

Had I been shot down attacking a worthless target? Was I hit with an American bullet? Those questions brought bitter bile to my sore mouth.

CHAPTER 36

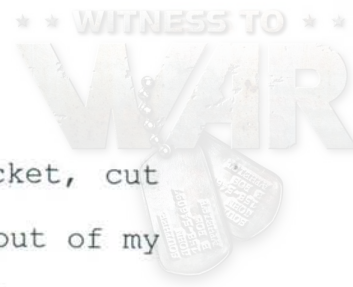
The next six days I was moved from place to place. Always there was a consistent pattern of questions accompanied by slaps, fist blows, and threats on the part of the officers. On the contrary, I received open-mouthed curiosity on the part of the common soldiers.

There was one notable exception. At one place, an officer had me taken out of my cell after dark, and fed me on red wine and biscuits. He spoke perfect English and claimed to have been on the Japanese Olympic Team at the Berlin Olympics in 1936. We talked for about two hours on sports and customs of our respective countries. Nothing was said of military matters except a few things I asked him. If he had an angle it was never apparent. He said that he would like to see a negotiated peace.

PART EIGHT. PRISON

CHAPTER 37

At the end of the six days of movement I arrived in a large Chinese city. I didn't know where I was since the last part of the trip had been made with my eyes covered by a blindfold which was only removed upon entering the city. We proceeded by car through paved streets to the "iso". Here I was turned over to the guards



who stripped me to the skin. They split seams in my jacket, cut off the zippers of jacket and pants, took the drawstrings out of my long-handles, and cut off a few buttons. All my clothes were returned with the exception of my shoes, and I was escorted to a cell in a large dungeon and pushed through the tiny door.

The cell was a six by six affair with chicken wire over a head high opening on the inside. There were bars at the outside of the foot-thick walls, and a window over the bars. On the front were four one-inch round wooden bars fitted with a three foot high door.

There was a food slot above the door and another at the floor level. Outside that was a narrow foyer bounded by a brick wall in which was a full-size wooden door which had a tiny glass-covered peep hole. The cells all opened on a long hall with one outside door opening into the hall. The main hall door and the cell doors were locked with huge archaic padlocks.

Inside the cell the furnishings consisted of a wooden floor, four ragged short, Jap-size blankets, and toilet which was a square concrete block in one corner with a rectangular opening. Just underneath the opening was a rectangular metal can containing evidence of a previous prisoner. It was removable from the outside. In the ceiling burned a dim electric globe.

It was cold, and I was shivering violently upon entering the cell. I quickly wrapped myself in the blankets and after warming up a little, I laid down to sleep. Sleep was not to be for my feet soon began to ache with the cold, and in no way could I arrange the



rag they had given me for full cover giving sufficient warmth to allow sleep.

Finally it was necessary to sit in the corner and cross my legs before the blankets would give enough coverage. At long last I dozed with my head on my chest.

CHAPTER 38

Next morning I was awakened by the screams of the guards who indicated by sign language that it was the exercise period. I could hear the other prisoners jumping around in their cells, so I followed suit. I was soon shivering violently with the cold again, so I broke off the exercise and resumed the position in the corner.

I retained that position except for the two periods a day food arrived. It was shoved through the food slot in the bars. There was a small bowl of cold rice and a teacup of equally cold soup containing a minute quantity of some unknown Chinese vegetable. Self-preservation made me eat the miserable stuff.

Truly my precious supply of luck had been used up during my previous flying career. I now wallowed in the depths of human misery and the inhumanity of man to man. At such times one becomes very close to one's God, and I was no exception. I cried out from the depths of my misery for strength to bear my burden and for forgiveness for these inhumane beings.

CHAPTER 39

After three days I was taken out of the dungeon and into the office where a group of officers sat me by the fire, gave me a



cigarette.

Their spokesman said, "you will be sent to join your friends who are warm, well-fed, and have cigarettes to smoke. But you must be frank with us."

Then the questioning commenced through an interpreter who spoke American rather than English.

"You may as well answer our questions for we know all about you already," he said.

Then they proceeded to produce such things as the plan of my home field, squadron number and group, and even such things as the nicknames of the C.O. and various members of the outfit.

Still I shook my head and refused to answer until I perceived the questioning officer was beginning to lose face. He unsheathed his saber and caressed my neck with it.

"You understand, one slice and you lose a hand, an arm, or your head."

With that he rammed his saber into its sheath and fired a question at me, "Why do American fliers always run from Japanese planes?"

That really pissed me so I shot back; "That's our tactics. Why fight when you are at a disadvantage when you can leave and come back and catch the other fellow at a disadvantage?" I blurted out.

He grinned broadly. The officer was satisfied; his face had been saved for I had spoken.



My mouth had been opened, so now I felt I must lie my way out of this predicament. I told them it was my first mission in China, and that I only had a few hours in the Mustang. The former was true, the latter was not.

The questioning then proceeded something as follows; "Where is the gas stored on your field?"

"I don't know, because somebody else takes the plane when I get out and carries it off for gassing."

"Which direction do they take?"

"I don't know, on the two practice flights I made, I got out of my plane in front of this building (I pointed), went in, and then heard someone take it off." "When I was ready to fly again, it was gassed up."

And then, "Why are you shooting up these locomotives?"

"They don't tell us anything, because our chances are very good of being shot down over enemy territory and captured. Furthermore, our officers know that you have no scruples in regard to physical and mental torture. You force information out of guys so we are kept in the dark about everything."

"But you are an officer - you should know these things."

"A fighter pilot officer is just the same as private in the Infantry. He is a front line fighter."

After considerable verbal sparring on the first questioning they casually asked the following question, but their listening was far from casual, "Have you noticed any activity of cargo planes



beyond a few a day which are necessary to maintain your base?"
(They loved to show off how much they knew.)

"No," I replied.

Oh oh! Here was something they really wanted to know, and I knew why. We were flying Chinese troops by the hundreds off our field to an area several hundred miles further south where Japanese troops were taking airfield after airfield and coming dangerously close to Chunking. The Generalissimo had made some sort of temporary truce with the Communists, so he was able to move about 35,000 troops out of the northern area. They were being flown out of our field at night and there were ten or fifteen U.S. Army bird colonels living on our field handling the arrangements.

"You had better be frank with us," warned the Jap.

"But I am telling the truth," I lied.

CHAPTER 40

I was put back into the dungeon, and that night I was forgotten, when feeding time came.

About every two days I would be questioned for three or four hours. I had nothing to do in between times except keep straight in my mind what I had already told them and figure how to keep my story consistent. But each time they casually injected some question bearing on the Chinese troop movement, and each time it would only be asked once and then left.

One time it would be, "Have you noticed any high-ranking officers around?" Next time it would be, "There are quite



a few Chinese soldiers around your base, aren't there?"

By the early part of January, after approximately ten of these interrogations, I felt that I was going nuts. Far better to have kept my mouth shut and lost my head than being driven insane by trying to maintain a lie. I knew that if I slipped I would lose my head anyway.

On what must have been my twelfth interrogation, I was questioned for two hours about my plane and radio equipment. I tried to convince my questioner that I really didn't know too much about the Mustang. I told him I believed that it probably would go 550 mph, had a 1500 mile radius of action, and so on. I said that the transmitting frequency was set by a radio man, the receivers just had white marks on the tuning dial where we were to keep it adjusted.

The Jap jumped up, slapped my face, and shouted, "you stupid, stupid ass." "Take him away."

CHAPTER 41

I was thrown back in my cell to await my ultimate death. For a week I never saw anyone but my guards who were of the feared Kempetai. They never spoke to me but only shouted to awaken me in the morning, told me when I could go to sleep at night, and grunt at me when the rice was pushed through the feeding slot. At each opening of the main door into the hall from outside I would become tense with expectation, still squeamish of how well my ruse had worked.



On Monday after this week of sitting in the corner alone with my grief and prayer which at this point consisted only in cries for supplication, a guard came into the foyer outside my cell and stood for several minutes. I opened up the blankets covering my head and peered out. There stood a tiny Jap looking steadily at me through the food slot just over the door.

"My name is Cato, my home is Tokyo."

I told him my name and that I was an orphan who had lived many places in the U.S.A., as I had told the others.

"Are you cold?" he asked. Then: "Samui des ka?"

"I'm freezing to death in this joint, Mac!"

"I don't know," he replied, which I took correctly to mean that he hadn't understood.

"Very cold." "Very cold," I repeated slowly. Then I stood up and gave a very convincing bunch of shudders.

"I understand."

He turned and left the cell, but presently he returned and threw two blankets into the cell which were even worse than the others and only about half the size.

"Thank you," I said.

He actually smiled.

That night I lay down to sleep and with the extra rags I could actually stretch out in reasonable warmth. I slept soundly and deeply that night for the first time in over a month, and in a



reclining position.

Next morning I arose as usual, took exercise, wrapped up again in the blankets, and prayed. "Our Father which art in heaven hallowed by thy name...."

Soon Cato appeared and asked, "Are you hungry?"

"Very hungry," I replied. I had learned "Nodo akawai itai desu" (thirsty, or literally my throat hurts from being dry) and "hara hirimasu" (literally My stomach's cut or hungry.)

"Do you like Japanese food?"

"Oh yes, it's very good," I answered with my tongue in my cheek.

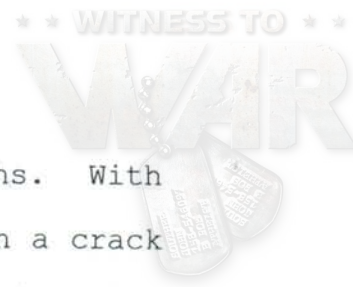
He disappeared, but when he returned with my food later it was actually hot and in a bigger portion than I had seen before. But, still hunger gnawed at my stomach even after finishing such a meal.

I had tried eating very slowly, and then rapidly like the Japs "slurping" as they did, but any way it was eaten still didn't change the fact that the quantity and quality was just not enough for a pampered American stomach. It's doubtful if even an Oriental could stay alive for any extended period on that diet. I would sit and dream of the dehydrated foods and K-rations we had all cursed.

In my mind I made fabulous offers to anyone who could deliver any of that stuff to me. If I could just have the food thrown out of my father's house every day, I could survive.

CHAPTER 42

From Cato I learned the date and day of the week as well as



the Japanese numerals and names for the weekdays and months. With a tiny piece of wire taken from the screen and secreted in a crack in the wall, I started a calendar in the wooden walls and marked off each day.

On Friday, Cato, in our daily conversation, asked if I would like a bath (or "bass" as he pronounced it). Then he said it in Japanese; "Ofuro arimasu ka?"

"Very much, when bath?"

This was too good to be true, for the only water I had seen was the two cups a day I got to drink.

"Saturday," he replied.

"America - Saturday bath all same," I said laughing for the first time.

This was marvelous, my future which consisted only in looking forward to two bowls of rice a day was now broadened to include a Saturday bath.

CHAPTER 43

The big day arrived and I awaited the event eagerly all morning, but it was not until the afternoon that the moment arrived. Cato and two guards burst into the cell shouting, so I got out from under my blankets to go, but they only jabbered at me and didn't open the door.

"You clothes," Cato said, pointing to the floor.

I didn't get it.

He made motions like taking clothes off, so I started



stripping. He nodded vigorously.

Cripes! They wanted me naked in that freezing room, and to leave my clothes there.

I did as I was told after which they opened the door and herded me down the hall. I shook violently with the cold.

We entered the steam filled bath room and there in the three-foot deep community tub sat no less than six filthy Chinese.

I refused to get in with them, but merely got a dirty rag and sponged off with equally dirty water. After the Chinese left I got in the tub of scalding hot water which had already bathed at least 40 other Chinese and Jap prisoners.

I was forced to get out of the bath very quickly, but I was warm to the very marrow of my bones. I ran back to the cell still wet and quickly dressed and wrapped up in the blankets. I slept in the sitting position I was forced to retain for the rest of the day.

CHAPTER 44

On Monday, the guards were changed. Cato was no longer on duty. On the same day I discovered I had company in my blankets.

Hundreds of little unwelcome guests in the form of lice mites were there. When the new guards came around for inspection, I finally got over to them my predicament by sign language. I thought they would burst open laughing.

Then the Corporal said, "Shurimi des ka?"

"They're slimy bastards all right," I replied. I was



beginning to understand some of their language.

Then they proceeded to have a blanket count. I had to fold all the blankets one by one and stack them while they counted. When they counted six, we went through the same routine again. Then they jabbered among themselves and looked very puzzled. What was puzzling them was the fact that I should have had only four blankets, but since they didn't know who had given them to me they were scared to take them away from me! This was repeated every Monday until about mid-March, when I was cut down to three.

The endless days dragged on until early February, when my friend Cato returned. I kept him talking to me as much as possible and got him to teach me more Japanese words. His English was very poor, so if I learned half a dozen words a day, I was doing well. Practically all the words I learned or wanted to learn were connected with food, for that was the subject uppermost in my mind.

Even escape, which was now more hopeless than ever, was all mixed up with food. The mere thought of food poured saliva into my mouth in excessive amounts.

CHAPTER 45

Mother nature takes care of her own however in many respects. I was able to eat sour rice, boiled maize, etc. without illness. My normally active mind became lethargic to the point where I could sit in my corner for endless hours awake but in a sort of stupor where my mind would apparently refuse to dwell on my troubles.

When Cato went off duty again, I commenced using my small



store of Japanese on each new set of guards. The routine began when a new guard entered my foyer, look ominously at me, and I would greet him with huge hello Jap style, "Konichi wa."

He would show amazement at my linguistic marvels, "Nippongo hanashimasu ka?"

"Ha, sukoshi," a little, I would reply. Then "coivito, des ka?" Then would follow small talk on his lover or wife and kids as the case might be.

At last I would get to my main theme - food. "Nippongo mishi tiehan yoroshi - very good."

"You like," would come the startled reply in Japanese.

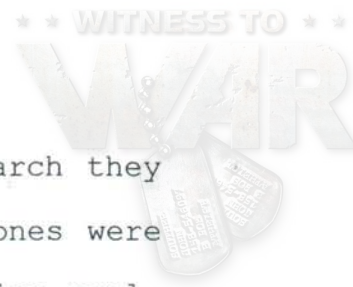
"Ha, gohan takusan, kudasai, " I would like to have large amounts of rice, I would reply while drawing a picture with my hands of a bowl overflowing with rice.

It paid off.

To all I passed on the information that I was lousy and surely would like to get them to do some delousing, for by now my killing of them was getting far behind their reproduction even though I would capture half a dozen or so at a time and crush them in the palm of my hand with my thumbnail.

CHAPTER 46

February dragged into March. I marked off the three months I had spent in my six by six cell, never seeing the sun, no haircut or shave, no change of clothing or chance to wash what I had on, and always the filthy crawling lice.



During March it began to get warmer and about mid-March they took three of my blankets away, but the three remaining ones were sufficient. A couple of days later after eating the morning meal, my stomach began to roll and grumble and the diarrhea came on me. When I informed the guard and asked for medicine, I got the usual laughter. When my evening meal arrived, my ration had been cut in half - dysentery treatment Jap style. Next morning, first thing I told them was that I was cured.

On a particularly warm day toward the end of March, I took off all my clothing first thing in the morning to try and eliminate the bugs. I noticed that after sleeping on my right side all night, my right leg was much larger than my left, particularly below the knee.

Realization dawned, "No! no! it can't be." But there it was, all the evidence of elephantiasis, that dread oriental disease which enlarges the legs to twice or more their normal size and makes them scaly and unsightly. I knew what I must do. I would give myself to medical science to be experimented upon, but I had no way to get it across to the guards. When I showed it to them, they only laughed. However after sitting up all day my left leg got slightly larger too, while my right leg got smaller. That night I slept on my left side, and lo and behold the same identical thing occurred, but to my left leg. I had been wrong, it was only beri-beri, due to malnutrition.

PART NINE. OUT OF SOLITARY



CHAPTER 47

Soon my friend Cato disappeared from the guard detail along with all the group who served with him. An entirely new group appeared. Fortunately, one of the group named Kawitawa spoke English rather well, so I could continue learning the language and have someone to talk with.

On April 12th. on a warm afternoon I was taken from my cell and to my amazement was guided out of the dungeon into the compound yard. There sat large vats of boiling water heated by burning charcoal. I was instructed to remove my clothes and toss them into the steaming vats and take my seat on a low stool.

As I started to sit down, I caught my reflection in a window. I stopped momentarily and stared incredulously at the grotesque reflection that stared back to me. Who was this scaly cadaverous body with the swollen legs, wildly disheveled hair growing over its ears, and a scraggly beard protruding almost horizontally from its chin, scratched clean on the cheeks from many lice pursuits? Was that really me? What a frightening moment!!

I was quickly herded onto the stool where a Chinese barber with fear exuding almost like tears from his eyes stood at arms length and with clippers removed almost every hair left on my body. Then I was handed a rag and bottle of kerosene to rub down my body.

In the meantime my clothing was removed from the boiling vats and hung up to dry. While still wet I shook them out and put them



back on. I was removed to a clean cell for the night while my own cell was treated with some sort of disinfectant.

The following day a whole group of guards burst into my cell shouting with glee. "Rooseveto ba-a-a!" "Rooseveto ba-a-a!"

Kawita said, "you Rooseveto dead."

"Oh?"

Needless to say I didn't believe it.

Kawita said, "you Roosevetos dead, you ships all destroyed, Kamikazi come, bomb ships at Okinawa."

"Great battle at Okinawa, war soon be over."

"What's that?" "Okinawa?" Close to Nippon, is it not?"

"Yes, Kamikazi destroy."

"What this Kamikazi mean?"

"Kamikazi, God wind, one plane - one ship." He made motions with his hands to illustrate the ramming of a ship by a Kamikazi plane. Wow! If we were invading Okinawa that meant the war would soon be over but not the way Kawitawa thought.

CHAPTER 48

A few weeks later Kawitawa entered my cell as was his daily custom and said casually, "New America-gin iso. Come today. Leg damaged." He made a chopping motion across the calf of his leg.

"Where is he?" "What cell?"

"He next cell."

"Hey! American! What's your name?"

Kawitawa shouted angrily, "no talk! no talk! no talk!"



Then he rushed into the next cell and I heard him shouting in there. This was great. A fellow American just a foot of concrete away and we could not talk.

Presently Kawitawa returned and said, "He name Arrod Okurodo."

"Earl O'Connor?"

"No! no! Arrod Okurodo."

After several more attempts I finally gave it up. As soon as Kawitawa left, I went to the wall and tried tapping out Morse Code. My mate tapped an undistinguishable answer on his side of the wall. We kept trying and trying, to no avail.

After two days of this I discovered one day while standing by the cell window that I could hear him singing in his cell.

I stood up on the concrete latrine and leaned over and put my face against the chicken wire and called out softly, "hey American!, what's your name?" After raising the volume of my call each time, he finally heard me.

"Harold Klota," came the answer.

"Well I'll be goddamned!"

This was a buddy, a pal. We had trained in the states and on one occasion made a four day leave in New Orleans together but that's another story.

"What's your name," Klota called out.

"This is Wall."

"We all thought you were dead." "How long you been in this stinkin' hole?"



"Ever since I went down nearly five months ago."

"Ain't you lost all your marbles yet?"

"Naw, but I've only got a couple left." "Your leg broke bad?"

He laughed wryly, "I ain't got a leg. The dirty sons-of-bitches cut it off."

"My God!"

At that the guards burst into our cells shouting with ire because we were talking. That night neither of us got our evening meal as punishment.

Next day I called to him, "We'll have to lay off the talk, they've got us by the belly."

At meal time the next night I could hear noise from next door like a bag of sand being dragged across the floor and the realization struck me, "he has no crutches!" How did he manage to take care of himself? Who dressed his wound? How could he possibly use a latrine which was elevated and required standing upon? How could he avoid infection and also survive on the meager rations?

The human body and mind is a very tough, adaptable organism and the will to survive is far more powerful than any of us would dare believe. The secret though lies in the mind because the body can adapt to the rigors of cold, hunger, and physical hardship far better than the mind, and can accept the loss of the warmth of prestige, the food of esteem or endure social hardship.

CHAPTER 49



We exchanged a few words each day which were as much a comfort to me as to him. Gradually I pieced together his story. He had been shot down as I had been while strafing a locomotive, but his target was a cleverly constructed dummy which was alive with anti-aircraft machine guns. In his own words:

"I went in on this engine and suddenly guns began blinking at me all around what I saw was a fake engine. Almost at once I was on fire with hot coolant spraying all around the cockpit. I pulled up and tried to jump over the side but my right leg gave way. So I rolled the plane up on its side and just slithered over the side. I made a wild snatch at the rip-cord ring and wham! I hit the ground. When I tried to get up, my right leg was useless. I had a compound fracture but was still too numb to feel any pain. I got the package of sulfa out of the "escape jacket" and just dumped the whole thing on the open wound."

"A few minutes later a bunch of Chinese brought out a big basket, put me in and started dragging me toward some woods not too far away. Pretty soon I heard shouting far behind us and the Chinese all ran. One returned with a long rifle into which he put a cartridge with a long silver bullet, rammed 'er home and cocked the trigger. I thought, by God, he's going to shoot me; so with vigorous pushing hand gestures, I yelled, boo how, boo how, you sonofabitch, get outa here! He got the point and beat it."

"Then the Jap patrol arrived complete with a first aid man. When they saw the damage to my leg they hauled me into a barn and



cut my leg off, just leaving the bone sticking out. No anasthetic!
No whiskey! No nothin'! It took ten of those little bastards to hold me and boy did I holler!"

"A couple of days later, a doc re-worked it, sawed off the bone and sewed it up, using no anasthetic, but left a hole in the stub. That was nine days before I was brought here."

CHAPTER 50

On the morning of June 12, Kawitawa came in and announced very casually, "Today you go Pekin prison camp."

"I didn't know there was Pekin camp."

"Yes, today you go."

"Does my friend go?"

"Yes, he go."

A couple of hours later, Kawitawa and several other guards walked in bringing my shoes and threw open the cell door. I sat in the door putting on my shoes and saw Jerry being helped out of the main door to the jail house across the compound to the guard house. Then I followed.

My friends eyes, looking out at me from beneath the shaggy hair, were those of a weary old man, darkly circled and heavily lined. We stood for a few moments staring at each other unable to speak, the emotions which welled up within us were seeking to overflow. Finally a trace of a grin appeared on his face and he spoke.

"Wall, you look like hell!"



"Likewise I'm sure."

Then we both giggled. It felt great.

The guards handcuffed us separately as we stood waiting for papers of some kind to be filled out. Jerry turned to one of the guards and said, "cigarette, tobacco?"

They stared quizzically at him.

"Tobacco, kudasai," I said.

A guard handed us both a cigarette, then just stood there.

"Matchi, kudasai."

Jerry and I then just stood smoking and grinning at each other.

Finally the paperwork was completed, and the standard prisoner binding on the upper arms was completed with a guard "attached" to our leash. We were carried by ricksha to the railroad station. Jerry had to be helped in and out of the ricksha but never once did his guard relax his hold on the leash. After a 30 minute train ride we got off at a small village. Jerry was put in a motorcycle side car while I walked toward a very large compound with guard towers at each corner. The compound covered several acres.

PART TEN. POW CAMP

CHAPTER 51

Just inside the gate there were numerous Americans working alongside the roadway. They were all thin but brown from the sun and healthy looking.

"Hey Joe!, look another fly-boy." "Where they been keepin'



ya?"

"Dungeon in Peking, 6 months solitary."

"Rough!" "Whatsa' matter with your pal in the motorcycle?"

"Leg cut off." "Where you guys come from?"

"Wake Island."

"Hey!, you're Devereaux's boys." "Lots of folks wondering what happend to ya."

With that we arrived at a small low building obviously Jap headquarters. Jerry was already inside talking to a very tall sad-looking Japanese officer. My turn came shortly and he got basic info and gave ma a card to write for Red Cross delivery to whomever I designated in the U.S.

Shortly another prisoner came in to take charge of us.

"My name is Wiggins." "I'm a Navy Corpsman," he said.

We each told him our names.

"You all got the bugs"?, he asked.

"Yeah, we got 'em."

"May we go?", Wiggins asked the Jap officer.

"Hai," was the reply.

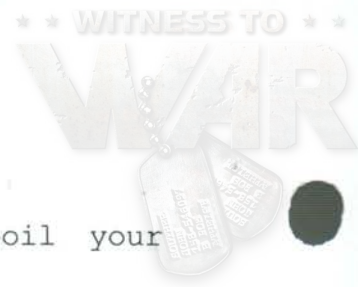
"Come on boys, let's get you cleaned up and fed."

"Man, we're all for that," we replied in union.

We left the headquarters and headed toward a nearby barnlike structure and Wiggins stopped us outside the building.

"Take your clothes off."

"I haven't had my shoes on until today." "Can I keep them," I



asked.

"No, we better check'em. We're only going to boil your clothes in a pressure autoclave," Wiggins answered.

We stripped to the skin. By this time a crowd had begun to gather. Through the crowd stepped a young very clean cut looking man.

CHAPTER 52

Howdy boys, my name's Kahn. I'm a Navy Doctor. I've got you all lined up to go into the hospital."

"Hospital! You got a hospital here?"

"Yes, though its not too well organized since we left Shanghai on May 9th."

"Say Doc you talk like Texas."

"Should, I was born and raised in Galveston."

We had completed disrobing by now.

"We've have some vitamins, and you boys need them as bad as anyone I've seen. We'll start you on them the next meal. Klota, let me look at that stump."

Jerry lifted up his stump for the doc to look at. "My God, any butcher back in my home town could do a better job than that!" "It's remarkable how well its healed without infection though." "Why did they cut it off?", said the doc.

"I don't know, I just had a compound fracture after I bailed out of my plane," said Jerry.

"Oh! In the Jap Army a compound fracture automatically means



amputation," replied the doc.

During this conversation I was getting shaved on head and face after which I was handed some insecticide with which to rub my body down. By now the crowd of ill-clad Marines started asking questions. They were news - hungry but quickly discovered that I knew nothing of the past six months and Klota knew nothing of the past two months.

Wiggins laughed, "we got later news than that." "We got another boy who was shot down April 22."

We'll get news from you then."

Two pair of outsize coveralls were brought for us along with some kind of hospital slippers, and we dressed. Doc said, "We won't have a place ready for you in the hospital before tomorrow, so you will stay with some of your fellow pilots tonight."

With that the doc took us across the compound, Klota using two Marines as crutches, to the middle building of the three in the compounds. The buildings resembled long stables in design except they were much larger and had higher roofs. He took us in a door and we were joined by a Japanese soldier who convoyed us inside the building to an officelike enclosure with solid walls on either side and at the rear with a waist-high railing across the fourth side. The enclosure was about forty feet square and there were supplies stored between the railing and the front of the building from whence we had come.

CHAPTER 53



As we approached the railing we saw several guys standing around looking quizzically in our direction. They were dressed in all manner of garb; leather and cloth, flight jackets, khaki's, o.d's., officers pinks, and coveralls. They all looked fairly clean, healthy, and clean shaven. One short, strong-looking individual with a neat mustache stepped forward.

Doc addressed him, "Hi Quig, we got some more company for you and your boys. Lts. Klota and Wall, meet Major Don Quigley."

"How do you do, sir?", we replied as we each shook hands with him.

"We'll see you later," doc called and with that he left.

"Sit down over here," Quig said as he indicated a couple of wooden boxes.

With that all the other guys gathered round us and proceeded to introduce themselves. There were 10 officers and five enlisted men. Major Quigley introduced us to them. The group (as we found out later) was made up of pilots and aircrew shot down and captured after June, 1944. They were:

Major Donald L. Quigley, Captain Donald J. Burch, First Lieutenants Walter A. Ferris, Freeland K. Mathews, Vernon D. Schaefer, Lauren A. Howard, (and now Harold J. Klota and me.) The Second Lieutenants were James M. Taylor, Jr., James E. Thomas, Samuel McMillian, Jr., and Samuel E. Chambliss, Jr. The Staff Sergeants were James P. Meehan and Donald Ray Watts. The Sergeants were Fred S. Carlton, W.R. Lankford and Carl R. Reiger. (For a



more detailed account of each individual see APPENDIX D.)

Jerry and I were polite when meeting the group, but quickly asked the most pressing matter on our minds. "How's chow around here?"

"Noodles and soup, then soup and bread, lousy." "We sure had it good in Shanghai."

"Bread? Did you say bread?", I asked incredulously.

"Sure, ya want some?"

"Man, I'll say."

Someone miraculously produced two small loaves of bread about the size a man's shoe though fortunately not as tough. We ate voraciously even though with each bite the bread in my hand was bloody where my tender scurvy-ridden gums were lacerated by the bread.

"Are we the only pilots in this camp?", Jerry asked.

"Naw, we're just the ones captured after June 1944." "We are not suppose to even talk to any of the other prisoners. Special treatment, that's what it is."

CHAPTER 54

It turned out that prior to the arrival of we post-June, 1944 airmen, the Kiangwan Camp near Shanghai was composed of soldiers, sailors, marines and civilians as indicated above. Major Devereaux of the US Marine Corps was one of the senior commanders in this camp. His story has been chronicled long ago in the media. Camp population in late 1944 was about 1,200, the survivors of an



unknown number of original captives.

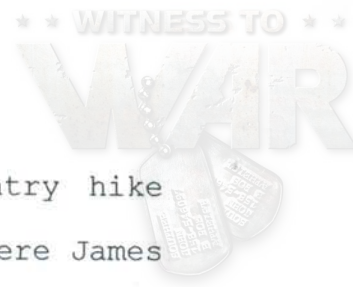
The population included eight US Army Air Force crewmen captured between October, 1942 and November, 1943 who were not segregated as we were. An anomaly never explained was why there were no USAAF personnel in this camp who had gone down between November, 1943 and August, 1944.

At this point in time (December, 1944) this camp had been the recipient of Red Cross aid through the Swiss Consul in Shanghai, and as a result, the camp had medicines and vitamins plus some food supplements. This very brave activity on the part of the Swiss had improved the health of the surviving members of this camp to a remarkable degree by 1945.

Whatever the reason, the strict separation in the Kiangwan Camp near Shanghai was commenced New Years, 1945, with the arrival of nine prisoners from the Hankow jail cells. Major Quigley and Sgt. Watts were the first in this isolated area. Strict segregation was physically maintained between the two groups, and communication was practically zero.

This period ended on May 9, 1945 when the entire camp was moved to the Pekin area. The new location was near the railroad connecting Fengtai and Tientsin. A group made an escape from the train during this trip. The Japanese told the POW's that they were recaptured, for obvious reasons.

According to an account by Jack White who wrote a book on this era, five officers escaped from the train enroute to Fengtai. They



made it back stateside by July after a wild cross-country hike involving both Chinese Nationalists and Communists. They were James D. McBrayer and Richard Huizenga, USMC North China; John F. Kinney (pilot) and John A. McAlister (artillery), USMC Wake Island; and Lewis Bishop, AVG.

The four Marines planned the escape. Bishop wasn't involved, but caught them in the act, and decided to tag along. Success of the escape involved knowledge that the countryside alongside the 100 miles of railroad north of Nanking was essentially under the control of Chinese guerillas. This knowledge was passed on to Kiangwan prisoners by "more recently captured aviators", according to official USMC WWII history.

Reiger remembers the Japanese guards pistol-whipping Freeland K. Mathews en route to Peking and leaving marked facial damage. The pistol whipping that Mathews received may have been because the Japs suspected that Matty, being a member of the CACW (Chinese American Composite Wing), had access to the kind of information the escapees needed, and had passed it on to them.

CHAPTER 55

After arrival in Peking the strict separation of the prisoner groups in Shanghai was relaxed. While sleeping and routine daily matters were still physically separated by the captors, the post-raid Air Corps personnel were able to meet other camp inmates from time to time and exchange information. It turned out that the Wake Island crowd had managed to construct a radio in Shanghai and



eyes of the machine gun toting guards. Occasionally they would produce some rice for us to eat.

It was hot in the cars, so we took turns sitting by the door to get some cool air. At last we arrived in Pusan on June 23, 1945. Those four days were pretty much a blur in everyone's memory. I guess that was nature's way of protecting us from recurrent nightmares about the horrors of that living hell. We didn't know the country, and hadn't a clue about our fate. I remember that we stopped once and were let out to stretch and use the "outdoor toilet" instead of the inside one we had to use enroute.

Upon arrival at Pusan, we gathered up our belongings and were marched about two miles through a driving rainstorm to our "quarters". We were "deloused". We sat around naked while our clothes and shoes were run through a steam autoclave.

Very early on the morning of June 28, 1945 we were marched to the docks, split into two groups, and loaded on the bottom deck of two troop transport ships. These ships were loaded with Korean draftees being taken to Japan. One guess as to where they were destined to serve when the expected American invasion was mounted on the Japanese homeland.

The ship was unbearably hot and stunk from too many bodies and all that emitted therefrom. We took turns at the few portholes which were just about 4 feet above the water outside the ship. It looked like there were some small patrol boats escorting the two ships. They would have been useless against any American air or



submarine attack. We were sailing across the Straits of Korea in broad daylight, and the later captives had some idea of American power at this point. Frankly we were indeed fortunate to have made this trip without being bombed or torpedoed and going "down with all hands". What a terrible end this would have been for the Wake Island survivors. It had happened to other POW's taken from the Phillipines.

PART ELEVEN. JAPAN

CHAPTER 57

About dark we anchored in a small bay, obviously on the west coast of Japan at a small fishing village named Susa. We were taken off in lighters to shore and put up briefly in what appeared to be a schoolhouse. Late at night, we loaded on passenger trains and departed.

The next morning we arrived at another port city which the sailors identified as Shimoneseki, which is on the southern tip of the main island of Honshu, Japan. We could see the evidence of sunken ships lying in the harbor with their superstructures sticking out of the water. It was the first view that the Wake island crowd had ever seen of Japanese defeats. They were speechless with emotion. We all loved the sight of every broken spar.

After two days, on July 1, 1945 we again loaded onto passenger trains at about twice the capacity of the cars. We could take turns lying on the floor under the seat to sleep or doze. Occasionally we