilibid Follies was a pretty pretentious affair, considering the time and place. On Christmas night, for example, the program consisted of 11 numbers (dialect comedians and a playlet, besides band numbers) and the band (now seven pieces) was beginning to sound almost professional. (Original composition worth hearing, by Dr. Knight: “The Lugao Jive”).

Thereafter followed a long, virtually uninterrupted series of Saturday night programs. Everyone who went through Bilibid remembers these shows with gratitude. Their morale value was tremendous. The original performers got better and better, and new talent was always coming forward. Certain of these deserve special mention. There was Tom Melody (Staff Sergeant) who joined the show in January, 1942. Melody knew the stage (his parents were burlesque actors and Melody grew up with it), and was an excellent Master of Ceremonies. He had the nightclub M.C.’s trick of drawing out the last atom of applause for any number, no matter how sour, and song-plugger. He stayed 6 months. John Son (two names – not one) worked well with Melody in skits, and was a pretty good song plugger and M.C. himself. Son’s forte, though, was composing original lyrics to old tunes. Son left in August, 1943, and Burns took over the direction of the show. Burns, small, shrewd, intense, had the hard worldly-wise wit of the native New Yorker that he was. An Irishman, he was a better Hebrew dialectician than most Jews. (“I ought to know how they talk. I’ve lived among them all my life!”) Burns saw a lot of life both before and after he joined the Army – as a cook.

The only real professional in the cast was Lieutenant Kuncl (pronounced Koonsul), the trombonist. A young fellow, around 25, Kuncl had played in various bands (including Bob Strong’s) in and around Chicago, and to play in that kind of company, you’ve got to be good. Kuncl’s solos were genuine events. Bob Baldwin soon shifted to the saxophone from the clarinet and, with Kuncl, was one of the mainstays of the band. Baldwin gradually came to do most of the arranging, which in this case meant one, remembering old tunes, and two, writing the music for each piece in the band. Most of the band music was produced this way; money was scarce and the Japs chary about such luxuries as sheet music. Bog was a schoolteacher before he joined the CCC’s (as educational adviser) in 1940, and had a band at a little high school in Stanley, New Mexico, where he functioned for 6 years as principal. He was drafted and sent out to the Philippines where, during the war, he spent his time in an anti-aircraft battery, shooting at Jap planes. “Si” Simonson, retired from the Navy was, before the war, chief clerk to the Commandant, 16th Naval District. He was a patient at Santa Scholastica when the Japs came in and was a prisoner of war thereafter. The only difference that his civilian status made, was that he did not get paid. At Bilibid, Si worked in the store and rehearsed for the show in his spare time. After the advent of Melody and Son, Si retired as M.C. and came into the band as drummer. He got some pretty good rhythm out of those homemade drums, too. “Muscles” Mahnke (Private Miles C. Mahnke) according to
Melody, “the biggest tenor in captivity” was a discovery of Dr. Stanley Smith, and could always be counted on to turn out a good, sentimental song or two on every program. “Lugao” Novak (Pharmacist’s Mate Louis Novak) had played the violin in a Hungarian band back home. He worked hard and got to be a pretty good jazz musician before the Great Hegira of October, 1943, took him off to Cabanatauau. Good comedians were Ebbert and Evers (Daniel Ebbert, Yeoman 1/c, and Robert Evers, civilian). “E and E” stopped the show one night. There was a driving rainstorm, punctuated with crackling flashes of lightning and ear-splitting peals of thunder. Evers was recounting his adventures on Bataan, when the thunderstorm came on. Thereafter, timing his story to the thunderclaps, he made them illustrate the noise of Japanese artillery shells. It was one of those opportunities that almost never happens; a coincidence so unlikely as to be almost grotesque and Evers took full advantage of it.

Many others could be mentioned – and are deserving of mention, but space and the readers’ patience do not permit. There must have been at least 50 performers who trod the planks of the Bilibid Bowl. Some were good, some indifferent, some bad. But they all did their best and, on the whole, it was a pretty good show that they turned out every Saturday night, their only reward the happy faces of the ragged men in front of them. None of the players has ever performed or will ever perform, before a more appreciative audience.

Two performances the performers did not enjoy. Both were “command performances” in the most literal sense of the term. On July 13, 1943, the Japanese ordered a special program to be produced for the benefit of the Propaganda Corps. This program was a command performance as far as the audience was concerned, too, for the propaganda fellows, standing near the stage, cameras and flashbulbs ready, indicated the places in the program where applause should be forthcoming, its duration and the quality of enthusiasm which the audience should put into it. Doubtless, pictures showing the “countless happy faces of the American prisoners of war at a stage show for their benefit” appeared in newspapers in Japan, and throughout the “Greater East Asia Co-Prosperey Sphere.” That was bad enough, but worse was to come.

On the afternoon of August 26, 1943, the Japs announced that, on that same evening, the Propaganda Corps would be on hand to make electrical transcriptions of the Bilibid Follies in action, and that the cast must be prepared to put on an extra special, number one performance. Son, who was Master of Ceremonies at that time, rose nobly to the occasion. With less than four hours’ notice, he put together a very creditable program with fast-moving numbers. The Japs were well prepared; they presented Chaplain Wilcox and Dr. Wanger with typewritten speeches, which they were required to deliver into the microphone. Commander Sartin also had to make a speech, which had been prepared in advance and had been well censored by the Japs. Dr. Wanger, the athletic officer, got the worst of it. He had to mouth out a Propaganda Corps speech beginning, “This is the happiest day of my life.”

Religion:
There is something incongruous in thinking of religion in connection with war. The essential purpose of all religions of which we have any record is, apart from worship of one or more deities, idols, phenomena, objects of nature, or whatever), to persuade people, by suppression of their natural instincts of selfishness, envy, greed and vanity, to be easier to live with. Religion is repressive and would be impossible if all men did not have something of the masochist in them. War, on the other hand, is a removal of all
repressions; a bacchanalian festival of destruction, where murder is exalted as a virtue and the most efficient murderers hailed as the most virtuous men. Yet, religion and war have always been connected and it was not long ago that the two words were virtually synonymous. Witness the conquest of most of the known world outside of Europe by the Mohammedan hordes in the 8th Century, in the name of Allah and the Prophet, and those sorry manifestations of mass hysteria five hundred years later, called the Crusades. In the name of God and the Trinity, witness the savage brutality of that most devout of women, Queen Isabella of Spain (for no woman who can put the Inquisition in the hands of an Alba, or exterminate three million Moorish families, needs further evidence in support of either her brutality or her piety); and the religious wars which racked Europe in the 1600's. Indeed, most wars of modern times were religious wars and it has only been since the Industrial revolution, that people have waged war for economic reasons.

The reason for this is not far to seek. It is only since the Industrial Revolution put on a coat and tie and settled down to the respectability of the Machine Age, making possible the existence of a middle class, that the mass of the people have had anything much besides religion to fight for. We no longer attempt to impose our religion on others by force; we send our missionaries out instead, and we fight nowadays, with the weapons of the Machine Age – tariffs, embargoes, most favored nation treaties – or, as a last resort, we turn to war to keep what we have or to get more of the Machine Age’s gifts – automobiles, indirect lighting and a seat at the opera. Yet, even today, there is a very definite place for religion in war. The essential aim of war is death, and every soldier must contemplate the possibility that he will die. Thus he is forced, inevitably, to think about an afterlife and to weigh his own chances of a happy existence after death (Heaven) or of being consigned to an unhappy one (Hell). These considerations, in turn, lead to thought on such subjects as sin and the remission of sins – in short, to religion. Soldiers of the armies of the present-day democratic countries are inherently no more or less religious than the great mass of citizens from which they are drawn; they are, indeed, a cross-section of that citizenry, a mirror of democracy. (For modern armies raised by conscription are a strictly democratic institution.) The intensity of their religious fervor is, naturally, in inverse ratio to the nearness with which they approach death, and as a rule, diminishes as death recedes.

So, in recognition of this fact, most nations make some provision for religion in their armed forces. There are chaplains in our Army and Navy. Selfless, devoted men for the most part, they are very useful in time of peace (“If there is anything you need, go see the Chaplain”) and indispensable in time of war. There were chaplains at Bilibid, working to help the men in every possible way. They did not limit themselves to providing spiritual sustenance, although they gave of this without stint, but devoted most of their time to the practical problems of food, clothing, and anything else that the prisoners needed and that they could provide. There were, at different times, three chaplains. By their works, you shall know them.

Chaplain Perry O. Wilcox, the Protestant Chaplain, will never get over wondering at the fact that he was at Bilibid at all. He calls it providence, and it may have been. Certainly it was the merest chance, in the shape of a little Filipino boy. This youngster (he was eleven – looked about seven) bore the imposing name of Conrado Alcantara. A waif – his father, a Scout soldier, was killed in a shipwreck and Conrado is vague about his mother’s demise – he turned up one day at the station hospital on Corregidor, where Chaplain Wilcox was on duty as Harbor Defense Chaplain. Conrado had malaria. They
got him over that pretty well, but by then Bataan had fallen (it was April, 1942) and they
couldn't send him back. "I sort of fell heir to him then," the Chaplain says, "and when
they moved the Station hospital to Bilibid after the fall of Corregidor, the kid came along
with me." Arrived at Bilibid, the Chaplain expected to go on to Cabanatauan with the
remainder of the Army officers from Corregidor, and made ready accordingly. Here fate,
or providence, or chance intervened. "I was coming down the stairs of the Old Hospital
Building with Conrado, on my way to join the others going out the gate, when somebody
- I don't know yet who it was - stopped me. 'Here,' he said, 'You can't take that Filipino
boy with you. All Filipinos are going to another camp.' I told him that Conrado was an
orphan and had nobody in the world to look out for him but me. The kid was crying a
little bit, and I didn't feel too good myself. All of a sudden this man - whoever it was -
said: 'Well, if you can't leave the kid, you will have to stay here yourself. Both of you go
back upstairs and go to bed.'"

And that is how it was. Chaplain Wilcox stayed on and was eventually put on the
staff as Protestant Chaplain. Conrado left soon after, bound for a government
orphanage. Thus, the Chaplain (he is a lieutenant-colonel in the Regular Army, but
prefers to be called Chaplain), after 25 years in the Army, began a tour of duty with the
Navy.

The Navy never had cause to regret the accidental association, for Chaplain
Wilcox immediately "turned to" with energy that belied his 60 years. A chaplain usually
makes his own job and Wilcox made his into one of the most exacting and useful jobs on
the place. Most important, in his view, were the inspection tours of each ward every day.
These trips consumed a lot of time, for he had to stop at every bed and offer a smile, a
word of encouragement. He never forgot a name or a face. Then there was the Old
Clothes Department, open for business every day. (Once in a while there were a few old
clothes, and once in a while you could get fitted.) For a while there were Red Cross
supplies to distribute. When it was decided to start a school, the Chaplain was naturally
given the job, and even after the Japs closed the school, he continued with his Bible
classes. He conducted Protestant church services twice every Sunday, and led the
"Navigators," a Navy religious organization, in their meetings. But, the bare recital of
Chaplain Wilcox's activities does not begin to tell the full story of what he did, or what he
meant to the hospital. Modest, quiet, unassuming, his influence was felt everywhere.
His sole aim was to help, and not in the manner of the Chaplain of Reading Gaol ("and
every day the Chaplain called and left a little tract"). To Chaplain Wilcox, a patient who
needed a shirt, a toothbrush, a mosquito net, etc., was a major problem calling for
immediate attention. Often he could not fill the need, but it was not for lack of trying.
And, he could and did provide an amazing number of things - unexpected things. Did
you need some nails? See Chaplain Wilcox. Pencil need sharpening? Chaplain Wilcox
had a pencil sharpener. String? He had yards of it. The area under and around his
wooden bunk resembled an oversized grab bag. And, if he couldn't provide what you
needed, you nevertheless did not go away empty-handed, for no matter what time of the
day or how pressing the Chaplain's duties for the moment, you got as much as you
wanted of his time. Always, you got his sympathetic interest and the warmth of his
smile.

It was a hard job. It is always hard to have to shoulder the burdens of others, no
matter how glad you are to do it, and to have nobody who can assume a few of your
troubles. And Chaplain Wilcox had plenty of worries of his own which, although he
never spoke of them, told upon him heavily. His daughter (Mrs. Marcia Barrett) and her
three children, were caught in Manila by the war, and were in the hands of the Japanese. For many months after the surrender, he did not hear anything of the safety or whereabouts of his son-in-law, Major Bert Barrett (U.S. Army, Reserve) and had no way of knowing how – or if – he had survived the march from Bataan to Camp O'Donnell (later to be known as the “Death March”) and the other prison camp at Cabanatauan. The Chaplain eventually received word that Major Barrett was “alive at Cabanatauan, but very thin, weak, and broke.” Soon afterwards, Barrett was taken off to Japan. These are worries enough for any man, and their accumulated weight and the strain of his work eventually began to tell on the Chaplain. He lost weight steadily; from a rather portly 190 pounds prewar, he dropped to less than 150, and had to be forced (doctor’s orders) to curtail his activities – take it easy.

Yet, with all this, if you were to ask Chaplain Wilcox which, in his opinion, was the best Christmas he has ever had, he would answer without hesitation, “the Christmas of 1942, at Bilibid Prison Hospital.” And he would mean it. For him, it was the best Christmas because he saw so many people made happy. That was when the Red Cross food packages were distributed. Then, on Christmas Day, he got a big package from his daughter in Manila, and received word that she and the three children were in good health. Finally, there was a package from “Conrado and the Filipino prisoners released from Bilibid.” At midnight service on Christmas Eve, 250 men were in attendance, and about the same number the next morning, at Holy Communion.

The Catholic chaplains were somewhat more limited in their activities, because there were many more Protestants among the prison population than Catholics. The Catholic “parish” was smaller. The first chaplain, William Cummings, a Mary Knoll priest in civilian life, also derived his connection with Bilibid through accident. He came down from Bataan as a patient with the big group from the U.S. Army Field Hospital Number 1 on Bataan in June, 1942, and was “around” when a Catholic chaplain was needed. Chaplain Cummings did a lot of good at Bilibid, however, not limiting his attentions to people of his own faith. He managed to get permission from the Japanese to go out to Manila once every two weeks, for the purpose of obtaining bibles, sacramental wine, and other religious accoutrements. Chaplain Cummings did, in fact, get a lot of these things, but he also contrived to bring in on each one of his trips, much that was not strictly religious: money, food, medicine – and in very large quantities. The Mary Knoll Sisters (at Assumption College) where he went, gathered the stuff together for him, and they were adept at wheedling the Jap guards to let him bring it in to the prison. Failing that, the Sisters showed that they were equally adept at distracting the guards’ attention, while Chaplain Cummings stuffed his pockets with contraband. The Chaplain used his own money to purchase food for indigent patients – at one time he had 80 men or more on his list – and besides this, he delivered large amounts of money to individual prisoners from friends on the outside. It didn’t last, though. After a few months, the Japs forbade Chaplain Cummings from going out. In October, Cummings joined the exodus to Cabanatauan, and the other Catholic Chaplain, Major John E. Duffy, carried on alone. Chaplain Duffy was brought to Bilibid from a provincial hospital in January, 1943, and was added to the staff. He was captured on Bataan after the surrender in April of the year before, began the March to O’Donnell, but never arrived there. He had many adventures, suffered incredible hardships, and endured much cruelty at the hands of his captors. His story would make interesting reading, but he would not talk to the author or to anybody else, insisting that first he would make his official report to the Chief of Chaplains.

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Athletics:
The Bilibid Prison Compound did not offer very much in the way of either equipment or space for organized athletics. Of the former there was none, and of the latter there were only the small triangular areas between the main buildings, radiating from the Chapel Building. Commander Sartin, nevertheless, realizing the value of athletic contests both as healthful exercise for the staff members and others who would participate, and as spectacles for the patients, appointed one of the dental officers, Dr. Wanger, Athletic Officer, and instructed him to see what could be done.

Dr. Wanger, canvassing possibilities, discovered to his surprise that some of the pharmacist's mates had contrived to bring with them, through all of the vicissitudes of Canacao-Manila-Philippine Union College-Santa Scholastica, Pasay and Bilibid — a volleyball net. Further examination of sea bags turned up a volleyball and a basketball. There was plenty of scrap lumber around at that time and in no time at all, a volleyball court and one basketball net had been rigged up, a volleyball "league" started, complete with teams, timekeepers, referees and assorted officials. There were eight or nine teams in the league, composed of different groups: Warrant Officers, Medical Officers, Army Corpsmen, various teams from among the Navy hospital corpsmen, and so on. The grave-digging crew entered under the descriptive name "Ghouls," and a group of patients from a convalescent ward entered the fray, calling themselves the "Malnutritions." The volleyball league was a big success. The teams played two round-robbins lasting for about five months, with every game played to a packed and enthusiastic "house." Eventually, enthusiasm of the players began to pall and interest turned to basketball. Another basket was erected, a court laid out and a basketball league organized, with eight teams. By this time (March, 1943), the athletes among the prison population were well known. The teams, as a whole, were fairly evenly matched and interest in the games was always at fever pitch. There was considerable betting, of course (they were Americans), and vast amounts of bananas, peanuts, tobacco and limes, purchased at the store, changed hands after every game. American style, too, the basketball league was highly organized along home lines; elaborate statistics were maintained of both individual and team performances. Each player was rated according to an intricate system of points — for field goals, free throws, personal fouls, etc. — and each watched his rating jealously.

The athletic program was a huge success while it lasted, and its morale value inestimable. All of the strictly American institutions were present: hard competition, good sportsmanship (officers played on even terms with enlisted men and submitted good-naturedly to the razzing of the crowd), organized teams and leagues, complicated "statistics" and raucous, completely unmannerly spectators. Referees were regarded like referees always are, and they bore the taunts and gibes of the spectators with the patient stoicism expected of them. There were even games forfeited (with much and vociferous argument on the part of the gallery), with the players and spectators insisting that the referees were physically — blind, lame, scrofulous wrecks and morally — dishonest, conniving, utterly depraved rascals.

The Japanese prison officials, representatives of a self-consciously athletic race, appreciated the significance of the limited athletic program at Bilibid, and once it was well under way, encouraged it with a few gifts; another volleyball net, a ball or two — but most of the equipment was purchased by voluntary subscription among the prisoners themselves. Eventually, soaring wartime prices combined with increasing weakness of the prisoners made replacements impossible, and the games stopped. Japanese
propaganda pictures of basketball were carefully stage-managed long after the athletic program had been dropped. This fact made Dr. Wanger’s "This is the happiest day of my life" speech, doubly ridiculous.

Library:
This heading should really be plural, for there were two libraries at Bilibid – the "medical library" for staff officers, and the general library for the rest of the prison population. The first enterprise was the particular pride and joy of Dr. Nogi. There were a number of medical textbooks in the prison compound, which individual doctors and staff had salvaged, often with great difficulty and at some cost and sacrifice. Several medical books were among the supplies which came in from Corregidor. The Japanese doctor got these together and put them in a room in the Front Building, which he called the medical library. Here, the medical officers could read and study, to the profit of themselves and their patients. Dr. Nogi used the place himself for a time, as a sort of private office.

The general library was of more accidental origin. The principal source of books was, again, private individual hoards, and here the situation was alleviated considerably by the forethought of three pharmacist’s mates whom Kusomoto, the first prison camp commander, took out for a "tour of duty" in Manila. When the tour ended, the three brought to Bilibid a large part of the very excellent library of the University Club in Manila, as well as a number of books salvaged from abandoned apartments of interned Allied citizens. The small building between Wards 1 and 2, was turned over for the use of the library. The original stock of books was augmented from time to time by miscellaneous gifts (Mrs. Norton again) and donations from the Japanese. In July, 1943, the Japs ordered all privately-owned books in the compound to be given up for censoring. These volumes were then given to the library. It was a peculiar – almost a bizarre – collection of between 75 (at its lowest) and 600 (at its highest) books, ranging through all the gamut that anybody has ever written about. On the same shelf, a translation of the "Enid" vied for attention with "Alice in Wonderland," an Oxford edition of "Macbeth," a polemic by Bernard MacFadden called (of course) "Exercise and Like It," and Victor Heiser's "American Doctor's Odyssey." Many of the books were in a sad state of disrepair to begin with and before long, they were all that way. But, there were many very fine books in the collection, and certain it is, that no library anywhere has ever afforded so much pleasure and comfort to so many.

Movies:
The fact that there were movies at Bilibid (once a month) was due to the Japanese passion for thoroughness. Particularly, it was due to the desire of the Japanese Propaganda Corps (which, following in the wake of the Japanese Army, was daily inundating the Philippines from one end to the other with the crudest sort of propaganda) that the Allied prisoners of war should not be denied the opportunity of being educated in the benevolent war aims of Japan and the blessings to come from the establishment of the New Order in East Asia. The first program, presented on January 21, 1943, was not so bad. A Mickey Mouse short, two Japanese propaganda newsreels, and the Marx brothers in "Go West." In fact, this offering was never equaled thereafter. The propaganda, showing Japanese warships plowing through the seas in search of the enemy, Japanese soldiers advancing intrepidly through acres of Chinese corpses, Japanese war planes blasting enemy positions (invisible) here and there, etc., with Japanese dialogue (translated for the prisoners' benefit by Yakushiji) was not too bad. The second offering a month later, was a full length picture entitled "The Fall of Bataan..."
and Corregidor." This was not so well received, although the prisoners sat through it good-naturedly enough. The men wouldn't have liked it, even if the photography had been good (which it hadn't) and even if it had not been obvious that most of the picture — certainly all of it purporting to show the Japanese Army in action — had not been faked. In other words, of course, even if it had been well done, they wouldn't have liked it. Most of the men had been through either the Bataan or Corregidor campaigns — some of them had been through both — and they would rather not have heard anything more about it. They wanted to be entertained and this stuff was quite the opposite of entertainment. Particularly hard to endure, was the running on the sound track (in excellent English). Sample: "And so, the intrepid Japanese warriors, fired with the indomitable spirit of Bushido, which in the code of the Japanese soldier means 'conquer or die,' advanced on the foe, Corregidor, last fortress of the insolent white race in the Philippines, which stood as a challenge to invincible Nippon. Little did the sleek, fat Americans cowering in their bomb-proof tunnels, built with the labor of thousands of murdered Filipinos, know of the fate in store for them."

That set the pattern for subsequent programs. There were usually two or three Japanese newsreels, an old American "short," and a Japanese full-length picture. Once in a while, an ancient Hollywood feature would be substituted — usually a comedy. Once though, it seemed that things were looking up. It was announced that the main feature would be "San Francisco," with Clark Gable and Jeannette MacDonald. Everybody turned out. But, the film was too old, the sound tract too blurred with static. After struggling with it for about an hour, the little Filipino operators had to give up and substitute a Jap thing called "Pearl Harbor and Singapore." The programs, bad as they were, did provide entertainment of a sort, however. Weather permitting, the pictures were exhibited on an improvised screen in the open. It was pleasant, under the stars.

Bilibid College:

This was the name unofficially given to the school that functioned at Bilibid Prison Camp for something like two months. "Unofficially," that is, because the project, like the store, never received the official approbation of the Japanese, and functioned clandestinely, if not furtively. Nevertheless, Bilibid College was an ambitious project and a complete success while it lasted.

In January, 1943, the author, then convalescing from pellagra and assorted diseases resulting from seven months of starvation in prison camps, conceived the idea that there were at Bilibid hospital, "many people who are accounted experts in various fields; who have knowledge to impart to others," and that there were also "many other people who are now possessed of more leisure time than they will ever again enjoy, and would like to make effective use of a portion of that leisure." He suggested to Commander Sartin that "an organized school, offering regular classes in various subjects, would not only be of great benefit to the students themselves, but would have a salutary effect on the morale of the entire population." Dr. Sartin, approving the idea, put Chaplain Wilcox in charge. The writer had already canvassed the prison compound and had assembled a "faculty" of ten teachers, offering eleven subjects. More subjects could have been offered, if there had not been a shortage of textbooks. Posted notices describing the courses produced an amazing response; nearly 300 men, including staff medical officers, pharmacist's mates and patients enrolled within a few days, most of them for at least two courses. By the middle of February, "Bilibid College" was functioning in three improvised classrooms. Classes were going on throughout most of the
day and one class (shorthand) was meeting at night. Soon thereafter, Dr. Sartin instituted four classes conducted by staff members for the benefit of hospital corpsmen, so that they could receive some of the instruction that would have been given them in Naval hospitals before the war.

These additions made a total of fifteen subjects in the curriculum of Bilibid College. The place resembled a college campus, with classes going on all day, students hurrying to their classes, poring over their lecture notes, gathering in little groups to discuss, argue, etc. The enterprise was conducted on a businesslike basis: high standards of instruction and scholarship was maintained. The students were graded on the basis of weekly and monthly quizzes which eliminated the deadwood and cut the enrollment in half. The faculty members took their duties very seriously; so seriously, in fact, that there were occasional demonstrations of scholarly temperament.

But, it was too good to last. The trouble with Bilibid College, that led to its downfall, was that it was too successful. Unwittingly, the enterprise ran afoul of the interpreter, Hataji. This individual, together with the Headquarters interpreter, Yakushiji, had been conducting a class in the Japanese language four nights a week. For want of anything better to do, something like a hundred of the prison inmates had been taking the course, but when Bilibid College started, attendance at the Japanese classes dropped off sharply and continued to decline until, finally, the two interpreters were lecturing to an audience of about ten men. This was a "loss of face" that the Japs could not endure. Hataji was particularly distressed. A complete nonentity, the tiny (not over five feet) Jap was for months almost completely ignored by both the Japanese officials and the American front-office men, and had adopted a humble attitude consonant with his diminutive stature and lack of any qualifications for his job (he knew almost no English). But when the Japanese classes were inaugurated, with Hataji as co-instructor, he changed. Each succeeding lecture seemed to give him more confidence. He strutted about the compound, began to give orders in an imperious voice, swelled visibly. It made no difference to him (perhaps the man was unaware of it) that nobody could understand what he was talking about, on the lecture platform or anywhere else; he was now Mr. Hataji, professor. He lived for those moments when he could command the center of attention and he was at first dismayed, and then angered beyond words to lose his students to Bilibid College.

Hataji determined to do something about it. He complained to Yakushiji or somebody at the Japanese Headquarters. The net result was more than Hataji had bargained for. All organized classes of instruction were banned, including the Japanese classes. The official reason or excuse was that, allegedly on orders from Tokyo, the Japanese Government disapproved of any instruction of prisoners of war, on the ground that it "tended to improve the efficiency of the enemy." At the same time, various restrictions were imposed on group assemblies: prisoners could meet only for "religious, athletic or entertainment purposes." That was the end of Bilibid College (except for the Bible classes) as such, but the principal aim of the project — to encourage the prisoners by study to improve their time during their imprisonment, so as to prepare themselves the better and easier to take up their lives again after the war — was not thereby defeated. The men, those of them who were in earnest, continued to study by themselves the subjects they had chosen.
Chapter 17

THE PASAY AND TAYABAS LABOR CAMPS

The great mission of the Navy Hospital Unit after the occupation of Manila by the Japanese on January 2, 1942, was to succor the wounded and sick prisoners of war. At Pasay, and for a time at Bilibid, Filipino as well as American soldiers received treatment, but the Filipinos were gradually released to their homes or to civilian hospitals and after September 1, 1942, the only patients at Bilibid were Americans. For several months, the patients were recruited from five sources:

1. Patients (most of them permanently disabled – paralytics, tuberculosis cases and the like) who were still under treatment at Santa Scholastica on January 2nd, and were not subsequently discharged as cured.
2. Patients taken up at Pasay from among military prisoners brought in there.
3. Prisoners who passed through Pasay on their way to the prison camps at Cabanatauan.
4. Patients from the U.S. Army Field Hospitals Nos. 1 and 2 on Bataan, who were brought to Bilibid Prison en masse on June 19 and 27, 1942.
5. Patients from the U.S. Army Field Hospital on Corregidor, who were transferred with that hospital to Bilibid on July 2, 1942.

As these patients reached the stage of convalescence, the Japanese transferred them to Cabanatauan. Except for two months of fairly heavy admissions from the Cabanatauan camp (December, 1942 and January, 1943) of prisoners suffering from deficiency diseases, most of the patients treated at Bilibid thereafter, were brought in from labor gangs scattered throughout the Island of Luzon.

The Japanese policy from the beginning, was to employ the prisoners of war on a multitude of projects. Occasionally, they took certain men – notably Signal Corps officers – as “technicians,” but for the most part the prisoners were required to perform manual labor and even the “technician” details usually turned out to be inquisitions into the mechanism and operation of U.S. Army equipment. Prisoners were employed as truck drivers, dock stevedores and mechanics, but most of them labored with pick and shovel and wheelbarrow on airfields. The plans for the defense of the Philippines before the War, had envisaged a tremendous increase in air power; new fields had been commenced at Lipa, in the Province of Batangas, and on the Island of Palawan, south of Luzon (the largest Island and the one on which Manila is located). The Japanese continued these projects – barely begun at the start of hostilities – and enlarged existing fields at Clarke Field, Pamanga Province, Cabanatauan, Nielson Field and Nichols Field, in the suburb of Pasay near the City of Manila. All of these projects, of course, were military in nature and it was a flagrant violation of international law to employ war prisoners on them. The labor was of the most grueling type; the work of constructing new runways on the airfields and surfacing them, was all performed by the use of the most primitive methods using pick, shovel and wheelbarrow, and mixing concrete by hand. Hours of labor were long – “from daylight to dark” – living conditions frightful, and the food insufficient in quality and quantity for even minimum maintenance requirements and fell far short of providing anything like what the prisoners should have had to stand up under such labor.
It was from these labor camps that Bilibid Hospital recruited most of its patients after August, 1942. Usually the men were sent in to the hospital after they had literally been worked almost to death, but quite often sick prisoners were taken off of drafts going through Bilibid, bound to or from some labor camp. For Bilibid was not only a hospital; as we have explained elsewhere, it was also used by the Japanese as a clearing house for prisoner drafts going back and forth between Cabanatauan and the work projects. "Sick call" was always held on these drafts, and on the recommendations of the doctors, the Japanese permitted sick men to remain at the hospital as patients.

In order that the reader may understand fully the hardships which the American war prisoners endured on these labor projects, as well as the important part that Bilibid Hospital played as a haven of refuge, where shattered men could recover a semblance of health, two of the projects have been selected for detailed treatment. These are the road building detail at Tayabas Province and Nichols Field. There will be no exaggeration. There is, indeed, no need for any. The author has made every effort to verify the facts herein related. He has questioned closely many prisoners who were on these two details and were eyewitnesses to the events described. This entire chapter is supported by verified statements throughout.

Tayabas

This was one of the first labor projects on which the Japanese used American prisoners of war. It has been selected because the Tayabas detail was the first labor detail with which the Naval Hospital came in contact, and was the first work gang to yield patients to Bilibid Hospital. Secondarily, this project affords an instructive contrast to that which follows, for as we shall see hereafter, there was an appalling mortality rate among the prisoners at Tayabas, although the food was comparatively good and there was little or no physical brutality practiced by the Japanese; whereas at Pasay, while the mortality rate was not nearly as great as it was at Tayabas, the men suffered terribly from a combination of hard, back-breaking work, poor food and cruelty. The men died at Tayabas from the living conditions to which they were subjected. They suffered — and many of them died — at Pasay from the elemental savagery of the Japanese who had them in power.

The story of the Tayabas project properly begins at Camp O'Donnell, to which place the defenders of Bataan were marched after the surrender. It is not the province of this book to describe in depth this prison camp. Much has been written and will be written about this, as well as the March to O'Donnell from Bataan and the prison camps at Cabanatauan. They are only referred to here incidentally, wherever necessary to our subject. Suffice it to say that it was an experience which no one who went through it would care to repeat. What happened at O'Donnell was easily foreseeable. It was what would happen when upwards of 90,000 half-starved, fever-ridden men were forced to undergo a terrible march of several days' duration in the hot, tropical sun, with no food or water, to a half-finished division camp, virtually devoid of sanitary facilities and there left to shift for themselves with no medicine, very little food and virtually no water. They died. Close on to 40,000 of them.

Something like 1,200 Americans had died at O'Donnell by May 20, 1942, and it seemed that most of these still living were sick from malaria, dysentery, starvation, or all three. On that date, the Japanese ordered the American command to produce 296 men and four officers at once for a work project. No information was given as to the nature of
the detail or where the men were going. "Three hundred men, at once. Regardless of
their condition," was the order. So little time was allowed, that the American command
had to send out the first 300 that could be rounded up. Some of them did not even have
time to go to their barracks and pick up their gear. Captain Jerry O. Gonzales was the
senior American officer in the group. The other three officers were Captain Henry J.
Pierce, First Lieutenant Rhodes (QMC), and Second Lieutenant George T. Holland
(Ordinance). The group left O'Donnell in trucks, arriving at Manila on the evening of the
same day. They were taken to Bilibid Prison, which at that time was teeming with
prisoners from the surrendered fortress of Corregidor, as well as a few from Bataan.
They stayed at Bilibid for three days and nights, during which time they were fed rice —
nothing else.

On May 23rd, the detail was taken to the Pasay Elementary School, where they
found the Navy hospital unit. The Navy doctors examined the men and found that 80%
of them were suffering from malaria, beri-beri and enterocolitis (intestinal inflammation).
Captain Davis pleaded with the Japanese to permit at least the most serious cases to
remain at Pasay, and after much argument the Japs finally agreed that 18 prisoners
could stay, provided they were replaced by an equal number from among the men at
Pasay. The exchange was effected. The 18 substitutions were made from a group of
29 American prisoners under the command of Lieutenant Colonel R.L. Say, U.S. Army,
who had been captured on the Island of Cuyo and brought to Manila, en route to
Cabanatauan.

On the morning of May 24th, the 300, accompanied by Japanese guards, started
getting in trucks. They had still not been told where they were going. Skirting the east of
Laguna de Bay, on the main provincial road through the provinces of Cavite and
Batangas, they headed south and east into Tayabas Province where, at the little town of
Malakboy, the trucks halted. It was about 1:00 p.m. It had been a long, hard ride; the
trucks were small, Japanese 1½ ton vehicles and the prisoners were piled into them, 30
or more to a truck. The trucks were open to the sun, which beat down unmercifully, and
very few of the prisoners had canteens or any other sort of water container. They were
thankful to stumble out at the end of the 7½ hour ride.

At Malakboy, the group was herded into an abandoned lime kiln, where they
spent three days. The men will always remember this little town, for here they got the
first meat they had received since the surrender of Bataan six weeks before. Filipino
natives took up a collection among themselves and purchased corned beef — enough to
give each man one can. The rest at Malakboy was a godsend, for the worst part of the
trip was just ahead.

At about noon of the 26th, the group of prisoners was herded onto some railroad
flat cars. You have heard of the "Quarent hommes, huit chevaux" boxcars which were
used to transport in France during the last year. They were big, compared with the
rolling stock of the miniature railroads of the Philippines. These flat cars, for example,
were about fifteen feet long and five feet wide. Eighty men to a car. As usual, there was
no water, but fortunately it rained heavily, reviving the hot, exhausted men. The train trip
lasted for five hours. At the town of Calauag (pronounced Kahlahwag) the railroad turns
off to the south to go through Camarines Sur. There the prisoners were taken off the
train and marched to an old provincial schoolhouse, where again they rested. Here they
were given some rice, which was no good to anybody until someone managed to find an
empty gasoline barrel and some wood with which to cook it. At 9:00 p.m., the Japanese started the group marching.

They marched all night, along the provincial road, eastward toward the boundary of the province of Camarines Norte. They were now in the Bicol region of southern Luzon — the region comprising roughly the lower portion of Tayabas Province and the provinces of Camarines Norte and Camarines Sur. Sparsely populated and mountainous, the district provided a meager living for the native inhabitants from lumber and coconuts, until the big boom in the Philippines in 1931-1937. Gold was discovered in the mountains, mining companies by the dozen sprang up, staked out claims, and prospected, drilled and blasted, providing lucrative employment for the poverty-stricken inhabitants. Some of these companies quickly found gold and went into production. Their payrolls helped to relieve the unemployment in the Bicol region, caused by the imposition of a processing tax on Philippine coconut oil exported to the United States — a staggering blow to the coconut oil industry.

It was a steady, uphill climb into the mountains. The Japanese guards — some 15 of them — set a fairly rapid pace, with a 10-minute rest period every hour. The Japs could afford to set a pretty good pace; they were in much better condition than the Americans and all of them gave their packs to the prisoners to carry. The Jap packs got heavier and heavier as time dragged on. Two men were being carried on "stretchers" — old door frames, picked up at Calauag. Some prisoners, too exhausted to continue, dropped out of the column. The Japanese ordered that these unfortunate men be left on the road where they had fallen.

There were two fairly long breaks, at 3:00 a.m. and at daylight. The men walked on until about 9:00 o'clock the next morning (May 27th), when the Japanese officer in charge called a halt and informed the prisoners that they could cook rice. At this point, Captain Pierce went up to the Japanese officer and, taking him down the line of haggard, exhausted men, succeeded in convincing him that the prisoners were in no condition to march any further. One thing which helped greatly in getting the point across: several Japanese guards had sunk to the side of the road and laid there, obviously done in. (One of these guards later died). The Japanese officer flagged down four passing trucks.

The four commandeered trucks brought the men about 15 kilometers farther, until the road became impassable. At this point, the men beheld a welcome sight: a food "dump" on the side of the road — stacks upon stacks of American canned food. Soup, corned beef hash, "C-ration," canned peaches. Most of the prisoners had forgotten that such food existed. The pile was at least 20 feet square. Spirits soared when the Japanese announced that all of this food was for the work detail, and the strongest men spent the rest of the day (it was then about noon) hauling the stuff from the dump six kilometers farther on into the mountainous jungle, where the campsite had been established.

The campsite was at the bend of a small river, at the end of the road, near the boundary line between the provinces of Camarines Norte and Tayabas. More properly speaking, the camp, so far as the American prisoners were concerned, was in the river itself, for the place assigned to them was a strip of rocky river bed. The Japanese occupied a group of newly constructed wood and straw houses about 50 yards up the
river and on the other bank. Here, on the stones of the river bed, the prisoners "lived, ate, slept, and had their being."

The men were given no equipment of any kind. No shelter, no mosquito nets, no blankets, no eating utensils – nothing. The Japanese did permit the cooking crew to clean up a couple of old wheelbarrows which, propped up on stones, served thereafter as the kitchen.

All camp life centered about the river. This was May, the middle of the hot season in the Philippines, and the river had shrunk to a tiny stream about six feet wide and two feet deep, which wound sluggishly over the stones. There is no way of estimating how many thousands of people lived along that river, but it is certain that the Japanese a few yards above the American camp did a thorough job of polluting the water. They threw their refuse in it, washed clothes in it and bathed in it. For good measure, every evening they drove their horses – of which they had a goodly number – into the river and washed them down. The river water was constantly choked with garbage, general filth and human excreta. There was no other source of water for the camp except the river, and no way of boiling it. Both wheelbarrows were required for cooking rice, and the Japanese would not permit another wheelbarrow to be used for the purpose, although there were more than a hundred of them on hand. The latrines were holes dug in the ground about twenty yards from the camp. Here, too, were located the garbage pits. In no time at all, dysentery was raging ferociously. Flies, not abundant at first, soon swarmed everywhere in black, buzzing clouds.

The work was hard. It was pick, shovel and wheelbarrow labor, cutting a road through the mountains to connect the main provincial highway at Tayabas through to the terminus of the highway in Western Camarines Norte. Prior to the War, there had been no highway connection between the lower (Bicol) provinces of Luzon and the central part. All transportation was by rail. If one wished to go from Daet, Camarines Norte to Manila, it would be necessary for him to go southward on the highway to the town of Sipocot on the railway line, and go from there on the train. The Commonwealth Government, in cooperation with the U.S. and Filipino Army authorities, had envisaged construction of the 20 kilometers or so of road that would be required to connect the highways, and the route had long since been surveyed. In fact, actual work of construction had been started before the War, with trees leveled, cuts blasted and fills installed all along the route. The military value of the project is obvious. The Japanese, for the most part, ignored this trail, however, and started right in with entirely new construction through the mountainous jungle. Many, many times the American prisoners spent days in digging cuts laboriously with pick and shovel, just a few yards from an already completed cut. According to the Japanese guards, gangs of Filipino laborers were working on the same stretch of road from the Camarines Norte side, driving southward to meet the Americans. Several hundred locally hired Filipinos were also employed on the Tayabas side of the project and worked on the road with the Americans, also some Formosans.

Working hours were from daylight to dark. The men went out in gangs of 30, each under a Japanese Army Engineer Corps soldier. These Japanese bosses had the virtual power of life and death over the men in their individual gangs. The quota system was in effect: each guard had to produce a stipulated number of wheelbarrow-loads of dirt per day, and any guard who could produce more than his quota received some sort of commendation. Conversely, under the system of corporal punishment which is
universal in the Japanese Army, any guard who fell below his quota was subject to a sound thrashing from his superior officer. These facts made for pretty rough treatment of the prisoners and they were required to work at top speed all day.

It would not have been so bad if the men had had any drinking water, but very few of them had canteens and there were no other containers. It was quite a distance from camp to where the men were working—about a kilometer and a half—to far to go for a drink of the filthy river water. As the day wore on, and the men became dehydrated under the hot sun, many of them collapsed. Sometimes they were allowed to lie where they had fallen, and sometimes not, depending upon the temper of the Japanese guard. A tough guard, like the one they named “Killer,” never let a man lie on the ground as long as he was conscious. “Smiley,” on the other hand, was comparatively kindhearted. But, even “Smiley” was tough if he was short on his quota. Usually the men were allowed a half hour or so for lunch, if the quotas were in a satisfactory condition, but the food usually consisted of a rice ball (cold and moldy) and a can of corned beef or sardines or something brought out from camp in the morning, and it is pretty hard to eat such food without water. Most of the men saved their food to eat in the evening.

As more and more men feel sick, the labor gangs got smaller and smaller. Starting with 30 men apiece, they dwindled down to 20, 15, 10 and even fewer. As the gangs got smaller, the work got harder for the men still able to report for duty. The quota system was particularly hard on the weak men; the Japanese guards or gang bosses were naturally inclined to favor the strong men who could produce many loads of dirt. They would pamper and feed the strong men like a farmer pampers a good work animal—would bring them water, fruit and cigarettes. Weak men (quota endangerers) received nothing but kicks and blows. A prisoner always knew where he stood with his “boss” by the number of cigarettes he received. Many good (“number one”) workers often got as many as three cigarettes in the course of a day; pretty good workers two; fair workers one and sick men, none. The guards looked after the welfare of their good men in camp, too. They would come down at mealtimes and watch the food being served. Woe betide the cooks if they failed to serve the good workers a double portion!

Captain Pierce, a young, eager infantry officer, did a splendid job after Captain Gonzales died, working himself almost to death and spending unselfishly of his own money on food and medicine for the men, but it was a hopeless task.

After the group had been there for about three weeks, the sick and death lists had grown to such proportions that the Japanese decided to send 35 of the sickest men to Bilibid hospital. They also decided to requisition some U.S. Army medical personnel. Captain William B. Ashton, Medical Corps, U.S. Army, who had been Acting Chief of Surgery with the U.S. Army Hospital Number One on Bataan, had come to Bilibid with the group of 513 patients from that hospital on June 19th. He was selected to go to Tayabas. With him went Captain Charles T. Brown, Medical Corps, U.S. Army (14th Engineers, Philippine Scouts), and four Army hospital corpsmen. Captain Brown was sick—he had come down from Bataan as a patient from the Army hospital—but he volunteered his services, as two doctors were wanted.

Drs. Ashton and Brown found a very serious situation confronting them at Tayabas. Several men had died (among them, Captain Gonzales), and dozens more were lying about the camp in a dying condition from malaria, fever and dysentery. The two doctors set up a “sick bay” under a canvas tarpaulin, which they managed to wangle
from the Japanese. Here the more seriously ill prisoners were laid, on the bare ground. A little later, the Japanese came through with another tarpaulin, which was utilized as a shelter for the dying. The men referred to this second location, accurately enough, as the “morgue.”

Beyond making the sick men as comfortable as possible, there wasn’t very much that the doctors could do. Captain Ashton, a strong, sturdy young doctor from (blanked out) had brought some medicine of his own down with him — quinine, sulfathiazole, first-aid equipment and so on — and he was able to do a lot of good with it, but the supply was as nothing in the face of the need. There was a Japanese medical officer on duty with the Jap engineer detachment and he occasionally came down and glanced over the sick bay, usually with a view to ordering sick prisoners out to work. He would order out men who were in the throes of fever, if they happened to look fairly strong. “That Jap doctor wouldn’t believe you were sick unless you were wasted away to a skeleton and obviously had one foot in the grave,” Captain Ashton told the author. Once in a while he would dole out quinine — usually about 150 tablets — about enough for 25 men for one day. To cope with dysentery, the doctors had — apart from the handful of medicine which Captain Ashton had brought with him — one 5-pound sack of powdered charcoal, which came down from Bilibid Hospital. Charcoal, of course, had no medicinal value, but the doctors fed it to the men in the hope that it might have some absorbent effect. The charcoal was everywhere. The sick men were too weak to keep themselves clean, and there were not enough hospital corpsmen available to cope with the task. Charcoal covered the patients, the tarpaulins — everything. Flies — millions of them — were over everything like a blanket. Big, bottle-green insects, they crawled over the patients, covering their mouths, eyes, and even crawling into their noses. It was impossible to frighten the flies away. You had to brush them off, but they would be back again as soon as you took away your hand. Captain Ashton pleaded with the Japs to give him a few mosquito nets with which to cover the helpless men, but they only laughed. Lieutenant Nito, the Japanese line officer in charge of the camp, particularly enjoyed visiting the sick bay and gloating over the human misery that he saw. He would tie a handkerchief over his mouth and nose by way of avoiding contamination and, surveying the dying wretches contemptuously, would ask: “Where is the pride of the insolent white man now?”

Lieutenant Nito was especially gratified when a prisoner died. There were plenty of them — at least one and sometimes as many as four or five in a day. The doctors always had to send the camp interpreter (a young Air Corps sergeant named James T. Boyce, who had picked up Japanese as a boy growing up in Shanghai) to inform Nito when someone died. “What, another death!” he would exclaim. “Pretty soon there won’t be any Americans left!” Lieutenant Kato, the engineer officer in charge of the road construction, was not so happy at the appalling death rate. It cut into the supply of workers.

The men were buried near the camp, about 150 yards from the river bank. It was necessary to go this far away because the river — just a trickle when the group first arrived — was steadily rising. This particular area of the Philippines never has any “dry season” comparable with most of the rest of the country. It rains the year around, only slackening up a little during the months of April and May. Most of the time, it rains every day. There was still no shelter for the men, of course, and they had to make out as best they could in the rain, on the rocks of the river bed. It is hard sleeping on rocks in the rain, but you can do it if you are tired enough. As the river rose, “camp” was moved up
the river bank by the simple expedient of moving the two wheelbarrows in which the rice was cooked. Captain Ashton believed that the graves were high enough to escape the river, although these mountain streams turn into raging torrents overnight during the rainy season. The graves are located at Kilometer Post 273.1, on the section of the provincial highway connecting Tayabas and Camarines Norte provinces, 400 yards northwest of a small bridge. They are - or were - marked with crude wooden crosses. Some of the bodies have U.S. Army aluminum identification tags, but, where these could not be found, the men carved tags out of wood and buried them with the bodies.

When a man died, four prisoners were detailed to carry the body out of the "morgue" to the grave. It was always difficult to find four men in camp strong enough for the task, and usually the doctors had to help out. The "funeral processions," winding up the river bank, had to pass by the Japanese camp. The Japs - coolie class - would stare curiously as the procession went by. It got to be a familiar sight, but once the Japs were startled out of their complacency.

It happened one day towards evening. Three men had died that day - three bodies carried on the short, tortuous journey to their resting place in the jungle. A fourth man - a pitiful, fever-wrecked skeleton - expired. It was raining steadily. His place on the muddy ground under the morgue tarpaulin was urgently needed for another patient who did not have long to live. The familiar announcement rang out:

"Two men needed to help Dr. Brown carry a body out!" Two weary prisoners, a little stronger than the rest, got to their feet, and took hold of the dead man's arms, with Captain Brown at the feet. The procession started out, up the river bank. The wood was wet through; there would be no food that night. No sleep, in the rain, on the rocks. The mosquitoes had already begun to come out and were droning cruelly, in anticipation of their nightly feast, another man dead. "We will all die, sooner or later," was the thought that ran through every man's mind.

Suddenly, from somewhere, came the words of a song. A prisoner was singing in a thin, quavering voice. The tune and the words were familiar. The men listened, at first indifferently, then with more attention.

"God bless America!
Land that I love."

Great God - America! Of course, there was an America. They had almost forgotten. Here and there a prisoner joined in hesitantly, for it had been a long time since a song had passed their lips.

"Stand beside her,
and guide her
through the night, with the light
from Above!"

The whole camp stirred. Prisoners huddled together in groups, shoulders hunched against the rain, looked up and began to sing. The stirring words rang out:
“From the mountains,  
to the prairie,  
To the ocean  
white with foam.”

They smiled at one another, shyly — a little shamefacedly. It was funny to be singing that grand old song in such a place. It had been a long time since anybody had thought about America and home — had thought about anything, in fact, except food, the rain, the flies and mosquitoes, and the ever-pressing problem of trying to stay alive. But, by God — there was an America. It was their country. They were Americans, and they knew that even in their degradation, they were infinitely superior to the grinning little yellow men across the river. They sang the song again and again. The burial party, toiling up the river bank, took it up. It was a splendid funeral march. A group of Japanese soldiers, lolling on a log on the river bank, looked up — rubbed their eyes stupidly. They shook their heads. These crazy Americans! What were they singing? Something about Ah-merica.

“God bless America!  
My home sweet home.  
God bless America!  
My home sweet home.”

The doctors struggled manfully with the tremendous problems confronting them. Captain Ashton suspected that most of the “dysentery” in the camp, was actually diarrhea. He reasoned, as Dr. Brokenshire did at Bilibid, that if bacillary dysentery were present, the flies would quickly have spread the disease to everyone in camp. He believed that there was some amebic dysentery and that the rice — old, moldy and full of weevils and worms — was giving the men the acute diarrhea that was wasting them away. He ordered everyone to eat as little rice as possible, and saw to it that the kitchen crew cleaned the stuff as thoroughly as possible before cooking. He administered his small stock of medicines judiciously, and before long had the “dysentery” under control. Without quinine, of course nothing could be done about malaria and, forced as they were, to live in the open, exposed to wind, rain and cold, pneumonia began to take its toll. Anemia sprue and other diseases of malnutrition began to appear as the stock of American canned food became exhausted and the prisoners were forced to subsist for the most part, on rice and “whistleweed” soup.

Altogether, the doctors had an appalling problem on their hands. The small medical “detachment” soon began to suffer casualties. Captain Brown, sick when he went down to Tayabas, became seriously ill as a result of overwork and the hardships to which he was exposed. All four of the hospital corpsmen became ill, and finally, Captain Ashton himself developed amebic dysentery. Fewer and fewer men were able to turn out for work on the road, and it was even difficult to find enough men each day, well enough to perform the essential routine of policing the camp, cooking the meals and looking after the dying.

They were a wet, sick and utterly miserable lot. Even “Killer” was touched. One day he stormed into the sick bay, as was his custom, with the intention of kicking the sick men to their feet to go out to work on the road. Captain Ashton indicated the men lying on the ground. “There they are,” he told the interpreter, Boyce. “He can see for himself they are in no condition to work.” Boyce translated. The “Killer” snarled, seized one of
the men and jerked him to his feet. The sick prisoner, eyes glazed, stood for a moment, then slumped to the ground. "Killer" kicked him; the man made no movement. The Jap glared around him. The men stared back with lackluster eyes, hopelessly. Slowly "Killer's" expression changed. He looked uncertain, then shamed. Even a glimmer of pity was visible in his black, beady eyes, as he surveyed the misery before him. He hesitated a moment, apparently lost in thought. Then, "Boyso!" He called the interpreter, gave him 20 pesos, rapped out some instructions in Japanese, then departed.

Boyce took the money, went in a truck to Calauag, returning after a few hours with a truckload of chickens, eggs, sugar and cigarettes, sold to him at much less than cost by sympathetic Filipinos in the town. "Killer" came down again and distributed the stuff — one chicken, half a dozen eggs, a kilo of sugar and a package of cigarettes per man. Then he made a speech to the prisoners in the sick bay, with Boyce translating. It was a moving speech:

"I feel very sorry for your suffering," "Killer" announced. "You Ah-merican soldiers are far from home and you are suffering much. It is too bad that this is so. You fought well on Bataan against the Japanese soldier. Many of you will die. Many have already died. What a pity that brave Ah-merican soldier must die." Then "Killer" turned and walked out. The Jap was really deeply moved. Tears were streaming down his thick, battle-scared face.

"But, it didn't last," says Boyce. "The next day he was the same old Killer, beating up the men and raising more hell than ever."

Finally, the death rate got so high that even the Japanese were forced to the realization that all of the prisoners were going to die, and that quickly, unless they were taken out of there. They told Captain Ashton that he could send around 30 patients each week to Bilibid Hospital. A truck left for Manila once a week for provisions and supplies, and this was the number of men that could be crowded onto it. Then it became a question of picking the worst cases and keeping them alive from week to week. Thirty-two patients left on July 1st, and 33 more on the 10th. Captain Brown, seriously ill, left with this second group. Captain Ashton got 32 more out on the 16th, and finally, on July 28th, the Japs broke up camp and took the remainder of the group — 108 men — to Bilibid. Not all of the men who started for Bilibid arrived there. One man with the group that left on July 16th, was dead on arrival at the prison hospital, and one man with the last bunch expired on the way.

It cannot be stated with exactitude how many of the men who went to Tayabas died. According to a statement made by Captain Pierce to Commander Sartin, dated August 6, 1942, there were 53 known deaths at the camp itself during the two months from May 29th to July 28, 1942. However, this list is admittedly incomplete, for there were a few deaths before the arrival of Captains Ashton and Brown, of which there is no report. This circumstance is due to the very practical fact that nobody in camp had a piece of paper of any kind, or a pencil, with which to mark down the names of the men who died. Captain Ashton brought paper and pencil with him, and from then on an accurate record was made. The men at the camp also gave Captain Ashton the names of the prisoners who had died before his arrival, as best they could, but they were unable to remember them all.
The Bilibid Hospital records show that, of 240 prisoners who came into the hospital from the Tayabas road building project between June 19th and July 28, 1942, 29 died. This is exclusive of the two men who died enroute to the hospital and who were also buried in the prison grounds. Nearly all of them died of amebic dysentery or malaria, or both. Most of these men died within a few days after their arrival at Bilibid, while a few lingered on for weeks or even months. That is a total of 84 known deaths, out of the original 300. There were possibly five more who died before Captain Ashton's arrival, and an unknown number who fell out on the march from Calauag. In addition, it is undoubtedly true that some of the Tayabas group who came in to Bilibid Hospital, were so ravaged and weakened by their experience, that they fell easy prey to diseases and starvation on other work details later on, and some of these men, listed as having died on some other labor detail, really died as a result of the privations which they suffered at Tayabas. Certainly the casualties were at least 100, out of 300. One in three, in two months' time.
Footnotes

Chapter 2

(1) This bomb shelter, constructed by Radio Electrician Earl Schweizer and his crew near the radio station, was not only the only bomb shelter on Sangley Point. It was also the only completed bomb shelter in the Philippines.

Chapter 4

(2) The Dispensary staff included Lieutenant Commander H.A. Erickson, Lieutenant Commander C.T. Cross (Dental Corps), Lieutenant (jg) G.K. Lambert, Lieutenant (jg) F.V. Berley, Lieutenant (jg) M. Glusman, Lieutenant S.W. Smith (Dental Corps), Lieutenant (jg) J.L. Wanger (Dental Corps), and Lieutenant (jg) R.G. Hethneck (Dental Corps), and 15 pharmacist's mates.

(3) Dr. Hjalmar A. Erickson has had a long and interesting career in many countries of the world. He was a medical missionary of the Seventh Day Adventists, from 1925 to 1940, when he was called to active duty in the Navy. He is a graduate of the Pacific Union College, St. Helena, California, and of the College of Medical Evangelists near Loma Linda, California. He served in the first World War with the 40th Division in France, where he was assigned to a chemical warfare company, which had the unenviable duty of examining and testing German gas shells. After the war and medical college, Dr. Erickson took his young bride (acquired in 1917) and daughter (born in 1922) with him to Scotland, where he put in two years of post-graduate work at the university of Edinborough. Then followed 14 years in Adventist hospitals at Bechuanaland and Nyasaland in Central Africa (where the second child, Arthur Ross, was born), Manila and Shanghai. In Shanghai, Dr. Erickson directed the activities of two Adventist hospitals – the Rangeroad Clinic (in a slum district and scene of bitter fighting when the famous Ninth Route Army made its stand against the Japanese invaders in 1937), and the Shanghai Sanitarium on the exclusive Rubicom Road. Chang Kai Shek and his beauteous wife, Mei Ling, were among the patients treated at the Sanitarium, and they became fast friends of the Ericksons. The “Young Marshal” Chian Hsueh Liang, scion of the notorious old Manchurian warlord of the early 20's, Chan Tso Lin, came to the Sanitarium seeking to be cured of the opium habit. He was cured by the “blister treatment,” which consists of raising blisters on the skin of the patient and thereafter injecting him with serum made from the fluid of these same blisters. The treatment is very effective, for the patient thereafter becomes deathly sick if he so much as smells a whiff of opium smoke. The cure is not permanent, however, and Dr. Erickson recalls sadly that the “Young Marshal” went right back to smoking opium as soon as the effects of his treatment had worn off.

War found the Ericksons back home, where the doctor was on duty at the Adventist hospital at Boulder, Colorado. He volunteered his services to the Navy, was taken in as a Lieutenant Commander in the Medical Corps Reserve and sent to
the Philippines. He was on duty at the Naval Dispensary in the Navy Yard on the
day of the great raid and was wounded by a piece of shrapnel. Now 50 years of
age, tanned and handsome, he looks much younger. It comforted him greatly that
his family was not caught in Manila by the war. It was the first assignment that has
not seen his family with him. The two children – Barbara May is 19 and Arthur
Ross, 16 – are both enrolled at the Pacific Union College, where Dr. Erickson
matriculated more than 20 years ago. No optimist, he believes that there will
always be wars; that the next war will dwarf the last one.

(4) The pharmacist’s mates assigned to help Mr. Shearer to move the Medical Supply
Depot were Chief Pharmacist’s Mate Dudley A. Henson, Chief Pharmacist’s Mate
Thomas J. Wade, Leonard J. Gaspa, PhM1/c, David W. Wavis, PhM2/c, George M.
Arnold, PhM2/c, and later, Chief Pharmacist’s Mate Abel O. Gomes, Bernard V.
Hildebrand, PhM1/c, Ernest L. Christensen, PhM2/c, Lloyd H. Halverson, PhM2/c,
and Thomas W. Shillington, PhM2/c. All of these men Mr. Shearer recommended
for special recognition for their tireless devotion to duty under conditions of
constant danger. Mr. Shearer himself was recommended for the Navy Cross.

Chapter 5

(5) The Cuartel de Espana (literally, “Headquarters of Spain”), a group of old
wooden buildings located in the Walled City of Manila was, before the war, head-
quarters and barracks for most of the 31st Infantry, the only all-American Army
infantry regiment in the Philippines. The Navy had long maintained a small
Dispensary there. At the outbreak of war, the officer in charge was Lieutenant
Commander Henry C. Brokenshire, U.S. Navy Medical Corps, Reserve. He had
with him Pharmacist’s Mate David A.M. Glick and two others. Following his
assignment on the “Mary Ann,” evacuating victims of the big air raid on Cavite to
Manila, nothing of interest happened at the Dispensary beyond routine first aid
care of people injured in raids on Manila, until the 19th of December. On that day,
there occurred the first big raid on Sangley Point, when Dr. Brokenshire took a
speedboat and went out to the Naval hospital.

(6) Captain K.E. Lowman, Fleet Surgeon, returned to Manila from Mariveles,
Bataan, on December 26th, bringing with him Doctors Bone, Kline and Morgan and
6 pharmacist’s mates from the Canacao staff, who had gone to Bataan that same
day, but were informed after their arrival there that their services would not be
needed. Captain Lowman became Chief of Surgery at Santa Scholastica.

(7) The work of the Army Medical Department during this strenuous period is
deserving of much praise. The most important Army medical activity in Manila
before the War was Sternberg General Hospital, with a bed capacity of about 300.
Upon the outbreak of war, this nucleus had to be expanded multifold – eventually
the goal was to have enough hospitals in Manila to take care of 6,000 bed patients.
We have mentioned in this chapter, the buildings that were taken over and
converted into hospitals under the Army Medical Center, but it is impossible to
convey any idea of the amount of work that all of this involved—unpacking and sorting equipment, installing it, assigning medical personnel to man the hospitals, training new personnel in their duties and old personnel in new duties, etc., etc. The job was accomplished somehow and the entire organization functioned well. There was a tremendous influx of patients into these new hospitals within the first few days of the war. They came to Manila from the Army hospitals at Fort Stotsenberg and McKinley, from the bombings of Clarks and Iba fields, the bombing of the Cavite Navy Yard and the town of Cavite, air raids on Manila and from the front lines. All were taken care of and the Medical Center was fully prepared to continue to care for all of the wounded and injured from the front, when the order came on Christmas Eve to evacuate Manila.

Chapter 6

(8) A word should be said in tribute to these Chinese cooks. There were about 13 of them and for the most part, they were long-time employees of the Naval Hospital at Canacao. After the outbreak of war, they stuck to their posts without demur, following the unit about during its peregrinations to Sternberg Hospital, Philippine Union College and Santa Scholastica. They set up a galley at each new location and never missed a meal.

(9) This school building was afterwards the barracks for American prisoners of war employed by the Japanese on the notorious Nichols Field (airport) project. Father John Doherty, the Nun’s Chaplain, and Miss Marie Adams, white-haired, buxom, energetic Red Cross worker at the hospital, were also taken away on this day and interned at Santo Tomas University.

(10) The so-called “Japanese Navy Hospital” was the Manila Sanitarium, a newly-built and well equipped hospital maintained by the Seventh Day Adventists. The Japanese commandeered it.

(11) Those four months at Santa Scholastica College were important. True, there wasn’t very much activity; in fact, most of the time everybody was hard put to it to find something to do. In a very real sense, it was an artificial existence. But, it was here that the Naval Hospital group was first captured; first became acquainted with the Japanese Army and Navy. Here they learned just what to expect from the Japs, to what extent the yellow men would comply with international law and their treaty obligations. The Americans, in the meantime, got a good rest, which was more than welcome after the strenuous weeks following the outbreak of war. It was, so to speak, a transition period, or rather, a breaking-in period for the equally strenuous and much more trying times ahead.

Chapter 11

(12) If both primary and subsidiary diagnoses are considered, the percentage soars to 107 percent, with some patients having more than one malnutritional disease.
These figures were revised downward about the middle of 1943, for certain ranks and grades. Thus, Warrant Officers took a "cut" to the same "salary," and spending allowance as Second Lieutenants and Ensigns, and the first four enlisted grades were cut to a uniform P10.00 spending fund.

After considerable research and changing the original formula several times to suit the conditions encountered, the vitamin potency of the yeast culture was estimated. This was done by accepting published figures on the vitamin B-1 and B-2 content of dried Brewer's yeast and relating these figures to the cultures. When large quantities of the Brewer's yeast was available, one mess kit spoon (or ½ ounces) serving was adjudged to contain as high as 90 to 100 International Units of B-1, and 45 to 50 Sherman-Bourquin units of B-2. As the supply of Brewer's yeast diminished, these figures dropped to 20 to 25 International Units of B-1 and 10 to 12 Sherman-Bourquin units of B-2.

Chapter 12

The establishment at Santa Scholastica, completely equipped as it was, would have been ideal as a hospital for the prisoners of war and as long as the need remained – and the need was certainly great enough – it was incumbent upon the Japanese to have left the Naval Hospital intact at that place. It cannot be said that there was any "urgent military necessity" which would justify the Japanese in confiscating the hospital equipment and supplies. Manila was an open city by declaration of General MacArthur. It had not been defended and no military operations had ever been conducted within it. There were any number of civilian hospitals which the Japanese could have utilized, assuming that the Japanese Army had brought with it nothing at all in the way of medical personnel and equipment. As a matter of fact, the Japanese could have availed themselves of the facilities of the hospital at Santa Scholastica for their own sick and wounded and the U.S. Navy doctors and hospital corpsmen would have freely given of their services, being, as the Geneva Convention describes, "neutralized persons." Giving the Japanese the benefit of the doubt, and assuming that there was such an "urgent military necessity" as would justify their confiscation of the hospital at Santa Scholastica and the medical supplies at the Medical Supply Depot, it was incumbent upon the Japanese to see to it that the wounded and sick prisoners of war were "provided for." Obviously, this means "adequately provided for," and does not contemplate any such provision as was made at Pasay and Bilibid. Nor did the Japanese "adequately provide for" the patients from the U.S. Army Hospitals on Bataan and on Corregidor, whom they evacuated to Bilibid Prison.

Not all prisoners in the Philippines fared as well in the matter of these "CCC kits." For example, the labor gang at Nichols Field received only enough boxes to permit distribution of one box to every five men.
(17) All Japanese Army clothing was designed to fit everybody. Thus, their fatigue caps, equipped with a shoelace at the back, could be adjusted to any size head. Similarly, their trousers were issued in one size and gathered up with a string at the waist. They had two sizes of shoes: big and little.

Chapter 13

(18) Lieutenant King, cereal chemist from Minnesota, came to Bilibid from the prison camp at Cabanatuan in October, to assist in establishing a program for the propagation of yeast from lugao.

(19) The Japanese brought in small amounts of some of the most urgently needed items, but many requests for laboratory supplies were unfilled. Some agar-agar and gelatin sent in, enabled the laboratory staff to make up some plain culture media for bacteriological work.

(20) Lieutenant Commander Cecil Welch, member of the American Society of Roentgenologists since 1929, was able, through his expert technical skill, to perform miracles with the limited equipment at his disposal. He is from South Dakota, a graduate in medicine from Northwestern University and has been in the Navy for 17 years. At Bilibid, he was in charge of the X-ray, Physiotherapy, Pharmacy and Dispensary.

Chapter 16

(21) One of Son’s lyrics (sung to the tune of “The Bam Bam Bunny Shore”):

“Oh a thousand miles I’ve traveled
And a thousand sights I’ve saw,
But if they’ll let me pack and send me back
I won’t go ‘way no more.

I was looking for adventure
Didn’t mind a little war,
But since they bombed my shack, everything looks black,
And I wanna go home once more.

I’ve slept in Shanghai, been drunk in Tiangtao
Now I’m in the P.I. in a dirty hoosegow,
I wasn’t meant to be a jailbird
And I crave a distant shore
So, if they’ll take me back to Hackensack,
I won’t go ‘way no more.”

(22) This picture “Pearl Harbor and Singapore,” was interesting for one thing: it showed conclusively—in fact the Japanese pointed proudly to the fact—that the attack on Pearl Harbor had been planned for months beforehand and that
Japanese aircraft carriers were steaming toward the base several days before. In the picture, a Japanese flight commander was quoted as exhorting his pilots, lined up on the flight deck of a carrier at 3:00 a.m. on the morning of December 8, 1941, "You have been trained for an average of seven years for this moment."

The reader may be interested in knowing what courses were taught in this unique school:

- Astronomy and Navigation – Lieutenant Commander Whitney
- Bible Study – Chaplain Perry O. Wilcox
- Constitutional Law – 1st Lieutenant James M. Robb
- English Grammar – 2nd Lieutenant Frank Goss
- French – Sergeant Durham
- German – Mr. Peter Nuthausen (Civilian)
- Public Speaking and Debating – 1st Lieutenant James M. Robb
- Mathematics (Algebra) – Lieutenant Charles Brock, USN
- Shorthand – Mr. F.W. Simonsen (Civilian)
- Spanish – CPhM William Derrick, USN

Nonacademic subjects for hospital corpsmen, were:

- Chemistry – Lieutenant M. Glogman (MC) USN
- Office Procedures and Forms – Mr. C. Shearer, W.O. (MC) USN
- Materia Medica – Lieutenant A.M. Barrett, (MC) USN

Chapter 17

After the surrender of Bataan, most of the Americans and Filipino soldiers were marched to Camp O'Donnell, a Division camp near the town of Capaz, Tarlac Province, in Central Luzon.

One of the prisoners who was left behind on the road was Private Gene S. Lowe, 17th Pursuit Squadron. A portion of his statement, made at Bilibid Prison on February 6, 1943, follows:

"Many of the Americans passed out on the road and were left on the shoulder of the road. Some of the Japanese soldiers passed out, too. The Americans were so sick that they could hardly take the march after the first ten kilometers. However, most of them managed to struggle on. I was one of the unfortunate ones who passed out. I was suffering from cerebral malaria and dysentery. Due to my illness, which was aggravated by the heat of the day, I passed out after I had walked about twelve kilometers. Two of my friends picked me up and carried me. Later, Lieutenant George T. Holland and Captain Henry J. Pierce helped the other two to carry me. The five of us, with one Japanese sentry were taking up the rear, about two kilometers behind the column.

About twenty kilometers out on the march, I passed out again. This time I did not come to. The Japanese sentry wanted to leave me on the
road and he told Captain Pierce and Lieutenant Holland and the other
two, to go on up the road. He probably would have shot me (as the
Japanese did so often on the Bataan-O'Donnell march when men could
go no farther) had Captain Pierce not insisted on carrying me further.
While they were talking, a noncommissioned officer of the Japanese
medical department fell back from the column to see what the trouble
was. He saw me on the road. He felt my pulse and pronounced me
dead. I was rolled over in the ditch on the side of the road and left for
death.

At 9:00 a.m. the next morning, I was awakened by two little Filipino
boys. They stared at me for a few minutes and then ran away. They
soon returned with their parents. The Filipinos from all around that
area held a 'war council' and decided that they should hide me out.
They were all for me. They did not want to turn me over to the
Japanese, but as they were afraid of the Japanese, they wanted to hide
me. They took me into a jungle nearby and made me a bed of leaves. I
was still very sick and had to stay in bed. I was almost delirious from
malaria fever.

I stayed in the jungle under the care of the Filipinos for four days. Each
night after dark and early morning before daybreak, the Filipinos
would bring me food - eggs, bananas, rice, papayas, mangos and other
fruits. On the fourth day I began to realize that I should give myself up
to the Japanese, because the Filipinos had no medicine to give me and I
was badly in need of quinine.

I made one try for the road which was a few hundred yards away, but
I was too weak to make it. I tried again later and made the road. This
was on the first day of June, 1942. I got to the road during the
afternoon and stayed there until 11:00 p.m. that night, when a Japanese
truck convoy passed over the road.

I waved at the passing trucks and finally the convoy stopped. Five
Japanese, including one Japanese Army officer who spoke some English,
came over to the side of the road. I explained as well as I could, but
apparently one of the Japanese soldiers was not satisfied. He hit me
over the head with his flashlight. They threw me into the back of a truck
and took me into the next town, where the convoy stayed overnight.
They fed me that night - corned beef and rice.

I left with the convoy the following morning. We drove all day and in
the evening arrived at Lipa, which is 120 kilometers south of Manila.
The convoy left me at a Japanese guardhouse at the south entrance to
the city of Lipa, Batangas. I was suffering with dysentery that day and
the Japanese sentries had to help me to and from the toilet frequently. A
Japanese captain came along and gave me quinine, water and some
sugar candy. That same day, a Japanese guard walked me into town.

I was taken to the Japanese headquarters in the town of Lipa. There
was a Japanese captain there who spoke good English. He was Captain
Chakai, the Lipa Commandant. I told him my story and after he had
obtained information he desired, he turned me over to the town jailer. I was put in a cell with four Filipinos and one Japanese. One of the four Filipinos was insane. He was also blind.

I was well fed by the Filipinos. A Filipino Catholic priest interceded for me, asking the Japanese for permission to let the Filipinos feed me. This the Japanese consented to.

The Japanese Town Commandant invited me to his quarters several times for dinner. He enjoyed talking with me and we had several interesting conversations. Captain Chakei was very humiliated to think that the Japanese would leave me for dead on the road, as they had done. Several times he visited me at my cell and each time he did so, he gave me a peso. I stayed at Lipa 23 days. During that time I gained forty pounds—from 90 to 130.

On or about the 26th of June, the Japanese decided to take me to Manila to turn me over to the Bilibid Hospital. I drove in a 1940 model Ford with Captains Nagai and Chakai, a Japanese interpreter and one Filipino. We traveled at 75 and 80 miles an hour during part of the trip. Upon arrival at Manila, I was turned over to the Bilibid Prison authorities. And, that ended my very unusual experience.”

(26) Captain Brown was very seriously ill at Bilibid Hospital for many months thereafter, suffering from malaria, beri-beri and heart disease. His action in volunteering a few weeks before to go to Tayabas, had almost been equivalent to signing his own death warrant.