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with great appreciation and friendship.
Armand Hopkins

PRISONER OF WAR

1942 - 1945

REMINISCENCES OF ARMAND HOPKINS

This account is primarily for my children and their children. It is written forty years after the events, and mostly from memory. Some minor details may, therefore, be inaccurate, but on the whole, this tells what happened and how it happened. Because a copy is to be sent to the West Point Library, some of the material will probably not interest the principal audience. For example, I have included the name and class of each West Point graduate involved in the specific incidents related. I have not, however, tried to list the many West Pointers who were at one time or another my fellow prisoners.

I arrived in the Philippines in October 1941, and was assigned to Ft. Hughes. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor occurred on December 7. (It was already December 8 on our side of the International Date Line.) The bulk of our troops held out on Bataan until April 1942 when, their food and ammunition used up, they surrendered. Corregidor, finally overwhelmed, surrendered a month later. That's where this tale begins.

PRISONER OF WAR 1942 - 1945

Corregidor was assaulted by the Japanese on the night of May 5, 1942, and surrendered the next day. I was executive officer of Ft. Hughes (Caballo Island) which, together with Corregidor, Ft. Drum (or El Fraile, or the Concrete Battleship) and Ft. Frank (Carabao Island), formed the defenses of the entrance to Manila Bay. Caballo Island is several miles south of Corregidor, and is, in fact, part of the rim of the ^{same} sunken volcano which forms Corregidor. It is about a mile long, ~~a quarter of a mile~~ ^{several ~~about~~ hundred yards} wide at its widest point, and some two or three hundred feet high, with very little level ground - just a slice of rock sticking up out of the sea. At the time of the surrender, which came at the end of the dry season, what little vegetation the island had was leafless as a combined result of enemy shelling and bombing and of the drought.

The Fort Commander was Colonel Valentine P. Foster. I was his executive and second-in-command as well as commanding officer of the Second Battalion of the 59th Coast Artillery (a purely theoretical organization, with no tactical or even ~~the~~ administrative functions). The peacetime garrison of the fort consisted of about 80 men. When the end came, there must have been nearly a thousand men on our hot, dusty, nearly bare piece of rock. There were about a hundred men of Battery G, 59th CA (to man what they could of the various seacoast guns), about a hundred in Battery E of the 59th (manning four added antiaircraft guns), about another hundred from the Fourth Marines (homeless and almost destitute after the bombing of Cavite), fifty or so forming a Composite Naval Battalion (mostly officers and petty officers of the Naval Air Arm, planeless and also homeless as a result of the Cavite

destruction), about a hundred and fifty Filipino civilian laborers (blasting a tunnel through the island), the officers and men - some two or three hundred of them - from the gunboats Oahu, Luzon and Mindanao (ordered to abandon ship, since they were sitting ducks for the Japanese planes), and finally a couple of hundred refugees, officers, enlisted men and civilians, from other naval vessels and from Bataan.

Ft. Hughes was well armed - but almost exclusively against attack from the sea. High up on the seaward end of the island was a battery of two ^{16"} ~~12"~~ guns. They were made the responsibility of the Oahu crew. They were never used, since their field of fire did not include Bataan or ^{Cavite} ~~Mariveles~~ where the Japanese land forces were dug in. But they were useful even without being used, since their mere existence helped to keep the Japanese fleet out of Manila Bay. About midway of the island, dug into a very steep slope, and served by an equally steep tunnel, was Battery Craighill: two pits, one higher up the tunnel than the other, and each holding two 12" mortars. Steel doors opened from the tunnel and from the pits into magazines and storerooms. Craighill was assigned to the Luzon's crew, with a few Coast Artillerymen to help out. Then a little further to the east, not far from the foot of the Craighill tunnel, there were two 14" disappearing guns, and not far from them, two newly-dug-in 155mm guns. These four guns, assigned to the men of Battery G, had been used against targets of opportunity on the ^{Cavite} ~~Mariveles~~ shore. Still further to the east, where the island is comparatively low and level, were two 3" guns, manned by the Oahu's crew, and the four anti-aircraft guns assigned to Battery E. Beach defense of the island, especially of this low-lying eastern end, had been made the responsibility of the Composite Naval Battalion and the platoon of Marines.

As long as our forces still held out on Bataan, we did not get much of the enemy's attention: just a few light bombings from the air, usually not very accurate because the Japanese planes stayed above the reach of our anti-aircraft. After the fall of Bataan, however, these bombings were supplemented by frequent, sometimes very heavy, shelling by artillery well hidden on the southern slopes of the Mariveles mountains. On several occasions, these poundings were so heavy and so prolonged that they seemed to be the prelude to an assault on Corregidor. So, on the night of May 5, 1942, when all hell broke loose, we were not sure, for a while, whether this was just another feint or, finally, the long-expected landing attack. The operations post on Corregidor soon let us know that it was the real thing, and called for barrage fire to be laid down in the north channel (between Corregidor and the Mariveles shore).

Although our little island was bristling with artillery - more than we could man, this had been emplaced, many years before, with fields of fire intended to keep an enemy fleet out of Manila Bay, but which did not include the north channel. In fact, we could not even see the north channel since it was hidden from us by the huge bulk of Corregidor. But two of the batteries were capable of the high angle of fire needed for carrying the shells over Corregidor and down into the north channel: the three-inch anti-aircraft battery and the twelve-inch mortars of Battery Craig-hill. So these went into action.

The AA battery had been moved to Ft. Hughes before my arrival there in the fall of 1941. They were well emplaced, sand-bagged, entrenched, and were thus in something like a fixed emplacement. This battery, with its rapid rate of fire, its modern

fire-control instruments and its high-explosive shells, was able to deliver heavy fire against the Japanese assault boats in the north channel. Since there was no way for the battery commander to observe and adjust his fire, we didn't know how effective it was. In any case, the battery continued its fire throughout the period of the assault, with only a few brief intervals when the counter-battery fire from Mariveles (on the Bataan Peninsula) became too hot.

Battery Craighill consisted of two pits of two 12" mortars each. I had assigned this battery to the crew of the gunboat Luzon and, with the help of our Coast Artillery people, they had learned how to man the mortars and perform the fire-control functions (so different from what had been required on their ship). Some firing tables had been improvised to permit Craighill to fire at targets above sea level and, after the fall of Bataan, Craighill had been assigned occasional counter-battery missions against the Japanese there. Although the objective area could be observed from the command post at the highest point of Ft. Hughes, the fall of the shots could never be spotted. This was because the only shells available were designed to pierce the armored decks of naval vessels; used against the Bataan slopes, they simply buried themselves in the soft earth of the forest. Japanese counter-battery against Craighill, however, had been quite accurate. Every time Craighill had fired, the Japanese had responded with 5 or 10 rounds, some of which would land in the pits. These were high-explosive shells, and kicked up a lot of dust wherever they hit. That made spotting and fire adjustment quite easy for the Japanese artillerymen. The Japanese fire had badly damaged one of our mortars, but otherwise had little effect on the concrete and steel of Craighill. It was a serious harrassment to our men, however.

After a while, they had learned to tell by its sound whether a shot was going to land in or near the mortar pit. This was because the trajectory was so high that the sound arrived a few seconds before the shot, just enough time for the gun crews to duck into a passageway if the shot was going to be a close one.

So, on the night of May 5-6, Craighill joined our AA battery in dropping projectiles into the north channel, interrupting their fire from time to time when the Japanese counter-battery fire became too hot. After three or four hours, we noticed that the great confusion of shooting on Corregidor had considerably subsided. I called the operations officer on Corregidor, to ask if we were to continue firing, and was told, simply, to cease fire. That was our last telephone message from Corregidor. We tried to make radio contact, but could not. We were not sure whether the assault had been beaten off or had succeeded. Towards morning, however, a few soldiers, Filipino and American, who had used floating debris to paddle themselves over to Ft. Hughes, told us that Corregidor had fallen.

When dawn came, all was silent on Corregidor. We kept trying to make radio contact, and finally succeeded. We were told that Corregidor had been overwhelmed, and that the Harbor Defenses (that is, the fortified islands at the entrance to Manila Bay, including us) had surrendered. We were ordered to lower the flag and to raise a white one to show that we had received the order and were complying. I took a few soldiers and sailors with me and climbed up to the top of the island where we lowered the flag and put up a white sheet. We returned to Battery Craighill where we built a small fire and burned the flag. We made as much of a ceremony of this as we could, and it was very like a funeral. I noticed that my tough and bedraggled companions were in tears,

and I suppose that I was too.

All that day we received no further word from the harbor defense command on Corregidor, nor any instructions from the Japanese. Towards evening, however, in spite of the surrender, we were subjected to five heavy bombings from the air. These were particularly effective and brutal since the planes had no longer to contend with anti-aircraft fire. The first attack caught us completely off our guard, and we suffered a number of casualties. It seemed that the enemy meant to polish us off.

There was a steeply inclined tunnel leading from the lower, eastern, end of the island up to an open track which in turn led to the 16" battery near the island's seaward end. From this tunnel there were several lateral openings into the Craighill mortar pits and several underground chambers: a communications center, fire-control rooms, ammunition storage, the fort command post, etc. Along the sides of the tunnel we had built wooden two-decker bunks for the many soldiers, sailors, marines and civilians who had no shelter elsewhere on the island. As a result of the unexpected post-surrender bombings, almost all of the island's personnel were now crowded into the comparative safety of the tunnel. But a few men, including those in observation posts, remained scattered about the island in reasonably protected locations.

About midnight, enemy batteries on the Mariveles shore began a heavy bombardment, concentrating particularly on the northeast end of the island where some level ground and a small beach invited a landing. ~~XXXX~~ The shelling lasted a half-hour or so. When it lifted, our observers reported that landing craft were approaching the beach. I remembered, then, that we had placed land mines along that beach. In the turmoil of the past twenty-four hours it had not occurred to

us that these makeshift booby traps were still armed, and that they might cause casualties among the Japanese who, especially in view of the surrender, would retaliate viciously and thoroughly. So I asked Col. Val Foster, the Fort Commander, for permission to go down to the beach with a lantern and a white flag and at least show our good faith by warning the invaders of the mines. He was reluctant to let me go, but finally agreed that there was a danger of reprisals. As I reached the bottom of the hill I met Lt. Porter who asked to go with me. It seemed useless for both of us to get out on this very shaky limb; but he insisted so, together, we stumbled out over the shellholes and through the underbrush. As we approached the beach, we found that the Japanese had already landed; we could hear them calling to each other and breaking through the bushes. There was a touchy moment or two, for we rather thought the enemy would shoot first and ask questions afterwards. But each Jap soldier apparently wanted to be the first to capture a live American, and we could hear them calling to us from various directions: "Come here!" (Highschool English?) Finally two of them came out of the brush and pointed their rifles at us. Porter and I went up to the nearest one, and were soon surrounded. I tried to make them understand about the land mines, but they didn't understand my dramatic sign language. In any case, none of the booby traps exploded. Either their homemade mechanisms didn't function, or they had all been destroyed by the shelling.

Several Jap soldiers were detailed to take us on to the beach. When we got there, I continued to try to explain, by sign language, that the beach was mined. Our guards merely grinned and grunted. Meanwhile troops continued to land. We sat down and exchanged cigarettes with our captors. They managed to convey some curiosity about our marital status, and whether or not we had children. Pretty soon an interpret-

er of sorts appeared. I told him that I was "the little colonel" and that "the big colonel" was at the command post, up the hill at Battery Craighill. There was some discussion among the Japs, and then Turner was sent away with a small detachment, presumably to lead them to "the big colonel". I remained there on the beach, surrounded by a lot of curious, rather shy, enemy soldiers. Shortly afterwards, some guards arrived with Commander Doug Smith. He and I were contemporaries, having graduated from our respective academies the same year, 1925, and we had become good friends. Doug was the skipper of one of the China gunboats (I think his was the Mindanao) which had arrived in Manila Bay just after Pearl Harbor. As the boats were almost defenseless against Jap planes, their crews had been ordered ashore at Ft. Hughes, and we had given them tactical assignments in the defense. Doug and his crew had been given the 3" battery, a hundred yards or so from the beach where we now found ourselves. We sat and smoked and tried to talk to the Jap guards, who seemed willing enough. They wanted to see pictures of our children, and admired them with appropriate noises. There was no evidence of that brutal hatred which we were to experience later.

After another wait of about a half hour our captors indicated that we were to get up and go with them. In the dark we stumbled our way through the leafless trees and bushes to the narrow-gauge tracks that skirt the island along the southeast shore. Then we followed the tracks past Battery Woodruff to the entrance of the Craighill tunnel. . As we passed the battery we heard someone cry out as if in pain or fear: "Commander Smith! Commander Smith!" Doug made a move to go and investigate; but he was firmly made to realize - now for the first time - that he was no longer a free man. We continued on, and then up the steep Craighill tunnel to our headquarters. Many times later I tried to find out what had been going on that had caused that anguished yell, but no one could tell me. Nor could I ever figure out how the man had

known that Doug was anywhere nearby.

The tunnel rose sharply - more than 30 degrees. We pushed our way up through our people, crowded there as much for companionship as for safety. About a third of the way up - some forty yards - it leveled off for a few yards, and there was an opening into one of the deep, concreted pits of Battery Craighill. Another passageway from this pit led to some underground chambers, one of which we had been using as Fort Headquarters. There we came upon a curious scene. Seated around a table drinking coffee were a few of our officers and some Japanese officers, ^{INCLUDING} The commander of the Japanese landing party, a lieutenant colonel. He sat with his samurai sword between his knees, his bright, dark eyes taking in the proceedings; but he said not a word as the ~~at~~ others waited to find out what would happen next. Occasionally one of his people would say something to him, or translate something which had been said by one of the Americans. He would nod slightly. Also seated at the table were our Fort Commander, Col. V.P. Foster, Cdr. George Brooke, skipper of the gunboat Oahu, Lt. Cdr. "Flash" Jordan, skipper of the gunboat Luzon, and Major Stuart King, Marine Corps. There were other Army and Navy officers standing or sitting about. Among them, as I recall, were: Lt. David Nash, USN; Lt. "Pete" Welch, USN; Lt. Jim O'Bourke, USN; Capt. Malcolm Petrie, CAC; Lt. Clif Chamberlain, CAC, Lt. Charles Roper, CAC; Lt. Blackmore, CAC; Lt. Buchman, CAC; Capt. Mike Gribben, Engrs; and Capt. Bart Coombs, Engrs.

Seeing that there was nothing to do for the moment, Doug and I got some coffee and sat down on a couple of stools to wait. I got into a sort of conversation with a Japanese lieutenant who spoke a little English and was anxious to show it off. He had been bustling about officiously, and had left his sword on a table. Seeing me looking at it, he came over to point out its beauty and explain its significance.

that wanted doing. The need for action finally overcame my weariness, so I rolled off the cot and got moving. Wanting to make as proud an appearance as possible in the presence of my captors, I sacrificed a little of the precious water from my canteen and shaved. Then I went to see Colonel Foster who, with Cdr. Brooke, was bunking in a small room close by. We discussed what needed to be done, and decided that the most urgent duties were burial of our dead (for the shelling had taken its toll) and replenishment of our water supply. As for the sick and wounded, they were being cared for in another underground chamber by our doctor, Capt. Bernstein, and two Navy doctors, Lt. Smith of the Luzon and Lt. Greenman of the Oahu. I made arrangements for a detail to locate and bury the dead, and for another to gather into a central location the powder cans full of water which we had spotted in protected places all over the island. But we were confined to the vicinity of the mortar pit, and our men couldn't get to work until the Japanese gave the word. We needed that lieutenant who, the night before had been so anxious to show off his English and who I had mentally ticketed as a possible "contact".

He arrived, finally; but when we made our requests, he had ceased to understand English. He had an idea of his own, and no amount of reverting to our needs, which we kept doing repeatedly, had any effect on him. He was wearing the typical field shoes of the Japanese troops - tennis shoes with a separated big toe - and he wanted some real shoes, American shoes. That seemed easy enough. We had received a shipment not long before, all our people had been fitted, and the left-overs stored. I sent our supply sergeant out - with a Japanese pass, of course - to get Lt. Watanabe some shoes. Meanwhile, we continued to press our requests; but Watanabe was deaf. He let us talk, let us explain the urgency; then he would start talking about something else.

At last the sergeant came back with ten pairs of the smallest shoes he could find. They were all too big. I sent him back again. But ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ time was getting on. Our men had had nothing to eat for over 24 hours, and no water save what remained in their canteens. There seemed no hope of finding a pair of 4 1/2 shoes to fit Watanabe; but we had the men pass the word that we desperately needed a pair that size, and ~~any~~^{would} anybody who might wear such incredibly small shoes please come forward. And finally, about noontime, a small soldier appeared, unhappily took off his shoes, gave them to Watanabe and accepted in exchange a pair that were much too big for him. I have forgotten his name, but he is among the unsung heroes.

As if by magic, Watanabe recovered his hearing. We soon had the burial detail on its way. As for the water, he would not let that detail go out, assuring me that the Japanese would see to it that we had food and water. However, he gave me a pass to go where I pleased when I suggested that I could help round up our people and bring about some order. I was anxious to get out and see what was going on. Before leaving, I packed my musette bag with as many of the small necessities as I could get into it. That, with a good Navy blanket, I stowed on top of a high cabinet where it would not be seen. Then I went down through the crowded tunnel and out into the sunlight.

Col. Foster, meanwhile, remained at Craighill. He was much older than I, and had been suffering a great deal with heat rash aggravated by the omnipresent dust. An interpreter, Kawachita, appeared from time to time, heard Foster's urgent requests for food, water and a burial detail. The latter need had now been taken care of by a detail under CPO Vaquiano of the USS Quail. But on the other matters, Kawachita had been of no more help than had Watanabe. Foster was a prisoner, now, unable to do anything about, or for, his heterogeneous

garrison, or even to learn what might be our immediate future. As for me, my temporary liberty to walk about was not fruitful either. There were a number of work parties under Japanese guards, but I did not find Vaquiano's burial detail. However, the dead and wounded had been removed from the places I checked.

Water was our most urgent need. As we were already beginning to learn, hunger can be laughed at a little, but thirst is deadly serious. Our problem was that the island had no natural ~~XXXX~~ fresh water. A large, ^{ce} deep cistern had been replenished weekly by a water barge from Corregidor. But the barge had been destroyed by Japanese fire; and a week or so before the surrender our cistern had taken a direct bomb hit which had poisoned the water. A brave crew from the Luzon had then started going out each night to their half-sunken ship to make (distill) water. This had then been distributed meagrely at the mess lines, and a small amount set aside in various protected spots for future use. I couldn't find any of these caches where I thought they might be. We had also sunk a small well which gave some brackish water. I checked it. It was full of debris.

I met an occasional working party under its Japanese guard. The men would ask me what was going to happen, or when they were going to get some food and water. I had no answer. I walked out on our shattered dock. There I saw the body of a Filipino soldier with no sign of a wound. I made a mental note to have Vaquiano's detail go out there if possible.

Sometime during the afternoon word got about that the Japanese were lining everybody up, that we were leaving. I hurried back to Craighill to get my belongings. The room where I had my bunk and my footlocker was a shambles. All the trunks - those belonging to the Navy lieutenants and mine - had been broken open and ransacked, and

our clothing, letters and other effects lay scattered about. Several Japanese soldiers were poking at the stuff with their bayonets and, for some perverse reason, were ripping to shreds the various articles of uniform. I knew that all these things had to be abandoned, but it hurt to see them destroyed - especially since among them were letters from my wife, and a beautiful picture of her and our two little girls. But there was no time for feeling sad. I hurried to reclaim my blanket and the musette bag. The latter had been ransacked, but still held some essential articles - messkit, spoon, knife, fork, toothbrush, razor etc. My empty canteen was hanging from my belt at my side. Craig-hill was now about deserted. Several guards were rounding up the last stragglers with shouts and blows of their rifle butts. So I hurried down to the entrance of the tunnel to be pushed into place - any old place - in the eternal column of fours. I wasn't the Fort Executive anymore. I was just a number. And like all the other numbers I was dirty, tired, hungry, thirsty and overwhelmingly sad.

This column of fours was an obsession with the Japanese. They would push it into being, holding up four fingers, shouting "Fo'! Fo'!" and swinging their rifle butts. Then we'd wait and wait. And the column would gradually disintegrate as each individual tried to find his friends, to get together with the rest of his military unit. Then the swinging rifle butts and the shouting would start again, the column would reform, we'd be counted for the umpteenth time. Then we'd wait some more. And as we waited under the hot sun the column of fours would dissolve again. And the whole business would start over. Watanabe spotted me and said: "You Americans have no discipline." He was almost right; we are pretty slow at learning imposed discipline.

Late in the afternoon, having been counted and recounted many times, we were moved a matter of some thirty yards on to the concrete floor of what had once been a gym. It had been badly treated by the

enemy artillery; but the frame and part of the roof were still there, so it could serve as a sort of prison compound with limits beyond which we might not go without being shot. It was hard work for the Japs to pack our swollen garrison into that small space, but they did. The swinging rifle butts helped. And to show that they were civilized, and knew what was correct among military men, they made a distinction between the grades: we field-grade officers were allowed to squat atop a retaining wall (the gym was built into a hillside) whence we could look down on our lesser fellows; the company-grade officers were assigned to a bowling alley which, being six inches above the floor, gave them the elevation due their rank; and the enlisted men, packed like canned sausages, sat or lay on the concrete floor.

This became our home for the next four or five days. We suffered a good bit from the hard stone beds, from hunger and, particularly, from thirst. Lt. Watanabe became our ^{leader,} liaison with his ^{Watanabe} who remained invisible. In effect, however, he exercised complete authority over us and our guards. He was everywhere, spilling over with self-importance. Although on official matters he dealt with "the big colonel", Col Foster, he often came, mopping his forehead, to drop down beside me for a few minutes to brag about his people and himself. He told me that he was from Tokyo; that his parents' farewell wish for him, as he went off to war, was that he would not return, but would die serving the Emperor. He said that all Americans were "drug store cowboys" (where had he picked up that term?) and that America would soon be defeated. He boasted of having killed many Chinese. He knew a little French, and sometimes showed that off.

I listened to him, and took advantage of these contacts to urge some action on our pressing needs: food, water, latrines. Usually he paid no attention - just went on talking about other things. But once in a while I would get some small concession from him. Then he would

generously "give" us some canned peas - our canned peas - one can to each four men; or canned milk - one can to each two men. He even let us go out in groups of three or four - under guard, of course - to the well which we had dug. It had partly caved in, and the water at the bottom was dirty and brackish. But it was water, and we drank it.

The second day of our stay in the gym there was an interrogation by several enemy intelligence people. The agent assigned to question the senior officers appeared to be a Japanese-Filipino mestizo. He was courteous, businesslike, but not very thorough. He asked for documents. I handed him the only paper I had not destroyed - a sealed letter addressed to my wife and to be delivered to her in case I should be killed. When I told him what it was, he returned it to me unopened, saying, "Then I will not read it". I was not searched.

That evening, Col. Foster, Cdr. Brooke, Cdr. Jordan and I were taken to the temporary Japanese headquarters on the island to hear a radio broadcast by General Wainright calling for the surrender of the remaining troops in the Philippines. Without saying so specifically, he made it clear that we who had already surrendered were not yet considered as prisoners of war, but as hostages, to be dealt with harshly, possibly killed, if the other forces did not surrender. (I learned later that Wainright had protested that he had relinquished command of the American forces in the southern islands, and could surrender only those troops on Corregidor and the other fortified islands of Manila Bay. The Japanese would not accept that argument.)

After that momentous and chilling broadcast, one of the Japanese suggested, as if it had just occurred to him, that perhaps we would like some tea - oh, and perhaps something to eat? As we were all famished, and suffering painfully from thirst, it was hard to cover the eagerness with which we accepted. The food and tea were brought in by Japanese orderlies; and as we ate, some of the Japanese officers be-

gan to question us in an informal way, as if to make polite conversation. The first questions were inconsequential: how many guns were on the island, how many men, where did we keep our ammunition, etc. Gradually the questions got around to gold. Where had we hidden it? They were convinced that we were paying our troops in gold, and that we had buried it somewhere. Our repeated denials did not seem to persuade them otherwise. But at least they did not get nasty about it, and finally sent us back to rejoin our fellow prisoners ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ - or rather, our fellow hostages.

The bumptious Watanabe delighted in his unrestricted power, and used it erratically. A notable example of this took place the next day. Some of our people had managed to get into a storeroom where the remainder of our canned food had been piled, and had made off with a few of the cans. Watanabe got wind of it and threatened to pick out any ten men at random and punish them severely unless the real culprits owned up. I explained the situation to our people, and about ten brave lads came forward and acknowledged that they were implicated. The guards then lined them up in two ranks and Watanabe made a long, violent speech about how reprehensible it is to be a thief, and how astonished he was to see people who claimed to be soldiers indulging in such a crime. He then administered to the Americans in the front rank a terrific slapping, accompanied by a frenzied cascade of angry words. This done, he dismissed the front rank. The men in the rear rank waited for similar treatment. But Watanabe had regained some self-control. He had another speech to make. He said that, while these men deserved severe punishment (that was the only kind of punishment the Japs ever mentioned), they also deserved to be rewarded for their honesty in admitting their crime. With that, to each of the Americans in the rear rank, he presented a can of corned beef. He then sent for

the two Japanese guards who had allowed the food to be "stolen", and in sight of all the prisoners administered the same sort of tongue-lashing and slapping as he had given the Americans.

A few days later, we were taken by boat, in small groups, to Corregidor. I had managed, to some extent, to reform our organizations by assigning to each unit an equitable space on the crowded gym floor. The move to Corregidor now ^{UPSET} ~~upset~~ whatever order we had accomplished. Officers and men, soldiers, sailors, marines, civilians - all were shoved helter-skelter into the launches. Only by chance were a few lucky ones able to stay with their buddies. On the way I had a tug-of-war with a Japanese boatman who took a fancy to my nice Navy blanket. I lost the struggle when a guard threatened me with his rifle.

Watanabe had told me: "You will be surprised how well you will be treated when you get to your regular prison camp." I wasn't expecting resort accommodations, of course; and besides, Corregidor was certainly not to be our "regular prison camp". But I hoped that we would get enough water and food to live on, and a chance to establish some order - especially as regards sanitation. As my boat approached Corregidor, however, this hope faded. I could see in the distance a huge crowd, jam-packed and milling around in a small area near the beach. An uncovered anthill. Some were wading in the water, as though forced there by the pressure. As we came nearer, we could hear the increasing buzz of their thousands of voices. Increasing also, now, was our realization that here was ~~no~~ order or organization. Just chaos.

Our boat docked a mile or so away. We were marched to the gate of the POW area, and turned loose among the crowded thousands on the blistering concrete. We were immediately swallowed up in this mass of prisoners. Impossible to get any information, impossible to gather one's men together, impossible even to find a friend or an acquaintance except by the purest chance. Was there any water to be had? Any

food? Where could you relieve yourself? Nobody seemed to know. Soon it was dark. Pitch dark. You couldn't move around without stumbling over someone. Besides, there wasn't much reason for moving around. So I just lay down on the concrete and went to sleep.

In the morning I woke up very stiff and sore, but refreshed. The sun was not yet high enough to burn, and the air was cool. I stood up to have a look at my new world. ^{Five} ~~Ten~~ thousand or ^{more} ~~so~~ prisoners were herded into an area about a hundred or a hundred fifty yards in length and width. About half of this was concrete. There were a couple of partly destroyed hangars which furnished some shade to the prisoners lucky enough to crowd into them; the rest of the area was exposed to the terrific sun - for the few trees were leafless due to the dry season and the enemy shelling. At haphazard over this area, prisoners who could find the material had erected little shelters of boards, boxes, pieces of tin or of cloth. It was an enormous hobo city, a maze of crazy streets, mostly dead-end, and completely packed with bodies - reclining, sitting, crawling or walking. All these bodies were dirty, ragged, hungry and thirsty. To get around in this city you had to step over the bodies, find your way through the maze, backtrack at the dead-ends, and suffer the growls of the weary body whose flimsy shelter you had stumbled against.

I had to traverse hobo-town, however, for I had to have water; and I had learned that the single water spiggot was located down the beach. One water spiggot for ~~■~~ ^{of} thousands men - and that spiggot running only at unpredictable hours of the day. Of course the line waiting to draw water was a long one - so long, in fact, that the spiggot was not in view of those near the end; and it was slow, very slow, for each thirsty man had as many bottles, tin cans and canteens as he could handle. I must have stood in that line for three or four hours. (Later I learned to do what everyone else had learned - join

up with a group, and take turns sweating out the line.) Fortunately the water was still running when I got to the faucet. But many behind me waited hours under the blazing sun in vain. This was the first of many, many water lines for me, and I shall never again hear the tinkle of a canteen without recalling those brutal days.

The water line was like an old-fashioned village pump. You eventually met all your acquaintances there, and exchanged gossip, rumors, information. So, as I *waited, I saw people I knew*, learned something about the various "quarters" of hobo city, found out how to get some food, and even discovered that the city had a makeshift administrative organization.

One of the first persons I hunted up was my regimental commander, Col. Paul Bunker (USMA 1903). He was the senior colonel at Corregidor, and in spite of his age and rank was suffering the same indignities as the rest of us. But he was a tough old fighter who had once (so the story goes) tried to resign from the Army to become a professional prizefighter and win the heavyweight championship from Jack Johnson. I found him in a sort of multiple shanty whose individual shelters leaned against and supported each other. Sharing this apartment house with him were some younger officers of the regiment: Dwight Edison ~~Edison~~ and Bobby Glassburn (USMA '32), Harry Schenck, Tom MacNair and Harry Julian (USMA '33) and Bob Cooper (USMA '40). They had rallied around the old man to help him and each other and, with his authority and their youth, to try to bring a little order out of the chaos.

It developed that there were other groups, also, working to get things done so that we would not all die. Their efforts went slowly because, in that jungle of patched-together shelters, it was almost impossible to find the men you knew and could rely on. Moreover, the Japanese had begun to apply a numbering system to the prisoners,

dividing them into groups of 1000 and sub-groups of 100. And this was done in such a way, intentionally I suppose, as to further break down whatever cohesiveness remained of the original American military units.

Gradually, however, latrines were dug, an internal (American) "police" system was organized, a dispensary of sorts was set up and several "kitchens" were established. The latter issued one cup of cooked beans a day to each prisoner, checking him off by his group and sub-group number ~~on his back~~ ^{ON HIS BACK}. Most of this internal work was organized and performed by volunteers; but each day a number of work groups were called for by the Japanese. They were for various jobs: clearing up the debris of the heavy fighting; burying the dead; gathering together the few remaining stocks of food which the besieged garrison had been trying to make last. The task of forming these work details, and giving them their instructions, became the duty of three American interpreters: Lt. Col. Carl Engelhart (USMA '20) Lt. Cdr. "Flash" Jordan (USNA '29) and Major Pete Pysick, USMC. Theirs was a bitter job. They had to transmit, somehow, to the thousands of prisoners, a flood of unpleasant and often contradictory orders; as bearers of ill tidings, they incurred the unreasonable anger of their fellow prisoners; and they were blamed - sometimes slapped around - by the Japs if the orders were not carried out promptly and properly.

On the third or fourth day in this swarming, sweltering compound, I had the good fortune to run across my classmate, H.J. Harper. Jean was lying on the concrete floor of the destroyed hangar, in a little section which had been roped off by our conscientious medics as a "dispensary". After the surrender of Bataan the previous month, he had evaded capture and, at night, had swum across the north channel to Corregidor. He had contracted malaria during the Bataan campaign, and had often been delirious. But he was rational when I found him,

and I sat down beside him and we swapped experiences. (We had last seen each other when we disembarked from the transport in Manila on October 23d.) Feverish though he was, in that fly-infested heat, his only complaint was that he had lost his class ring. It had disappeared from his fingers during one of his bad spells. The incident is worth noting because it started the ring on a story of its own, of which more later. I continued to see Jean each day, but there was nothing I could do for him except to talk to him and to see that he had water.

One day I was put in charge of a work detail of fifteen or twenty men. We had three Jap guards who spoke no English and thus had to rely on gestures to tell us what to do. They took us to some destroyed houses about a mile away where we were to salvage the sheets of corrugated metal that had been the roofs of the houses. We did not - we could not - work very hard, and the Jap guards seemed not to care. The men of my detail spent most of their time looking for usable items among the devastation: pieces of wire or rope, canned food, money, soap - anything that might serve to lessen the extreme discomfort of their present existence. We saw no bodies, but the sickening smell of death hung very heavy over the ruins. Our Corregidor comrades must have put up a tough fight here.

As we were working and searching among the debris, there was a sharp explosion and a cry. One of the Americans had kicked an armed hand grenade. His leg was shattered by the bursting metal. We quickly made a rough litter with some boards, put the wounded man on it and with four prisoners and one of the guards, sent him to the Malinta Tunnel where, we hoped, the Corregidor Hospital was still functioning. I was never able to learn how the poor fellow made out. The rest of us, Jap guards included, decided that there might be more live grenades in the ruins, so we gave up our rummaging and headed back

to the prisoner compound. When we arrived at the gate, it developed, of course, that we were short five prisoners and one Jap guard. This caused a great commotion, and we were kept standing an hour before being turned loose inside the camp.

I had done some scavenging myself among the wrecked houses, and had brought back, among other things, a thin mattress. It was for Col. Foster whom I had found, in a rough shelter, lying on the bare concrete. He was considerably older than I, and the heat, flies and hunger had greatly weakened him. He was glad to have something softer than concrete to lie on. That was the last time I saw him for, not long afterwards, the generals and the "eagle" colonels were separated from us lesser mortals.

In the Philippines the rainy season arrives suddenly. That's how it came to our dusty, broiling hobo city when we had been there about two weeks. One afternoon, out of what, minutes before, had been a clear sky, a very heavy shower poured down on us for a half-hour. The next day the shower arrived earlier and lasted longer. The ravines poured muddy water down into our encampment. The latrines filled to overflowing. The ramshackle shelters caved in or were washed away. It was refreshing after the terrific heat and the dust; but even the Japs recognized that we could not survive here. So after a few days they brought in some transports and some landing craft. We were formed up in the usual column of fours, Filipinos and Americans separately, and after hours of standing and waiting we were taken out to the transports and packed down into the stinking, standing-room-only holds. This move, like the others, caused a reshuffling of bodies in which all orderly grouping was lost and friend was separated from friend. I did not know what had become of Jean Harper or Col. Foster, or whether they and other sick prisoners were

given any special consideration.

The Japanese, by their numbering system, had already separated Americans and Filipinos; so we were not surprised that only Americans appeared to be involved in this move. The disturbing question was where we were going. Our suffering from hunger, thirst and the suffocating heat of the crowded hold was somewhat lessened by the hope that we were headed for a "regular" prison camp where conditions might be bearable. Finally, after many hours, we could feel the throbbing of the ships engines. We were on our way - but ~~where?~~ ^{where?}

As it turned out, not very far. It must have been about noon when the motion stopped and we could hear the anchors being let out. We were ordered up on deck. The two ships were lying off Paranaque Beach, about 4 or 5 miles south of Manila. Some landing barges appeared and began shuttling prisoners from ship to beach. As each barge got to where the water was about chest high the prisoners were obliged to jump overboard and wade ashore. Many were so weak they would have drowned but for their stronger comrades who managed to drag them up on the beach.

Sometime during the afternoon all were ashore and lined up in the inevitable column of fours. Dripping wet, with the water squeezing out of our shoes, we started the long, hot march towards Bilibid Prison in Manila. Along each flank of the column rode Japanese horsemen with lances. They saw to it that the sick and the weak did not lag behind. Each of us had a bundle or a pack of some kind - now, of course, waterlogged and heavy. As the ragged column made its way painfully towards Manila, prisoners who had overestimated their strength began to discard, bit by bit, the less essential of their meagre possessions. Some unfortunates, about to collapse of heat and exhaustion, abandoned everything they had. (~~I learned later that Col. Bunker, that tough old fighter whom I have already mentioned, succeeded, with some help from a few~~

~~Myself and my comrades, in making that long, desperate march.~~

The purpose of this cruel and unnecessary parade through the streets of Manila was obvious: the Japs wanted to exploit the surrender to the utmost, wiping out all American prestige. This was a way of saying to the populace: "Here are your proud, haughty Americans, the fine, fighting men of the richest country on earth. Look at them, now!" So I expected that arrangements would have been made to have crowds on the streets to hoot and jeer at us. But I was very mistaken. There were very few Filipinos in the streets. Most of these good people had arranged to be elsewhere as we passed, so that they need not add to our unhappiness by witnessing our disgrace. Of the few whom we passed, many, many were weeping. And I'll never forget those tears, for I wasn't sure that we deserved that affection; and it is good to find you have some friends when you thought you had none. There were even some who, less emotional but more courageous, ran out to the ranks, dodging the Jap guards, to give us a drink, or an orange, or a piece of candy. From that moment on the only uncertainty I had was not who would ultimately be victorious, but only whether I would be alive to see the victory.

So we struggled along through the broiling, almost deserted streets, over the Pasig River, and at last came to Bilibid. Some of our people had dropped on the way of heat prostration, but all recovered except Col. Short who died several days later. My regimental commander, Colonel Bunker, heavily built and no longer young, had managed to keep going on sheer willpower, and had collapsed just as we reached the prison. He was later shipped to Formosa with the generals and the other full colonels. He was a fighter, but too old to withstand the repeated hardships. He died in Formosa the next spring.

The Filipino prisoners were not in Bilibid. We learned that they had been taken to the main pier in Manila, and had then been sent off

somewhere. But I found at Bilibid one Filipino whom I was very sorry to see there - Technical Sergeant Bocamora. Boc had been the only Filipino soldier in our garrison at Fort Hughes. His job was to care for, and supervise the operation of, our searchlights; and he was an expert at his job as well as a fine soldier. The day after our surrender he had come to me for permission to try and make a getaway. He had found a small banca (outrigger) that had washed ashore. He and a Filipino sailor planned to leave as soon as darkness came. They hoped to paddle to the Cavite shore and just lose themselves among the civilian population until they could find their families. I opened our safe and gave Boc what money was in it - about two hundred pesos - along with my blessing. ~~XXX~~ The next morning he and his friend were gone. But, as Boc now told me, the current had carried them out to sea. They had been spotted by the searchlight of a Japanese ship, had been captured, taken aboard, and were now just numbers like the rest of us. Boc was very downcast as he told me this. He had a wife and a whole army of children and was worried about their survival under the Japanese occupation. I did not see him the next day, nor for many long, terrible months afterwards. But we were happily destined to meet again, one day, and under better circumstances.

For most of us, Bilibid was but a brief stage in our wanderings. I stayed there only a few days. In the movement from Corregidor I had lost contact with Jean Harper and did not see him again for some time. But while searching for Jean and other friends among the milling crowds at Bilibid I had the good fortune to find Doug Smith. We decided to stick together if possible, and began by staking out a claim to a few square feet of concrete floor in one of the buildings. We spread out Doug's blanket to sleep on, and used Doug's navy bedspread to cover ourselves against the attacks of the mosquitoes. The next day I managed to buy a mosquito net from another prisoner, and hunger replaced mo-

squitoes as enemy number one. Still, we did get some food: a small amount of cooked rice each day, and some onions. Water was plentiful, there were a few straddle-trench latrines, so we were not too badly off at Bilibid. True, the concrete made a hard bed; but, in compensation, we were sheltered from the rains which were falling daily, now, for longer and longer periods.

The Japs began sending contingents of prisoners away from Bilibid the day after our arrival there. The administrative methods were quite simple. A couple of guards would enter one of the buildings of the compound, chase all the prisoners outside with their pitiful belongings, and line them up in column of fours. A hundred or several hundred would then be counted off and marched away. The rest would be dismissed, to go back to their spot on the concrete floor - or to find a better spot, now that more room had become available. Doug and I made no effort either to avoid or to join these outgoing contingents. We had no way of knowing whether they were headed for a better or a worse existence. But we managed not to get separated, so that, when our turn came, we were still together. This was four or five days after our arrival at Bilibid.

There must have been about five hundred in our contingent. We loaded into a freight train ~~and~~ which headed north. The car Doug and I found ourselves in was steel, and it stank of rancid copra. ^{Its} ~~THE~~ accommodations were standing room only. After a while the sun got beating down on it, and the sides got so hot you could hardly touch them. We had a Jap guard in there with us - a young fellow who looked scared. He was finally unable to stand the heat any longer, so he opened the door a crack. That helped him and the few prisoners who were near him, but didn't do much for those who were crowded back into the car. There was a good bit of squabbling and cussing over who had a right to be near the door, or who was taking up too much room, or whose elbow was

sticking in whose stomach and so on. Our destination was Cabanatuan, about fifty miles north of Manila. The trip took all day. The engine was running on charcoal, and every time we came to a slight up grade it had to stop to build up steam. In the late afternoon we arrived at Cabanatuan, and were herded into the yard of a schoolhouse. The building was a wooden affair with a tin roof. It stood high on stilts above the yard, which lay below the road level. *fix*

The daily rain began about the time we arrived. It did not come on gradually, with a few advance drops; the skies just quietly opened up, and the huge, steady downpour was on us. All the prisoners who could took shelter under the school. So did the mosquitoes - great clouds of them. Doug and I were able to crowd in with them. We sat on his blanket, covered ourselves, head and all, with his bedspread, and so spent the night sweating, fighting the mosquitoes, gasping for some air, and aching in all our joints from the cramped position. But the ground under us remained dry. Some sort of ditching arrangement had kept the water from flowing down under the building.

By dawn the rain had stopped. We were glad to be able to move out from under the shelter, stretch our legs and arms, and get away from the thickest concentration of mosquitoes. We lined up in several single files to receive a glob of rice about the size of a baseball - our first food in 24 hours. Then, in the usual column of fours, flanked by youthful, impatient Jap guards, we set out on the hot, seven-mile walk to Cabanatuan Camp#1. Having been on a near starvation diet for about three weeks (and on short rations for several months before that), even the infantrymen among us found it pretty hard going. But the very real possibility of being bayoneted for faltering kept us moving, the the younger and sturdier helping the older prisoners as best they could. Doug Smith, being more used to walking the deck than to making forced marches, had an especially hard time of it. He seemed about to *march*

collapse. He was going to drop his blanket and his small pack of belongings; but I took the blanket, some young fellow took the pack, Doug gritted his teeth and hung on.

Camp #1, which we reached about noon, had been built shortly before the war for the Philippine Army. As we approached, we saw *Camp #1* row upon row of low, bamboo barracks. In the distance there were some high, wooden guard towers which probably marked the outer perimeter. ~~XX~~ Closer in there was a barbed-wire fence. It turned out, later, to be two parallel fences, separated by a ^{tr} sandy path and by ~~XXX~~ a deep moat. Our bedraggled column took a muddy road that ~~xxx~~ followed the fence, and came to a wide barbed-wire gate next to a small wooden building - the guard shack. After a long wait, while our captors conferred, we were counted off in groups of about a hundred, and each group was taken to one of the barracks. The Japanese guards then withdrew and left us to arrange ourselves as best we could. *shack*

My barrack, like the others, was built on a wood frame, with ~~it~~ woven bamboo sides and a thatched roof of dry nipa palm leaves. A sort of alley, with a dirt floor, ran the length of the building; and on each side of the alley, about two feet off the ground and also running the length of the building, there was a bamboo-floored platform about seven feet deep from the alley to the bamboo wall. Along the alley edge of the platforms, bamboo posts supported the roof and also served to divide the platforms into sleeping bays. As we dragged our weary carcasses into the building, we peeled off into the unoccupied, or the least crowded, bays. The last prisoners to enter had trouble finding a space, so there was some jostling and some tired quarreling. But it turned out that, to accommodate everybody, we had to have five men to each bay, fifty on each side of the alley, and a hundred in the building. So gradually we adjusted our territorial claims to the requirements of the situation.

We learned the next day that this camp, Cabanatuan POW Camp #1, was populated mostly by some thousands of survivors of the Bataan Death March. (These were all Americans. The Filipino survivors had remained at Camp O'Donnell where, I found out later, thousands died because of the unsanitary conditions.) (Camp 1 had been functioning a week or two when we arrived, and had begun to settle into some rough kind of organization. There was an "American commander" with a small "American staff" whose duties were to maintain order among the prisoners, and to receive and carry out instructions from the Japanese. There were some "kitchens" where rice was cooked in huge iron cauldrons over open wood fires. There was a "hospital". And, by far the most precious of the new amenities, there was water. *leading up*

For the most part, we were free to wander about this vast, muddy bamboo city; and so, after learning the rules about how to get my twice-daily ration of cooked rice, my first concern was to locate my friends. I had by now been completely separated from the men and officers of Fort Hughes, and had again lost contact with Jean Harper and Doug Smith. I found them both eventually: Doug was packed in with some Navy friends, and Jean was among strangers, still weak from malaria, but getting a little quinine regularly from the "dispensary". (I use quotation marks on some of these words to make sure that they are not misunderstood as having any but the vaguest resemblance to the real thing.) *camp*

I had not heard of the Bataan Death March. It had taken place a month before the fall of Corregidor. Now I began to meet some of the people who had been subjected to this brutal example of man's inhumanity to man. Quite a few were friends from West Point days. As I heard of their experiences, I realized that my own, which had seemed so harsh, were by comparison simply unpleasant moments.

In exploring the camp, some of us made a point to visit the

"hospital" where we had heard there were other friends "in a bad way". This pesthouse was just another bamboo barrack like the one I had been crowded into. The patients were not there to be treated but because they all had dysentery, and many had malaria as well, they were kept there in isolation, to survive if they could, or to die - as most of them did. They were pitifully emaciated and weak, most of them unable to crawl to the latrine or to control their bowels. They would repeatedly soil themselves, the ground and the sleeping platforms. The stronger among them, when not racked with cramps, would help the others as best they could. Our American doctors, who were simply POW's like the rest of us, had not yet had a chance to get organized, nor did they have the needed medicines.

medical

I learned that the Japs had appointed an "American commander" of the camp - in theory, the senior officer among the prisoners. He lived by himself in a small, one-room bamboo shack and did not mingle with the other prisoners. It seems that he was quite friendly with his Japanese bosses who saw to it that he was comfortable and well fed. None of the other prisoners knew him or had ever heard of him, and the consensus was that he was a slick imposter who had either bamboozled the Japs into thinking he was a senior officer or, what seemed more likely, had collaborated with the Japs even before the surrender. In any case, he was in authority for the moment and we had to accept him. After the war he was tried and convicted of collaboration with the enemy.

note!

One day, a week or so after our arrival at Camp #1, we were all herded out to a large open area, a former parade ground. A speaking platform had been built there, and on it was a group of Japanese officers. One of them announced that the Camp Commander was about to address us. Whereupon an ancient lieutenant colonel, obviously

recalled from retirement, came forward, ^{and} began a long speech in Japanese, stopping after each sentence or two for the interpreter to translate. He reminded us that we were captives, not prisoners of war; that his emperor, not having signed the Geneva Convention, was not obliged to give us any consideration whatsoever; but we would find, he said, that the Japanese were a civilized people, and that as long as we obeyed the camp rules and made no effort to escape, we would be treated well. Prisoners who tried to escape would be executed. Anyway, even if we could get out of the camp, where could we go? The Filipino people were grateful to the Japanese for liberating them, ^{he said,} and would turn us in rather than helping us. And how could we expect to swim the thousands of miles to San Francisco? We should be patient because America had no fleet and would soon surrender and the war would be over. Meanwhile, we would be paid, as the Geneva Convention required (this was news to me); but since we would have very little need for money, most of it would be put in the Japanese Postal Savings Bank for us and we would be allowed a little pocket money. This we would be able to spend in the "commissary" which would soon be opened.

*Japanese
Camp
CDR*

After this lengthy exhortation to good behavior (and on our few ounces of rice a day, who had strength enough to behave otherwise?) we settled into a routine of fighting the mosquitoes and sloshing through the mud to the rain-filled latrines. The commissary did not open.

One day, about a week later, some fifty of us were selected (by what process I don't know) to be transferred to another camp, Camp #3, seven miles away. As we stood waiting outside the Japanese guardhouse, an interpreter came out and asked who was the senior officer. I didn't know anybody in the group. All seemed younger

Camp #3

than I. So I spoke up and said that I supposed I was. But another prisoner thought that he was. We shook hands and introduced ourselves. He was Lee Paquet, USMA Class of 1919 - which made him six years my senior. He was thereupon appointed American commander of the group - which meant chiefly that some Japanese orders to the group would be transmitted through him and that he would catch the blame if they weren't obeyed promptly. He asked me to be his "second-in-command", and thus began a friendship that was to last for the rest of Leo's life.

The march to Camp 3 was not as hard as had been previous moves under the Japanese. We were all in good health and, though somewhat weak from hunger, we did not suffer from thirst, that most maddening of wants.

The arrangements at Camp 3 were much the same as these we had left behind, except that the terrain was a bit sloping, the heavy downpours drained off into a small stream, and the "streets" were a little less muddy. There were about a thousand prisoners divided into two groups. Leo became the "American Commander" of Group 1, I of Group 2. The American Camp Commander was Colonel Napoleon Bowdreau. I had met him seventeen years before, at Fort Hancock, NJ. He was a captain, then, and Post Adjutant; I was a second lieutenant, fresh out of West Point. If he remembered me, now, he did not show it. The camp had received its thousand prisoners only a few days before, and the Jap guards were screaming at us to get things organized. There was no time for social amenities. Besides, Col. Bowdreau did not belong with us. He should have been somewhere else, with the full colonels and the generals who, it was rumored, were being given somewhat more civilized treatment in keeping with their rank and age.

*Camp
organizing
3*

As it turned out, I too now acquired a small fringe benefit from being a lieutenant colonel: as "American commander" of Group II I no longer had to sleep on the floor of a bamboo barrack, crowded in with the other prisoners. I now slept on the floor of a bamboo hut which served as group headquarters, and which I shared with a major (my "adjutant") and a captain (my "supply officer"). The diet continued to be a meagre serving of rice gruel, called lugae, in the morning and another meagre serving of steamed rice in the afternoon.

As group commander, I had to bring some order to the near chaos. The Japs did not have any rosters of the prisoners; they had only the total count for each group, and there was hell to pay when the twice-a-day counting did not jibe with the Japs' figures. But this was a job I could leave to my adjutant, hoping that somehow he would be able to scrounge a pencil or two and some scraps of paper. The serious problem was sanitation. Many of the prisoners had diarrhea; and the trot to the open-ditch latrines, in the dark, in the rain, in the mud, was a long one. The paths became soiled with feces, the feces drew flies, and the flies swarmed all over everything, everywhere, but especially in the cook-sheds. So I had the leaders of the five barracks of my group (lieutenants^{ants} and captains) assemble their men in an open area and I gave them a really impassioned harangue about sanitation and disease. The Japanese commander either observed this, or heard about it, and may have thought that I was encouraging my people to escape or revolt. He raised hell with Col. Boudreau, and Col. Boudreau raised hell with me. And I understood then that, while I would be held responsible for anything that might go wrong, I was not, on my own, to take any action intended to make things go right.

In another incident, a few days later, one of the barrack companies had failed to follow, to the letter, some seemingly minor order. Col. Boudreau told me to find out who was at fault. After talking to the barrack leader, a fine conscientious lieutenant, I concluded that the order had not been entirely clear and that the barrack leader had carried it out as he had understood it. Boudreau was furious. He said that the Japs always insisted on a culprit, someone to pin the blame on. An order had not been followed correctly; someone was responsible and must be punished. He took the matter out of my hands and went himself to investigate. Neither the lieutenant nor I ever heard any more about it. I think the Japs simply forgot about it. In any case, Boudreau left a few days later to join the other colonels and the generals wherever they might be.

Boudreau

It was not until many months afterwards that I gradually came to understand why Boudreau had become so impatient and apprehensive. He had made the "Bataan death march" (as I had not), had seen his starving and thirst-crazed companions beaten and bayoneted for not keeping up with the column. He had probably been beaten himself for not walking fast enough. He had learned the tragic way what it meant to be a prisoner of the Japanese. I had only just begun to learn.

Col. Boudreau's place as American camp commander was taken by Lt. Col. Curtis Beecher, a Marine who had had, so I heard, a distinguished record of service, "on loan", with the Haitian police. He was assisted by Major "Bo" Ridgely and Major Bradley, both also of the USMC, and all orders from the Japanese came through him and this staff.

*Camp
Commander*

The Japs didn't bother us much; in fact, I hardly ever saw them and, except for the fact that they didn't give us enough to eat, the relationship seemed almost benign. The only news we had about