

PHILIP SPARROW'S

STORY

PHILIP H. SPARROW was born on the 14th March 1911. When the World War broke out in 1939 he joined the R.A.F. He served in 242 Squadron in England, in the clerical branch, and was posted overseas with the squadron in 1941. In March 1942 he was taken prisoner by the Japanese and released in 1945. He married Margaret in 1949 and after many happy years Philip passed away on the 1st April 1976.

Philip left behind a record of his experiences as a P.O.W. and which, after editing, are on the following pages.

Recognising that the work - writings, sketches and plans are those of Philip Sparrow, it is felt that they should remain as a whole, so therefore copyright is vested in Margaret Sparrow and no copying or reprinting of any portion is permitted.

This booklet is compiled from P.H. Sparrow's diaries, notes and observations by the JAVA F.E.P.O.W. CLUB 1942. Published by them and edited by R. Chapman. Hon: Secretary.

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THE DIARY OF PHILIP SPARROW, deceased. Phil was in the RAF and in January 1942 was on board the Empress of Australia passing through the Sunda Straits. We pick up the narrative here although the original commences in England.

"Now nearing end of month and also nearing journey's end - still in the dark as to our destination. Will it be Singapore or Batavia - shall soon know as we are nearing the end of the Straits and can see mountains on each side - quite close to land on port and patches of what appears to be cultivated land can be seen. The convoy splits - we are turning S/E, the other part goes N, so it looks as if Java is to be our destination while we have a strong suspicion that the other part of the convoy is fated for Singapore - under our breath we say "poor b-"

We reach Batavia Docks the 4th February and the dock entrance is so narrow we almost foul the sides. Can see several destroyers and cruisers and much other shipping - on our starboard side we see the Duchess of Athlone with women and children on board and surmise these are some of the evacuees from Singapore. They cheer our boat as we pull in and we are told to give a cheer back to keep their moral up.

Unloading starts and we are told to get our kit together (our deep sea kit bags have been brought up) and await instructions - in the meantime up on deck we have plenty of time to survey the surrounding scene. We are now informed that we shall disembark in an hour, or two hours time and have instructions to bring all kit upon deck by our parade or boat stations. We do this and it is now getting quite dark. Are later informed we shall not disembark till following day and we are to sleep as best we can (there being kit all over the place)

We are just getting settled down when siren is heard and shortly afterwards aircraft are heard - ordered below - get lifebelts - lie on floor - passed without incident - thinking - "What a welcome".

Proceed once again on deck and do not succeed in getting much sleep - breakfast on board - assembling on dockside with all kit after first receiving a couple of oranges. Lorries come and pick us up and we ride into Batavia passing through native quarters and a terrible smell. There is a railway line running alongside the road; we are surprised at the number of natives on bicycles - estimate the distance to Batavia six or seven miles.

Evidently we are not expected as no provision has been made for us but we go to a King William School. This is a large modern building - are we to stay here? Finally, after much discussion, it is decided we shall. We get our kit bags and proceed to our billets. Are we to get any food? that is the big question but we are told the authorities are doing their best. In the meantime we fix mosquito nets which have just been issued. Now between 7 & 8, getting dark and hear tropical noises, frogs etc. An impromptu meal has been provided - bread & butter - milk - slices of pineapple - bananas - and a stew of a type. We are told we shall have to make do with this. As we are all very tired we retire early only to discover the wire on which we hung our 'moszzy' nets on is electrified due to it having fouled electric cable at some point.

In the morning we lay on as late as possible and arise to breakfast of bananas, pineapple, bread, butter and tea which is followed by details for fatigues, guards and pickets etc, there were no exceptions made. I volunteered for guard, guard parties do 24 hrs comprising guard who do two turns of two hours each - I do one day turn and another at night. There was a torrential downpour with lightening and thunder and my two hours night guard is done 'down in the rain' - suffered no ill effects - cleaning rifle and bayonet.

On the second day at King William all camp allowed out except those on duty - being on duty I am not allowed out - after first getting payment of ten guilden. Later, the fellows come in worse for wear in more than one sense - some few cases of drunkenness and learn that there are many houses of prostitution in Batavia. Each man has been issued with an E.T. Pack and

after a lecture by the M.O. on diseases etc, has been instructed to use same if the urge is so great that intercourse cannot be resisted (consider this degrading) On the morrow many suspected cases of V.D. treated - quite a few definite cases known.

Went to Batavia two days running. This school is quite a way from the actual town so hire either boys on bikes carrying two, or trap pulled by pony, carrying three. The town is fairly modern and clean in residential quarter but native quarter and markets not so good. Some quite good picture houses showing up to date talkies - talk in English - words on screen in Dutch. First duty was to find a P.O. and send airmail card to D and mother. (Sent card as time was limited so could not write a letter) (Went to Holland House for tea) Cost of sending high - no concession for servicemen.

Left King William, Batavia, on 7th February travelling by train. These have poor carriages with wooden seats down length of carriage with wooden seat down centre, however, we are not too crowded. We travel all day and note, on the way up, lay-out of rice fields and irrigation of same. They bear a crop which seems as if it can be sown and reaped at almost any time during the year as on our journey we see the crop at various stages. Oxen are used for ploughing and the men are knee deep in water turning the land over. There are native huts, built of bamboo and standing on legs in the midst of the rice fields. The bamboo structures are roofed with coconut palms and tied together with string, few nails are used.

In places the railway runs through very dense vegetation and we see monkeys in the trees and other wild life. There are bananas in profusion, the flower of which is large, deep red, and grows upward until weight makes branch lean. Coconuts too grow similarly. Buying of fruit is very cheap, for 15 cents (approx 3d) one can get a hand of about 15 bananas; large pine apples are 5 cents which is less than 2d. Tangerines are strung in bunches with string through the stalk on a thin piece of bamboo. They are green but on buying them (1 cent each) we found them yellow inside and quite good - small ones better. Ices and lemonade also could be bought - plain lemonade - putrid - like tonic water, and dear - 40 cents a bottle, beer also - beer I consider dear but prices vary according to style of place one gets it at. I have paid 40c and as much as 95 cts. It is like Worthingtons.

While in one station another train drew up going the other way. It was full of troops who expressed surprise that we were going up to S. (Sumatra?) We also see many evacuees making Batavia-wards.

On the journey we had a tin of bully and biscuits between three and Finally reach O in mid-afternoon where we alighted and paraded on station with kit etc. The sea runs alongside the rail here for perhaps a mile or more and the station runs right on the quay. We discovered, when we arrived that a meal had been prepared on the station. It was served by Dutch women but we had not yet got used to some native food - rice, wrapped in banana leaf - pineapple - bananas etc so there was not much eaten. A refreshment shop was cleared out of beer, lemonade, cakes etc. We waited here for about an hour and then boarded a medium sized boat and set sail for M. There were several small islands in the Straits and our voyage took between four and five hours passing through many rain storms, when we finally arrived it was dark. We were informed that we should have to spend the night on board and so the majority had to sleep where they were placed on deck. I was fortunate as Mr Newton, who was sharing a cabin with another officer, asked me if I would like to sleep in there on the floor, but I declined this and said I would sleep in the passage opposite his room where there was room for K. aswell. I didn't sleep much and was up early as this was the best chance to get a wash. We finally disembarked and paraded on the quay.

On the quay we were informed that the train by which we were to be conveyed would not be ready to take us for some time and we were dispersed into the 'rubber'. It was an opportunity to do some exploring. There were plenty of lizards, and coconuts, but although we could drink the milk of these the nut was not ripe enough for eating. We had a considerable wait here and a meal of corn beef and bread and butter. Noticed a goat pen built off the ground near a few native huts. The natives seem rather afraid of us. Discovered many coconuts, hardly covered with soil showing sprouts, The shoot grows through a soft hole.

In many instances in the narrative, Phil uses an initial to identify places and without prior knowledge I am unable to give the correct identification, nor have I a good map of the area at that time to check and the modern map has different names. Phil writes that they arrived at O. by train and sailed to M. I would have said they arrived by train at Merak and sailed to Oosthaven but I could be wrong. Maybe those of you who passed this way will enlighten us. Ed:

The train finally arrives and we get on board for our journey up through S. (Sumatra) The undergrowth is much denser and it is a milder country altogether. There are good bridges over deep cuttings but the streams seem fairly shallow although swiftly running and huge boulders can be seen in the beds. At occasional stops we can purchase fruit from natives and twice on the journey we are issued with a tin of bully between three and a packet of iron ration biscuits. (18 - six each).

It is dark when we finally arrive at our destination station and we hear rumours that the place has been bombed two or three evenings ago. There are no lights nor is smoking allowed. Apparently the party splits here - there are rumours that 258 have another journey across water but do not know if this is correct. We are told to prepare ourselves for a long walk with full webbing, kit bag and rifle. We commence marching and during the journey have several rests. There is not much march left in us when we finally reach the place where we are to spend the night - seems to be a village-cum-town. We get a wash as best we can at 3 or 4 taps. The lavatory accommodation is very poor. I'm so tired that sleep comes quickly and have a lie in next day till round about nine. Have an impromptu breakfast although the cooks have been heroes and have got tea and a fairly decent breakfast ready - bread and butter, sliced pineapple and a couple of bananas. For dinner we have 'bully' bread and butter and a slice of pineapple. During our short stay here our food does not vary much day by day. Our accommodation was evidently a school and is situated on the river bank. There is a native market over the river and we can see the women doing their 'dhobi', they do not use soap but beat clothes on stones to get them clean. There are curious natives in 'sampan' which are punt like boats tapered at each end and beautifully made, they seem light and easy to handle.

Soon we are besieged by natives purveying all sorts of fruit etc and brought by boat across the river. The fact that we have been advised not to buy fruit from these sources does not deter the boys and soon a roaring trade is being done in coconuts, pineapples (these are called 'nanas') and bananas (which are called 'pisan'). There are also several other fruits which we have not heretofore encountered and the natives eat these first to show they are good. One I remember has a brown skin and is the size of a medium potato, it tastes like pear and has a black stone in the centre. Fruit is very cheap - five cts for large pineapples and same for coconuts, 10 cts for good quality bananas - roughly 15 to a hand. Ice cream and ice drinks vendors sell drinks which are a type of essence, coloured in beautiful shades of red, green, yellow. Risk this with crushed ice in a glass, quite good, very sweet.

We arrived here on the 8th and did not get properly organized, left on the 14th to Palembang on south side of river, the main part of the town lies on the other side. It is possible to cross this on a large ferry boat which is capable of carrying two or three cars or lorries as well as up to 50 - 60 people. To cross by sampan costs 5 cts each. There are quite a few buildings of brick and plaster on our side of the river. One building is very ornate with gold, green and red paint. I presume this to be a native temple. Some of our people picked for S.P.s and do this tour of duty on the other side of the river. We have various fatigues in an around buildings, stacking provisions etc. Having nothing better to do I volunteer for guard.

In the buildings adjacent to ours are native 'PBD' (equivalent to our Home Guard) with Dutch supervision. A few of our people go to work on the Drome here - P1, but there is a distressing lack of organization. On the second day here we have good mattresses provided (two between three). I went over the river to Palembang and find some decent shops, post office, bank, and I purchase paper and envelopes as we have been informed that we can write but letters have to be censored by our officers.

I strayed into the native quarter and found it smelly and unclean so didn't stay long this side of the river as I wish to write to mother and D. I do so but do not believe these letters will ever get away. I purchased stamps in all denominations up to a guilder and they have nice pictorials. Airmail costs one guilder a letter.

On the 12th Mr Newton came to me and said he had been selected to supervise a convoy that was going north. (There is tension in the air and we all now realise the serious position) so after shaking hands and expressing the hope that we may meet again, he gave me his wife's address and asked if I would write or get in touch with her if we arrived back in England safely, it seemed futile to write from here.

On the 13th we heard that parachutists had been dropped on and near the drome. Armed parties went out and cleared these up and it was reputed that the majority of them were dressed in native clothing. We received instructions to pack a few essential items in preparation for a hurried evacuation. The following morning we were awakened early and informed that more parachutists had been dropped. We were ordered to line up with just a side pack containing a change of clothing ready to march to the station. Prior to this two or three days ago, the majority of our rifles had been confiscated, presumably for Dutch troops. Our canteen, which we had started for the sale of beer, lemonade, cigs and cigars etc, was now broken into as was the ration store and everyone carried as much stuff as possible plus a bottle of beer or whisky under each arm (fortunate people) When the march started in the heat of mid-morning we all left behind two kit-bags of clothes including our RAF Blues. We progressed along in single file on each side of the road, 10 to 15 yards between each man in case of air raids and the march was without incident. At one point we passed a machine-gun post on a bridge but that was all and when we arrived at the station our shirts and pants were wringing wet with sweat. My! was it hot!

There were many other RAF here, dispersed in among the trees and native huts. There was absolute panic - rations brought by some soldiers were looted, the natives selling fruit were mobbed, (amongst the mayhem I saw a goat give birth to a kid) and no one seems to know what to do and then, after waiting here 3 or 4 hours, we are told we have to return to our billets. Lorries came to collect us, (thankgoodness we haven't got to walk) and when we did get back it was to find our kit-bags ripped open and set on fire. Burning were officers great coats, shirts, suits, boots, shoes, flying apparel, blue uniforms, tropical uniforms and the adjudant decided to add to it by burning documents and secret matter. What a distressing sight, and I am confident that this could have been avoided if some organization had been brought to play but everyone seems to be running about after each other.

We are not back an hour before the order to move comes again but this time lorries are provided and we scramble aboard. We see another lorry arrive containing dead J. (Japs?) We arrive at the station and there are more lorries parked here and many men hanging around but contrary to expectations we do not stop but journey on. There is an officer up front with the driver so suppose it is OK. As we travel along we see a crashed Hurricane in a 'paddy' field. It is a rough road and a bumpy ride and as it gets dark the discovery is made that the vehicle has no lights. Torches are produced and we take turns in shining these on the roadsides. The speed does not slacken and several times we hit the road edge. Any minute we expect to go into a ditch but finally we stop at a gun post where we learn that we have to go another couple of miles. The officer informs us that this is another drome and we proceed until we are again challenged - at the guard room.

The heartening news is that every inch of bed space is utilized, there have been evacuations to this centre from all over the island all day. Then we are informed that there are billets 3 or 4 miles up the road. Good! but then the lorry refuses to start despite all efforts and we are just deciding to sleep on and under the lorry when another lorry with some of our fellows aboard pulls up. We tell the officer i/c of the billets up the road and are invited to join them so we all pile on board but this vehicle has no sides. Now comes the nightmare ride and it is only providence which saves us from mishap as several times we are almost off the road to shouts of alarm and cries of 'Go slower' - loud and prolonged. Just as we reached the billets a torrential downpour starts and we are wet through before we get into the shelter.

This place is built 7 or 8 feet off the ground and the only available space is in the corridor but we are so tired we drop down here and are soon asleep. We are awake early next morning and as there are no sanitary arrangements we have to go in the bush but are warned not to go too far because of snakes. I have a look round and from the kit and equipment left behind it is apparent that the last occupiers have made a hurried exit.

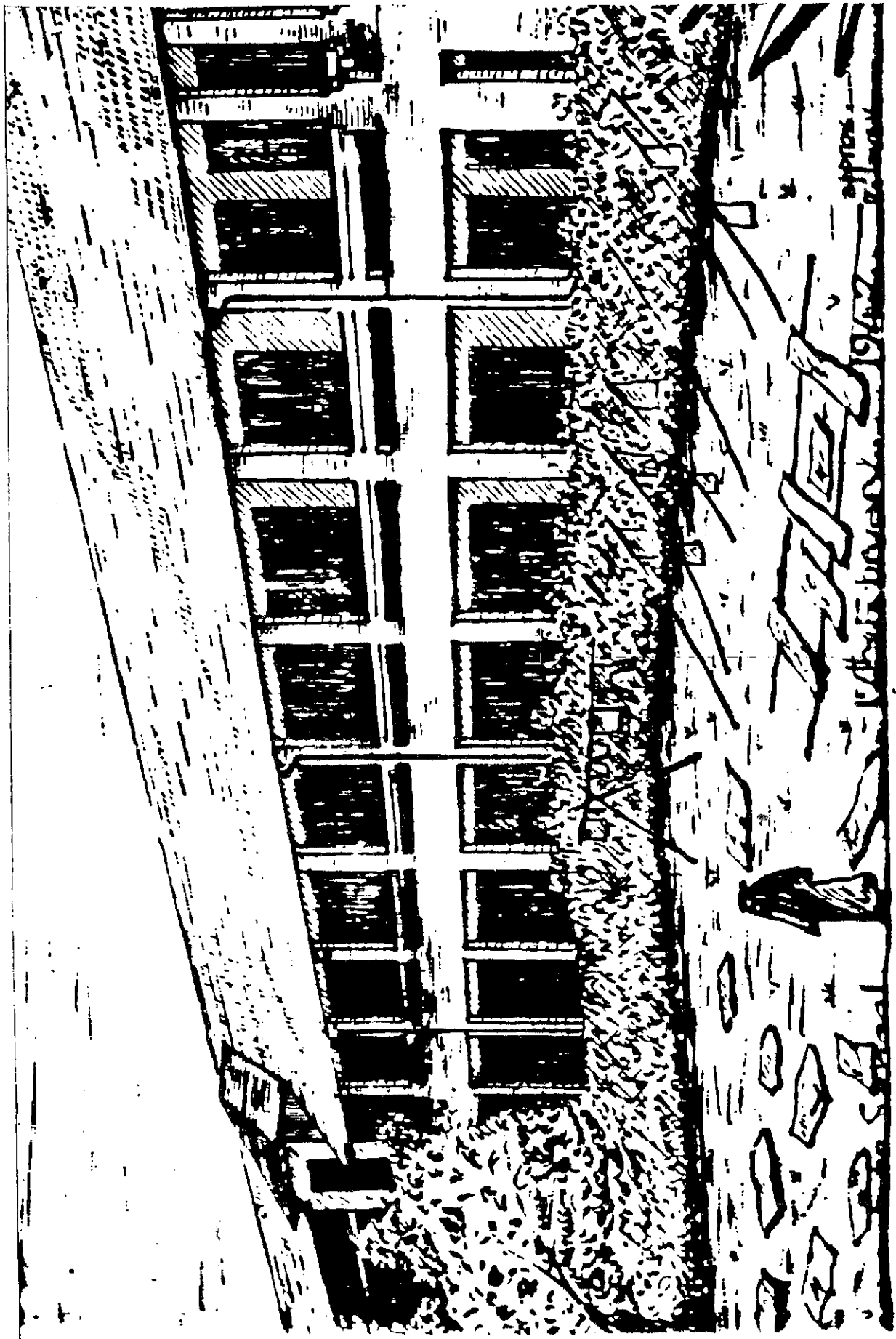
What to do? is the question and we have a W.O. with us who decides that food is the main thing so we pool our resources and make a fair meal of bully, bread and butter. Fortunately a water bowser comes along and having found tea left behind by the original occupiers, we light a fire.

There is almost a continual stream of cars and lorries containing troops passing this place and after vainly waiting for an empty vehicle it is decided we start off to walk. Whether we ever reach our destination is debateable as the port we are making for is 250-300 miles away. After half an hour we stop to rest opposite a cutting down to a railway line. We see two lorries loaded with our fellows and entreat them to stop but without avail. We then notice a train pulling into a station loaded with R.A.F. - Army and Dutch troops in cattle trucks open to the weather. One of our party runs down to the station and discovers our adjutant and a number of our party are on board, so the train is held up whilst we are lifted up into a closed truck. There are 25 Army, RAF and Dutch in here and two of the army lads are wounded; one has two bullets in the arm and the other has five bullet wounds, one right through the jaw and is in a very bad way on his stretcher. We hear he received his wounds whilst driving a tractor to block the passage of a captured Dutch armoured car. When we reach the next station both these casualties are taken off the train by the Red Cross but the latter case was dead before they got him to an ambulance. We appreciated the kindness of the Dutch people on this journey for we received a little food and cigarettes from them. Then it rained and heavy with it, we were glad we were in a closed truck as those in open ones were absolutely soaked to the skin. Added to this were the bits of flying charcoal from the engine (which is fueled with wood) which properly turned them black.

It grew dark and it was midnight when we finally reached the port M. It was hopeless to try and get sorted out so we spent the night in a warehouse on the dockside; it was full of thousands of pounds worth of stock - cases of bully - cigarettes - beer - fruit - beans - cheese - milk plus machinery etc etc. We rifled cases of bully as we were hungry and tea was made for us. There were thousands of people here - Dutch families - troops - better class wogs - all waiting to be taken off the island. We didn't sleep much but were awoken at day break and paraded with squadron. There were still people pouring into the port and cars of all descriptions parked for a mile or two along the road. We commenced to organize a meal and fires were lit,; we had just started eating cheese, biscuits, bully, beans and milk when the order was given to get on a boat. We are instructed to take as much tinned stuff per man as we can. There were cases of beer rifled prior to getting on the boat. It was crowded with troops and civilians. We sailed from M. and after a crossing of 4 to 5 hours we arrived at O. There are still some of our fellows missing. On our journey down we actually saw some of our equipment travelling in the opposite direction. (which we identified by markings) We had a meal of bully and biscuits on the boat and the crew made tea for us. There were several stretcher cases on board, some of the fellows in bad shape - legs off etc.

We helped with the unloading of the wounded at O. and there was a torrential downpour. I think everyone was of the opinion when we boarded the boat that we were bound for A. (Australia) but no such luck. We saw several cruisers and armed merchant vessels proceeding in the opposite direction.

We had a long wait at the station but a lorry arrived bringing lemonad and we got a bottle each, also we could buy the usual fruit. The train finally arrived in the late afternoon and we travelled through the night to arrive at B. (Batavia) in the early morning. The organization seems better here as there are plenty of lorries to take us to billets; ours is C. school which is very large and we can sleep anywhere as long as it's under cover. Eventually we wake up and wash although the sanitary arrangements and washing facilities are poor. The cooks have once again been up early and prepared breakfast - tinned bacon and beans - bread and butter and tea



CARPENTIER SCHOOL. See bottom of page 5.

We stay here just over a week and exist of impromptu meals. There are various fatigues but we are allowed out. Each man is given 10 guilden to purchase clothes and toilet requisites etc - everyone goes looking for shirts and shorts and the shopkeepers, knowing we must have the stuff, put up the prices. I bought shorts at 2.75, shirt 3.25, stocking 40c, 2 handkerchieves 35c, one pair underpants 55c and soap etc which leaves me with no change out of 10g. Some fellows do not spend a cent on clothes.

Met Mr Summers here. On the first day out I went to the P.O. and sent cables to D, 11G, and mother 9G; I also purchased 2 envelopes and paper; I returned to camp and wrote them airmail letters (I can't have these censored so hope they got away) I met a press correspondent in the P.O. and we engaged in conversation, he said he was still in touch with his people so I hope my cables got away too.

We move to 11/12th Infantry Barracks (Meester Cornelius) and there's much better accommodation here - washing facilities - showers - swimming bath and a much better type of latrine. Have a chance to do some washing. O.R. in operation. On one fatigue here we march to another building where the R.A.S.C. equipment has been dumped - gas equipment - steel helmets - wagon sheets - driving gloves - khaki battledress etc etc, there is heavy machinery still in cases.

We have not heard any word from our pilots but go up to drome and service kites for 232 whose ground staff is reputed to have been moved for a rest as they had reached breaking point; I do not know if they went off the island. We are up at 5:am every morning and after a mug of tea are transported about seven miles to the drome - meals are provided there throughout the day but we get them at varied times. I go on telephones and try to incorporate two jobs as far as I can. See no reports sent in and lack of organization very noticeable. The ground crews work like trojans with the result that there are more planes serviced than for several days past. Two squadrons here - Hurricane and also some Brewster Buffaloes - 232 & 605. The maximum planes serviceable at one time seems to be 16. There are reports of raids by Japanese from various sources. Their chief fighter plane seems to be 'Navy O' radial engine monoplane. It is very manoeuvrable, has frame construction. Army 99 Dive bombers and also twin engined bombers. Work on drome goes on till dusk then lorries take us back to camp. S/Ldr Brooker is the C.O. 232.

I decided to have a day off and arrange for a deputy as it is too late to go out after a day's work especially as we are up so early in the mornings. I spent the following morning in camp and went to Batavia in the afternoon where I did some shopping. I had my tea out and then in the evening went to the flicks. I arrived back in camp to hear that the drome has that day been bombed. Several bombs had been dropped registering hits on hangar and on outskirts of drome near position of maintenance. One bomb dropped about thirty yards away from pilot's hut. They are of small calibre, chiefly anti-personnel. Morning or late afternoon seems to be the chief time for these raids and in formations of 15 or 27 with escort. Several Bofors gunposts and machine gun go into action but this does not even break the formations. No one is injured and our planes were up at the time and are surprised to find on their return that the place had been bombed.

I resume duty next day and find no entries in flying times. On enquiry I discover no one reported for duty. We hear planes in distance and have no time to take cover before we are subjected to machine gun attack by N.O.s. It was a very nasty half hour in which repeated attacks are made during which time I and several pilots are occupying as little space on the floor of the pilot's hut as possible. It is a bamboo structure with palm roof and after the raid we find one Aussie has been killed and one of our fellows has sustained a bullet wound in his thigh. A smoke first though, after the raid is over. We continued to work under similar conditions until the 2nd March and there were cases of chaps going sick under false pretences so sick parade was held on the drome. We have information from our recon planes that on 1st March landings had been made by the Japanese at three places on the island. Hurricanes from our drome reported that here there are approximately ten fair sized merchant vessels carrying troops and equipment with one escort vessel. Landing made by small boats plying between vessels and land, some equipment also landed. What a target but no attempt is made to bomb. This points to lack of aircraft and seems to be the major trouble in both

Malaya and here. I have heard from several sources which appear reliable that the total number of serviceable aircraft at the outbreak of war numbered 157 - this included Gipsy Moths in which reconnaissance flights were made. During day 8 trips were made by our aircraft on search expedition in which one aircraft was brought down by A.A. from boats - several had bullet holes through sumps - one wing tip holed by a shell - this aircraft brought nose of shell back in wing. At the end of the day it was known that for the morrow there would not be more than three planes serviceable. Had instructions that night to pack all kit and get ready to move off on the morrow.

Up early and breakfasted and loaded lorries. We were all re-equipped with rifles and 50 rounds of ammo. There were 10 to 15 vehicles in convoy including an ambulance and 6 or 7 private cars. The store was rifled before we moved off. I went down with K. and was absolutely amazed at the stock of cigarettes - SE333 - cases and cases - Tobacco - Capstan - Players - Three Nuns original - bottles of beer Bass and Worthington - Lux soap and Knights Castile - cases of whisky and gin - huge glass jars of rum and brandy - shaving soap - tooth paste - pencils - stationery, chocolate etc etc. Stock which would run into thousands. Everyone is grabbing all it is possible to carry and in many cases discarding - just throwing on the floor what they consider inferior quality to other stock; hence Cadburys plain chocolate is trampled underfoot in preference to Nestles milk chocolate and fruit and nut. What waste! and it makes you think how wicked it is when people at home have a job to get chocolate, tobacco and cigarettes while here it is trampled on. And thinking about it, stacks of paper and a typewriter were left in the Orderly room. Kit and I secured more 2 oz and 4 oz tins of Capstan, Players and three Nuns, one or two 50 tins of cigs than anything else but we each had two or three bottles of White Label. We were in a Bedford 15 cwt with 7 other men and kit, between us we had approx a doz bottles of whisky and 5 or 6000 cigarettes and tobacco.

Finally the convoy moved off and it was intended to add the Drome personnel to it but that plan fell through for after a short wait while a dispatch rider went to the drome and back for we were told to carry on. This was 2nd March and after travelling several miles our Bedford broke down and despite renewed efforts it could not be induced to fire again. A Ford van appeared but had only room for three, so piled in with kits and rifles and the journey continued. There was a very heavy rainstorm and we were lucky to be in a closed vehicle. All the time we were on the lookout for aircraft and shortly after the storm we heard the sound of planes. Opening a door in the van roof we looked up and saw 15 twin engined bombers on our right, fairly low and travelling away from us. At this moment a car drew alongside us instructing all vehicles to keep a distance of 150-200 yards apart and in the bombers returned to draw in under the trees and get out of the vehicles. Half an hour later the planes were once again in the vicinity and natives were running helter skelter. We happened to pass a native air raid alarm which was a fair sized hollowed tree trunk with a groove down one side. We saw and heard the bump bump which denoted the warning. One can see these all over the country and in normal times I understand they transmit messages. They are hung up and are beaten by a native with extreme force on the part that is uncut, it is surprising how far the sound travels. On hearing this we immediately grabbed rifles and drew in under some overhanging bamboo and dispersed into the undergrowth. The planes were quite close but seemed to have some other definite target in view so they had either not seen us or did not wish to pay us any attention. After a few minutes we heard the rat tat tat of machine gun fire and saw bombs dropping from the bombers. Apparently the leading bomber fires its machine gun as a signal to the formation to release its bombs but this is only conjecture, there could be another explanation.

We then continued on our journey but after 15 minutes saw from a bend in the road huge clouds of black smoke rising. 10 minutes later we saw one side of a native hut practically gutted and burning fiercely while on this side of the road a railway siding and a large oil storage tank were in flames. We crossed over the railway crossing and stayed a few minutes but no one was hurt. Meanwhile the convoy had drawn up close together as wires were down and over the road, we got out to remove these to cries of 'get a move on' - the petrol bowsers had had to draw up at the side of the burning

native hut - hence, cries of alarm. Eventually we got on the way again over fairly level ground with occasional hills with precipitous drops on one side down to a stream at the bottom - rice fields on slopes. It grew dark and we reached a fair sized town. This is B. We pass through a good clean neighbourhood and note the marvelous cafes. People feeding and dancing and shady lights of rosy-hue. We travel to a large camp at which there seems to be a crowd of air force personnel but no one seems to know where we have to go. After a wait of about an hour we are escorted by staff car some miles to a drome - St A. (Andir?)(Bandoeng?) Discover the pilots have arrived with planes - still no one seems to know where to put us and we are once again waiting for two hours. Finally we move off to an Infantry Barracks, the 5th & 6th, which are approx seven miles away and there we get our heads down anywhere - thoroughly tired out.

Awake early and breakfast, (getting used to impromptu meals) and told not to drink water (tea at the cookhouse all day) We parade outside and get sorted out. We see more white Dutch here than at any other place heretofore. We march inside and move into proper quarters - three to a bay and I am with K. & W. Orderly room gets organized - various fatigues detailed - gun posts set up on flat roofed buildings (they are needed badly as we get a raid or two every day) The officers are in a different part of building and as there seems to be nothing doing on drome I am asked if I would like to be a batman. I consent but there is not very much to do - tidy rooms - clean shoes - straighten beds. There is a bad raid on drome on the second day so everyone is asked to go to the drome for bomb hole filling. There are as many holes as there are in a colander - houses are damaged in the vicinity. We see many Kitty Hawk fusekages in packing cases and wonder why they are not assembled - there only seems to be our Hurricanes on the drome. We take cover almost as soon as we get on drome. A H. takes off with a glycol leak and crashes. Anyway, we fill a few bombholes on runway and turn a couple of kites into position and then return to barracks. We are at Bandoeng 3 days during which time things are pretty hot. We are told on the morning of the 5th to get everything packed. I must mention the consuming of the bottles of whisky brought from Batavia and the resulting drunkenness and the resulting reprimands which finally resulted in all liquor being confiscated.

We are just boarding lorries to leave when the siren goes and we all take cover but move off on the all clear; arrive at T. in late afternoon. A meal has to be prepared so I go out in a lorry to get wood - rice etc. There are field kitchen type boilers here and we get a meal of hotted up Machona-chie. The billets are in empty houses. I volunteer for guard looking after lorries. It seems to be a small town, as we drove in we passed a picture house and some shops.

Up early in the morning and as we go to wash hear the sirens and see several Jap planes over so disperse in trees surrounding houses. A line of taps have been built at the rear of these houses (about 6 taps) and they have a surrounding bamboo screen. Sanitary conveniences, also have a bamboo screen, with bamboo laid over a stream with holes cut in. They are rather primitive but effective. We hear later in the day that the planes which were over bombed the drome and volunteers are called on to go up and help repair damage. The volunteers are so few it becomes a compulsory job. We go - all armed - and when we get to the drome the Dutchman in command does not seem to know what we are there for. It is a large drome with runways and there are planes but I can't see what type they are. At that instant there is the heaviest thunderstorm we have yet experienced and take shelter. As it abates we take the lorry and a plank and try to fix it over one of the bomb holes; it's a temporary job and a very poor. In just doing this we get wet through and as it comes on again to rain we go back to the billets.

Went to bed early and was awaked by S/Ldr J. and F/Lt Gartside about 11 o'clock who say that if we want to get off the island we must go to the drome and get petrol for refuelling the vehicles ready for an early morning start. In company with several other fellows we go to the drome but encounter the usual lack of organization once again for after hanging around for nearly two hours we are told to go back to the billets. The situation gets more serious everyday. We are awakened at 5:am and instructed to pack as lightly

as possible and prepare once again for the road. This is the morning of the 8th. I am packed in the rear of a lorry loaded with rations, we are all armed and have 50 rounds each. We are instructed to be on the alert and be prepared for action; everyone is keyed up. This journey is through mountains and very rough country, credit has to be given to the drivers for the way they handle the 20 or 30 vehicles of all types which make up our convoy. We pass numerous places and see tanks, lorries and bren-gun carriers drawn to the side of the road and then levered over the edge into a ravine which range from 40 to 150 ft in depth. We believe the main object of this 'trek' is to try and reach the coast. We cross several bridges and before approaching these are ordered to extinguish cigarettes and pipes etc. Presume bridges are mined. There is a hold-up of convoy in front and this causes immediate congestion. We suddenly hear machine gun firing and take off from lorries gripping rifles and tommy guns to the shelter of a bank. A F/Lt comes up and tells us not to panic so we get back on the lorries and the journey continues. Shortly afterwards a staff car comes from the opposite direction and tells us we are to turn about and take another road. Turning here is practically an impossibility owing to a steep bank on one side and a drop of 60 to 70 ft on the other. Fortunately we are at a bend in the road where 15 cwt Bedfords in the convoy are able to make a turn after much manoeuvring. Ours is a 3ton Thornycroft and any vehicles over 15cwt all have to proceed another 3 miles before they can reverse. After this the journey is continued and we are now the second vehicle in the new formation as the 15cwts waited at a road junction and joined up at the rear. Proceed for about an hour when we are stopped by a F/lt who instructs us that all armed personnel and join W/Commr Alexander's party a mile up the road, (the idea is to make a stand in the hills) slight panic ensues - some cases of slinging rifles and ammo away and much ammo is dumped into the swiftly running stream below. Practically half the convoy turns tail and speeds in the direction from which we have come and this is the last we see of them. Food is dumped on the road and we are ordered to break open cases and take rations. We proceed from here with a much depleted convoy. We see Army personnel on each side of road with rifles and others are behind trees on look-out on edge of rice fields and here we pass one of the largest convoys of motor vehicles of all types, tanks etc, that I've ever seen - we joined another large convoy after 4-5 miles travel. We're warned to have rifles ready and keep a strict look-out. In the meantime have camouflaged our vehicles with palms, tree branches etc. Pass a tank on fire on a piece of grassland and ammo is exploding on the road-side, so keep our heads down. On this road, in the afternoon, we get information from a staff car that the Dutch have capitulated and as we are under Dutch rule this applies to us also. We are informed that we have to proceed to a place called Pamigatan (all this without seeing a Jap). We got to Pamigatan just at dusk - learn that a tea planter has been kind enough to give us his factory for sleeping and living quarters. We are taken and shown the place but go back to lorry and while we are waiting for further instruction we are given tea straight from the kettle by natives.

We do finally get instructions that we are to take our kit and proceed into the factory. There's a general sort out and allocation of sleeping space plus some instruction re handing in of rifles and ammo - majority leave these on lorries. We partake of another impromptu meal - Machonochie and tea. So tired that we go to bed immediately after this.

The factory is a huge place of two storeys, there's a lofty ground floor half filled with machinery for producing tea, part store room and part sorting shed; we sleep on top storey. It is a lovely climate here as it is high above sea level - the shed has a corrugated iron roof and we awake in the morning feeling cold. I do believe that on some mornings here the temp was close on freezing, but it is very hot upstairs in daytime.

We arise and go to breakfast - porridge - pineapple - tea. Instructed that all arms have to be handed in to Orderly room. Do this and see 30 - 40 brand new tommy guns thrown into a pit and covered. The lorries are all parked in plantation grounds with white handkerchief tied to wing mirrors - we wear white arm bands. There are sundry fatigues such as digging primitive lavatories etc. I am once again asked to be batman and have P/O Power, F/O Sullivan, P/O Gibbs, F/O McIntyre and P/O Lightfoot to look after. Duties of

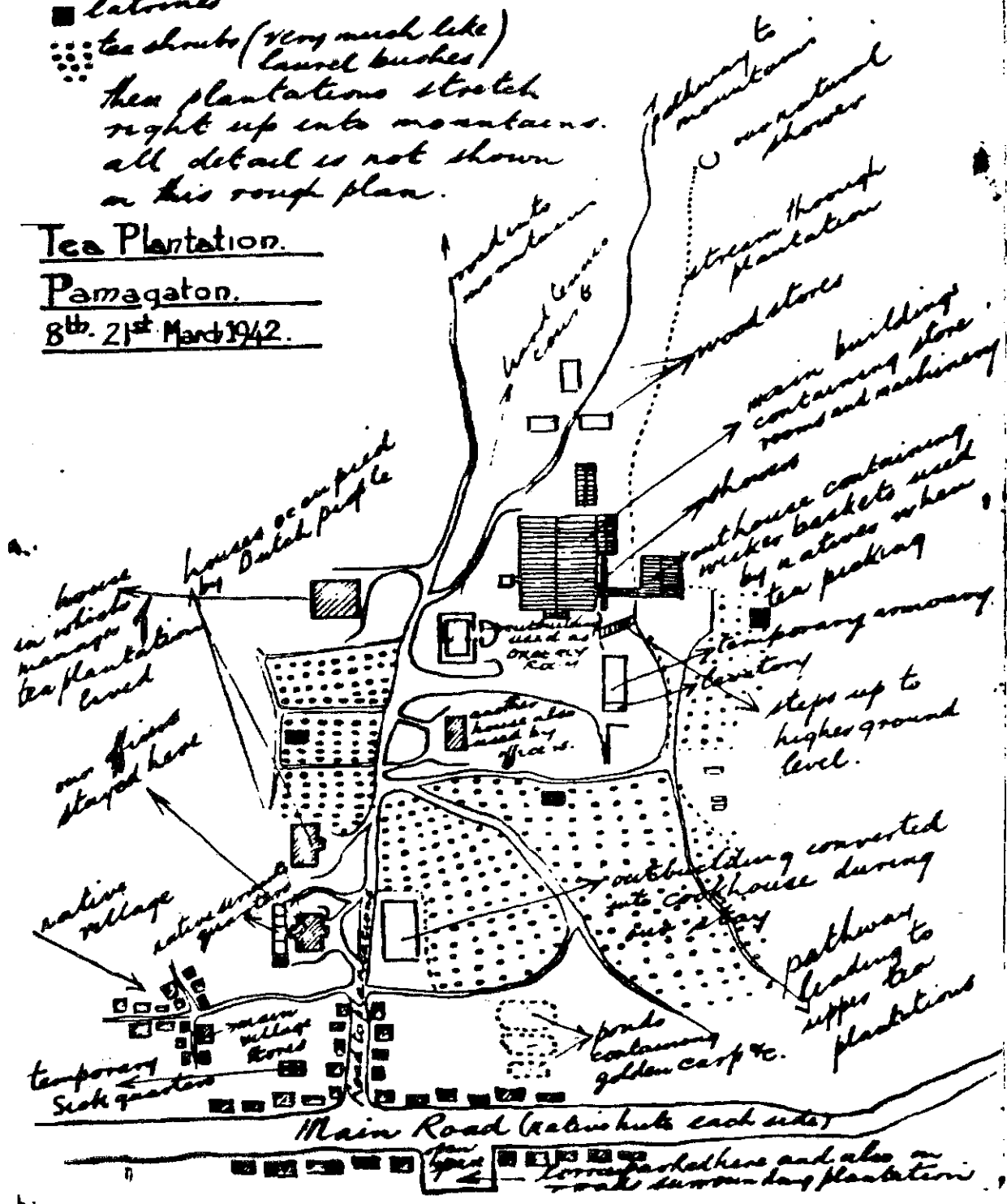
DAIDO BOEKI KAISYA, LTD.

No.

houses
 main tea factory and outbuildings.

latrines
 tea shrubs (very much like laurel bushes)
 these plantations stretch right up into mountains. all detail is not shown on this rough plan.

Tea Plantation.
Pamagaton.
8th. 21st March 1942.



house in which manager of tea plantation lived
 our firm stayed here
 houses occupied by Dutch people

native village
 temporary Sikh quarters
 main village

another house also used as office

main building containing store room and machinery
 out house containing wicker baskets used by natives when tea picking
 temporary annexe

steps up to higher ground level.

outbuilding converted into cookhouse during our stay
 pond containing golden carp etc.

pathway leading to upper tea plantations

Main Road (native huts each side)

terrace here and also on other surrounding plantations

batman - parade first thing in the morning - fatigues detailed - perhaps route march organized - but batman excused after roll call - go down to house - get brush from native servant - make beds (two slept in double beds one on a camp bed and two on the floor - swept floor and tidied rooms - wash up plates, cups etc, used for breakfast - clean shoes - general work. Officers have their meal the same as O.R.s, served in the cookhouse but by separate servers (They still have some tinned rations - bully, beans, Macho-nochie) They have a snack when they want one and dine in the evenings with the lady of the house (young, approx 28, fair haired, with one child approx two years old. That is all my duties consist of, finish about 10 or 11 o'clock. I get to know the native servants very well - one man to do outside work - chop wood - tend gardens, and two women who do all housework - washing ironing etc. (use an old fashioned iron that has to be filled with hot coals) These servants live on the premises at rear of house. One woman has a daughter who I imagine is about 8 years old. There is always tea brewing and I have some nearly everytime I go down - very often I have delicious food which they prepare for people of the house. They cannot speak English nor can the lady of the house so use signs. There is a bush growing in garden that looks very much like raspberry canes gone wild but fruit has appearance of strawberry but comes off stalk exactly like a raspberry and is delicious. I took some for K & W. also take other cookies.

One morning the servants picked 20 or 30 of the fruits placed them in a glass and grated brown candy type sugar over them, they added water and handed it to me - delicious. The male servant sharpened my knife on a stone over the river at the back of the house.

During our stay here, from the 8th to 21st March, we did not once see any Nippon. We did have a speech by the A.O.C. but have a fair amount of freedom and occasionally I strolled up the mountain in the afternoon and had a shower from falling water up there. We had brought plenty of rations here and our food is supplemented by bananas, pineapple - coconuts and sweet corn, so it is good. I also had a private stock of chocolate, bully, sardines and cheese, so do well. Also as soon as the natives saw we were here for some time nearly every house was turned into a shop selling tins of milk, bananas, sweets, brown candy sugar (goola Java), fried chicken, fish cakes, sweet rice cakes, fried banana fritters and pineapples etc. (Fried chicken 75cts fish cakes 1 ct) Purchases were made on a fairly large scale as nearly everyone had some money. We were invaded by young native boys with trays displaying the above eatables for sale. In a large village close by there was a store owned by a Chinese where one could get practically anything - tinned pears - salmon - fish - apricots - biscuits - bread, cigs of many brands, 12 cts for 20 for best quality, less for cheaper brands not so good. But we had an issue of Craven A and Gold Flake from our store. There was also a Church Army van that visited us every day with toilet requisites etc etc. In fact we had a fairly happy time here.




Word to move came at last and the evening before the move I went down and spent a couple of hours with the natives at the house. I gave them a couple of guilden each before parting and I'm sure they were as sorry on parting as I was to leave. We shook hands and on our departure the next morning they were all out in front weeping and waving furiously as our van went by. Many chaps had bought native knives as souvenirs but they had had to hand them in.

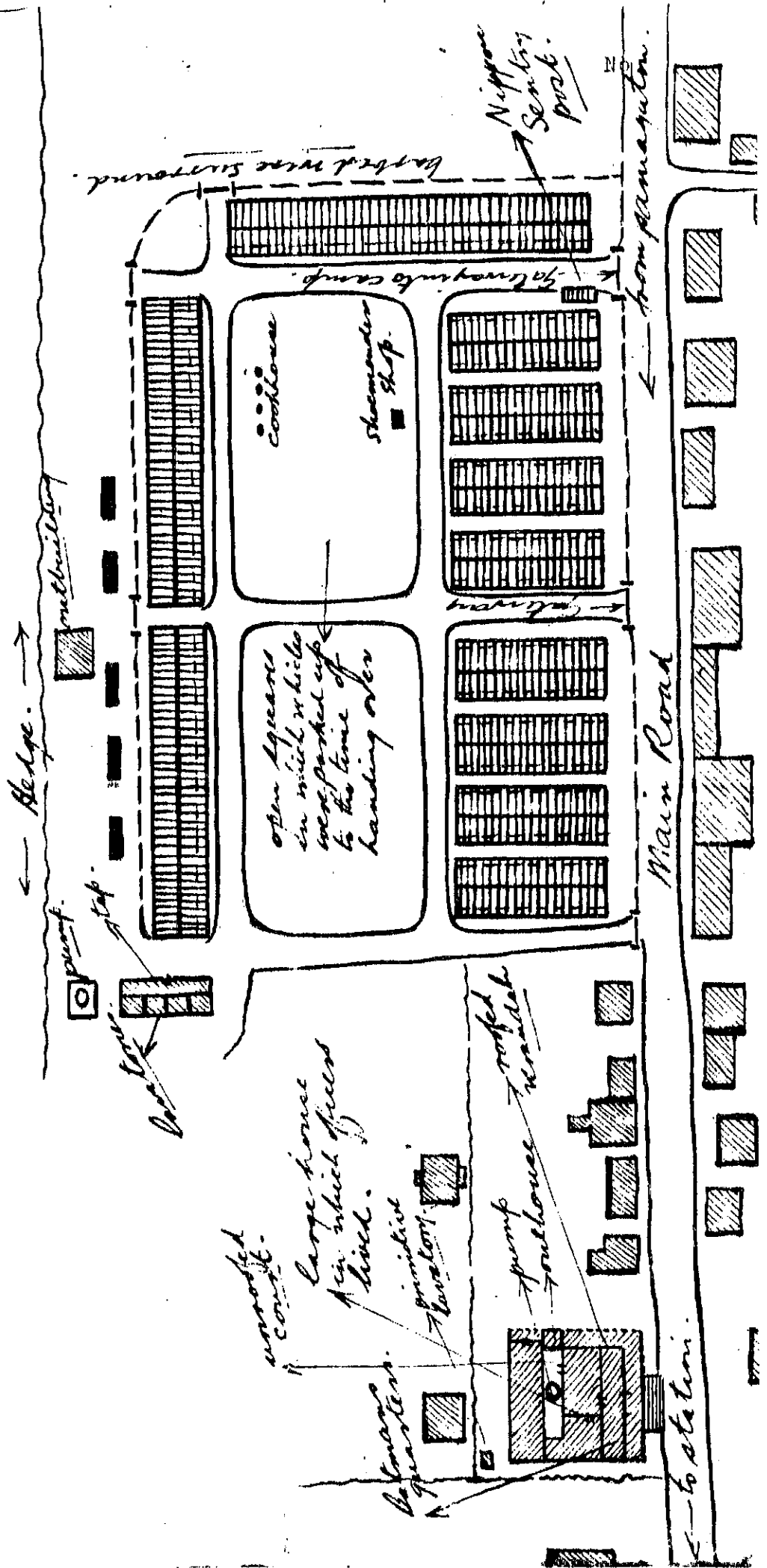
There were 40 to 50 vehicles in the convoy and the journey once again passed through mountains to finally reach W. - here we see first Nippon. Our quarters, I imagine, had once been the market place. It is an open roofed structure and after a meal we made our beds. Sqn/Ldr Grant bought several rush mats which we laid on the floor before putting bedding down on the stone ground. The lorries were parked in open ground between buildings and the cookhouse fires were also here.

On the following day I took up batman duties again. The officers were in a house just along the road and here I move together with Badcock and Saunders, two clerks. There is a lot of buying done here through fence. We receive instructions as to saluting Nippon guards.

We, not being in camp, have facilities for getting down to village and we buy Guinness at 1G20cts a bottle for officers; we have bottle each given to us but it has 'gone off'

Warerodja. 21st to 24th March 1942

-  - Latrines
-  - Native houses or shops.
-  - Roofed shelters - living quarters.



The natives are selling Sarongs, Pyjamas, etc, etc, in fact we live well, we eat the same food as the officers, eggs - duck principally @ 3 or 4 cts apiece, which we fry over an open fire (frying pan made out of 4 gallon petrol tin cut down) also buy bread & tins of butter. But we are on a short stay here (from 21st to 24th) and supposed to leave tonight at midnight.

We parade at 12 but leave at 1:am and march to station. During the march we pass upwards of 200 vehicles of all types and some tanks parked on roadside - reach the railway station after about 6 miles and wait for train. Some bed down but commence train journey in dark. We see the dawn break and the fruit buying at stations begins again but we have an issue of bully and biscuits. We halt at a place where the bridge has been bombed, alight, and cross to where line recommences to join another train waiting on other side. There are workmen repairing the bridge and Dutch people hand out cups of tea and some of us are lucky enough to get one. It is quite a scene here, there are Dutch, Chinese and natives all waiting with belonging on the embankment, apparently for a train. Just after journey commences we see the remains of railway carriages and an engine on the embankment; it looks as if they have been derailed by bombing. Natives are filling bomb holes and relaying track.

We finally arrive at a fair sized station which is B. (Buitenzorg?) we dismount and parade outside on a green opposite station entrance and put at ease. There are several Nippon guards around. While waiting for lorries we can buy bananas. This is a clean fair sized town and close by is a well kept park (Bogor Botanical Gardens?). We see many young Dutch boys and girls and girls 18 to 25 with older females. Some of our officers cross the road to converse with the Dutch but immediately a Nippon guard ran across and sent them back and ordered the females away and also dispersed the many natives gathered around. There seems to be a better class type of native here - Fez - spotless white or fawn linen jackets and sarongs, they looked immaculate. Finally the lorries arrive and there being inadequate transport we are packed sardine fashion and ride a further 6 or 7 miles.

Dusk is descending as we draw into the camp then comes the usual waiting about - then the sorting out of kitbags which came direct - then the allocation of billets - we are very tired - there's a meal and we sleep.

This place is called Semplak. There are about 30 guards under a guard commander plus a camp commandant (W.O. 1st class) whom we don Tojo. The accommodation is in native huts (ours holds 30 men) and at the first storm they leak badly, luckily I have a dry spot. The first request from the Nips is for Tradesmen. Wing/Commr Alexander refuses and is taken away but we don't know where and rumours abound. Wing/Commr Matthews takes over, calls all men on parade and announces decision to disclose trades. He says that we shall have some work to do on the drome but no orders will come from our officers. First we have roll call then after breakfast march to the drome where we fill in bomb holes and demolish the burnt out hangars. There is a general tidying up of the place - digging and cleaping ditches - we clear practically all petrol to Buitenzorg by lorries. Some of our drivers are employed fetching stones from several miles away for the filling of bomb holes. Work of this type lasts about 3 months then a period of comparative idleness, except for minor fatigues, is experienced. For the first week or two here I still continued with batman duties but I decided that 3 batmen for 6 officers were too many and as circumstances so different I approached Mr Gibbs and stated my case. He in turn told me I could still keep the job if I wished but I said I would rather take my chances with the rest of the lads - K.W. & P. on the drome or where ever. I received a joint present of ten guilden from the officers.

Going with the lorries to collect the stones was in a way a rewarding job, occasionally one could cadge cigs from a Nip guard and buy fruit off the natives. A coconut cost a cent but the natives were made to climb the tree to pick it first. Our food in camp was meagre - rice and watery soup with little variation so we attempted to add to it as often as possible and I did very well on my foraging. The wheel had turned full circle and now we were selling clothes to the natives, in fact articles of any description, we even sold watches to the Nip guards. We could buy sweet potatoes and we erected ovens and lit fires at the rear of buildings where we

DAIDO BOEKI KAISYA, LTD.

Septak 25 March - 16 Aug 1942.

■ - living quarters.

dotted lines show covered verandah around building.

■ all-ments.

• traps. have made fireplaces at rear of building.

not in wheel code sheet. (Stores also kept in here.)

Cookhouse

No.

living quarters complete with latrine

Caravans (flashed) in showers

detention cell.

area latrine over stream

Office in basement work over to 4 for office use

workshops water & cove

that end of building has been in office

Latrine leading out of camp. (small with barrel used)

Sentry box

Basket Ball pitch

football pitch

Raised dance baseball pitch

private cookhouse for officers.

Nippon Guard Room

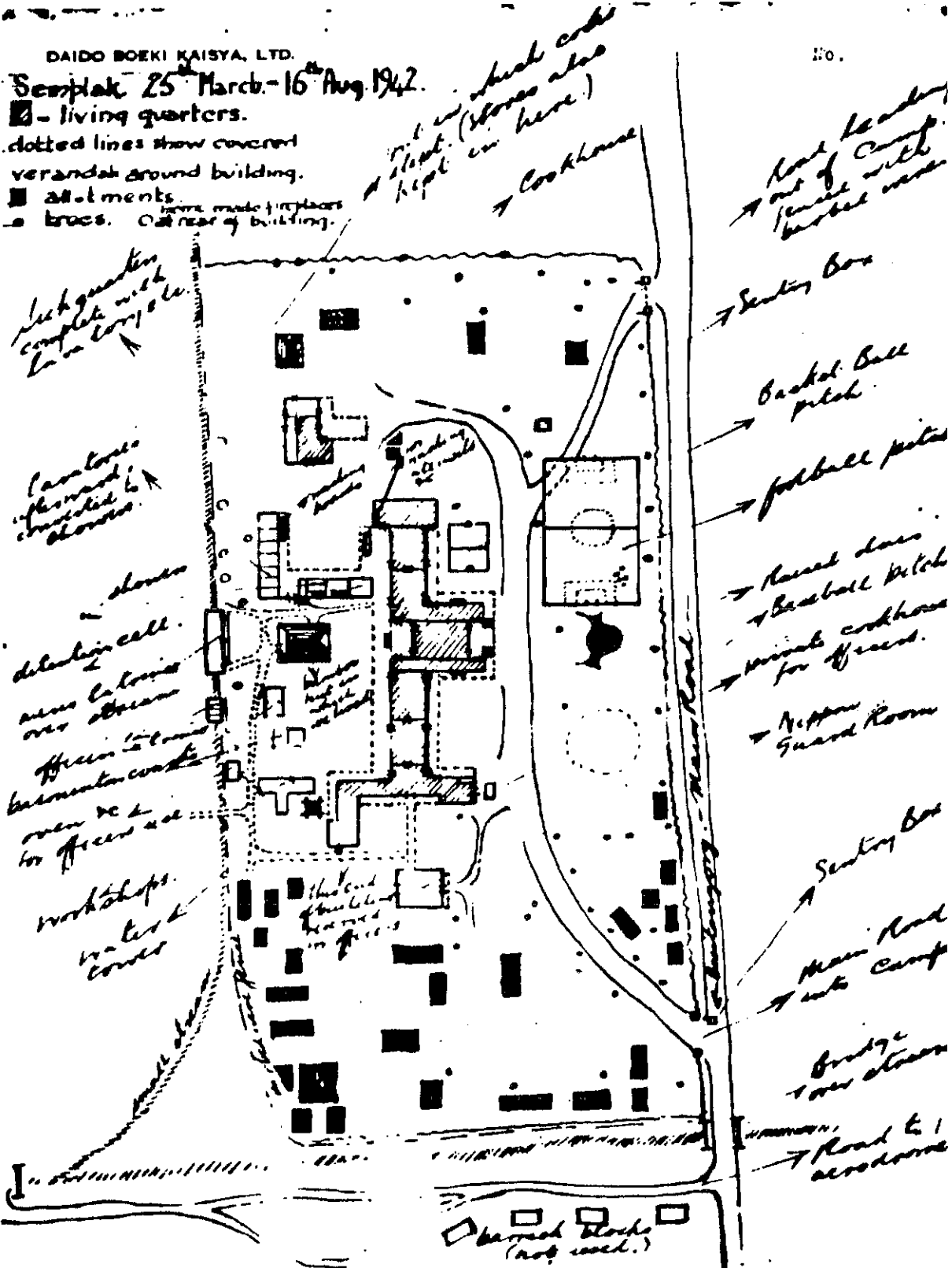
Sentry box

Main Road into camp

Bridge over stream

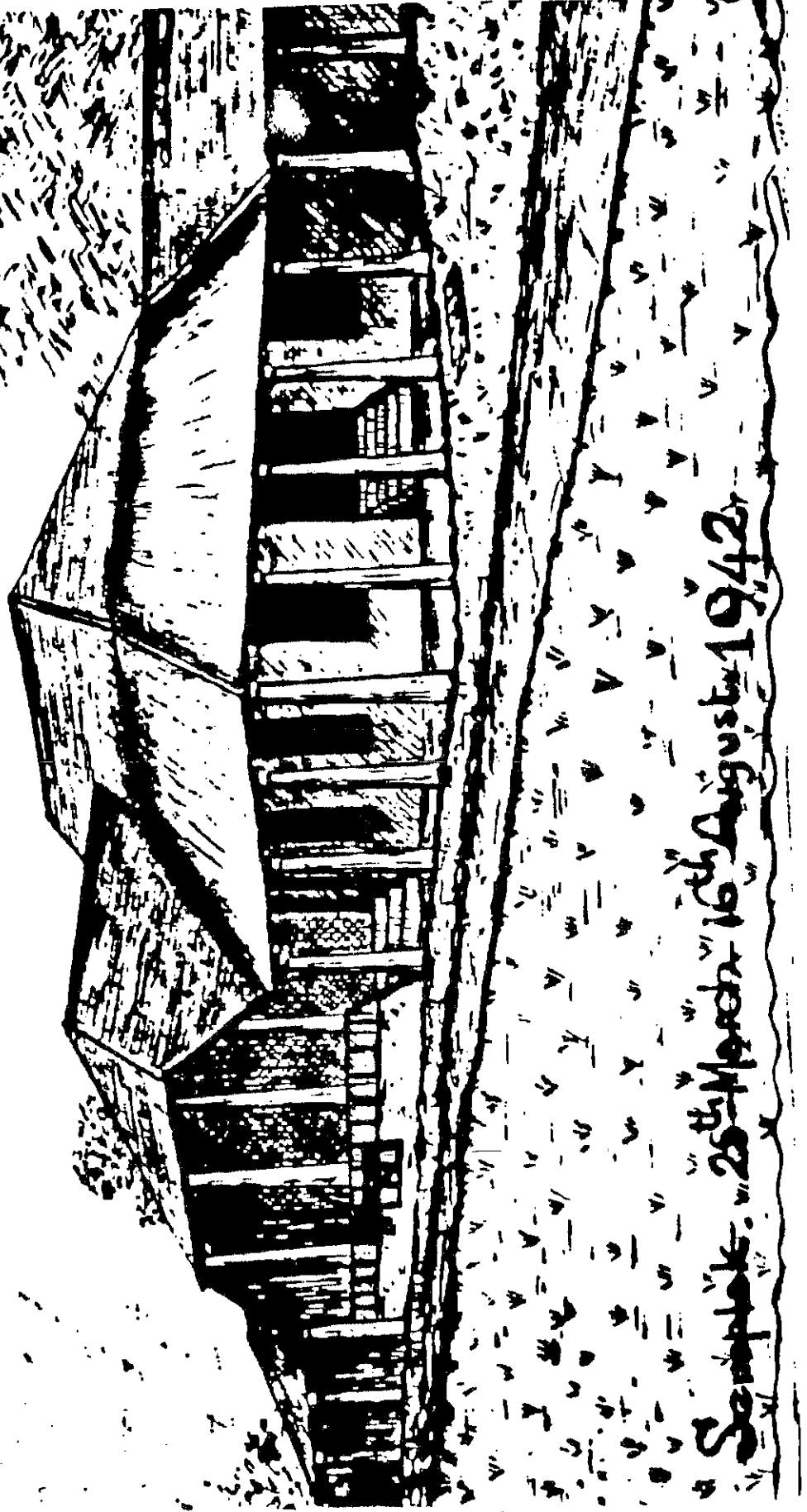
Road to 1 across

Barbed blocks (not used.)



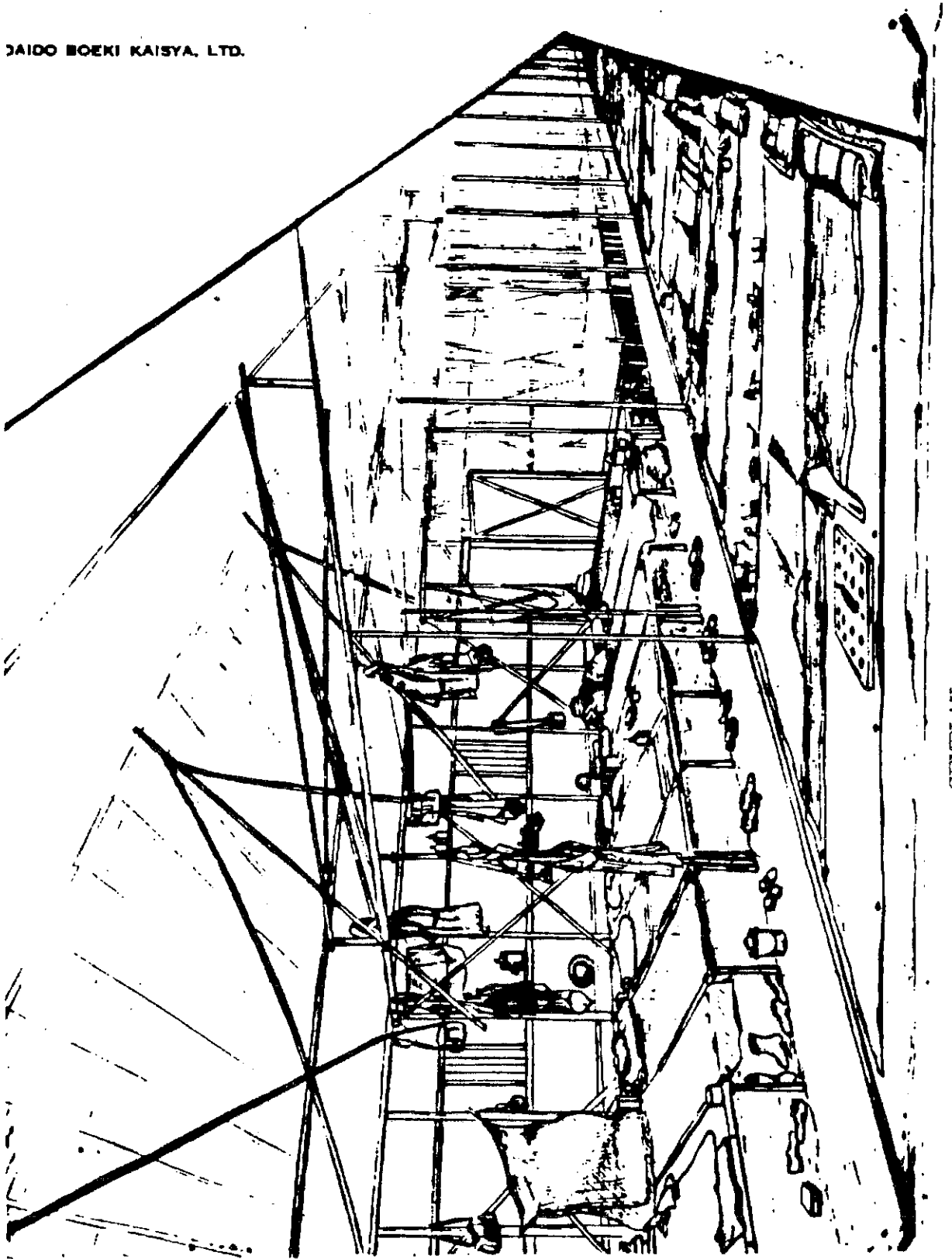
JAIDO BOEKI KAISYA, LTD.

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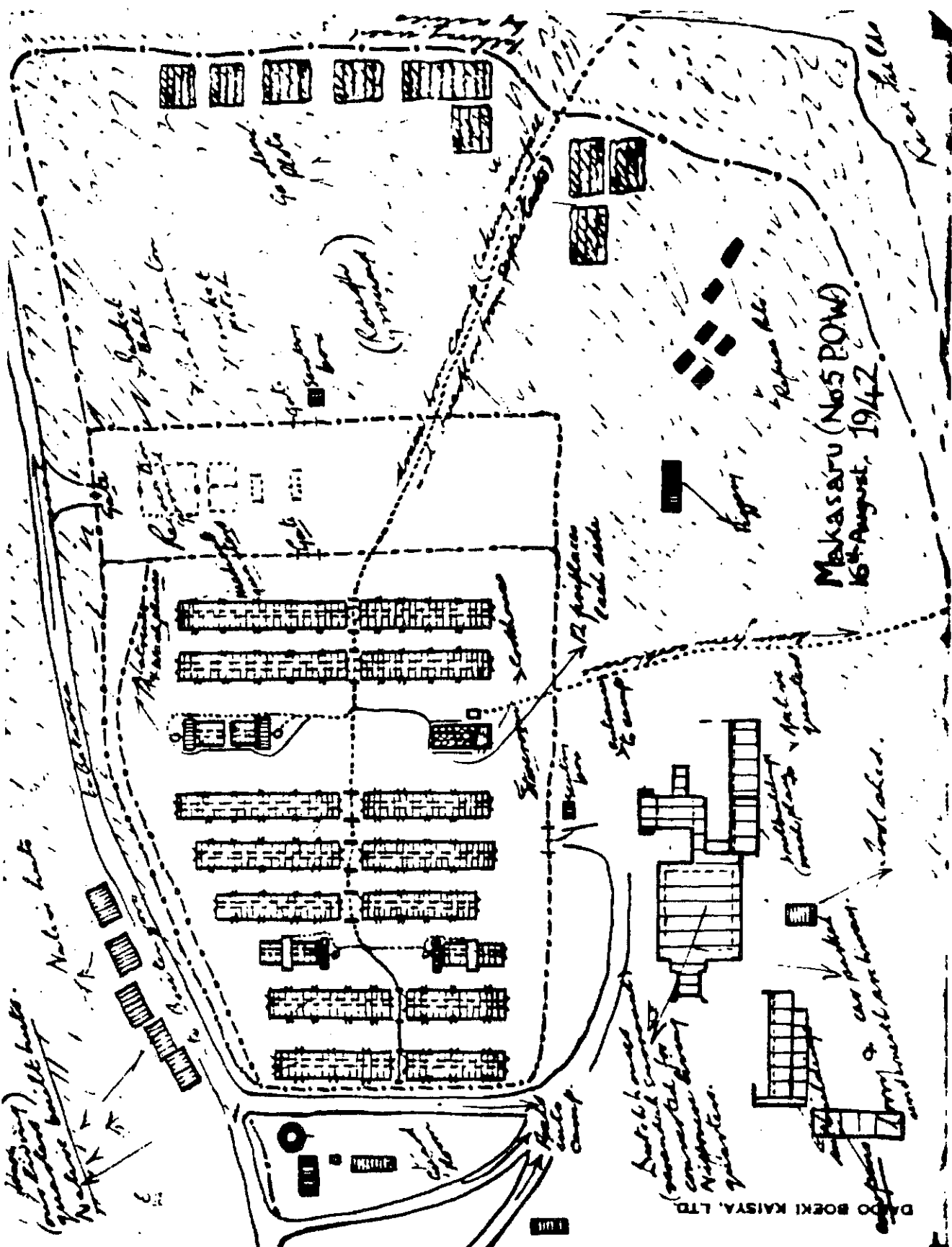


Sample. 25th March 16th August 1942

DAIDO BOEKI KAISYA, LTD.



SEMPPLAK



Makasaru (Nos 5 POW)
 16th August, 1942

DADO BOEKI KAISYA, LTD.

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12 personnel head side
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boiled our eggs, cooked our sweet potatoes and anything else we could lay our hands on. Buying over the fence was stopped by the Nips but there were many instances of men continuing to do so and some got caught.

In some of the lorries which went out to pick up bricks etc false bottoms were fitted and on returning to camp carried all types of eatables and canned stuff. A vehicle went to Buitenzorg every day for rations and a welfare system was started where those on the vehicle bought eggs @ 5cts bread @ 12 cts, sweet potatoes 3cts a kilo (4 to 8 spuds according to size) Four of us - K.W. & P and myself had sweet potatoes for dinner and after the evening meal. There were organised games of football, netball, baseball badminton and darts, there were also bars and swings. A library was formed made up of books given by the Dutch and Chinese in Buitenzorg. It became quite a comprehensive library containing 500 to 600 books. There were classes in English, shorthand etc organized and there was work by individuals with perspex and duro found on the drome, water colour painting, pencil and ink drawing and even an exhibition was staged. One chap made a pair of pyjamas, others made perspex crosses, paper knives, aeroplanes, cocktail set trinket box, belt buckles, wooden speed boats, galleons, perspex and wooden crib boards, a hammered metal ink stand, duro model aeroplanes of Lightnings, Blenheims, M.E.110, Wellington, Hampden, Spitfire, Hurricanes, and all were excellent.

The officers lived well here as they still had plenty of money so could buy tinned fish etc and fruit.

As the major part of the work on the drome had been completed allotments were started, tomatoes were planted but it is a poor climate for such but sweet potatoes, beans, peanuts, cucumbers did well; sweet corn was planted but never saw it come to perfection.

The Nips held a number of kit inspections and requested we hand over tin hats, cameras, clasp knives and the like. On the 16th August we left Semplak. The kitbags went on lorries and we walked with small kit to Buitenzorg station - a mornings walk of 6 miles and on arrival we waited in the park opposite the station and ate sweet potatoes we had cooked the previous evening. We saw our lorries go through. We noticed an absence of Dutch people apart from a few wearing Nip armbands; hear rumours that they are being interned. We entrain and travel roughly 30 miles to Batavia. There is a roll call on arrival. Our lorries are waiting here with our kit but then set off on the remainder of the journey. There are hundreds of natives standing watching us march away as we proceed to the next camp which I estimate as being a distance of 7 miles. There are cigarettes and chocolate thrown to us by some Dutch people and by one or two natives, which is very acceptable. It is very hot and we are sweating, allowed three rests on the way. The road is very familiar to us as it is the same road we took to the drome, however, we keep straight on past the turn to drome and after about a mile see camp M. (Makasura?)

This is a camp built entirely of bamboo and roofed with palm leaves, (attap) it is surrounded by a barbed wire fence, double fenced on roadside, and rush mats obstruct view of an from roadway. Within the camp are many coconut palms - obviously a cultivated plantation. There are seven long rows of huts and between number 2 and no 3 huts are two latrines and wash-places. In between No5 & No 6 huts is the cookhouse and another latrine. The sanitary provisions are not too good being of the septic tank type - flushing done by stop taps. The huts are divided into sections with passage ways up the centre, on either side are bamboo platforms 18 inches from the ground which are our beds (sounds primitive but these are quite comfortable) There are electric lights in each hut with one main control switch per hut. The routine is - reveille 0715, parade 0730, breakfast 0745 - 0830, working party 0900 till 1200, dinner 1230 till 1330, working parade 1400 till 1700, evening parade 1900, evening meal 1930hrs. but vary slightly.

There were about 500 of us when we were joined by about 600 from Kalidja and this number included 150 S.T.C. boys. Each day there were fatigues such as waste bin emptying, cleaning and flushing latrines, general clean up of camp, sweeping ground around Nip quarters, rice and vegetable preparing. As there were now 1100 men in camp these fatigues came round about every seven days. After a week more men were needed by the Nips for work started on

on digging the waste ground outside the camp to make gardens. Several large patches were dug and beans, cucumbers and tapioca were planted; this lasted for three weeks. A piggery was also built and 15 pigs were brought at the beginning of November, with two men who had knowledge of pigs put in charge.

From the 5th September the Nips decided to pay 10cts for outside fatigues and also for latrine work inside camp which involved removing four feet of water from the septic tank each day and emptying this in a gully running through the camp into the rice fields. This was a very necessary job as the sanitary system was not a success and was inadequate for 1100 men. Three men were employed permanently in the Nip quarters. We had to salute all guards. The guard consisted of regular army 2 star and 3 star but after a month they changed for non regulars - a different type of fellow. Had daily drills for about 3 weeks. The camp was controlled by a 2 star commissioned rank - a 1st Lieutenant. Library started but no classes; a part of one hut was reserved for Divine Worship.

On the 12th September, 25 Army men arrived from Timor via Surabaya and Batavia. We had previously heard that Timor was in our hands so that was knocked in the head. We heard various news items but I think most of it was fictitious. The men from Timor tell of three days fighting then capture. Apparently there were supposed to be some men fighting in the hills and an attempt was made to break out of camp and some were away from camp for a day or two. They came from Timor in a 500 ton merchant ship with 1000 Nips on board and the conditions were shocking. The padre's wife travelled with them and had to use the same toilet. Shortly after their arrival our whole camp had inoculations - anti bubonic - 3 anti dysentery - malaria and diphtheria. Dysentery, malaria and diphtheria were prevalent in the camp as well as tropical ulcers and sweat rashes etc. There was a sick bay in camp but when cases were too bad they were sent to Batavia.

There are rumours circulating that a move is on and 500 receive an envelope containing a cellophane in which a motion sample has to be placed. they also receive blood tests at the sick bay.

At this time we have to sign a paper saying that we will obey all the orders of DIA NIPPON GUN. A slip was issued to each man and details such as date of birth - place - next of kin - civilian occupation and hobby had to be stated.

On the 16th October all men who had the blood test were told that a move would be made on the 17th with a 6 mile walk to the station carrying only skeleton kit (no lorries would be provided) as much as they could carry. There was a lot of kit discarded. They paraded the following day on the recreation ground and a sorting out of the 500. They marched off at 10.30. In the meantime the same procedure happened to another 450 (without the blood test) P and myself in this lot but not K. and we felt sorrow at this. There was another parade two days later and evidently a new list has been made as only 300 are selected and I am not amongst these neither is G.P. so we remain together (G.P. George Pattenden?) (Some people in this batch who did not submit samples) These men move off at 10-30am (The army chaps in the 1st batch and also in this batch receive bully and cigarettes and the few that remain each credited with 15G each left with an army officer.) After the parties leave approx 420 left in camp and are moved into two huts.

There are rumours that a large party is coming to the camp.

On Sunday 21st a party of 50 of us are taken to Batavia to a large military hospital there to cut grass around the buildings. The place is scrupulously clean, there are Nip nurses and Nip patients. We are treated very well here - cigarettes handed to us by guards - we have paw-paws and iced tea. For dinner we have tea, a half loaf of bread, rice, battered pork and I was lucky enough to get some chicken soup and veg. Probably the surplus of the patient's food but good. We were there from 9-30 till 5:00.

On the 6th November about 1040 Australian Army arrive from Bandoeng. (Ed: Note - see page 114, The War Diaries of Weary Dunlop who was here from 6th Nov 1942 until 3rd January 1943. Much is confirmed) At Bandoeng they had received excellent treatment, a canteen and comparatively good food to what we have. Our food was bettered by their coming; now an egg each

each morning with rice, beans and rice for dinner, tea 10-30 & 15-30, fatigues do not occur so frequently. Two more roads are being made into the camp. On the 16th November we are detailed for outside fatigues and told to take plate, mug and spoon. There are 50 on lorry with shovels and stretchers and we journey towards Batavia but branch off main road. On the way we pass some of our chaps pushing trucks, seven to a truck. We travel about 5 miles over half of which is on rough track. We pass a tile making place that employs mainly children for labour; then another place where heaps of stones are graded into various sizes by children - stones the size of cricket balls are broken up into small flints for road making; see women labourers working under portable shade shelters.

The journey continues with rough ground either side, there are many wild pineapples, there are also patches of cultivated ground here and there. Pass through young rubber plantations and reach houses in a clearing, of a better class than normal; we alight.

A 3rd class W.O. and guard are with us; a native brings them four chairs and a table and provide tea; the Nips invite our F/Sgt to join them and we all have 15 minutes rest. Afterwards we take off our shoes, socks and shirts walk through rubber plantation to the bank of a swiftly flowing river armed with shovels and stretcher carriers. We get into the water and grope on the river bed for stones which we place on a shovel and throw 5 feet above us to a level spot. Rafts on the river pass as we work and we have an audience of natives. The trucks brought from camp arrive and are filled; at 1 pm we cease work and the trucks leave; we wait for food from camp. A Dutch run-about arrives with a Nip soldier and two natives and the W.O. goes with these to investigate non arrival of food as it is now 3pm. Shortly after this a lorry arrives and the W.O. returns with this. Apparently it was late because it had run out of petrol. The rice and tea were luke-warm but we are hungry. We commence work again at 4:15 and finish at 4:45 to return to camp.

Rumours fill the air - new guards arrive and guards who accompanied last large party to leave camp are back here. Remours Singapore invaded.

On the 17th a Fly swotting campaign ordered by the Nips - 10 to 12 each day. 18th - fly swotting continues but now 12 to 1400 hrs. Aussies are now on 'River' party as they do two loads per day, (our chaps only did one) after a couple of days they begin to moan. Still have egg for breakfast - peas on rice for dinner - stew every evening with meat every third day. Learn that egg and peas are supplied by an Aussie officer. At 8 pm on the 19th we had a concert by our chaps and Aussies. It lasted 1½ hrs and I enjoyed it. There is a good band here now. (Ed: someone may understand this - he writes "mentio 'Bees' as fairy in sketch - golden hair made of stuff used for wiping pipe joints - brassiers - short frock made of flour sacks, silver paper stars sown on)

Rumours - that Dakar attacked - FF (Free French?) ours. Some more leaving camp?

20th - more aerial activity today. Plane over after dark last night.

On refuse pit digging today with W/O Loveday (Albert) a morning fatigue only. See formation of nine twin engined bombers - several other planes about. See pigs for first time, there are 15, quarter grown. In working party on gardens - a poor crop of both beans and cucumbers. Beans dying off when about a foot high and pulled up. As for the cucumbers, what few there are have been stuck. Tapioca has a good start.

21st - Not so many planes about today. Names of those who have knowledge of ship building requested by Nips. Understand some Aussies hand in names. Library once again open after recall of books for repair (some few books from these brought by Aussies)

Unloading rations from lorry - egg fruit (egg shaped 3" to 8" long. mauve outside and white inside) cabbage - veg similar to radish but larger, colour white and bunched - carrots always young and bunched - beans similar to dwarf in the older stage - cucumbers - 6 x 2cwt dried peas (understand the peas are Nip issue and now controlled by them) that is a month's supply so suppose we shall now get them on one day per week, not everyday.

From time to time at this camp we have received a tobacco or cigarette issue - mostly cigars or native cigs or native tobacco. Had a 20 cig issue yesterday. Making 60 issued this week.

Sunday 22nd November 1942. Told on morning parade that flies killed today have to be produced on evening parade - everyone busy. We also have to hand in a list of all equipment we possess. Went to church this morning at 10.30 Flies handed in this evening - my count was 10 - average in camp 7 per man for the squadron.

23rd - more aerial activity also more rumours, hear that war in M.E. (Middle East?) is over and that church bells were rung in E. Usual routine day. Nip W.O. inspected flies caught.

24th November. On septic tank fatigues today, one hour morning and one in afternoon. Rumours still persist. More air activity today.

25th November - Rumours today that more men are to be moved (as ten typists had to report this morning over at the Nip quarters maybe there is something in it) The Dutchman in charge of Friesian herd here has today been interned Note - the cows and bull have been moved. More air activity - visited by 6 or 7 Nip airmen ; seem very amicable.

Someone mentions Xmas a month from today. Xmas shopping at home - thoughts. I have not mentioned before that since our arrival here we have had the good fortune to be sleeping opposite the cooks - extra snacks - beef tea - fried rice. (Ed: and it was said that it wasn't the meat that made the cooks fat, it was the heat!)

26th - 500 men on fatigue outside camp and march to an empty camp about $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile away. It appears to have been a camp similar to ours but the huts have no sides. There are craters as if made by bombs, only a few huts left standing and dismantle these. Cart bamboo and a few bricks back to our camp on trucks. Had my first taste of Mango, they are just coming into season. They are oval shaped, yellow/green skin 5" to 8" long, large stone in centre surrounded by orange like substance, very juicy and sweet. (better than an orange in taste)

Rumoured that some Nip guards that left here today have returned. Query? For the past few nights the choir has been practicing carols and while I am writing this the strains of "O come all ye faithful" can be heard.

27th. Ordinary day - no fatigues. Saw some of the handiwork executed by the Aussies at Bandoeng. A different type of work to that which our fellows did Outstanding exhibits were a carved wood tray depicting an elephant chasing a native with a background of palms and vegetation - a crib board with carved wood surround - two horseshoes of metal with inset pegholes drilled in these. I hear there is to be an exhibition of work from both sections on Thursday. A memorial book is also being compiled by the Australian group and our names and addresses have been taken to be included on the mailing lists. (The Aussies had much better facilities at Bandoeng for executing work and holding classes than we had here for apparently they only did a minimum of work for the Nips) It may appear too that their officers had more organizing ability.

28th - No fatigues - doing mess orderly today with Kinsey, GP & 4 others.

29th - Advent Sunday - have just come from Church, "Abide with me" and "Thy Kingdom come" were two of the hymns.

One would have been able to write a book on rumours if a check had been kept each day - they still persist - Russ ans receive set back - severe shipping losses suffered by Britain - Two German armoured divisions landed at Tobruk. This and more is supposed to have come from a Nip newspaper of 21st.

Rumoured that Aussies are to go back to Bandoeng.

30th - No egg for breakfast - it is said that the native who used to bring them has been stopped by the Nips. This applies also to all welfare goods.

On brick removing fatigue from old dismantled building at rear of Nip quarters - old bricks into outbuildings - an all day fatigue 9 till 12, 2 till 5.

1st December - P.T. each morning still continues - on emptying septic tanks again. Announcement on evening parade that in future lights will remain on until 10-30 pm. Meat in evening meal and hear it is to be daily (Pork and beef) As we had it tonight as well maybe this is correct.

2nd Dec: - Natives inside camp digging wells near septic tank - looks as if this may be to help sanitary system.

3rd Dec: Exhibition of art today and invitation extended to camp commandant but he says he will not be able to attend as unfortunately he has to go out.

I have been over to see exhibits - first class - wood carvings - designs on water bottles - crib boards, perspex and wood - Rolls of Honour - cuff links in horn - drawings and sketches of all types - Bill posters advertising concerts in camp (Bandoeng) - Cushion covers made from odd scraps of wool but main from blankets - pipes made at Bandoeng and various other items.

3rd Dec: - Today's rumours are fantastic - British and American troops have made a landing 50 miles north of Singapore. Last couple of days have had a news sheet and I understand this compiled from Nip newspapers published here therefore news has to be taken with a pinch of salt. The shop has reopened as fruit etc is being brought by another native. Only without eggs on one da

4th Dec: - Yesterdays news had a footnote - "ONLY EIGHTEEN MORE SHOPPING DAY TO CHRISTMAS" - there's a new bulletin up today - among many other things it reports a big fire at Hollywood with big loss of life among whom was Buck Jones. Natives still on digging wells and generally improving appearance of pits. Had an interesting talk this evening with Aussie Sgt Low (comes from S.W. Australia) After talking for a while about life in Aust in general he told of his experiences on this island. He did not give himself up until after 20 days after capitulation (in company with other Aussies) and then only because of malaria. He went to a hospital at Bandoeng and when better to camp 13 with Dutch - Aussies - Natives - all separated by barbed wire. It was a confined space surrounded by a high brick wall and there was no room to exercise except round the barbed wire. He estimated that about 1500 men were in the camp on 2 acres of land - the hut accommodation was insufficient and they were sleeping like sardines. He was here only six weeks but lost 3 stone in that time, if they had been there much longer there would have been a loss of life. He was shifted to a large barracks in Bandoeng and here the conditions were completely opposite - gas and electricity - pots and pans - a cafe - extremely cheap food. He was in what had been a married quarters and there was some activity in the gardens but not much work for the Nips. Punishment for wrong doers - standing on one leg - knees bend - holding book over head etc.

5th Dec: Square boxes placed about the camp filled with grey sand like earth presumably precautions against fire. (incendiaries) Complete blackout tonight between 9 & 10pm. No lights on in camp or in Nip quarters. Centre light (left on normally all night) draped with black cloth and Nip windows have same material. Went out during night to lavatory and surrounding lights usually left on were off and camp in darkness. Are these things significant?

6th - Had another native fruit today, it was plum shaped, slightly larger than a good sized Victoria - russet coloured - skin of texture of a russet apple - fleshy inside with black stone in centre - tastes very much like cooking pear but much sweeter. Have today discussed what store we shall get in for Christmas - 12 bananas @ 1½cts each. Sows (?) @ ½ct 24. 2 pineapples @ 6cts. 6 mangoes @ 3cts. 6 tangerines @ 3cts. 4 duck eggs @ 4cts. 2 papayas @ 6cts. 1 b.x of 50 cigars @ 32cts. 2 pkts of cigarettes @ 10cts. 1 kilo of peanuts @ 15cts. Total 173cts.

Have been to church once again this morning and there was quite a good after dance. The Padre always prays for those at home.

7th Dec: First thoughts today on waking - one year today since we boarded boat. Blackout last night was still in operation. All lights in our billet have now been blacked out and it's very dismal at night - the lighting before was inadequate. (4 lights in hut which accommodates 88 men - 44 each side with 3ft of space for each man) The Nips were on manouevers (practice) last night and on evening parade we had been told that gen and no notice had to be paid to cries and shouts that we heard, it is rumoured that the blackout is on till the 10th. It was announced in the newspapers that celebrations over the islands are to take place from the 7th to the 10th.

8th - the celebrations have evidently been started as a gala procession complete with native bands went Bataviawards this morning. There were two or three hundred natives and in the procession a practically life size silver aeroplane had been mounted on a car and there was a mock tank and guns. There was an excellent model of a native house executed in the fruits of the region complete with a miniature Nip flag flying from the roof. The most interesting tableau depicted some 20-30 natives of different ages with bodies and hair coloured white with two natives dressed as Nips with mock rifles

and bayonets painted silver - the whole representing English POWs with guards. The majority of us had a good laugh over this. Today being the 8th our thoughts revert to that memorable day one year ago when we actually set sail and to nine months ago by the date - the day we were taken prisoner - thank God up till now we have suffered no ill effect. The episode of the mutiny of some 200 fellows and their refusal to board the City of Canterbury at Durban owing to the conditions on that boat, and our subsequent continuance of the voyage without them, springs to mind, I wonder what happened to them?

The natives have now finished the extra wells, in each case going down 25ft, it's good brown earth to a depth of 10ft and from there a reddish brown soil similar to that seen in some parts of the Cotswolds.

Egg for both breakfast and dinner but double quantity was issued, hence the extra egg. Blackout still continues.

9th Dec: Egg this morning! I hear egg issue in future is to be at dinnertime Have just been over to shop and purchased 10 (Sows)? (Ed: I don't know what they are - he puts brackets and question mark). No P.T. this am as the ground was too wet after heavy rain last night. Am getting rather low on toilet requisities although still have two cakes of toilet soap - one bar of good quality washing soap - a tube of tooth paste in use and also a new tube - 20 razor blades and three new sticks of shaving soap - hoping these things will last out our period of captivity. Heard this evening that the fellows that left this camp have arrived in Nippon - the source from which this came seems reliable. There is plenty of conversation in the billet these evenings as the blackout restricts card playing. K and I usually dwell on happy memories of the past but this evening we looked into and talked of the future. Maybe the atmosphere created by the blackout did not induce optimism for the conversation was, in the main, of a pessimistic note.

10th - Today the blackout ends so shades are taken off lamps. This evening we have been presented by the Nips a single news sheet headed WAR ANNIVERSAR EXTRA and printed in English - at the moment one of our fellows is reading from same - in the main it seems a fairly accurate description of what they have done to date mentioning their growing power after the war with Russia - the Pearl harbour attack and the sweep through Malaya to the N.E.I.

11th. Have today been on fatigues - laying a brick trench to take away water from near officer's quarters. The land behind the outbuildings has been turned over for cultivation. Road outside camp is being repaired, even rollers - steam and motor.

(Ed: At this point he writes the odd word in English and the main in shorthand which I cannot interpret. Maybe he does so to hide from Nip eyes the information he writes. This continues on until the 2nd June 1944)

Three kind ladies have translated the shorthand and typed out the narrative and the translated portions have been emphasised in heavy type. There were no secret tirades against the Japs in the shorthand and we can only assume he used the method as an exercise. To complete this page I will continue the 11th December to the 14th and then use the typing by the ladies from the D.H.S.S.)

11th Dec CONT: Rough stuff off top of road brought into camp for path making Hear a job we have been on will last for a day or two so shall be earning a few extra 10 cents. Have been told we shall be on the same job tomorrow but have told George he can go if he likes.

12th Dec. Not much news, have heard that no more peas till Wednesday, as there were none today, think this may be so. The Nip guards are buying white blankets for 5Gs each, several being sold.

13th Dec. Get rain most days now generally in the afternoons but this morning had steady rain from 6 till 7.30am. Church again this morning, had 'Through all the changing scenes'. Missed fatigue party. Because of this had interesting talk with fellow from Gloucester last night, made both K and myself think longingly of home.

14th Dec. Have been on fatigues today. This morning straightening and trenching a new piece of ground, in afternoon digging up rows of cattle fodder for more land to be put under cultivation, also planting papaya trees. Working hrs are now 9-12, 2.30-5.30. Rain stopped work at 5pm today. The few guards

with us today seemingly so confident (no rifles were carried) makes one wonder how long we shall be here. However, we are content and wondering will not get us out any quicker.

15 DECEMBER

Have today got the cigars ordered - boxes of 49 cost 35 cents, larger size 10 for 13 cents and helped unload ration wagon and all of us each had bar of salt 6pm.

16 DECEMBER

Have had news today that President Coolidge sunk in South Pacific with troops on board and also hear southern dromes in England heavily bombed and while I am making these notes am enjoying cigar.

17 DECEMBER

Have had one of my colds for the last day or two but it is better today and handkerchiefs are a problem but I was able to buy two a few days ago and shoes are also a problem and many fellows have made clogs for wearing on the camp and we are now anxiously awaiting the next issue of toilet paper and soap.

18 DECEMBER

Today camp commander has been out and as is usual when this occurs the guards have taken advantage - relate incident. Have agreed to go shares with the cooks for our extra food at Xmas if this is a success I will give an account of the menu on Xmas day and on parade this evening were given new instructions for saluting.

19 DECEMBER

New fireplaces and ovens are now nearly ready. Today the cooks brought small bun like loaves over for us to taste and very good. Up to the present time we have had no bread but now may get regular supplies.

35

20 DECEMBER

Have been on fatigues going down road just for a mile getting rough tarmac from roadside to make road outside barbed wire at camp two parties morning and afternoon. Had good guards with us who bought us papaya and pineapple and were just moving off when procession of natives heralded by blare of musical instruments note for stretcher made of bamboo, roof of newspaper etc, native woman inside bedecked with ornaments, face whitened and white gloves on hands clasped as if in prayer.

21 DECEMBER mention P/OL incident

Again on fatigues digging trench in between camp and Nipponese quarters for taking water from camp to rice fields -still plenty of rumours and if one could believe them it won't be long now.

22 DECEMBER

Stand by at the Orderly Room this morning went over to Nipponese quarters to move some sacks of rice. Today some 150-200 of the Aussies have received some form of letter great excitement.

23 DECEMBER

We are to be allowed to write another letter - have had the letter forms and have written ready to be typed at O.R.

24 DECEMBER

Fruit etc we ordered has come. 12 bananas - 18c, 12 sorosis - 6c, 2 papaya - 12c, 8 eggs - 32c, 6 bars chocolate - 12c. A lorry load of various articles - clothing, sweets, cigarettes, cigars, soap etc has come into the camp today presumably from Dutch - Xmas Eve memories and thoughts.

25 DECEMBER - CHRISTMAS DAY

Waking thoughts turn homeward - up at 6.15 and had shower parade 7.30 - breakfast, rice and bread (supplemented this by 2 fried eggs). Cooks morning off spent in preparing the extra food. This meal we had at * 11 am. The menu was (1) Egg Nasi Goring, (surplus), (2) Fried egg on fried bread, (3) 2 Cornish pasties each (ate only one), (4) Corn beef sandwiches (none eaten), (5) fruit salad - containing 2 pineapples, 2 papaya, 12 bananas* with three to four pints egg custard poured over this - (after we had enough left for four others), (6) raw fruit - sorosis, bananas, papaya, (7) chocolate salted peanuts roasted, (8) Coffee and cigars. Six of us partook of this meal and there was some left over - everyone was full and had an enjoyable time - this meal was over at approx 12.15 and then our ordinary meal followed at 12.45. The officers and senior NCOs served this meal and I think everyone was surprised at the meal itself - peas and diced meat on rice, hard boiled egg and fruit salad (sorosis, papaya, bananas) with carnation milk, plain roll (made with lard) sweetened coffee (kept peas and meat till evening meal) - afternoon spent reminiscing - and eating fruit etc - evening parade 7 p.m - meal 7.30 pm. Veg, meat etc supplemented by 40 chickens - after this we had carols and impromptu concert. Nippon commander let us have piano and lights were on all night - concerts were kept till 5 a.m. Boxing morning we went to bed at 2 a.m but had very little sleep. Were granted a holiday all day Xmas day and are being granted a holiday all day today.

26 DECEMBER BOXING DAY

* Church parade for the whole camp at 9.30 a.m (excepting RCs and Jews). Carols by the choir "O come all ye faithful". ("The First Nowell". "Holy Night". "God rest ye Merry Gentlemen". "Angels from the realms of Glory") "Christians Awake". "While Shepherds watched their flocks by Night". "Cwym Rhondda" (sankeys) tune to "Angels from the realms of glory". Stayed afterwards joined Communion - thoughts homeward. Got back in time to get share of Dutch gifts - soap, tobacco and papers, bar chocolate.

26th DECEMBER

Spent quietly **many of the fellows with stomach ache - lights on again all night - went early to bed.**

27 DECEMBER

Work resumed - **digging new plots - had another argument in the billet at night re temperatures. 93° in the shade and some said it had on occasions been as hot in England?**

* Message from Wing Commander Alexander read on Xmas Day morning parade by F/Lt Young - adjutant.

Today, 25th Dec. is our first and we sincerely hope our last Xmas as prisoners-of-war. Whilst we can no longer take any active part in the World War we can play our part by keeping our body as fit as possible and our spirit as high as ever. In order to attain these two objectives we must take advantage of the limited sports, P.T etc available and be of good cheer, tolerant, and above all, self-disciplined. All the officers join me in wishing all ranks of the RAF and RAAF the best possible Xmas under the present conditions and a 1943 that will see us all united with our own folk.

No. 5 P.O.W Camp

Signed

..... Makasura, JAVA, 25th Dec. 1942

Senior RAF Officer

36

28 DECEMBER 1942

Paraded **this morning for fatigues but only a few men wanted so came back - more rumours of move.**

29 DECEMBER

On fatigues **today digging new ground for cultivation, in afternoon sticking cucumbers. Rumours re move seem to be right as some of the fellows have envelopes (mainly Aussies).**

30 DECEMBER

Envelopes handed in on 9.30 parade **this morning - (S/Cdr J. 10 cents) Two Nipponese MOs on the camp examining those who are to go away - working party of 20 planting, no work in afternoon because of rain.**

31 DECEMBER N.Y.E

Out on work **today digging holes for posts presumably for extending camp, in the afternoon cleaning up around Nipponese quarters - parade held while we were out, looks as if move will be on the 2nd - Auld Lang Syne.**

1 JANUARY NEW YEARS DAY

Church service held 9 a.m this would be approx 1 a.m home - thoughts - hymns "Nearer my God to thee" - "O heavenly Father strong to save" - "Sun of my soul" - "Jesu lover of my soul" - **this day is observed by the Nipponese festivities - the majority of the guards went down to Batavia - guard kept by native policemen - rain all day.**

2 JANUARY

Day off again - very little veg in, had dried potatoes (boiled) and veg - very good. Between 200 and 300 fowls came in tonight for tomorrow.

3 JANUARY

On fatigues sweeping over at Nipponese quarters - Aussies are to move at 1.30 and 2.30 a.m (2 parties) tomorrow - issued with mosquito nets, plates, shoes &c (mention incident) - tonights meal was very good (one ladle full of gelatine, potatoes, chicken and rice).

4 JANUARY

Aussies moved off this morning but did not hear them general clean up of huts, storeroom in cook house etc.

5 JANUARY

The wettest day we have had so far - approx 1,000 Dutchmen arrived between 7 pm and 9 pm. More on the camp now than ever before.

6 JANUARY

Hear that the Dutchmen came from Socrabaya - 30 hour train journey - lorries collected kit from station - standby fatigue at OR camp mass of mud.

7 JANUARY

On gardens planting seed potatoes - Dutch had inoculation yesterday and test today.

8 JANUARY

The rainy season seems to have come for we have had rain almost continually for the past three days - my shoes are now practically worn out and I have today bought a pair of Dutch boots for one g. - eggs and peas are now finished since Aussies went so we are now back to old diet.

9 JANUARY

Rain still continues - went out to work but had to come in as it rained - fine in the afternoon but were given afternoon off.

10 JANUARY

Preparing ground and planting tapioca - did not commence work till 10 am owing to rain.

11 JANUARY

Digging again in the morning - in the afternoon finished screening the fence alongside road - rumoured that the Dutch are going on Thursday midnight - great buying and selling of many things.

12 JANUARY

Again on the gardens reshuffle of the people on permanent fatigues as some of the "regulars" have been meaning, no bread tomorrow as the Dutch are to take four loaves each tomorrow when they move.

13 JANUARY

Rain stopped work today got wet as rain came before we could get under cover - rain continued all day - did not get any pay for this.

14 & 15 JANUARY

Digging on gardens some cucumbers cut.

16 JANUARY

On trucks getting stones for sticking patches on camp - long rest in afternoon - dancing and singing - have had two new fruits - mangosteen and prickly fruit with similar centre to mangosteen.

17 JANUARY

Rain stopped work today only did one journey.

18 JANUARY

Day off today the Dutch had their first test today many rumours re Middle East and Far East situation - just after lights out tonight came the news that some 200 of our fellows were to be moved in the course of a day or two and they were issued then with cellophane paper for test. It is with some regret that I find Kins, George ?Pattendon?, Wally Abbott, Wally Bayliss, Johnny Kidd, Wacker on the list and I am not.

19 JANUARY

Today the fellows detailed to go have had blood test and inoculation and have daily to hand in sample of excretia.

20 JANUARY

On OR this morning which is a boring fatigue, have now gone back to the old system as none of the fellows on the draft do any fatigues now.

21 JANUARY

All on the list and the Dutch have job up rear and our fellows have innoculations. Mention drawings by Dr Dawson. On sweeping up over at Nipponese quarters have packet of muscat for Italian coin.

37

22 JANUARY 1943

Seeding over at the Nipponese quarters in the morning and in the afternoon manuring papaya trees and egg fruit plants - had conversation in the evening with Dutch fellow.

24 JANUARY

Sweeping over at Nipponese quarters and picking cucumbers 9 rice sacks full.

25 JANUARY

Digging piece of ground which had already been dug once and planting in the afternoon - our fellows and Dutch are to move in the early hours tomorrow.

26 JANUARY

1 am. Have just been over and said goodbye to Dutch fellows as the first batch move at 1.30 am - 2.30 am the rest of the Dutch and our fellows ready to move but at the last minute move cancelled and the first party of Dutch are on their way back so we all go to bed wondering about cancellation - had morning off and went over and had interesting talk with Dutch fellows - in the afternoon digging refuse pits.

27 JANUARY

Had the day off today and spent the day packing as we have been told that all the British are to move to camp in Batavia early tomorrow. Happy to be together a little longer - say goodby to Dutch friends and await move.

28 JANUARY

Parade at 2 am and move off - walk approx five miles (with full kit except bedding) to station in Batavia - board train at approx five and have a ride of just over half a hour - arrive at Tanjong Priok and from here march approx two miles to our new camp - after waiting till daylight we move into our billets and then fetch our bedding from main gates - rest all day and go to bed early as there are no lights in billet.

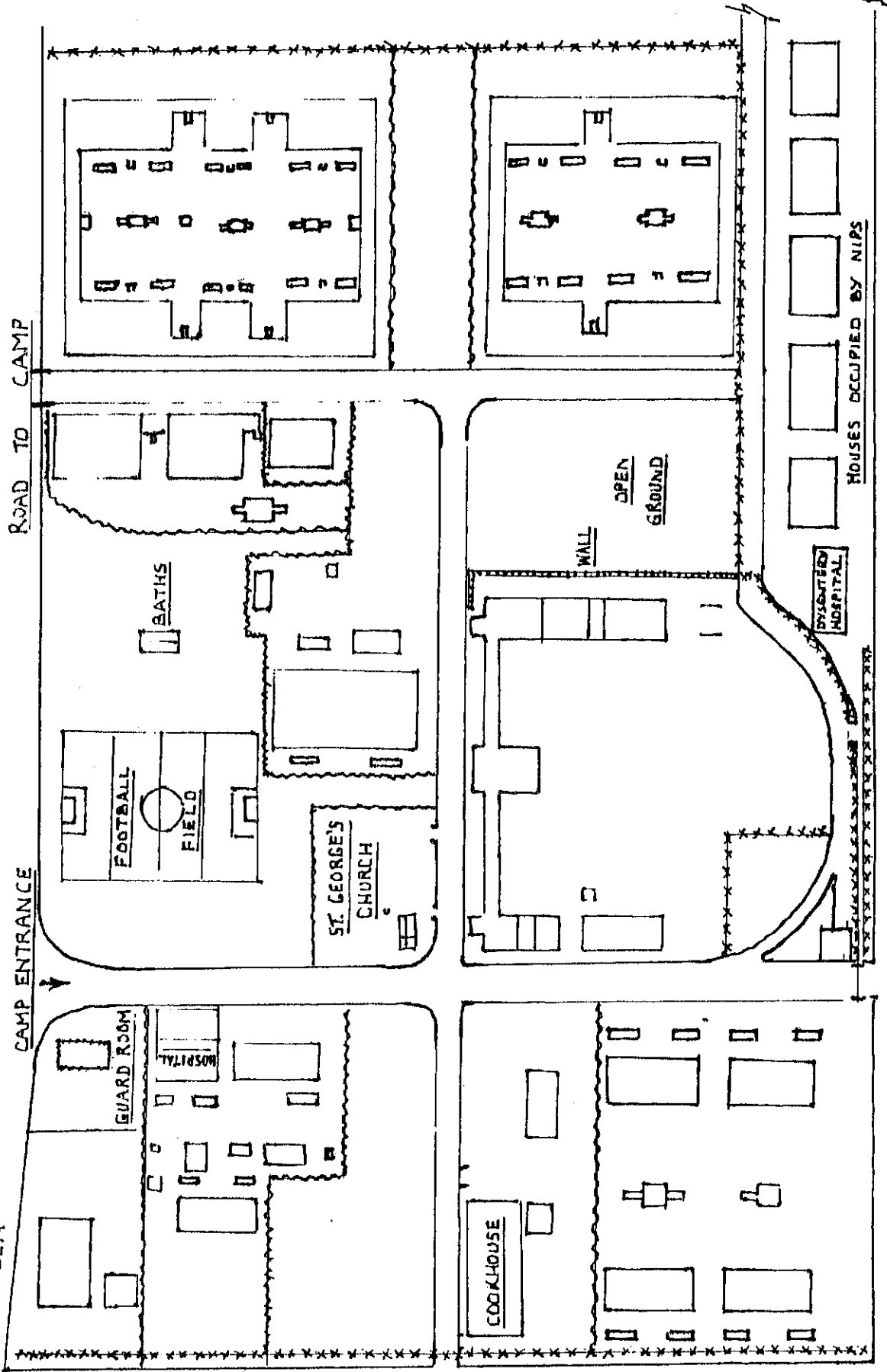
TENNIS COURT

TO THE SEA

GARDENS

CAMP ENTRANCE

ROAD TO CAMP



TANDJONG PRIOK CAMP 1943

DRAWN IN PENCIL ON THIN PAPER
IN 1943 BY P.M. SPARROW.
REDRAWN 1988 BY R. CHAPMAN

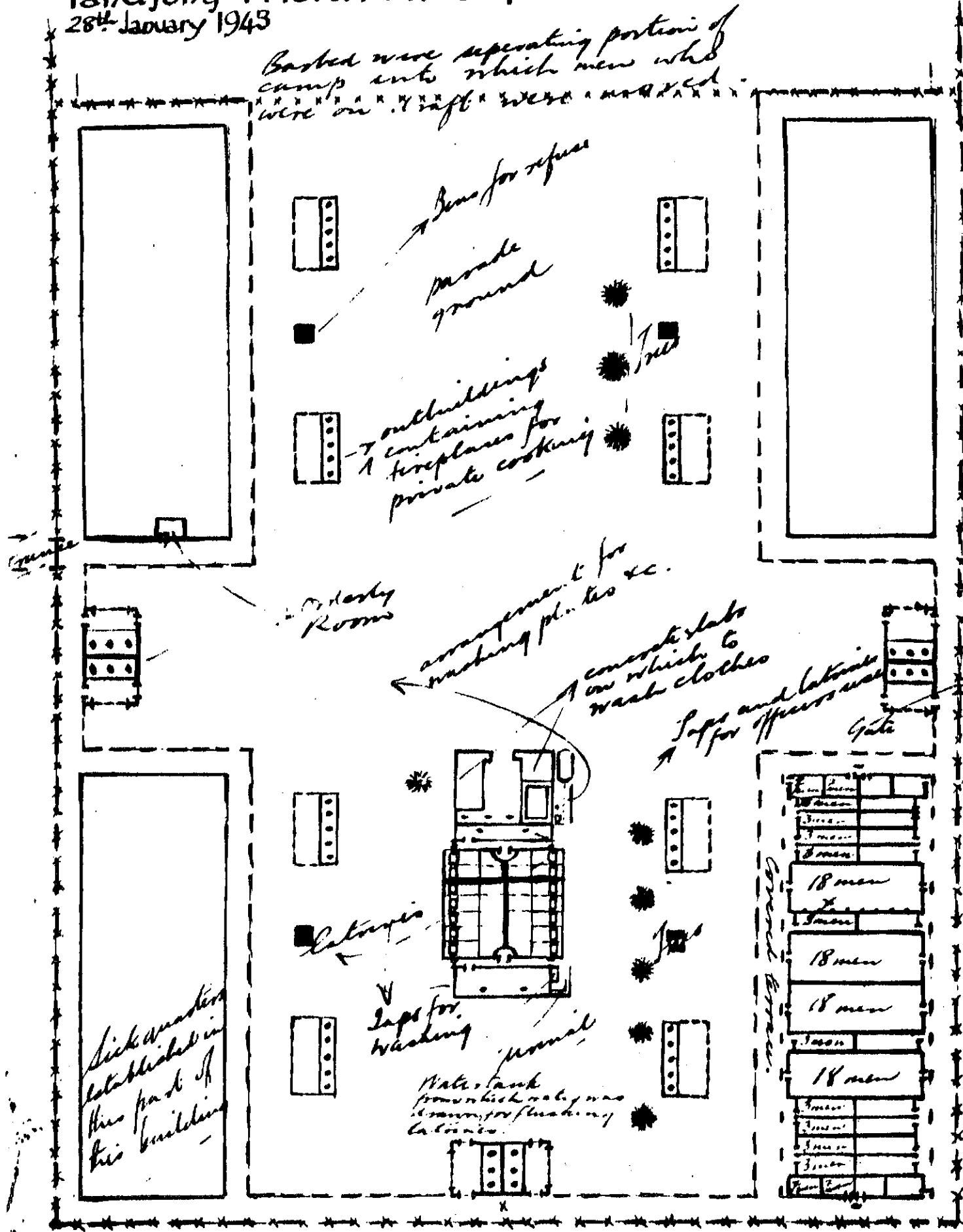
018 shows the portion of the camp we were in; the main camp being divided into

BAIDO BOEKI KAISYA, LTD.

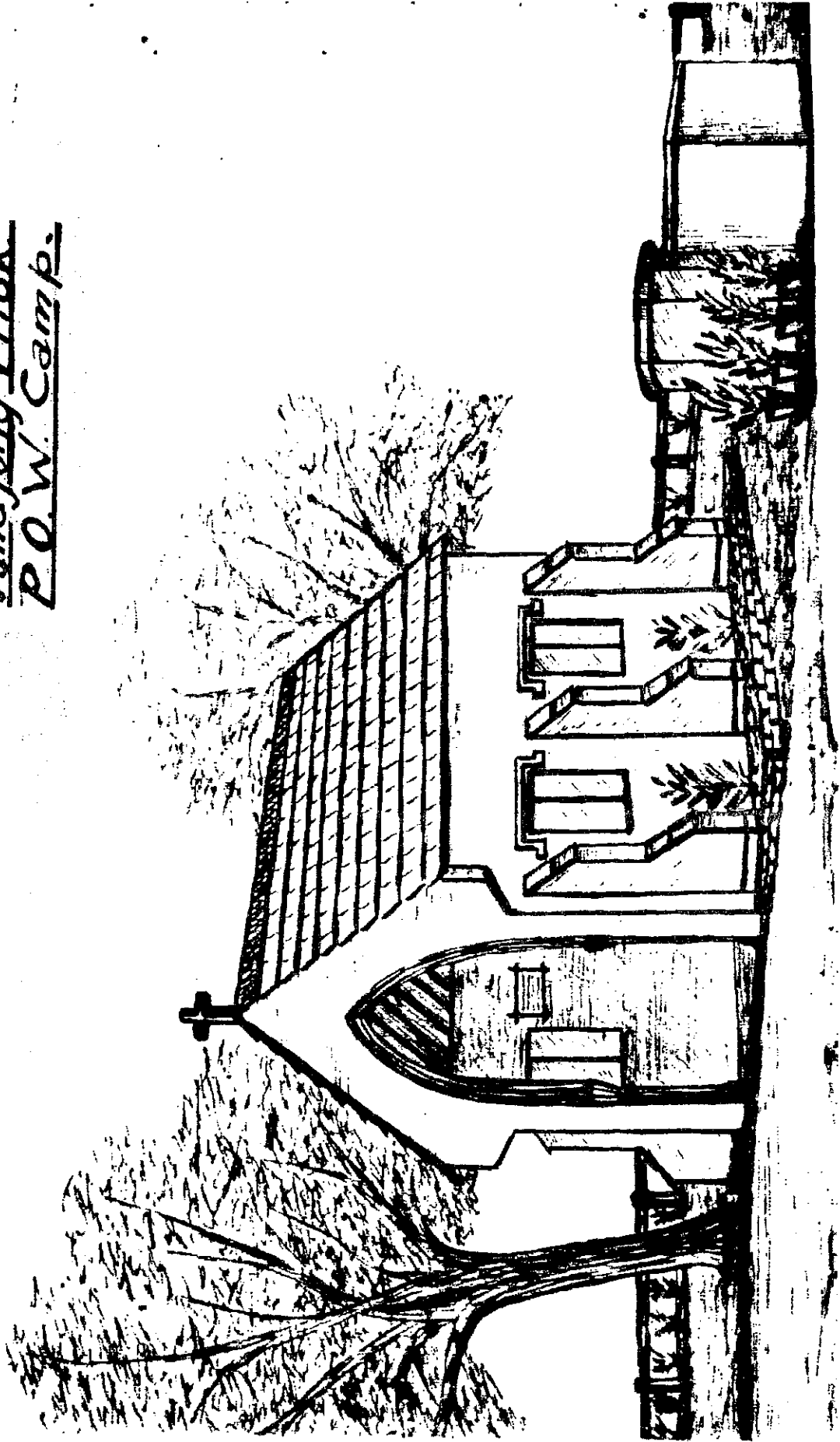
Tandjong Priok. P.O.W. Camp. (Sub-camp No. 2.)

28th January 1943

Barracks were separating portion of camp into which men who were on raft were housed.



The Church at
Tandjong Priok
P.O.W. Camp.



29 JANUARY

Clean up camp and have more rest. The food here is better than any other camp we have been on up to date - breakfast consists of rice with one tablespoonful of sugar on it, meal at 12.30 rice and one pint cup of stew with meat or Nasi goreng, meal at 5.30 rice and veg stew and roll of bread and flat cake or Cornish pasty - tea with each meal - have today washed shorts, shirt, socks and towel.

30 JANUARY

Messy orderly today, the 200 that were on the draft have been moved to the next camp and we have had a change of billets so that Kensey is now in the other camp - these camps adjoin so we can talk to each other through the wire.

31 JANUARY - SUNDAY

Went to church at 9.30 am. 1st hymn was "Through all the changing scenes of life" also "Fight the good fight" and "Stand up, Stand up for Jesus" - this service was held in a large hut opposite our camp but services are usually in a place in the centre of the camp and on this has been planted flowers and the hedge surrounds it, a small chapel has been built in one corner and in here there is a wooden altar, carved chair, lectern and one or two verses carved in wood hanging on the wall the chief feature of this place is the stained glass window - outside a pulpit has been built - the camp borders the docks so we get a good breeze from the sea - concerts are held regularly and also bathing parties - went to service in the evening which takes the form of a musical recital also - several solo piano pieces and trumpet solos.

1st FEBRUARY

On working party march out of camp to dockside and then board boat like barge - taken along front of docks to jetty and are on loading cable from dockside to dumper trucks - party divided into two and we work an hour on and hour off, few boats in docks, one unloading cement so two leave - midday meal fetched by four of our fellows in small launch, finish at five.

2nd FEBRUARY

Had day off today and was on inside camp fatigue cleaning up.

3rd FEBRUARY

On working party again the same as on the 1st - one boat leaves and two arrive. Last night a party of men went working at the docks unloading petrol in fifty gallon casks, finish at 2 am.

4th FEBRUARY

Just a year since we landed here - have a day off today and spent some of the day writing notes. Had the chance to go swimming but did not go as I had shoes to mend.

5th FEBRUARY

Day off again today and I am on a fatigue but this is cancelled - the 200 on the draft in the other camp have again had papers for test.

6 FEBRUARY

Working down at the docks today shifting furniture, tools etc. Put it into trucks - went down to the docks in lorries - finish just before five the rest of the men are on roadmaking.

7 FEBRUARY

Sunday again but am not able to go to church as billets have to be cleaned up - the 200 have had paper again - go to service in the evening, band give recital.

8 FEBRUARY 1943

Have a day off today - the 200 on the draft go in the morning - spent the last

38

mittens

pay from M.

night with Kins.

9 FEBRUARY

Get up in time to see the draft off, a meal was provided before the party paraded at six (approx 1000) and a loaf given to each man - no indication as to venue - at work up at coconut grove - dump.

10 FEBRUARY

Work again and am on lorry moving furniture from Batavia - bringing this to a place by docks.

11 FEBRUARY

Have been swimming today and it was enjoyable though rough. The place we go bathing is not five minutes walk from camp gates.

12 FEBRUARY

Off today and spent a lazy day - make rough drawing of window in church.

13 FEBRUARY

Work on road by station, easy day's work.

14 FEBRUARY

Go to docks in the morning but did not do any work - at coconut grove in the afternoon - pay parade at night.

15 FEBRUARY

On fatigues in camp today cleaning up.

16 FEBRUARY

At work on road by station again today - saw two fresh boats in and some of the crew presumably off one of them - this work seems to be just finding something to do - had inoculation.

17 FEBRUARY

We have a new Nipponese camp commandant and he inspected us this morning - he had an interpreter with him and he asked several questions - who had footware, money, long slacks, and who had had malaria.

18 FEBRUARY

Raining this morning and some of the working party did not to to work "no sun all day".

19 FEBRUARY

Rain all night and we discovered that with the rough wind from sea we had a leaky roof. Some of the fellows go into new billets - the camp commandant today paid a surprise visit and inspected the food at the midday meal.

20 FEBRUARY

Today have been cutting grass round a Nipponese guard room on the way to the grove - we are now given pink bands to wear when we are out - finished just after four but had to wait for rest of party before going into camp.

21 FEBRUARY

No work today except for anti mosquito (camp fatigues) squad - rain all day.

22 FEBRUARY

Went on Nipponese drill this morning which was taken by our officers just outside the camp. Went bathing but the football pitch was wet.

23 FEBRUARY

The working party was out last night late as they had to unload petrol and oil off a boat down at the docks - have today been on fatigue in the camp making the space in between the barbed wire tidy - paid at 11 am. This was an all day fatigue which was thought unfair - unloading of boat completed today.

24 FEBRUARY

Loading drums of petrol into trucks, explain incident of cigarettes "brown lady" and "mascot".

25 FEBRUARY

Down at the docks - several boats in and we go to where one is being unloaded by wogs looks like ammo - Do some work - go again at night.

26 FEBRUARY

Day off today but go to work at night and work hard six till two unloading off a boat bombs in crates - many wogs too - this boat is approx 7,000, and had a large mixed cargo doors etc heavy work - two boats gone since yesterday.

27 FEBRUARY

Day off today and had a parade for inspection by commandant but he did not visit our camp.

28 FEBRUARY

Went out to work again last night and working from eight till five fifteen and had one break of ten minutes loading bombs from a warehouse into trucks - hard work- fatigued - 100 and 250 in boxes - had impromptu parade this am - panic because Nips thought a man was missing - misunderstanding - bathing this afternoon, calm - the working party had an easy day today - the boat we unloaded is being loaded with kapoks seed.

1ST MARCH

Day off today and had lazy day - fetched out of bed between nine and ten to give list of greatcoat, shorts, shirts, tunic (heavy and tropical), trousers (ditto), boots, pack, haversack, mosquito net, puttees (?).

2ND MARCH

Work on road party today - nip bought us some ramutans and we had cigars bought by our officer.

3rd MARCH

Grass cutting at end of docks by hangar, Navy fellows in charge - taken by barge.

4 MARCH

Have an egg for breakfast as I have day off today but am put on working party and go up to the grove loading petrol, easy day - are all to have a vaccination so do not go to bed till late.

5 MARCH

Day off today and am on mess, go bathing in the afternoon - still get news but can we give it credence?

6 MARCH

Out today on odd jobs and day is spent riding about.

7 MARCH

Have an egg and camp has a day off as the sports are being had today - went to church in the evening and the usual address was given at the end of the service.

8 MARCH

A year ago since we were taken prisoner - on unit drill this morning - a speech was broadcast last night to Blighty and I hope was received by folk at home.

9 MARCH

On cleaning and petrol drums today.

10 MARCH

Get ready for work but are not wanted for day.

11 MARCH

On the road again today and the Nippese bought us fruit - next to Nature - was postman today with usual mail and note that the cards have no surcharge.

12 MARCH

Day off today for the camp and sports are had on the football field - prizes presented by the unit commandant - some races for units and the band played some Unit music - ably - all the morning sports, and in the afternoon swimming - afire all the day practising.

13 MARCH

Loading empty petrol drums on to the boat - small boat - two boats in this dock - easy day.

14 MARCH

Day off today and I go and see the show of pictures (Nip) in camp 14 - church at night - good recital.

woke up to this (caustic soda)

15 MARCH 1943

Work* down at the docks today - easy and to pass the time had PT.

16 MARCH

On grass cutting and had an easy day - Nip bought us toffee - list taken of clothing.

17 MARCH

Some of the chaps on the camp have had (stamping) mail and on one envelope I saw that the address was ours - postmark 5 July 1942 - hope I get letter.

18 MARCH

Inside camp fatigue - grass cutting - out in the afternoon on Nip fatigue but no work - working down at the docks last night but cranes out of action so came away at nine - beer and stew.

19 MARCH

On the road again today - easy as usual - bananas - had a cinema show last night - propaganda.

20 MARCH

On work at marine docks - grass cutting.

21 MARCH

Day off today and I did not feel too bright - rest all day.

22 MARCH

Go sick and am put in sick bay in sub camp.

23 MARCH

Sent over to main sick bay - sore throat - have two injections - anti dip.

4 APRIL

Discharged - make note of food etc.

5 APRIL

Fatigues have been as usual but a place is being built so work may be done in camp by those unable to go out working - inspection by camp commandant of gardens - prizes given.

6 APRIL

600 Aussies came into the camp when I was in sick bay - those in camp 2 had gone into camps 1 3 8 6 so Aussies moved into camp 2 - I am in camp 6 and this is the Yanks camp.

7th, 8th APRIL

Fatigues are as ever - road making etc.

9th APRIL

Have today been given the news that a move is to take place in a few days - 1024 in all made up of 500 Army, 500 RAF, 12 officers Army and RAF - fetched out of boat to give list of clothing - no heavy stuff.

2 JUNE 1944

(10th Batt. Camp) Batavia. It is now over a year since I wrote anything so I shall have to try and memorise the most important happenings during that time. First of all I cast my mind back to Priok Camp and go on from where my notes ended above.

9 APRIL 1943

Rumours of a draft of 1000 being moved in the course of the next few days and this rumoured move ultimately materialised between the 20th and 30 April (See note book for correct dates). Searches of kit etc and general "kitting out" prior to the move. New footwear (Dutch boots & canvas & rubber boots). Sun hats - given shorts - tunics or shirts. Walk from camp to station - issue of bread & fruit for train journey - arrival of train approx 5 pm - departure - windows allowed open some of the journey - internee camp of Dutch women & children - heartening sight - Just outside Batavia - waving & "thumbs up" - travel through night and during next day - see volcanos active during this days travel and hear we are bound for Socrabaiia - arrival at S after dark and march to camp - get meal & sleeping quarters - the evening of arrival meet up with some more of our friends

W. O. Keefe - F/Sgt

(discip) Bill Yeardyn

- but very little time to converse as they are on a draft leaving early next morning - large draft leaves - English & Dutch - good food at this camp and we stay for a few days during which time most of us are engaged in "cleaning up" the camp which was in a really awful mess - few on outside working party at docks - one camp of Dutch "civvy" internees and rumour has it they have not been here long but we are not allowed to speak with them and a boundary has been fixed so we cannot go near the camp - draft journeys from arrival station - (walk to station - roads lined with Dutch females) and then short train journey to docks - wait on docks and then sprayed with disinfectant before boarding barge-like affair lashed to small steamer and being taken to large merchant ship anchored 1 mile out.

2nd June 1944. (10th Batt Camp Batavia) It is now over a year since I wrote anything so I shall have to try and memorise the most important happenings during that time. First of all I cast my mind back to Priok camp and go on from where my notes ended above on the 9th April 1943.

Rumours of a draft of 1000 being moved in the course of the next few days and this rumoured move ultimately materialised between the 20th and 30th of April (See note book for correct dates) (Ed: I'll print this note book as an appendix later) There were searches of kit and a kitting out prior to the move. New footwear - Dutch boots - canvas boots - rubber boots; green shorts and either tunic or shirt (of Dutch origin) We walk from the camp to the station and have an issue of bread and fruit for the train journey and the train arrives at 5pm. The journey commences and we are allowed to have the windows open. Just outside Batavia we see an internee camp of Dutch women and children. It is a heartening sight and we wave and give the thumbs up sign. We travel through the night and during next day. We see active volcanoes during this day's travel and learn we are going to Soerabaia. We arrive there after dark and march to a camp - we have a meal and find sleeping quarters. On the evening of arrival we meet up with some more of our friends - W.O. Keefe and Bill Yearde - but little time to converse as they are on a draft early next morning. A large draft of English and Dutch leave.

Good food at this camp and we stay for a few days during which time most of us are engaged in cleaning up the camp which was in a really awful mess - a few are on an outside working party at the docks. There is a camp of Dutch 'civvy' internees and rumour has it that they have not been here long but we are not allowed to speak with them and a boundary has been set up so we cannot go near the camp. Our draft walks from camp to station along road lined with Dutch females and then there is a short train journey to docks. Whilst waiting on docks we are sprayed with disinfectant and then board a barge-like affair lashed to a small steamer and taken to a large merchant ship anchored $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile out - estimate 8 to 10,000 ton. On boarding vessel the sleeping quarters are allocated - in the forward hold with 619 others, mostly R.A.F. but also some Army but no Dutch. The rest of our party on another vessel. We hear this is the system used by the Nips for transporting their troops and also that 1000 have been transported in this space previously. Spend first night on board without moving and next morning Cpl Stevens and W.O. Jones are taken off as they are ill.

We sail this day and after about 6 days arrive at our destined port. All tobacco, lighters, pipes and cigarettes were taken from us on the first day so it was a case of no smoking on this trip. The food was poor and there was a lack of drinking water but a drop could be found caught from a leaking joint on 'Donkey Engine'. The voyage was uneventful and we eventually arrived at Ambon. After docking we helped to unload cargo - rice - beer - a small pea-like bean - salt - sugar - shells - wire barbed and plain and we worked through the night till 2am. Spent the night on board and resumed unloading next morning. It was heavy going! I was one of a party of 18 picked for loading some of the stuff from our vessel onto a small coastal steamer. We are then detailed for a job on this steamer and together with the help of natives transfer coal slack (fuel) from a lower hold to hold No 1. It was a dirty job and there was little room to work so we worked shifts. A period of tropical rain did not improve matters. The nips on board were quite decent. We finished at Dusk and returned to our own boat in time to see our fellows having a good wash in the sea. While working on the small boat we met some Aussies who say they are at a camp 3 or 4 miles away, about 500 of them.

On the following day we disembarked with kit and are informed we are to march the remainder of the journey (rumoured 30/40 kilometers) but large kit to go on lorries and we carry small kit. Issued with sausage and rice to eat and rice and sugar for meal on the way.

We leave docks and pass through Ambon town, there is a look of desertion about the place and note the native females adopt European dress. We see signs of damage. The Aussies said it would be a gruelling march there, but there would be rest periods. We see Aussie camp as we pass, it is in an ideal position on the sea shore. There is a long sea shore most of the way and we stop for a meal in a coconut grove so the meal is supplemented by coconuts and coconut milk.

We proceed on journey after a good rest and when we had covered about 15 kilo we made camp for the night on the sea shore. There were portable tents for the Nip guards complete with mosquito nets and there was some tent accommodation for our officers and a few O.R.s but the majority slept on the shore. The night promised to be fine. (We were allowed a privilege bathe at this spot and it was refreshing - excellent. We had a meal and so to bed with the sea practically touching our toes. In the night - rain and chaos - find shelter as best we can. I sleep by the gable end of a guard tent and during the night one of them gave us some Mascot cigs - they too are not very comfortable. When morning comes nearly everyone is wet through but we have a meal and proceed once more. During this gruelling day men fell out (also some guards) exhausted, but were collected by a lorry at the rear. We had stops on the road and a meal we had collected in the morning spiced with coconuts. Finally, in the late afternoon, we reach our 'camp' a sorry struggling bunch and rain falls once more to make matters worse. The camp is actually only a site, with one building destined to be a cookhouse and one attap roofed, partially ratan sided billet. The Army has these allotted and most of the R.A.F. are in tents. There is some sickness. On the second night our tent is confiscated and we 'squeeze in' the cookhouse billet. The kit arrived the next day and dumped out front - most of it wet through.

Natives proceed with building of billets and I volunteer for sanitary squad digging trenches on opposite side of road near a peanut patch. Our work is for our use and separate trenches for the Nips. The rain continues and we find this is not an ideal site for a camp. There is no running water and we collect rain water in mugs from the roof and bathe in falling raindrops from the eaves. Sickness on the increase and some dysentery cases crop up - one billet converted into a hospital.

There is a lot of coral in the ground here and digging the latrines with inadequate tools is very hard. About the 23rd May I had some stomach trouble and reported to the doctor. I was excused duty and remained sick in billet. I thought it was a strain but was admitted to hospital on 26th May. (Mention incident relating to car in ditch on 2nd night there)

Working parties are engaged on road repairs and building drome (This had been partially built by Dutch but overgrown) Day to day life in hospital but no apparent improvement) (Mention food and treatment - coconut milk injections and blood (11) injections. There is a change in the camp and surroundings after a new Nip officer takes over and gardens are started. We have a shortage of veg and wild plant leaves are utilized - (Passion fruit - kachanijo leaves - maize) Private cooking arrangements are allowed and some tasty dishes produced - grated coconut squeezed - passion fruit leaves - maize leaves - kachanijo leaves - tapioca leaves - all chopped very fine make a very tasty meal - also tapioca root grated with grated coconut and coconut gratings squeezed over plus a little salt make a tasty cake. Also grated coconut on rice with the milk from same squeezed over all. Fried coconut gratings squeezed over rice is very tasty - add a little salt. The cookhouse is situated nearly two miles down the road and meals and tea/water have to be brought from here on lorry (A pipeline from village in valley is laid after a few months; it is made from bamboo). While stocks lasted there was an occasional issue of 'Silver City' cigarettes from the Nips in the first month or two; after that we used native tobacco of various qualities. There were some free issues to hospital patients.

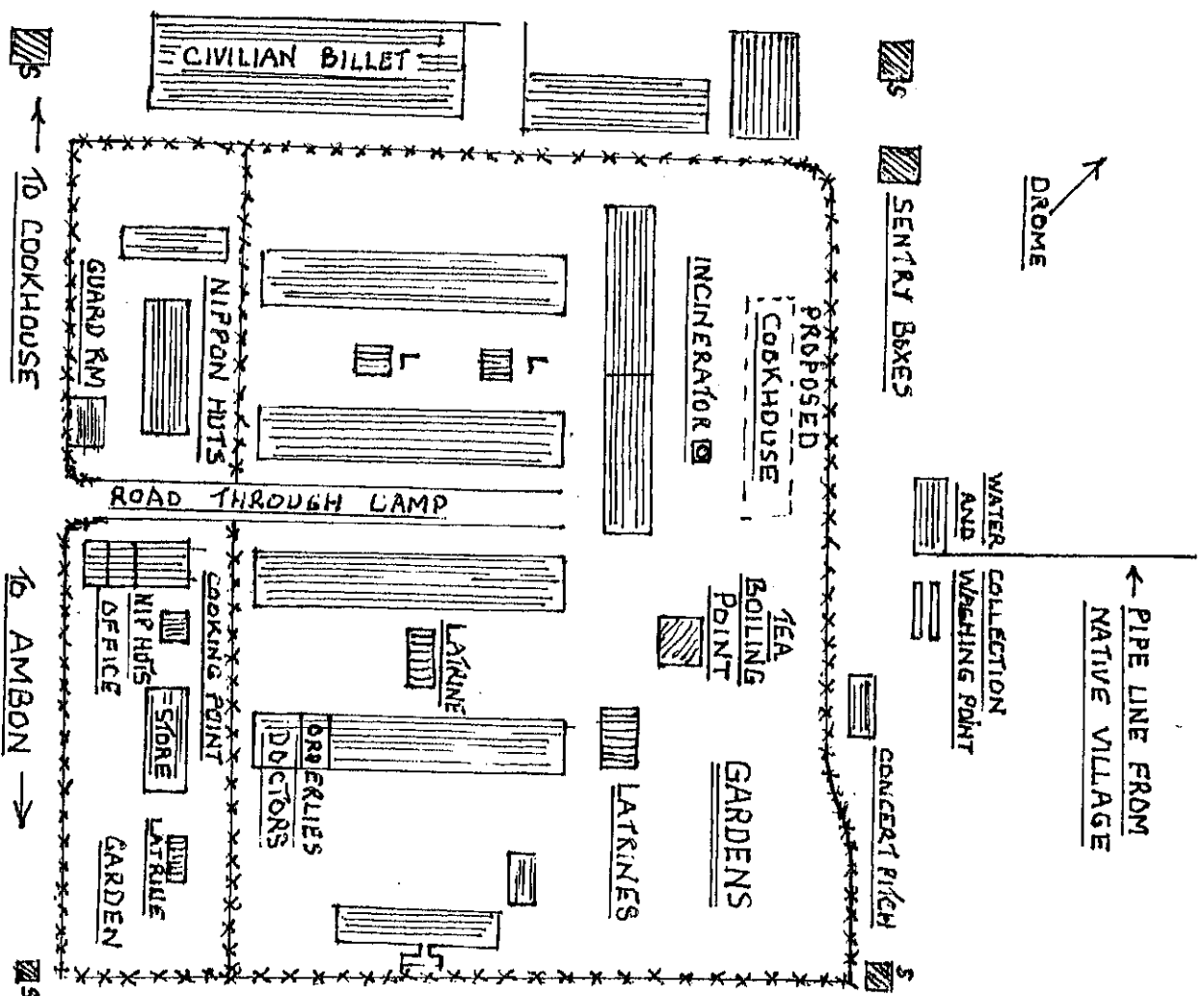
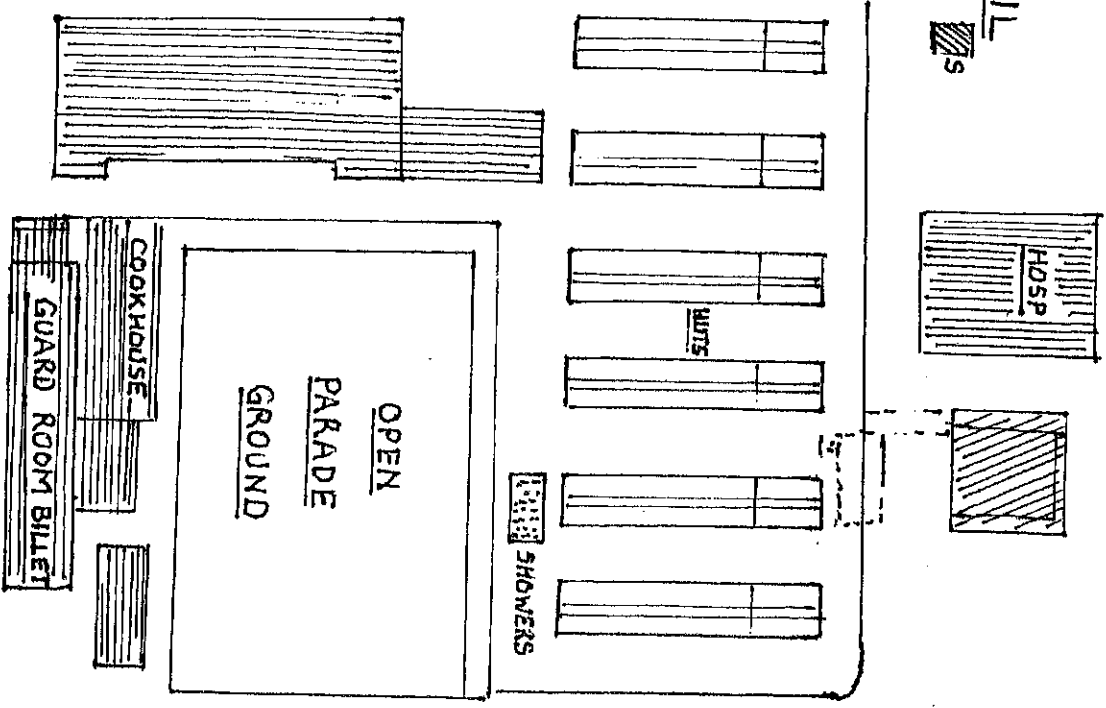
As the weeks went by the death roll gradually increased and a burial ground is made on the hill opposite. (mention coffins - 129 when we left. Drafts from Haruku - 'Rocky' P/Sgt Knight and Fitzpatrick on this draft) Fitz sends one guilden into hospital between three of us. These people depart - presumably returning. There's a draft of Dutch.

There were numerous incidents - one of our fellows fell from a coconut tree and subsequently died from injuries received. P/O Ives and other deaths in hospital. There was an out-break of tropical ulcers - enormous places on legs and arms. Flies were a menace and there was a fly-swatting campaign; prizes were offered to the men who killed the most. I'm on a banana diet for seven days and I am sent from ward 3 to ward 2 and then to ward 1. Weighing was introduced and I am lightest in ward 2 - 5 stone 8 lbs - almost unbelievable - I do make 6 stone while in hospital.

ORIGINAL BY
 P.H. SPARROW
 SKETCHED IN PENCIL
 ON THIN PAPER.

REDRAWN BY
 R. CHAPMAN,
 1980

LEGEND
 S - SENTRY BOXES
 L - LATRINES



- AMBON-LIANG CAMP -

1944

GARDENS

BUILDINGS
 UNCOMPLETED
 ON ARRIVAL

Just before Xmas 1943 I am on list for a draft leaving (presumably for Java) but at the last minute I am one of 37 sent back - am disappointed - especially after kit inspected when several articles were taken off each man, and this at night. The draft leaves the following day after 'reveille' at 4am (breakfast in dark) There are 300 odd men on draft and the move by lories takes practically all day.

I am settling down once again and hospital gradually fills up - these are worse cases now than those that went away. A party is detailed for collecting wild leaves to augment supply. Have now eaten to my knowledge - shark - cat - dog - snake - turtle - goat (the goat strayed into the hospital grounds and got lost) We have some supplies of fish (for issue and some for purchase) and as I am on fish list I get a free issue. (it is fresh and similar to a herring - we get a very small outlet each and it is very nice boiled) I have had a turtle egg and this was delicious - similar to a tennis ball in shape and soft shelled. Have had one or two hen's eggs, but they are very small and very dear; the price started at 10cts but as demand increased so did the price and finally reached 35/40cts. This was so with everything - fowls went from 1G to 3G 50c/4G 50c. Fish according to size 15c to 1G. The shark bought by the hospital cost 4G. Tobacco was very dear and natives cigs 1c each. Even toilet paper "Bumph" (any sort) was sold. Book leaves used for cigarette papers. Reading matter was very scarce and the library in ward 1 gradually dwindled. There was trading of all articles - shirts, shorts, watches, pens, wallets - cigarette cases - anything saleable was sold. Shirts 3 to 5G. Shorts 2 to 5G. Watches 10 to 50G. Pens (Parkers in great demand) up to 15G. Wallets 3 to 6G. And cigarette cases 2 to 20G.

There were issues of soap periodically and a piece could be bought for 10c One sarong sold for 7G 50c, but the trading between us and the natives was ultimately stopped. (Heartening sight of 4's and results)(B24 Bombers?)

Parties periodically went to Ambon for unloading jobs and also on tunnels. There was a lot of sickness on the tunnel job and nearly all the fellows in 'dock' on return. There was one death when party was returning and 3 or 4 more resulting.

At Xmas 1943 we had no extras, just two days holiday. Some fellows purchased fowls for Xmas dinner.

So the weeks slip by and more Dutch than English come into hospital. Just after Xmas a Dutchman came in and started taking a Service on the Sunday afternoon. Quite a nice short Service given in Dutch and English. I am asked if I will read the English part of the Service but just at this time comes rumour of another sick draft and we have a short Service the Sunday before leaving, but I do not participate as it is held in the morning - impromptu. There is a dispersal sale of items of kit before we leave as we have benefited by the other drafts 'stripping', even so our officers come round and take even more off us - they take good shoes and leave rubbish to replace. Those left for me were so bad I decided to go barefoot. We have a parade and kit inspection and afterwards we are left with just what we are wearing. A Nip officer explains that the clothing will go to our comrades (They need it badly enough as by now boots and shoes have worn out and a percentage of men working on drome etc have either clogs or no footwear - the clothing situation is the same and many men are just wearing loincloths.

(The new latrine system which had been in operation for many months - four gal petrol tins with wooden seat fitted - were emptied three times daily into a large pit. System of cleaning oneself - after using same was by rag and disinfectant bowl)

Returned to the billet after kit inspection minus many things including headgear - soap - water bottle - plates - mess tins and side packs. We're allowed one plate or mess tin each. Stand by to leave on the morrow and hear reveille is at 4am, breakfast at 4-30, move at 6am. This was correct but move changed to 8am. Food was to be taken on a lorry for midday meal.

(Originally this draft was to have included the majority of hospital patients and some (approx 200) men in ill health or general weakness from outside but at the last minute this draft was cut from in the region of 400 to 200 and only two men from outside are included.)

The issue of new draft numbers was late at night and so on parade in the morning and the move off (move altogether on lorries 25 on each) One lorry breaks down on the way and the other lorries take on extra men.

It was a rough ride to Ambon along a new by-pass road some of our men helped to make during the year we have been on the island. We passed through Ambon town to another jetty about 3 miles away. All off lorries and have quite a good meal of rice and fish. We embarked on a small coastal steamer and are then taken to a large merchant ship anchored in the bay - board this in a sling which is quite the best way as the majority of us are not fit enough to climb up the ladder. We sit on the forward hold which is partly covered as more cargo has to be taken on and we wait for this. 20 or 30 natives are also taken on. Remainder of cargo is stowed and tarpaulins are erected in a tent like manner over hold and so we learn that this is how we are to travel. During the voyage there are various incidents and one Englishman and a native die through sickness. We have to hand in all monies, coins, personal papers, fountain pens and propelling pencils and photographs. I am sent for as there is a Parker pen amongst my personal stuff and I am asked 'How much?'. I ask 12G but never see cash or pen again. I know the Nip Sgt/Major has it because I see him wearing it when we disembark and I report it to Dr Stibbe but he says he cannot do anything about it. (The photographs, some of the best pens, foreign coins and paper currency (quite a lot of English notes among this) are not returned. My packet of personal papers and other money returned less 5% deduction for fruit - bananas, coconuts etc - fish - tobacco - eggs and a very tasty toffee like sweet with nuts in it supposedly purchased by Nip guards and issued on voyage. Nip doctor looked at tongues as we leave boat.

We entrain without any hanging about - 45 in each carriage - windows not allowed to be opened. It was hot. Once all aboard we were quickly off.

The heat made us thirsty and no drinking water was available so draw water from lavatory tap and purify with tablets supplied by medical orderlies in our carriage. Two sweet loaves made from tapioca flour issued to each man and this has to do for two meals. Water is later issued and the lucky ones get tea. After a few hours travel night falls and we sleep as best as possible. The lavatory is in great demand and used all night.

Another day's travel and things are more organized so we have a meal of rice, meat and veg wrapped in a banana leaf - not many eat the rice but the extras are very tasty. Another night with fitful sleep and the morning sees us near Batavia and we arrive at the station where a Nippon doctor and officials meet us off the train and do some 'weeding out', stretcher cases and some others do not come with main body of men. We are loaded, 25 men to a lorry which is quite comfortable, and ride through Batavia to King William school.

Our surround is all boarded up but we have a bit of reaction at getting to a camp and being 'in civilization' once more. In fact we are not allowed contact with anyone and placed in a sub-camp on our own in isolation. Our kit is brought on a lorry. On being allotted quarters we are issued with two reed sleeping mats per man but this night we are not allowed to use any of the kit we brought with us. On arrival we have a good meal and then to the bathroom where there is plenty of water and have the first good bath since leaving Ambon (we never had a real wash on the journey) It was very refreshing and afterwards we are issued with fresh Dutch green clothing. After another good meal we go to bed. We have electric lighting which is a change from no lighting at all - lights out in the barrack blocks at 10.30pm. I have a fair night's rest but still have the 'runs'.

Next day reveille is at 7-30am followed by 'tenko'. I report sick and am admitted to our sub-camp sick bay - on a starvation diet. Today all kit is out in the sun, old rags and sleeping mats thrown out for burning. The washing and bathing period is 2 to 4.30pm so everybody busy washing. The Nip doctor wants a sample of excreta and after this more men are in dock. A group arrives from the island of Flores, chiefly malarial cases. Some dysentery cases sent to outside hospital. I heard about a man who was an ulcer case dying on our train.

Have seen Jack Grist and W.O. Keefe, he asked if Kinsey was with me. He looks fit but has lost some weight. Also saw F/Sgt MacDonald, Voynick and Crissop, F/Lt Young, the little Aussie officer who was i/c the cookhouse at Makasura (F/O Cummings) F/Lt Gastrell and several other officers who were at Makasura. Grist sees me with Tiplady and Jimmy Makin. A tin of pork

We hear that the Red Cross (American) has been allowed to operate and that parcels have been received just prior to our coming here. Having seen the pitiable condition of our draft a collection has been organized in the various sub-camps by an officer and we have been presented with various canned goods. This has been distributed and runs out at a tin of corned beef (or the equivalent e.g. a tin of spam) a small tin of pork or ham and eggs and a small tin of butter between two men. Extra to this there is a lottery from which each man draws a numbered article, for instance - a tin of meat spread or a box of prunes or one pkt of Chesterfield cigarettes or Camel cigarettes, some Onions and a tablet of soap, all divided into lots as equally as possible (Some soup powders with that little lot) How tasty these items seem when we have them with our bread for breakfast or evening meal. Here we have half a loaf for breakfast with a mug of tea and every other morning we get $1\frac{1}{2}$ spoonfuls of sugar. The issue of canned stuff lasts us 5 or 6 days. Meals here are at 8am breakfast, Midday meal at 12pm which consists of a pint mug of steamed rice, just under a pint of soup with chopped meat and veg separate (this is sometimes varied, such as chopped veg and meat with a fry-up which has a distinct mushroom flavour) 5.30pm evening meal which is a $\frac{1}{2}$ loaf of bread served up sometimes at 7-30pm with 1 pint mug of rice, stew, a small quantity of spinach and a drink of tea. Extra to this one can buy for 3cts a spoonful a mixture of chilli and onion paste and sometimes in the evening one can also buy 'bean spread' at 3ts per portion - what a change after a year at Ambon!

There are other diets for those whose stomachs are not so good. The fruit issue once a week is very good - tobacco and 'bumph' are also issued. The fruit issue is usually (for each man) 3 bananas, 2 sowahs or 3 oranges (tangerine type) 3 or 4 mangosteens, a pineapple or pomelo between two. The canteen, which is twice a week, offers bananas 3 and 4cts, oranges 5cts, mangosteen 5cts, papaya 30cts, pomelo 11cts, sowahs 2cts, sugar @ 30cts a kilo, onions (eshallots) @ 48cts a kilo, boiled duck eggs 12cts, cigarettes 5cts for 10, cigars 1c each, tobacco 8cts a pkt and such things as chilli, toothpowder, boot polish, cucumber and salt etc etc.,

There are more and better medical supplies here, we are gradually getting better. Hear another of the crowd who came with us and went to the outside hospital has died. Rumour has it that one of the boats in the last convoy from Ambon got sunk and that there were 114 survivors but at the moment have no proof of this.

Each man issued with 'Klompers' (similar as base of clog and held on with strap over foot)

There were a few fatigue duties in the camp of a general nature such as sweeping and cleaning and I heard there were a few outside working parties. Inside parties do not get paid so there is little chance of earning money. I understand cooks, medical orderlies, sanitary squads get 10cts and some others 6 and 5cts. P.T. of a light nature started and also some 'rackets' STARTED such as 'draws' for canned stuff etc, selling of Dutch dixies (which are cheaper here than on Ambon)

A draft from this camp left a few days after our arrival. 6th June 1944. Now have some books loaned us by the main camp library so will be able to do some more reading. There's quite a good selection.

Some of the chaps suffered with eye trouble while on Ambon (partially losing sight) these are now on liver treatment 1-2-3-4 tablespoonfuls according to seriousness of the case.

We get a Nip magazine printed in English, it's mostly photographs, a picture mag similar to 'Good Housekeeping', also a single sheet newspaper in English called 'The voice of Nippon' issued once a week.

7th June. I am still in isolation and hear that the last draft in isolation were in this camp 5/6 weeks. Get 'special diet now as stomach is still weak. 'Pap' rice with sugar and milk for breakfast. Pap rice and minced veg for midday meal. Pap rice with finer cut veg in stew for evening meal.

These days it is sunshine, much different from Ambon. It has only rained twice since we've been here. Have to have hair clipped short but may grow a beard if we wish - many fellows do. There's a shortage of shaving facilities all round and blades at the canteen cost 30cts each. One of our fellows doing shaves at 2cts a time with his Rollo razor. It's self shave or him.

9th June - I am back on ordinary food again. Hear we have to do one hour each verandah guard at night. Some chaps have started doing washing at so much per article, the same fellows make pillows at 30cts each. We have been issued with new POW numbers - some of the fellows are making tin mountings for these @ 10c per time. We have another 'bumph' issue.

Have not seen Chiefy, Mac or W.O. Keefe recently so I wonder if they went away on draft. (Doc Kinmouth here) The Nips order that no drawing allowed on this camp.

A draft of men move into camp next to ours and find out they are some of the draft returned who moved out a couple of days after our arrival. Chiefy, Mac, W.O. Keefe, Spike, Lofty Askew, are among them. I hear they are here for a working party and rumour has it they are only here for 10 days. Credit system for canteen goods now discontinued and we draw what credits stand to our accounts. Working party from next camp have been digging trenches. Many rumours in the last few days - hear that the invasion has started and that P. has been reached (have heard these rumours several times before) but there may be something in it this time as the Nip paper has mentioned in the last few issues the probability of invasion. Hear Q.M. is dead. (Queen Mother) Much discussion on these matters.

11th June 1944. Sunday once again - how quickly the weeks slip by (middle of asparagus season at home) thinking of those at home always. We are not allowed to congregate for Divine Worship, but, as the officer says, Worship can be carried on individually. Free fruit issue again today - 2 bananas each and a pomelo and papaya between two, also two tangerines, three mangosteens and one sowah each. If bought in the canteen these would cost us 42cts. A tobacco issue today and I get 10 cigars at 1c. A good smoke. Most of the lads make a fruit salad with the free fruit. Rumoured it is the last free do.

I am watching two fellows practising golf strokes and stance in next compound. There are parallel and overhead bars in this compound and we see some quite good work done on them. The Flores group fellows have marked out a badminton court with light coloured crushed stone and are very keen players. 12th June. Had a quiet morning - a fly swatting campaign has started again although very few flies here - it's my turn today and we have to catch 60 each - caught mine by midday so will be able to spend the afternoon reading. F/Sgt 'Spike' Leek saw Nobby Clarke and sent in 10 cigarettes each to those on the squadron - Nobby Clarke, Jim Maken and myself - sends message that he may be over to see us tonight. See Sgt Aikin - hear that Makasura is considered better than this camp.

13th June. Had third of a papaya for breakfast, like melon and very nice. I hear that the many officers at this camp subscribe a good percentage of their pay (monthly) to the camp fund which provides the little extras like brown beans. The free fruit is a Nip issue. Orders out to get haircuts and beards off and moustaches trimmed - inspected by Nips. See Chiefy Mac who has seen P/O Jolly and told him we are here.

14th June. Have not yet seen Spike but restrictions probably make this difficult. We have another free issue of fruit which is a surprise. There are two air raid warnings today - one during daylight, one at night. Rumours still persist and one wonders if there is any truth in these - we all hope. We're still doing P.T. which each morning gets a little harder. Soap which was 6c a portion has now gone down to 5c - I have a good stock.

15th June. Another quiet day. Still in isolation - quite a few being treated for scabies - I am one. Have not seen a newspaper this week.

16th June. Spike came over this evening and brought a loaf and 50 cigs for the three of us. We had a good talk on things in general - he mentioned the names of those from the squadron who died on Haruku - counting those who died on Ambon the total would be about 20. He was in charge of their draft and says 8 died coming over and after their arrival 12. He said that Dr Kinmouth has seen me and I have to go and see him as soon as we are out of isolation. Flt/Sgt Williamson is in this camp but understand there is some friction between them.

Working parties from here are good but Makasura is preferred by the majority. Work there is on gardens $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles down the road - the playing field has been extended and there is a half day on Thursdays plus all Sunday off. We had

a very pleasant evening recalling incidents. W.O. Keefe has, since being a POW, received a letter informing him he is a father - a son.

17th June. We have done well today for free issues - soap - bumph (used mostly for cigarette paper) - salt and another fruit issue. The quality of the fruit is excellent, much better than we get from the canteen.

18th June. I have today bought a set of Dutch 'Dixies' complete with two handles and a wire handle for 3G cash and my RAF dixie as part exchange. Mine was in a very poor condition, it was very rusty and the handle would soon have come away as the plate holding it was nearly worn through. The Dutch utensils are very superior to any our forces get issued to them. Some thick concentrated soup comes over from the cookhouse for sale @ 5c per small mug full. Any of the ordinary soup issue which may be extra after the camp has been served comes over here and is issued to the cubicles in turn. Saw P/O Lightfoot this evening; he seems very fit. W/C King was in charge of a draft which left here about six months ago for Nippon. Group Captain Noble i/c draft that left for Formosa.

19th June. Only 70 on working party today - the day off for the others. P.T. disbanded due to lack of enthusiasm -(2nd class party) but we can attend 1st class and do what exercises we can.

20th June. Am still changing my morning bread for midday rice. Sugar issue restarted this morning. Library books recalled and new lot expected. Money is getting short among the boys and the canteen order has decreased. New lot of library books in and I draw Wuthering Heights. We have a newspaper issue but it contains no news.

21st June. Inspection by camp commandant - bread ration increased by 50 gran per loaf. Eye patients go over to general hospital for eye test. I still have some razor blades - there's a ready sale for them @ 15c each,

22nd June. Peanut butter available again @ 20c per pat. toothpaste @ 7c. Read news from paper to Tiplady whose eyes are not good

23rd. All on parade today and separated into 'A' and 'B' groups - 'A' group fit for light duty. Practically the whole of the camp on parade and the rumour is that there is a draft on. 17 men plus majority of Dutch and Flores group in 'A' group - various surmise as to possible destination - many officers, M.O.s and orderlies on this (probable) draft. There is a list of names here of fellows who were on the last draft from Ambon and whose names are in the deceased file - we fear the worst.

24th June. Free issue fruit today. It was decided that the extras at the evening meal should be divided among those on draft. These parade at night for a sort out and one or two are sent back. Still various rumours as to destination. Those on draft have been moved to another camp which leaves us numbering 130 - they are busy having inoculations etc.

25th June. Parade again today and some more sorted out. I am still in 'B' group but there may still be another sort out. Some of the ulcer cases and weakness cases have to go to outside hospital, this will leave us with very few in this camp. Issue of blankets, shoes, hats and water bottles to those on draft.

26th June. Those on draft parade this afternoon for inspection - they are to move early tomorrow morning.

27th June 1944. Draft moved off at 5.30 this morning, camp seems deserted and very quiet. Rumour that another draft is coming in.*All that have not had eye test have eye test and Occulist puts me on liver as the left eye is not as good as the right. Liver each day at 12 o'clock.

*28th June.

29th June. Voynich brings half a loaf between Tip and myself everyday. Chiefy MacDonald in outside bakery.

30th June. Arrival of approx 400 men from Flores - this is not a sick draft and they look very fit. Camp in isolation again.

1st July. Only three of us left here of the old Semplak crowd and W/Commr Alexander has informed us that while we are here he and other officers will make us a monthly allowance.

2nd July. Some of our fellows have started work at the carbon paper factory. One fellow has started at the tobacco factory and another at wood chopping.

3rd July. Started work today at the tobacco factory. There are a number of factories on this camp - tobacco, soap, toothpowder, and pencil. I am on

weighing out loose tobacco ready for packaging; cigars are made here. About 60 men are employed, there are two rest periods morning and afternoon and tea is provided during the first rest period. We get extra rice for this work Camp inspection by Nip officers and cigarette machines have to be handed in - no explanation.

4th July. Last day of scabies treatment - do not go to work as clothes have to be handed in for boiling. The Flores group are keen on buying bread (as we were) - bread is sent along to us from the English camp each day. Cigarette trade good.

27th JULY. MAKASURA. On Sunday the 16th July most of the Ambon boys and others got the news that we had to pack and be on parade at 5-30pm as we were to move to Makasura. This we did - about 400 of us paraded and our kit was inspected. There was little taken, chiefly boots and then these were given back to those whose footwear was very poor - sorted into groups for walking or riding as the case may be - Tip and myself on the riding party. We were told we had to parade next morning at 4am so we returned to camp and had some sleep. We were up at 3-30am the next morning and the majority of the party set off on the march to the station. Two lorries took the remainder of us the whole distance of 12 kilos to Makasura.

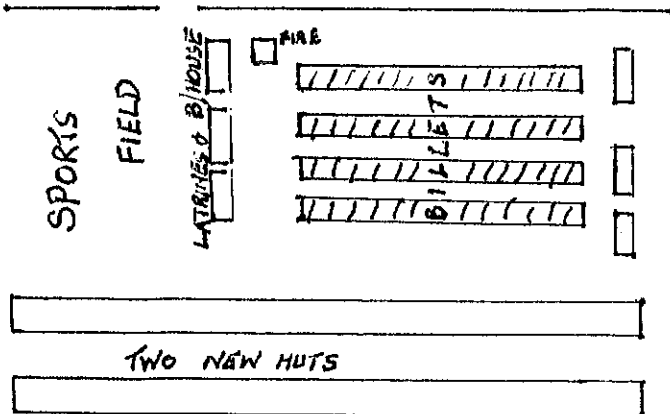
We arrived at 6am and meet the camp working party just going out. The rest of the party who travelled by train come in at 7-30 just as dawn is breaking. We are taken to a new hut built on what used to be garden. After a short rest and breakfast Doc Morgan then comes and interviews us and we are placed in various groups.

Tip and myself have quite an interesting chat about old times and we decide that we will have a go at work in the gardens surrounding the camp (Ed: he writes - describe gardens - Tanjong Oost and work in camp) We start work on Tuesday and I am on the back garden making trellis for cucumbers to trail on. Do various jobs in front, back and flower gardens. A few days after we arrived the order came that all flowers had to be pulled up and veg planted. After a few days I have had sunburn on the back and the doctor has made me a bed case until it has cleared up - the sun is very hot and I burn easily.

It is the same camp commandant here and Ramsey Rae is our camp commandant. Thursday afternoon and all day Sunday is yasume. Soap and toothpowder are made here.

It is a different layout to the camp we opened up in 1942 and much has changed. The large end hut near the sportsfield has been pulled down and replaced by another hut which is farther away from the next hut. Apparently this extension building was started at the beginning of the year when an army of natives came and were literally falling over one another while doing the work.

ROAD Rough sketch of Phil's drawing on writing paper.



1st August 1944. There was a parade two days ago for 'Circles' and 'Δ' fit and nearly fit and on parade last night. They were asked to hand in kit deficiencies. I'm still a bed case with sunburn but it has nearly cleared up and may start work again tomorrow. Loud speakers have now been installed on the sports field and P.T. is now done to music. I've had stomach pains these last two days. P.T. periods last 10 min except for X party who continue till 10.30 and again from 3.30 till 5pm in the afternoon. This is the dry season and the place is

very dusty. One fellow here does washing at 2cts an article, owner provides soap, so I had my washing done by him.

2nd August 1944. No work today. Awaiting more news of draft. Paper for test distributed during the night and handed in by 7.30am. I am once again fit for work. Doc Morgan has put me (and also Tip) on a new drink called Katool. There was a slight shower last night otherwise the weather continues dry and very hot. Met an Aussie who is very interested in stamps - he has about three thousand with him - some very decent stuff.

There is a rumour that no more sugar is coming in.
 6th August, Sunday - draft not yet gone but heavy kit collected this morning ready for departure. Up to now 3 tests have been made. Those on draft issued with new shoes (Monk type with strap) also coconut bottles, 3 bars of soap, blankets and sun hats. Had P.T. this morning and afterwards 1 hr. instruction.
 15th August 1944. Kit returned to those on draft and soap issue has been collected. Have had 3 or 4 parades this week mainly I think for medical re-classification. Work goes on more or less as usual and I have a semi permanent job on a patch of cucumbers. Have day off today and P.T. as on Sunday mornings. Rumours of all kinds still persist. Have joined the library by handing a book in. Had F.F.I. this morning also it is pay day. Pay at Cycle 50cts - 30cts. At Makasura 40cts - 30cts - 70cts.
 20th August Sunday. Ordinary P.T. this morning and no instruction afterwards. Work as usual on workdays. Picked first cucumbers off our patch this week. TNAJONG OOST from yesterday, started new work hours, start from here at 9am leave work at 4.30pm. It is rumoured that another 600 men are coming to this camp. Rice crop in fields below gathered this week - payment in rice - pre-war value 10cts.

At this point apparently the thin Dutch paper runs out and Philip ceases to write.. He has two Indonesian note pads, one is filled with his shorthand exercises and the other with further writings. (NOTOTIE BLOC - 100 BLAADJES)

It is now April 16th 1945 and as far as I can remember without looking at my notes I have not made any entries since about 16th August 1944, so here I propose making a rough summary of events as near as possible. I think I have already explained about the gardens at Makasura and we (Tiplady and myself) are permanent gardeners. We have a patch on our own which is divided by a stream running through the centre - it's about 30yds X 20yds. The first crop we had was from trailing cucumbers which were not a great success due I think to the irrigation system for the stream didn't always have water and it was in the hot dry season. Watering from the well or pool became a big job. Eventually we solved the problem by remaking the beds and planting other veg. We are now getting as big a yield as possible and we are supplying all the veg from these gardens to the camp. The average production daily ranges between 800 to 1000 kilo (a kilo 2½lbs) (ED: There follows a detailed explanation of the methods of cultivation and treatment of various plants and work in the garden which would only interest the enthusiast so I continue where he takes up the POW story again)

At this time rumours came of another draft and this time Tip and myself were on the list. After the usual several parades with samples we were on parade one morning again with samples when we received the information that the draft was cancelled so normal camp life resumed. Shortly after this several people were discharged from the outside hospital to Makasura - among them were Bernard Hall and Cpl Phillipot. Another two drafts have returned from Ambon and with them information comes that on the voyage over Allan Saunders died. One of these voyages took six weeks and very many died en route. (In the region of 150)

Work here goes by numbers and a new working party has started called G2 and the hut admin says we may possibly have to go on this as he has a job to find enough men for outside work. This is so and we found ourselves going to G2. This is a job in Batavia and we are collected by lorries and taken to the job. It is quite a change to get out and see a little of the outside world again. The actual job is cutting dispersal bays for lorries and strangely enough the place at which we are working is King William 111 - the place we first came to on arrival in Batavia. It is greatly changed and here there are two Nips in charge and under their command several native soldiers who guard us during the day. We find ourselves on this job for 14 days on the run, and then on a day when we are having a break (digging gun pits round the camp) the Dutch officer in charge of the gardens comes and enquires why we have deserted the gardens and after we have explained in was no wish of ours. He says he will fix it so we go back on the gardens - so ends G2 for us and back on gardens once again and the old routine.

Once again we are on draft and Xmas draws near; it is promised that on Xmas day we shall have one or two surprises regarding food and it is announ

ced that it will be a general yasume.

Xmas eve comes and the wood situation which has been acute becomes even more acute and we here that there is no wood for tomorrow so a general drive is made and all bamboo surrounding private gardens in the camp (We too have our own private garden) is confiscated together with all the odd wood lying around - and a fair pile is collected, however, this is not enough and Xmas Day dawns and there's still a wood shortage; everyone is down in the dumps but the situation is saved by a truck load of wood coming in mid-morning - the day proceeds and we are all quite satisfied with the day's fair - Breakfast: half a loaf with cream and tea. Mid-morning: A piece of shortcake with sweet coffee. Midday: The usual meal but a better standard and a piece of pudding very much like bread pudding and very sweet. Mid-afternoon: half a loaf of light sweet bread and tea. Evening meal: Similar to midday plus half a loaf of bread. Several concoctions have been brewed and healths drunk. Apart from the extras we had a good do of our own with fruit (some of which we bought and some free issue) so that the day ended and we all felt quite satisfied and happy. From the Nips we each had a piece of blue material 36" X 15" and a diaper which was appreciated as the clothing situation is somewhat acute. We had two days off except for a volunteer garden party - (both Tip and I went out) which had to work a couple of hours in the morning to collect veg. And so our thoughts turned homewards once again on this memorable day for we did have a small Service with carols and the lights were allowed on an extra hour. So another Xmas passed and we still wonder how long it will be.

Shortly after Xmas we were issued with boots, clothing and blankets where necessary, plus coconut water bottles. The draft has a rehearsal and we are told to prepare to move. There are two searches and my last sarong was sold to the guard commander (under duress) Then we assemble on the sports field early morning prepared to move and then told we are to fetch wood, copra and rice from the railway siding about 2½ miles away. We are only allowed to take what we stand up in and a minimum of kit as we march to the railway siding and 650 of us board a train which is waiting for us. We'd had a meal before leaving and had half a loaf for the journey. The move went without a hitch and as daylight dawned we saw the sea and knew we were heading for Priok docks. From rumours received we had heard we should be travelling to Singapore and that the Red Cross Authorities had been advised of the move.

We paraded in our groups on the station on reaching Priok and then marched ½ a mile to the docks. We partook of our loaf and lay around for about 4hrs in the shade of a warehouse. We embarked on a single funnel inter-island passenger boat which compared with other travel seemed luxury although we were very crowded downstairs as the cabins on the prom deck were all occupied by Nip soldiers. We set sail in the late afternoon immediately after we boarded and soon afterwards a tasty meal of carrots and boiled rice was served.

We were on board three nights and we seemed to take a direct course to our destination which proved to be Singapore. Many of the fellows had been here before so as soon as we sighted land we knew it was Singapore.

We had paraded at Makasura at 4am early morning of the 8th January 1945. It was a fine night and the sports field was lit by electric light. After some delay during which time watches were handed back to the owners (The Nip camp commander here had a system by which watches were handed in and a slip signed by him given in return; it also had particulars of the watch on it; on leaving camp the watch was returned on production of the slip) There was also a system in operation here where one handed any money in over 10Gs, and then from time to time drew from this as required.

We arrived at Singapore at approx 4.30pm on the 11th January. Immediately we disembarked and unloaded the small cargo (tobacco, sugar and soap which we afterwards found out were for us) the boat pulled out and we were informed she was returning to Java to collect the remainder of the people from Makasura. We spent about two hours on the quay and then marched off in group of 50 men through part of Singapore having one rest on the way; I estimate the distance to the camp at about 4 miles, it was dark when we arrived.

My first impression of Singapore was that it was a dirty place with old tumble down buildings. I was informed by some of the lads - very greatly changed in appearance from peacetime.

Passing through part of the camp to our billets we could see that here there were many Indians and when we arrived at the four huts that had been allotted to us, by the light of the electric lamps we could see that opposite to us were some more English and a few Australians. The first thing that was so noticeable was that they had long hair. We were then given instructions to lay our kit out and it was inspected by Nips with torches. After packing up we were shown into our billets and told a meal was being prepared. A meal (pap rice) had been prepared for 800 men but so many doubled up about 100 didn't get fed. I was one of the unlucky people so went to bed tired and hungry.

Reveille here was at 7am but we slept on till 8.30am although we could hear the fellows across the way being called up to get their breakfast while it was still dark. We got sorted out during the day and moved to another billet and you can guess we had plenty of visitors from across the way. More visitors came in the evening after the working parties returned and we swapped yarns, learning that they had returned to this camp in October from Thailand after completing the railway there. Their death roll was colossal and they estimate that they lost in the region of 23000 and the deaths of native labourers employed as being twice that number. Cholera was their biggest epidemic and it swept whole camps away. On the whole they did much better than we did for food and although at this time they are on 750 grams of rice they say "Let's get up country where there is more food and coconuts and oil etc are cheaper".(?)

Trading started immediately as these fellows were much more poorly clothed than we and in many cases some were sleeping on sacks. Our first intimation of the value of the dollar here was when a fellow offered, and bought, a blanket for 80 dollars. They nearly all have stacks of money and gamble in hundreds of dollars. I have been across and seen them handle 10 dollar bills like bits of paper. Tobacco is very scarce and they tell us that outside it is 75 dollars a 'Catty' (1 & 1/5th lbs). We have plenty as we had a good issue before we came and during our first week or two here we have had about three good issues so we trade tobacco for palm oil, salt, wood (private fires are allowed) sugar, rice and curry powder etc.,

After we had been here for three weeks we hear that there is a draft forming and 200 of the Dutch and Eurasians from our section are named. There is a canteen and the goods are : Coconuts 3D 8C. Salt 15D a catty. Chilli 40D a catty. Palm oil 4D 5c a catty. Tobacco 75D a catty.

The draft moved out and with their departure work started for us. (Up to then we had not done any work) We get the information that another draft of 600 men has arrived from Makasura and that they are in a camp down the road. The food in our camp is not so bad. We are near the 'Great World'.

Although we heard in Java that Singapore had been raided many times this is not so but we have heard several big raids since we have been here.

Of the 450 left here the working parties number 300. The largest working party numbers 200 who are collected by lorries and taken to what was at one time a Chinese High school along the Bukit Timah Road and the first job here was building an earth wall along the road frontage. After this we were put on tunneling into the hillside at the rear of the school. The school is now being used as an officers training quarters. A party of 50 were on an M.T. detail and another 50 on a 'speedo' detail.

Late in March we hear that the other draft that came from Makasura have moved into a camp near the docks which has recently been vacated by Indians. These Indians have now moved into our camp and shortly we shall join the fellows from Java.

The food situation since the raids has gradually grown worse and now outside workers are on 300 grams a day, those inside camp on 250 grams. From the authorities on the 200 working party we get 100 grams.

Tip had a very bad attack of malaria early in March so is now excused duty. Work for us finished on the Sunday after Easter Sunday.

Private cooking was allowed at River Valley camp and nearly everyone makes a stew in the evenings. We manage to bring in a bundle of wood each day which we use for cooking and brewing tea. Actually the wood situation is acute as the allowance is a piece of wood 15" X 4" X 4" per man per day

so we all try to bring in a piece of wood per day to hand in to the cook-house. The guards in charge of us exchange our sugar issue for tree stumps. Church Services are held here so once again we go the church and with Tip I attend my first Communion since leaving Priok. It was early morning, still dark, and the candle burning on each side of the Altar in the little hut used as a church, with a Padre taking the Service, one recaptured some of the atmosphere of an early Service at home.

The warning here for an air-raid is a long note on the siren, a warbling sound denotes a raid in the vicinity, and twice at night we have had to take to the trenches; the all clear is also a long note.

We finally hear that we are to move and that we shall be joining the people that came from Java, and so work finished the Sunday after Easter. On the Monday we had a day off for packing etc., and on Tuesday reveille was at 5am and after breakfast we paraded at 7.30am and moved off straight away. It was a well organized move and we marched with kit to our new camp which we found was about 3 miles away arriving about 10am. Arrangements had been made to receive us and we met up with old friends. Jock Smith, Nobby Clarke, Phillipot, Tony Boender, Clem, Ado Jackson, Otto and Dick etc., The billets here are of wood with tiled roof and concrete floors; they are much cleaner than at the last camp. At each end of the billet are flush lavatories and 3 taps which prove to be ample for the 100 men in each billet. Tuesday we rested and on Wednesday restarted work again. The working parties march to the docks about a $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile away and do various jobs. The biggest job at the moment is clearing up the debris etc (burnt rice, rubber and resin) which was burned in a raid a few weeks ago. There is a lot of damage.

The food here is not too good; although we are supposed to get 300 grams per man we rarely get this amount. Veg is practically non existant as there are no gardens here (some have been started but are not producing) We receive no pay here although we are officially still on 30c - NCOs 35c W.O.s 45c. but all this goes into a common fund which is used to purchase "Extras". Everyone is noticeably much thinner and there are many in hospital, apparently the camp these were at previously was not too good as there were only three slowly running taps and the billets were old stables.

We depend on wood for cooking and collect burnt out timber from the docks 19th April 1945. I am on yasume today as work here is one day on, one day off Clothing here is very scarce and today I have been patching my shorts which are more patches than original material; luckily I still have my housewife, some needles and plenty of cotton (At river valley needles could be bought at 45c each and reels of cotton at 40D a reel) Jock Smith was in this afternoon and he tells me that P/O Gibbs and Bainbridge are at Changi. I have also seen Cpl Johnny Smith, Cpl Joyce and Clipsham on a lorry that passed one day when we were going to work from the last camp.

It was announced last night that a Nip officer had visited the camp and given the information that we should be receiving Red Cross parcels as soon as transport was available to bring them. Most of the transporting is done on bullock carts which is a slow method of transportation. A native driver told me that a bullock is now valued at 30,000 dollars. Such prices seem fabulous but it just shows the rate of inflation here - cigarettes are from 1D50 to 2D50c each, coffee 1D per mug, tapioca balls (about the size of a golf ball) 1D each, eggs 6D each and a meal is from 25D to 100D according to quality and quantity. Three days ago apparently six bullock carts were seen here but moved away. For the last four days raids have been over and were unhampered. Yesterday a search was made before leaving the docks, it was an English party on west wharf - much P.O. had been lifted and this was discovered. In some cases the guards would make fellows drink it, or the O was poured over other people or over the officer in charge of the party - many suffered this way(?) Normally we finish the mornings work at 12.30 and restart at 2pm but the lorry which had gone to fetch the rations did not return until almost 2pm so work did not begin until 2.30. However, we did not mind when it was explained that the lorry had been commandeered to fetch the Red Cross parcels to the camp. The fellows that were on the lorry informed us that Capt Dorman, the Dutch officer in charge of the camp, told them that the parcels would be issued in the afternoon. (One parcel between two men) This proved to be true so when we arrived back in camp in the evening the parcels had already been

distributed. Imagine the excitement out first Red Cross parcel created, the first since being a POW. I shared mine with Tip: the contents varied slightly, and actually these parcels were for POWs in Germany, the dates on them being April, May, June, 1942. Some of the fellows compared our receiving these parcels to kiddies receiving their presents at Christmas. Our parcel contained sixteen items and I give the list here : 1 tablet of soap, a $\frac{1}{4}$ lb block of Meltas plain chocolate (in excellent condition)(these we ate first) 2 small tins of sugar, 1 tin of tomatoes, 1 tin of margarine, 1 tin of cheese, 1 tin of biscuits, 1 tin of meat roll, 1 large tin C & B beef & veg, 1 tin Nestles condensed milk, 1 Peak Frean's tinned apple pudding, 1 tin of bacon, a 2oz packet of tea, a $\frac{1}{2}$ lb tin of syrup and 1 tin of creamed rice.

The majority of the chaps 'got in' straight away and after 2 days most of the stuff was gone but the doctors had said 'take it easy' so we two have agreed to have 1 tin a day.

21st April 1945. Rumour has it that the two guards who came with us have been put in charge of rations and today the rations certainly seemed to have improved slightly. Up to now the rice has been issued in a morning, per sack which is supposed to contain 100 kilos but never does and from now on the rice is to be issued by weight, so from now on we should get the quantity we are allotted.

22nd April. Had a day off today so with breakfast we had a quantity of meat from the tin of meat roll and will eat the remainder with the midday meal. Fire picket has to be done here and it was our turn last night from 10pm to 8am - each do one hour so it comes round about every 10 days. Clearing the 'Godown' floor of resin finished yesterday and we are now breaking up the concrete to make run-ins for lorries. We have had no rain since coming here so working conditions are good although the heat is oppressive and the last three nights have been very sticky. This is Sunday once again and this morning at 9.30 I made the remark that this job had been on long enough and I wish I was just setting out for my usual at home Sunday morning walk.

23rd April. Work as usual today and in the evening we opened the tin of tomatoes and had half each on our evening meal. There had been a small sugar issue and I introduced sugar on tomatoes to Tip who had not had this before. The meal was hash and the tomatoes were delicious.

24rd April. Tip started work today after nearly six weeks and it was an exceptionally easy day; during the afternoon we did practically no work. In the evening we opened the tin of creamed rice (heating up arrangements were made at the cookhouse) and also the tin of syrup which made a good sweet. Rumour has it that there is a World conference tomorrow and we wonder if this is true and whether it will have any bearing on the situation. A little trading is being done - spoons 5 to 10D, two bob pieces 5 to 15D.

25th April. We have this morning signed for (but not received) our last 20 days pay and have been told this that this has been voted into a common fund to purchase extra veg. This evening we have decided to open our bacon and have changed our apple pudding for another tin of bacon as general opinion has it that bacon is the best little tin in the parcel. We do not get tea in this camp, just hot water, but this morning we had a very nice cup of tea at 11am using tea from the parcel. We made a tin burner ourselves and for fuel use wax which was melted on the godown floor and which we scraped off; a small piece of blanket serves as a wick, and we can boil water this way.

26th April. The rations have slightly increased. Today I worked for the first time on the west wharf and the damage here is similar; notice a fair amount of troop movement. Tip had a piece of corrugated iron fall on his ankle yesterday and has 3 days light duty.(27th April)

28th April. Same. Have a day off.

29th April. The Emperor's birthday - and usually we have a yasume and something extra in the rations but today everything seems to be as usual. night we were detailed for work. This morning we parade for work but told only 200 wanted - 100 for west & 100 for middle - wharves. I was on the middle and before we set out we were told the west had been sent back. Our job proved to be different today as we collected tools from a different place today; we put them on a small lorry and then in two parties of 50 men proceeded on two lorries to a football field about a half mile behind the camp and were split in 3 parties, each party starting on a dispersal bay for lorries. The location for the sites for these bays was extremely restful after

the activity of the docks. We have green fields, trees, a few native houses and not far away a small hill with a gunsight on top. We were agreeably surprised when at 11.30 we were told to collect all tools as it was to be a half day holiday. The wood situation does not improve and we heard there would be no hot water this evening but this has been contradicted and we are now informed there will be water.

30th April. The birthday of one of the Dutch Royal Family. The Dutch are very patriotic regarding birthdays etc, and do their utmost to get 'something extra' for days such as this. This morning we have had boiled ginger with our pap rice. It was quite tasty but not too good without sugar which fortunately I had. The working parties numbered 450 today. I am on standby but no one went sick so I have a yasume.

1st May. Detailed for work today and I went to middle wharf but it rained all day so we did no work. (What a difference to the old days when we worked through the rain)

2nd May. On the new job again today and it continues to be quite easy. The road running alongside the football field leads to Mount Faber Observatory. Saw some Dutch and Aussies this morning. The Aussies are working quite near but they told us not to make contact with them as the Nip with them was not too friendly. (Ed: WE know what he was) However, we find they are in a camp at Kepple road, not very far away from us. At the moment they have not received any Red Cross parcels. The lorries did not come to fetch us until late so we did not arrive back in camp until 6.45pm.

3rd May. Middle wharf today and I am on a new job dismantling godowns, actually, knocking the bolts off girders with hammer and cold chisel. The Nip wanted us to go right up to the top but we refused. Have had some little trouble with my stomach these last couple of days so I have asked the section sgt to give me the day off tomorrow if it can be arranged. The food situation is very fair and this morning we had sambol with the Pap. Had $\frac{1}{2}$ spoon full of margarine with it. We still have the milk and have been offered 30 dollars plus tobacco and cigarettes for it. Have just come in and was greeted with the news that there is no rice so maybe we shall not have a meal this evening. It is supposed to be on the way. Every man brought in a good sized piece of wood for use at the cookhouse as one party has been pulling a fence down round the Singapore cold storage Co building and we were allowed to bring the wood away. Rice is now in so expect a meal about 8pm. The meal was not too bad considering it was a rush job.

6th May. Am on Mount Faber again today. The rations came in last night (ten days supply) and instead of the rumoured increase there has been a cut so we shall be going back to pap morning and midday and steamed rice in the evening. The pap both this morning and the midday meal was very tasty but this was probably because yesterday just over 2000 dollars was spent on sweet potatoes etc (About every 3 or 4 days a similar amount is spent in this manner). A small party of nine of us did well today, the Nip giving us two coconuts (now 4D) and a piece of boiled tapioca (when the Nip guards get a coconut they only drink the milk)

7th May. West wharf today. The breakfast this morning was beyond a joke and two fellows took theirs and showed it to the Nip sgt who was disgusted with it and said he will try and get us more rice or sweet potatoes in lieu of rice (Ed: now that is something I have never heard of before - Oliver Twist, yes - Fepows, no) The work was heavy again today but I was with a good party and the set amount of work was finished by 4.30pm. The midday meal was watery again but much better in the evening as sweet potatoes boiled with rice.

10th May. On a new job today at Gilman barracks which I am informed were occupied by the Loyals prior to the fall of Singapore. The barracks have the date 1935 on them and are ideally situated and good modern buildings. The area all round these barracks has been cultivated and on our way here we passed a fair sized pig farm. Our job at Gilman was to fill in a large hole due to subsidence. It was a mixed party and a fair amount of work was done. In the morning we were given a type of native sweet very much like turkish delight and at the end of the day the Nip guard gave us a piece of boiled tapioca root. Meals over the day showed a marked improvement.

11th May. West wharf and again moving girders (a general clean-up) It looks as if the S Cold Storage Bldg is being made into a headquarters as

furniture etc has been brought in and the surrounding area is all being cleaned up. It has been seen in a paper that Germany made an unconditional surrender on the 8th so we try and imagine the reactions at home and wonder if it will have any bearing on the job out here. The clothing situation is acute and many fellows have made shorts out of the sacking from the Red Cross parcels. I have made an exchange of tobacco for a pair of green shorts as mine have gone almost beyond repair. Tobacco is at a premium and on parade this morning it was announced that outside it is 89D a catty, and almost unprocurable; very few on the camp have tobacco left now.

12th May. Have the day off so do some dhobi. Dull and some rain but cleared up so was able to dry my washing.

13th May. West wharf today and still on clearing up. Girders and scrap loaded directly into barge by crane. See a fair sized troopship with troops on board - rumour says these came from Java.

14th May. Am myself on Mount Faber today although some of party on west wharf. Work now is levelling a piece of ground on which wooden buildings are being erected. These buildings are being built by Nip soldiers. Lorries late coming to fetch us so didn't get back to camp till 7pm. This evening we had a nice piece of battered fish (very tasty). The cookhouse now occasionally make us popcorns with the maize. Some cigarettes thrown to us by native soldiers.

15th May. Detailed for work but on standby and not required.

16th May. At Mount Faber although nearly all the section were on west wharf. Had a quiet days work as we worked a system of ½hr on, ½hr off in hourly periods. Quite a lot of cigarettes thrown to us by native soldiers off lorries (Ed: the worm beginning to turn?). Tip was on tea boy and we managed to get some sweet potato leaves which he boiled up and we ate them with our meal.

17th May. West wharf today and still on clearing up but have had a quiet day with no 'binding' from guards, have issue of P.O. (?) when we get back to camp which was brought in buckets from docks.

18th May. Mount Faber again today and a very quiet day. Cigars could be bought at 30c each and pasties at 1D smuggled over to us by a young Chinese kiddy. Tip was on special party - another job like Chinese High school. One or two tunics sold ranging from 45D to 80D. We are levelling a piece of ground which looks as if it may be used for building as lorries have been bringing cut timber all day.

19th May. Day off - many rumours about and two fellows came from hospital yesterday and the same news seems to be very similar to what we have heard. There has been much aerial activity these last couple of days.

20th May and am on Mount Faber today. We were warned as soon as we got up there not to wander as yesterday the Dutch were on and one of the fellows was caught over a mile away from the job trying to sell a pair of green shorts. Heard the church bell ringing for 11am Service.

21st May. West wharf today on a new job digging air raid shelters; work similar to this seems to be being done all over Singapore.

22nd May. On the special job at Gilman barracks and find it is another tunnelling job. A party of 25 English detailed for this job each day and split into three parties each working on a separate hole. The two Nip guards (one Army one Navy) in charge of us are very enthusiastic and work as hard as any three of us. The midday meal was late and we worked till it came at 2pm. Had a piece of boiled tapioca root given us by the Nips. It was quite a good day although the work was hard but we had to drive 5 miles from the camp and one has a change of scenery. Met some English and Aussie POWs from the next camp to us - they have a permanent job here on the tunnels. They seem to do very well for extras.

23rd May. Day off. It was announced on parade that 2000D have been spent on sweet potatoes and 'missoo' a native seasoning which makes food quite tasty (Ed: actually 'miso - Nip fermented soya bean')

24th May. Empire Day. On Mount Faber and as usual have quite a good day although at the end of the day one of the native workers was found with a green tunic (evidentially bought from one of our fellows) he was badly beaten up but ran away in the middle of the beating. We had a thorough search

on parade and we were asked if anyone had sold this article but everyone kept 'mum'. A few cigars were discovered in the search but the incident closed without more ado. The tunic was taken back to camp but the guards took no further steps regarding the matter.

25th May. West wharf today and I am hoping we have a palm oil issue as the Dutch did yesterday. An easy day spent digging holes a metre square and one metre 20C deep and we finished ours in the day - 4 men on each hole. Had a good issue of palm oil. Quite a few Nip civvies about on the docks and we saw about a 1000 Nip troops arrive and march away up the road. Heard that on the Mount Faber job today a Dutchman was caught with 400 cigars on him and also some sugar. The cigars were confiscated - burnt on the spot. Some of our fellows working at Gilman have been talking to some chaps from another camp and were told that each man got a Red Cross parcel to himself and that they have been allowed to write a 24 word cable home. This is good news and hope we may do the same.

26th May. Mount Faber today and we are still on the 1hr on 1hr off system. Still levelling off and another shed is being erected by Nip workmen. The fellows asked the guard today if he would buy cigars for them. He did and distributed some to the chaps to smoke, the remainder he carried back to camp and passed them through the back window of their billet to one of our fellows. Rumours that Churchill has resigned and that Major Attlee is now P.M. Also that there is an election on the 5th June. Many other rumours.

27th May. Day off and did some washing, it was a good drying day and by mid day all was dry. Fifty men have been picked for a 'strong arm' job and are to standby ready for a move. It was announced on parade (but not officially) that 500 men composed of the sick and weak from this camp would probably be moved from here. Working parties from henceforth have only to take one eating utensil, a spoon, no sidepack and shirts or tunics have not to be worn. The reason given was that so much stealing and petty thieving from the docks and other work places was being done that it must stop. The tobacco situation is acute and it is not an uncommon sight to see fellows going round picking up 'dog ends'. Clothing and footwear has become a serious problem and many men go to work barefoot. I have a pair of boots but am hanging on to them in case we make a move and have to march. I also have a pair of sandals and I march to work in them but work barefoot. Cigars now range from 30c to 50c. Many exchanges are made and those in the fortunate position of having tobacco can command almost anything. Money is no good.

28th May. Mount Faber - a good day but we were not allowed to buy anything. Had a good dinner hour as we finished at 12.45 and did not start until 2.45 as the guard fell asleep.

29th May. West wharf. Work seems to have eased considerably, the guards taking practically no notice of us. The job we were on was at the other side of the road from the docks cutting dispersal bays for lorries in the earthen banks. Had a few packets of cigarettes thrown to us by Chinese passing in cars. Some controversy about food at midday because one section got more than another.

30th May. Mount Faber - still levelling off ground for buildings - they seem to be for lorries. Was filling baskets with soil and had a kick aimed at me which I managed to deflect. This was because I was not filling the baskets full enough. (These people change in a second)

31st May. West wharf - digging individual shelters. As soon as the place is marked out for a shelter the natives come and plant a banana tree close by. Had another warning this morning and we were hurried into shelters for 1hr.

1st June. West wharf knocking down brick pillars and walls of a burnt out godown. A large boat has been unloading rice for four days continually. We had a tenko at midday before eating and a guard kept us standing at attention until the number was complete - the last man was badly beaten up. It was announced two nights ago that a Nip Lt had said we would be receiving more Red Cross parcels in the course of a day or two. The fifty strong arm party has left for an unknown destination. Dysentery is again fairly prevalent and we have been warned to take due precautions.

2nd June. Day off. 3 buckets of P.O. (palm oil) came from the docks yesterday but it was said it was for making soap. It was first of all taken into

the officer's quarters so I don't suppose all the oil will go into soap. One of the large palm oil storage tanks is being moved and a few of the fellows managed to get palm oil; some were caught and beaten up. No Red Cross parcels yet but apparently transport is the problem.

3rd June. Mount Faber - and being Sunday there were no natives working so our fellows had to unload the bricks and rubble which came from the docks. Still levelling off but the 'change system' was not working - all worked, so consequently there was not so much work done. The Nip guard threw half bricks at us several times during the day and chased one chap with a saw. On parade this evening we were told that the swill bins outside the cookhouse and Nip quarters were out of bounds owing to the increase in dysentery. Some of the fellows had been foraging for peelings etc and boiling them up. I hear that we have to pay for transport to take the sick from the camp and also to collect the Red Cross. Some Korean guards left camp.

4th June. Was detailed for Mount Faber but went to West wharf. Was on the wood party which is the easiest job you can get - just loading or unloading as the case may be. Several fellows caught with palm oil and beaten up. Rumour says that rations are to be cut and that we shall go on to River Valley arrangements for feeding. A Nip officer said that in two days all sick, weak and light duty men are to be moved. (Ed: Above actually for 5th)

5th June (Ed: Actually for the 4th) West wharf dismantling godowns. 6th June. West Wharf - working on the change system and digging what appear to be pits for guns. A good job and the guards seem disinterested. There was another boat in today carrying troops and rice was being unloaded.

7th June. West wharf. Knocking the walls of a godown down. The rations have been cut - 200 grams rice for the sick and excused duty men - 250 for inside workers - 300 for outside workers.

8th June. West again and on the same job as yesterday. Several fellows caught stealing palm oil - beaten up and made to stand holding a block of $\frac{1}{2}$ doz bricks above their heads.

9th June. Mount Faber - the party consists of 50 English 50 Dutch. On lorry dispersal bays. Nip Police - Kempetai - about today.

10th June. West wharf. Digging a cutting on the opposite side of the road behind some native houses.

11th June. Same as yesterday. Hear this evening that the Red Cross is in but the Nip Sgt i/c says it all has to go straight into the cookhouse. Of course everyone is against this but we shall have to wait and see.

12th June. With Tip I am today detailed for tea boiling on West wharf. This goes round each section on roster and this is the first time I've been on it. Were complimented several times on the 'Brews'. I did the wood cutting while Tip and two Dutchmen looked after the fire and boiled the water. A fair amount of vegetables and a fowl brought in today - All agree that with the Red Cross being so near this is foolishness. We have a Nip guard on the West W who speaks good English. It is most noticeable how work has eased off although scarcely a day goes by without a beating up. No Red Cross but have been paid full amount and told to say, if asked, we only got half. There has been an internal move in camp, the Sick and E.D.s are to be together and officers, N.C.O.s and O.R.s in their separate huts. I am in hut 5 and will move to hut 9. It will mean that English, Australian and Dutch will all be mixed together (Not too good)

13th June. Yasume today after 10 days work. The administrator tossed up and I won. Tip has been put a special party. We think this is a party on which the Dutch worked but it has got so hard that now is Dutch one day English next. This morning told that as so much veg was being brought into the camp it had to go into the cookhouse instead of on private fires. The Nip Sgt has recently caught some fellows with private fires in the billet and is on the prowl everyday looking for such. Have swopped some tobacco for A.B.C. Murders, a book by Agatha Christie. Rumour says that as a result of a conference in Nippon the war will be carried on to the end. Today the Nip Sgt had a round of the barracks and found several variously sized tins that had been used for fires, also charcoal, wood, rice, sweet potato chips and even an electric fire. All confiscated. It is 8.30pm and the special party is not yet in. See below.

14th June. Special party got in at 9pm after a gruelling days work. Tip had

a blackout during the morning and rested afterwards; he had to be assisted back to camp at night. All men on this job on yesume today and the Nip Sgt is making enquiries.

(Ed: For the uninitiated tunnels were being dug in Japan and all over the occupied territories by POWs. They were actually the graves for POWs for when the time came they were to be herded into them, petrol poured in and set alight. A similar system using air raid shelters had been used in the Philipines and it worked)

14th June cont: On West wharf still cutting into hillside. Rice stealing, which has been going on for several days from the Nip store was today discovered. A Yank POW was caught red handed and one or two others just missed being caught. He had a terrible beating up by the guards and will be excused duty for several days. This put the guards in a bad mood and in consequence there were several other beatings - two Dutchmen had their heads split open with an iron bar.

15th June. The whole camp has a day off but there is an inspection at 9.30 by a Nip Major. Re-allocation of billets is also to be made. After, but while still on parade there was a search in the billet and any excess clothing was taken. Tip went into dock with a bout of malaria before the parade. In the afternoon the change-over of billets took place - we are now in hut 7.

16th June. On West W. same job - removing girders. No Nip guard but the "Yank" Nip came a few times. During the day there were 40 of us and we had 50 cigarettes given between us by a Chinese off a boat.

When the excess clothing was taken at the search yesterday none of my kit was taken but some silk knickers I had been trying to hang on to caused some amusement.

17th June. Mount Faber. Working with bricks and levelling. The sick and E.D. men moved out today and were transported by lorry and have presumably gone to Changi.

18th June Mount Faber carrying turves for dispersal walls.

19th June. West W. Digging connecting tunnels between gun pits. We had a 'presento' of palm oil for good work. (valued at 15 cigars in camp)

20th June. West W. and job like yesterday with like presento. Last night we had a delightful drink of chocolate made from the Red Cross stuff. The M.O. had proclaimed it not edible unless boiled.

21st June. Mount Faber today and still on dispersals. Have something on the bottom of my foot so will have to go 'sick', can hardly walk.

Have been sick and am on E.D. tomorrow.

22nd June. Nearly all the guards went from here on the 20th and before they went one purchased from me two pairs of knickers. I asked 100 cigars for them but finally got 20D which I was lucky to get. Tip came out of dock yesterday. Several minor incidents happen on the jobs we are on, one chap fell off a corrugated iron roof and had to have stitches in his shoulder; another had a roller over his foot. All the men in the camp were weighed the night before last and without exception all have lost weight since leaving Makasura. I am 100lbs compared to 110lbs at Makasura. Permission has been granted for us to open a canteen and we are told we can grow our hair if we wish.

23rd June. Am in camp, I have'nt seen M.O. yet about my foot. There is a rumour that the Nip Sgt is leaving - it could be so he has been checking all the cookhouse equipment. There is also a rumour that we shall be leaving this camp in the near future. Have just had my foot lanced, it was a small abscess under the skin. The M.O. says I can go out to work tomorrow.

24 June. Mount Faber today and only the Nip cpl there and it was a very easy day as my foot was painful. I think there is another abscess near the last one. Will go sick again tonight.

25th June. I am on E.D. Tragic happening in the camp - two Australians died this morning and eight others have been speedily moved to outside hospital. It is believed that they died from alcoholic poisoning as the two and the others had been drinking it; apparently it was pure alcohol which the Aussies brought into camp two nights ago.

26th June. Have had my foot dressed and the M.O. has put ne into hospital for a days rest. Had a Nip officer in hospital who said more fellows to be

are to be moved to outside hospital tomorrow.

27th June. One of the fellows due to be moved to outside hospital died during the night. A short funeral was held before he was taken out of camp. I am out of hospital now. The lads tell me work is still the same. Some Korean guards made up to one star Nip soldiers.

28th June. I am still in camp and the foot is painful; have done some cleaning latrines and bathrooms. Tip is still doing inside work as he is in camp for a few days yet. He is tea man for our section.

29th June. Still in and on ablution work. No canteen yet, it's still in the air. Pay for last period is in and expect we shall be paid today.

30th June. Back at work on West W. on tunnelling party - no incidents. Announced this evening that half the strength are on yasume to morrow and the following day the other half will yasume.

1st July. On Mount Faber and we walked to and from the job. Again a Sunday, quite coincidental the number of times I have been here on a Sunday. The natives looked very smart in their Sunday best. We were entertained by music from a radio in one of the houses opposite. We hoped to hear some news, as news has been heard by some, but we were not so lucky. Some chaps from another camp say they had a clothing parcel yesterday.

2nd July. Yasume. Some Nip officers in camp having a look round.

3rd July. I am on a new job; about a hundred on lorries go nearly to the causeway collecting granite from the railway sidings and convey back to Singapore. One load in morning, one in afternoon. An easy job, a long ride and a nice change. Have biscuits, bread and pineapple from Chinese.

4th July. Same job as yesterday.

5th July. A change today - split up into small parties - 8 of us on plank carrying. Near some Chinese houses and did quite well as we were each given 2 bananas, a bombay duck and 1½ cigars. Next job digging a hole - the Nip guard gave us some sugar cane and a papaya for lunch. Had several biscuits thrown at us by Chinese and took one back for Tip.

6th July. On tunnels today at West W. - it was an easy day, as good as a yasume, but some of the parties didn't do as well. One party has 300D off Chinese - also coffee, bananas and cigars. (between ten men)

7th July. Canteen sales have been stopped as too much money coming into camp. Same work as yesterday.

8th July. Mount Faber. On lorry dispersals and blast walls between bays. Heard wireless but no news.

9th July. West W. on tunnels. Had a surprise when we got back to camp - Nip Sgt had issued 150 tins of meat and veg to cookhouse from R. Cross.

10th July. Changed from West W to Mount Faber and had another easy day. We were cutting grass and placing it on newly turned earth from dispersals. Two parties on West had palm oil today which is good news we haven't had an issue for a long time. Walk to Faber work each day, no lorry.

11th July. This morning the working party was sent back and told to standby until the bell rings. We had a hurricane last night at 2.30am which blew the cookhouse down and also another attap building. Expected no breakfast but it was cooked in the Nip cookhouse. Working parties not required. Day off.

12th July. Was today on digging a hole - 100 of us split into parties at various places to which we had to walk digging holes and we walked some miles. Our particular hole was very tough and when it was finished we were finished. We ate our meal two at a time so the work could continue.

13th July. West W. as now we do alternate days on holes with the Dutch. We did not do a 'stook' all day except tow a barge from one end of the wharf to another for unloading.

14th July. On holes but a really excellent day. Walked three miles to the hole our small party of 11 was on. This was by some Chinese houses and an old Chinese lady kept us continually supplied with tea all day. We came to an agreement that if we received anything we would share and share alike. At the end of the day we had received 44 Kooa cigarettes - 6 shts cigarette paper - 11 cakes - 2 loaves - a small quantity of tobacco and 70 dollars. You can get some idea from this how good the Chinese are to us but more about that later.

15th July. Have had some surprises regarding meals as the cookhouse is not yet built so we don't know what's coming up next. Mount Faber today and

here they have started four cuttings. Had a fairly easy mornings work but after the midday meal we were brought back to camp. Work has been very erratic the last few days as manoeuvres have been taking place.

16th & 17th July. On Mount Faber both days - the work was just as easy. Have been weighed again today and have lost another 6lbs - nearly everyone has lost between 5 & 10lbs since last being weighed.

18, 19 & 20th July. On Mount Faber on a new job but levelling off ground presumably for building and also to Gilman to which we walked 4 miles. Nearly everyone is on a similar job to this at various points on Mount Faber. Issued with $3\frac{1}{2}$ biscuits and a drop of marmalade on the 19th from Red Cross supplies.

21st July. On a tunnel today just behind the railway station. This tunnel has been cut about 40 yards into the hillside and we are working at the end. An electric fan was supplied!!

22nd July. The most restful work I have been on for many days; down at West W. weaving raw sisal into wire netting for camouflage purposes. A sit down job and no 'binding'. Should actually have been on Mount Faber but this party seems to have finished now.

23rd July. The morning work was the same job as yesterday but in the afternoon 2 lorries came for 80 men and we were taken about 7 miles along the West coast road near the sea shore to stack logs into orderly piles. We finished at 6pm and started walking but a lorry came and picked us up half way, even then we were late in and didn't have a meal before tenko.

24th July. Another job today and had a good walk of 4 miles arriving on the job at 10.45am. This proved to be a building job and I was carpenter sawing wood all day to required lengths for building a shed.

25th July. In camp on gardens which is almost as good as a rest day. Did some brick carrying as the cookhouse is being divided and some more fireplaces built. The camp has also been divided - 400 supposedly fit are on one side and 300 sick and E.D. on the other. The reason for the split is unknown.

26th July. On the same job as the 24th - had to walk there and back but it was a reasonable day.

27th July. Still another change of work (we do get variety) and once again up in Mount Faber for the first half of the morning log carrying for another building and then working on a tunnel with two shifts relieving so we had $\frac{1}{2}$ hr on and 1hr off. Were fortunate as a lorry brought us back. Had an impromptu concert which was quite good and attended by the Nip Sgt and some guards. One party did not return until 10pm.

28th July. Tip is still in dock and has had a bad touch of dysentery. Quite a change of work today. I was in a party of 50 that went down to middle wharf unloading a barge containing timber. Had a pint of P.O. issued. Last night's late party had day off today.

31st July. Yesterday the fit men were split up into two parties. One heavy work party of 160 men who are to move to a camp $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles past Keppel road and the other party of 240 men are to move to Keppel road camp. It is rumoured that both these parties will be on extra food. Instructions for the move are as follows - Reveille 6.30am. breakfast then midday meal collected and on parade at 8.10 with full kit ready to march off. All went as per plan. All kit had to be laid out and the usual search conducted by the Nip guard, but this was not as thorough as usual. (By this time the majority of the fellows have a skeleton kit) anyone with two of anything - bed mats, shirts, tunics, shorts etc had one taken off them. We were on the parade ground for two hours before we finally moved out accompanied by 2 guards. Keppel road camp is about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Tanjong Pagar and we arrived about 12.30 after one rest on the road. We were shown our billets - attap roofed with raised boards and centre passage. We had the food we brought with us and here we learnt that 160 men had left this morning destined for the same camp as our 160 men. About 160 left on this Keppel road camp we joined. This camp is under British administration. Had a shock in the afternoon when a working party was called for and I was detailed. We walked over Mount Faber to one of our old jobs and evidently they did not expect us as they didn't know what to set us to do; however, we were finally given a clearing up job. We finished at 5.30 and were taken back to camp.

17th August 1945.

I have not kept a day to day record while at Keppel Road camp so must give a brief summary of routine and work from 1st August 1945.

Working parties are much better organized than at the last camp as parties are lettered and the 'A' 'B' or 'C' party as the case may be keeps the same job day after day and the same men go on these individual parties. I was in 'E' party which consisted of 40 men but as soon as we were out of the camp gates we were split into 2 parties of 20 men each. The party I was on was detailed for tunnel digging and when we got on the job we were split into two parties of 10 and each party had a hole. These tunnels were made into the face of a hill and a metre and a half was to be cut each day. It was similar to what we had been doing but we were kept 'at it' more. Some parties had harder jobs than others but on most the lads soon got organized on extra food. For sixteen days we had practically the same routine but twice I went to different jobs. Tunnels and holes were being dug all over Singapore at this time and also on the mainland. During this period we heard rumours that the war out here was over and the Chinese were always giving us the 'V' sign and some Germans we saw on several occasions also gave us the 'V' sign too. On the 18th we were paraded as usual for work but there seemed to be some tenseness in the atmosphere and after waiting on parade until about 9.30am we were dismissed. There was a tremendous amount of chatter and conjecture in the billet. On the evening of this day a Lieutenant in charge of the English came into the billet and made an announcement to the effect that all personnel who had recently arrived here from other camps would return to their home camp the next day. He also announced that all POW camps would be on increased rations - this statement was received by loud cheers. He could give us no definite information regarding the rumours re the end of the war but said we should all soon be smoking 'Players'. At a later hour the same officer came and told us the move would be made on lorries - a thing unheard of on previous moves. The return of personnel to home camps seems to be a general move as the 160 who left Keppel Road are due to return tomorrow.

19th August. Lights were on at 7am and everyone busy packing kit. We were on parade at 9am and there was a kit inspection but not a thorough one. The 160 men returned before we left but our transport came soon afterwards; three lorries - three batches. Arrived back at Tanjong Pagar at 11am and made contact with Tip immediately. Their meal last night was the first 500 gram (new ration) they had had. Tip looks much better. We were told last night that there were to be no more working parties for POWs and this is confirmed at Panjong Pagar. They have been hearing the same rumours as we so all hope the war is really over.

20th August - 4th September 1945.

For the period between those two dates I have not been able to keep a record as things have been moving with such lightning rapidity, but I shall give here as full a report as possible.

First of all on this 4th September we paraded on the square at 10am and had a colour hoisting ceremony. The Union Jack was hoisted in the centre with the Stars and Stripes on the right and the Dutch flag on the left. It was a short but impressive ceremony and 'God Save the King' was sung. The C.O. of the English (F/O Murray) afterwards sent a notice round to each billet which read "The C.O. wishes to congratulate all men on the manner in which they responded to the Ceremonial Colour hoisting Parade held this morning" The Ceremony did more to convince us that we were no more POWs than any other happening which has taken place since the news came that the war here was over. In the afternoon those who wished went on a route march. About 130 English went on this march and the route taken was over very familiar ground, namely, down to Middle Wharf and here we saw the arrival of a battle wagon - it was said this was H.M.S. Sussex, on board which the signing over of Singapore took place. No one seems to want to sleep these nights, and whatever time of the night one may go out, one sees groups of fellows sitting around talking.

5th September 1945. Today a Major took over command of this camp, we paraded and he gave us some information regarding the return of POWs to their

various places. We are to have a medical exam by a doctor who will come to this camp in the course of a few days when we shall be grouped. Those in 'A' Group will proceed home by boat (ordinary trooper) - this group will be reasonably fit. We shall be kitted out with battledress and small kit and then when we do finally get on board more clothing of a suitable nature will be issued.

Food today has improved considerably as supplies have been coming off some of the boats that are in the harbour here. We have had meat, sausages, M & V, biscuits and some of the fellows who have been out of camp (unofficially) come back loaded with stuff of all descriptions - cigarettes, white bread, sweets, magazines, papers, books, emergency rations and clothing etc., A library has been started in the camp composed chiefly of books printed in America.

6th September 1945. Now I will give a detail of the meals as the day goes on. First of all I must say that bugle calls have been instituted. Breakfast this morning consisted of one packet of biscuits per man together with a meat mixture M & V (beans, Runner beans & potatoes) plus mashed sausages. Midday, rice plus greens and a 1lb tin of bacon between two or alternately a 2lb tin of sausage between four.

An invitation was received from 'H.M.S. Derbyshire' (a trooper) for 50 Dutch and 50 English to dine and the fellows are just back. They had an excellent Irish stew followed by a sweet (as much as they could eat).

This afternoon an invitation has been received for the same number to take tea on board H.M.S. Sussex. I was detailed and cut the cards with Tip and Tip won. There is also to be a cinema show in one of the godowns on the docks and the party already out are to go plus a 100 more men from camp. Some of the worst cases from the hospital inside camp have this afternoon gone to an outside hospital. We have today had some W.R.E.N.s in camp, the first European women we have seen for years.

7th Sept 1945. Last night I was one of a party of a 100 who went down to the docks to see a talkie entitled 'Gentleman Jim Corbett', also saw newsreels and two colour cartoons. Very enjoyable.

Today I was one of an organized party of 100 invited on board HMS Derbyshire to lunch. Boarded her at 12 o'clock and was immediately conducted down to lunch, which consisted of a thick soup (carrots, potatoes and onions) followed by beef, peas and potatoes (as much of any of the dishes as one required) followed by vermicelli pudding. With the meal we had an unlimited supply of bread and butter (This to us was the highlight of the meal) White bread! how good it was.

Then in the evening we had an invitation on board one of the Red Cross boats - just a small party of 40. Had a very enjoyable evening.

The day I was on the 'Derbyshire' I had an interesting, all afternoon, talk with a Miss Gray from Edinburgh, a 'two piper' in the T.A.N.S. and she got me some books and four large loaves of bread (sandwich type) and we are enjoying these with eggs we got off the natives in exchange for cigarettes. One would have to be smoking all day to keep up with the cigarettes we have recently had issued, so that exchange for eggs etc does us more good. The natives stipulate 'English' cigarettes and for 20 Players one can get from 4 up to 10 eggs. We also get bananas, papayas, etc in exchange. We had a church service on the camp at 9.30am but it was very poorly attended. I went and also stayed for communion afterwards.

I had another invitation to go on one of the smaller ships in the harbour but this was cancelled as there is a movement of shipping today and some are embarking, however, I went down to the hospital boat at night to see a fellow from Cardiff (I met him the first night we visited the boat) and spent a quiet evening with him. The fellow has been very good and I have had cigarettes, papers and tobacco from him. Andy was on guard so we had a good supper from the cookhouse. Meals have improved greatly and we are now nearly back on European standards.

10th Sept. Have heard that already some of the fellows have been flown away (the very fit) and yesterday and today some personnel from other camps have been embarking on Red Cross boats. Went out this morning and did a 'swop' for a watch. It is very amusing to see the number of fellows (ex POWs

soldiers, sailors, white and coloured) buying watches. Here I shall be very brief - each days happenings did not vary very much and finally we heard that we should be sailing.

We left Singapore on the 16th September 1945 calling at Columbo on our way. Here we had a really marvellous reception and a Pipe band played us in. We were taken to a reception centre on lorries and here, without exception) everything was ideal. We were ashore about five hours. On the way again and the next call was Adabiya (The other side of Suez) Kitting out etc was carried out here and here too we found how marvellous the organization was. We went ashore in the morning, returned to the boat for lunch and were kitted out in the afternoon. On again through the Suez and so to Port Said. We stayed there a short time for refuelling and immediately went on our way again. Gibraltar was our next stop but we did not disembark. On again through the Bay of Biscay - rather rough here and some were sick.

No 1155749 L.A.C. P.H. Sparrow. _____ Edited by R. Chapman

Practically within sight of Britain Philip ran out of leaves in the notebook and no doubt out of inspiration to write more. There the script ends as all good stories should, to leave us with thoughts of a future without fences and barbed wire.

I apologise for Philip in his references to the 'English' I itched to change the word to 'British' as no doubt he would have done if he had revised his writing as he intended to, but I left it to leave authenticity in his writing. To the Jocks and the Taffs and the Paddys, bear with him. He did make an attempt to rewrite but faltered after a few pages. I'm sure that even if the will was there he hadn't the time to spare from trying to get on with living his life as we all were.

R.C.