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Japanese Empire in the Tropics

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Japanese Empire in the Tropics

Selected Documents and Reports
of the Japanese Period in Sarawak
Northwest Borneo

1941-1945

Edited and Introduced by
Ooi Keat Gin

VOLUME II

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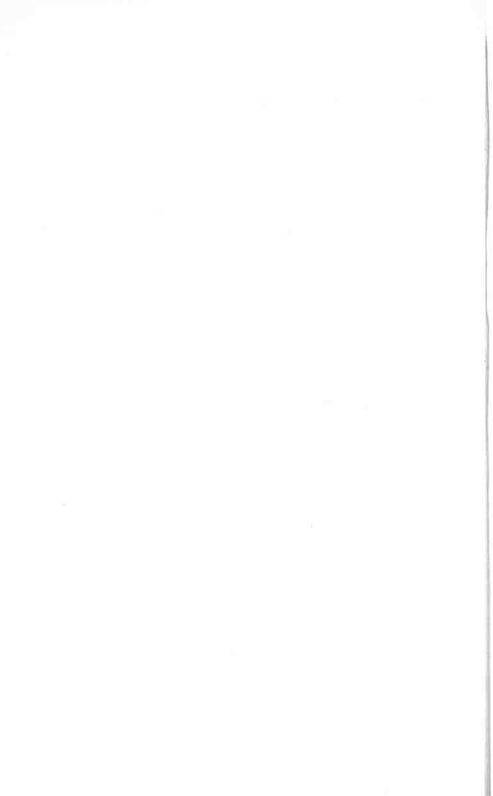
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Abbreviations

A.B.C.	America-Britain-China Powers
A.I.F.	Australian Imperial Forces
A.L.F.S.E.A.	Allied Land Forces South-East Asia
A.R.P.	Air Raid Precaution
BBCAU	British Borneo Civil Affairs Unit
BCL	Borneo Company Limited
B.N.B.	British North Borneo
<i>BRB</i>	<i>Borneo Research Bulletin</i>
C.C.S.	Casualty Clearing Station
CGS	Chief of General Staff
C.G.Y.C.	Colombo Golf and Yachting Club
C.M.	Camp Master
C.S.M.	Company Sergeant-Major
F.I.C.	French Indo-China
FMSVF	Federated Malay States Volunteer Force
GOC	General Officer Commanding
H.M.R.A.N.	His/Her Majesty's Royal Australian Navy
H.M.S.O.	His/Her Majesty's Stationery Office
I.J.A.	Imperial Japanese Army
IWM	Imperial War Museum, London
<i>JMHSSB</i>	<i>Journal of the Malaysian Historical Society, Sarawak Branch</i>
M.C.C.	Malayan Cadet Corps
Mgr.	Monsignor
M.L.	Motorized Launch
M.P.A.J.A.	Malayan Peoples' Anti-Japanese Army

M.T.B.	Motorized Transport Boat
M.V.	Motorized Vessel
N.E.I.	Netherlands East Indies
OC or O/C	Officer Commanding
P.O.W.s	Prisoners of War
PRO	Public Record Office, Kew
Prob.	Probationary
P. & T.	Post and Telegraph
P.W.D.	Public Works Department
R.A.	Royal Artillery
R.A.A.F.	Royal Australian Air Force
R.A.F.	Royal Air Force
R.A.O.C.	Royal Army Ordnance Corps
R.A.S.C.	Royal Australian Service Corps
R.E.	Royal Engineers
R.E.O.C.	Royal Engineers Ordnance Corps
Revd.	Reverend
RHL	Rhodes House Library, Oxford
R.S.M.	Regimental Sergeant-Major
R.T.C.	Rejang Timber Concession
SARFOR	Sarawak Forces
S.C.S.	Sarawak Civil Service
SG	<i>Sarawak Gazette</i>
SMJ	<i>Sarawak Museum Journal</i>
S.P.G.	Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, London
S.R.D.	(Australian) Services Reconnaissance Department
ST	<i>Sarawak Tribune</i>
VP-Day	Victory in the Pacific Day
W.O.	Warrant Officer

Weights, Measures, and Currencies

Local Units	Imperial Equivalent (Approximate)
-------------	--------------------------------------

Weights

1 tahl	1.33 ounces (oz)
1 kati = 16 tahils	1.33 pounds (lbs)
1 pikul = 100 katis	133.30 lbs
1 koyan = 40 pikuls	5,333.30 lbs
1 gantang (dry weight) = 8 katis	10.64 lbs
1 passu = 8 gantangs	85.12 lbs

Measures

1 depas = an arm's length	20.00 inches
1 panchang	108 stacked cubic feet

Currencies

Unless otherwise indicated, all currencies refer to the Sarawak dollar, which, prior to the Pacific War, was tied to the Straits (Settlements) dollar. From 1906 the Straits dollar was pegged to sterling at the rate of \$1 to 2s 4d, or \$8.57 to £1. This rate was generally maintained until the outbreak of the Pacific War in 1941.

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Volume II

PART III

25 DECEMBER 1941
TO 9 JUNE 1945



CHAPTER 5

THE *GUNSEIBU* GOVERNMENT

A MILITARY government (*gunseibu*) was established in Sarawak from the start of its occupation by Imperial Japanese forces. General instructions promulgated in Tokyo as to the governance of occupied territories in the Southern Area (Southeast Asia) were as a whole adhered to by local commanders in the field. These orders, incorporating changes as wartime conditions shifted, are laid out in DOCUMENTS 38, 39, and 40. They are derived from the collection of papers classified under Special Intelligence Bulletin mentioned earlier. Together these three documents present an outline of the situation in occupied Sarawak.

DOCUMENT 41 gives a more detailed account of the administrative structure of the *gunseibu*. It is an abstract from "British Territories in North Borneo," an intelligence report penned by Australian intelligence officers. DOCUMENT 42 outlines the Japanese economic policy, which was the implementation of Imperial Japan's Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Part of the economic plans of the occupying forces in the territories of northwest Borneo was the rejuvenation of the oil fields to serve the wartime

needs of Japan. It is based on an interrogation report of a Japanese civilian administrator. Kawada Saburoo was the senior administrative official in the civil administration established in former British North Borneo. He took up his appointment in September 1944. He surrendered to Australian Forces at Beaufort. Kawada was interrogated by Lieutenant F. E. Mostyn on 4 March 1946. The interrogation report stated that Kawada's intelligence was "Good," but reliability only "Fair." This report is kept under the WO Series at the Public Record Office.

DOCUMENT 43, which tells of the rehabilitation, utilization, and development of the Miri oil fields and the Lutong refinery by the Japanese, is an extract from a paper entitled "Borneo Oilfields" dated 19 September 1945. As its title declares, this paper offers a detailed description of oil fields and oil installations throughout the whole of Borneo relating to their prewar situation, development, and exploitation by the Japanese, and postwar rehabilitation. This paper is classified under the WO Series in the Public Record Office.

In their attempt to garner local support to imperial needs, the *gunseibu* initiated the establishment of an indigenous volunteer militia, the *Kyodotai*. DOCUMENT 44 provides insight into its objectives, recruitment, organization, activities, and training. Included also are the probable factors contributing to the *Kyodotai's* failure in Sarawak. This paper is based on information gathered from interrogation sessions with five Japanese officers of the organization: Captain Ikeno Ryuji, Captain Tatsuma Minoru, Captain Morikawa Kenzo, Lieutenant Watanabe Yoshio, and Lieutenant Wakamatsu Yoshihiko. The results of these interrogations were reproduced as Item 2182 of Intelligence Bulletin No. 237.

DOCUMENT 38

Orders Relating to the Changes in the Responsibilities of the Southern Army

Special Intelligence Bulletin: Japanese Plans and Operation in

S.E. Asia—Translation of Japanese Documents, 21 December 1945. WO 203/6310. PRO. Documents 7 (a) and 7 (b).

1. With a view to the successful completion of the Great East Asia War, Imperial HQ are making preparation for stabilising the vital Southern Area,¹ so that a state of self-maintenance may be achieved, leading to final victory. In addition plans are being made for operations required by current conditions.

2. GOC Southern Army, in cooperation with the navy, will be responsible for stabilising the vital Southern Area. In this task he will bear in mind the following points. In addition he will prepare for operations against strong areas on the borders of his sphere of operation.

(a) Defence of *BURMA*, *BRITISH MALAYA*, *SUMATRA*, *JAVA*, and *BRITISH* and *DUTCH BORNEO* must be perfected, and military administrations set up.

(b) He must cooperate in the defence of *FIC* [French IndoChina] and *THAILAND*.

(c) Pressure will be maintained against *CHUNGKING* from the areas of *BURMA*, *FIC*, and *THAILAND*.

(d) Offensive air operations against *INDIA* and *CHINA* will be carried out as necessary, but orders for offensive ground operations into the interior will be issued separately.

(e) If necessary, assistance will be given in the defence of areas under naval control.

(f) The necessary propaganda against *INDIA*, *AUSTRALIA* and *CHINA* will be carried out.

3. CGS will place the necessary shipping units at the disposal (or under the command) of GOC Southern Army for the time being.

4. Detailed instructions will be issue by the CGS.

By Imperial Decree

29 Jun [19]42

CGS SUGIYAMA, Gen.

To:—GOC Southern Army Count TERAUCHI Hisaichi.

Instructions based on the above orders.

1. For the defence of the vital Southern Area, GOC Southern

Army will follow the central Army-Navy Agreement, Supplement No.1.²

2. In order to maintain pressure against *CHUNGKING* from the *BURMA* Area the line of the *SALWEEN* River, particularly in the region of *LUNGLING* and [*TENGYUEH*], will be firmly held for the time being.

3. The GOC Southern Army has the authority, if necessary, to conclude an agreement with the military authorities of *FIC* or *THAILAND*, based on the *FIC* Japanese Mutual Defence Protocol and the Thai-Japanese Treaty of Alliance.

The number of troops stationed in *THAILAND* will remain at the minimum as long as the situation does not change.

4. For the time being, GOC Southern Army will be responsible for the defence (excluding air defence) of *TIMOR*.

5. In the Southern Area the GOC has the authority to raise and train armed bands necessary to expedite the accomplishment of our mission.

6. Air bases will be established in accordance with supplement No.2 (General Information on air bases established in the vital Southern Area).³

7. GOC will endeavour to improve unit training and to foster a proper sense of discipline, in order to maintain and increase fighting strength.

8. GOC Southern Army may delegate to the [N]avy, after conferring with C-in-C Combined Fleet, on the following points the power to the *KEMPEI* or OC *KEMPEI* [*Kempetai* or secret military police], either local or official orders as provided for in local and official regulations.

i. *KEMPEI* within the naval defence area must accept orders from Cin-C Combined Fleet in matters of police required for defence. This is in accordance with clause 2 of the Mar [19]36 Agreement relating to the division of responsibility for home defence.

ii. Commanders of naval base forces within the said areas have the authority to issue orders to OC *KEMPEI* in matters of police required for defence purposes.

DOCUMENT 39

Outline of Air Bases Established in the Southern Area

Special Intelligence Bulletin: Japanese Plans and Operation in S.E. Asia—Translation of Japanese Documents, 21 December 1945. WO 203/6310. PRO. Document 7 (d), Appendix 2.

June [19]42
Imperial HQ
Army Branch.

PARA 1. POLICY

Efforts must be made to have air bases in the Southern Area in a state of readiness for impending operations. Also everything must be done to maintain and develop the air strength necessary for the defence of the Southern Area. For these reasons, established strong points will have to be repaired, supplied and built up.

PARA 2. OUTLINE.

i. Air bases will be established in FIC [French Indo-China], THAILAND, BURMA, MALAYA, SUMATRA, JAVA and the PHILIPPINES with SINGAPORE as the centre point. Essential army airfields is as shown in attached table No.1.⁴

Of the above, airfields in THAILAND must be available for use by the Japanese Air force.

Airfields in FIC will be maintained as they are at present, but ultimately extensions will be carried out as the necessity arises.

ii. The intended disposition of air units for the defence of the Southern Area is as contained in the attached table No. 2.⁵

iii. In airfields and installations, as well as in repair and supply installations, full use will be made of existing facilities. Necessary Establishments will be strengthened and expanded. Efforts must be made to have the installations on permanent bases ready for operation; additional establishments may be constructed on

other bases according to operational necessity, but it must be borne in mind whether or not forces from other areas may be concentrated or deployed on the work. In BURMA particularly, preparations are being made for three air divs [divisions] (about 100 companies) to be deployed.

iv. It is our object to be able to repair and issue for air-craft locally, and we are doing all in our power to develop the ability of each area to meet its own needs in supplies. To this end we are developing the ability to repair aircraft and to construct pre-fabricated installations rapidly. The intended disposition of machinery for the repair of aircraft is as shown in attached table 3.⁶ The carrying out of this will in the first place be according to the Asiatic Army General Order (SECRET) No. 1014.

v. As a rule, supplies and fuel will be obtained locally.

vi. Certain essential air routes are being established for communications between air bases used by the army and between places in the Southern part of the Co-[P]rosperity [S]phere.

The following principal routes in particular will be maintained without fail.

- (a) FORMOSA-PHILIPPINES-East BORNEO-JAVA route.
- (b) FORMOSA-PHILIPPINES-West BORNEO-SINGAPORE route.
- (c) HONGKONG-South FIC-East MALAYA-SUMATRA-JAVA route.
- (d) HONGKONG-North FIC-THAILAND-West MALAYA-SUMATRA route.
- (e) PHILIPPINES-South FIC-THAILAND-BURMA route.

DOCUMENT 40

Summary of the Policy of Government of Occupied Sarawak, Brunei, and former British North Borneo

Special Intelligence Bulletin: Japanese Plans and Operation in S.E. Asia—Translation of Japanese Documents, 21 December 1945. WO 203/6310. PRO: Document 11.

12 Oct [19]42

Imperial HQ Army
Branch

Each area must be ruled according to its special characteristics, and the points to be borne in mind, are as follows :—

In the occupied zones, JAPAN will in practice control all military affairs, and also transport, economics and foreign policy, even although in theory control may have been handed back to the local authorities. The main object of this is to strengthen the defence of the united countries of Great East Asia, and to further our plans. . . .

PARA 4. NORTH BORNEO

For the present, our policy in the development of this area will be as follows :—

(a) Our plans at present are to use native princes as the instruments of military government, according to their former status and their ability.

(b) We must maintain the use of a part of the local vital resources, particularly oil, as reserve stocks.

(c) The political power of local Chinese must be restricted as soon as possible.

DOCUMENT 41

Japanese Administration in former British Borneo Territories

"British Territories in North Borneo," extract from Allied Landing Forces South-East Asia (A.L.F.S.E.A.), No. 52, 28 September 1945. WO 208/105. PRO. pp. 22-24.

The British States and Dutch West Borneo are grouped together under a Military Administration. South Borneo and the Great East (the latter comprising the Celebes, Moluccas, Lesser Sundas and Dutch New Guinea) are under a Naval Administration. The C-in-C of the Japanese Expeditionary Force also holds the appointment of Governor General. He is advised by the Chief Civil Administrator. The British States have been demarcated as follows: East Coast

State (B.N.B.), West Coast State (B.N.B.), Miri State (Brunei and North Sarawak), and Kuching State (Sarawak), each being under a Japanese Provincial Governor. The administrative system provides for the formation of District Councils. Each of these has as Councillors five to ten local inhabitants who have been recommended by the District Chief and appointed by the Governor of the Province. The Councillors are required to meet at least twice a year, generally under the presidency of the District Chief. Members of Chinese, Indian and other immigrant communities are appointed as Special Councillors. The system is one of decentralised power allowing of participation by local inhabitants under Japanese supervision. According to first-hand information the town of Kuching was administered by Japanese who were resident there before the Occupation. The same applies to other areas. Local administration in the jungle territories is in the hands of native Police agents and village headmen. The latter in most cases have had no option but to retain office under the Japanese, whose treatment of them apparently is not of the best.

At the time of the invasion numbers of the Police engaged in desultory hostilities against the Japanese before dispersing to fend for themselves. Later many of them drifted back to the towns and took service under the Japanese. A Malay sub-inspector was appointed to command the Police force at Kuching. A call for recruits for the Indian National Army was made in Kuching in May/June 1943, and of the 80 men who responded about 60 were Sikh polic[e]men. They were sent to Malaya. Since July 1944 Chinese have been recruited for the Police force in those parts of Borneo where there are Chinese communities.

JAPANESE INTELLIGENCE ORGANISATIONS AND DISPOSITIONS

No details are available, but it is probable that selected local inhabitants as well as immigrant Formosans and Koreans are employed in intelligence duties.

PRINCIPAL [JAPANESE] POLITICAL, ADMINISTRATIVE
AND [C]OMMERCIAL [O]FFICERS

Gen. Masataka YAMAWAKI	C-in-C, Japanese Expeditionary Forces in Borneo.
Taneki KUMABE	Governor, East Coast State (B.N.B.)
Yoshimasa MURAKAMI	Governor, West Coast State (B.N.B.)
Roichi KODAMA	Governor, Miri State (Brunei and North Sarawak).
Sotojiro TOKUNO	Governor, Kuching State (Sarawak).

SCOPE OF [JAPANESE]
COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE ORGANISATIONS

It is to be expected that counter-intelligence measures are enforced mainly in the coastal areas. Port security is maintained by personnel of the marine branch of the Kempei (Japanese Military Police). Evidently Malays and Dyaks are employed as naval ratings. Naval personnel wear anchor insignia surrounded by a laurel wreath in red on the left arm and on their cloth caps.

A vigilante or auxiliary Police organisation, known in Malaya as the "*Jikeidan*," may exist in parts of Borneo. A leader is appointed for every group of ten households and a superior for every group of 30 households, 100 households, and so on. Householders are detailed to patrol the streets at night, to enforce blackout and other forms of A.R.P. and to question strangers or suspects.

Informers and Police agents are used by the Japanese to report on any anti-Japanese tendencies or activities they might discover.

Travel by land or sea is not permitted without a pass issued by the *Minseibu* [Civil Administration Department].

COAST WATCHING

Japanese naval personnel are stationed in various parts of the coast. Apparently the defences include a few coastal guns, pill-boxes and machine guns. Reports indicate that motor launches are used for patrolling adjacent waters. It is not known to what extent local inhabitants co-operate with the Japanese in coast-watching duties.

[JAPANESE] PROPAGANDA OF SPECIFIC IMPORT

The population being largely illiterate and disinterested in politics, their reactions to Japanese propaganda would be, on the whole, negligible. Propaganda for internal consumption in Borneo has been inconsequential by contrast with its volume and content in other occupied countries such as Java, Malaya and Burma. Its most practical and dangerous form has been the spreading of the Japanese language and the ideologies underlying the "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere." It is to be expected that a fairly high percentage of the urban population will have acquired at least a rudimentary knowledge of Japanese.

DOCUMENT 42

Japanese Economic Policy with Special Reference to General Trade Policy in North Borneo

Interrogation Report No.21 [Kawada, Saburoo] 4 March 1946.
WO 208/3114. PRO.

1. Object and Organisation

The first object was to stabilise the native currency and cost of living after the original turmoil caused by the JAPANESE invasion.

Military stores were expected, in order that the Military Administration might help the in-habitants. [?]

Originally, the administration had the characteristics of a Civil Administration, but its control fell into the military organisation. Five provincial offices were set up at KUCHING, SIBU, MIRI, JESSELTON, and SANDAKAN; these directly super-intended and directed native labour.

Civil Administration officials (excluding military officers and soldiers) were appointed from JAPAN. At the time they left JAPAN, these men received only the following general instructions from the military:—

- (a) To enforce military and civil discipline.
- (b) To carry out their duties in accordance with the Army's policy.
- (c) To respect the rights of the civilian population.
- (d) To render assistance to the population in order to encourage trade.

When these officials arrived at their posts in BRITISH NORTH BORNEO, their duties were as ordered by the Comd [Commander] of the Army, or Provincial President.

2. Industrial Policy

(a) In order to permit trade to continue and lessen friction between the JAPANESE and the civilian population, troops were not allowed to move freely about the countryside.

(b) The JAPANESE made use of the natives in employing them in their trading companies and allowing the owners of businesses to carry out work as contract companies.

(c) In order to permit the continuance of free trade, rice was imported for the natives. Coal was exported to other areas in occupation. The difficulty of sea transport and its hazards prevented the import of as many goods as were intended.

(d) The question of oil was regarded as belonging to the

Military Administration's tasks, since it was treated as a military store entirely.

3. *The Policy in Relation to Production Generally*

(A) AGRICULTURE

From the end of 1942, plans were made to increase the production of rice as a staple food. At first rice was not sufficient to feed the natives, but later in 1944 communications became so very difficult in BRITISH NORTH BORNEO that it no longer became possible to supply the interior regularly.

Moreover, the paddy crop fell off and rice could not easily be imported. The natives were [?] therefore encouraged to produce "Ubi Kayu" (tapioca.)

(B) RUBBER

Rubber production was kept at a steady level. The JAPANESE authorities purchased most of the product.

(C) HEMP

At first the production of Manila hemp was encouraged and this was used for trading purposes. When shipping became scarce however, this could no longer be exported and no further interest was taken in it.

(D) INDUSTRY

There were no industries flourishing when the JAPANESE arrived. In order to promote some necessary tools were imported to set up ship yards, workshops, motor-factories. Small car parts factories began. A nail-making shop, a shoe-repairing depot, a spinning workshop and medical supply manufacturing factory were

set up. Owing to lack of raw materials and machinery, these ventures for the most part were unsuccessful.

A tanning factory was, however, successfully set up and continued.

(E) MINING

No attempt was made to establish new mining areas, but the existing ones were modernised and improved. A certain amount of mercury and antimony were obtained. Coal mines were enlarged and sufficiently worked for use in factories and to export. It was intended that machines should be imported to develop the mines but again this plan was frustrated owing to the dislocation of sea transport.

(F) FORESTRY

Timber was obtained on a large scale by employing gangs to work in the jungle, and was used to build shops, factories, houses, and furniture.

(G) FISHERY

Prior to the War, the JAPANESE fishing companies in BRITISH NORTH BORNEO had rights of fishery. The area permitted was extended to the far side of the East Coast. On the West Coast, the native more primitive fishing arrangements continued as before.

DOCUMENT 43

Utilization and Development of the North Borneo Oil Fields by the Japanese Imperial Military Government

"Borneo: Oilfields," 19 September 1945. Abstract. WO 208/104.
PRO.

4. Japanese Development and Utilization

A. SERIA OILFIELD

It was expected that the enemy would concentrate his efforts on the redevelopment of the Seria field, due to its high potentiality and valuable fuel oil reserves. It was assumed that they had at least three strings of drilling tools in the area. Commercial drilling crews could drill a deep well on a land site in about 20 days. With the above tools, this would average four wells per month or a possible total of 120 deep wells in the 36 months from January 1942 to January 1945. It was unlikely that any of the three gas wells could be salvaged, and it is largely by chance that gas in a useful quantity is found in a new well. It was assumed that the 80 gas-lift wells would probably have to be provided with pumps or compressed air equipment to continue producing, however, an estimate for 1944 gave Japanese production in the Seria area as 3,000,000 bbls [barrels]. It will be noticed that this figure is considerably lower than the figure attained in 1941. However, the disparity between these figures may possibly be [due] to the fact [that] this field even in 1941 was gradually approaching the stage of exhaustion.

B. MIRI OILFIELD

Photographs made in October and November 1944 showed many evidences of Japanese activity. The well locations had been cleared, and the numerous roads in the field section appeared in good shape. There were derricks on many of the locations, which suggested that much of the pumping equipment shipped to Singapore had been returned, or new equipment provided. The estimated Japanese production for 1944 was 1200 bbls per day.

In February 1945, only five storage tanks remained of which four were estimated at 12,000 barrel capacity or 3,000 barrels ea[ch]. In the main storage section, one 5,000 barrel tank remained.

There were, of course, numerous small flow tank groups in the field which rarely exceed 500 to 1,000 barrels in capacity of 100 barrels per tank.

In November 1944, photography revealed that the machine shop building was in good condition, also the slipways were obviously in operation. The casing-yards at Miri were well stocked and the brick plant appeared to be in operation.

C. LUTONG REFINERY

On the basis of expert opinion it was assumed that the restoration of the Lutong Refinery would be a fairly simple operation and this opinion was substantially confirmed by photographs in October [1945] which revealed the Japanese facilities as fourteen tanks with a total capacity of 600,000 barrels. The figure quoted above is approximately equal to the pre-war capacity of 650,000 barrels. Photographs also showed that there was sufficient pipe available for three completely new lines three miles long. Rebuilding of the sea-loading lines was estimated by report of July 1943 to take six to nine months. It is quite evident however, that the lines had been repaired by the Japanese for almost [11,000,000] barrels of crude oil and fuel oil as well as approximately 4,600,000 barrels of finished refinery products were shipped from the area in the period July 1, 1943, to June 30, 1944. The tank storage capacity, including the 'rundown' tanks, was estimated from photographs of November 1944 at 1,030,000 barrels. . . .

5. *Allied Bombing*

The enemy's plans for maintaining and improving the major sources of fuel oil in Borneo came to a sudden end when Allied bombing attacks began in November 1944. Considerable damage was done to the Lutong refinery and storage tanks. One source

states that at the 1st January, 1945, the effective bombing had considerably restricted the capacity of the refinery. No precise figures are given however. Photographic coverage of February 1945, showed heavy damage to the tanks and it was estimated that the capacities were probably reduced to 750,000 barrels. The sea-loading station, refinery pumping station and storage tanks also [were damaged] . . .

DOCUMENT 44

The North Borneo Volunteer Corp (Kyodotai)

Intelligence Bulletin No.237, 15 June 1946; A.C.L. Dredge, Liet.-Colonel, G.S.I.A. Officer Commanding. WO 203/6317. PRO. Item 2182.

1. General Policy

The NORTH BORNEO Volunteer Corps was formed on 10 Oct [19]43 and absorbed within itself units which had begun to recruit natives and train them earlier in [19]43, on the order of Comm[ander] 37 Army. The purpose of the unit was to train future village chiefs to accept the JAPANESE occupation, absorb JAPANESE ideals and ideas and work in harmony with the JAPANESE. After a two year course, trainees were to be returned to their kampongs [villages] as headmen, when they would be in a position to inculcate what they themselves had learned on their vil-lagers.

Natives were enrolled as trainees on the broad principle that a candidate had to be sufficiently intelligent to be able to absorb the doctrines that were to be poured into his [e]ars. Natives were required to submit applications to the Resident of each district, who

reviewed the applicants' history and after careful selection, rejected or accepted the natives as trainees.

Trainees were drawn from all native inhabitants of BRITISH BORNEO. DUSUNS, MALAYS, BAJANS [Bajaus?], SEA DYAKS, LAND DYAKS and MARUTS [Muruts?] were all open for acceptance. CHINESE were excluded from the organisation by the Comm. 37 Army and there were no exceptions to this. For the most part, volunteers were drawn from the interior and all were put into the various units as shown in the table of Organisation below.

No native trainees was ever sent out of BORNEO.

The commanding officer of each Coy [Company] was responsible to the Comm. 37 Army for the training and discipline in his Coy. Instructors were the officers of the Coy, assisted by a number of N.C.Os.

2. Training

As had been said, training was intended to last two years, and this period was divided into two separate parts. In the elementary training which lasted six months, military subjects e.g. drill, use of arms, aircraft recognition, infantry tactics and defence position training, and "the three r's," were taught. In the remaining eighteen months, specialist training in farming, building, sanitation, hygiene, field works and engineering was given as well as an understanding of communications. The JAPANESE language and JAPANESE history and geography were taught all through the two year period.

Despite the grandiose nature of the scheme, after basic training all trainees were entirely used to assist various JAPANESE undertakings such as the building of factories and camps, the [driving] and maintaining of JAPANESE vehicles and in cultivating land to produce crops, designed to fill the belly of the JAPANESE soldiery.

The period originally planned for two years, was never completed. The organisation was disbanded in August 1945 on the order of Comm. 37 Army.

Estimated numbers of the trainees were roughly as follows:-

1. KUCHING Coy.	350 men
2. SIBU	300 men
3. MIRI	180 men
4. KENINGAU	300 men
5. SANDAKAN	150 men
6. MELALAP Carpenter Coy	had no fixed number of pupils, who were sent from other companies for various periods of instruction.

3. Purpose

So far as is known, the BRITISH BORNEO Training Unit was not a branch of a larger organisation outside BORNEO, though whether or not there were similar separate organisations in other JAPANESE occupied territories, is conjectural.

... [T]he basic aim of the training was to improve the level of the social, economic and material structure of native societies and to try and help natives to understand new and better methods of production within the framework of co-operative enterprise. . . . [T]he organisation was formed to bolster the JAPANESE regime by means of propaganda injected mouthpieces and to assist in JAPANESE public works owing to the shortage of manpower. Any benefit accruing to the native population, they affirmed, was entirely incidental. This is understandable, since a long term policy of benevolent exploitation, designed to show dividends in the next generation, was quite unnecessary owing to the intention of the JAPANESE to evacuate the Army from BORNEO when the war was stabilized, leaving only those traders and immigrants who wished to get rich quick at the expense of BORNEO's resources and population.

4. *Reasons for Lack of Success*

Capt IKENO Ryuji, the Company Commander of the MIRI Coy., is of opinion that the organisation did not prove a success.

He gives the following reasons:—

- a) The dislike of the natives for the JAPANESE.
- b) Unpleasant character of some of the JAPANESE soldiers in charge of training.
- c) On both sides, the language difficulty was an ever-present obstacle.
- d) The period of training was too short.
- e) The unfavourable situation of JAPANESE in the war at the end of 1944 caused the native soldiers to lose interest in the course and they ran away whenever they could.
- f) Gradually, owing to air raids causing dislocation of communications and lack of food, duties became more and more arduous; education was neglected and discipline languished.

It is felt, however, by the officer commanding, that although from the JAPANESE Army point of view the scheme failed, the natives nevertheless obtained a valuable training.



CHAPTER 6

“GUESTS” OF HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY THE EMPEROR OF JAPAN

THE IMPERIAL Japanese forces' headquarters for all civilian and P.O.W. internment camps was located at Batu Lintang, about three miles to the southwest of Kuching town. From his base at Batu Lintang, the camp commandant, Major (later Lieutenant-Colonel) Suga Tatsuji, managed and monitored the day-to-day functioning of all internment facilities throughout North Borneo. Smaller internment camps operated in Jesselton, Sandakan, and, for a brief period, in Labuan.

The Batu Lintang camp, formerly the premises of the barracks of the 2nd/15th Punjab Regiment, housed both civilian internees and P.O.W.s. The entire camp was enclosed within a five-mile barbed wire fence. The internees were segregated under various categories into wired-in compounds as follows:

- Australian officers and N.C.O.s
- Dutch and Indonesians
- British officers
- British other ranks

Civilian male internees
Women and children internees
Dutch Roman Catholic priests
Indian Army (2nd/15th Punjab Regiment)

British officers and their men were initially confined within the same compound. However, from 5 February 1943, the officers were removed to another compound, presumably for fear of subversive activities. The remnants of the 2nd/15th Punjab Regiment after their capitulation were brought to Batu Lintang in 1943.

The segregation pattern and security features of Batu Lintang, in the words of a former inmate, were as follows: "Groups of huts were separated into 'Compounds' by barbed-wire aproned fencing, and the whole 'Compound' area was encircled by double fencing between which ran a path. Along this path, at strategic intervals, were watch towers with a guard in each, and the whole path was patrolled. An outer perimeter fence enclosed the whole Camp area, the land between the outer and inner perimeter fences being, at a later stage, cleared and cultivated."¹

At the apex of the command structure in Batu Lintang was Lieutenant-Colonel Suga. Being the commandant of all P.O.W. and internee camps in Borneo, Suga was often called away. The next senior officer was Lieutenant (later Captain) Nagata, who assumed control in the absence of Suga. Lieutenant Ojema also played an important role in camp administration. Lieutenant "Doctor" Yamamoto, presumably a medical practitioner, served as the camp's medical officer. The quartermaster was Lieutenant Takino. Lieutenant Watanabe dealt mostly with administrative and other bureaucratic matters of the camp. Most of the rank and file who constituted the camp guards were Koreans, with a few Formosans.

Prior to transference to the main camp at Batu Lintang, many internees upon their surrender and/or capture by the Japanese spent brief periods at transit or temporary camps. DOCUMENT 45 tells of the different experiences of two individuals at these tran-

sit internment depots. The first part of this document is extracted from the Papers of W. G. Morison. In this extract, Morison tells of his experiences in other temporary internment camps in Kuching before being transferred to Batu Lintang. Relating different experiences in another transit camp, Noakes gives an account of his time as a civilian internee. This account of his personal trials is appended to his official report.

The trying conditions of life under internment at Batu Lintang camp tested to the limits of the human struggle for survival. Food shortages, diseases and sickness, death, forced labor, harsh treatment, and deplorable living quarters were daily occurrences in camp. John Beville Acher, former Sarawak chief secretary, collated and edited documents relating to the Civilian Internment Camp No. 1, which housed Sarawak European male civil servants. Archer's compilation covered the years 1942 to 1945, and was published as a pamphlet in March 1946.

The appalling living conditions in the civilian section of Batu Lintang camp are described in DOCUMENT 46. DOCUMENTS 47, 48, and 49 list out the series of rules and regulations, and the numerous restrictions and prohibitions, to which they were subjected.

DOCUMENT 50 is an account of a civilian male inmate's experiences of those trying years spent at Batu Lintang. This account of Noakes's existence under internment is from his "Personal Report upon My Experiences as a Civilian Internee at Batu Lintang Civilian Internment Camp No. 1, Kuching, Sarawak, 24 December 1941 to 16 September 1945," which is a typescript document attached to his Report. DOCUMENT 51, on the other hand, provides a picture of camp life from the perspective of a woman internee, depicting the trials and tribulations of existence in the women's compound. This narrative is from the journal of Miss H. E. Bates, a nurse based in Jesselton prior to the war. This section of Bates's journal of her time under internment is a typescript account (written circa 1980s) largely based on an original handwritten manuscript compiled in September 1945 covering her life since

December 1941. Her handwritten journal (140 pages) and the typescript account (162 pages), camp postcards including a note of instructions on their composition, plus a single page letter composed after liberation, are presently kept at the Imperial War Museum Archives, London.

Accounts of life in the adjacent British prisoner-of-war camp tell of a worse situation than in the civilian sections. All the regulations and prohibitions enforced in the civilian sections described in DOCUMENTS 47, 48, and 49, were also applicable, if not more strictly implemented, in the compounds of P.O.W.s. Comparatively, the P.O.W.s were treated much more severely by the Japanese. For obvious reasons, they were under greater surveillance and suspicion vis-à-vis their civilian counterparts. Harsh punishments were meted out on a much more regular basis; slappings and, not infrequently, severe beatings, were a common occurrence for minor infractions of camp regulations. The *Kempetai*, the Japanese secret police, was called in for serious intransigence or suspected subversive activities. Those who survived a *Kempetai* encounter often returned after being beaten senseless; some, however, were not seen again.

The P.O.W.s and male civilian internees were employed in the reconstruction of the Bukit Stabar landing grounds located at the 7th Milestone to the south of Kuching. "White coolies" were also engaged in stevedore work at the Kuching harbor. During the later part of the war years, when the food situation became critical, their labor was also utilized to produce foodstuff; accordingly land around the camp was cleared for cultivation.

Vivid recollections based on memoirs and "secret diaries" of three men—an officer, a sapper, and an N.C.O.—DOCUMENTS 53, 54, and 55 respectively—tell of life in "hell."

DOCUMENT 52 describes the arrival of a group of P.O.W.s to Kuching and their subsequent transfer to Batu Lintang. This description was written by Lionel E. Morris, a sapper in 30 Fortress Company, Royal Engineers (R.E.). He was taken prisoner by the

Japanese after the fall of Singapore but managed to escape from Changi in a small boat. However, freedom was shortlived for Morris and his two fellow escapees. After a fortnight, they were picked up by a Japanese cruiser in the Sunda Straits. This was followed by imprisonment at various centers in Java. From September to October 1942, Morris was back at Changi again. Subsequently he was transferred to Kuching by the prison ship, *Hideru Maru*. His arrival at Kuching and transfer to Batu Lintang are described in DOCUMENT 52. He remained at Batu Lintang from October 1942 to June 1943 (DOCUMENT 54) and at Bukit Stabar 7th Mile Landing Ground from June 1943 to June 1945 (DOCUMENT 56). Morris suffered at the hands of the *Kempetai* when his diary was discovered during a surprise search. He miraculously survived *Kempetai* "hospitality" (DOCUMENT 59). The Papers of L. E. Morris are in the possession of the Imperial War Museum Archives.

DOCUMENT 53 tells of the process of day-to-day survival in the P.O.W. compound through the perspective of a British officer, Captain F. M. Merrett, who was attached to the 20 Base Ordnance Depot, Royal Army Ordnance Corps (R.A.O.C.), stationed initially at Batavia, Java. Captain Merrett was captured by the Japanese and imprisoned at Unie Kampong, Tandjong Priok, Java. Subsequently he was moved to Singapore's Changi Camp in late 1942. Shortly after that, he was transferred to Batu Lintang, where he remained until August 1945, when Australians liberated the camp. The Papers of Captain F. M. Merrett are lodged at the Imperial War Museum Archives.

A British N.C.O.'s version of life as a P.O.W. at Batu Lintang is presented in DOCUMENT 55. E. R. Pepler was captured by the Japanese in March 1942 in Sumatra while serving as an N.C.O. with an unnamed unit of the R.A.O.C. He was imprisoned at Singapore (March to August 1942), then transferred to Batu Lintang and remained there from September 1942 to September 1945 (DOCUMENT 55). Pepler, together with J. P. Flemming and Leonard Thomas Beckett, construct, operate, and conceal a radio

(the "Old Lady," a.k.a. "Mrs. Harris") and a generator ("Ginnie") (DOCUMENT 62). According to Pepler, the "brains" of the whole operation was Beckett (referred to in his narrative as "Len"). Pepler also gives a sketch of prominent Japanese personalities at Batu Lintang (DOCUMENT 58). Pepler's account of events was written about 1950. All fifty-seven pages of his manuscript are presently kept in the Imperial War Museum Archives.

DOCUMENT 57 tells of internees writing postcards home using ready-made phrases provided by the Japanese authorities to describe their life under internment, an activity that provided comic relief for those who had yet to lose their sense of humor.

Notwithstanding the severe penalty, acts of defiance ranging from keeping a diary to assembling a radio from scratch and operating it under the noses of the Japanese with the help of a camp-constructed generator demonstrate the ingenuity of human nature under trying circumstances. Morale was boosted occasionally, at best kept alive, when news reported by the "Old Lady," the made-in-camp radio, was disseminated. The lengthy and detailed account of the "birth" and continuous "survival" of the secret camp radio and the hand-driven generator (DOCUMENT 61) is from the pen of Corporal G. W. Pringle, British Military Police Corps. Pringle made several precarious trips outside the camp perimeter to contact a leading Chinese family of Kuching who helped make the radio scheme a success. Pringle also took the risk of keeping a diary, written in code ("Ken code"), during internment at Batu Lintang (DOCUMENT 60). He recalled the absurdity of the writing of postcards home by P.O.W.s using ready-made Japanese-prescribed phrases (DOCUMENT 57). He also described the workings of the black market (DOCUMENT 63). Like the others, Pringle also spent some time as a P.O.W. at Java (Garoet and Tandjong Priok) and Singapore (Changi) prior to imprisonment at Batu Lintang. His part in the "birth" of the camp radio followed by the creation of the generator was crucial and invaluable; nevertheless the account of his accomplishments is written with a high sense of modesty. His narrative (345 typescript pages) was based on his in-

ternment diary. The Imperial War Museum Archives is in possession of his papers.

DOCUMENT 45

Internment Prior to Batu Lintang Camp, Kuching—1

W. G. Morison, "Personal Experiences during Japanese Occupation of Sarawak," 20 January 1946. Papers of W. G. Morison, MSS.Ind.Ocn.s.155. RHL.

Having been interviewed by the local Japanese Commander, [J. C. H.] Barcroft [*sic*; Barcroft, district officer, Mukah] and myself [W. G. Morison, assistant district officer, Sarikei] were taken along to the house, where the rest of the Europeans had been interned. Here we stayed for a month or two. During our stay there the conditions were not good—thirty or forty people living in a four[-]roomed house. The food, however, was adequate, and ill-treatment by the Japanese was rare. After this we were removed to the Roman Catholic School at Padungan. We were forced to put up the barbed wire round this new camp, and on transfer to this camp, we were also forced to carry our own belongings although we were allowed, unofficially I believe, to hire a rickshaw or two for carrying some of the heavier baggage. In Padungan the conditions in some respects were better, as there was more room, but accommodation was unpleasant for those who had to sleep in the air raid shelter and Chapel. While in this camp we were not forced to work, but dug for victory on our own account! A short time before moving a third time to the Lintang barracks, the internees from Miri arrived. In Padungan the food took a turn for the worse and bread soon came off the menu, weavily rice and rotten fish, taking its place. Quite often we refused the fish in the first place, although later on we grew to like it. However, we were able to do quite a bit of smuggling one way and another with local Chinese and Indians, so we were able to improve our lot to some extent. In August the camp was moved to the [Batu] Lintang Barracks.

Internment Prior to Batu Lintang Camp, Kuching—2

J. L. Noakes, "Report upon Defence Measures Adopted in Sarawak from June 1941 to the Occupation in December 1941 by Imperial Japanese Forces; Also an Account of the Movement of British and Sarawak Military Forces during the Japanese Invasion of Sarawak," 15 February 1946. MSS Pac.s.62. RHL. pp. 123-26.

(1) . . . Rope wounds on my [J. L. Noakes's] hands and ankles received during the first 48 hours of capture took three months to heal completely and it was two years before my left leg recovered. From the evening of the 26th December 1941 to the 8th January 1942 a number of us were kept in [a] small room in the Police Station in Kuching, while others live above. We managed to purchase odd articles of food through the Sarawak Police—mostly Sikhs—who were at first well disposed towards us. Our friends mostly servants, were allowed to send us a few essential supplies and after a few days the Rest House cook was allowed to supply us with two meals a day. The food was simple and insufficient, but greatly relished. I feel certain that this cook was never paid for this service and perhaps some action will now be taken to reimburse him. The Japanese did not supply food. A number of us wanted medical attention and after many requests we got it. The Japanese military "doctor" came in and dabbed a liberal supply of mercurochrome on everything we showed and that gave us a very bad night but it cured us of Japanese doctors. Actually there was a First Aid chest in the room and we broke into this later. The room had been a First Aid Post, so we made use of, and kept, the stretchers, blankets and pillows. My clothes were in such a filthy state, after my stay in Astana that they could not be washed and used again, but it is to the credit of the Japanese that one day they brought us clothes, tooth-brushes and soap.

(2) It was a sorry procession that moved from the Police Station to Zaida on the 8th January 1942. A few of us could scarcely walk and we struggled along carrying our few newly received possessions, while the townspeople looked stolidly on. In Zaida we renewed old acquaintances and elected a committee at once. Our

guard lived and slept in the house and we thirty-eight odd prisoners slept above. Our barbed wire enclosure containing the house measured 60 feet by 60 feet. The food supply was precarious, but we did amazingly well nevertheless. Sometimes the Japanese would give us food—sacks of flour, meat, sugar, etc. Often we were allowed to buy bread and odds and ends from a few brave vendors at the gate, and friends were allowed by the guards, if they were in a good mood, to bring supplies to the gates when there were no Japanese officers about. We managed to get the Japanese to give [us] a cook (Chinese) but he was taken off after about a month. Then a Punjabi was left to cook for us, but he was a Mohamadam [*sic*; Mohammedan or Muhammadan] and could not cook anything but chupatties.² He would wail at his prayers for hours daily and we were sure he was at least a little mad. We managed to get the Japanese to remove him.

(3) We then took over all the cooking and our first efforts, in the light of future experience, were ludicrous. Once we were given half a pig, mostly fat, so we cut off the lean and cooked it and gave the fat to a Chinese walking along the road. We soon learnt to value fat. In later days that fat would have been worth hundreds of dollars to us. At this time we were not obliged to work for the Japanese so we spent our days playing games—chess and bridge mainly—studying (Archdeacon [B. A. M.] Mercer taught me Hakkā), arguing, discussing rumours and giving our opinion on the course of the war. Most of us thought at first that the war could not last longer than about nine months.

(4) The house was full of bed-bugs. Some people tried to keep them down; others appeared to want to raise more of them and a few were quite indifferent to their presence. This was a new and painful experience to many, but it had its advantages. It kept our minds and bodies occupied.

(5) When we were in the Police Station a high ranking Japanese officer questioned some of us regarding our former duties. Again, after a few days in Zaida, two or three of us were questioned by Japanese Intelligence Officers. I was asked to mark the routes leading over the border on a map placed before me, but I said I did not know. They told me I was a disgrace to my profession³ and smacked my face, but let me go. Again, perhaps late in January

1942, I was called to the Japanese office for questioning. This officer was the only really gentlemanly Japanese officer I ever met. He enquired about the denial schemes, particula[r]ly the sinking of our vessels and the disposal of workshop parts (I had prepared the schemes and issued instructions for them to be put into effect on the night of the 23rd December 1941). I told him that I knew nothing about them and then he produced instructions signed by me (I have yet to find [out] how he got them), and asked if I was still of the same mind, so I replied that they were instructions from the War Office in London. I got off, but I know now what a decent chap he was. A year later his countrymen would have dealt with me very effectively. When the landing ground was blown up on the 23rd/24th December 1941, Major [C. L.] Newman took all bomb component parts to Batu Kawa and dumped them in the river. He must have been seen because this Japanese officer asked me what had been dumped there. He described the boxes and seemd to think that the missing currency (burnt by Mr. [A. G.] Taylor) might be in them. He asked me if this was so, but I feigned ignorance and we agreed that dredging only would decide. I often wonder if any dredging was done. I do not want to give the impression that this officer was stupid and I was clever. I would say that he was quite clever, but he was honourable enough to respect my reticence.

(6) Later still the Government officials were called, one by one, to the office and asked by the same officer if we would work for the Japanese and under what terms. Most of us said that we must discuss the matter with the Chief Secretary [Cyril Drummond Le Gros Clark] when we knew the type of work suggested. Many of us, more realistic, were quite decided that in view of the circumstances of our capture and imprisonment it would be treasonable to assist the Japanese in any way except medically, even though in doing so we might assist and safeguard the people of Sarawak. Others thought that as their first duty was to the people of Sarawak, by accepting work in the administration they would be able to act as buffers. We had some heated arguments, but it all came to nothing as the offer was never again made.

(7) In January 1942 a Dutch plane dropped bombs over India Street, I was upstairs in my stretcher at the time, a cripple, unable to walk. When the explosion occurred I was out off my bed as

quickly as any one else and spent the rest of the day near the ground. Following upon this[,] an air-raid trench was suggested, as the Japanese had an enormous ammunition and bomb dump on the Police Square, about 50 yards away. Opinion was divided, but nevertheless a shelter was constructed.

(8) Looking back on those early days I am amazed at the easy life we led compared with the last two cruel years. It is true that the guards often came stamping through our rooms at all hours; Mr. [W. G. R.] Ward was smacked heartily once for pouring disinfectant through the cracks of the floor (bug control) whereby it dripped on to the Japanese guards, and their papers, below; Mr. [J. B.] Archer [former chief secretary] had a bayonet driv[en] through his shoes, but not his foot, fortunately, for not picking up rubbish fast enough; and Mr. [W. G.] Tait [postmaster general] was hit ([on] his back) for some petty fault. Once some Japanese officers paid us a visit. They came upstairs at about 3 p.m. when most of us were on our beds, and we stayed there and stared insolently at them. We learnt later that we had incurred the displeasure of our Commandant by our ill-mannere[d] attitude—and it was ill-mannered. Once Mr. [A.] Keir [director, education department] was called to meet a Japanese Intelligence Officer[.] He came back reasonably happy; he had been given some of the local stocks of whisky and had been thanked for *his* humane treatment of the Japanese internees. He described some photographs he had seen of the Pearl Harbour shambles but he and we did not believe they were authentic. We were well kept up-to-date with Japanese successes and we knew all about the fall of Singapore when it occurred, but for a long time we would not believe it. Once, Mr. Le Gros Clark asked Captain Kassia, who became our Commandant in April 1942, for a wireless set. We were given a gramophone and a few records.

(9) On the 16th May 1942 we were moved to the Roman Catholic Mission School at Padungan. During the previous week we had built our own barbed wire perimetre fence and had enjoyed the work for it meant exercise and comparative freedom of movement. We had a little encouragement one day before moving in when Mr. Chong Ah Kong, my former Land Office correspondence clerk, contrived to drop a note in my path giving full B.B.C. news of the Coral Sea battle. This was heartening. It meant that the Japanese

could be stopped. But when we settled down a feeling of depression spread over the camp and never left it. We had a vague feeling that "the position was deteriorating." Work appeared to be implied! Our manners were being questioned by our guards! Help from friends outside was lessening and the Japanese appeared to be on top in the war. It should not be thought that the majority of us considered for a moment that the war might be lost. One or two had that idea, but most of us felt that some time, somehow, the Allies would be victori[ous].

(10) The land around the quarters was swampy and sour and often flooded with salt water. One day the dandy Captain Kassia gave us a pep talk and explained that we were to do some work, prepare the land for cultivation, as one day we would have to rely upon it for our food. He said we could organise ourselves, but if we did not work he would make us do so. We discussed the matter and argued amongst ourselves and in the end the majority decided that it would be as well to get on with the job as we might need the food and peop[le] suspected that Kassia could be very nasty. So the area was trenched and planting commenced, though our experts said the land was useless in its sour state. However, Kassia was kept happy.

(11) The Japanese gave us basic rations of rice, salt, sugar, tea, fats, meat and fish. We thought this poor, but what a lot we had to learn. To supplement our supplies I organised a smuggling service with an old Chinese lady named Lo Huoy Hu, who lived with her three children, and occasionally her husband, across the fence and ditch behind the camp. This old lady was the centre of our supply service from friends outside and she also made purchases on our behalf of such commodities as the depleted stocks of the town could supply. She was an amazing creature—unafraid of the Japanese, even to the point of insulting them. I tried to take every precaution and had a system of guarding at night, when most of the supplies came in. She was not so careful. She would shout for me across the fence, beckon and exhibit supplies all in broad daylight, with the Japanese only a short distance away. At night, when work commenced, there would be a squalling of children and banging of tins and bottles. However, we were never caught and I believe it was only because the Japanese guar[ds] were not interested. Definitely the Sikh and Malay guards who assist our Japanese guards knew a

little of what was going on, but they kept quiet. This old lady followed us to Batu Lintang Camp and offered to carry on, but I knew my luck with her could not last so I told her to give up work and did not see [her] again after August 1942. She is still in Kuching at Petanek Road, and deserves a fine reward.

(12) Rumours were rife. Every day brought stories for discussion. Once an Indian went up a side road crying, for our benefit, "Mussolini sudah mati" [Mussolini has died]. Fortunately most of us did not believe him. European friends interned at Miri were transferred to our camp and we were overjoyed to see them as we had been greatly worried regarding their fate. Roman Catholic Mission personnel arrived also from all parts of the country and brought us very interesting, but sad, news of Sarawak under Japanese domination. Once Kassia lined us up and gave an address from the balcony. We were made to stand in the midday sun, without hats, and thus there was such grumbling. Little did we know that later many of us would be working almost naked for many hours daily under a tropical sun. Kassia told us we would be repatriated in two weeks, but no one really believed him and looking back upon his speech I think that he meant we would be moved—as we were—to another camp.

(13) One day we were paraded and addressed by a Japanese General. He told us how badly the war was going for our side and tried to explain that we were extremely well treated. According to him, the British had treated their Japanese prisoners very badly in Malaya. They had been made to travel in open trucks and many of them had been squeezed into kerosene tins! Just what he was driving at no one bothered to enquire, but the whole show was most amusing as Mr. [E. M.] Selous [secretary for Chinese Affairs] stood by the Japanese and interpreted. Mr. Selous prefaced his translation by "The General says" and when he came to the kerosene tins we were in fits of laughter internally. Mr. [E. E.] Pengelley [resident of Brunei], not so amused as some of us I fear, happened to be examining his finger nails at one period and so received a hearty kick from behind from Captain Kassia, who had decided to impress the General.

[On 14 July 1942, Noakes and the others were transferred to Batu Lintang Camp.]

DOCUMENT 46

Memorandum on Conditions in Civilian Internment Camp No. 1, Batu Lintang, Kuching

John Beville Archer (collected and edited), "Lintang Camp: Official Documents from the Records of The Civilian Internment Camp (No. 1 Camp) at Lintang, Kuching, Sarawak, During the Years 1942-1943-1944-1945," March 1946, pp. 9-10.

[1942 (about June).]

1. *Living Conditions.*—Internees live, eat and sleep in the same barracks in which each man is allotted a specific small space. There is no common room in which internees can meet, attend lectures, play games, hold religious services, or in any way get away from their confined sleeping quarters.

2. *Food.*— . . . It is submitted that this is obviously deficient in quality and deficient in quantity in everything except rice. This submission is supported by the attached opinion from the Camp Medical Officers. There is no recognition on the part of the authorities of the fact that internees are unused to Asiatic diet and no attempt to provide the kind of food to which they are accustomed. I am informed that even the children in the Women's Camp do not receive a ration of milk or fruit. Requests by internees to be allowed to supplement their diet by the use of the money in their possession in making purchases from the bazaar have been consistently refused. The receipt of gifts from friends in Kuching has been consistently prohibited.

3. *Work.*—Since May 12th internees have been required to perform other than work of a domestic nature. Between August 12th and September 27th internees were employed on the aerodrome, or in the immediate vicinity thereof, their work consisting of extending the landing ground, levelling, draining, felling and clearing undergrowth. In reply to a protest against the nature of this work internees were informed that any refusal to work will result in the death penalty. On an average internees left Camp at 7.30 a.m. and returned to Camp at 6.30 p.m. with one day free every week. Since

September 28th internees have been employed ostensibly on preparing land for vegetables and pig-farming. The hours of work are from 9 a.m. to 12 noon and from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., sometimes overtime being required.

[N.B.—These were conditions in 1942. They were worse in 1943-44-45.]

4. *Necessaries*.—The remarks made above with respect to food are equally applicable to necessaries such as shoes, clothes, tooth-paste, toilet paper, etc. which are not provided and facilities to purchase which do not exist.

5. *Medical*.—Medical attention has been cursory and medical supplies wholly inadequate. Recently two of the Camp Doctors, in obedience to Japanese orders and on the explanation that this was the only way in which stocks could be replenished from Saigon, signed receipts for medicines which in fact had never been received in Camp. In present conditions proper treatment by the interned doctors is quite impossible.

6. *Friends and Relations*.—No facilities exist for correspondence with friends and relations either in Europe or elsewhere, or for the receipt of parcels. Communications either by interview or in writing between internees and persons in Kuching who are not interned are forbidden. Meetings between internees and their families interned in the Women's Camp have been permitted only occasionally and at irregular intervals. . . .

7. *Guards*.—Instances of repeated bullying and blustering by individual guards have occasionally occurred, sometimes in the presence of officers. Physical assaults on internees have been common.

8. *General*.—In general the administration of the Camps has been indifferent and off-hand. Orders have been made and countermanded repeatedly; requests and applications have been treated with a complete lack of interest and airily dismissed. Organisation of living conditions has been left almost entirely to the internees; and for nine months neither latrine accommodation or sanitary arrangements were inspected at all, this duty being completely neglected until a death from dysentery occurred among the Dutch civilians. Repeated requests to be permitted to obtain books from Kuching Library repeatedly fail to elicit a definite reply. In many

cases a clear negative, unfair though it might be, would be preferable to the tortuous uncertainty and bewildering ambiguity to which our applications are continually subjected.

DOCUMENT 47

List of Prohibitions for the Kuching Civilian Internment Camp No. 1 issued by the Japanese Authorities, circa June 1944

John Beville Archer (collected and edited), "Lintang Camp: Official Documents from the Records of The Civilian Internment Camp (No. 1 Camp) at Lintang, Kuching, Sarawak, During the Years 1942-1943-1944-1945," March 1946. p. 10.

- N O (i) Smoking inside huts except beside ash tray.
- (ii) Smoking outside except at smoke holes.
- N O SMOKING (i) Between lights out and morning roll call.
- (ii) Outside during the "brown out."
- N O Cooking except in the kitchen.
- N O Fires except at the kitchen, forge and laundry.
- N O Gambling.
- N O (a) Talking to or communicating in any other way with members of any other camp or outsiders.
- (b) Passing to any other camp any food, clothing, money, etc., except through the Japanese Authorities.
- N O Talking during roll call.
- N O Sketching nor photography.
- N O Meetings of more than 10 persons without previous permission.
- N O 1 Attempting to escape.
- 2 Offering resistance.
- 3 Disorderly conduct.
- N O Use of fire buckets for purposes other than those for which they were issued.
- N O Waving to Allied aircraft.
- N O Hiding from Japanese Officers in order to avoid saluting.
- N O Planting inside or going inside the apron fence.

- N O 1 Leaving rubbish, empty bottles, tins, etc., under huts.
 2 Leaving urine tongs [containers] in the immediate vicinity of huts or the kitchen.
- N O Alteration nor damage nor destruction of camp buildings or property without permission of the Japanese Authorities.
- N O Use of water for any purpose except during the permitted hours of: 6.00 a.m.—7.00 a.m.
 10.30 a.m.—12.30 p.m.
 5.00 p.m.—7.00 p.m.
- N O Bedding or clothing to be put or hung outside huts before 1 p.m.

DOCUMENT 48

"Air Raid Regulations—Directions to be followed by Prisoners of War and Internees in the event of Air Raids and other Emergencies," issued by the Japanese Authorities

John Beville Archer (collected and edited), "Lintang Camp: Official Documents from the Records of the Civilian Internment Camp (No. 1 Camp) at Lintang, Kuching, Sarawak, during the Years 1942-1943-1944-1945," March 1946. pp. 11-14.

1. It is needless to state that the utmost is being done by the Camp Authorities to safeguard the lives of the prisoners and internees under their command.

In the case of enemy air attack or other emergency, persons who disobey the Commander's Regulations, either by planning or actually attempting to escape, to offer resistance to the Authorities or any other unnecessary form of disturbance, must bear in mind that not only will they be severely punished, but that no effort will be made to protect them.

The following points are here set out and should be continually kept in mind concerning the manner in which prisoners and internees should conduct themselves in the case of such an eventuality as that mentioned above.

2. Warning will be given in the event of an enemy air raid, or of the possibility of such a raid, either imminent or delayed.

Warning will be given both in the event of approaching enemy aircraft and of imminent air attack.

Warning will be communicated (both at the commencement and at the end of raids) either by flags, or by sound (such as sirens, gongs, bugles, etc.), or by verbal orders. . . .

3. In the event of an air raid warning, no action of any nature must be taken until orders to that effect are received from the Japanese Camp Authorities, unless previous special permission has been granted.

(a) Instructions to be followed on the warning of a possible air raid being received:

(i) During working hours:

In the case of men working inside the camp, or in the immediate vicinity of the prisoners' (or internees') camp, work generally will cease and they will immediately fall in, the roll will be called, and they will march back to camp under the direction of the Japanese Authorities, where together with those men still in camp, they will remain quietly inside their barrack room.

Those persons (either prisoners or internees) who, according to the Camp Regulations, are permitted to move in and out of their respective camps (such as Liaison Officers and Camp Masters), will not exercise [*sic*] this privilege during such a warning and will remain inside their own camps unless they receive special permission to the contrary. In the case of people who are working elsewhere (at some distance from the camp) on the receipt of such a warning generally they will stop work at the direction of the Japanese Authorities in charge of them, and will fall in in an orderly manner and will then await subsequently [*sic*; subsequent] orders.

(ii) Men who are not working:

In the case of prisoners or internees who are not working, on the receipt of such a warning these persons will remain inside their own barracks and will await further orders.

(b) On receipt of the "all clear":

On receipt of the "all clear" prisoners and internees will re-

vert to normal procedure as quickly as possible and will continue with what they were doing before the warning was given.

(c) In the case of warning of an imminent raid:

(i) When warning of a possible raid is followed by warning of an imminent raid those persons (prisoners and internees) who are inside camp when the above warning is received will, under the direction of the Japanese Camp Authorities go to their appointed trenches in a quick and orderly manner, and will remain there quietly. Persons who are in any other place except that mentioned above when the warning is given, will immediately take advantage of any shelter which is available close at hand such as trenches, or any other natural hollow in the ground. Once persons have taken shelter, they must remain there until permission is given for them to leave the shelter.

(ii) On receipt of the "all clear" from the above warning (that is imminent air raid), prisoners and internees will revert to the procedure detailed in paragraph (a) above, i.e., as if warning of a possible air raid were in operation.

(iii) On warning of a possible air raid being given without being preceded by the warning of a possible raid, prisoners and internees will follow instructions as set out in paragraphs (a) and (c) (i).

(iv) On receipt of "all clear" from the above warning, prisoners and internees will quickly revert to normal procedure as before the warning was given.

4. *Light Control.*

(i) On receipt of warning of a possible raid (to be carried out on receipt of this warning) lights must be completely shielded and it is forbidden to show lights outside the barrack room.

(ii) In the event of an imminent raid (to be carried out on receipt of this warning), lights must be completely extinguished.

5. In the event of fire in any camp caused by the dropping of bombs, incendiary bombs or any other reason, the fire brigades from each camp will do their best to extinguish the fire, and to prevent it from spreading. In such a case, it will be necessary to await orders from the Japanese Camp Authorities.

6. Each camp's first-aid party will be responsible for the treatment, under the direction of the Japanese Camp Authorities, of all sick and casualties. In the event of casualties, the first-aid party will render emergency treatment, and if necessary will communicate with the Japanese Camp Authorities. In the event of fatal casualties, the Camp Authorities must be immediately notified and steps taken to prepare and to dispose of the bodies in a decent manner.

7. In the event of an actual air raid, prisoners and internees are not allowed to attempt or carry out any of the following acts which are detrimental to the Japanese Army: signalling to enemy aircraft, conspiracy with outsiders, escape, riot, resistance to camp Authorities, and destruction to camp buildings and fixtures.

In the event of an actual air raid prisoners and internees are not allowed to make their presence known to enemy aircraft by means of signs, flags, flashing lights or any other means.

8. Prisoners and internees must bear in mind that any infringement of Articles (3) to (7) will be severely punished.

9. Prisoners and internees must have continual practice under the direction of the Japanese Camp Authorities in all measures to be carried out in the event of an air raid, such as taking shelter, treatment of casualties, etc.⁴

DOCUMENT 49

Regulations for the Conduct of Civilian Internment Camps, Borneo Civilian Internment Camps, circa January 1944

John Beville Archer (collected and edited), "Lintang Camp: Official Documents from the Records of the Civilian Internment Camp (No. 1 Camp) at Lintang, Kuching, Sarawak, During the Years 1942-1943-1944-1945," March 1946. pp. 62-67.

Administrative Regulations and Discipline of the Imperial Japanese Army

1. While under the command of the Imperial Japanese Army, civilian internees will observe the administrative regulations and

disciplinary instructions of the Imperial Japanese Army, paying strict attention to detail.

Internees will be responsible for maintaining good order and discipline among themselves.

COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATIONS

2. All Camp Rules and Regulations, and all Orders and Notifications of the Japanese Military Authorities, must be obeyed absolutely.

3. Internees must not attempt to escape, must not offer any resistance, nor behave in a disorderly manner.

Saluting

4. Internees will salute the Commander of the Internment Camps, the Commandants of sub-Camps, Detached Camps, and temporarily Detached Camps, and all Officers (including civilian officers), non-commissioned officers and sentries attached to the Camps.

Details as to the manner in which this saluting will be carried out will be found in other regulations.

Whenever any Japanese Military or Naval Officer, or High Civilian Officer attached to Military Forces are met, they also will be saluted.

System of the Camps' Organisation

ALLOCATION OF DUTIES

5. Internees will be divided into units or sections of about 30-50 persons each, according to age, nationality and sex. Each such unit will elect a suitable person to act as Barrack Master.

In addition a Camp Master (and Assistant Camp Master) will be appointed who will supervise the running and organisation of the Camp as a whole, and will be responsible for all Barracks in the Camp.

The Camp Master under the supervision of the Japanese Internment Camp Authorities (in the case of sub-Camps, Detached

Camps, or temporarily Detached Camps), the Heads of these Camps will be responsible for the carrying out of Orders and Instructions; for the communication to members of his Camp of any Notifications; for the prevention of fire; for the maintenance of the cleanliness and hygiene of the Camp, and for the submission of any application, petition or request which any member of his Camp may wish to submit to the Japanese authorities.

The Barrack Master will be responsible for the maintenance in his unit or section of those things (as set out in the preceding paragraph) for which the Camp Master will be responsible with regard to the Camp as a whole.

Camp Masters and Barrack Masters as mentioned in the above clauses will be appointed or discharged at the discretion of the Camp Commander. (This also applies to the Heads of sub-Camps, Detached Camps, or temporarily Detached Camps).

6. The internees in each Camp will appoint individuals in their Camps to carry out the undermentioned duties. In each case the approval of the Commandant of the Internment Camp (or the Commandant of the sub-Camp, Detached Camp, or temporarily Detached Camp) will be previously obtained as to the number and identity of the individuals appointed to these positions.

1. *Liaison Officer* (who will wear his badge of office on his left breast).

This officer will work under the Camp Master, and will attend all meetings; will be responsible for the communication of all orders and notifications of the Japanese authorities to the Camp Master; and will attend all sick parades for the purpose of communicating the diagnosis with regard to sick personnel.

2. *Quartermaster* (who will wear his badge of office on his left breast).

This officer will work under the Camp Master, and will be responsible for the drawing from the Japanese authorities and issue to the Camp of all rations and supplies; and for the purchase of and payment for all canteen goods.

3. *Property Master* (who will wear his badge of office on his left breast).

This officer, under the Camp Master, will be responsible for

the care and preservation of all Japanese possessions, property and utensils in the Camp, and will be responsible for submitting applications for the replacement of any breakages which may occur; also for the suitable distribution within the Camp of any articles which may be sent in from outside, and for the distribution, care and return of any library books which may be issued.

4. *Chief Cook and Cooks.* (The Chief Cook will wear his badge of office on his left breast).

The Chief Cook will be under the Camp Master, and will be responsible for the cooking and distribution of rations; for the care and preservation of all kitchen utensils; for the application for the use of knives when required (all knives of all descriptions will be kept by the Camp Officials and will be issued to the Chief Cook for use as and when required); and for the cleanliness of the kitchen.

Cooks will work under the Chief Cook and will carry out their duties in cooking all camp meals.

All rations and supplies issued to the cooks will be used as economically as possible.

If occasion should arise for the appointment of any further officials or staff in the Camp not detailed above, previous permission for their appointment should be obtained from the Camp Commandant (or the Commandant of the sub-Camp, Detached Camp, or temporarily Detached Camp).

Time-tables and Roll Calls

7. Internees will adhere strictly to the following Time-table:—

1. Reveille	0700 hrs
2. Morning Roll Call	0710 hrs
3. Breakfast	0730 hrs
4. Working Parties Parade	0830 hrs
5. Work Commences	0900 hrs
6. Medical Inspection Parade	1000 hrs
7. Lunch and Rest Period	1200-1430 hrs
8. Meetings (Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays)	1700 hrs (Wednesdays 1000 hrs)

9. Work finishes	1730 hrs
10. Evening Meals	1830 hrs
11. Evening Roll Call	1900 hrs
12. Lights Out	2200 hrs

8. At Morning and Evening Roll Call the whole Camp will parade at the appointed place; the Camp Master will then call the parade to attention and will give the order 'Number,' and he will then report to the Camp Officer (or non-commissioned officer) attending the parade any unusual occurrence since the previous roll call (or will submit 'Nothing to Report'). The Officer attending the parade will then check the numbers.

In the case of the Camp Officer (or non-commissioned officer) inspecting the parade, the Camp Master will follow him round the ranks.

Hygiene

9. Internees will pay strict attention to public hygiene and to the cleanliness of the Camp, and will endeavour to exterminate flies, mosquitoes, etc., in order to prevent the spread of disease.

One person's neglect may cause a million casualties.

10. At Morning Roll Call, each Camp Master will inform the Camp Officer attending the parade how many persons, if any, wish to attend for medical examination that day. This does not include cases of emergency, for which exception will be made.

11. Internees wishing to attend for medical examination will be taken to the Internees Medical Inspection Room by the Camp Liaison Officer for examination by the Military Doctor.

12. Internee patients admitted to Hospital outside the Camp must conform to the Hospital Rules and Regulations.

Emergency, Fire; Fire Precautions

13. Internees should take every care to prevent fire.

14. Internees must not use any naked lights, such as smoking or lighting fires, except in places specially appointed for these purposes by the Camp Commandant (or the Commandants of sub-Camps, Detached Camps, or temporarily Detached Camps).

15. Smoking must be confined to certain spots in each camp marked by signboards, where, outside, there is a hole in the [?] will] be no smoking [original text indecipherable]

16. There will be no smoking from 'Lights Out' until Morning Roll Call. The Barrack Master shall arrange that after 'Lights Out' all ash-trays shall be collected and put together in the Barrack Room.

17. Each day when cooking is finished, the Chief Cook should ensure that adequate precautions are taken to prevent any danger from the fires, if left in.

18. Fire Buckets must always be in position and filled with water, and must only be used for their express purpose.

19. There must be a permanent Camp Fire Brigade of from 15-20 persons.

20. In case of a fire, either inside or outside the Camp, the Fire Brigade or other persons will take their orders from the Camp Officials.

21. In the case of emergency, all persons will take action as set out in the preceding paragraph.

Reconstruction, Damage, and Destruction of Buildings

22. There must be no wilful reconstruction, damage, or destruction of camp buildings or property without the permission of the Camp Authorities.

Work

23. Any persons who are not performing some useful work in war-time are failing in their moral obligation. Internees should therefore do their best to do such work as they are best suited for, such as agriculture, farming, and stock-breeding, in order to increase the supply of foodstuffs to the Camp.

Talking and Other Communications

24. There must be no talking or other communication by any means whatsoever, without permission, between members of different Camps, nor with outsiders.

Meetings

25. Internees must not hold meetings for any purpose (such as study groups, artistic studies, music or amusements) without permission from the Camp Authorities, even though it be within their own Camp.

Religious Service

26. Internees may hold religious service at appointed places in their Camps, but the times and details of the form of service must be previously submitted to the Camp Authorities (or Commandants of sub-Camps, Detached Camps, or temporarily Detached Camps) for approval.

Photography and Sketching

27. Internees must not take photographs nor make sketches either of the interior of their quarters or of outside views, unless special permission has been obtained from the Camp Authorities.

Correspondence

28. In connection with the receipt and dispatch of mail, internees will follow instructions which will be set out in other regulations.

Leaving Camp, Interviews or Meetings

29. In the case of Internees wishing to proceed outside the Camp, or wishing to interview any persons (either in other Camps or outside the Camp area altogether) they will follow instructions which will be set out in other regulations.

Petitions and Applications

30. In the event of it being desired to present a petition or application to the Camp Authorities, the form of the petition should be handed in at a meeting, or handed to the Camp Official attending morning or evening roll call.

DOCUMENT 50

*Personal Report upon My Experiences as a Civilian Internee at
Batu Lintang Civilian Internment Camp No. 1, Kuching,
Sarawak, 24 December 1941 to 16 September 1945*

J. L. Noakes, "Report upon Defence Measures Adopted in Sarawak from June 1941 to the Occupation in December 1941 by Imperial Japanese Forces; Also an Account of the Movement of British and Sarawak Military Forces during the Japanese Invasion of Sarawak," 15 February 1946. MSS Pac.s.62. RHL. pp. 126-30.

(14) On the 14th July 1942 we were moved to Batu Lintang Camp. Two days later Dutch internees, Dutch officers and troops and Indonesian troops and convicts arrived. We settled down fairly well, but the Japanese appeared to be out of their depth and could organise nothing. After a few days many of us were put to work on the roads and then we were discomfited to hear that we were to supply a force for work on the landing ground. A meeting was held at which many people were in favour of refusing to work, but the committee, of which I was then a member, advised the camp to go on to the site and examine the work. If it was found to be work on a military objective and of a military nature, and therefore contrary to the Hague Convention (we were not certain if Japan was a signatory)—then the committee should inform the Japanese that we would refuse to work. Early next morning we walked to the train. When we arrived at the landing ground we were given tools and told to commence work excavating on an extension area. The committee decided that the Japanese were probably not entitled to use us on such work so Mr. Le Gros Clark informed the Japanese officer accordingly. The officer said he had no power to make a decision but he would inform Captain Kassia as soon as that person arrived and at his suggestion we made a pretence to do something. Kassia arrived about nine a.m. and as soon as he heard of our complaint he jumped on to a trolley and entangled his sword in his legs—fell off—got on again and then, through a bad interpreter, said "Siapa yang tida mahu kerja, pergi sa blah sini" [Those who

refuse to work, stand over here], indicating a vacant space to one side. Five men stepped across, but the rest of our Company, including those so firmly resolved the night before not to work for the Japanese, stayed where they were. Mr. Ve[r]heul, the Dutch representative, tried to explain that we were not objecting to work, but to this particular type of work, and was briskly slapped for his pains. Kassia then informed us that whoever refused to work would be shot, and Mr. Verheul, seeing the hopelessness of any concerted refusal, ordered the lonely four to return to the other side. In the evening we were all paraded and addressed by Kassia. He informed us that we would work wherever we were ordered and death by shooting would be the penalty for refusing. Martyrdom did not appeal to us.⁵

(15) The landing ground work was hard, but we were fairly fit and in good spirits. We travelled five miles to and from work in open railway trucks, and walked another two, in all weathers. We were fed on rice and salt fish (and perhaps one banana per man, per day). We were allowed tea, without sugar and milk, of course, three times during the day. I was in charge of our smuggling activities and we managed to buy comparatively large quantities of blachan [shrimp paste for cooking curries], gula apong [*sic*; kabong, locally manufactured sugar made from nipah or sago], bananas and tobacco, all of which had to be taken secretly into the camp. Once we heard there was to be a search, so we buried all our goods on the landing ground. The Dutch were not so cautious and when searched had to disgorge quantities of goods, which were confiscated. Mr. [E. W.] Cousens [A.R.P. Kuching District Warden] and I made and carried the morning and afternoon tea to our place of work each day, as it enabled me to contact lorry drivers, carpenters and others and thus purchase goods. The money used was communal and the goods were all pooled. One morning we arrived with the tea and commenced distribution, but an angry guard called us up, beat us and kicked our tea can over. We found later that an order had been given for the tea to be given to him first, but of course we had not been told.

(16) After perhaps two weeks of landing ground work, a new Commandant, Major Suga, arrived. He visited us at our work and said that we would get extra food for heavy work done. I think we

did for a while. On the 9th September 1942 a large number of internees from Jessleton arrived. They worked with us on the landing ground for two days and then all of us were surprised and gratified to hear that that work was at an end and henceforth internees would be used on light work around the camp and would be given land to cultivate to make themselves self-supporting. Major Suga held out bright hopes of a model camp and it really appeared that at least we would be able to cultivate land in our own way for our own use. We did, in fact, keep some of our land right up to the end, but we were so greatly hampered by other work imposed on us, and rules and regulations, that we were never able to make full use of the land. Furthermore, there were influential people among our community who assisted [*sic*; insisted] that we would never get the produce from the land—the Japanese would take it all, and though they were proved wrong in the end, nevertheless their influence did much to retard gardening and reduce our much needed green food supply. Some maintained also that by working in our gardens we were producing food which the Japanese should supply. Whether or not the Japanese were required under any law, moral or legal, or international agreement, did not, in fact, make any difference to our unfortunate situation. We were now getting desperately short of the right kind of food. The Japanese had said we were to be self-supporting and they had given us land—we had better grow food or starve. There were men in our camp who refused throughout internment to work in our outside gardens and the burden, not only of work but of abuse and thrashings, fell on those who were public spirited enough to work to produce food for the community. The story of our gardens is a sorry one if we are disposed to look back upon the obstructions imposed by some of our own people, but it is a brave one if we can forget them and dwell only upon the great work done under the courageous and inspired leadership of our head outside gardener, Mr. D. R. Lascelles [district officer, Miri].

(17) On the 17th September 1942 I was called to the office and questioned by a Japanese Intelligence Officer. He wanted to know about New Zealand. I painted a glowing picture of the country, but when asked where the aerodromes were situated, I replied that I had been away from the country for so long that I had no idea, and

added that I could not give him such information even if I knew it, just as he would not supply such information to an Englishman. He agreed, and we finished the discussion by talking about his education in Japan.

(18) About October I became head of the firewood gang. I had some of the best men in camp and however much they may have grumbled concerning me, I had nothing but respect for them. A lawyer, two priests, a telephone expert, three accountants and a missionary were among those who worked in the gang. We went outside the camp, stumped, split and cut trees and carried our wood back on stretchers. It was very hard work for men in our weakened condition. I was still on the two camp committees—general and purchasing—and so I did a little purchasing for the community from friends whom I would contact in the scrub, when the guards were off the alert. Then I—supposedly an expert with an axe—nearly cut off one big toe, but I had some stitches put in and was right again in a few weeks.

(19) On the 13th October 1942 the first British troops arrived from Java via Singapore—56 officers and 1103 N.C.Os and men made up a party in charge of Lt. Col. M. C. Russell of the East Surreys, Adjutant, Captain W. G. Skey. At first we were able to talk with them over the separating wire, for the officers and men were not segregated till later. We were happy to meet again Lts. B. J. C. Spurway, R. E. Edwards and A. D. Dant of Sarawak, and Captains N. S. MacArthur, F. W. G. Crossland and J. E. S. Temple and Lt. J. H. Farwell of the 2/15th Punjabis. All were in good health and they had lots of information for my official report on the fall of Sarawak. Incidentally I got a lot of information for this report from Dutch officers from Dutch Borneo and from other Sarawak people who were brought in from time to time.

(20) The soldiers were in good spirits and reasonable health, but their general physical standard was extremely low and we wondered how so many of them managed to get into the Army. I am certain that their death rate of about fifty per cent, by the end of the war would have been much lower had they been front line troops. Most of them had come direct from Europe to be captured and they were not acclimatised or conversant with tropical hygiene.

(21) Lt. Col. Russell [East Surrey Regiment, over-all British

camp commandant] soon had a secret wireless set working,⁶ but this has been described in my letter on Mr. Le Gros Clark.⁷ The set was of inestimable value to all and it enabled many of us to keep the progress of the war in true perspective, since the Japanese were now commencing to supply us with their propaganda newspapers.

(22) Towards the end of the year the Japanese removed most of their guards, who were old soldiers, and replaced them with a detachment of youths newly arrived from the North. These boys were a mixture of Japanese, Formosans and Northern Chinese. They had little previous training and at first were gullible and friendly, but as time went on they changed, as we expected, into dangerous and [merciless?] tyrants, no doubt due, in part, to the intensive training they received. They were under strict discipline and were very afraid of their officers and N.C.O.'s.

(23) It seems that round about November 1942 the Japanese made an effort to run the camp upon better lines. The officers were moved into a separate compound and the women and children were taken to the Hok[k]ien School in Kuching. They moved on the 26th November 1942 but were brought back again on the 27th December 1942. A number of Dutch Eurasians with us were released and returned to Dutch Borneo between the 9th and 19th November. Long consultations took place between camp masters and the Japanese Commandant. A canteen materialised but it soon deteriorated into a depot for the issue of meagre supplies of food at Japanese prices—prices which became fantastic as time went on.

(24) Christmas 1942 was the happiest—if one can use the adjective—we ever spent in internment. The Japanese allowed us to purchase ample supplies from them at their prices; we were allowed holidays and no restrictions were placed upon our entertainments; inter-community games were organised[;] we were allowed to visit our friends for a couple of hours in the women's camp and a fine concert was given on the Square by artists from all communities.

(25) And now for a few months we enjoyed comparative peace and comfort. Our garden was coming into bearing. We had plenty of leisure and could study and hold meetings and concerts without und[ue] restrictions. The guards were becoming increasingly conscious of their power, but they had not yet reached the stage where

they were oppressive and our smuggling activities were still proceeding unsuspected by the Japanese. Medicines were available and our very sick were being treated in the general hospital in Kuching. Deaths were few and in our community I record one death only during 1943, Mr. R. E. Shaw [first engineer, S.S. *Shinai*] on the 13th February 1943.

(26) On the 12th March 1943, the Sandakan group of internees—men, women and children, arrived from that place. We had mixed we[ll] with the Jessleton group and they co-operated easily with us in all details of communal organisation which had been evolved before they arrived, but the Sandakan internees were not so easily led. They had lived in comparative freedom on Bahala Island, off Sandakan and communal principles did not come easily to them. A certain number refused to pool their money for the common good (though repayment was promised after the war) and insisted upon individual action. Frankly they were a disruptive element and in my opinion, lowered the morals [*sic*; morale?] of the camp and reduced our chances of survival not that they were the only ones—we had some just as dangerous i[n] our own group, but left to ourselves we could control those few. With the increased numbers it became a major problem to keep the “rackets” and “ramps” under control.

(27) And now on the 1st April 1943 an additional British force twenty officers (Lt. Col. T. C. Whimster R.A.O.C., in Charge) and 479 N.C.O.'s and men arrived from Singapore. Among these were 108 of the Straits Settlements Volunteer Force, one of the Kelantan Volunteer Force and 28 of the Federated Malay States Volunteer Force. These volunteers did not stay long at Batu Lintang, but we[re] taken to Dahan to build the road to Tegora, where the Japanese imagined they had immense resources of cinnibar. They were brough[t] back to Batu Lintang some time later, many of them suffering from malaria, and then they were sent to Labuan, where, so far as I can gather, all of them died. Those few who stayed behind, mainly the very sick, were lucky as some of them survived the war. About this time also, though I cannot remember the date, a large group of Australian officers arrived from Sandakan, where there had been considerable trouble with the Japanese over escapes, plots to revolt and the discovery of a secret wireless set. These

officers were under suspicion and were herded into a separate compound next to the British officers and were given no extra ground to cultivate and thus were dependent upon the Japanese for all but a little food which they managed to grow around their huts.

(28) At this point it would be advisable to describe the organisation of the whole camp because it did not again change much throughout our imprisonment. To the West was the women and children compound (Camp Mistress, Mrs. W. C. Adams) containing internees' wives, sisters, mothers and children, nurses and doctors, teachers and nuns. A few were Eurasian and Chinese but most were Dutch and British. Their quarters were new and fair and they had a reasona[ble] area for cultivation. A gap, with two huts housing the Indian prisoners-of-war, without any land for cultivation, and then came the British P.O.W's compound (O/C R.S.M. (and later 2nd. Lt.) St. T. Sunderland), in which approximately 1500 British troops were first quartered. Deaths approximately 550 and removals reduced this figure of 1500 to about 800 by the end of the war. They were kept in grossly over-crowded barracks, with inadequate kitchen, lighting, water and sanitary services. Adjoining and eastwards, was the internees' (male, excluding Roman Catholic Mission personnel) compound of approximately 250 persons, of whom [?] were Dutch. Another gap, and then came the British Officers' compound, perhaps the most commodious, with a fair area of workable land. Next to them, but north, was the Dutch Officers' compound (O/C Lt. Col. Mars) and the Australian Officers' compound (O/C Lt. Col. Walsh), both of which were without sufficient land for cultivation. On a hill to the east of the Australians stood the Japanese headquarters office (Major—later Lt. Col.—Suga was Commandant for all P.O.W. Camps in Borneo), and the Japanese officers' and men's barracks. The camp administration office (Japanese) was situated across the road and north-east of our entrance. Directly north of us, and also across the road, was the Roman Catholic Priests' compound and the Indonesian soldiers' compound. North of, and across the road from the British P.O.W's compound was the so-called camp hospital, which was later to develop into a filthy, germ-ridden death hole. The Dutch soldiers and about 50 British soldiers were stationed in a separate compound at the landing ground.

(29) It is significant that from January to August 1944 my remembrance of the sequence of events is vague and unreliable as my health deteriorated rapidly during that period. In common with many others I experienced the pains of food deficiency disease and by May 1944 it was difficult to work and nights were a torture. My eyes failed rapidly and it became impossible to read or to distinguish any objects clearly. The death rate for the whole camp jumped at an alarming rate and we began to realise that we must now begin a real fight for existence. For me work was the antidote and I applied myself to it in an effort to forget my condition. Any green food, no matter how unpalatable, was sought for and devoured in an effort to decrease the vitamin deficiency and there was slight, but gratifying, change for the better during the second half of the year.

(30) During that second half of 1944 we saw a very definite change in the Japanese attitude towards our prisoners. They became highly suspicious and intolerant, no longer sought to appease us in any way, restricted all our actions unnecessarily, took reprisals in thrashings and ill-treatment out of all proportion to the offences committed, and took every opportunity to demean us. Food supplies were reduced to a minimum of rice, a negligible quantity of green food and an infinitesimal amount of mests[?], fats and oils. We were given loin cloths in lieu of clothes and for our feet we received highly perishable rubber shoes, which meant that most of the workers appeared in loin cloths and usually bare-footed. Medicines became almost non-procurable. It appeared that the Japanese had decided that they could obtain no advantage by treating us well; they would have to put [up] with us, but we were only so many animals anyhow and the more of us who died from starvation and disease, the better pleased they would be. Thus the general condition of the prisoners deteriorated rapidly. They began to die at an alarming rate and morale fell. The camps now abounded in "rackets" instituted by a few at the expense of their fellow prisoners. I am not going to describe all these rackets, but will give one example. A few persons had been lucky enough to bring in, or acquire, M and B tablets, which were invaluable for the treatment of our sick, since tropical ulcers abounded and no person was free of them for any length of time; in fact, many died of their effects.

Japanese soldiers would pay almost any price for the tablets as venereal disease was a punishable offence in the Japanese Army; so our M and B owners traded their goods with the Japanese soldiers for food and tobacco for themselves, while their comrades suffered and died from starvation and disease. . . .

DOCUMENT 51

Nurse Bates's Version of Life in the Women's Compound at Batu Lintang, Kuching

Papers of Miss H. E. Bates. MSS 91/35/1. IWM.

Five dreary days passed before we turned into the Kuching river, and docked at Sarawak, where we were told to disembark. We were a motley crowd when we stepped onto the quay; [o]ur clothing was very grubby and untidy, and the poor Nuns looked not only very tired, but pathetic, with their white habits besmirched with a mixture of dirt and oil, and their coifs and veils limp and bedraggled. As always, [h]owever they were persistently cheerful, making light of our troubles, and never failing to give help whenever possible.

Though probably the most exhausted among us, were the mothers of young children, who were burdened with infants and baggage, the former having become intractable after long confinement, and who continually whimpered. Even the parrot screamed, which added to the general turmoil.

After being counted several times, and having our baggage examined, we were crowded into open lorries and rushed at break-neck speed to an internment camp three miles from the town, and on reaching a barbed-wire enclosure containing some long huts, were told to dismount. We stood rubbing our bruises caused by the rough journey, and as we did so, a weird collection of men emerged from the huts, and stared at us. We stared back as they talked in an unknown language, and were certainly the queerest people we had

ever seen—even in Borneo! These men wore pyjama trousers, but no tops, and their heads were shaven except for a tonsure, and they wore beards down to their waists. Later we learned that they were Dutch monks or priests from Dutch Borneo.

After being marshalled and counted again, we were lectured by the Japanese Camp Commandant, and hustled into another enclosure across the road, near another prison camp which held the male internees from Jesselton. They waved to us, but the guards soon put a stop to that. Hardly had we talked through the gate of the camp, than a group of sturdy grey-clad Dutch nuns ran to us, picked up our bundles,—and the children—, and with cheerful smiles escorted us to our quarters, giving every possible help.

We were quartered in barrack buildings; the rooms were small, and each one contained six or eight of us. There were no beds, tables or chairs, or any other amenities. The nuns cooked us a sketchy meal of rice and vegetables, which was all they had to offer, and it seemed that conditions here were much worse than in Jesselton.

We only stayed in this camp for a few weeks however, and then were told to pack what we could carry, after which we were marched to another camp. There we learned that we were to be treated, not as prisoners but as internees, so were isolated from the former. Nevertheless, with their usual inconsistency, the Nips soon sent us back to our original camp, and there we were joined by female internees from Sandakan,—on the East Coast of N.B., who until then had been treated rather better. Their husbands had been allowed to stay with them and help with the children, and so naturally the women were most distressed when they were parted from the men, and found they had to help with work in the camp.

Singapore had fallen some weeks before, and British prisoners of war began to arrive, and were billeted in adjacent camps. At first they appeared reasonably well and cheerful, but before long the sound of the 'Last Post' [a tune played on a bugle at military funerals] could be heard daily, and we realised that they were dying in large numbers.

A party of Australians came through on their way to Sandakan,

to be used as labour in building aerodromes. Just before the war ended, such of these poor men who had not died in the meantime, were force-marched into the interior of North Borneo, and suffered such frightful atrocities and hardships, that out of several thousand, only *six* survived. Apart from the perversity of the Japanese there could have been no reason for this death march, as within a few days[,] the Emperor of Japan ordered his troops to lay down their arms.

Some British and American soldiers escaped from camp, thus risking their lives, in order to talk to us, and some of the women foolishly broke many of the Japanese rules about fraternising, and this resulted in our being moved to yet another camp, where conditions were worse than ever. There we lived in long huts, each holding one hundred people, each person being allotted a space of four feet by six feet in which to sleep and store our belongings. The huts were made of bamboo and palm leaves, and so reasonably cool, but draughty, and not entirely rainproof. In the frequent wet weather the ground surrounding us was a sea of mud, and through this we had to carry food containers from the cooking hut some distance away.

The latrines consisted of a deep pit covered with planks, and with holes at intervals. To begin with, there were rough wooden partitions between the holes, but gradually some of these disappeared, as they were taken to make tables, stools, etc.. The latrine pit was cleared each month by British soldiers. It was deep and therefore a great danger to children, and they were ordered not to play within the vicinity. One day however, a Nun happened to pass by when a three year old boy called "Frankie Sykes" called out,— 'Sister, Matie's down the laths'

Very shocked, Sister exclaimed,— "Are you *sure* you are telling the truth?" "Yeah," lisped Frankie, pointing to the pit; "Matie's down there!" Still half doubtful, Sister opened a trap door in the planking, pushed her arm through, and hearing a faint whimper, she probed around in the filth, and grasped the child's head by the hair. Fortunately she was able to pull the little girl clear, and filthy

and odorous though she was, after having a pail of water thrown over her, became recognisable as Matie!

Thanks to this prompt and courageous action on the part of Sister, Matie was saved from a dreadful end, and rather surprisingly, was none the worse for her awful experience.

It was doubtful whether anyone not closely connected with small Frankie, would have taken much notice of his lisping talk, and certainly few would have had the pluck to probe the noisome pit. For some time after this episode, the other children would not play with poor Matie; "She *smells*" they said! In a tropical climate bad smells are apt to linger on indefinitely.

During the early weeks of our internment, we were left pretty much to ourselves, and our work simply consisted of chores about the camp; cooking, cleaning etc. As I was at that time suffering from a groggy [weak] heart, and looked on as a semi-invalid, I was given the job of looking after the children when their mothers were otherwise engaged. Most of the children were very young, and took to internment much more easily than the rest of us. In fact, it was an adventurous change from everyday life at home, because firm discipline could not be applied. They had few clothes to soil, no shoes, and could not be expected to clean their teeth!

Surprisingly, the Nip soldiers were tolerant to the children, who did not seem to be afraid of them, and quite often one would see an infant unbuckling an N.C.O.'s belt and sword, without any protest being made! Needless to say, the youngsters quarrelled amongst themselves, and this created rows between the mothers now and again.

My favourite was Ronald; a tough three year old, and quite the naughtiest child in the camp! He possessed an angelic face, wavy golden hair, large blue eyes with long lashes, and an attractive Scottish accent. This little wretch often escaped punishment for his crimes, simply because of his appearance, and the artless gaze of his big blue eyes when being pulled up!

When his mother was ill, Ronald was left in my care, and whenever he became too naughty, I would say 'Now, bend over, Ron-

ald!" As I then produced a small cane, prepared to whack him, he would turn his head and give me such an appealing look, saying: "Oh Batesie, you *would'nt*, would you?" And I would end by giving him just a tiny smack!

Ronald bore no ill will however, and we gained a certain respect for one another. His bete noire was another boy older and larger than himself who had a doting mother. Always turned out beautifully in clean shorts, he looked very smart.

One day while outside the hut, I heard a terrific commotion, and on rushing back found Ronald kicking and punching his enemy while his mother tried to stop the fracas, at the same time calling to me: "Oh, Batesie, this horrid child will kill my boy; *please* take him away!" This took a little while, as Ronald was what would now be described as a 'Tough Guy', but when I managed to part him from his victim, I asked him very sternly:—"Ronald, *why* did you go for that boy?" His reply was; "Because he *needed* it," and I'm afraid I quietly agreed!

As might be expected, there was some friction between the women with children and those who hadn't any, especially when the time came for roll-call, and certain infants were missing which meant that their mothers turned up late, and this incensed the Japanese, who made us all stand strictly to attention until all were present. In the early days all children had to be counted, but as the number seemed to vary from about six to forty, when on parade, the Japs grew weary of trying to agree as to the exact number, so finally gave up counting!

Later on, the nuns organised a school each morning for an hour or two, and this kept the children out of mischief as well as filling up their time. Not unnaturally, a good deal of religious instruction was pumped into them, and Ronald informed me that "God sent Adam to sleep, and then pinched his rib, and made him into a mother!" (Which only goes to show how easy it is to confuse a small child).

As a great concession the married women were allowed to meet their husbands once a month in a pig compound between the camps, and despite the locality, this was a great morale booster, and

the wives would put on any make-up they might still possess, and don any garment which had been preserved for these occasions. Some in fact, managed to make them selves quite presentable, and a pleasure to see, for the rest of us who were so used to their customary grubby appearance. The Nips kept careful account of the number of married couples, and those of us without husbands were not allowed to meet the men from the camp.

Sometimes these wives would return with little gifts, such as a tiny piece of real soap, or a pencil,—such items being real treasures to us at that time. One kind soul always passed her handkerchief on to me when she returned from such a meeting, and as she had very cleverly managed to keep some Chanel No.5, with which she scented said hanky, I took it to bed with me, and luxuriated in dreams of glamour!

Local labour became short after a time, and so did the male prisoners of war, and this resulted in the women folk being put to work on the land, growing vegetables and so on. Being unfit to dig, I was placed in the sewing-room, where I worked with six nuns. We were marched each day to a building outside the camp, which was equipped with sewing machines, and there we worked from nine till six, mending and patching Japanese uniforms, with a break for a mid-day meal.

The six sisters and myself were the sewing party, and as we marched each day past several camps and guard-rooms, we were expected to bow to the sentries. Sometimes we could get away with just a nod, but if the Nips were in a perverse mood, we had to remove hats and glasses, and bow almost to the ground. After that, we were searched, even though we had nothing of importance to hide. While in the sewing-room we were closely guarded, but we did manage to steal thread and occasionally needles, which were as scarce as diamonds in the prison camps.

The Japanese guards did not bother us much, but the officers did their best to annoy and embarrass us. They would come into the sewing-room, pull buttons off their clothes, then remove the garments for us to repair. During this time they pounded up and

down the room, sometimes minus even a loin-cloth. They usually fixed on me as being the only 'non-nun', and came close to my sewing machine, hoping to annoy me into protesting, but as a nurse I had seen far too many naked bodies to be worried or upset, and would calmly look the offender up and down with contempt, until finally *he* blushed, whereupon he hastily covered himself, grabbed his clothes, and departed. At times like this, the nuns kept their heads well down, hiding under their coifs.

One day when we had been working late, we were passing near the British P.O.W. camp, when their 6 p.m. feeding gong sounded, and thinking we had already returned to camp, the men rushed out naked, and one boy who happened to see us, fished out a frying-pan from the hut, and held this in front of him! (These soldiers were reduced to wearing little except loin cloths, which had to be washed each evening, and meant that they remained naked until the following morning).

I could not resist a giggle at the sight of the boy with the frying pan, and thoughtlessly said "Oh Sister, do look!" Mother Superior's eyes twinkled, but quietly she said; "Sisters! eyes down please."

I was trying to mend one of my tattered shoes one day, while standing by a rubber tree near the fence of the British soldier's barracks, when a working party passed, and suddenly a packet of cigarettes flew over my head, landing at the feet of the first soldier and the guard, who immediately leaped over the fence and grabbed me, then marched me up to the Nippon Camp Commander who ordered me to go to the Guard Room together with the British soldier who had picked up the cigarettes. There I was made to kneel before the senior guard. It was useless for me to explain that I had not thrown the cigarettes, and that in any case I would have preferred to smoke them myself!

I was kneeling on sharp stones, with my arms above my head,—an altogether uncomfortable position,—when the Jap sergeant proceeded to auction me by barter as it were,—to the sentries. However, fortunately for me, it seemed that my value was not

sufficiently high, and two hours later I was released, to my great relief. It appeared that the American woman who had been responsible for having thrown the cigarettes, had finally been induced to own up. She was taken to the Jap Commander, who returned her cigarettes, and promised to let me go.

One of the most irritating factors during our internment was the unfathomable thought process of our captors. Though very cruel at times, on other occasions they would actually laugh at one's misdemeanours. We seldom knew which misdeed we had committed, and their attitude seemed to indicate that so long as *some-one* was punished, it mattered not *who* was the culprit!

I managed to keep a rough diary during most of the three and a half years of our internment, and the Japanese fortunately never found it, though periodic searches were made to discover any writing by the prisoners. I scribbled on any odd scrap of paper I could find, and concealed them between two thicknesses of hessian, which covered a rough wooden chair which had been made for me by a male prisoner at Christmas time one year. Unaccustomed to squatting like Orientals, we Europeans felt the lack of chairs keenly, and eventually all of us manufactured something suitable to sit on.

Accounts of internment by the Japanese are abundant, [?] do not intend to write more on the subject, but in the [?] chapter there will be certain entries from my diary [?] prove of interest.

Notes from my diary during Internment in Kuching

DECEMBER 1943

The second Christmas came and went much as the first one had done. We were allowed to attend a concert given by the British Tommies, and were seated in a roped-off enclosure away from the men, but near the Dutch Fathers. The show was excellent and we thoroughly enjoyed it. One of the boys had composed some very catchy songs, and there was a good female impersonator and several comedians. In addition, the Australian Officers had a first-rate choir.

Having had dysentery, I am enjoying two weeks rest in a tiny cubicle off the chapel, which had been constructed at the end of one of the huts. It is lovely to be alone for the first time in two years, and to have no other people sleeping within reach.

Before being taken ill, I had been acting as foster mother to two children whose mother was lying very ill in what was known as the Clinic. This may sound easy, especially for a nurse like myself, but truth to tell, the circumstances were far from being so. The amount of space allotted to the three of us was 12' x 7', and this included sleeping accommodation.

A shortage of soap, bedding and clothes, did not help matters, and the children had no toys, or even enough food for healthy young appetites. Cuts and sores were also a great worry, especially as such things easily turn septic in the tropic[s] and we had almost no medical supplies of any sort.

There was one hurricane lamp to light a barracks of eighty feet in length, and when darkness fell, we could only retire to our sleeping places and try to entertain the children with stories. Toddlers had to be 'potted,' and when Ronald,—one of my charges,—had to be lifted to do what he called 'Wee-wees', having recently watched the goat being milked, he once remarked,—'No. I'd rather do *milk!*'

Things generally are much the same here, very dull and dreary. The months are marked only by the new moon as it appears, and to which we solemnly bow, turning any money or silver we may possess [an attempt to stretch meagre funds to the maximum].

Rations remain the same, sometimes less,—and never too much; a very dull diet of rice and native vegetables. Once in ten days a small amount of pork is sent in, chiefly 'innards' and offal,—as the Nips get the meat. However, it does provide a little fat and flavouring for our stews, though a couple of pounds does not go far among 271 hungry people.

After 'Lights Out!' we discuss what we should like to eat and

wear, for we are always hungry, and our clothes are now thread-bare. I have managed to make a sort of day shirt out of an old breakfast cloth, but sewing cotton costs the equivalent of one penny a yard, and a needle, (when obtainable), two and sixpence. Sometimes I manage to steal these from the sewing room!

Feeding utensils too, are a problem. Enamel mugs which we salvaged in the beginning, are now chipped, and [horrible] to use, and one dreads losing the only spoon, or having it stole[n]. Coconut shells now take the place of plates and bowls.

Another real problem is how to keep one's hair brushed, but I finally managed to exchange something in return for a large dog-brush.

We are also plagued by rats and mice which run about at night, and run off with our soap, or anything else that they fancy. One poor soul even lost her false teeth!

My two sleeping companions are Barbara, and on the other side,—Minnie Carlton, known as 'Carlie.' The latter was formerly the Head of the Primary C[hurch] of E[ngland] School in Jesselton, and while in camp, has been made Rations Officer,—no easy job. Carlie, with the R.C. Nuns, are responsible for collecting and weighing the daily rations, and staggers back pulling a bullock cart, after which she measures out the childrens' milk. Each child is allowed 1½ ozs a day, and mothers watch with eagle eye, to make sure that their child receives it's fair share!

Lately there has been a very serious outbreak of dysentery throughout all the camps. Our camp had very few really serious cases, though almost all were afflicted. There have been no deaths among the women, but the Tommies have had a grim time and have died by the dozen. All day we keep hearing the 'Last Post,' and a burial ground has been made in their compound, to avoid outside contact. On my daily walk to the sewing room, I now miss faces each day, and many poor boys are altered beyond recognition.

The soldiers are treated very badly by the Nips, and are underfed and overworked. Originally they had been sent to Malaya after only six months training in England, and many were far from

sturdy, or in the A1. [medical] category. Before becoming acclimated to tropical conditions they were taken prisoner,—many without having fired a shot.

Soon many of these men exchanged their clothing and other items for food and tobacco, but many lost heart and just died. Those more able to battle with conditions managed to keep themselves reasonably fit and cheerful, but the majority are simply human skeletons with listless eyes, crawling feebly about their tasks. There are no medical dressings, and many have filthy ulcers, and large sores exposed on their hips.

The men are covered with mosquito bites which have turned septic, and also have scabies. The fatless diet is the main cause of many of their skin conditions.

We women draw the same rations as the soldiers, which though insufficient,—serves us better than the male prisoners, who do manual labour, and in any case, need more than the female sex.

Could [any] of us be transported to our homes right away, not only would our relatives be horrified at our appearance, but our language and manners would certainly shock them, especially that of the children, who so readily mimic their elder!

Among my companions in camp are some outstanding personalities and the following are a few of these.

Mrs. A. K.—a noted American novelist,⁸ who proposes to [write] a book on our life here. She is much sought after by the Japanese Camp Commandant, as he has read one of her previous books about Borneo. He evidently holds the opinion that a cup of [coffee] given in his office, and a packet of biscuits as a gift for her small son, will ensure him appearing as a hero in said book!

Mrs. A. K. has an unusual appearance, being six feet in height, very thin, and with the stealthy lops of a Red Indian. She dresses in a startling and very flamboyant fashion, in very bright colours, while her hair is worn in two plaits, one over each shoulder, thus adding to a slightly Indian aura!

M. W. was an opera singer, and still has a lovely voice with a Scottish accent. The Japs asked her to sing for them, but she pleaded

that her dental plate was short of a tooth. When they insisted, Mrs. B. produced an old denture, and the Nuns removed a tooth and stuck it into the place of the missing ivory, but *upside down*. So when M. W. stood up to sing before the Japs, and began 'One Fine Day' from Madame Butterfly, the first high note dislodged the tooth, which she removed in her handkerchief, continuing the aria. Only a few of us realised the worst, by her trembling hands.

Mrs. R. is a viola player of international fame, who travelled all over Europe before her marriage. She is tall and beautiful in a classical way, and though middle-aged, has a face as unlined as a baby. All her spare time is spent in sleeping, and she is a Christian Scientist who lives the most unruffled of lives. Her hands however, are ruined, I fear, through the manual work she has been doing here.

Mrs. C.—An American who was married only three weeks before the outbreak of war. She escaped from Manilla by junk, and was caught by the Japs here. Formerly a Crooner and Broadcaster she still gives performances in the food queues in [camp] to the irritation of other internees! She is attractive even when grubby and unwashed, which is most of the time, but a treat to behold when prepared to meet her husband on their once monthly meeting.

Mrs. B. formerly ran a dress shop in London, and is proud to state that she once worked for Molineux. Her voice is fretful and her manner anxious, but she has a heart of gold. Much of her time is spent in making clothes for the children from odd pieces of material, and also in ensuring that she is always immaculately dressed herself.

With us are some animal internees, probably given to us in order that that they could be fattened up for eating. At Christmas time a small pig arrived, who was christened 'Selina,' but she became such a pet of the children, that we had not the heart to put her into the pot! Unfortunately, though, Selina was struck by lightning during a fearful storm, and died immediately, so finally provided us with a lovely meal! We were also presented with a few ducklings which were only 24 hours old. These thrived on what we could give them, and any scraps they were able to pick up, and

when a few eggs were produced, these were allotted to groups of prisoners in turn. A turkey arrived on Christmas but did not last long, as he was put into the pot, and gave some flavour to the rice meted out 271 people just for one day.

5TH NOVEMBER 1944

The latest Japanese 'hate' is for the red[,] white and blue, and anyone wearing this combination of colours is either slapped, or marched off to the camp office for disciplinary treatment!

I find I am becoming an expert needlewoman, for in addition [to] patching clothes, I can now make mattresses, also mens' shorts, and mosquito nets. Each patch has to be perfectly round, and usually placed on dirty, smelly uniforms, so that this is a most hateful job.

Recently we had our first death in the womens' camp. This was a poor old lady who had been suffering from diabetes for years.

Two nights ago we were shown a 'propagation' film by our hosts. It consisted of Japanese military manoeuvres in Manchuria, followed by a love film which ended with the man in the case joining the army to everyones' satisfaction!

The performance was all rather dreary, but we all attended in order to get away from the camp for a short spell.

17TH. DECEMBER 1944

The Japs made an intensive search yesterday, turning us out of our barracks at 9 a.m., without any warning. All the doors were guarded, goodness knows why, for we have few possessions to hide! Fortunately, I was able to grab my chair which held this diary concealed in the seat,—and was permitted to sit on it,—being an invalid.

Later that day the Camp Paymaster announced that a Christmas canteen would be established, and that extra food would be available on payment. The charges were :—

Pork 18/6 a pound, chicken 25/-, and eggs 3/- each.

We managed to obtain some money by selling certain articles to the Japanese soldiers or natives, such as watches, gold, pencils, or bracelets etc: if we happened to be left with any of these things!

The prevailing feeling of homesickness is at present being increased by the sound of the Nuns' voices, as they practise the Christmas carols.

The English Catholic Sisters are quiet, and gentle, but the Dutch Sisters seem lusty and rather noisy, all talking at once, with no-one listening! However, they are all very efficient and cheerful. All of the Nuns pray a good deal privately,—as well as in Church, and sometimes I feel exasperated when one of them sits down near me in the compound, when I am myself seeking for a little peace and quiet, and am disturbed by a long period of murmured praying.

Life drifts on, and we are having a particularly hungry period, and can quite truthfully say that our mouths water, and that we 'slaver' as dogs do before meals. Some of us find it advisable to rise slowly after lying down, as due to malnutrition, any rapid movement is apt to cause dizziness or even a black-out. Our colour now is a greyish-yellow, due to the climate and lack of soap.

21ST. NOVEMBER 1944

Now I am in for a very dull fortnight, as one morning recently I awoke and discovered to my horror that my sight had become very dim. Later I realised that this was due to vitamin deficiency in our poor diet. Many prisoners of the Japanese suffered in this way, and became permanently blinded, when a few vitamin pills which were cheap and plentiful, could have saved their sight. (The Japs have plenty of these).

The female medical officer in our camp advised me to retire to bed blindfolded, and I was to lie there for about ten days. Meanwhile red palm oil was dropped into my eyes daily. This proved extremely painful, and the pain increased when ants crept under the bandage to consume the oil. As in the tropics, ants always attack the dead, I began to feel like a corpse myself! Thanks to my com-

panions I have been able to preserve my sanity, as they did their best to keep me amused, largely by conversation or reading aloud.

At the end of ten days my sight seemed little better but it gradually improved when I was given oil by mouth, and a daily spoonful of powdered pig bones to provide calcium, which was made up in the camp.

11TH. DECEMBER 1944

Only two weeks to Christmas now, an awful thought. Little did I think we should spend a *third* Christmas here, though I am now resigned to a *fourth*, and also to spending another birthday in captivity.

27TH. DECEMBER 1944

Another Christmas over, which wasn't too bad at all. The Dutch Sisters gave each child some sort of toy,—perhaps a doll, exquisitely made from scraps of cloth and unravelled cotton. The British soldiers also made some carved wooden toys and a Christmas tree,—all of which were slipped over the fence after dark.

The tiny children,—who had been taught by the Nuns,—gave a little concert, followed by a sacred one by the Sisters. This was both picturesque and sentimental, as the Chapel was lit by only one small hurricane lamp. Our Christmas dinner consisted of rice and native vegetables.

On Boxing Day work was resumed, but at 7 p.m. we were regaled with a memorable dinner of chicken soup, rice, fried pumpkin and sweet potato. This we found very good, but too rich for the children whose stomachs revolted during the night, so that we had little sleep.

12TH FEBRUARY 1945

I have been in the sick bay again adjoining the chapel,—together with several Nuns, all of us suffering from the objectionable

complaint of dysentery. There are no medicines or special diets, so we just rested and hoped for the best. Happily my companions did their best for me by providing night attire and even sheets from their meagre possessions.

Lying in bed gave me time to think, and I began to worry a little. I shall be 44 next birthday, and hated the thought of these wasted years,—when I could have done so much—

Food is becoming worse, and so is Japanese aggression towards the male internees, and the Japs indulge in various for[ms] of torture,—for real or fancied offences.

14TH. FEBRUARY 1945

I am back in barracks once again feeling reasonably fit, though a whole stone lighter, which I can ill afford to be.

We are existing under a cloud of depression, due to absence of news, apart from grim rumours, and our hearts sank still further when we learned that one of the male internees has committed suicide following intensive interrogation by the Japanese. Although young, this man already had a brilliant record of service in the Government of Sarawak. Another worrying piece of news is that the Nips have decided that we women are not working sufficiently hard, so fifty are detailed each day to weed tapioca fields for six hours at a time. The ground is swampy, and under the glaring sun such work can prove very burdensome, especially for those who are unfit. There are only about fifty all told—who are in reasonable health, and active enough to do anything except camp duties.

My companions did their best to make my birthday a happy one, and I was the happy recipient of five eggs, one cup of *real* coffee, one tomato, and a sweet potato. These were the most welcome presents I have ever received in my life! Sometimes such little luxuries could be obtained by bargaining with the Jap soldiers, who were greedy for any little valuable or Borneo currency we might happen to possess.

The Nip soldiers received a minimum amount of pay, and had

little clothing or any possession which could be used to barter with the natives in return for drink or tobacco etc.: In some ways, they were peculiarly honest in their transactions, and we were never robbed of our money or other treasures, except for papers and pencils, or any other thing which they thought might help us to make contact with the outside world.

The value of everything has risen sky-high. Salt is now £2.10 a pound, and sugar £5. Eggs are 4/6 each, and meat almost unobtainable.

One woman managed to bring in a quantity of soap with her baggage, and this she sells at £1. for a piece of about six inches long. My last towel has now disintegrated, so after washing I am obliged to shake myself like a dog until dry!

Another thing one longs for is real tooth-paste: Soot is not at all a pleasant substitute, though all we have for teeth-cleaning.

PALM SUNDAY

Excitement at last, and of the *right* kind! At 11 a.m. to-day American planes passed over and dropped pamphlets near the Airfield seven miles away, so we feel we are *not* forgotten. Since then there have been several raids and an oil dump was hit. The Japs claim that all the planes were brought down by their own heroic airmen, but this is an obvious lie, as the Nips here only have two small aeroplanes which rarely leave the ground,—and never during raids!

The only difference these happenings have made to our life here is that we have *less* food, and we have been forbidden to put our washing out to dry *except* when it rains, which makes for great discomfort in the huts.

Deaths in the soldiers camp are increasing, and all the inmates are emaciated and ill, but the Japs continue to work them until they drop. Owing to a chronic shortage of planking, the dead are no longer placed in coffins, but burned in shrouds made from rice sacks.

26TH APRIL 1945

Another air-raid. Ten double tailed planes flew over the camp, and it seemed that they were taking photographs. The roof of each hut now has the letters 'P.O.W.' on top.

During raids the Nip soldiers cover themselves with so many twigs and leaves,—as camoufflage,—that they look like Burnham Woods! They then pop down into trenches in the ground.

Just recently someone lent me a copy of the 'London Perambulator,' and on reading this I became so homesick that I shed tears under my mosquito net, and thought how wonderful it would be to see the English countryside again, and smell the lovely flowers there.

If I am released, I wonder what I shall do? Just now I feel I cannot face hospital life again, or nursing.

It would be interesting to see oneself in a full sized mirror instead of the small portion visible in my present one, which is only six inches square, because I see changes in my companions, but cannot examine my own appearance properly. The others seem to have lost their female curves, and all of us go *in* where we should go *out*!

2ND. MAY 1945

The ideal religion to follow during internment would appear to be the Roman Catholic one. During raids two priests are permitted to come in and sit with the nuns, but the Nips have not suggested that we should have a parson with *us*! The Roman Catholic do appear to receive many favours, and perhaps the Pope has something to do with this?

10TH. MAY 1945

I have been allowed to attend the funeral of an old friend of mine,—a Mr. Byron,—who died partly as a result of starvation,

and partly [due] to the amputation of a leg which was necessitated by severe jungle ulcers.

The grave was dug by friends of his from Jesselton, and I was horrified to see their condition. Some had formerly been strong men of twelve to fourteen stone in weight, but were now reduced to mere shadows of themselves, and weighed less than eight stone.

As we walked to the burial ground we passed the soldiers camp, and noticed that many of the men were just skeletons,—crawling about, as few were able to stand upright.

Even our toddlers received the same rations as these poor [souls], and the *children* are still hungry, so what must have been the suffering of those men, many of whom are hardly more than boys?

The Japanese guards are becoming more jittery every day, and treat their male prisoners even worse than before. Their favourite methods of punishment are either kicking below the waist with their heavy army boots, face slapping, or striking the head with a rifle butt, or alternatively a curious form of reprisal which consists of forcing two prisoners to strike one another until one falls to the ground almost insensible. This apparently amuses the Japanese very much.

There are however, one or two kinder guards, and the one in our sewing room is quite a pleasant little chap. He does not expect too much work from us, gives us occasional rests, and even sometimes slips us a potato, or a paper packet of sugar.

1ST. JUNE 1945

We are now undergoing a reign of terror due to an indiscretion on the part of one of the Dutch girls, and because of this the Tommies are being hounded and beaten up unmercifully. Yesterday a Punjabi soldier was hung from a tree by his arms—and beaten, and when a Dutch soldier tried to interfere, he was immediately knocked down and stamped on by the Guards.

This was witnessed by his son and daughter—aged 10 and 12.

When his wife made a protest to the Japanese Commandant, he,—as one would expect—, said he had no knowledge of the incidents.

Lately I have been acting foster mother again to two small boys, whose mother has lost control of her nerves and temper. They lived in a constant state of fear and apprehension, and it took a whole week before they could summon up enough courage to speak to me, or answer without flinching. Sometimes they would tell lies if they thought I would prefer to hear such,—rather than the truth. It really is pathetic how very little these children know of the outside world,—having been imprisoned for most of their short lives. On one occasion I remarked to one small boy, "Don't rush so; You are not catching a train," to which the child replied "How *do* you catch a train?!"

16TH. JUNE 1945

The reign of terror is abating, but has left many marks. One male internee was paralysed for a week following Japanese brutality, simply because he had not made his bow in what the Japs considered a proper manner. Also, the husband of one of our women in the camp,—is very ill, and we are all very distressed for this wife, who is a real Londoner, and has a heart of gold. Mr. & Mrs. Bidmead came to Borneo, together with their youngest son, as they had had such a bad time during the air raids, when they were in Epping, and Mr Bidmead thought that life for them would be safer and more restful if they joined him for his last tour. Now unfortunately, the boy too, has been admitted to the male camp hospital suffering with acute dysentery.

More excitement followed when a four-year old boy swallowed a piece of barbed wire. After much persuasion, the Japs allowed him to be taken to the civilian hospital in Kuching. There he was X-rayed, which showed the wire to be well down in the colon and he was then given large amounts of sweet potatoes in order to help things forward, and sure enough the next day, the offending wire made its appearance!

The child thoroughly enjoyed being able to eat so much more than he was usually allowed, and his young brother is now wondering what *he* can do to get so much extra food and attention!

25TH. JUNE 1945

Poor Mr Bidmead passed away, and I have just returned from his funeral. I am horrified at the increased number of graves in the burial ground. Deaths are now so frequent, that a party of grave diggers is now permanently employed, and given extra rations in order that they will have the strength to dig.

To-day we had a very long air raid, and there are rumours that Singapore has been retaken, though this was later denied, and also that Labuan was now in Allied hands, and Kuching is to be evacuated, and that we shall be marched twenty miles up country.

14TH. JULY 1945

We grasp at any rumour which sounds favourable, even though each one seems more improbable than the last, but in reality we have had no definite news of the outside world for months. To begin with we had factual news from the British soldiers, who had managed to construct a radio receiving set of sorts, with the help of someone's hearing aid! Later, it was feared that some woman might chatter, and so lead to discovery of the set, and as a result, only occasional 'safe' items came across.

The price of gold is soaring, and we are so hungry that we are forced to part with anything we may have left that is of any value. One woman paid the equivalent of £9. for a chicken so that her children should have food, and I parted with my last piece of jewellery in return for something to eat.

The Japs have actually given us some soap, so there must be something in the wind—

While inspecting my very worn clothing, I wonder whether fashions have changed very much during the years we have been

here. I have the remains of a pair of pyjama trousers which I bought for use during air-raids in 1940, and now realise that they have been reseated six times,—with rags.

To-day the Japanese Commandant has told us that the war in Europe is over. He says that Britain has turned Communis[t] to please Russia, and is quarrelling with U.S.A. over Germany. He added that Hitler and Mussolini are dead. Also that there had been a general election in England, and that 80% of the British troops had refused to come to the Far East to continue the war. As an after thought he said that Labuan—, a nearby Island—, was now in American hands. What he forgot to mention was that Russia had declared war on Japan!

DOCUMENT 52

From Hideru Maru to Batu Lintang Camp, Kuching

Papers of L. E. Morris. 91/18/1. IWM.

The entire complement of P.O.W.'s was 2,500 men crowded on two decks of a 5,000 ton ship [*Hideru Maru*]. . . .

At 1 p.m. [11 October 1942] two islands, barren and uninviting, hunched out of the northern horizon, seemingly swirling away, and gradually sank again astern of the *Hideru Maru*. During the afternoon four more islands of volcanic rock almost devoid of vegetation appeared on the starboard quarter. Lulled by the motion of the ship I basked in the sun, and was joined by a Lieutenant [R. E.] Edwards [director, public works department, O/C Sarawak Volunteers, Kuching Corps], who explained by way of introduction that for many years he had lived in Sarawak, even to the outbreak of war.

Edwards was convinced that the ship was headed for Borneo. Late that evening he sought me out especially to point out the Poi Range of Sarawak. After our two hours sailing due east, Mount Matang and the Kuala Tebas Point were clearly visible.

"The Poi Range was the first landfall which the old trading schooners used to sight," he continued. "From Mount Matang a course was set for the Sunda Straits and Java."

Apparently the seas off Borneo were infested with the "Lautans" [*sic*; Lanuns] or sea pirates during the early days of Queen Victoria's reign. Many were the stories of massacre, rape and cannibalism, perpetrated long years ago.

Hideru Maru skirted the breakers of Kuala Tebas and entered the vast estuary of the Sarawak River proceeding with great caution for the tide was at its lowest ebb. The same evening the rattle and henching of chains brought an awareness that we had dropped anchor in the western estuary.

The Lieutenant was almost certain that at so late an hour no move ashore would be made until the following day. By 10 a.m. the next day [12 October 1942] the crowded transport moved slowly towards the eastern approaches.

All sorts of pennants fluttered and dipped from the yards and foremast, then a pilot's pennant joined in the display. Meanwhile, the troops sweated on board the ship under a scorching sun. Hideru Maru crawled so slowly into the river's mouth there was very little wind to relieve the oppressive atmosphere.

Numerous small craft appeared almost out of nowhere, and circled the ship. Cheering and waving, the natives of Sarawak made the most of the gala occasion.

Towards evening there seemed to be very little water for the troops, and ultimately we were obliged to endure yet another night in the sweat box below decks.

Japanese soldiers from small escort ships then came aboard during that evening bartering clothes for cigarettes, soap and especially toothpaste, which was a very scarce commodity.

Nightfall found the ship moored opposite a small jetty. Large pagars [fences] and kampongs [villages] flanked the estuary. I took particular note of the terrain, in the hope that such knowledge could be of possible value at a later date, but it was a daunting seaboard. At low tide there was a great expanse of mud and long

treacherous crevices of ooze; just the sort of place for crocodiles, or so it seemed.

With the dawn came orders to be in readiness for disembarkation at 8 a.m. Having very little 'luggage' the men were soon ready and optimistically lined up for the transfer to the promised boats, but two hours spent in the broiling heat elapsed before two launches came alongside the Hideru Maru.

The first, the Regina, was registered at Kuching, and she was followed by the Margaret. Half an hour later, a third and nameless craft arrived, and the transfer of the P.O.W.'s was made. The journey up river began.

Malay-type kampongs on either shore were numerous and being built on very high poles were well clear of the flowing tide. Small children, paddling kolehs [dug-outs] with great skill, approached the launches, but the Japanese were in no mood for fraternisation and soon left the 'Malays' astern to bob about like corks in the creamy wake.

Twenty[-]two miles of river journey came to an end almost as soon as the Astana was sighted. This former home of Rajah Brooke was a stately white modern structure, and quite the most notable piece of architecture on view. To the south of Kuching high mountains were just visible, mostly capped in cumulous clouds and mist.

Aboard the Margaret we sweated, and another interminable period of waiting began. The small river steamer settled low in the water, her bow yawing in a most alarming fashion, for she was not designed to carry such a throng.

An ever increasing number of empty food cans began to disappear over the ship's sides, in spite of an order to conserve food.

Our great need was for drinking water, for the heat was intense, and the men crowding in on each other only made conditions worse. Thankfully Chinese arrived at the quayside with the much needed water and we drank like thirsty cattle.

Minutes later the disembarkation began. We lined up in serried ranks, and sweated once more. Our guard and escort were youths

scarcely out of school, armed with rifles and bayonets. Not all the escorts were Japanese; there were many Koreans present as well.

A short march to the street of Main Bazaar brought a brief halt. All men sat on the ground and the farcical ritual of counting prisoners began. There being nothing better to do, I studied the facade of the main office block of the Sarawak Steamship Company across the street.

Groups of fearful Chinese passed close to the prisoners, but were moved on speedily by our young and zealous guards. The troops made 'eyes' at the local girls just for the hell of it. A few beauties tossed their heads in real, or assumed disgust, while others smiled warily at the hopelessness of our situation.

Our amusing pastime was cut short by the arrival of a two-star officer who screamed a word of command. With naked sword in hand he shouted what sounded like, "Tomare—Ki-oats-kay-mae-susume," so our march to a new camp began.

Overhead rolling black storm clouds mustered, and the atmosphere suddenly chilled. Five minutes later lightnings flashed, and a torrential rainstorm began.

There is nothing quite like a Borneo storm in the grandeur of its fury. Jet black clouds with serrated edges pour down deluges of water, so that often one side of a road is drenched, while the other is bone dry.

After the torrid conditions on the Margaret the initial down-pour came as a welcome reprieve from the heat, but all our kit was saturated, and the few garments worn by the men soon lost whatever dye they had possessed. The material clung tightly to each contour of the body of each soldier like a second skin.

The route into the unknown lay along Rock Road through pleasant rural countryside past Kuching Cathedral, and buildings representative of European institutions reminding us of those at home.

Japanese men with their women were then living in large residential houses, lounging against the rails of the verandahs, watching the rain bubbling away down the monsoon culverts.

A mile further up the road brought us near to a Chinese Ceme-

tery occupying sites on each side of the road. The Chinese are much preoccupied with the life of the hereafter. Many of the tombs were grandiose structures decorated with intricate arrays of symbols, and intertwined with dragons. It was a world I hardly understood, for the perfidious English are more interested in living instead of dying. In the years that lay ahead there was to be ample opportunity to study the countryside, for this was to be the main route used by the working parties from Lintang to the docksides of Kuching.

As the march continued so the quality of the road surface deteriorated. The paper-thin soles of my army boots were poor protection against stones and granite chippings. The chilling rain sapped one's strength and body heat ebbed away. Three miles is not a long march, nor is it usually considered much of an imposition to fit men, but the storm produced an enervating effect especially in the ranks of walking wounded, and sick men, of whom there was a considerable number.

As the march finally drew to its end, we entered a hutted camp encompassed by a high barbed wire fence. The site was the former base of a Punjab Regiment.

The main camp was subdivided into compounds occupied by British and Australian soldiers, and comprised fourteen semi-permanent wooden houses each 96 feet long and 16 feet wide. Roofing and walls were made of 'attap' which was a clever system of woven palm leaves easily repaired as necessary.

In adjacent compounds lived Dutch soldiers and officers, Dutch civilians, women internees with their children, nuns, civilian internees, and fathers of a holy religious order. Each man was allotted space enough for his sleeping needs, which the Japanese assessed as three boards width.

My entire kit was contained in a small 'Red Cross' haversack and comprised a spare threadbare shirt, shorts, half a broken comb, a spoon, a square mess tin, a wad of paper, and a pencil. My diary was detailed and precise. I had even then determined to record all events with a view to writing at greater length at a later date.

Half an hour after our arrival at Lintang the rain ceased, and our bodies steamed off to a state of 'clammy-dry.' Within minutes all were summoned on parade again; this time in a clearing opposite the Japanese Guard house, and Administrative Office.

Rumour had it that we were to be inspected by a higher authority. When that gentleman appeared he was perhaps five feet six inches tall and well built. His face was stern; his head rather large for his cap due to a white skull bandage wound about his cranium.

On the left of his dark green tunic a row of medal ribbons bore mute testimony that we were dealing with an experienced soldier. He stood facing the motley throng of prisoners, taking his time, savouring every minute as he surveyed the ranks.

"Ki-oats-skay" he roared, bringing all men to attention; then surprisingly in English ordered "Stand at ease!"

Taking a breath so deep, it seemed his tunic would burst. Suga; for such was his name; launched into his great oration.

"I am Colonel Suga, Chief of the Borneo Prisoners of War Camps. You are here because you are prisoners of the Imperial Nippon Army, against whom you fought. You must obey all your instructions. You must look after your health. You must not try to escape. I sympathise with you, and I will do what I can to satisfy your needs, but you must be content with our simple living; like Japanese soldiers. No country can afford a high standard of living at this time.

You must be courteous to all Japanese soldiers and pay compliments to all Japanese Officers and sentries on duty. You must obey all camp instructions. If you do not, you will be severely punished.

Look after your health. Do as you are told.

That is all."

During this introductory speech Suga's face hardly relaxed its official mask-like facade; then as an afterthought occurred to him his face crinkled into an enigmatic sort of smile and he added, "Because of your long journey I give you three days holiday; yesterday, today and tomorrow!"

Timewise 'yesterday' and 'today' were already spent.

'Tomorrow' was rather less than a holiday also, the men working very hard establishing features of the camp concerned with the necessary and daily chores of living.

The cynicism and double dealing associated with Suga was adequately assessed in terms of the 'holiday' speech. Most so called benefits which he allegedly gave to the P.O.W.'s usually turned out to be nebulous and retrospective in quality, yet it was necessary in part for him to gain the co-operation of all prisoners at Lintang for there was much work which the Japanese hierarchy were anxious to complete.

Apart from their physical occupation of Kuching and the docks; the establishment of a fighter aerodrome at Batu Tujoh was vital to the defence schemes of Sarawak and Borneo as a whole.

The working parties of prisoners and civilians had a key role to play, and there was no choice of action for the vanquished.

Our very survival depended on the magnanimity of our captors, and they in turn made it very clear, "That only those who work will eat!"

Throughout the three years of the Japanese occupation of Borneo, and Sarawak in particular, this pernicious system was to be responsible for decimating the non-Japanese communities, P.O.W.'s and civilians alike.

With many doubts and misgivings I settled down to sleep on my allotted three bare boards of floor in Hut Number 7; so ended the events of Tuesday October 13th 1942, and our introduction to life at Lintang P.O.W. Camp had begun.

DOCUMENT 53

Life of a P.O.W. in Batu Lintang Camp— A British Officer's Experience

Papers of Captain F. M. Merrett. 87/12/1. IWM.

. . . evening of 12th [January 1942] & proceeded up the Sara-

wak river on 13th. Changed boats & did last five mile to Kuching (= Cat in Chinese [*sic*; Malay]) = Sarawak in a semi-river boat. March to previous 2nd/15th Punjabi Camp (referred to now as Lintang Camp) by the Jap Lt Ngaii [Nagata]—with drawn sword all pukka like through the breaking storm of the monsoon.

We were with the men—60 to a hut—atap (reed thatch) & wood. Suga the Jap commdt [commandant] addressed us—said three days holiday before starting work—yesterday, today & tomorrow. Working parties—our total strength was approx. 1000 men was 250 at first, increased afterwards to 600. Work was first at the aerodrome. W[ork]/Parties *i/c* [inclusive] of officers. I had acute colitis (diarrhoea) for first three months. There was no clorodyne or opium. Many people had dysentery & 1 in 3 at least, died. We buried Lt "Jimmy" James & Pte. Bevan in first few days. In the first 6 months we buried 20 all told out of 1042 in our corner of Kuching Cemetery. At the time we thought these losses heavy. We received pay as follows: $\$ (= 1 \text{ Yen}) = 1/-$ 22-50 per month [twenty-two to fifty dollars per month], $\$60$ being withheld for light & lodging & $\$40$ for a fund "for when we were sent home"!! At this rate we bought the entire officers camp about twice a year. Food was poorer from the ration point of view but better cooked than in Java. We started an officers Mess just before Xmas altho' I was still on rice porridge (=bubor) diet & missed the opening. I continued the study of book-keeping & we borrowed "Carter's Accounts" sub rosa from the Internees. There were 29 children & about 200 women ultimately interned in a section of our camp—mainly from B.N.B. [British North Borneo] which surrendered to the Japs & hence they were treated much better & their money—a large amount—was refunded to them in monthly payments[.]

There were two Aussies from A[ustralian] 8th divvy [Division] at Sandakan recently released from "solitary"[.] Major Campbell a former 18 stoner—one of them, had cardiac beri-beri[.] At that time Paddy (Tony) Roche (you may hear from him incidentally) formerly of the Malayan Police & then in M.C.C. in Immigration Dept & I had joined forces properly & were pooling everything

except tobacco & Paddy had fixed up an "agent" one Chia Kim Hock a Chinese who got us supplies now & again when we were out on working parties. Paddy had the nerve of the devil where anything like that was concerned.

We tried as far as possible to keep the men out of trouble & illness—we forbid[e] them to go without boots etc & told the Japs that we would not allow it & got away with such measures until Feb. [19]43 but then the Japs decided that we were no longer of use to them in handling the men & segregated us in a portion of the camp—2 1/2 acres—including the huts—next to their own camp. We had 1 1/2 acres of cultivable ground, 3 huts & 109 officers & a total of 24 OR's—cooks & batmen. This worked out (I am actually anticipating matters—we started with 65 officers) at 6 1/2 planks = 5 feet or slightly less x 7 ft per person. We had frame beds ie—building sections 3' x 6' on short legs. I unstranded some old barbed wire (English double strand type) & threaded it thro[ugh] the side & end members to give a 3" mesh. This lasted me over 3 years & had the advantage that when one got thin it was usually possible to find sufficient holes in the right places for the various boils or sores. On this I had my valise which I had managed to hang on to & one army blanket. The separation occured on Feb 5th. We did not have to go out on Jap working parties but had to supply our own wood parties to cut down & carry in rubber trees (the whole camp was in a Chinese rubber plantation) & I also did some purely voluntary gardening—growing tomatoes—or trying to!

N.B. From now on until notice is given I give the diary as written noting special things.

April 3rd '43. A party of about 25 officers FMSVF (Fed Malay States Vol Force), RA etc arrived from Singapore under Lt Col. Whimster RAOC. who had formerly been at Corsham. About 500 Aussies officers also arrived but went on to Sandakan & Labuan (8th Div. ex Singapore), Captain John Mackay (FMSVF—a mining engineer) & Capt Kettlewell RAOC—ex Tobruk now joined Paddy & I at our end of the hut—a notable addition. *May 4th.* [Lt.] Col Russell. O/C. died of blood poisoning.

June 1st. Obtained some inter maths notes from John Mackie & these enabled me to tackle a book on Differential Equations someone else had. These are fundamental to the study of Physics & hence Physical Chemistry & all the time I spent on these was time well spent. I actually copied out the whole book—225 pages.

July 30. Started navigation with John Mackie

August 2. 33 RAF & Army officers arrived from Sandakan including quite a few of those I met in Sumatra. Had another spell of colitis but resumed gardening on my own afterwards. Also experimented with making sandals from clay & latex. Became quite expert in tapping rubber trees. Started a "Little Ship Club" with Ken Allen (Lt RA) as skipper.

Aug 31. Started new scale of pay—Lodging \$20 Bank \$70 Cash \$32.50. Canteen (when not cut off by Nips) very poor—very little fruit & a little peanut toffee.

Sept Continued gardening, maths, bookkeeping & started French with "Tinker" Bell (Lt. R.A.) Made a pair of leather chaplis from someone's old suitcase. These were planned to last 6 months (what optimism) & actually lasted 26. Also did some Cost Accounting.

October Started onion growing from some "buttons" that came in with the rations. (For rations etc see book I am bringing home)

November Gardening & wood parties. Had septic finger & had nail removed with aid of little dental anaesthetic—result—1 tot of brandy from medical supply—most unexpected. There were two small tropical ulcers under the nail so it was as well I chose to have it taken off. I cured my Singapore (athletes) foot by application of 90% phenol. All our books were taken away to form a central library. Dropped French classes—too many people—too few books. Capt. Phillips died of phthisis after a 9 months fight. Attended funeral. Obtained one of his pipes—a City de luxe which gave me sterling service right until the end & which I am carefully preserving.

December 1943. Continuing Diff[erential]. Eqns [Equations]— $\frac{1}{2}$ way through. Received some pea-nuts, pork 12 lbs every 10 days (for 134!) & had 20 days on red ("par-boiled" rice). Feel quite out of mind due

to the absence of all books—the wrong mental diet. Ration of rice last few months 11 oz per day. Started playing bridge through sheer boredom.

January 1944 Continued maths & gardening with usual wood parties etc[.] Am getting quite expert at cutting down trees & carrying chunks of wood about 3' long & 12" thick. Have had a small dry season of 10 days in the midst of the wet monsoon season.

February. As before. Not so wet as last year. Bruised a horsefly bite with chunkol (= mattock) handle with inevitable result—abscess over left thigh muscle—this caused trouble after putting on weight on release—muscular cramp. Books were returned at the rate of 48 for 129 people & I read 17 in the first 30 days period by linking up with John Gardiner—"Honest John" & by borrowing. Actually there were some quite good books thanks to the internees.

March. Sgt Jeffrey died of perforated Duodenal ulcer the usual aftermath of amoebic dysentery. Started Don Yates Cambridge Electrical Notes[.] Nearly all my section in the men's camp were sick but noted that Cpl Walker after 6 months sick was on working party in the men's garden looking comparatively well.

April. Pay altered again: Subalterns & Capts—Cash \$30, Rations etc 27, Bank \$65.50. The men have now been off working parties for a time (reason—Aerodrome job finished for time being) & already look better en masse altho' I think they prefer working as they get extras.

May. Send card home. Recd [received] five letters from father, 3 from Eve, 2 from Jack & one from Marje[.] Received—for camp use—1 duckling (Donald) 1 goat & 2 piglings. Had one small ulcer. Borrowed Lowry & Cavell's Inter.[?] Chemistry from Aussies Camp & copied John Gardiner's "Guide for Gourmets"[.] Read Keble's Lectures on Poetry & Saintbury's "Essays on Criticism." Also reading for interest the Pelman Course—surprisingly good. Started section 3—Chapter XI of Diff. Eqns. [Differential Equations]. Book keeping dropped off with new library books. Quite a little wet season—ground always too hard or too soft for chungkol work.

June. Very dry. Warned by Japs that there would be no more imports. Kettlewell built a datchang—steelyard—of wood & so we were able

to keep weight records of rations & of ourselves. Weight 9 st 10 lb. Started the use of a blanket as cushion for sitting on as our backsides were getting too skinny.

July Rice cut to $\frac{2}{3}$ rds. Made up wt. for wt with tapioca root. A very bad bargain as apart from extremely poor food value, it is very stringy. Wt July 10th.—9 st 4 lbs. Health of camp much better (? dry weather). Our sweet potato crop was poor. Planted some artichokes. Beans—parang (= sword-shaped) & four-angled—just coming into flower. Intercropping them with bajam (= root of cabbage-lettuce)[.] Read "Cruise of Tai-mo-shan." Also 1870-1914 vol. of Oxford History (Ensor) both V.G. Also 2nd vol of H. G Wells—"History of World"[.] July 20th—finished my tobacco. We actually used native tobacco & on acct. of price & rarity I used to mix it with an equal quantity of chopped banana skin & make a navy-type plug of it.

[At end of April received $\frac{1}{6}$ th of a 1 man parcel of Red X food—all we were to receive. This parcel was intended for a week's food for 1 man—included 29 Camel cigarettes as my share—so stopped smoking for 6 weeks & saved tobacco—all used up now.]

Have been going barefoot for the last month or so. Could be worse & it certainly cures Singapore foot—we have nothing else to cure it—not even crude carbolic. I sometimes stub my toes & get bitten by mosquitoes at night but it could be worse.

August '44. 12 letters received from home up to end of July. Heard from Eve that Father had recd. [received] my first card (from Singapore.) Letters much appreciated & read when particularly fed up. Rations very poor indeed so much so that one's stomach felt constricted & it was difficult to straighten one's back. Steadily losing not so much wt as muscle & reserve fat. Wt- 9-1 lb. Feeling very cheap—ribs too poorly upholstered to lie on, elbows ditto. Flesh going off bones all round. Succession of small sores & one sharp attack of colitis with a lot of mucus—thought I had dysentery. Treatment—2 days rice water (water rice was boiled in) & two days bubor—no rations made up afterwards[.] Books still going strong. Canteen very poor[.] wt 9 st even.

Sept. Rations altered—25 katties (= 1.33 lbs) of sago flour for 134, made up to 16 oz with rice. A distinct improvement. Started abscess of left leg—at knee—saw Col. King the S.M.O.—"If I had all the

British Pharmacopeia here I should still order hot fomentations 3 times a day".—Had to have it cut in the end. Would not let me have it done in hospital & return to camp so I had to [be] in for three days—result three months intense itch from scabies. Leg healed slowly. Found it very hard indeed to swot [work hard] as did all rest of camp even including the bridge players—fanatics all. Close weather & no exercise due to leg. Canteen very poor. Made notebook wallet—& more or less introduced book-making into the camp & practically everyone made some. Weather very dry—praying for monsoon to break. Received more mail—up to May (date of despatch) this year. Wt. Sept 10th—8 st 10 lb.

October Rations down again with a bump. Was on extra diet for a month after leaving hospital—total of 10 bananas, $\frac{1}{3}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ pt of ked-geree (fluffy rice) each evening & 6 drops of shark's liver oil each evening.

Nov. Rations getting less[.] All oddments just vanishing[.] Received a little more mail. Wt 8 st 7 lbs. Had the "camp itch"—untreated scabies. About $\frac{1}{2}$ hrs sleep per night. Had to stop brain work almost completely on account of lack of thinking continuity due to short rations. Had to sell some kit—out of what little I had—over the wire as cash was so short[.]

Dec. Rations getting less. Wt—8 st 9 lbs. Received mail telling that two more cards from Ku-ching (Marjorie) recd. at home. Xmas spent so-so. Little more rice. Recd one egg per person as Xmas present from our generous hosts. Alf Poole—my second friend after Paddy—former Blue Funnel Wharf manager went into hospital—brain going—very unfortunate. During sleepless nights worked out plan for Cambridge—one certainly sees one's past etc in greater clarity while semi-starved.

January '45 I had kept my itch in hand & by great will-power had not scratched myself & hence was eligible for small quantity of sulphur—about $\frac{1}{4}$ of threepenny bit's—necessary for partial cure. Very much better immediately. Rations worst ever & feeling some hunger pangs as in August—bent back—attacks of dizziness—queer sense of always being hungry—sort of phantasmagoric. Wt—8-7 lb. Eating baked rubber nuts—hitherto alleged poisonous. Outside wood parties continuing—very hard work now. Tobacco & funds very short.

February Rations a little better. Started eating frog snakes—quite good—cross between chicken & fish. Received first limes for months. Alf still in hospital. Weather quite dry considering it is wet season. Just right for the garden. Wt 8-7 but feeling better & feeling either hungry or otherwise. Completing plans for Cambridge—this was my real life-line during these & the months to come. Had to sell some more kit—so called.

Week off with mild attack of dengue.

March '45. Alf came out more or less normal—subject to persecution mania. Rations 1st-10th lowest ever—200 gm rice & no root. For previous few months we had only had 2 meals a day. In middle of month recd 1 months "reserve rice" which of necessity we started to use & went onto 3 meals a day.

NB. During all this time we had been working a secret radio set in Men's camp—I did not put in my diary in case it was found—first on torch batteries—then a radio transformer valve was obtained from the Chinese outside. Now the current was cut off & they started to build a hand generator. It was supposed to take 10 days & actually took 2½ months, every tool having to be hand made in secret.

On Lady Day—25th the first air raid occurred with 4 engined planes—beauties. Dropped leaflets down the river & did a little machinegunning over the air drome. Apparently American altho' markings were very hard to distinguish. Second raid by twin fuselage fighters with auxiliary tanks—on 30th[.] About 12 planes—flew over aer[o]drome & machine gunned it.

This event naturally was attended with much jubilation. Wt 8st 2 lb[.]

April. No more rice issued so down to 6 oz a day. Third raid on the 4th—24 4 engined planes. Bombed to the NE of us—large clouds of smoke rose—& we could see the bombs coming out of the plane. Apparently more leaflets were dropped & the Japs shewed POW signs on the central square[.] Suga—the Jap commandant promised 900 Red X parcels at present at Singapore if transport could be arranged. Wt on 10th 8st 2 lb[.] [A]t end of March was put by King on light gardening work only—by this time all work was compulsory since everyone was feeling shagged more or less completely—wood parties were an

agony & gardening not much better. As time went on, too, the effort of getting into the air-raid trenches became greater & greater.

Another raid—10 twin fuselage fighters on 23rd—circled round & round camp before going home at about 50–100 ft—a glorious sight. Had a routine medical inspection—verdict as before.

May Sent card home on 20th—No 8. Rations poorish. No protein at all except 20 lbs pork at Easter[.] No tobacco after the 15th. Had usual fever 16–24th[.] Finished map of Cambridge—original by Don Yates from memory. Air raids every five days or so.

June. Usual fever 2–5th[.] Paddy in hospital 29th May to 9th June—suspected appendicitis & both kinds of dysentery. Small amount of tobacco. Put on very light “non-manual” work by Col. King. Broke down remains of Burberry to make a single sheet[.] No protein whatever for 3 weeks (21st)[.] Routine raids continued—very hard on us as the task of getting into the trenches & staying there for an hour or more was very trying on the body.

DOCUMENT 54

Life of a P.O.W. in Batu Lintang Camp— A Sapper's Recollection

Papers of L. E. Morris. 91/18/1. IWM.

The perimeter fence on the west side of the soldiers' compound was shared with the civilian internees, our nearest neighbours. Many friendships and contacts were established 'across the wire,' but talk between the inmates of adjacent compounds was against the rules laid down by the Japanese and it was a hazardous indulgence, bringing a penalty of a severe face slapping when discovered by the sentries.

My first contact thus made was with a civilian Don Tuxford, who explained that his eight year old son lived in the internees camp with him, but his wife and daughter Julia could be seen in the enclosure on the opposite side of the main camp road.

Many of the internees watched as their wives waved handkerchiefs of hope and encouragement from behind the barbed wire fence of their compound some sixty yards away. It was no humane gesture on the part of the Japanese that members of families so separated could only see each other at a distance; the waving and watching merely aggravated a most unhappy situation.

In many ways the lot of the civilian captives was more pitiful than was the case in any other section of the community. It is true that on occasion [Lieutenant-Colonel] Suga [commandant, Internment Camps, Borneo] permitted some civilians to meet their wives and families for two hours each Sunday in exchange for services and work in support of the Japanese cause. Most internees were employed as gardeners to render the camps more nearly self-supporting.

Tuxford was a very friendly man adept in the art of barter transactions; so it was through his influence that I acquired a Dutch Army mosquito net, of a design much more compact than the British model, very light and easy to manage.

The net turned out to be a very good exchange for only two cans of bully beef, and probably accounted for the fact that in all the years of my captivity, no malarial mosquitoes had access to my blood and ensured undisturbed sleep. It was also large enough to protect two men and became my most prized possession with just one possible exception.

My army mess tin was square, difficult to clean, and I knew it would soon rust away. At the first opportunity I negotiated with the Dutch for one of their round aluminium cook pots made up with three trays and a self-contained handle. The deal cost me forty Davros cigarettes, which I in turn had acquired by exchanging my sugar ration over the period of a fortnight. Shortly afterwards all food was centralised in a communal reserve.

Gradually the troops were organised and allotted to companies A to H inclusive for administrative purposes. Each group comprised members of the same unit in so far as this was possible.

Compared with other units there were few Royal Engineers,

but Royal Artillery, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and Royal Army Service Corps were represented in substantial numbers.

The over-all command of the camp and answerable only to the Japanese, was Lieutenant Colonel Russell of the East Surrey Regiment. He was brave, considerate and a gentleman of sterling quality. On his shoulders lay the unenviable responsibility for the well-being of nearly two thousand men.

At the onset the demands of the Japanese on the workforce was such, that the entire potential of the camp was not called on to be used each day, so it was possible to 'rest' a few men each day; especially the sick, on a rota system.

During this time we enjoyed the luxury of a maintenance unit for essential work in the camp under the general supervision of Captain Kettlewell of the R.E.O.C. and three other officers. As a sapper I was invited to join this group. My diary of the period recalls the strength and distribution of labour within the group as:—

Occupation and officers in charge	Total	Works A Captain Kettlewell	Works B Lieutenant [sic; Major] Edwards	Works C Lieutenant Allen	Hygiene Lieutenant Ross
	4				
Draughtsmen	2	—	1	1	—
Carpenters	28	4	6	18	—
Storeman	1	—	1	—	—
Metal Workers	7	7	—	—	—
Mason	1	1	—	—	—
Foremen	6	1	1	2	2
'Fatigue' men	61	—	4	—	57
Electricians	2	2	—	—	—
Total (all men)	112	15	13	21	59

The camp services unit soon established a cookhouse centre, latrines, a sick-bay, attended to the general drainage of the site, maintained the huts, and helped with the burial of the dead.

Very soon the number of men employed in the camp was drastically reduced, so in consequence the domestic workforce became very much overworked.

There was, however, a great advantage of working within the confines of the camp; there was far less contact with the guards, but working 'at home' brought several disadvantages as well, such as the boredom of not experiencing any change of environment during each day, and having no opportunity to obtain tobacco, salt or sugar from the local Chinese.

My work brought me in close liaison with Captain Kettlewell and Lieutenant [*sic*; Major] [R. E.] Edwards [director, public works department, O/C Sarawak Volunteers, Kuching Corps]. By some 'miracle' Edwards produced drawing board, and I was set to work making a plan of the camp, plotting drains, siting kitchens, and recording all changes in the position of latrines.

Meanwhile the policy of segregation left the camp without all but a few officers. I was not to see Bob Martin or Gillie Campbell again for a long time for they had gone to Japan.

During late October 1942 I chanced upon an ex-Palestine policeman, a Lance Corporal Bill Lambert. This remarkable man shared a corner of 'H' Company hut with me, and soon we became firm friends. He told me he had lived at the Yorkshire village of Copmanthorpe. Later he joined the Palestine Police serving the entire period of the riots in that unhappy land.

Bill, ever a man of invention and ingenuity[,] was no stranger to adversity. His optimism concerning our early release boosted my own morale.

Bill Lambert was tall, wiry, very fit and rather red-faced. His eyes were pale blue, said to be the hallmark of a good shot; and his gaze seemed to penetrate your innermost soul.

When deep in thought he would methodically twirl the ends of his rampant Victorian-type moustache; then in crisp phrases outline such and such a course of action.

Occasionally Lambert just disappeared at night for hours at a time, returning only as the first streaks of dawn heralded the new day, sometimes with a chicken or eggs or fruit, but always with something. To him the barbed wire of the stockade held no problems at all; he was quite capable of coming and going at will. His

built-in intuition told him when to expect the next sentry and inevitably he would be absolutely right.

As time passed the camp began to rely on the sheer courage of Bill Lambert, particularly with regard to the security of the illicit camp radio.

It was essential right from the beginning of our imprisonment at Lintang that some sort of contact be maintained with the battle zones of the Far East then so far away.

The long sequence of reverses in the fortunes of the Allied Forces had done much to put down the morale of the prisoners who yearned to hear some good news. Their waiting was not in vain, for a new era was dawning.

It was not until months after the event that I learned of the existence of a radio set in the camp.

Pieces of wire, mica, and even valves were filched from the Japanese stores, or thieved from warehouses near the docks.

Clever men made condensers and rheostats, out of the most unlikely materials. Perhaps the least worry of all was the setting up of an aerial, for there was a surfeit of barbed wire available. The power problem was solved overnight by tapping the Japanese domestic power line.

Great care had to be taken with the release of war news to the rank and file of the camp. Most men were responsible and sensible people with a fair appreciation for the needs of security, but a dangerous minority seemed quite oblivious of the dangers of 'loose talk' and self-indulgence. Several such fools sometimes chattered on within earshot of the guards.

Most information was presented in the form of rumours allegedly passed on by the Chinese. Months passed by before any formal admission was made that a radio set did indeed exist.

Several Japanese guards spoke English quite fluently. There was no doubt in my mind that many more with a knowledge of English were planted in the working parties around Kuching docks, for the expressed purpose of listening-in to the conversations of unsuspecting P.O.W.'s. The Kempai Tai (Secret Police) were fully

capable of interpreting such gossip, especially if the news was 'hot.' In the Japanese mind there lurked the constant fear that war news was dangerous in the extreme, and could so boost the morale of the suppressed communities as to incite rebellion and insurrection.

Penalties for possessing, or listening to radio sets, or the possession of firearms, were severe in the extreme.

By the time the Kempri had 'processed' suspected men, death was often preferable, and a happy release from the dreaded police. Most P.O.W.'s went through a phase of 'clutching at straws,' listening to the most absurd rumours if they contained the remotest hope of an early release. Japanese guards never relaxed their vigilance, whether escorting working parties, or patrolling within the camp. Their object was to repress news, and destroy hope.

It is impossible to understate the feelings of elation as news of Japanese misfortunes in war came to hand. One could sense a great lifting of the spirit, and perhaps for the first time in months men smiled and talked excitedly in random groups.

Meanwhile the Japanese authorities always distrustful of the written word, forbade the exchange of letters or notes between compounds. They were ever apprehensive of overthrow by the prisoners.

Numerically the guards and their reserves were inferior to the inmates of the camps, but any potential rebel had three undisputed factors to bear in mind.

The Japanese controlled all food supplies[,] issuing sufficient for the day, and no more.

Sheer force of arms would have rendered escape expensive in life and limb. Geographically any insurrection was doomed to failure for the nearest Allied Forces were more than 2,000 miles distant; the odds against survival were enormous.

All the same the enemy continued to indulge in 'spy mania.' Anybody writing or sketching without the knowledge of the authorities was considered to have spy potential and very soon came under Kempri scrutiny. I wrote my daily diary constantly in fear of arrest. It was possible to commit some grievous sin without know-

ing the actual offence. Camp discipline was learned the hard way; by trial and many errors.

All men, women, and even small children were required to bow to all Japanese soldiers, no matter how lowly their rank; whether they were on duty or not.

Punishment for non-recognition of officers or men of the I.J.A. [Imperial Japanese Army] was summary, and often severe[,] according to the whims and disposition of the guards.

Most of the sentries were given nicknames according to their appearance, habits or inclinations.

Among the most infamous of all the escorts especially on the working parties were:—"Moonface," the Makan Wallah (food man), Pock Mark (because of his smallpox scars), and the Bear—a great barrel-chested man who was the head guard commander. His second in command was "The Mule," so named because of his penchant for kicking luckless offenders.

Men employed on working parties wore scanty clothing, often dressed only in loin-cloths tied with string about their waists. Footwear varied from the remnants of army boots or wooden footed clip-clop sandals. With luck one might have retained a waterbottle or a haversack.

The rules concerning working parties were very strict. Nobody was supposed to buy anything at all from the local Chinese or Dyak traders without the prior permission and presence of a Japanese guard.

Anyone caught thieving at the dockside or any other venue of work was beaten unmercifully, and stood in the sun bareheaded for many hours.

As a deterrent these penalties were a failure. Men became more crafty. Certain commodities such as salt, quinine and other drugs were needed in the camps and workers on the docks often used diversions as a means of securing such luxuries as could be found. It was impossible for the guards to find the time to search all the prisoners each day, but spot checks sometimes provided 'sport' for the escorts.

Work-parties departed from Lintang at 7.30 a.m. and worked for periods of eight to ten hours before returning to the main camp. Employment in any capacity was always accompanied by a sense of fear of being beaten for the most trivial offence.

If the work went well the sentries proclaimed a period of 'yassume' or rest for ten minutes. On rare occasions approval was shown with an issue of cigarettes to those who had found favour in their eyes.

Prisoners were forever on the prowl for anything which could be used to improve their daily lives. Small pieces of clothing, bottles, tins and pieces of wire no matter how small were treasured. As sewing needles had long since become a figment of the imagination, new needles were made from short lengths of wire, which were hammered flat at one end and bent at right angles. The apex of the bend was then sawn, reheated and beaten out straight again. Holes made by this method were large and often ragged, but the finished products worked very well.

The thread used in sewing could be teased out from suitable coarse woven cloth. As clothes wore out they were patched. When the patches wore thin they were made up into a 'new' patchwork material, cut out, and remodelled into shorts, shirts or loin-cloths.

Few men wore any form of headgear, for regimental caps had long since been lost or worn out in the first few months of captivity. Work at Kuching dockside was always heavy, seemingly never-ending and mostly boring routine. The principal tasks involved unloading fifty gallon drums of petrol and oil from the river boats, and reloading the cargo onto trucks. Most of the time the drums were rolled in convoy along the dock road, and once in motion it took considerable skill to steer them on a straight course.

On very hot days, which was most of the time, the air shimmered in a haze; the metal was so hot it was prudent to use pieces of sacking to maintain a grip on the rims of the drums.

All sorts of people were coerced into joining in the work, including Chinese, Dyaks and even Japanese soldiers.

We discovered early on that without much trouble to us the

drums could be punctured by bringing them into sudden collision with other drums, kerbs or walls.

Sentries and overseers keen and alert as ever to this situation, tried to keep the procession of drums moving in orderly columns.

In spite of the vigilance of the guards a remarkable number of containers leaked away their precious liquid.

Each premeditated calamity brought its retribution of beatings and face slapping. The noise and shouting was unbelievable as the guards, beside themselves with rage cavorted up and down the ranks of the P.O.W.'s shrieking in unison, exhorting "More speedo—No stoppo—You British no goodo, etc."

One particular afternoon nothing seemed to go right in our sector. A ramp slipped and five drums fell into the water. Immediately several Jap soldiers dived into the murky water thinking the canisters would sink—nobody had told them about specific gravities, the buoyancy of liquids or the lifework of a gentleman long dead, by the name of Archimedes. Near one hour elapsed before the cargo was returned to safety.

Half an hour later I made a complete hash of negotiating a corner of a large brick building. My drum, dented and leaking blocked the main aisle. One of the guards came rushing in and kicked my backside, and all the time shouted, "You bloody, bloody, bloody, bloody! Bugaro, kinaro," and so on.

I was clearly a bloody something in his opinion, but the fury of the invective, borrowed from European soldiers themselves, rarely made much sense. Providing one was not the immediate recipient of such abuse, considerable amusement was often gleaned from such events.

As work proceeded many Japanese never joined the party. They lounged about the streets, in warehouses, or watched from shop doorways looking out for any move by the prisoners to communicate with the Chinese, who male and female sometimes offered gifts of rice or fruit. As the watchers were usually the same men day after day, we concluded they were undercover agents of the secret police.

The dockside was a prime site for the receipt of news of the 'outside' world. Information received concerning battles at sea, particularly of Midway (June 1942), indicated that at long last, the Japanese were beginning to pay dearly for their unprovoked aggression in the Pacific.

I became inquisitive as to the probable destination of the petrol and oil. On Monday October 19th 1942, the Japanese themselves provided the answer. Working parties strengths were suddenly stepped up to nigh on five hundred men, to extend the runways at Kuching Airfield. There had for many years existed a landing strip at a place called Batu Tujoh.

As 'batu' in Malay was interpreted as 'stone,' and 'tujoh' was 'seven'; it was natural to assume that the aerodrome was seven miles from Kuching. Each morning thereafter a special force of workers paraded at 7 a.m. and boarded a train. This was the only railway in Borneo;⁹ a single track affair with loops at two-mile intervals to facilitate the passing of the other oncoming train, for there were only two locomotives in Sarawak.

Ours was named Bulan; pulling open trucks, and being fired with logs of wood as well as coal; great showers of hot sparks showered down on the near-naked bodies of the passengers. On such days we hoped for a change in the direction of the wind or a rainy day.

In the beginning the work was preferable to slaving long unpredictable hours on the dockside. One could look forward to set periods of employment for the train returning to Kuching always departed around 5.30 p.m. daily.

Coolies were no strangers to chunkels [cangkul] and baskets; which were the implements of all native farmers, but the 'white' coolies had to be schooled in the use of these giant headed hoes. These tools enabled one to dig or rake furrows in the earth with astonishing speed. Earth scraped together was lifted or flicked into broad flat baskets; built up on three sides, but open on the front. These baskets held about one and a half cubic feet of earth or gravel, and by spinning, then checking the contents, a wide and

even distribution of earth was assured without having to use a rake afterwards. Indeed no rakes were available.

Gangs of workers operated in great circles and lived a sort of treadmill existence. One squad filled the baskets as others transported gravel to the site as directed by the Japanese overseers.

As the men with the chunkels had the harder work, for they never stopped digging and loading—the day was divided into shifts. Chunkel weilders [*sic*; welders] worked almost only in one place, whereas the basket carriers walked miles during each day refurbishing the surface of the runways.

On the second day heavy rains fell, but the work proceeded without respite regardless of water in the baskets and the fine gravel clotting the wickerwork.

Characteristic of the British capacity for endurance under extreme hardship some humorous souls began to sing, "Keep right on to the end of the road," and soon all men sang.

The Japanese guards conscious of the day's assignment, and as wet through to the skin as any of the prisoners, gazed in wonderment pointing to their heads, muttering "Gila." They thought quite simply we were "bonkers."

After the rigours of the week, Sundays were looked forward to with great anticipation. On this 'rest' day one attended to personal chores, and the sick rested, hoping they would be well enough to face the trials of the working parties each Monday morning.

Inevitably the first deaths occurred. On Thursday October 22nd 1942, Gunners Osborne and Morris succumbed to dysentery. I recall Bugler Murrey borrowing my shorts to officiate at the funerals. These were early days! The Japanese paid full military honours to the dead of their making. Colonel Russell, the British Camp Commandant, lead the parade, which was attended also by the Bishop of Sarawak, nuns, holy fathers and internees with Dutch Officers of adjacent compounds. The Japanese made a great show of saluting the cortege, and Suga had gone to much trouble to impress everyone with his alleged feelings of sympathy.

On October 28th Gunner Fergus of the 35th Regiment R.A. died

also from dysentery, but as this was a work day and there had been three deaths in practically as many days the number of mourners was cut drastically and was almost exclusively comprised of senior British Officers. Suga was notably absent from the event. Those attending the funeral—apart from Colonel Russell and the Bishop, who attended everything, were the Adjutant, Captain Skey, Captain Saunders[,] the 'C' Company Commander and Lieutenant Girvin.

Meanwhile two of my associates in the maintenance squad quite suddenly became ill, both with the dreaded dysentery; so it was that Gunner Trainer and Private Vic Walters died and were buried on a thoroughly wet and miserable day. At last the importance of the camp domestic works party was recognised by the Japanese authorities and reluctantly some materials were supplied.

The barter system within the P.O.W. fraternity had its own limitations. Soon all men on working parties were to receive token payments for their labours. The rates proposed were:—private soldiers 10 cents, N.C.O.'s and all officers 25 cents per day. As the sick were already dead as far as the enemy calculations were concerned and did not merit payment or food there was clearly a duty for the fit to support their less fortunate comrades. All money was printed by the Japanese, who seemed to possess large quantities of notes largely bearing serial numbers, but it was 'joke' money all the same with no signature to endorse relevance and authority.

Camp meetings were held regularly. It was agreed to pool all resources of money and materials. Native red tobacco was purchased in bulk and all men received a hank of the stuff once a fortnight. Under the revised scheme every man received 4 ½ cents in cash per day plus a messing fee of 3 cents.

Already the number of prisoners available for work on the airfield was diminishing, so it was that a Japanese medical officer named Yamamoto was introduced to 'stem the tide of sickness.'

He immediately set up a convalescent area with a separate hut, No. 19, where the chronic sick engrossed in the process of dying could do so without contaminating the rest of the camp—his words not mine!

There were grave doubts about Yamamoto being a doctor at all; his great policy was to leave and let die. This man was a mere five feet six inches tall, lean, hook-nosed, but impeccably dressed, striding about the camp with one hand on hip, and the other steadying the Samurai sword at his left side.

One of my sapper friends, 'Slim' Landers stood with me, and together we watched as Yamamoto swaggered in through the main gateway. I was prompted to enquire of Slim, "Why does a doctor wear a sword?" Slim with characteristic cynicism [*sic*; cynicism] answered, "They are bloody good for amputations!"

It was not long before the graveyard at Kuching was full. It was also deemed inconvenient by the Japanese to make repeated journeys along Rock Road to Kuching, and it was considered wasteful in terms of man hours lost and petrol used, so a new cemetery was created almost within sight of Lintang Main Camp.

The site chosen was on a hillside formerly planted with pineapples; the soil being red laterite, rocky, and exceedingly difficult to dig.

British troops and internees alike soon found a name for this macabre place, and it was at once dubbed "Boot Hill."

The first man buried in the new cemetery was a Private Barsom of the R.A.O.C., who died at 11 p.m. on Thursday November 12th 1942. On the following day the first of the officers died, Lieutenant James, also of the R.A.O.C.

In consequence a terrific row developed between Colonel Russell and Doctor Yamamoto.

James had been very ill for twenty days and received no drugs at all; the excuse offered was that as there was a shortage such supplies of drugs were needed for the fighting men of the I.J.A. (Imperial Japanese Army).

A complaint being made to Colonel Suga direct, Yamamoto 'lost face.' Colonel Russell accused the Jap M.O. of being a very bad doctor.

Yamamoto insisted, "You liar. I am very good!"

Lieutenant James had died the day following.

It was to be expected that a certain amount of discord and dis-

agreement should occur within our own ranks. Our own officers had been accorded the due respect expected by virtue of their ranks, but several expected additional concessions, as on the occasion when demands were made for an extra hut to be used as a messing house. Each officer already had more than his customary "three boards" of sleeping space. Thankfully commonsense prevailed and the issue was never voiced again.

At this time (October 1942) I noted the strength of P.O.W.'s at Lintang as 1,054 officers and men. Officers numbered 62 and N.C.O.'s and other ranks 992.

By the end of the first twenty-eight days eight men had died and 128 cases of dysentery were recorded. Altogether 185 people were unfit for works parades because of beri-beri, malaria, swollen joints and sundry skin troubles.

Those men who died in October and November of 1942 were buried in the Kuching cemetery. Such journeys involved a parade along Rock Road. Coffins were improvised and suitably adorned with the 'Union Jack.'

As time went on timber became so scarce that individual coffins became a rarity. A special group of coffins for repetitive use were designed and constructed with false bottoms. There had been a hotly contested debate concerning the disposal of the dead, whether or not to cremate all bodies, as the doctors affirmed that dysentery germs do not die with burial. It was decided germs or not, all men would be buried according to the traditional rites of the Services, with full military recognition.

The Japanese listened with interest to the "Last Post" and "Generals Salute" as each funeral service ended, then typically insisted that all the funeral party should visit Kuching Hospital, be washed, and sprayed with carbolic acid. Noticeably the Japanese enthusiasm for such parades died rapidly too, and the Japanese tradition of supplying gifts of fruit for use of the deceased in the next world, was discontinued. The guards became apprehensive and scared at the prospect of being in close proximity to the prisoners involved in the burial of the dead; their fear of dysentery was real and unabashed.

Gunner Unitt died on November 2nd 1942, and in consequence the whole camp was placed in quarantine.

There were, however, moments of light relief, such as the arrival of a stray white cat, which on selecting the Adjutants Office for maternity purposes presented Captain Skey with four white kittens.

The Eleventh of November had passed with the usual tradition of homage being paid to the dead of two World Wars. There among the rubber trees, where men died suddenly, it was almost miraculous to see those about to die find time to revere the heroes of so long ago.

Medical supplies of any sort were critically low, those acquired through the Red Cross at Singapore were almost finished. In desperation, a message was drafted to the officers at Changi, to send supplies from Singapore to Sarawak. I never did learn of any response, or indeed if the message was sent, or received, in the appropriate quarter.

Colonel Suga continued to extract maximum effort from the white coolies, although he liked to give the impression of being kind and considerate. It was strange to see such a man who could be fierce and unrelenting, taking children for rides in his staff car, but then one recalls that that arch devil Adolph Hitler was supposed to be extremely fond of children.

After the working parties of the day there was always a great temptation to lie down or sleep. Part of the campaign against death and disease, was to direct one's mind away from the adversities of the day. Small groups of men met during the evenings to talk to each other about their own lives and occupations.

These talks took in a variety of topics varying from the game of chess, carpentry, music and wood-carving. In a lighthearted mood one man confessed to being a professional cat burglar, and gave a lengthy discourse on the art of breaking into a domestic house, picking locks and generally how to pick up anything else as well. The skills of this man were to be put to good use, for it was he who gained access to the Japanese powerhouse for the purpose of establishing power lines within our own camp.

Small 'clubs' blossomed. I ran a fraternity called "The Little Ship Club." We met once a week to talk about sailing. At one of these gatherings I met Mac Osborne, former crew member of the late "Uffa Fox." Many were his tales of ocean racing and dinghy racing. We also learned to tie a variety of knots and to make lashings. I was surprised how little the average man knows about knots.

Chess and draught sets were carved by hand under the direction of a former chess champion Rubinovich.

Representatives of most social activities abounded; their skills patiently dispelling boredom. These activities, and the men who organised them, were beyond price.

With November practically gone, thoughts turned to organising some festivities for Christmas. Negotiations with Suga began in early December. The introductory meeting passed well. At this time Suga openly boasted about the work he could achieve through his white coolies.

Providing the strength of the working parties was kept high, he, Suga, would examine the possibilities of help in producing some extra food. Outward signs seemed promising, but Suga had promised much in times past, but had done little else but talk.

It was, therefore, a very pleasant surprise when 58 chickens arrived with the rice rations for 1,000 men.

Dr. Yamamoto not to be outdone in what could be considered as a bid to re-establish himself in the eyes of the Main Camp Medical Staff, entertained both the Dutch doctors and the British Officers, Colonel King and Captain Bailey. Each received a tot of whisky, a towel and a handkerchief.

Rehearsals by representatives of all camps began with great enthusiasm. Ladies in the camp across the road could be heard singing hymns and carols. The Dutch choir sang "Silent Night" in such a way that left a life long memory. The nuns and holy catholic priests sang religious songs.

The great day dawned. All camp personnel who so wished had taken part in religious services. In the soldiers' compound Holy

Communion was celebrated under the direction of Bishop Francis Hollis and the Reverend Henshaw.

After the service the bishop sought me out and expressed a desire to re-establish Kuching Cathedral after the war. Although I had not met Francis Hollis previously, I was known to him, for he knew of my ability to draw. The Cathedral was even then being used as a fish market by the Japanese, a circumstance which grieved the bishop very much. The plans I submitted pleased him so much that ultimately he brought them back to England.

To return to Christma[s] 1942 the concert was to be the only one of its kind during the 'captivity,' for it is true a second concert did take place later, but its nature never sustained the moral and religious significance of the Christmas production which included the following contributions:—

- Camp 1. The British Officers.
Stories and Song—Captain Anderson.
Scottish Airs and Songs—Lieutenant Montgomery
Campbell.
(Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders).
- Camp 4. British Soldiers.
A concert by Drabble and Hardy and a Pantomime
"Cinderella" with an adult twist!
- Camp 3. The Catholic Priests.
A choir sang:— *Ecce quomodo moritur*
Ave Maria.
Jesus Dulcis.
- Camp 6. Internee Women and Children.
Childrens Choir—*Hickory dickory dock, etc.*
Ding dong bell.
British Ladies—In an old fashioned town.
Land of Hope and Glory.
Mrs Rutten—Drink to me only with thine eyes.
(Viola) *Londonderry Air.*
Parlez-moi d'amour.
Raffs—Cavatina.

- Camp 5. Dutch Soldiers.
 Choir—Naaz—Zee.
 Engels—Coumans—Snyders—Florentinus—
 Anderson and Hoogerhuys.
- Camp 2. Internees Mixed Civilians.
 Two Spirituals.
 The Road to the Isles.

The combined audience had assembled in the soldiers' compound, but were not allowed to intermix.

This regulation was particularly hard on the married couples, who once again were so near and yet so far from each other.

Musical instruments had appeared by magic, some owned, others borrowed from sources outside Kuching, and the sounds they made created a tangible link with the civilisation we had been forced to forego for so long.

At the conclusion some attempt was made to sing the National Anthem, but the guards broke up the meeting. Yet as the audience rose to return to its various compounds, men and women were still singing, wishing the night to linger on. Long after midnight, when I too retired to my pillow of haversack stuffed with grass, meditation on the themes of the season renewed the pleasure of the event.

Days later the Scots let in the New Year in their own inimitable way, for Lieutenant 'Monty' Campbell still had his bagpipes and they all sang *For Auld Lang Syne* together. 1942, probably the worst year of military disasters in the annals of the British Empire had finally expired; and no one grieved its passing.

The 'early' months of 1943 was a period when the P.O.W.'s at Batu Lintang clung feverishly to their culture and ideals. Encouraged by the success of the Christmas celebrations, a group of patient and industrious men, highly skilled in making and repairing clothes, formed a concert party. Where such men found the energy and idealism to pursue such a project after the rigours of work in the Kuching docks remains a mystery to me even now.

Men deserving of special mention in this field of endeavour, who strove to raise the morale of their friends and keep it in good

fettle, were listed in a one copy only programme, pinned to the wall outside Colonel Russell's hut.

Thus I read the announcement:—

January 1943.

A revue devised by A.S. Hardie and Lou Levy.
Suggested by M. Farrer and produced by A.S. Hardie.
"Mr. Meek Comes to Town"

Characters

Mr. Meek	E. Pasquill
A Colonel	R. Ditchfield
A Bandleader	Lou Levy
A Landlady—dance hostess etc	E. Tarleton
A Tipster—barman etc.	N.E. Edwards
A Girl at the Races	B. McNulty
A Maidservant)
Cabaret Star) A.S. Hardie
Stall Keepers)
Railway Porters) Members of the Band

Orchestra under the direction of W. G. Eley.

C. W. Copper	L. F. Tyler
J. McAlister	F. R. Barnard

(Combs, paper and tin cans much appreciated)

Costumes and wigs—E. Tarleton and A. S. Hardie.

Properties and effects by F. R. Barnard.

Synopsis of Scenes:-

A country yokel, Joe Meek from Boggart Hole-Clough comes up to London for a holiday and has a gay time.

- Scene 1. His arrival at the station and encounters with porters.
- Scene 2. He goes to Big Annie's Boarding House, where he meets the Colonel and is swept off his feet by Lou Levy and the boys.
- Scene 3. He goes to the races with the Colonel and wins big money, but never sees it.

- Scene 4. He lunches at Lyon Comer House, where he is not considered to be a desirable customer.
- Scene 5. He makes some bargains at the Caledonian Market, but finds his pockets lighter in consequence.
- Scene 6. He goes for refreshment at Dirty Dick's Public House, and is surprised at the cost of drinks in London.
- Scene 7. He has a glimpse of the night life of the Metropolis at the Silver Slipper Night Club.
- Scene 8. The sad awakening.

Once again choirs from neighbouring camps lent a tone of respectability and reproduced much of the content of the Christmas gathering.

Permission to produce the entertainment had been granted after long negotiation with Colonel Suga and great persistence by the British Camp Commandant Lieutenant Colonel Russell.

The show ran for two hours and was attended not only by prisoners and internees, but by many Japanese officers and men. They may not have understood the British language, but the tone of the play left little to the imagination. It was a riot! There were British Soldiers dressed up to kill, as ladies of ill-fame cavorting about the arena—the Japanese understood every gesture! Just for a few brief hours, the harshness of our dire predicament was pushed aside; we lost ourselves in the 'drama' of the moment.

Suga himself was delighted with this diversion and insisted on seeing it several times. As the National Anthem was banned we all concluded with "Land of Hope and Glory" instead.

Several days later the Japanese appreciated the full significance of the song especially the bit about 'not being slaves,' etc., so that rendering of our 'second anthem' also became "Verboten."

As the pressures of work increased, even the Sunday rest days were cut to one in every three weeks.

The concert party never again functioned at its true capacity. Materials became so very scarce, that it was impossible to spare any cloth for costumes or properties be they ever so plain and undemanding. Finally the concert party disbanded, for many of its

members had died and were buried, but the memory of their accomplishments lingers on.

The war in the Pacific was now seriously joined on a number of fronts. The Nipponese leaders knew then that they all had a hard struggle ahead. Many of the more educated men in the hierarchy must have begun to realise that fighting the combined forces of Britain, Australia, China and the U.S.A. could only bring about a resultant defeat.

Now that the prospect of further concerts became remote the P.O.W.'s latched onto any rumour inspiring hope or thoughts of release. With a number of men the yearning to be reunited with their families was so strong that they were inspired to write poetry; many were pathetic and sad but the exercise brought some relief to their tortured spirits. Such a poem was written by John Kirkup of the Royal Engineers, and it was entitled:

"You Three"

Upon my home-made shelf I see
The photograph of you dear three,
My Mary holding in her arms
Our girl in all her charms;
And though I love her just the same,
I only know our girl by name,
For I was sailing 'cross the sea
When she was born to you and me.

John, too I see stood there,
The sun is shining on his hair;
And sometimes when I'm lost in thought
My heart beats faster than it ought,
And in my breast I feel a pain;
The longing for you all again,
That grand re-union with you three
I'm yearning for impatiently.

As here I lie at night to sleep

The oil-lamps make the shadows creep,
Now will you promise, little lad,
To look after your Mum for Dad?
And if you're good and never cry
I'll come back soon bye and bye,
I'll bring some presents with me too
Grand for little boys like you!
So pray, my son, and don't do wrong
And Dad'll come back before ere long,
And "Goodnight" now my lovely one,
And may God bless you Derek son.

(A year later John Kirkup died aged twenty-three).

January 1943 was a black month for me. I had made a number of new friends, but in rapid succession five of them died. After a fortnight of no casualties, Vic Walters, Private Smith, Driver Holdgate, Private Tipping and Lance Corporal Matthews, all died of dysentery.

Shortly afterwards the remaining officers who shared administration duties with Colonel Russell, were all withdrawn to the separate officers' camp. As the officers were not allowed to join the working parties their lives became an existence of boredom relieved only by making improvements to their own camp; so it was that they devoted their energies to the setting up of a 'new' oven. This was made from a fifty gallon petrol drum tamped around with clay.

With the departure of the officers I lost what little contact I had maintained with my own superiors of the R.E's.

There had been occasions when certain officers were considered to be too demanding and overbearing, but when they departed from our midst we experienced a sense of loss and a new appreciation was realized. The shield of reason and power of bargaining once removed, left us exposed to the idiosyncrasies and whims of the guards.

Within two days Colonel Suga added to the gloomy prospects with a speech about a general shortage of rice, due he affirmed to

the American Navy who were sinking the rice ships. It was quite remarkable for Suga to admit that the Japanese were not so invincible in all things. The loss of the supply ships confirmed rumours about American activity in the Pacific.

There followed promises of clothes and footwear. Out of 1,000 men only 200 possessed shoes or boots of any kind accounted as serviceable on a working party.

Japanese issued boots were made of crude rubber, which stretched so quickly and flapped about on one's feet so that we resembled military Charles Chaplins. A size 6 boot often stretched to size 9 within two or three weeks of wear.

The rice shortage at Batu Lintang were made worse by the Japanese Quartermaster who 'fiddled' the rations of Japanese and P.O.W.'s alike.

News of the arrival of a high ranking Nippon Officer who was to inspect the Camps brought near panic in the Guardhouse.

On the eve of the inspection March 27th 1943, forty-two bags of rice were dumped suddenly at the soldiers' camp. The quartermaster was relieved of his job, and the last we saw of him was his journey towards Kuching in company with two Kempri honchos.

Lieutenant Negata unpredictable as ever, revealed that Red Cross parcels were on their way to us from Singapore; and for once he told the truth.

A bonus was the unexpected receipt of letters posted in the U.K. the previous June and July.

Not all men were so fortunate, but I was very lucky receiving two well censored messages of hope and advice, one from my father and the other from my brother Leslie.

My younger brother had joined the Fleet Air Arm and was serving 'somewhere in the Far East.' I thought how ironic it would be to be bombed by my own brother, but life had in times past produced stranger twists of fate.

After the departure of the V.I.P. whom I may add none of us saw; the entire payroll for all the P.O.W.'s suddenly disappeared, and much of the rice was returned to the Japanese stores again.

The theft of the money was genuine, so my friend Bill Lampard [*sic*; Lambert], once of the Palestine police, was given the task of unravelling the mystery. Bill was far more clever than anyone dared to hope. A corporal of the R.A.O.C. was known to have cashed \$10 bills.

Lieutenant Negata hot on the trail, hot in spirit, and keen for success, issued an order of the day.

It read:—On March 23rd 1943 a great robbery has taken place. If the offenders return the money within five days, they will be dealt with leniently. If the culprits are found out after the five days expire they will be liable to very severe punishment including execution.

The Order was signed,
Negata 2nd Lieutenant.

I.J.A.

The order produced the desired effect. As if by magic the money reappeared; the culprits were never named, and that was the end of grand scale thieving by anybody.

Trouble of a different nature broke out in a most unexpected quarter. One Sunday night we had been priveleged [*sic*; privileged] to walk outside the camp along a track, but two of our men were severely beaten up by Nippon sentries, who not having news of the amended regulation, thought the P.O.W.'s were trying to escape.

Colonel Russell arrived at the main gate and interposed himself between the luckless men and the sentries, who were beside themselves with righteous indignation. In the scuffle the Colonel himself was struck a heavy blow with a stick.

One sentry was very drunk, and inflicted a bayonet wound on one of the P.O.W.'s. The Japanese guard commander arrived and disarmed the sentry, but the real trouble had only just begun. Friends of the offending sentry arrived fearfully drunk and disarmed their own N.C.O. In the ensuing punch-up another force arrived and knocked their drunken comrades about unmercifully so that three were carried unconscious to the guardhouse.

Such Japanese domestic troubles were rare, but nonetheless dis-

concerting for the prisoners. Guards sober were bad enough; guards drunk were an extremely dangerous prospect.

On another occasion, contrary to all regulations, an amorous sentry entered the women's compound in the early hours of a morning, when the moon was high. Failing to impress the object of his attention with gifts of cigarettes and fruit, this doubtful charmer tried to rape the woman. She in turn screamed so loudly the noise reached the soldiers' compound.

The sentry, thwarted, and abashed, retired to his post in the sentry-box, in some confusion and very angry.

A wiser woman would have let the matter rest as no real harm had been done, but foolishly she reported the whole affair to Colonel Suga. He on balance, being reasonably fair with the ladies of the compound, ordered a full enquiry. The woman, Agnes Keith, a journalist, could not identify her assailant, but the entire guard were knocked about to such an extent that most limped about on duty or sported shining black eyes.

Negata as second in command only to Colonel Suga, was intensely jealous of Suga's power, and made it his business to disagree or oppose any issue which he, Negata, had not directed.

Suga had been called away to Sandakan on P.O.W. business. Negata immediately accused the woman of lying to bring the Japanese soldiers into disrepute, and he hoped she would sign a declaration of repudiation. Still she declined to withdraw the charge.

During further interrogations she was severely beaten, having ribs cracked and sustaining damage to an arm.

On Suga's return there was one hell of a row, Negata himself was slapped and the guards again belted with sword-sticks.

To my great delight "Pock Mark" and the "Pig" appeared with double blackeyes, and were in a very ugly mood.

During the following week the trouble overflowed into the soldiers' camp. The men were subjected to a reign of near terror. Guards entered the compound and lashed out on the slightest pretext of P.O.W.'s having broken camp rules.

Usually these louts operated in pairs; crashing into the huts[.]

even forcing sick men out of their beds to stand and pay compliments. Woe betide anyone found smoking without the provision of a water pot, or bow, while still holding a cigarette. Camp regulations could hardly have been more stringent, and mayhem persisted for several days.

Harsh treatment of the women filled the British P.O.W.'s with a savage fury. There was a very real possibility that reprisals by the prisoners would bring about a holocaust at Batu Lintang. An emergency meeting of all camp leaders with the Jap authorities resulted in Negata being told quite bluntly, that if there was any more beating of the women, they, the camp leaders, would not be able to control the reactions of the men.

This was a dangerous assertion to make, but in a strange way it touched the nerve centre most feared by the Japs. The result was that the immediate feud was called off, and normal routine was observed—bad as that was.

Negata was the evil genius responsible for oppressive rules and unpleasantness in the administration of the camps. Unlike his superior, he entertained no pretensions about being a gentlemen, and held no special regard for European women. He enjoyed the prospect of seeing them humiliated.

Suga, in spite of the usual defects of a fanatic, himself, was tired of the routine role of having to be contrary and obstructive.

Of the unholy quartet, Colonel Suga was probably the most amendable [*sic*; amenable] to reason, but there was little to choose between these men.

Most sinister and violent was the officer in charge of the security, a Lieutenant Kubu. This man was a drug addict and sadist, whose sanity fluctuated in direct proportion to the amount of drugs he could assimilate. When he was 'high' he beamed at everybody in a childish stupor, but as the drugs' effect wore off, he was bad trouble for anybody.

The guardhouse had been built with its quota of cells; little better than animal cages six feet by four feet. One entered these by crawling through a hatch scarcely three feet by two, and hardly ad-

equate for the passage of a man. Once inside the cell there one remained until someone remembered you were there, and with luck you could be fed once a day. Mosquitoes and excreta were your only companions in that environment. Most Japanese officers were jumpy and volatile in personality.

Lieutenant Yamamoto was typical of this Jekyll and Hyde fraternity. This Japanese Medical Officer; for such he was, reacted violently to criticism. He had very largely opted out of his responsibilities and never attended to P.O.W.'s sick or diseased men. The care of all prisoners was left in the hands of the European camp doctors, people like Colonel King and Captain Bailey in the main camp, and Dr. Gibson the lady doctor in the women's compound.

Yamamoto quite often beat sick men until they fell down, especially if he was approached directly for drugs.

When the Japanese M.O. hissed, half closed his eyes, and his face turned a sickly yellow, it was always time to take avoiding action, or redress any apparent lapse of behaviour. Nobody could afford the luxury of the merest glance of defiance in Yamamoto's presence. To disagree with him or force a point too strongly, invoked a savage beating.

To be beaten by some paranoiac Japanese coolie pig left all men bruised in mind and body. Mental reactions varied with each individual. Most men took a beating quietly, bravely, without fuss, hoping the ordeal would soon be over, for nobody could come to the aid of these unfortunate people.

As a regular soldier I was quite familiar with the British Army system of training, and one fought 'a mad three minutes,' often with a friend, but always in a proper ring, as a test of courage. Such affairs were properly refereed; there were no excesses, and no real harm done.

Confrontation with an irate Japanese guard meant you were on your own, without controls and no safeguards. Later on in March I had just returned from an exceptionally arduous day, working on the Kuching dockside, and fell foul of the guard we hated most of all.

A cloud of tobacco smoke hung in the air as "Pock Mark" sud-

denly entered Hut 7. I was stranded like a fish at ebb-tide, with no water pot. With a roar like a wounded bull he fetched me a resounding clout across the face. "Out! Out! Out! You very bad man. All the time you smoke without water pot. Now I beat you."

Beat me he did, repeatedly belting my face and ears until my head spun and ached so much I feared I might lose my hearing.

Just when I thought I had paid enough for so petty a 'crime,' he kicked me in the thigh so that for the first time I cried out in pain.

The fact that I had yielded up some sort of noise seemed to satisfy his lust to inflict pain, but "Pock Mark" had another insidious ace to play. My cigarette lay in the grass and thankfully it no longer glowed. I believe the guard's first intention had been to stub it out on my bare body; for this was one of his favourite tricks, but he shrieked, "You have cigarette! Now you eat."

After being forced to retrieve the offending thing I chewed and swallowed it as ordered.

As I had not eaten anything since 7 a.m. that day, the reaction of raw nicotine on my palate, and stomach, caused a sudden and revulsive action, which proved my salvation, for I vomited all over the guard's boots.

Surprised, he backed off in haste, cursing me and raving like a madman. During the following week "Pock Mark" tried on half a dozen occasions to catch me out again, but my attitude towards tobacco and smoking was undergoing a radical revision.

The most important rule to observe if one was knocked down during punishment was not to remain huddled on the ground. Once they had you on the floor serious damage could be inflicted as they kicked in the ribs or jumped on your chest.

After my beating by "Pock Mark" I was left in a furious temper and I hoped I could have repaid him in kind.

My frustration at not being able to smash in his evil taunting face knew no bounds, and only added misery to an already desolate spirit. My reactions were typical of normal men, who vowed revenge for several days after the event, but reason always prevailed, as it must. As the bruises healed, so one's resolve to extract

retribution melted away, which was just as well as the penalty for striking a Japanese guard was death.

Re-assuring news reached the P.O.W.'s. Heavy Japanese Naval losses in the Bismarck Straits (March 1943) were now confirmed. Fighting around Rabaul and New Guinea had cost the Japanese thousands of troops. New long range aircraft had been developed by the U.S.A. German soldiers in the Western Desert referred to them as "Those forked-tailed devils."

In April 1943 the Japanese Navy was dealt another stunning blow, losing its most highly respected and efficient commander, Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto. This man was revered as a latter-day Nelson of the Japanese Fleet, but fate delivered him up to the Allies. The Americans had broken the enemy naval code.

Lockheed Lightnings or P38E's as they were known intercepted Yamamoto's flight some 550 miles from their base at Henderson Field. With speeds exceeding 395 m.p.h. and armed with a 20mm. cannon, and four 0.5" machine guns, these twin fuselaged fighter bombers outmatched the Zero escort planes. Yamamoto was shot down and crashed in a jungle. The Admiral was a former Chief of the Japanese First Fleet and later directed the Second Fleet with distinction.

We at Batu Lintang sensed something bad had occurred. The guards indulged themselves in acts of violence for several 'hate' days. Life was generally unpleasant and scarcely anyone walked without a limp and bruises, after encounters with the sentries.

In an effort to improve the morale of his own troops, and to counter the growing improvement in outlook of the P.O.W.'s, Suga produced copies of the "Syonan Times" for sale in the main camp. It dealt chiefly with the ambitions of Emperor Hirohito, the Co-prosperity Sphere, and extolled the virtues of Japanese culture.

There were many references to the unreasonable attitude of the Western Powers; presumably because they refused to give Japan carte blanche approval to overrun, and annexe the smaller lands of the Far East.

As propaganda the newspaper was a failure. It impressed us not

at all. On the contrary we extracted considerable amusement from the absurdities from the revamped "Straits Times" of former years. Snippets of information circulated as mere rumours in the camps suddenly took on a new significance.

No record of Batu Lintang would be complete without mention of an internee named Batten. His closest friends knew him as "Lofty"; a gentle giant of a man, the first mate of a ship torpedoed off Pontianak. The survivors of the ship had been brought to Lintang as early as August 1942. Lofty was a Quaker by conviction and addressed people as 'thee' or 'thou'[,] soon establishing himself as a reliable man, honourable and kind.

Many were the conversations we held 'across the wire' for in addition to the loss of the ship, he was greatly worried about the fate of his wife and son imprisoned at Singapore.

Often he would confide sadly, "If only I could be with them now, when they need me most!"

One knew instinctively, Lofty would be clever with his hands. All day long he whittled away at small pieces of wood. Patiently he fashioned each piece; then one day he displayed with pride a miniature model of a square rigged ship "The Cutty Sark." It was his intention to put the ship in a bottle. All the masts were hinged for this purpose.

Guards came and went, some admired his work, others were jealous of his skill, and strove to find an excuse to destroy his handiwork; for months these treasures were hidden from the Japanese.

It was 'Lofty Batten' who launched a project to make toys for the young children in the women's camp. Wooden trains, small ships and horses on wheels all found their way to the internee camp across the road. Lofty brought great joy to these children especially at the Christman [*sic*; Christmas] season.

Batten it was who mended my army boots, even though I had decided their usefulness was past.

If he had a fault it was one common to all internees; particularly Don Tuxford; who was too optimistic concerning the prospects of an early release. A man such as Batten used to the freedom of a

ship on the high seas, must have suffered greatly during his captivity in Sarawak.

The Japanese had made the mistake of trying to coerce him into sailing ships in support of their navy. He, adamant in his refusal to work against the Allies, had incurred the profound displeasure of his captors.

Talking across the wire had become a very dangerous game, not to be played often, and never for long spells. I could gladly have talked to Lofty all day long, but I too was becoming a marked man. On several such sorties, I escaped a beating by the narrowest of margins.

Soon the talk would have to cease altogether, but until then Batten's optimism never failed. His faith in the ultimate supremacy of the Allies was inspiring. He avowed "God will never allow these evil men to triumph." His faith in a Divine power was absolute and unshakeable.

About this time the conduct of the Japanese security man, Lieutenant Kubu, had become so unpredictable that even Colonel Suga considered him unsuitable for the role he had to play. Every man employed on the working parties knew in his heart that it was the avowed intention of the enemy to kill off as many of their former adversaries by overwork and malnutrition. Kubu on the other hand was not very subtle, and only increased the resistance of the P.O.W.'s against the system.

Just how far Suga was prepared to pursue the official line was anybody's guess. One thing was certain; he could ill afford to appear too lenient in the presence of subordinates such as Nekata, and Yamamoto, incurable fanatics; equally certain was his distaste for Kubu's excesses under the influence of drugs. The Japanese Camp Commandant disappeared from the scene for two days. When he returned Kubu was gone; replaced by a younger officer, Lieutenant Ojema.

On rare occasions, young and gullible guards could be induced by flattery or subterfuge to divulge important news. Thus we learned that a troopship due to arrive at Kuching would bring more men to our camp. Any new arrivals were a welcome source

of interest. Sooner than anyone dared to hope, a column of Allied troops came swinging down the road to Batu Lintang. It contained 100 British and 300 Australian prisoners from Singapore.

These men looked quite fit and were certainly far better equipped than us. As I began to wonder, "Where on earth are they all going to live," it became evident that the Australians were to be kept separate from the remainder of the British soldiers.

Three days later the Australians were marched off to Kuching again and re-embarked for Sandakan. It is history now, that none of that party survived. All were murdered on the second infamous death march to Ranau.

The arrival of the hundred men from Changi brought a complete change of fortune for us.

Many of the troops were R.E.'s from units I knew well; and joy of joys; the party included Frank Fisher, Corporal Davy and Freddie North, (the Colonel's former driver). Within a week, work on the aerodrome at Batu Tujoh was to be stepped-up, and fifty men were going to live there permanently.

The names were read aloud by the camp leader, and included most of the R.E.'s newly arrived. Just when I thought "I'm not going to be allowed to join them," the W.O. almost as an after-thought called, ". . . and Sapper Morris!"

DOCUMENT 55

Life of a P.O.W. in Batu Lintang Camp— An NCO's Story

Papers of E. R. Pepler. 88/33/1. IWM.

As our camp was comprised of other ranks of the British Armed Forces, it was us who had to bear the brunt of the Japanese working parties and [from] such stemmed a considerable amount of the sickness. To attempt to work in tropical conditions on the meagre rations of food that we had, was nearly impossible and as the time went on, it of course, became even worse.

The two main working parties were either at the airfield outside Kuching, or on the making of a road in the jungle which was to serve as a runway. At the airfield was a hill about three hundred feet high, situated a few hundred yards from the end of the runway. Apparently this presented problems in the landing and taking off of planes and the Japanese thought it possible for it to be removed. Not having any machinery to cope with this, they apparently thought it was possible to remove, by labour from our camp. The working parties were presented with flat bottom rush baskets and chunkels (a large type of hoe) and at the top of this hill, the earth and rubble was hoed into the baskets and then carried by two prisoners to the edge and tipped over. Of course, this was a very painfully slow process and it was made much more slower by the prisoners just keeping moving only. As can be well imagined, this hill was never removed, in fact, it was hardly touched, although thousands of man hours were spent on it. The other main working party was to make a road in the jungle to act as a runway for aircraft, this necessitated clearing jungle growth, etc. This work [also] did not progress very far and was only about half completed when the war ended. At times small parties were sent to and around Kuching, to work either unloading barges of stores, clearing jungle and waste ground and other menial tasks. As time passed on, the working parties grew smaller and smaller, because of the considerable amount of sickness and vast reduction in numbers of prisoners, because of so many deaths.

A small number of prisoners were kept in camp for such duties as latrine men, cookhouse staff, medical orderlies, etc. Most of these were either sick or disabled but could walk and use their hands. The latrine men were perhaps fairly fit as their job was very heavy. Leonard Beckett, and myself, stayed in the camp for most of the time and helped during the day with camp chores, but we did go on working parties at the airfield on a considerable number of days.

The amount of food given us by the Japanese, was very small and also of very poor quality. Our main diet, of course, consisted of

polished rice, which was supplemented by some vegetables, such as sweet potatoes and beans, bananas, dried fish, pork and sugar, in small quantities, were also given us. The cookhouse staff tried very hard to make these ingredients into palatable dishes and stretch them as far as possible. Stews were made when we had vegetables or some pork. Rice was chiefly boiled, but sometimes baked into small cakes, mixing sweet potatoes with it. Dried fish was mixed with rice to make kedgerree, as very often we were supplied with drums of coconut oil for frying purposes. Also when oil was in stock, we had rice balls fried. Any fruit was given out in company rotation but the bulk of the meagre supply was used by the hospital and sickbay authorities for the really chronically sick.

We were supplied with quite a reasonable amount of tea but, of course, no milk, the sugar ration usually worked out to about a dessert spoonful per day, which one could use as he liked. During the period from March, 1942 to September, 1945, we received only one supply of Red Cross foodstuffs, and this worked out at one tin per man and was either corned beef, spam, condensed milk or tomatoes. To obtain any advantage in the way of extra food, such as the foregoing Red Cross supply and smuggled food, it was best for four or five men to be in a group and so pool their resources. Leonard Beckett and myself were in such a group, along with J. [P.] Flemming, (security man) and Scotty, (Sergeant-[M]ajor and [N]ip maintenance man). We formed this group very early on and we were billeted in a small room at the end of the long hut which housed the rest of our Company. All our resources were pooled and in this way we all helped each other and the four of us all came out of the camp, at the end of the war, in fairly reasonable condition. In our group of four, I was delegated to watch our interests and to ensure we all received equal shares of anything we got hold of. One of the first things we did was to obtain some day old chickens; these were obtained by flogging [selling] my Ronson petrol lighter to a Japanese, for six day[-]old chicks. Of those six chicks we managed to raise three by feeding them on crushed rice, worms and beetles, etc. Scotty was able to obtain paper bags full of rice

sweepings from the Nip stores and lorries fairly regularly and this was our chickens' main source of food. Alas, these three chicks turned out to be three cocks and when they were about four months old, we had a stroke of luck. As we knew from the news bulletins that the war would carry on for some time, we had decided on a long term policy of trying to get eggs and not eat the cockerels. I found out that a couple of Aussie prisoners were intending to kill a chicken for a feast and that it was a pullet. I hastily got to them and effected a swop of two cocks for a pullet, this they agreed to, and so we had obtained a black pullet about 4½ months old. We knew that she would soon be laying eggs as the pullets tended to lay much earlier than they do in Britain. Very soon she started laying but before then we had to build a banana leaf shelter to house her and provide a laying box or else she would have gone over the wire into the jungle surrounding us. As soon as we guessed that she would start laying, we kept he[r] shut in until she produced the required egg. Alas, once again we had been fooled, as our black witch laid only 13 eggs and went broody on us, another trick of the tropics. We immediately scratched our heads and decided to try and get a batch of fertilised eggs for our broody pullett. J. P. Fleming, had a very nice ring still in his possession and he said that Scotty could use this to see if he could barter with a Nip driver. He was successful and obtained thirteen eggs, which we hoped would be fertilised. Our black menorca was faithful to the end and nine chicks were hatched three weeks later. It was hard work trying to rear these chicks as the hen would even take them outside the wire into the jungle searching for food. She always brought them back and so our chicken farm prospered and we had quite a lot of eggs and cockerels to eat before the end of the war. I believe I am right in stating, that when the war ended in August, 1945, we had 31 hens in our possession. Very often we used to give eggs to our more chronic sick in our company and this was well appreciated.

All through our captivity, sickness was rampant amongst us. The most common incapacities being dysentery [*sic*; dysentery], malaria, beri-beri and tropical ulcers. These diseases were caused

chiefly by malnutrition and working conditions. It was essential for all our sakes, that the standard of hygiene in the cookhouse was as high as possible, but as food had to be taken out to the working parties in metal drums, it was not always possible to stop the flies contaminating the food. Also with so many prisoners suffering from dysentery [*sic*; dysentery] and the primitive latrine arrangements, it was easy for the flies to pick up the necessary germs and transport them to us. The cooking utensils and containers were scalded out with boiling water twice a day and the cookhouse was also scrubbed twice a day. The latrines were washed twice a day with plenty of water, but we had no disinfectant. Medical supplies were very scanty with very little quinine for malaria, nothing for dysentery [*sic*; dysentery] except to stop eating even the scanty rations to try and allay the disease. No vitamins to counteract the beri-beri and only boiling water to supply to the tropical ulcers to try and stop the infection. These ulcers started one day the size of a pin head and within two days were the size of half-a-crown and continued to putrefy the flesh around until they reached gigantic proportions. There were vast numbers of prisoners walking around with these ulcers in which one could put their fist.

Dysentery [*sic*; dysentery] was the main cause of so many deaths as men wasted away from their normal weight of over ten stone to three or four stones and their stomachs completely disintegrated so that any food passed into the body was evacuated exactly as taken orally. Deaths took place regularly every week and as the time passed on to 1945, the deaths in our camp were taking place at two or three every day. During the latter part of our captivity, the Japanese would not give us any wood to make coffins, so many prisoners were buried in just an old blanket. The bodies were carried by us to a jungle clearing about one mile from the camp in a coffin, with a hinged bottom, which when released, deposited the body at the bottom of the grave and the coffin was then brought to the surface for further use. All prisoners who died were given a Military funeral, including The Last Post played by a bugler and each had a dignified burial service.

A record was kept by the Camp Authorities of the name, rank and number of each deceased prisoner and a plan of where each one was buried. The Aussie 9th Division, who were responsible for our release in 1945, erected a cross with particulars on each of the graves. This cemetery is rather a large one, as out of the two thousand prisoners who entered our camp, only approximately seven hundred and fifty survived. Through lack of proper food and vitamins, a lot of prisoners suffered from beri-beri which causes parts of the body to swell, as though full of water, to large proportions. Most were affected by this disease either in the legs or testicles and tummies. I have seen many prisoners with their testicles as large as a football and it was not a pleasant sight. Of course, malaria was always present and we had so little quinine, the only course left open to us was to get under the blankets and stay there.

I have only referred to the four most common ailments that we had to suffer but many others, known and unknown, were endured, if not fatal. As I have stated before, we had very little in the way of medical supplies and the Japanese only supplied us at times with small quantities of quinine and aspirins. Even such a small thing as toothache had to be endured unless one preferred it taken out by a civilian internee without any anaesthetic, which of course, happened many times. One man [of] our Company had his appendix removed by the Japanese without any anaesthetic; he was partly held and tied to the operating table. It turned out to be a successful operation and that man came out of the camp at the end, very much alive.

Of course our medical men had no chance to effect cures in the majority of cases, as without drugs, etc., they were more or less helpless. However, it was remarkable what was achieved by our two doctors, Colonel King and Captain Bailey, supported by a few medical orderlies. The two doctors were always chasing Dr. Yamamoto, the Japanese Army Doctor, for medical supplies [*sic*; supplies] and extra foods. Very often our two doctors had to tell a prisoner that he was fit for some duty, when, in fact, he should have been in hospital or sickbay, as there was no room for him there, and their only course left open to them was to try and keep them on their

feet, as once they succumbed to their blankets, it was usually curtains [*sic*; curtains] for them.

As can be seen from the foregoing, we had to have something to keep our morale as high as possible because medical care and good food was not available and it was in this respect that the news bulletins, obtained over the secret radio, were of immense value. Also the fact that we were operating without the Japanese knowing, served to stimulate all in our camp and helped us in our sufferings.

Most of the guards were Formosians, with Japanese N.C.O.'s and Officers, and the Japanese were experts in stirring up these guards to make us toe the line. One day, every month, these guards were lined up near their quarters in two lines facing each other and were ordered to slap each other with their belts. Each line took it in turns to slap the other and as can well be imagined, the guards were in a very ugly mood following these episodes. Punishment meted out to the prisoners was always widespread and mostly without foundation. A guard would punch, kick or hit with his rifle, any prisoner he considered offended him. A favourite punishment was to make the offender stand in the blazing sun with his arms above his head holding a log of wood. If the prisoner or his arms sagged, he was punched or kicked. This punishment usually lasted until the prisoner completely collapsed. Much worst punishment was meted out to any prisoner who had committed a mere serious crime such as trying to barter for food with a native when outside the camp on working parties. The prisoners who committed the more serious crimes were despatched to the doghouse cells in the Japanese guard house where the conditions were terrible. These cells were very tiny and had no light and had hardly any ventilation. A prisoner could stay in a cell for days without any food, except perhaps for a spoonful of salted rice and a mug of water. No toilet facilities were provided, which made the living conditions of the cells, even worse. If the guards were in a sporting mood they would drag out the prisoners at anytime and punch and kick them practically insensible.

All through our prisoner-of-war life, we had to bow to any

Japanese or guard who passed by and woe betide any prisoner who failed to comply. It was decided very early on that it was easier to swallow one's pride and bow to the enemy, than to risk injury, which although could be counted small at the time, could have been the beginning of the end in view of our physical condition. During our captivity it was possible to obtain native tobacco, if any of the Japanese was lenient and allowed the purchase from the natives. Most of the natives would accept the Japanese currency and there was always plenty of this around in view of the buying and selling activities, which were always taking place. Our group of four were again very fortunate in having Scotty working on the Japanese transport, as he was always able to obtain tobacco when outside the camp. He was also able to get some thin typing paper from the Japanese office, which was used to roll the tobacco in. We used to ration ourselves to a few smokes a day and also supply some of our less fortunate comrades. The Japanese had given orders, which prevailed throughout, that no prisoner should smoke inside a hut unless he had a tin of water beside him and if outside, there must be a hole in the dirt or a tin of water. As can be seen, therefore, it was not possible to walk around the camp smoking unless a tin of water was carried. It was a common occurrence for a prisoner to be caught disobeying this order, which usually resulted in a 'belting.' As time went on it appeared to my friends that a lucky star always seemed to shine over me as I had never been punched or punished by a guard, although I broke their laws as much as any of them. One night, as three of my friends and myself were sauntering about the camp, I was smoking a cigarette and lo and behold, were walking straight into a Japanese guard. Of course, the cigarette was snuffed and dumped immediately, but he had spotted it. We stopped and bowed and he pointed to me and said 'Smoko,' I nodded in the affirmative, and awaited the repercussion. To all our astonishment, he merely tweaked my nose and said, 'No goodo' and passed on by. My friends, from experience on their more numerous working parties than me, said that he was usually a really bad guard, who delighted in corporal punishment

and that I was most certainly born under a very lucky star. Although I was not deeply religious, I always read a few verses from the Bible, which my wife had given me, every Sunday, and I am sure that this had a lot to do with my outlook and treatment during these years. The Japanese, for quite a considerable period during our first months of prisoner-of-war life allowed The Bishop of Sarawak [Francis Hollis], who was a civilian internee, to come into our camp on Sundays to give a Service. He was later accused of blackmarketing and was debarred from giving us this Service. For the first couple of years, the Japanese allowed us to hold camp concerts and some very good shows were put on.

A stage was built on the largest, empty space in the camp, and it was surprising what talent was available. We had a first class female impersonator, who was always called 'Portia', and as Japanese Officers always attended these concerts, they were very dubious when 'she' first appeared, whether or not it was a man or a woman. A few concerts were also given in the main square outside the camp when everyone who wanted to attend from the other camps, could do so. Of course, the attendance was always large as the civilian internees then had a chance to see their wives or husbands from at least a shorter distance. The Japanese took great care not to let them mingle or talk together, but it must have cheered the internees immensely. All the acts given at these concerts were from our camp, and it was cheering to see that all were greatly enjoyed by the other camp prisoners and internees. Unfortunately, as time went on, through deaths and sickness, we were unable to continue with these shows. Throughout the whole of our prisoner-of-war life, it was always difficult to keep one's personal appearance presentable. Our meagre supply of clothes soon became tattered and torn, as owing to our living and working conditions, the clothes had to be washed everyday. We did always have some soap and water, but through constant scrubbing, the materials soon wore out. No replacements were given us by the Japanese, and all that we could do was to pass on any clothes left by a deceased prisoner, to one who had worn his out and was reduced to wearing a

loin cloth only. Razor blades only lasted a few months and cut throat razors were made by sharpening army knives as fine as possible. It was surprising what a quite good shave could be had from one such treated knife. To clean one's teeth, you had to collect some soot or fine fire-ash to mix with soap and this kept teeth in quite a fair condition. A lot depended on how long your tooth brush lasted and by the end of the war, our tooth brushes only had a very few bristles left. In our unit was a chappie who, although he was not a barber, had some hair clippers and scissors and he became quite a proficient barber. After a while quite a few of the prisoners did not have ordinary haircuts, but for hygiene purposes, had all their hair shaved off very close. This proved very satisfactory if the prisoner in question owned a hat which he could wear when out in the blazing sun. Unfortunately, a large proportion of us had no head-gear at all and it was nearly unbearable at times when working in the sun. Most prisoners tried to keep the back of their necks covered by tying an old piece of cloth or toweling around their necks.

During the whole of our captivity, we were allowed to send five postcards home, on some we could write about twelve words, on others the words were already printed by the Japanese, such as 'I am well and happy'; 'Well treated.' We addressed and signed these cards hoping that they would arrive at their destination and at least tell our loved ones that we were still alive.

Unfortunately, so many of us were dead and buried before the postcards even left the Japanese, but after many months a lot were received in the home country. Towards the end of 1943 and early 1944, some mail from home was received by the Japanese and distributed to the lucky ones. I was fortunate and received half-a-dozen precious letters from my dear wife. In one of them was pinned a very small photograph of our baby and so for the first time, after nearly two years, I knew that we had a baby girl. These small happenings were the only rays of light, apart from our news bulletins, in our dark world and gave us more determination than ever to beat the Japanese and come out alive. . . .

Throughout our captivity, we were subjected to sea[r]ches of all

types, very often any working party returning to camp, was stopped at the Japanese guard house and thoroughly searched. It always amazed me that even after these searches, goods were still smuggled into the camp. One of the favourite ways of smuggling dried fish was to nail it to the bottom of the wooden bins in which the boiled rice had been taken out from the camp, for the mid-day meal. It was always surprising what a hat still being worn by the bearer, could contain and the Japanese were prone to forgetting to search the headgear. These type of searches were of nuisance value only as practically all the goods being smuggled in, were food stuffs. Usually for this offence, one got a belting and the goods confiscated. Our chief source of anxiety was, of course, the searches made in the camp, as this involved the security of the Radio. Luckily for us, most of the searches had prior warning because the Japanese always thought that the officer's camp would be most likely to be the camp where any nefarious business was being conducted. Through the grapevine system operating from camp to camp, we were always informed within minutes and this usually gave us time to check security, or if the radio was being repaired, to get it underground.

There were the odd occasions when we had no warning as the Japanese came to our camp first and, of course, this contingency was always in our minds when either operating or repairing the radio. It was during one of these searches that I consider we came very close to being caught. As I have written previously, the radio was kept during the daytime in our small bakehouse, and one day we had a lightning search. We found out afterwards that it was because two civilians, who had been operating a commercial set, had been caught at a camp in North Borneo. These civilians were beheaded for this heinous crime. However, on this day the radio had been put to bed after the previous night's operating, in its hiding place underground, under the bakehouse fire.

Fortunately, a fairly large wood fire was burning, as bins of water were being heated to boiling point for use by our medical staff in the sick-bays. The Japanese had made us all line up along a stretch of the path leading from the entrance to the camp past the

bakehouse. After we had been search[ed], we were sitting down watching the guards search our huts and two guards entered the bakehouse. As the corrugated metal sides of this dut [*sic*; hut] did not reach to the ground, we could, of course, see the bottom half of the guards all the time. One of them had a long bar of iron in his hand and he commenced prodding the floor very violently. This operation caused our hearts to stand still, as we knew if he struck violently under the fire, our hiding place would be discovered. It seemed ages before they came out of the bakehouse and they had found nothing, from marks caused by the iron bar, which we examined afterwards, the Japanese were within two feet of finding the radio. In view of this close shave, operations were suspended for a few days, as we had learnt from past experience, that it was much better for our nerves to have a spell off duty when the heat was on, and when we had received a scare.

Another very heart-stopping episode was caused by one of our earlier security men walking from the bakehouse to the stores, carrying the radio in his pack with a pipe (unlit) in his mouth. As our working parties came back to camp in the evening, we considered this the best time for transporting the radio from its daytime hiding place in the bakehouse, to the operating point and false bot-tomed table in the stores. When working parties entered the camp, there was always a lot of activity with either prisoners carrying bins of food, empty bins, packs, etc. As can be visualised, this was the ideal time for the operation and our security man always collected the radio and carried it across the camp using either bins or pack. On this particular occasion, he had collected the radio from its bakehouse hiding place and was transporting it to the stores in a pack. This security man was a pipe smoker and although he did not have his pipe lit, he had it in between his teeth, sucking away at it. At about half way to the stores, he met a guard who had apparently come into the camp with the working party. Our man stopped and bowed to the guard but kept his pipe in his mouth, of course the guard presumed that he was smoking and proceeded to rant and rave and struck him across the face. After a while he de-

sisted and travelled on his way but in this instance we were extremely lucky, as very often if a guard caught a prisoner doing something against their orders[,] they searched whatever was being carried. This same security man of ours caused us to be violently scared on one other occasion and from that time, he was dismissed from our staff. As I have said before, the radio was always in need of constant repair and overhaul and this work had to be done during the daytime. On this particular occasion, Leonard Beckett was carrying out repairs in our small room at the end of our unit's hut on our home-made table. Security guards had been posted at vantage points covering the two main entrances to the camp and I was watching the camp as far as I could see through our open window. All of a sudden, around the corner of our hut at our end, came a Japanese with a native, carrying a disinfectant spray on his back. I whispered 'Nip' to Leonard, but did not move. Beckett whipped the receiver part of the radio, on which he had been working, under Scotty's blankets, which were piled on the floor near the table. The guard and native passed by but the native looked in our open door at the other side with a great big grin on his face, what he was laughing at we never knew, but it scared us to death that he might have seen something and would say something to the guard. However, he must have just felt happy as nothing further was heard of the episode. About two or three minutes afterwards, our security man came up to our room and told us that there was a 'Nip' in the camp. He was told in no uncertain terms that we already knew and in view of this and the previous episode [*sic*; episode], we had no alternative but to disperse [*sic*; dispense] with his services. It was at that time that we enrolled J.P. Fleming as Head of our security and from then onwards our security arrangements never deteriorated, but improved all the time.

At this point I must tell you how we came to lose our primus stove and the fault was all mine. As previously written, it was essential to keep our room and belongings as clean as possible and I was always putting our stuff outside whilst I washed the floors and wood sides of our room. This operation entailed throwing tins of

water against the walls and then b[y] using a home made squeezy, push the water out through the door to drain away in the dirt. On this particular occasion, I was unlucky, as when I was in the midst of this operation, along came a Japanese guard, who seeing our belongings outside, decided to have a search of his own. The primus stove was covered by blankets but of course he found it and took a liking to it. He did not question as to why we had this stove but just took it away with him. My name was mud for sometime but the difficulty of heating the soldering iron when it was needed was overcome by using a fire of our own near our hut. Owing to the numerous tropical ulcers and the only treatment we had was boiling water, we were allowed to have small fires in tins or holes in the ground away from the hut on which to heat water. It was, therefore, easy for us to have some of our lads, with these ulcers, heat water on such a fire nearby.

There were many occasions throughout our operating life that we were scared out of our wits by various happenings and many times we had to cease functioning for up to a week at a time. When it was heard that some prisoners or internees at another camp in Borneo had been beheaded for operating a commercial radio, the searches on our camps were intense and our Campmaster had a verbal message from our officer's camp to destroy the radio as it had become too dangerous to operate. Our Campmaster called Leonard Beckett and myself to his room and told us that he would not order us to destroy the radio, but that we could make up our own minds what to do. As at that time we had been operating for such a long time and also the news of Allied advances and victories were so good and knowing how much depended on us getting the news for our comrades, it was decided there and that that 'we might as well be hung for a sheep as a lamb.'

DOCUMENT 56

Forced Labor at Bukit Stabar 7th Mile Landing Ground

Papers of L. E. Morris. 91/18/1. IWM.

Early in the morning of June 4th 1943 our party of selected workers set out to board the train to Batu Tujoh. On arrival at the halt, the old but willing locomotive 'Bintang' was already waiting under full steam. The men climbed aboard open trucks, sitting, squatting or standing dangerously crowded, but generally contented at the prospect of leaving Lintang.

Bintang spewing smoke and sparks high in the air reluctantly gathered speed along a single track route. Half an hour of laboured huffing and puffing brought the train to the foot of a low hill, and although the line led southward as far as the eye could measure, we had indeed arrived at our destination.

The camp was situated on the slopes of this high ground, and was rather less than a quarter of the area we had known at Batu Lintang.

It was apparent we were to share the site with Dutch P.O.W.'s; yet even there the policy of segregation ruled. British P.O.W.'s were allotted the higher ground overlooking the airfield; the Dutch P.O.W.'s occupied the lower slopes, the two communities being separated by a barbed wire fence.

Regulations concerning camp life were no less repressive than those enforced in other compounds.

There was to be no official approval of talk across the wire, and the fence was skilfully sited to bisect a tract of open ground under the constant scrutiny of the guards of the hill.

The remainder of the first day was spent 'settling in,' which meant earth augurs were at work drilling holes for the bengi pits [holes/place for defecation], and similar holes for cookhouse waste.

I was beginning to feel the need for a wash when someone shouted, "Outside on parade all who need a bath."

To a man, the entire force lined up and the ritual of counting in Japanese began. The guard arrived in force; six sentries and a resident guard commander, who was well known as "The Bear." As a soldier, this barrel-chested man was as keen and as inscrutable as most others I had met.

He had been moved to the airfield specially from Batu Lintang;

his word was law. The Bear was judge, jury, inquisitor and inescapable to all the P.O.W.'s and the guards as well.

The entire British contingent were housed in one wooden hut 96 feet long and 16 feet wide, sited dangerously near the rim of a deep cutting.

In the event of Allied air raids, both the P.O.W.'s and the Japanese guardhouse were at risk; a fact which had not escaped the notice of the Bear. He inspected the quarters, and the men, grumbling constantly under his breath; shaking his head in distaste of the adjacent airstrip.

Camp regulations having been read and reiterated, the Bear paraded his guard so we might know each sentry individually. They were an unsavoury lot, and I was especially dismayed to see "Pock Mark," surly as ever, in the front rank.

He knew me well, but for some reason known only to himself he gave me a wide berth, maybe hoping I would not be sick over him again.¹⁰

The "Makan Wallah" (food racketeer) was there too, with his partner in extortion "Moonface."

The "Pig" had been left at Batu Lintang. I reasoned that without the "Pig" life must surely be more tolerable than formerly. In this matter as with the assessments of most optimists, I was indulging in self-delusion.

There were to be other pigs waiting down there on the airfield, but then I was content to be marching down the hill, on the very first 'bath' parade. My excitement at the prospect of a refreshing plunge was shared with most men of the party.

As we clambered down the railway embankment several green snakes slipped away noiselessly out of our path. We turned right along the railway track. Sixty yards further on we descried a green pit some twenty yards square; so this was the much vaunted wash-pit!

On the left two long planks formed a catwalk. It swayed and occasionally sank under the combined weight of the men, as from this precarious ledge, cans tied with rattan were lowered into the

murky water. A film of green slime and algae was scooped away to give entrance to the cans. As the water settled again, mosquito larvae swimming with spasmodic figure of eight motions quietly halted, hanging by their tails until disturbed a second time. Thereafter all men evolved a technique of straining the water through pieces of cloth, the work being done efficiently if the men worked in pairs; one holding the cloth and another pouring the water. There was no swimming allowed as this would have stirred up the black ooze from the bottom.

It was most noticeable; the Japanese never used that particular pool.

On the occasions when we bathed nude, the Japanese guards exhibited great interest in our genital organs. Comparisons appealed to their primitive sense of humour, and gave them great pleasure.

In this respect the focal point of their attentions settled on that utterly embarrassed soldier Ted Yates (not his real name!).

The guards pointed with glee shouting in approval "Besar; besar bunyak (Big, very big)."

Their imagination ran riot as they asked "You have wife? How many children? Four, five, six or seven?"—As if size had anything to do with efficiency. Poor Ted blushed to the roots of what little hair he possessed. "My God," he said in alarm "I've never had such appreciation in all my life."

Water from this stagnant pool had to be carried back to the camp for all laundry work, but even after boiling it was totally unfit for drinking.

Each day a water wagon visited the camp. All water for culinary purposes was 'humped' up the hill and as the Japanese relied on the water-cart too, we had to supply their needs in addition to our own.

As time passed we looked forward to heavy rain storms, to augment and freshen our supplies.

The guards, largely isolated from their fellows, lived lives of utter boredom, relieved only by occasional games of mahjong¹¹ when not on duty.

I watched the guards sweating during the day, and heard them

rampaging around the P.O.W. enclosure at night, and tried to divine their secret thoughts.

"What sort of a system was it that inspired a man to look forward to death rather than life?"

At these times I knew that if I lived to be a hundred I would never understand these worshippers of such a negative future.

Nipponese soldiers believed that to be taken prisoner was to be damned for eternity. The guards, to a man, despised all P.O.W.'s.

To die in service to the Emperor was all glorious; the zenith of their lives' ambitions; yet were there times when the enemy exhibited rather less commitment and idealism.

They smoked, and sometimes drank on duty, and occasionally left their posts to become a little richer by negotiating black market deals.

Others indulged in sordid affairs with local women. In these exploits the Japanese charmed until they had fulfilled their purpose, then returned to their original roles as conquerors, aggressors and gaolers.

At Batu Tujoh there was little opportunity for racketeering. The guards were poor men, and the P.O.W.'s were even poorer.

The only real excitement came with the arrival of the ration truck, an event which occurred once a week. Only our camp leader and a fatigue party were allowed in conversation with the P.O.W.'s of the ration party, who had driven from the main camp at Batu Lintang.

In the late afternoon of June 5th I received the appalling news of the death of Lieutenant Colonel Russell, East Surrey Regiment, and over-all British Camp Commandant.

Although poles apart in rank, the Colonel and I had talked long on topics of mutual interest particularly concerning fishing and shooting. He was well read. Our friendship had blossomed on a foundation of literature appreciation, with the sort of confidence normally attributed to brothers.

Now like a passing cloud he was gone.

I cursed anew, the war and the damnable captivity which de-

stroyed such men of culture and heroism. I remembered how he had shielded the two soldier P.O.W.'s on the gate, and taken upon his own shoulders the blows of the sword-sticks, and borne the insults and invective for their sakes.¹²

The sadness engendered by the passing of Lieutenant Colonel Russell wrapped me in a mantle of sadness for many months.

Colonel Suga attended the funeral and made one of his rare submissions affirming, "Colonel Russell was a good officer and a British gentleman."

I wondered, "Who the hell is going to be great enough to replace this man, so gifted and charming?"

* * *

Although the area wired off for our use was far smaller than the compound at Batu Lintang in terms of outlook and panorama it held a wide range of interests. To the south rose high purple mountains almost capped in cloud; and below interminable tracts of mature forest swept down to within two hundred yards of the airfield.

The landing field was "T" in plan with the main runway reaching out from north to south. The stem of the "T" was a shorter run flanking the British P.O.W. Camp.

At the onset of war, neither of these runways was of great length. Our work in the following two years was concerned with the improvement of facilities at Batu Tujoh. It was significant that with the exception of four military policemen, all were tradesmen and members of elite Corps of the British Army.

Few skills were required for the work. Most of the time was spent digging or carrying gravel from one place to another. There were virtually three basic tools used viz:—the chunkel or native hoe, a shallow basket, and on rare occasions a crow-bar for levering large pieces of granite. The use of tip-trucks was confined exclusively to the quarry face.

In June 1943 work began on a long ditch to take away flood water in the period of the monsoon. The direction of this work was undertaken by a civilian engineer, who paced out each allotted

task. This drain was three feet deep at the shallow end and the sides sloped to forty-five degrees. During the first day forty-five men dug and graded sixty yards of ditch.

The following day the allocation of work was increased to seventy yards, but the P.O.W.'s were hard pressed to fulfil their appointed tasks. In spite of beating and much shouting the work dragged on till early evening.

Next day the workforce was divided into three gangs, the idea being to make each group work harder and compete for rewards of bananas and durian fruit.¹¹

As not all men worked at the same rate so the same group producing the least length of ditch was beaten each day and made to work through the yasume or rest periods.

After several days we conspired with neighbouring groups to slow the pace down so that nobody won the race for fruit. In consequence the work turn-out faltered. The Japs were furious at our connivance; the rewards withdrawn, the workforce reunited as a single force, and the guards doubled.

Several days of heavy rain filled the ditch to capacity and erosion took its toll in sand, mud and debris. This particular project never was satisfactorily completed; we were accounted as useless and the native chunkel gangs were substituted for the white coolies who were supposed to feel guilty and disgraced.

In the course of time rivulets of water gauged [*sic*; gouged] out ridges on the main landing strip, so the Japanese airport staff sent down two large lorries and restoration work commenced. Day after day two squads of men toiled [*sic*; toiled], spreading or digging gravel. The technique involved the undermining of a high gravel bank, and using levers to send the gravel crashing down.

The P.O.W.'s filled a ten-ton truck every twenty minutes, meanwhile down on the runway the second truck cruised slowly down the centre of the runway as men scattered the gravel with shovels, and raked it flat with boards.

A large force of Chinese[,] Dyaks and Malays were employed with bumpers to firm the gravel. They worked in long lines across

the airstrip, chanting in unison, swaying rhythmically three paces to the right, advanced a foot at a time, then swayed three paces to the left; thus they made relentless progress hour after hour.

The lorries were timed and the progress of the P.O.W.'s assessed. Woe betide any squad whose lorry was not full of gravel before the arrival of the second truck.

Several accidents happened as crow-bars were dropped, or the cliffside crumbled prematurely bringing tons of gravel down amidst the workers below. The greater the haste, the more chaos developed.

Soft topsoil was supposed to be removed separately and set aside, but it was not long before we contrived to get it all mixed-up with the clean gravel. Our civilian overseer ran about like a mad bull; exhorting us to greater efforts. When words failed he used his feet to good effect. His frustration and anxiety knew no bounds.

A Japanese 'two star' officer arrived and slapped the foreman. The desired quota of work had not been realised, so we in turn were slapped repeatedly. Within a period of a month most of the gravel in the cliff had been worked out so the workforce was redirected to the only quarry near the airfield.

Although the authorities were keen to complete the extensions to the runways quickly; no more petrol was to be lavished on the gravel trucks. This was in part a punishment for having introduced water and grit into the petrol tanks of an airport vehicle. In future all gravel was dug and carried in baskets.

Slavery of this sort extended from seven in the morning until late afternoon. At the end of each day columns of men marched to their waiting transports exhausted and spent. The airport party marched back to their accommodation overlooking the site of the day's toil. Certain categories of work were designed to be punitive in the extreme; as on the occasion a squad of men were required to carry sacks of rice on their backs, fifty yards or more. Each sack weighed in excess of 200 lbs. and most of the P.O.W.'s fell down under their impossible loads.

Very strong Japanese soldiers were always on hand to demon-

strate how the tasks should be done, totally disregarding the frailty of half-starved men.

On rare days the Japanese detailed men to work within their own quarters. A favourite chore was wood-chopping for the Japanese cook. Even the most menial of Japanese never lost an opportunity to show their superiority over the P.O.W.'s.

One afternoon I was working quite well, or so I thought, cleaving logs with a parang [chopper; straight sword] when the Japanese cook decided to demonstrate to me his superior skill. Taking the parang from my hand he soon sent sticks flying rapidly in all directions.

My clever Japanese show-off glanced up to see what sort of impact his performance was having on me. The next stroke was delivered with rare gusto and severed an inch and a half of the pointing finger of his left hand. He let out a yell of pain and humiliation. I could scarcely contain my delight at this turn of events. As he threw the parang at my head I ducked instinctively and beat a hasty retreat.

There was always safety in remaining obscure on the work parties. Several so called 'cushy' jobs resulted in trouble, as was the case of Freddie North and Slim Landers.

These men worked for a day in the Japanese cookhouse, and as a reward were given bunches of onions. On return to the British enclosure at Batu Tujoh, the sentry on the gate presuming that North and Landers had stolen the onions, immediately summoned the Bear. As guard commander he was the arbitrator on such occasions.

The two unfortunates received a heavy session of face slapping. Next day enquiries by the Bear established the fact that North and Landers had indeed told the truth. As 'judge' in the case, the guard commander gave each man three cigarettes as compensation for wrongful punishment; which was rough justice for Freddie North who was a non-smoker.

* * *

Our own cookhouse was a shaky lean-to hut, often flooded, especially during the monsoon season.

In this domain Corporal Davy, and helpers 'Butch' Coleman,

North and Forbes wrought near miracles in bringing a variety of presentations to the menu. Rice could be fried, steamed, rolled and patted into fancy shapes.

Normal issues of food included dried shark meat stinking with preservative ammonia, soya beans for sauce making, and a chunk of belly pork, which usually was so small the only way to apportion it was to put the meat in a communal stew.

Rarer luxuries included turtle eggs, resembling squashed table tennis balls, and a fish paste known as katchang [belachan?] ikan. The latter was a valuable commodity for making insipid rice dishes more palatable.

The quantity of the rice varied from week to week. One consignment was virtually alive with brown weevils. It was almost impossible to extricate these bitter-tasting insects from the grain. Davy devised a method all his own. A short plank was thrust into the rice and the container heated gently forcing the weevils to move upwards and 'walk the plank,' from whence they were collected by the thousand and burnt on the stove.

Evening meals were served at about seven o'clock[,] immediately after the ablutions parade. Rations of cooked rice gave the impression of bulky and satisfying meals. Rice was augmented by the inclusion of beans or a stew of pork bits. The men conformed to a code of absolute honesty with regard to food rations. Special cans and scoops were devised to apportion exactly the same volume of rice or stew to each man and all extras were given in strict conformity to a rota system.

A large proportion of the diet was water which dispersed rapidly through the digestive system.

Food was always eaten slowly; to make the hope of living endure to the bitter end. Rarely was rice hoarded for it soon fermented and became a loss.

Men sought to alleviate hunger by searching for new materials and devising new projects to satisfy their needs. Thus we became acquainted with snails and frogs. Every evening I laid down banana leaves over moist ground and collected the snail harvest

shortly after dawn, discarding grey molluscs and keeping the black ones. Grey snails were poisonous and were eschewed as a food. Small steep pits trapped frogs, and if we were lucky an unwary snake became fodder for the stew-pot.

Hibiscus leaves from a garden hedge could be made into a thin green soup, but this was not very popular because it promoted "squitters" [.] that unpleasant state of diarrhoea which sapped one's strength and was often the prelude of the dreaded dysentery.

'Monkey' or ground nuts were grown in small patches around the camp. As the flowers of these plants were buried the nuts developed underground. Often the guards interfered with these crops, but nobody dared to arraign the Japanese for these petty thefts.

All forms of vegetation grew at an alarming rate. Banana tree trunks felled in the evening produced a pulpy growth of at least four inches in a night, which when cooked was tender but almost tasteless. Pineapple tops placed flat on the ground produced plants and fruit if tended properly.

Meat was at a premium. Animals such as monkeys avoided the camp; with good reason.

In the Dutch soldiers' compound rats formed the basis of a stock soup, and even the occasional dog was appreciated with relish.

The military contingent was not the only group to feel the squeeze of the Japanese administration. Technically the civilians were free, but in effect suffered great hardships under the Japanese heel. Chinese families had to contribute to the enemy war effort, and were required to work long hours in the fields, on the airfield and in labour gangs on the waterfront at Kuching. Rural families at all times feared for the safety of their livestock, and the meagre possessions still left to them.

Most meat, be it pig or poultry was the property of the regime. The loss of a pig was deemed a major tragedy and had to be explained to the Japanese overlords. Ducks and chickens were rarely used for meat by the kampong dwellers, for such stock was not easily replaced, apart from which, no one readily destroyed the means to acquire eggs. Although the Japanese controlled most

things in Borneo there were other assets over which the enemy exerted no influence.

The incidence of sunset brought great beauty to the evening skies, and a tranquillity of spirit to those disposed to behold it. The colours shifted and danced with easy grace bathing the mellow clouds with the full range of the spectrum.

Out of the purple and gold haze, there sometimes emerged dark formations of flying foxes; those giant fruit-eating bats, five or six hundred at a time descending on leaden wings and settling ravenously on the durian trees. They have been known to denude large areas of fruit and foliage in a single night. Their presence gave the lie to the Japanese assertion that there was a severe shortage of fruit in Sarawak. Flying foxes were believed to be good to eat, but such 'food' flew at about two hundred feet, and rarely passed directly over the camp.

As night came to Batu Tujoh the P.O.W.'s did all in their power to extend the hours of leisure.

There was no electricity supply in the hut. Lamps with floating wicks provided but dim illumination.

The usual fire drill was observed, the lamps being sited above water pots. No smoking was officially allowed in the hut, and those caught indulging in that dubious pleasure were as usual beaten. The fuel for the lamps was rancid cocoa-nut oil when available; but as most oil was used to sustain life, there was very little to squander on lighting.

Each evening I made short entries to my diary, fully aware of the risks I took in pursuing this project. Once checked the precious pages were buried in the monkey-nut garden.

It transpired that some ten thousand words of my 'book' were hidden in the folds of the attap (palm leaf) covering of the hut roof. It had been my intention to revise some of these entries at a later date, before burying these too in the garden.

Without warning the Japanese Kempri Tai, the dreaded secret police, descended on the British and the Dutch camps in force and simultaneously during the early morning of July 7th 1943.

Their search was methodical and thorough. At 3 a.m. all men were paraded in the nude in front of the hut, with the Bear and his henchmen in attendance with rifles and fixed bayonets.

The Kempri ransacked all beds and personal belongings. One enterprising fellow searched the roof; my blood turned to ice. My worst fears became reality, as with a yell of triumph and exultation he brandished the incriminating papers high above his head.

Within a short space of time I was called upon to admit that I was the writer of the diary.

A honcho scribbled down my name and other particulars in his notebook. No voice was raised in abuse, and no hand smote me to the ground. I just stood there in front of the assembled company and wished that I could fly far away.

I expected arrest and to be taken away by the Kempri at once, or at the very least to be beaten and tied to a tree for a day or two, but the interrogating officer did nothing at all.

The P.O.W.'s returned to the wreckage of their beds, to find many letters and photographs of wives and families missing.

Nobody slept again during the night. With the dawn came another working party.

The Kempri Tai had melted into the dawn mists; it was difficult not to believe it was really just a bad dream.

A fortnight later, most of the letters and nearly all the photographs were returned to their rightful owner, but my diary had been retained in its entirety for further study.

Doubts, fears and black forebodings were my constant companions for several weeks after the raid, but as days passed into weeks, and nothing happened, I began to believe that the diary had been destroyed, and that no further action would be forthcoming.

Work on the airfield had reached a fast and furious momentum; the matter of the diary was forgotten in the daily routine of camp life, and for a while I gave up writing altogether.

* * *

Gradually the longer runway had been extended to well over a hundred chains; Batu Tujoh was fast becoming an operational

fighter base. I was dismayed at the speed of the Japanese achievement—at our expense in toil and morale.

In moods of deep depression I thought, "Maybe we will be slaves for the rest of our miserable lives." Then again I reasoned, "With all this frantic haste the Japanese must be under some severe stress.]"

All the time I had a secret fear we should all be killed long before help arrived, and we would know nothing of the final victory we all craved for so much.

Formations of Zero combat planes were already parked in front of the air-control building, and laughing pilots relaxed in chairs drinking in the sunshine, and the spectacle of British 'white coolies' at work with baskets and chunkels.

I was surprised to see a German Junkers 88 taxi in for refuelling and speculation was rife that perhaps German air crews were operating in the Far East; though the aircraft bore Japanese markings.

No heavy bombers such as the Kates and Betsys visited Batu Tujoh. The main runway was still a lottery of soft spots, especially at the southern extremity.

Advance warning of approaching aircraft brought temporary cessation of work. The welcome shout of "Yasume" from the guards meant we could lay down our chunkels and watch the aircraft coming in to land; and later its take off after refuelling.

One such rainy day five fighters spiralled round the airfield. Pits and ridges in the primary strip were full of water; a daunting prospect for any pilot in a light sensitive aircraft. The first Zero skated in and after a bump or two landed safely. The second bounced twice and buried its nose in a gravel bank completely disorientating the propeller blades.

A third fighter landed safely and was followed by a fourth yawing madly first one way and then the other until a wing dug into the ground. The port wing fell away, and the pilot slewed his machine round to a halt, then climbed out of the cockpit staggering as in a daze, to crouch on all fours by the side of the runway.

Number five roared in with landing wheels cascading water

high in the air. The pilot drifted alarmingly to port, over compensated for his initial error, and the machine gyrated out of control smashing tail first against the infamous gravel cliff.

Our guard explained that the pilots would be punished for wrecking their machines. I thought the men had been very lucky to survive at all. The three offending pilots lined up in front of their commander. There followed a great deal of shouting, bowing and gesticulating. Meanwhile the senior officer had unbuckled his sword and scabbard, and commenced the belaying of the three luckless men about the face and shoulders.

When the beatings were accomplished our sentry said, "Now the men will thank the officer for the punishment they have so richly deserved." As predicted the pilots bowed, recited their thanks in unison, then staggered on their way, bruised and bleeding, to the airport control.



Work at Batu Tujoh was often of a nature contrary to the normal ethics and usages of prisoners in wartime.

Men were bribed, beaten and coerced to perform tasks contrary to their own interests; thus it was that Hallett, Forbes and Joule together with a group of the fittest men found themselves employed in the refuelling of military aircraft. Of all the P.O.W.'s, few were more skilled in the art of messing up their work than Ted Hallett and Leslie Joule.

One afternoon those two men were pouring petrol into a twin engined aircraft, temporarily out of sight of the air crew, who lay stretched out, relaxing under the shadow of a wing. Hallett had partly removed the filter, and all the men quietly urinated into the tanks and emptied their water bottles for good measure, though this meant going without a drink for several hours in the burning sun.

Half an hour later the plane taxied onto the runway prior to take-off.

The pilot revved up first one engine, then the other checking 'maximum' revolutions. There was much spitting and misfiring as

Hallett's alien mixture came into the reckoning. After several abysmal attempts the aircraft returned for engine checks.

Never again were P.O.W.'s used in the refuelling work. We feared reprisals, but apart from a token beating, all men returned safely to the comparative seclusion of the camp on the hill.

The Japanese were beginning to suspect that the 'special' force of P.O.W.'s at Batu Tujoh was far from reliable. Kempai Tai agents appeared at the airfield and watched the men at work, but detecting no apparent faults in our behaviour, eventually gave up their vigil and returned to Kuching, but as a consequence of their visit the discipline became even more harsh and repressive.

Certainly there had been airport personnel who realised there was no lasting merit in bashing the P.O.W.'s all the time.

On days when the work advanced at a fair speed bananas and tobacco were offered as rewards. These 'good' guards were few and their stay as administrators was of short duration.

Work had started on excavations for the protection of fighter planes from blast. When completed these earthworks were camouflaged with huge nets.

Aircraft were dispersed on either side of a road leading in the general direction of Pontianak south-west of Sarawak.

After a week of comparative immunity from extreme harshness, several 'good' guards were surprised by senior officers and caught in the act of distributing cigarettes to the P.O.W.'s. The P.O.W.'s and the guards were beaten and the tempo of work stepped up to a ridiculous speed.

'Yasume' or rest periods thereafter were of short duration, and the P.O.W.'s posted look-outs to give warning of the approach of the airport hierarchy.

About ten days later all the 'good' guards disappeared from the works sites and never returned; their work being taken over by a ginger group of sentries, who apparently had never heard of the word 'yasume.'

As men became too sick for work they were returned to Batu Lintang and replaced by men in better physical shape and stamina.

The Japanese were determined to maintain a force of fifty P.O.W.'s at the airfield. Other men sometimes envied our role, and imagined the hillside camp to be some sort of health resort compared with the crowded main camp. In some ways we were less exposed to disease, for, being a smaller group, signs of sickness could often be diagnosed early and checked.

The chief disadvantages were twofold. Firstly, we were easily available—groups of men could be called out for work in the evenings long after the normal toils of the day were thought to have ended.

Secondly, our position on the hill was extremely vulnerable to air attack. It was only after repeated requests by the camp leader that permission was granted to dig slit trenches [covered ditches with narrow openings for view].

Month after month the Japanese refused to admit that such contingency plans were necessary. It was now obvious there had been a change in the Japanese fortunes of war. Colonel Suga on one of his rare visits to Batu Tujoh admitted that the reason for the poor rice rations was the stranglehold the American submarines were imposing on the food ships supplying Sarawak.

Sweet potatoes and the roots of tapioca plants were offered as alternative foods. We were even exhorted to grow the stuff.

Tapioca was known locally as ubi-kayu and largely resembled the artichoke. The outer skins of the tubers were believed to contain some prussic acid, and even after peeling, the residue was far from ideal as a food for humans.

Work in the British camp cookhouse was in several ways just as arduous as that experienced elsewhere. All wood had to be cut and carried from a site half a mile down the railway track, sometimes necessitating three journeys a day. When blow flies appeared in their hundreds the lids for the bengi pits were made by the cooks.

Each morning the 'Bear' inspected the camp and being a realist soon sent for used sump oil to be poured into the holes to kill the heaving maggots at source.

The Bear was certainly a hard man, but in contrast to most of his underlings[,] he was fair.

North and Davy discovered the guard commander's great flaw, character-wise. He was amenable to flattery, to the point of being gullible.

North taught the Bear to play cards, and let him win game after game. These rummy sessions were supposed to be a secret, and were played when the main working party was out of camp, and the sentries were on patrol outside the wire.

Davy in particular was skilful in extracting tit-bits of information. It was the Bear who let slip the first really authentic news of Japanese ships (and of course twice as many of the Allies) sunk off the Solomon Islands (on November 16th 1943). He failed to mention the heavy Japanese losses at Tarawa and the Gilbert Isles.

It was due to the influence of the Bear that copies of Japanese magazines were supplied for use in the bengi pits. A good deal of this paper was cut into strips for cigarette making, but the heavy deposits of printers ink killed the taste of the tobacco. Paper used in the manufacture of British Army prayer books was far superior for smoking purposes, but alas, supplies were running low.

In mid-December 1943 advance notice of two days yasume was received with joy by all P.O.W.'s. All men pooled some of their pay for the purchase of a few chickens, an extra ration of sweet potatoes, and fruit.

The Dutch soldiers prepared for Christmas each evening singing "Silent Night." They were great harmonisers and enjoyed their choral work. I enjoyed the singing too, but long before the Great Day I had become satiated with "Silent Night," and prayed secretly that soon we would all be granted one.

The forty-eight hours of Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day did much to repair the ravages of fatigue. My best Christmas present was a letter written by my father on July 22nd 1942, and delivered at Kuching on December 19th 1943.

The letter was delivered by Bishop Francis Hollis, who also ad-

ministered the Sacrament of Holy Communion, but as there was no red wine we had to be content with a taste of sake [Japanese rice wine] and a morsel of burnt rice. It chanced that the bishop was suffering from diarrhoea, so it was that we met by chance in adjacent bengi pits. Quickly he made known to me that the radio in the main camp was being rebuilt. It was vital to obtain a quantity of wire, perspex glass and mica.

I drew Hallett to one side and gave him the message. That worthy gentleman affirmed, "I'll need a magic wand to find that lot!" Wand or not the Hallett and Joule team produced the goods. Contact was made with a working unit from Lintang, so the materials reached their required destination at the main camp.

As usual the Dutch community at Batu Tujoh was in a state of ferment and unrest.

Across the wire perimeter came the most outrageous rumours of Allied victories which did nothing at all for our morale. There is nothing worse than rumours proven false, for dashing one's hopes.

The Dutch Sergeant Major suffering from 'wire fever' often prowled outside the barbed wire compound. Though there seemed to be no other obvious reason for these nocturnal adventures.

Rumours that an Australian 5th Columnist was operating from a hide-out deep in the jungle were reluctantly discounted as fictitious, but in the light of history it became known that such an agent existed. All efforts by the Kempri Tai to unmask the spy failed. Even the Japanese rank and file were becoming 'spy mad,' and distrusted any irregular conduct which they could not understand.

By February 1944 the Japanese had lost Truk and Saipan with considerable losses in men and materials. The reaction of the guards to misfortune was as we feared, vicious and ruthless; for a while they seemed to indulge in more 'hate' days than ordinary days.

It was a period of peril, nervous tension and considerable hazard for the P.O.W.'s.

Men searched constantly for wood to improve their beds. The floors had become infested with bugs; nobody slept on the bare

boards if they could possibly make hammocks or double-decker bunks.

Hallett pulled down the shutters of the hut and enjoyed two nights of blissful sleep until the ever watchful "Moonface" discovered the vandalism. Not for the first time Hallett was slapped, and made to repair the damage, but he was quite unrepentant, and could be relied upon to try again the following day.

On May 20th 1944 I received a second letter from my father, written and posted on June 17th 1943. Its message was short and to the point:—

"Delighted you unwounded" stop "Keep your pecker up!"
Love from All Dad.

A week later several Dutch soldiers 'disappeared' from their camp, followed soon by the arrest of the Dutch Sergeant Major, a man named Hueing, and the interpreter Hart Singh.

Deep in my subconscious mind disturbing thoughts surfaced, and intuition warned me that something hideous was about to happen.

DOCUMENT 57

The Postcard Fiasco

Papers of G. W. Pringle. IWM.

Something happened today which caused everyone to think the war was hastening to an end. Colonel Suga himself was the bearer of a large parcel which he ceremoniously handed to our Colonel.

Handling the parcel as though it were a time bomb the Colonel gingerly laid down the parcel and, proving himself to be well worthy to hold high rank, ordered Bert to cut the binding strings.

To our great relief the parcel contained nothing lethal but something which we had no longer believed would ever come our way.

A batch of several hundred blank postcards tipped to the floor and this, said Colonel Suga, was a special Japanese 'Presento.' We are to be allowed to send a letter card home. Only twenty five words. Not one more or one less. Strictly twenty-five.

"That's as high as he can count" sotto voce from Arthur.

Twenty five words or not. A pleasant surprise. But how can we possibly condense everything that has happened to us during the past years into twenty five words?

Never before have I heard the camp so still and silent as when the men, pencils borrowed from the Jap office, studied and pondered over what must be the most important letter they have ever sent.

Never before has so much lying propaganda been forwarded from a Prison Camp as that sent from Kuching on the postcards the Japanese were allowing us to send home.

"I am well." A flagrant lie.

"I am not working." I cannot work much longer.

"I hope to be with you soon." Much too optimistic[.]

"We have plenty of food." Deep belly laughs from the hungry.

"Please give my love to _____." With great pleasure, but I hope they will receive this postcard.

This sample of the type of information we are being permitted to send home will have a few of the Intelligence men at home pondering over why so many have found nothing more to write about.

Our local spies tell us the Japanese are censoring every postcard and already two men have been punished for including more than the stipulated twenty five words. Their punishment is very severe. They will not be permitted to send their postcards home. Plus, of course, the usual beating up.

The postcard 'Presento' has been carried out with the usual Jap fuss and bother and the usual shouting and screaming. I think everyone is secretly pleased the cards have been filled in and handed back to the Japs.

Now all the fuss is over the only concern we have is:—Will they ever reach our homes? Knowing the Japs promises of old I have every doubt. Time alone will tell and certainly we shall not know

whether or not they reached our families until we return home. And then I know many of them will arrive as messages from the dead. . . .

I wonder how far our postcards have travelled on their journey to our homes?

DOCUMENT 58
"Big Pig and Little Pig"—1

Papers of E. R. Pepler. 88/33/1. IWM.

The Japanese Officers, in command of our camp, were, I suppose, the same as all Japanese fighting troops; arrogant, ruthless and vicious. They were arrogant because of the easy way in which they had overrun the British, American and Dutch in the Far East and, therefore, treated us as their inferiors. Colonel Suga was the officer-in-charge of all Prisoner-of-War and Internee Camps, in Borneo and he was perhaps the most lenient of the officers. His education, at an American University, may have had a bearing on this, but he gave his officers much too much rope and when any snags or troubles were about, he would take himself off to another camp out of the way. I must confess that our problems were always worse when he was away and the blame for this lies on the shoulders of Lieutenant Negata. This Officer was extremely ruthless and was always provoking his guards to be vicious with us, and when any prisoner was being punished, he would turn his back or walk away. The only other Japanese Officer, who figured prominently in our lives, was Doctor Yamamoto. This officer was very insipid, and when our medical staff approached him for medical supplies, he would always blame the Americans for the shortages. He did very little to help relieve suffering and appeared to be afraid of catching diseases from us. I am unable to remember the names of any Japanese N.C.O.'s, as most of them were engaged on other duties than bothering with us. Occasionally some of them

came into camp on a rampage after their officers, especially Negata, if he had been stirring them up. Out [*sic*; our] most common daily torment was caused by the other ranked guards, of which at least six were vicious and always handing out punishment. The two worst were nicknamed Big Pig and Little Pig and most of the prisoners fell foul of these two at one time or another. Some of these guards did not bother us much provided we did not get them into trouble with their officers or N.C.O.'s, and these guards were usually the ones engaged on 'blackmarket' trading in jewel[le]ry and watches, etc. Of all the Japanese, there were very few that could speak English and a lot of directives, etc., were given in Malay, as a lot on both sides had a smattering of this language. Most orders were given in Japanese and also we always had to number in Japanese when lined up in front of them. In the beginning, the Japanese issued orders that we had to learn their language, 'as it was degrading for them to speak the language of the down trodden' but numbering in Japanese was as far as we got and at the end, the Japanese could speak much more English than we could speak their language.

"Big Pig and Little Pig"—2

Papers of G. W. Pringle. IWM.

What's in a name, asked Mr. William Shakespeare. What indeed? Here in Kuching we have carefully selected the names by which we recognise our guards and although we rarely use them in their presence I believe they know them and so far as I am aware only the 'Big Pig' has retaliated. The reason for awarding him such a grandiose title is obvious and needs no further explanation. Come to think of it neither do any of the others.

We have:—'Banjo Bill' a skilled puncher upperer of defenceless men.

'Piano Legs'—self explanatory.

'Dopey.' As stupid as he looks, but vicious.

'Kitchie'—Diminutive [*sic*; diminutive] in stature but a useful wielder of the butt.

'The Bastard'—probably is but most aptly named.

'The Big Civvy'—a civilian engineer, very tall, over six feet and born horrible.

'Green Eyes'—believes he is head of the Jap equivalent of M.I.5 and wears green coloured spectacles to heighten the impression.

'Miauwamotor!' A cat like Korean whose real name is Miamoto. Very stealthy.

'Lekas Larry.' The first real bully boy. Everything, including his punches, is delivered at high speed.

'The Benjo Kid.' Sometimes referred to as 'Benjo Bill,' Chief Sanitary Wallah to the Japs in Kuching camp. His one asset, he can be smelled miles away. Is a known V.D. [venereal disease] sufferer.

'Fish Face.' Tall and with a hangdog expression. No well-liked respectable person would ever wish to be called 'Fish Face.'

'Sweetie Pie.' The only Jap in Kuching who does not slap or punch the prisoners. The number one Jap 'Call Boy.' No need to wonder if he is homosexual—he is and looks it!

'The Bear.' Powerfully built Jap senior N.C.O. Stands no nonsense but has never badly used any prisoners. Actually has a sense of humour if you are brave enough to look for it.

'The Baka Man.' Born mad and madness increases daily. Has a pathological hatred for everything British, especially British soldiers[,] who always give him a wide berth.

'Scar Face.' Claims his badly scared face was obtained in a series of bar brawls in Tokio. We believe him. He has also added a few scars to many faces in Kuching. A certain candidate for the hanging rope if we succeed in surviving and catching him after the war ends.

There are others, but they have a lot to learn in the art of ill treating prisoners. The 'Bash Artists' mentioned are in a very special class of their own.

Of all the 'Bash Artists' I have mentioned the 'Big Pig' is the most outstanding. Vicious, sadistic, unbelievably cruel, he never passes up an opportunity to ill-use any prisoner who comes within his reach. He prefers them to be really sick and weak then he can the more easily knock them to the ground and proceed to kick them round the compound. The pitiful thing is we can do nothing

about it. Obviously Colonel Suga condones the actions of this man so complaint to him would be useless.

DOCUMENT 59

"It was like returning from the dead."

Papers of L. E. Morris. 91/18/1. IWM.

The working party duly assembled to begin its labours of the day at the Batu Tujoh Airfield. Guards came and went, shouting and raving as usual because the numbering of the groups was still far from perfect. They were forever checking the numbers of P.O.W.'s.

Ichi, ni, san, shi, go, rokoh, etc., we heard it all before. After six or seven false starts, we were finally ready to leave the comparative peace of the compound, and had in fact turned to face the slope leading to the airfield when the green Wolsley Hornet appeared almost out of nowhere. This car usually struck terror into all who saw it, for it heralded the arrival of the secret police—the dreaded Kempai Tai and the equivalent of the German S.S.

Even the camp guards looked apprehensive, for they were also subject to the harsh discipline of these police elite. The car had come to rest in front of our column and disgorged a two-star Lieutenant in jack boots, and three privates of various ranks—even their private soldiers operated a caste system. The Jap honcho in charge of us began to scream commands like someone demented and all present came to attention, saluted and waited.

Eleven months had elapsed since the surprise search of our quarters,¹⁴ which taking place at the dead of night had left us completely unprepared—from the beginning I had been determined to write a full account of everything that happened in and around our camp, and had added for good measure a considerable amount of my own personal opinions and observations.

On that sunny morning (June 5th 1944) I sensed that all was not

well. My manuscript, or to be more exact 10,000 words of it had been found hidden in the folds of the attap roof covering our accommodation. It had been taken away as a matter of routine, and apart from a brief interrogation by the Camp Commandant—Colonel Suga, I had suffered no rebuke, nor had I been brought to account in any way, but intuition told me the car, and its occupants had come for me.

After much bowing and chatter I heard a noise which sounded very much like "Morriska." My worst fears were confirmed. Our honcho known as "The Bear" strode along the ranks of P.O.W.'s and halting within a yard of me nodded to the Lieutenant, pointed and said "Morriska."

Sgt. Major Dover was called and informed me; as if I didn't know already—that I was to be taken to Kempfi H.Q. in Kuching for questioning.

The manuscript had been sent to Tokyo for transcription—for it contained a fair proportion of English idiom and some rare comments concerning the Jap Col. Suga, and now it had been returned to Kuching with a directive that I was to be punished.

I marvelled that I was not struck to the ground right away, for that was the usual salutary introduction to the Kempfi. My escort formed up. There was just time to see the look of resignation and perhaps some relief on the faces of Ted Hallett and Freddie North—they surely did not believe that I would be seen alive again—it was not often anyone returned from Kuching.

Corporal Davis gave me the "thumbs up" sign and was instantly slapped across the face for so doing. There seemed no apparent haste as we took our seats in the car—five persons in a very small sports car.

The guards eyed me quizzically, not really comprehending the reasons for my arrest. No one spoke, or smoked, and discretion indicated that on this occasion at least I must not speak until I was spoken to! The seven miles to the Kempfi H.Q. seemed an age, but at last the journey ended and the car screeched to a halt near a grassy quadrangle formerly in the grounds of the Sarawak Police H.Q.

I was immediately conducted to a long airy room with a wooden floor and single table at one end, and was thrust into an upright chair and jammed against the table. Confronting me was a Lieutenant in Kempi garb. In front of him was a stout stick wrapped in leather, a box of matches, a tumbler of water and cigarettes. The signs were not encouraging. My interrogation was thorough and to the point, beginning at the birth of one Sapper Morris—and where did I live, was I married? Oh yes I was a regular soldier. Ah so! You regular SPY! You spy, and so over goes the chair and boots crash into my ribs, and blackness descends. Three guards joined in the fun!!

That first session was sharp and frightening. The following day the routine was the same plus the appearance of a radio set.

Again the taunting voice, "You know morse-code—You transmit message—You show me," etc.,—then another bashing followed by a cigarette and coffee—most amiable—then more questions. There is some merit in being a complete clot with radio—I just didn't know.

My interrogator could hardly appreciate such inefficiency—surely I was lying. I must know how to send a message—but I feel a perverse sort of confidence—the only thing I am sure of is that no matter how much I am hammered I just don't know anything about the radio. After ten minutes the questions take in Jesselton again and did I know anything about naval battles in the Pacific—a crafty one, that, and of course I had heard rumours—but my own book was going to be trouble enough. So I disclaimed all knowledge of the place. After my initial ordeal I was being led to Cell No. 3 and met the Chinese Consul[-General] to the Republic of China; on his way out to execution, as it transpired, who spoke to me quickly. I think he said his name was Henry Cho [Huan Lai]. He said I was only there for questioning—I was not considered to be a criminal—as yet!¹⁵

He wished me luck and called me by name, a circumstance which worried me a great deal. The police had even tried to link me with him—they were very thorough. This was a period in my life when notoriety was the last thing I desired.

That night I saw many faces I had not seen for a considerable time—those chiefly from the Dutch Camp—but then they were all involved in the newspapers and radio case.¹⁶ Poor Bent and Goldsborough were the go-betweens together with an interpreter Hart Singh, Kinnib[a]r, the priest [?] Webber, Sgt. Major Hueing and the British Major Val Stook[e]s, who had been in World War I serving in the Royal Flying Corps as a pilot and had won the M.C. [Military Cross, awarded for bravery].

During exercise periods we were on rare occasions set to work in local gardens near quarters occupied by Kempri Tai personnel.

The more luxurious houses were located in Rock Road. Food on these occasions was appreciably better. The Japs believed in paying workers with food—no work, no food! By the sheerest good fortune I was 'paired' for work with Major Stook[e]s and I learned first hand about his life immediately before the Jap invasion of Borneo.

Prior to the invasion the Major had been a peripatetic doctor with a practice embracing Jesselton, Labuan and British North Borneo, so because of his considerable knowledge of the terrain and his command of native languages, he was considered to be a very high security risk.

His machine lay in disarray—partially dismantled on the dockside of Kuching, and was visible from the north window of our cell at Kempri H.Q. so I was very interested to learn more about it. Major Stooks had been approached by the Jap Officer commanding the troops at Kuching and had been offered a life of comparative luxury if he would only teach the Commandant to fly the seaplane. This Stooks had firmly and finally declined to do and the Jap Officer being equally adamant, Stooks had received a terrific beating.

On enquiring whether he was being held because of the incident concerning his seaplane he replied, "Oh no. I am accused of the same crimes as Sgt. Bent and Pte. Goldsborough, namely, supplying the Lintang Camp with newspapers and information about the current events of the war. I hope you are not concerned in the same business?" he enquired.

I explained the reasons for my inclusion in the Kempri 'party'

and he frowned and shook his head, but as an after-thought added, "You will be alright, just so long as you do not mention news of any kind." Considering the main theme of the interrogation had been concerned with communication between camps and wireless, I hardly needed convincing that to be associated with the newspaper case was extremely hazardous, and could have fatal consequences. One ill-advised gesture or statement could spark off yet another witch hunt. As long as my replies were consistent, and my story well rehearsed, simple, and reiterated every day then no new suspects would be drawn in. If on the other hand the Kempri detected discrepancies in my statements the net would widen and God alone knew how many more people would become involved.

Several days later we received a disconcerting piece of news. New arrivals from the Main Camp would join us soon. They arrived within a few hours and included Schmidt, the Dutch interpreter from Batu Tujoh, Kinnib[a]r an engineer, and Webber an American priest [?]. The Kempri officers were very hostile to Webber, who was very ill, but still resolute. This was his second arrest by the Kempri—he was not to survive it.

The beatings and interrogations began all over again, but not immediately for the inmates of Cell 3, with of course, the notable exception of Sergeant Bent and Private Goldsborough, who were still considered to be the prime suspects in the newspapers case. All the prisoners were incurable optimists at heart. Fearful risks were taken to obtain news of the outside world. The Japanese Kempri Tai, clever as they were, failed to realise that most of us could to some degree make sense out of the war reports in the local newspapers, which were printed in the Malay language. The trick was to reverse all the main facts and leave the smaller details to stand.

Access for local newspapers came in a most elementary way—the paper torn into squares was used in the customary western habit by all and sundry who visited the 'thunder box' at the end of the great corridor.

By matching and patching the newspapers almost under the very noses of the guards a fairly good appreciation of events in

New Guinea, Celebes and North Australia was possible. Even if such news was imperfect and left much to the imagination it all helped to restore our morale.

During one of the gardening sessions Major Stook[e]s had advised me, "No matter what story you tell, for God's sake stick to it, because if it varies one iota from what you said in your first statement they will knock hell out of you!" The instruction was sound, but they still knocked hell out of me. My only consolation was that perhaps the hell quotient might have been even greater.

After six weeks of being beaten regularly at 10 a.m. every day the real sense of despondency assailed me. I had spent hours killing and counting the bugs which issued through the floor boards. Soon even that pastime palled and there were no new games to play, no hope in false rumours. There seemed very little possibility of my returning to the Main Camp let alone surviving the war. My desperation increased hourly and there were times when I doubted my ability to remain sane. I began to cogitate on the theme of madness. What was insanity? Should I know when I had reached such a state of mental incompetence—perhaps it was just a form of nervous drunkenness, and later I would hate myself for my own weakness and preoccupation with self. My colleagues in Cell 3 had even less reason to hope in the future—they had all been involved in the deadly practice of disseminating news to the troops in a variety of ways—chiefly from local newspapers and an undercover radio set.

My writing of the diary had been sheer folly, or more to the point, being discovered was the folly. The timing of the discovery was very bad on several counts not the least of which was that it happened within two months of the October 9th [*sic*; 10th] rising in 1943 of Chinese guerrillas, who killed over 40 Japs and very nearly occupied the port of Jesselton in North Western Borneo. The Japs had inflicted terrible reprisals hunting down and beheading guerrillas for nearly a whole year.

The raids had been organised by an underground movement in March 1943 under Kwok Hang Nam a Chinese from Shanghai. Their armoury included shotguns, police rifles, spears and sticks.

Local sympathisers donated over 500,000 dollars. They made two amphibious landings at Jesselton customs wharf where they burnt Japanese rubber stocks, and on the beach near the market area. A third force took the Japs by surprise by driving boldly into the town from a nearby village in motor lorries. They had surrounded the Jap H.Q. in a Government building and killed many staff officers.

After the Japs had driven off the attack they brought reinforcements and planes from Kuching rounded up practically every male Chinese they could find, bombing and machine gunning outlying villages. About 180 Chinese were machine-gunned into a ditch outside the town of Jesselton on January 18th 1944. Nam and his chief followers were betrayed by a guerrilla who turned traitor to get a pardon and a reward. In due course his throat was cut—the Chinese are patient and have good memories!¹⁷

It was in this climate of intrigue and suspicion that I found myself being asked repeatedly questions relating to Jesselton, Labuan and Sandakan. Clearly I was being interrogated not only for writing the diary, but as a spy and agent provocateur. For a while the Kempi inquisitors thought there was some link twixt me and the goings on at Jesselton. I was given blank maps and told to mark down the chief towns of Borneo. Thank God I knew nothing of Jesselton—only that Major Stook[e]s the peripatetic flying doctor had once been based there, and this information I kept to myself for it was an offence to talk to fellow prisoners. The simpler my case the better I hoped it would be. The strain of having to tell the same story each day lay heavily upon me. The interrogations became intensified and Kemp business was brisk. There was no sleep for anyone, there being a macabre fascination in listening to the screams and thuds resulting from third degree methods at their most brutal, and a perverse satisfaction in the knowledge that for a while anyhow I was not the recipient.

After the Sandakan/Jesselton affair the Secret Police had gone all out to make sure there was no complimentary event at Kuching.

Shortly before the lights went out one night I was informed that the following morning my head would be cut off if I did not con-

ness that I was implicated in the newspaper affair, and over and over again I was asked how much did I know about Jesselton. I had never been there, but I began to dream about the place as I imagined it to be.

The following morning I was allowed no exercise, no breakfast, no conversation at all. At about 8 a.m., being blindfolded, I was led out to the grass quadrangle, or so I judged, and was made to kneel, my hands being tied and a rope secured to my ankles.

The interpreter asked me the same questions all over again. I was then left to consider my predicament, but my mind did not seem to work at all—I was really petrified with genuine fear . . . and then—anti-climax the bandage was removed and my return to No. 3 Cell assisted by Malays I had not seen before. The next day's interrogation began quietly enough, the Lieutenant affirming that he had no wish to hurt me—and then only if I continued to be obstinate. Two cigarettes and one cup of coffee later I was again on the floor and beaten with sword-sticks, my head shaven, and again followed the trussing up. How well they knew how to tie a man so that his head simply had to loll forward.

Once again there was the long wait on my knees in the centre of the grass square. How long I remained after this fashion I had no means of checking. The most disturbing element was the clang of rifle butts on the paved surround of the verandahs. I was not sure if I was to be shot or chopped. By the noises of movement and the general scream of voices I knew there were many people there.

In my dark little world beneath the bandages I waited. A hand was placed on my head forcing it forward—this had not happened before, and I was more convinced than ever that this time it really was my lot. Another pause and the ice cold flat of a sword was laid on the nape of my neck and held there—my stomach by now felt as if it was full of ice. Blackness descended, my world ceased to be. I had passed clean out.

The first indication that I was indeed still alive was on receiving a bucket of very cold water smack in the face; I had proved for all time that where heroes are concerned I was way back in the queue.

It had all been very real, stagemanaged to the last detail. How was I to know that the whole business was just an extension of the interrogation system—they had played a cat and mouse game with me. For 48 hours I was virtually left to recuperate as best I might. To say I was completely 'shattered' is putting it mildly. The realization came then of how complete and absolute was the power of the secret police. The myth of the Geneva Convention lay in shreds. How easy it was for innocent persons to be caught up in the vortex of events. The average Westerner has no appreciation of police rule at this level. My own frailty turned out to be my salvation, although at the time I was not convinced that the future held very much. The interrogations continued, but not quite so intensely as formerly; the Lieutenant even made fun of me concerning my reaction to the ultimate ordeal. I was not amused. My fellow prisoners at this time included a Dutch Sergeant Major—a very courageous man, Sergeant Percy Bent of the Gordons and Private Goldsborough of the Royal Artillery. The interrogator tried very hard to establish a link between Sergeant Bent and me, no doubt with a view to uncovering a 'fifth' column plot in Kuching. There was no doubt in my mind that the Chinese were thoroughly well organised in Sarawak especially in Kuching.

The Japs were spy mad and with good cause. One day in June a lone Chinese man in his early twenties was brought in by the guards. It had been established that he was a member of the local underground movement. He was subjected to most horrible tortures of water and fire, in the hope that he would give the names of his colleagues. He stood firm knowing well he was doomed and that one confession could open the floodgates of reprisal and cause the deaths of many Chinese. His captors even threatened to kill his ten months old son in front of him, and they did unspeakable things to his wife. Finally he was lead away and we never saw him again. Our guards gloatingly told us he had been executed and his body thrown in the river.

Of the four inmates of Cell 3 Sergeant Bent was probably the most brave and stoic. Private Goldsborough bore his troubles with

fortitude. We were all interrogated and beaten daily. The quality of our rice water deteriorated progressively. We were told to blame the Americans for sinking the rice ships around the coasts of Borneo. I doubted whether the U.S. Navy would waste time or ammunition on such trivialities. The Dutch Sergeant Major, a man called Hueing, took some awful stick. He in turn was convinced that he would be executed, and constantly lamented his inability to see his wife and family again. He was becoming very bad for morale, but we listened to his complaints and understood. I had met him on working party days on the airfield for the British and Dutch P.O.W.'s worked together filling in bomb craters and bashing granite in the quarry.

Hueing had been a man of fire and enterprise often boasting of the way he and his comrades had gone through the wire eluding patrols night after night. Finally he had been shot in the side and the left thigh and was taken prisoner again. After countless interrogations and beatings he presented a pathetic sight to me then, huddled in his corner diagonally opposite to mine gasping as if every moment would be his last. He had given up the occupational therapy of killing and counting bugs in the cell—his spirit had finally cracked. For eleven foodless days with failing strength and wavering hopes he became racked with dysentery. Every morning the Sarawak guards—far worse than any Japs—compelled him to take his round of physical training, each movement imposing additional agonies.

Serious doubts began to assail me. I could see no timely end to the war; it would all arrive too late for us. We had long since given up any hopes of the Japanese doctor renewing his visits—and Hueing needed a doctor quickly.

What was Hueing thinking of his predicament? All too soon I was to find out.

The last rays of sunlight had long since died behind the rooftops of the town. The Malay guard we had christened "Snake Eyes" pressed his evil face to the cell bars and bellowed to his Japanese superiors that all was present if not quite correct in Cell 3.

Hueing shifted uneasily in his corner with his hands concealed

behind his back. Private Goldsborough feigned sleep but I knew he was only half gone!

The cell was deathly quiet. Hueing ceased to moan and was busy—yes very busy with something or things behind his back. A quick glance at the recumbent forms on my right—I had my back to the bars. Hueing was smiling wistfully, almost apologetically at me. After five minutes or more I detected the metallic clink of some instrument and the grin on his emaciated face broadened. It was not the grin of a happy man[,] there was purpose and pain etched in every wrinkle of it. He began to whisper "If I tell the truth about the radio there will be another raid, more captives, when will it all end? In the morning they will beat me again—they can burst your stomach if they choose. I cannot stand any more I must die, die, die." On the third "die" the blood spurted across the floor—he had cut both wrists with a metal rice spoon he had somehow concealed from the guards. It all happened so suddenly. Thank God Bent was awake in a flash and a struggle for the spoon ensued. It was as sharp as a razor—Hueing had been sharpening it for days. In the event we staunched most of the bleeding, but as I feared the fateful attentions of "Snake Eyes" had been aroused. Bent had wrenched the instrument of self destruction out of the Dutchman's grip and flicked it deftly out of sight between the outer bars whence it fell with a tinkle on the gravel path outside.

Out in the corridor all hell broke loose. All the lights were switched on and the clip-clop of sandals was followed by the stamp of heavy field boots. The heavy square door was kicked open with a crash and the Malays laid about us, including poor Hueing, with sword-sticks, "You no fight—you sons of whores—you no talk—British barbarians," and so on. It was only when one of the guards slipped in the blood and smacked his head on the floor was it appreciated that their star witness was bleeding to death before their very eyes.

All but he were immediately forgotten. Within seconds the doctor appeared and Hueing almost unconscious by then was taken out.

I never did see him again—all I know is that the incident did his

case no good at all; later he was to be executed in company with Bent, Goldsborough and the Major.

The events of the night seriously aggravated our agony of mind and spirit; we felt sure the whole matter would be reported to a higher authority of the Kempri Tai. To what new horrors would we be subjected in that event?

Miraculously the bits of spoon were never found and life in No. 3. proceeded as normal—sitting cross-legged from dawn till dusk, a vigil broken only by a quick wash and physical training at about 11 a.m. each day. The P.E. was almost beyond our physical strength. It was always a punishing and deflating experience.

Bent affirmed that we would be punished by being denied food for two or three days and exercise periods would be cut. He was the most experienced 'lag' in our cell and understood the workings of the Jap mind better than any of us. News filtered through the 'grapevine' that Hueing's life had been saved, but exactly for what purpose Bent was not sure. We took new strength from the thought that perhaps the worst of the beatings were at an end.

As Bent predicted, our meagre rations became even more meagre. Normally all food was served in shallow wooden boxes, of rice, peas and lentils all mixed up with the occasional luxury of dried shark meat added; but the [food] boxes failed to appear. For 48 hours we lived on water only.

Strange to relate nobody was questioned about the events of the fateful night and generally life became more tolerable. On the third day the food boxes arrived by which time we were all so hungry and weak. We were now deemed to have paid in full for the previous tumult in Cell 3.

After fifty-eight days news came that a party of prisoners was to be moved to Jesselton for further questioning. It was clear that the case at Kuching and the revolt at Sandakan and Jesselton had been linked together. I did not know then that the Major, Bent and Goldsborough and many more were already condemned men.

A week later we were all required to sign ponderous documents of confession. I enquired of my interpreter the meaning of the

Japanese characters on the 'Confession Paper.' I suggested it could well be my own death warrant! The old man had his limitations and lived in daily fear of being accused of helping the prisoners—his knowledge of English, however, never ceased to astound me.

It was an awe inspiring document some eight inches across and two feet 'deep.'

That day was a sort of clearance of all prisoners in our cell block. We entered the interrogation room—singly. Only the Lieutenant and the interpreter were present; the guards were nowhere to be seen.

It was said that the senior officer had been lenient with me and I had served a sentence adequate for my 'crime.' The interpreter said, "Sign the thing; it is your only chance." In fact it purported to be a summary of all my misdemeanours and writings. They said I had insulted the Imperial Nippon Army in general and Colonel Suga personally—I thought "Well, Lionel, that just about writes you off!" The final irony came on being asked to thank the officer for my punishment which I had so richly deserved! It was all very civilized—like hell!

Orders from the Kempri Tai forbade me ever to be found in possession of a pencil—pen or paper and I must not divulge a word to anyone of my sojourn in the Kempri H.Q. on penalty of death. My bruises took about three weeks to heal and disappear and this time was spent in the No. 3 Cell where I was fed well—my weight had slipped away to five stones and three pounds—but soon I began to gain weight—the point was blatantly made; nobody would ever believe that I had been maltreated in any way—there was no evidence apparent to support such a theory!

The time came for my departure—returning to Cell 3 for the last time to collect my few dirty rags of clothing and my haversack; I shook hands with Bent and Goldsborough—waved to two Chinese prisoners in Cell 2.

I never saw them again. Of the seventeen arrested during the period May-August 1944 two only survived, namely myself and the Dutch interpreter Hart Singh.

Bent, Goldsborough, Hucing, Webber the priest [?], Kinnibar, the gallant Major Stook[e]s and others being transported to Jesselton were made to dig their own graves and were machine-gunned into them. Poor Hart Singh was re-arrested later—the Japs intended us to believe that he died of stomach trouble—but I doubt that; for he had been fitter than most. I was virtually the only survivor.

My sadness at the demise of such fine people will live with me forever; none of those men deserved to die. Looking back, I know now that both Bent and Goldsborough had known all along they were doomed.

I had been asked if I would like to return to the main camp and cause no further trouble, but neither Percy Bent nor Goldsborough had been given that option. Bent, particularly, was quick to seize on this point—and reassured me, “You will be alright,” he mused, “but as for me its a case of” and then made a gesture of the hand like a sword on his neck.

Throughout the years since I have maintained a profound admiration for Bent and Goldsborough who sensing their own inevitable demise still found time to cheer us with their own wisecracks about the guards, and the Kempji Tai; making so little of their own deadly plight.

Their graves are at Jesselton, but their names are at Kranji (Singapore) on the Walls of Remembrance. God rest their souls. If there be any recompense in the hereafter, they most surely have earned it.

In due course Conductor Dover was informed that one Sapper Morris would be returning to the working party at Batu Tujoh Airfield in a few days time.

Meanwhile I had returned to Batu Lintang, but was not permitted to enter the main camp.

The Kempji Tai had one more ace to play.

A small wire cage had been knitted with barbed wire next to the sentry post at the junction of the main camp roads. It was evident that I was to be exhibited before my own people as a warning to others not to transgress the camp regulations. In my confined space

I could neither sit—which was not permitted during the day; nor sleep properly at night, because the cage was too small. I was thankful no rain fell.

Although I was fed at intervals during the two days of incarceration, I became the object of scorn for all the guards, especially when the sentence was changed. I was prodded with sticks, and those who spoke any English averred, "You very bad man! You like the Kempai? Ha! Ha,!" etc.

Late in the evening of the second day a familiar face appeared with the arrival of the Kempai interrogating officer. The little green car arrived, the Lieutenant driving without any escort. Neither of us spoke a word as I was returned to Batu Tujoh. The Bear met me at the compound gate and said just two words, "Ah, Morriska."

Meanwhile Ted Hallett and Corporal Davy escorted me back to the hut whence I had departed three months earlier.

A wondering, inquisitive crowd proffered their congratulations on my being alive, but were dismayed on being told the terms of my release. I was taking no chances, and explained that I was not permitted to talk about my treatment under the Kempai Tai, neither was I allowed to divulge the names of others still imprisoned at Kuching.

A Dutch named Kinnibar had been re-arrested to the [. . .] clutches of the secret police under any circumstances. The time for revenge was far distant and not yet.

Hallett was surprised to see me and said, "I thought you were bloody dead!"

My reply was simply, "I'm bloody not!"

Apart from that obvious remark he too was told very little, I could not afford the risk.

The Jap guards thinking the Kempai had gone soft or something had gone wrong with the 'system,' came—particularly "The Bear"—and tested me out asking, "How was it in Kempai hands"; but he got nowhere at all. I was not talking—not even to "The Bear."

Even the Japanese Colonel, Suga, paid me a visit, but by now I was thoroughly alert to his bungling interrogations.

Life in the Kempri H.Q. had taught me a lot—I was now super security conscious!

After a month life resumed its normal round of monotonous work parties, and beatings.

Everywhere I went the guards pointed me out as the bad boy who had been reprimanded by the Kempri. In spite of being a marked man, my spirit was in good fettle. It was like returning from the dead.

DOCUMENT 60 *Keeping a Diary*

Papers of G. W. Pringle. IWM.

Arthur, if he is not found out and executed first, seems eager to have the Samurai sword descend on my neck. He has just handed me ten lead pencils and casually informs me I might find a use for them as he has never seen their previous owner writing anything and obviously doesn't need them! . . .

Ken again thinks a written diary most dangerous. I agree, but point out I could not possibly remember all I want to remember without some guidance. The clear calculating brain has been at work again and Ken has produced a code. A numbers code which he believes will allow me to continue my suicidal policy with a fair degree of safety. I can think of one immediate difficulty. If I do not survive who will translate my diary? Ken has graciously agreed to survive. I will operate the numbers code from today and hope neither of us forgets the meaning of the numbers we use. . . .

A member of the cookhouse staff I was told today has also been keeping a diary. But he had been very careless and during a Jap search his papers were discovered by the searchers. So far as can be ascertained he is still in our Jap guard room and has been already beaten up, but his future is unknown although it is expected he will be taken to the main gaol in Kuching for interrogation by the Jap

Kempi Tai. His ultimate fate we will never know until after the war ends. Wrongdoers who are sent to the Kuching gaol or the Kempai Tai H.Q. never return to camp and we never are told of their fate.

This has again brought up the advisability of continuing to keep my own diary and I am meeting a great deal of opposition from my friends who, I suppose rightly, consider I am unfairly involving them in a situation they would prefer to be without.

I suppose I have been lucky to date. I have successfully concealed for a long time now a growing pile of pieces of paper, all containing information which if translated by the Japs would immediately reveal my connection and that of my friends with the 'Old Lady.'¹⁸ I can only hope the 'Ken Code' remains inviolate.

I have now the official consent of the Colonel [Russell],¹⁹ to continue with my diary but he has emphasised the need for strict security and suggests that only the most important details of our life be written about.

I have failed completely to persuade him that even the most trivial events will be of interest to our Intelligence officers if I survive and give my diary to them. He will have none of it, and I gathered his opinion of the Intelligence of Intelligence officers is about equal to my own. I am determined, however, to defy him and I shall continue to record the doings of my friends and the situations they so often bring about. . . .

The difficulties of editing my diary are immense. I have hundreds of pieces of paper all carefully hidden and never withdrawn until I add any additional items. I cannot sift through all I have recorded and I may be guilty of repetition. This I cannot avoid. The greatest difficulty in editing is deciphering the 'Ken Code.' Each time I add to my diary I cannot help but look carefully at Ken to assure myself he is likely to survive. Should Ken be so unfortunate to be carried to 'Boot Hill' all this will be wasted effort.

Speaking of this to Ken he answered, "I will paraphrase King Charles." "Let not poor Kenny starve."

How wonderful to be blessed with an education. Or a good memory!

The "Old Lady," and Her Companion, "Ginnie"

Papers of G. W. Pringle. IWM.

The centre court of the compound is usually crowded with P.O.W.'s at the end of the day, when I see it almost empty or occupied by only a few I'm nervous. Do they know something I don't?

Late this evening I noticed the centre court occupied by about six people including the Colonel [Russell]. I was nervous.

I was invited to join the group and finding it impossible to refuse, finished my meagre rice ration before joining.

Perhaps it is as well I am using the Ken Code. The Colonel. Our Colonel was leading forth in his well known parade voice about lack of fibre, lack of morale, lack of everything, and I was far from popular when I suggested lack of food might head the list of his grumbles.

With a flutter of foreboding I recognised the remainder of the group. All the members of the Tandjong Priok radio gang. With the addition of one Lt. 'Shot,' formerly head of the Museum of Kuching. He was, to me, the puzzle. What was he doing in the group? I was not kept long in suspense. As I had suspected from the moment I joined, the Colonel wants a radio. More than that he intends to have one. The man is mad. Now I know why Lt. 'Shot' is in the group. He was very friendly with the leading Chinese family in Kuching and has convinced the Colonel that if we can by some means or other contact this family we shall receive every assistance possible.

I was not left very long in doubt whose job it was to endeavour to contact this family. Mine. There was to be no volunteering for the job. It was an order. Everyone in the group was given their assignment. None were very happy about the plan. It would be incredibly dangerous and from the moment the wheels were set in motion everyone's life would be in grave danger. The Colonel had the answer to that fear. "It rather looks as though we are going to die here in any case, so get on with the job."

Ken, who had some idea of what was transpiring, agrees with

me that Senior Officers should not be permitted to give such orders. Do these madmen ever seriously consider these idiotic plans before putting men's lives in danger?

But how can I back out without feeling ashamed? I am no hero as I often remind myself and I am prepared to lead as quiet a life as possible during my stay in Kuching.

Ah well, in for penny, in for pound. I suppose if we can bring it off a radio giving up[-]to[-]date news would be a fine thing, but when I think of the danger I shrivel up. Literally my flesh, what is left of it, creeps.

As usual the Colonel has had the brilliant idea but has overlooked all the necessary planning. We are in the middle of a big re-organisation of the camp lay-out. It will not be possible to conceal and operate a radio in the 'Hospital' area. This would not be fair on the patients.

Contact with the Chinese family will not be easy from the main camp. The only solution is for me to be on the staff of the 'Hospital' and try to make contact from there. If I am successful, how do I transport any radio parts I might collect from the 'Hospital' to the main camp?

There are so many problems. And always the fear the Japanese might stumble on the scheme. They are not total fools and one careless word would mean the death of many men. Including me.

It is ever so easy to think of brilliant ideas. Putting them into operation is an entirely different matter.

The Chinese family live about one mile from the camp. There can be no other way to contact them other than by crawling through the perimeter wire and struggling through the dense undergrowth separating the house from the camp. It is to be expected the Japs will know of the pro-British attitude of the Chinese and there can be little doubt they will keep the family and the house under close surveillance.

To be caught out of camp at any time would mean execution. To be caught at the home of a prominent Chinese family would certainly mean execution but only after a very thin time in the jail of

the Jap Kempji Tye [Kempitai; Japanese secret police]. Most unpleasant. I do not wish to think about it.

I must think about it. The Colonel asks every day how our plans are progressing and he is becoming very truculent. Colonels, even in prison camps, do not like being kept waiting. Blast the man.

However vociferous the Colonel might be he will just have to control his impatience. We cannot even think about contacting anyone until the camp re-organisation is finished. We must have as accurate a timetable as possible on the movements of the [s]entries during the hours of darkness and this we cannot do until we know whether or not we shall be accommodated in the new 'Hospital' compound. Subtle pressure is being put on [Lieutenant] Yamamoto [Japanese medical officer] by the Colonel in an endeavour to have all the 'Key Men' included in the new 'Hospital' staff.

This will not be easy. Any man fit enough to look after someone else is considered by the Japanese to be fit enough to work for them.

Should the sick men die through lack of attention, even the most elementary, Yamamoto will shed no tears. He has already ordered, "No rations to be issued for men in hospital." But I suspect he is only relaying this order from someone higher up in the Japanese Command.

By common consent all the food issued to the entire camp is to be shared amongst all. This means our sick will be fed. It also means we shall all be on a very much reduced ration. Very serious indeed in view of the already acute food shortage.

Great news today. Len [Leonard Alexander Thomas Beckett] has acquired the first components necessary to begin building the radio. As usual Arthur is heavily involved. He managed to persuade a very deaf civilian internee that as there was nothing worth listening to in the camp, the aid to the deaf machine he was wearing was of no use to him whatsoever. Probably the poor man was so deaf he didn't understand Arthur in the first instance and is in all probability still wondering how he ever became parted from his deaf aid!

Len was delighted but points out he still needs a lot more and "When do you propose carrying out your part of the plan?" Pres-

sure is again being applied to me very heavily. But what can I do? . . .

The shadow of our Colonel is ever present and now the hospitals are, as he describes it, "A going concern," he is becoming impatient and anxious to get cracking with the attempt to contact the Chinese and to press on with the building of the radio.

Assisted by my friends I have commenced to keep a timetable of the movements of the sentries but so unpredictable are they it rapidly becomes evident any attempt to break camp will need to be played by ear!

Things are difficult. I cannot plot the movements of the sentries but I can see a way of breaking camp and entering the 'No man's land' between our camp and the home of the Chinese.

But what am I to do once I have left camp?

How can I possibly hope to successfully travel through unknown territory covered with secondary jungle growth, a distance of about one mile, locate a house and make myself known to a Chinese family I have never met, know nothing of and who in all probability want nothing to do with our mad scheme?

Unfortunately I am committed and braver men than I have wilted before the cold eyes of the Colonel. I am quite prepared to admit being a coward but facing the Colonel? I am too much of a coward to do that.

The night came when everything seemed set for success. Skirling [*sic*; skirrling? i.e., quickly moving] cloud and low moon, a noisier than usual Jap barrack sing-song. The main gate sentry lazing more than half asleep and the prowling sentry gone past for more than an hour.

Inwardly cursing, and with butterflies in my stomach, I literally force myself into crawling through the wire surrounding the hospital.

Once beyond the comparative safety of the camp wire, I realised just how big a world we lived in. I have never felt so alone in my life. Nor so afraid!

How eerie it was to look back and see the outline of the camp.

How easy it was to imagine every Jap soldier in Kuching was fully aware one of the hated prisoners was at that moment lying in a tangle of undergrowth, heart beating like a trip hammer, sweat pouring from every pore in his body and fear in his innermost soul.

What a mad venture. I had no idea undergrowth could grow so thick, nor with so many tentacles. Each and every one seeking to grasp and hold any part of the body foolish enough to come in contact with them.

I had no idea there were so many vicious mosquitoes in the world. They all seemed to have concentrated on the spot I occupied and their torments almost made me scream aloud. I had no idea there were so many red ants with stings like red hot needles. I had no idea it was possible to make so much noise and still remain undetected. I was certain as I thrashed about, trying to disentangle myself, I could be heard for miles. If my struggles were unheard, surely the thud-thud of my wildly beating heart must be clearly audible.

I remembered many of the strange words used by Arthur and the General and I now understand why they used them. A remarkable method of expressing deep feelings. Fear now gave way to determination. Determination to at least locate the house of the Chinese family. By now I realised it would be impossible to risk any attempts at contact. Time, I knew, was not on my side. I had no idea how long I had been away from camp but it must be near 'Lights out' when there was always the possibility of a snap roll call.

Somehow or other I managed to clear the tangle of undergrowth and more by good luck than management found myself on a fairly well defined track. This track I decided to follow, sure it would bring me near to my ultimate destination.

Stealthily I crawled on making as little noise as possible. My heart beats had quietened down and a strange feeling of exhilaration overcame me. I had escaped the undergrowth. There was no sound of pursuit. I could not have been missed from the camp. The idea the Japs may have been laying in wait for me never entered my head.

Press on regardless. I did. And regretted my impulse. The track

I was so carefully following led to more undergrowth, this in turn led to overhanging trees with thick covered branches. The night became very dark. The pale moonlight could not penetrate the overhang. But still I pressed on. Until, with a resounding crash I fell headlong into a deep ditch.

Momentarily stunned I recovered to find myself wallowing in stinking water and clinging mud, bruised, battered and breathless. And I had hurt my arm. I felt truly sorry for myself and uncertain whether to burst into tears or give vent to an explosive temper. Arthur's strange words were remarkably useful and I wish I had learnt a few more. I shall pay more attention when next he gives forth!

What purpose would it serve to either burst into tears or give vent to my temper?

My first attempt to contact the outside world had been a dismal failure and the only thing to do was to return to camp as quickly as possible. And as silently. I could only hope I had not been missed and no Jap ambush awaited me.

Of my return through the undergrowth to camp I have little recollection. Except it seemed to take less time than my breakout.

Covered in mud and smelling like the dead I was quickly washed down, given a hot drink, and informed by Arthur, "The devil looks after his own." His way of telling me I had been lucky to return without injury and without being detected. What had gone wrong? Obviously lack of planning, lack of knowledge and being in too great a hurry.

Most of the night I spent with my friends discussing ways and means of achieving my object and even in the morning we had not arrived at any satisfactory conclusion.

I had still to face the Colonel. Something I was not looking forward to!

The initial explosion by the Colonel when he learned of my failure angrily prompted me to remind him that those who watched from the inside could know little of the outside and what did he propose to do about it?

Greatly to my surprise he made no comment on my 'impertinence' as he named my outburst, probably realising I was just as upset as he was. Instead he asked if I was still prepared to make another attempt, but he asked in a manner making it impossible for me to refuse.

"Not without more knowledge of the route between the camp and the house" I replied.

Further discussions between my friends and myself proved pointless. The 'No man's Land' between the camp and the house must be better reconnoitred. But how to do it? The Colonel surprisingly found the answer. Approaching Yamamoto he suggested the undergrowth surrounding the entire camp was a first class breeding place for mosquitoes and unless something was done to curtail their breeding[,] everyone, including the Japs, would eventually suffer seriously from malaria.

Yamamoto fell for it hook, line and sinker and promptly detailed a working party of orderlies to report to the Jap stores, there to collect anything which would cut down the undergrowth. He even provided a spray complete with some diabolic disinfectant to spray the area after cutting. Needless to say, I was one of the first to be included in the working party.

Once outside the wire, in broad daylight, it was fairly easy to see where I had gone wrong. There was no straight route from the camp to the house. The area inside the undergrowth was honey-combed with ancient Chinese graves and deep holes resulting from the pulling down, years ago, of large trees. Little wonder I had found myself in such difficulties.

Although we were not allowed to travel more than fifty yards from the camp perimeter wire it was possible to plot a possible route which could bring me to the outhouse surrounding [i.e., in the vicinity of] the Chinese house. Carefully avoiding the eyes of the Korean guard accompanying us I managed to contact my friends and ask them to remember as much as possible of the terrain.

Back in our hospital area, after the undergrowth cutting job, everyone advanced their theories and suggestions and gradually I

was able to piece together all the information gathered. I came to the only conclusion. The job was impossible. It was possible to plot a route, but following the route would be largely a matter of guess-work.

The day was too far advanced to contemplate an attempt at contact that night and I prepared to face the usual night-time advances of one of the most pernicious enemies constantly attacking us. Bed Bugs.

Now, suddenly, the Japs have instituted a new system of guard patrols. If they keep this up it will be almost impossible to 'break camp.' I admit to a feeling of relief. Even the Colonel can see the impossibility of attempting any rash journeys and he is saying nothing. At the moment, I doubt if he will keep quiet for long, his fertile brain will be thinking up other mad and almost impossible schemes. But he certainly keeps us on our toes. . . .

Well, I am happy to record my second attempt met with some success. The journey through the undergrowth was as difficult as the first time, but on this occasion I was prepared for some of the difficulties and able to avoid the pitfalls of the Chinese graves and water filled holes.

My first 'contact' was a large building which, it was plain to see, was the comfortable home of a large number of very large pigs. I distinctly remember thinking, "I'd better not fall into this lot or Arthur will have some sarcastic comments."

Carefully scouting round this building and taking every precaution, I was making, as I fondly thought, great headway when to my horror and surprise my arm was seized and lightly held by someone whose face I could not determine. How thankful I am I now knew the meaning of some of the Malay language. How thankful I am I did not act as spontaneously as I had been trained to act and plunge the knife I carried deep into the body of the man who now held me. Fortunately I recognised the wor[d] "Kawan" (Friend) and breathed a little more freely.

Leading me into a dimly lighted part of the pigsty the man, carefully concealing his face, looked closely at me and seeing I was

a white man, and obviously from the prison camp, relaxed somewhat and allowed me to see I was in the company of an elderly coolie. I did not reveal to him the object of my visit but with the help of the few words I knew, let him understand I was hungry and was looking for food.

Bidding me to wait, the man, just as silently as he had appeared, disappeared and within a few minutes returned, bearing a platter of rice mixed with large lumps of meat. Pork. Waiting until I had devoured his offering he then gestured to me and was obviously inviting me to point out the pig I would like to have killed!

Any one would do. But how was I to carry the damned thing back to camp?

This was not the worry of the old man who promptly dispatched a medium sized pig and within a matter of moments had gutted the hapless creature. Cutting the carcass into four pieces, he wrapped them with sacking indicating to me it was time I did a disappearing act, although throughout the encounter he had shown no fear. More than I could claim!

My thanks were profuse and I did manage to tell him I would return at a later date. This did not, in any way, cause him any concern and I marvelled at his composure.

Without incident I returned to a heroes welcome. Chiefly, I suppose, because I had succeeded in bringing back the carcass of the pig. My exploits were not enquired into until after we had all enjoyed a meal of boiled pork. I never ceased to be amazed at the speed at which anything edible was cooked and disposed of in our camp. No time was ever wasted in preparing for the pot and the speed and alacrity with which fires would be lighted and boiling water provided never ceased to intrigue me.

The following morning the inquest was held. Our Kuching curator 'Shot' identified the man I had encountered as the 'Hanchow' or head man of the Chinese family's farm. 'Shot' knew the name of the man but I found it so impossible to pronounce I immediately christened him 'Sainsbury.' The name seemed apt.

Yet one more problem. How far could I trust the old man? He

was a coolie, not an educated man. Dare I mention my desire to contact the Chinese?

'Shot' provided a possible solution. During the palmy days in Kuching he had owned a race horse named "Brown Jack." Both horse and owner were well known to the Chinese and his suggestion was for me to carry a note bearing the message:—"Brown Jack will run again if the course is clear."

Such a cryptic note would convey nothing to "Sainsbury." The Japs, if it fell into their hands, would be able to make little of it and only the Chinese family would realise the purpose of the note.

Real cloak and dagger stuff this. I could only hope we were not being overwhelmed with an exuberance of our own enthusiasm.

But we seemed to be getting somewhere.

The following night I again made contact with "Sainsbury," enjoyed a mixed dish of pork, rice, and bananas. What an ungodly mixture. But how very enjoyable.

Giving the note to "Sainsbury" I asked him to hand it to the head of the Chinese family and indicated I would return in two days time. If all went well, and I was still alive!

On this occasion I was not given the carcass of a pig to carry back, but a large bag of sweet potatoes. I am becoming a regular beast of burden and cannot help thinking "The more you do the more they want you to do." But provided I can carry anything back to camp I do not object. The kindness of "Sainsbury" cannot be denied and the value of anything additional to eat beyond comprehension to those who are not hungry.

Large lumps of pork had to be disposed of quickly. Apart from rapid decomposition, the Japs would most certainly have disapproved of their prisoners having food not provided by them, and would certainly want to know who had been the kind provider. Sweet potatoes we could easily conceal, and as I had carried in about half of one hundred weight, they would provide a little extra nourishment for a day or so.

The Colonel was now in a state of great excitement, certain we were going to be successful and resenting any delay in furthering

our plans. He must learn to be patient. For the only time in my army career I have the upper hand. It is my neck on the block and I will decide when to go and when to stay. An attitude of mind which did not endear me to the Colonel. For the first time in his army career he could do nothing about it. I have a feeling of smug satisfaction.

I must admit it was with feelings of extreme trepidation I prepared to leave camp again. I had one more worry. How far could I trust the Chinese? I had only the word of "Shot" they were reliable and trustworthy, and he would be relatively safe in camp.

I could not clear my mind. I had about one mile to travel through heavy undergrowth and, of course, hostile country to meet a coolie who might or might not be reliable, and then the possibility of meeting a Chinese who might not be prepared to run the risk of being discovered by the Japs befriending a British prisoner-of-war. The thought had entered my mind I might find a posse of Japs awaiting me. Tipped off by the Chinese.

Safely negotiating the undergrowth avoiding the graves, and deep holes, I arrived at the hut occupied by "Sainsbury" and was again greeted in a most friendly manner.

Bidding me to sit down, "Sainsbury" placed before me a gigantic pork chop covered in some strangely tasting sauce which to my mind completely spoiled the delicious flavour of the chop. But who was I to complain?

I must have been so busy chomping the chop I failed to notice "Sainsbury" had disappeared, but the moment I did so I made rapid preparations to leave convinced I had at last fallen into a carefully laid trap.

I suppose some day I shall learn to be more trusting. Before I could open the hut door I was confronted by "Sainsbury" and a young man, obviously Chinese.

Rather inanely, I thought, I bid him "Good Evening" and was delighted and vastly relieved to hear him return my greeting in perfect English and his assurance he was friendly, although he did tell me that at that moment two Japanese officers were discussing

business matters with his father! This did not perturb him, but left me rather anxious.

"What did I want?" he asked. He knew "Shot" very well and had fully understood the meaning of the note I had delivered to him via "Sainsbury."

Quickly I informed him of our attempts to build a radio and to receive first hand information of the war situation. "Could he help?" I asked. I suppose the question ought to have been, "Will you help?"

He was not prepared to commit himself but told me the Japs had confiscated every radio in Kuching, and to be found in possession of a radio, working or not, was inviting the death penalty. After the usual Jap treatment of offenders that is.

"Come back in one week and I will talk again with you." More than that I was unable to coax from him.

I left the Chinese and the coolie and making my way back to camp, after congratulating myself on my 'achievement,' suddenly thought, "I've done it again, left myself wide open to arrest by the Japs." A more sobering thought was, I had compromised the entire camp and the radio scheme.

Nothing frightens me more than fear.

Reporting to the Colonel on the 'success' of my mission I asked his opinion of my fears only to receive a rather typical answer, "You will not have long to wait before finding out if your fears are justified. If the Chinese is not so friendly as 'Shot' would have us believe, the Japs will be here before your midday meal." Very consoling.

Three days have passed and still I am 'free.' The Japs have not been to transport me to their pool. I am beginning to feel a little more easy. The Colonel is walking about with his "I told you so" look beaming all over his face.

Arthur is, I think, a trifle disappointed. Having presented me with a fearsome knife he feels I ought to have tried it out. "How do I know if it works" he asked.

Two more nights and days have passed. Still the Japs have not

been for me. Perhaps I am too easily scared and lack trust in my fellow men?

Work still continues the same brutal way in the camp and the 'hospitals' are becoming crowded. Dysentery, despite all our efforts, is gaining ground and the lack of drugs with which to treat the sick men is heartbreaking.

Yamamoto cares not at all.

"Two men have died?" he repeats. "Good, soon all English soldiers die."

"Over my dead body" muttered the Colonel.

"More than likely" says Arthur.

But this conversation has given the Colonel yet one more idea. Ask the Chinese to help us acquire drugs. I have a feeling we are beginning to push our luck and suggest as much to the Colonel.

"Nonsense, these chaps have the entry to all sorts of places through their secret societies." Sadly I think the Colonel has been reading too many Bull Dog Drummond books. But I do not tell him so.

Tonight is the night and I am now in a much more trusting mood. I do not think the Chinese have betrayed me and I am sure I shall not stumble into a Jap ambush. I hope not in both instances.

Once again I am indebted to "Sainsbury" for a strange tasting meal. This time it is fish. I think. I'm not certain. Certainly it has a fishy flavour.

Once again he disappears. Once again I wait. Nervous but ready to strike if the need be.

There is no need. The Chinese enters the hut, offers his hand, and tells me his decision. Although he recognises the danger he is prepared to help. What do we need? Valves, transformers, condensers and various other components I have memorised.

Seemingly this would present few difficulties but he would need time. Most of the radio sets and radio components in Kuching are under Jap guard and time would be needed to arrange for their removal.

I might have suspected, being Chinese, he wants to bargain.

One condition only. Any news we receive via our radio we must promise to pass on to him. He will circulate the news to the Chinese community in Kuching. This will help sustain the morale of the inhabitants of Kuching.

I cannot commit our camp to this condition but promise I will pass on his request to the Colonel and will give the answer on my next visit, which we agree will be in three days time.

Before taking my leave I remember the Colonel suggesting we ask for help in obtaining medicines and drugs. Can the Chinese help?

Nothing more easy. The hospital in Kuching is staffed by Chinese. Everyone has a deep hatred of the Japanese and will gladly do anything to help.

Now I had something to tell the Colonel and my friends. Something good. The promise of medicines, and something very worrying. How can we complete the bargain unless we agree to their terms? I am far from happy and it is perhaps because my mind was distracted by this worrying subject I failed to see the pig hole I fell into. Again I was wet, miserable and literally far from home. If the P.O.W. camp could be called home.

Although I could see the camp lights from where I stood, after extricating myself from the pig hole, they seemed a long way off. They were a long way off. Inadvertently I had wandered to the wrong path through the undergrowth and had paid the penalty for failing to concentrate.

Everything in the camp area appeared to be normal. There was again no sound of pursuing Jap guards, and even they would not expect an escaping P.O.W. to stupidly wander from the only safe path through the undergrowth. Nothing else for it. Time would not permit me to retrace my steps, and I doubt if I could raise the courage to do so. Once more, press on, this time—regardless.

Not until I had successfully returned to camp did I fully realise the danger [in which] I was by now surrounded. Had the Japs found me outside the wire this night and taken me to the Kuching gaol, how long could I have held out against the torture they

would undoubtedly apply? Their methods of extracting information from unwilling victims was well known and something to be avoided. This time I had information of a most vital nature. And names. These names I do not intend to enter in my diary.

The Colonel was delighted with my success and without hesitation agreed the Chinese should be given the radio news. If and when Radio Kuching became operative. And I still survived!

I am still worried. This new venture is surely most dangerous. Perhaps more so than we think. At least three heinous offences are being committed. Breaking camp. Contacting Chinese. And being armed with a dangerous weapon. My knife.

Now I was being asked to run a news service. Not just a local service, but a news service which could easily travel the length of Borneo.

Frankly I am scared and think the risks are too great. To me, the camp and the Chinese. The Colonel does not agree. And that ends the discussion. . . .

Now it was time to make the most crucial run of all to the Chinese house. What would the answer be? Would he be prepared to help as fully as we wished and accept all risks? Would he be discreet in his handling of the news bulletin? Assuming we were successful and able to receive news broadcasts from India, Australia or England.

On this occasion I was offered no food from "Sainsbury." Quickly he left the hut and in a short while the Chinese arrived carrying a large and heavy looking parcel, carefully wrapped.

Dismissing "Sainsbury" from the hut, he told me after very careful consideration and long discussions with his family, he was ready to help in any way he could and as proof had brought with him several radio components. These he would give to me only if I had brought our promise to supply him with any news we might successfully receive. I had the authority of the Colonel to give him this assurance, but still I was not happy. These inscrutable men of the Far East could so easily have collaborated together. Surely, any Policeman from any country would not arrest a suspect or criminal

without full proof of a crime being committed? And what better way to prove this criminal act than by actually helping us to construct a radio and wait until a delivery of news was made?

My fears must have been plainly visible to the Chinese. His mind was working as quickly as mine and I think he realised I was still very suspicious. How could he reassure me and convince me he was a genuine friend and most anxious to help? Life for the Chinese community in Kuching was extremely difficult he told me. Daily, members of the community were being arrested and subjected to the most appalling tortures for the most trivial offences.

His own family, although his father was Chief of the Chinese community and needed to be most careful in his every day dealings with the Japanese, were not immune from persecution and his brother was at that moment in gaol suspected of distributing anti-Jap propaganda.

Finally I allowed myself to be convinced and the handshake we parted with was one which could have only been given by two people sworn to friendship. He suggested I use no names in my dealings with him and my own camp chiefs. Would I refer to him as "The Bird?" He would refer to me as "The Pigeon." Any reference to his father would be "Gajah." (The Elephant). We ourselves he suggested as mice in the play of cats and this he said would be the name we should use when mentioning the Japs. "The Cat."

Even more cloak and dagger, but his suggestions make sense.

He would not meet me again but anything he had to leave for me and anything I had to give him would be left in an old air raid ditch some distance from the house, but not readily accessible to the Japs. The chances of their finding the ditch were remote.

I knew I should easily find the ditch. I would in all probability fall into it!

Before reporting to the Colonel, on my return to camp, I decided to devote some time to considering my far from healthy involvement in the radio scheme and just how much I should commit to my diary. I am finding it extremely difficult to keep my entries in anything approaching chronological order and have

adopted the habit of just noting things down as they happen. The fact I do have a diary and just how dangerous it could prove, irrespective of the Ken code concealing the contents, should it ever be discovered, has not escaped my thoughts, add to that the involvement in this mad hat scheme of a radio and I am beginning to think I am living, not in a P.O.W. camp, but on the extreme edge of an extremely active volcano.

Ken assures me the Japanese cypher office will never be able to decipher my notes if they do unearth my diary "Never in a million years." I am of the firm opinion they will be able to decipher my notes, by the simple method of beating hell out of me and forcing me to tell them the contents.

Everyone seems to have overlooked the most important fact of all. We are contained in a relatively small area, surrounded by Jap soldiers and their Korean partners and subjected to surprise searches whenever the mood takes them. How can we possibly keep such a highly dangerous instrument secret? I suppose we will not be the only P.O.W.'s to have a radio, and our comrades in Burma, Singapore, Java and the Amboinese islands will also have their special worries over security. But I doubt if they have committed themselves to run a news service.

Ken insists I should keep a full record of what might easily turn out to be a subject of historical interest to those at home whose job it is to write up the history of the war and all the incidents and actions which occurred.

Arthur thinks they are more likely to be kept busy writing our obituaries and telling our families, although our efforts were appreciated, we acted without War Office approval and therefore were remarkably stupid. This seems more than likely.

I am worried about security. A group of about six men could I suppose, operate a radio situated in the midst of an enemy encampment but in our camp we have over 2,000 men plus about six thousand civilian men and women.

The fact that we cannot hope to keep a radio secret from our own men must be accepted and we can only hope (and pray) the

civilians will fully appreciate the danger and be especially careful with their own security.

A casual reminder from Bert that I am sitting on a bomb forcibly brings to my wandering attention I still have the parcel of components under my bed, and I should give immediate attention to disposing of them to some much safer place. But where? By some means or other the components must be conveyed to the main camp where Len will be anxiously awaiting their arrival and this cannot be done until morning, the only possible time when the sick men from the camp parade to the medical inspection room to have their ailments attended to.

In the meantime the only solution seemed to be:—Bury the parcel. Careful uprooting of the small bushes growing near our hut the parcel was carefully placed in the hole, the bush replanted and we fervently hoped it would be safe until morning.

The Colonel is over the moon about the success of 'His Plan' but volunteers no ideas of how to successfully move the components from the hospital to the main camp. We dare not ask the sick men each to carry one item. Usually they are searched as they re-enter the main camp and the risk of detection is too great, although we know none would refuse.

How would we manage without Arthur?

He has yet one more brilliant idea. "Ask one of the sick men to carry a message back to camp asking for someone trustworthy to throw a mock faint. He can be brought on a stretcher to the hospital where we will find nothing wrong with him and return him to camp with the parcel under his blanket. The Japs will not stop and search him." And this was done. To the great relief of all. Strangely enough the Japs never searched the bed of a man being carried from or to the camp.

At the evening sick parade a message was given to me from Len telling me all was well and everything he needed was included in the parcel. He hoped shortly to have completed the construction of our radio.

This then is the end of what Ken calls "Phase One of Radio Kuching."

Now we can only wait and hope all goes well. . . .

Good news from Len. He has succeeded in making a radio, and more important it works, and works better than could ever have been anticipated. Making a radio? Building a radio? Much more true to say Len has created a radio.

Ken again insists I make a note of the construction details of our radio.

From today onwards the term 'Radio' will not be used. The instrument will be referred to as the 'Old Lady.'

Although many valuable components had been supplied by the Chinese, Len had been obliged to improvise and many and weird were the parts he constructed.

A Norton motor cycle steering damper was the method used to tune the variable condensers. A bakelite shaving soap container was used to wrap the tuning coil. The instrument panel was made from the backing of an old map case. Insulation was supplied by pieces of glass stolen from the airfield, and the rectifier was made from various parts stolen from Jap owned motor cars and motor cycles.

Surely Len's greatest achievement was in being able to conceal the 'Old Lady' in a soldier's 'Dixie' [large stewing-pot].

The old problem of where to hide the 'Old Lady' during her in-operative periods again raised its ugly head.

Several excellent suggestions were made and after careful consideration found to be unsuitable. Eventually it was decided to adopt the method of concealment used in Tanjong Priok. Bury her under the fire.

Now all we can do is wait until the camp security has been thoroughly arranged. Systems of look-outs must be carefully planned. The Koreans and the Japs are frequent visitors to the camp and as they can enter from three points and there are many approaches to the cook-house where the 'Old Lady' is secreted, it will be so easy to be taken by surprise.

Everyone must be on their guard. So many lives are at stake and the welfare of the camp must be considered.

'Palestine Billy,' a former Palestinian Policeman, and for the duration of this war a member of the British Field Security Police Force, is to be in charge of security and he has a most difficult task. No-one doubts his ability to arrange tight security but until this is achieved it will be foolhardy and dangerous to regularly operate the 'Old Lady.'

Hopefully we leave him to his job and trust he does not take too long about doing it. After the great risks taken so far, and Len's efforts, we are all anxious to have some tangible reward.

The Colonel has decided when we do have the 'Old Lady' regularly working her blabberings must be kept exclusively military. With one exception. The Camp Chief of the civilian camp will be informed and he will be asked not to give the news to all the inmates of his camp, but to arrange for the spreading of rumours which will, of course, contain a considerable amount of truth.

"Believable lies" Arthur exclaims.

The news will be carried to the Chinese only once a week to lessen the risk of discovery, unless anything stupendous such as the capitulation of the Japanese Army is told to us by the 'Old Lady.' This I consider most unlikely, at least for a very long time.

We have acquired a new friend. 'Freddie'. A real Cockney. By his own admission a self-employed thief. I have the feeling he will be a valuable addition to our circle. . . .

Koreans and Japs have been carefully followed during their visits to the camp and their whereabouts signalled by various methods. Towels or pieces of cloth being placed on window ledges. Bird calls and various other devices ensuring the complete coverage of the visitor during his walk around.

Surely we cannot have much longer to wait before the 'Old Lady' commences her regular duties?

The Colonel is becoming impatient. I am very patient, preferring to know we have complete security before I venture outside again. . . .

The great day has arrived. A message from the camp, delivered during the morning sick parade, informed me security arrange-

ments were completed to the satisfaction of all concerned and the first serious attempt to operate the 'Old Lady' would be made after 'Lights out' tonight.

I have spent the entire day in a state of great excitement and can barely await the coming of tomorrow.

Excitement? Perhaps fear would be the more apt description. Should the attempt be successful I shall be called on to inaugurate the Kuching News Service, a prospect which I find far from welcome.

Sleep is impossible.

Those of us engaged in caring for the 'Old Lady' share many anxieties. The most obvious being, "Will she work?" We know the first trial was very satisfactory, but can she keep it up? Are the security arrangements really secure?

My own trial will not be for some hours yet, but the time lapse between the 'Old Lady' delivering the goods and my inaugural run of the Kuching news service will, I'm certain, reduce me to a complete nervous wreck.

Arthur has dismissed all our fears in one sentence. "You are acting like a shower of ham actors on first night."

Perhaps he is right?

I admit my 'First night' nerves last all day and for once I make no comment on the food I eat. It has even less taste than usual; again Arthur attempts to cheer me by telling me of the first food he ever ate, cooked by his sister.

"Was it good?" I asked.

"Ever tried eating a wet book?" was the answer.

I'm afraid all attempts at humour fall a little flat as we anxiously await the evening sick parade, praying that if the 'Old Lady' has been good to us her packet can be safely delivered on the first part of its journey.

Sick parade over, I have seen no signs of any 'packet' but my fears were allayed by David calling me to one side, after we had returned from the medical inspection hut, and telling me he had the news bulletin safe and sound, tucked away in his 'Jock strap.'

How revolting. I had contemplated eating the paper on which the bulletin was written in the event of my being discovered but now, seeing from where it was produced by David, I have second thoughts.

Darkness seems to have fallen more quickly than usual this evening and the time is rapidly approaching when I must make ready for my trip to the Chinese.

Although by now I am a bundle of nerves I realise nothing can have altered on the route I normally follow. I think I know all the 'man traps,' 'pig holes,' slimy pools and creepers en route. I ought to. I have fallen into most of them!

Arthur assures me he has sharpened my knife and I still feel he would welcome my being given the opportunity to try it out.

Bert produced the most brilliant idea of the day: "Why don't you read the bulletin? At least if they knock you off you will be able to spend your time in gaol thinking about how close or how far away is the day of liberation?"

Freddie thinks it would be a good idea if everyone was told the contents. We are all in the secret and I have not been ordered to keep the bulletin to myself. Preoccupied by my thoughts I had completely forgotten neither I nor my friends had, as yet, enjoyed the first edition of authentic news from the free world. How stupid of me.

I think our friends in the main camp are carrying security to much greater lengths than we had planned. Even if the Japs apprehend me and capture the news bulletin they will make nothing of it. Never before have I met such indecipherable handwriting.

Borrowing one of my precious sheets of paper we all lend a hand at translating the almost illegible handwriting of the person responsible for collating the news. The effort was well worthwhile, although we all admit most of what we read makes strange reading.

Who is this General Montgomery? He seems to be the man we ought to have had in charge from the very beginning. A real live wire.

With amazement we learn the Germans have been soundly beaten in Egypt, Cyrenaica, Libya and Tripolitania.

I wonder if the Japs know about this and, if so, how do they feel?

The Russians appear to be doing rather better than when we last heard of them but we ourselves are having a hard fight with the German U Boats.

Altogether a satisfactory bulletin for those of us who have been so long cut off from the outside world. It is easy to read between the lines, however, and obvious we still have a long way to go.

Now it is time to go and as I secure the precious bulletin to the inside of my trouser leg, David reminds me, "Today [24 February 1943] is the [first] anniversary of the fall of Singapore." Perhaps because Singapore was not our war, most of us had over-looked this historic date.

A trouble-free run and I had no difficulty in finding the trench where I had agreed to leave the bulletin. I had an uncanny feeling of being watched and this made me very uneasy but I dismissed it as nerves and tension.

My Chinese friend had thoughtfully left a small tin box and into this I placed the news bulletin, wishing it well!

Picking up a small parcel lying nearby I returned to camp to find more noise than usual coming from the Jap quarters. This puzzled me until I remembered, "They will be celebrating their famous victory of one year ago."

Arthur was the first of my friends to meet me on my return and I might have guessed, "Did you use the knife?"

Plainly he was again disappointed when I told him, "No, you bloodthirsty Englishman."

Like children opening their birthday gifts we all gathered round to open the parcel I had brought back.

What a splendid effort.

Six tins of Tiger Balm ointment. The Far East cure for all ailments, a large packet of iodoform, several large bandages, a small bottle of carbolic acid, a large tin of boracic powder, several pairs of surgical scissors and a lance. A brief note telling us of the conditions existing in Kuching. Poor rations, bad treatment, curfews

and a general shortage of everything that had been in generous supply before the Japanese occupation. And a 100 dollar bill. All for me!

The Colonel is delighted with the medical supplies but warns us to be very careful.

Previous to this we had no bandages and no ointments. Should the Japs discover us using them we will be in serious trouble.

How can we camouflage the bandages? Dirty them and then wash them. Perfect. The ointments and powders? Mix them with some axle grease we have. First class. Care had to be taken not to advise any of our sick we were now able to offer them a little better treatment for their sores and sicknesses.

The radio men are happy at their work and are daily adding improvements to the set. Will the Colonel never be satisfied?

The Japs are introducing a canteen and we are to be allowed to buy whatever they decide to offer for sale. In all probability this seemingly generous gesture means we are to have yet one more cut in our already inadequate rations. This the Colonel will not accept and he has asked me to raise a loan of 10,000 dollars from the Chinese re-payable by the British Government after the war or from his own personal monies. I think we are asking too much, but 'Shot' agrees if it is at all possible the Chinese will do it.

Such is faith.

But I have promised to raise the subject with the Chinese on my next trip.

My 100 dollars bill will be most useful if and when we have our canteen. I shall be able to repay Arthur and Freddie for some of the kindnesses they have afforded me during the past few months.

One important thing appears to have escaped the notice of the Colonel.

Assuming the Chinese agree, and are able to give us the loan of such a large sum of money, how can we hope to explain the sudden influx of wealth into a poverty stricken community?

I passed my thoughts to the Colonel and was pleased to note an

expression of deep thought momentarily cross his face. Blandly he dismissed the matter telling me he would "think of something."

Greatly relieved he had not passed this problem to either myself or my friends I refrained from any further discussion. The moods of the Colonel are as unpredictable as a flash of lightning.

How rapidly the days seem to pass between my trips outside the wire.

Now it is almost time for my next sortie. Again all the old fears assail me. But no-one takes any notice. I hope familiarity is not breeding contempt?

The 'Old Lady' is continuing to work very hard and several new rumours are gaining ground in the camp. Rumours I know are based on both fact and one or two things the Japs let slip in their more unguarded moments.

All this is good for morale and I hope it continues. Certainly a more cheerful atmosphere is noticeable in the camp. Provided the secret of the 'Old Lady' is maintained I see no reason why she should not continue to cheer us all.

Once more we must guard against excessively high morale. We do know the Japanese are starved of news from their own sources and are very rarely given an up to date summary. Japanese losses are never revealed, but they seem to have no hesitation in revealing any setbacks of their allies.

The Colonel has given me a note in his own handwriting explaining his request for a loan from the Chinese and has promised repayment will be prompt and in full within a very short time of the war ending. I am indeed pleased to note, never at any time does he ever consider we might be on the losing side! I sincerely hope the Chinese have the same faith and belief in an Allied victory.

The news bulletin I carried out to the Chinese tonight tells very little more than of continued successes in the Middle East. Mention is made of a Battle of the Atlantic. This is something new to us, and we are not yet fully aware of its meaning. Probably something to do with the war against U Boats?

The Russians continue to make good progress and the heavy bombing of London and other large cities seems to have lessened. This is good news. But when shall we hear of some progress in the War against the Japanese?

Once again a large parcel of various medicines was left for me to bring to camp and just how valuable they are I hope my Chinese friend will appreciate. A carefully written note contained in the parcel tells us the Chinese are forming an underground movement with the object of hitting at the Japs wherever possible. We all wish them every success, but hope they will exercise great care!

I am happy to be able to tell the Colonel I have left his note safely in the tin box and I have no doubt the Chinese are already reading it and marvelling at our supreme belief in thinking they can achieve the[m], if not impossible, at least difficult task, when the only difference between them and us is, we are surrounded by barbed wire. They at least can move about but certainly they are not 'Free'. . . .

One more, not so mad, request from the Colonel. On my next visit to the Chinese will I ask for vitamin supplying plants and seeds? Gladly.

The 'Old Lady' is settling in well to her dangerous job and everyone is pleased she has joined us. . . .

One more very successful run, although I again had the feeling of being watched as I deposited the bulletin in the tin box. I also left the note asking about plants and seeds. Can it be the Chinese do not trust me, and are keeping a careful watch to see I am not playing a double game?

Of course the silent watcher, if indeed there is one, could be a Japanese Kempji Tai. A rather disturbing thought and one which prompted me to hasten my return to camp. The old fears again? Still, I cannot be too careful.

The Chinese packet this time was a real surprise. Apart from the further selection of tablets and powders, one additional parcel, very securely tied and wrapped, was included. It contained 2,000 dollars and a note asking if we could accept this sum as the first de-

posit on the loan we had asked for. No I.O.U. or other form of re-payment promise was included.

I am ashamed of the doubts I held against these admirable people.

The medicines and powders were received with the, by now, usual acclaim of the medical fraternity, and with great pleasure I handed the 2,000 dollars to the Colonel, with the note from the Chinese, and my own wishes that he would give a lot of thought about introducing such a large sum of money into circulation.

There is a strict limit how far one can keep reminding high ranking officers about their obligations I was reminded by the Colonel! . . .

A new[s] bulletin is due to be delivered to the Chinese tonight and thankfully on this occasion the Colonel has made no new requests or demands. For this respite I am truly grateful. Should the Chinese take a dislike to Englishmen or object to continued appeals for help I am the person in contact with them. Not the Colonel. It will be my head they chop off. I am most anxious this does not happen!

There seems to be a lot more activity and coming and going in the Jap quarters this evening, accompanied by the usual shouts and screams and I can think of no logical explanation for this unseemly conduct.

I have good news for the Chinese tonight. Japanese resistance on Buna [*sic*; Burma] has collapsed. A General Wingate, with a new army, has made the first expedition into Burma since the Japanese conquest and has crossed the Chindwin with good results. The tide seems to be turning against the Japanese, however slightly. The Germans have launched an attack at a place named Medenine in the Middle East but this does not appear to be worrying the new General, Montgomery.

The Middle East troops are very fortunate. We should have been thrilled indeed to have had a General who did not worry about the enemy attacking him but calmly decided to return the compliment, with apparent success.

Unfortunately, it is too late to ask for a transfer!

All went well on my outward trip and safely depositing the bulletin in its usual place I made my preparations to return to camp burdened with a more than usually heavy parcel.

I could hear the shouts and screams of the Japs from more than [a] mile away but I was no more alarmed than I had been on previous occasions when I had heard their activities. Tonight, however, things were different. Very much so.

I had hardly covered half the distance from the Chinese ditch to the camp when it seemed as though all hell had been let loose. Hordes of screaming Japs and Koreans yelling their heads off were charging through the undergrowth. Their yells of 'Banzai' brought a sweat pouring from me and in fear and trembling I sought the nearest cover I could find. As usual a pig hole half full of stinking slimy mud!

How long did I lay there? I cannot remember. It seemed an eternity. The noise of the Jap soldiers increased and I was certain I had been discovered. What could I do with the parcel? I buried it deep in the slimy mud and hoped it would stay buried.

How long can a man live submerged under mud and water? I'm convinced it is no longer than the text books would have us believe!

For a long time there was no sign of any abatement of the noise and dashing about of the Jap soldiers. Their efforts seemed to be concentrated in one sector only of the undergrowth. I could do nothing but keep partially submerged in my stinking mud hole and hope for the best.

Hours seemed to have passed before the noise and screaming subsided and I congratulated myself on having survived one more crisis.

Well, almost.

I had still to find my way back to camp and to make absolutely certain the Japs had left the area.

I had no way of being absolutely certain there would not be at least one Jap or Korean bringing up the rear for his friends and I

certainly did not wish to bump into him! Caution was still very necessary. I was determined to exercise the utmost caution. Eventually and without further soul-scaring incidents I climbed back through the wire as I thought safe, sound and unhurt although badly scared.

I had forgotten all about my sojourn in the pig hole. My friends reminded me and with speed and alacrity quickly had me under our washing tap cleansing away most of the mud and the stink.

It was most noticeable I was given ample room to move about. None, it seemed, desired my company. The smell of the pig hole had impregnated itself so thoroughly into my skin, the severe washing down I had undergone had apparently been a waste of time.

The whole expedition had been a waste of time.

Where was the parcel? Deep in the mud in the pig hole.

The unanimous decision of those who had never ventured beyond the wire was that I should return immediately and not return until I had successfully located the parcel.

My enthusiasm for a further adventure had considerably waned.

Arthur assured me I had been unfortunate in stumbling into an anti-parachute exercise by the Japs and as I had only been absent for three hours one more hour would not cause me any trouble.

"Besides," he reminded me, "Don't forget the Colonel."

Blast the Colonel.

Without fear of contradiction I can write, "The most scared and frightened soldier in the entire Allied armies bolstered up his already non-existent courage and returned to the pig hole."

With a lot less trouble than anticipated I recovered the parcel and on this occasion casting caution to the winds, returned as fast as I could possibly make my way through the undergrowth, pig holes, tree holes and creepers.

Mightily relieved I again submitted to the cleansing process but objected strongly to my 'friends' complaining about the "Bad smell" pervading the room.

The Chinese would appear to have our well[-]being at heart. Once again the parcel contained a large sum of money, 3,000 dollars. But perhaps of equal value, several packets of seeds and a large clump of Kang Kong, a Chinese vegetable not unlike asparagus and very easy to grow. Instructions for the successful cultivation of these seeds and plants was also included and several suggestions for other plants full of vitamin content were made. A further supply of bandages, powders and tablets were included, together with a large flask of laudunum and a smaller flask of chloroform.

Altogether a highly successful trip, excluding my near brush with the Jap parachute exercise, and my severe treatment at the hands of my friends during the cleansing operations.

Is it usual for some people to take everything for granted?

Trying to explain to the Colonel my near escape during my return to camp and the need to make a second journey to recover the parcel, was a wasted effort on my part. He was much more interested in the medicines, plants and money to spare a thought for my misfortunes.

After my interview with the Colonel I had no doubts his personal motto was "Do or Die." He was quite prepared to 'Do' but would leave the 'Dying' to other people! Myself for instance!

"No business to get mixed up with the Jap exercise." "Should have kept a better look-out." "Take someone else with you next time, if the Japs get you, we will still have a man who can act as go-between."

I did not remind him if the Japs caught me, he himself would be in deep trouble. He was in complete command of all the medical staff and the Japs would hold him responsible for any misdemeanours on the part of any member of the staff.

Something of my innermost thoughts must have penetrated the mind of the Colonel. I was invited after the midday meal to accompany him on a stroll round the hospital area.

The Colonel is worried, very worried. The death role [*sic*; roll] is increasing at an alarming rate. Food is becoming even more scarce. We are unable to help our sick comrades other than by the help af-

forded us by the Chinese, and this cannot be looked on as a never ending source of supply.

The Korean guards are becoming more sadistic and brutal. The Senior Soldier of the guard company, named by our troops as the 'Big Pig,' is an outstanding example of brutality and sadistic behaviour.

Appeals to Colonel Suga [camp commandant] are useless. Always he has an excuse.

Dr. Yamamoto wishes us all dead and does his best to achieve his desire.

Captain Nekata [Nagata; most senior Japanese officer next to Suga] follows the orders of the Japanese High Command to the letter:—"Be merciless." He is.

Altogether a very bleak outlook, and can anything be done about it?

I am more concerned about the sudden increase of wealth in the camp, although none of the money has, as yet, been released. However, I am assured by the Colonel a small sum spent each week will never be spotted by the Jap Quartermaster. Not a very bright specimen of humanity.

The newly acquired plants and seeds we will explain to the Japs have been carefully collected from plants growing in and around the camp area. I hope they believe this.

All we need now is somewhere to grow the plants. We have several large plots of uncultivated land, used mainly as dumps by the Japs, and the Colonel believes he can persuade Suga to allow us to clear these plots and turn them into gardens. Remembering Suga's blunt refusal when asked to supply us with edible plants instead of flowers I am not hopeful of a satisfactory answer. . . .

The cannas and the balsam have bloomed. They provide a fairly colourful display but not nearly so good as I imagine they might had they been planted in a carefully prepared garden and by more expert hands. Colonel Suga is pleased with the result. Arthur now believes in prayer. I was correct. He had offered up a small prayer for the success of the plants when they were given to us by Suga.

Probably because of the success of the flower plants Suga has now given permission for the empty plots of land to be cultivated and used to grow vegetables. He will not, however, allow men from the main camp to do the work. We are now to combine our work as hospital orderlies with that of vegetable growing.

We do not object. So long as we have the strength. Any additional food will be of immense value. The Colonel appreciates we will not be able to grow sufficient to augment the main camp rations, but we will be able to give a little more to our sick. Now we can grow in limited amounts:—Tomatoes, sweet potatoes, cucumbers, Kang Kong, melons and various other gourds including the Loofah.

I suspect the Japs will confiscate most of the stuff we grow, but they will need to be sharp off the mark! . . .

Everyone but myself apparently is delighted about the new garden project. They are talking enthusiastically about melon dessert, unlimited supplies of sweet potatoes and tomato and cucumber salad. They have the same expressions on their faces as one would expect to see on the faces of men confronting a mirage for the first time. Such is the effect of hunger on a man. . . .

Again it is time to deliver a news bulletin. I am tempted after my last scare to teach the 'Ken Code' to the Chinese, but I fear this will be impossible, although I would feel much more secure. In the event of the Japs discovering me they will find only a list of numbers which I doubt, without the aid of Ken, I would myself be unable to decipher.

The 'Old Lady' tells us the 8th Army, whoever they are, have attacked the Germans at a place called the Mareth Line, wherever that might be, with considerable success. American submarines are sinking many Jap ships and Tokio is being bombed occasionally.

It really seems as though the tide is turning against the Japanese but I do wish it would rapidly 'flood.'

More medicines. More powders and the remainder of the money. 5,000 dollars. And no I.O.U. They are very trusting these Chinese. The Chinese Underground is gaining strength and have already started their programme of harrassment against the Japs.

Jap troops are being moved from Kuching to some unknown destination but the Chinese believe American troops are preparing to invade some of the Jap occupied islands.

One more large bunch of Kang Kong and several packets of seeds, chiefly cucumber and gourds.

No trouble on the return journey and the usual exclamations of delight from the medical men. I hope the British Government suitably reward the Chinese after the war. They are indeed trusted Allies. . . .

By methods known only to prisoners, whether they be in a civvy gaol or a German or Japanese P.O.W. Camp, we have received a request from the Camp Master of the Women's Camp:—Will we allow them to have a copy of our news bulletin? Dorrie, wife of the Chief of Police in Borneo is Camp Master and we are assured of her integrity and common sense in disseminating the news. Unfortunately we all agree. Passing such dangerous information through at least three channels will be testing security to the utmost.

We cannot allow the women to have a copy of our bulletin.

We reckoned without Dorrie.

None of us had ever met her, and certainly never spoken to her, but we had seen her on her way to discuss camp matters with the Japanese Officers and we thought she looked most unlike a woman who should be in charge of several hundred women of mixed ages, nationalities and temperaments. We learnt in a very short time why she had been the unanimous choice of the women to be their leader.

Dorrie had never been known to take 'No' for an answer and she apparently is a woman of great resourcefulness. Dorrie had the complete answer to our security worries.

Every morning a Catholic priest is permitted, accompanied by a sentry, to celebrate a service of Mass with the interned nuns and others of the Catholic faith. Colonel Suga had graciously consented to this concession much to the surprise of all the women. Why he should have given his consent is beyond understanding. Suga is a Buddhist, but perhaps the missionaries in Japan have had some effect on him?

The Priest delivers his service in Latin. The nuns are all Latin scholars. Could anything be more secure than a Priest in the midst of a solemn service delivering up to date news of the war and other messages of importance?

Dorrie thinks not. With some misgivings her suggestion is adopted, and we hope the Priest can salve his conscience.

Arthur now wishes he had been of the Catholic faith, arguing that the Priest, fully aware he is committing a sin of the first magnitude, can by virtue of his office absolve himself in his sin and need have no trouble with his conscience. Arthur has many sins but he disagrees with me when I suggest it would be a never ending ritual with him, sinning and then forgiving himself!

How did the women find out we had the 'Old Lady?'

Our security is perhaps not so tight as we believe.

The 'Old Lady' continues to do her job satisfactorily and it is almost time for a further delivery. . . .

Once more it is time to deliver the bulletin. Once more Arthur sharpens my knife and once more I see the gleam in his eyes. He will never be content until he learns I have killed a Japanese.

There are no signs of Jap anti-invasion exercises this evening. The moon is obscured by fleeting clouds and it threatens rain. Just the proper conditions for an outside foray.

The bulletin contains information about a Jewish uprising in Warsaw. The mysterious 8th Army have attacked Enfidaville, wherever that might be, and we have lost no ships to the German U Boats. American air attacks on Japanese occupied territory are increasing and the R.A.F. are bombing Germany with increasing severity. The tide of war seems to be definitely turning against our enemies.

Once again I have the impression of being watched as I deposit the bulletin in the tin box and this time I am not mistaken. "Sainsbury" appeared like a vision from beyond, grinning all over his face and making his usual friendly gestures. I cannot understand his presence as it had been understood by me he would not be informed of the time of my journeys nor where I was to deposit any messages. This could be dangerous.

How was it possible "Sainsbury" had been able to time my arrival to the minute? Was he acting as look-out for the Japs or had he brought a message from my friends? So many possibilities and explanations for his presence raced through my mind but the foremost thought was "This man is not to be trusted."

"Sainsbury" had never been nearer to death than he was at that moment. Instinctively I had drawn my knife and made a grab at the old man. It was a natural reaction. He was the only one who knew I had personal contact with the leading Chinese family in Kuching. If he were indeed a Jap informer he had valuable information to give them and I was not prepared to allow this to happen.

There I was, hiding highly secret information in a ditch deep in the undergrowth of a Borneo forest, and looking on what was a possible informer, fully aware of my reason for being there.

Knocking my hand away, the hand holding my knife, "Sainsbury" uttered the one word which I honestly believe saved his life. "Kawan." (Friend).

Using my very slight knowledge of the Malayan language I asked him what he was doing there and how he knew I would be there.

His answers to my questions made me realise just how vulnerable I had been, and just how vulnerable was the 'Old Lady.'

"Sainsbury" knew the prisoners were hungry, and despite his limited intelligence had worked out a scheme whereby he could augment his limited income. He would sell food to the hungry men, especially eggs. "Sainsbury" had access to an unlimited supply of eggs, or so he claimed.

To date he had been unable to make any contact with our men and knowing I made periodic visits to the Chinese he had cunningly concealed himself each night and on two previous occasions had been within touching distance of me when I had buried the bulletin. Tonight he wished to sell me eggs. I had no money with me and would not have bought from him in any case. To encourage the old man would be wrong and could endanger the 'Old Lady.'

"Sainsbury" was very obviously disappointed but reluctantly agreed to 'Pigi Lekas' (Go away quickly) and never to approach

the prison camp again. I sincerely hope he never does but I'm afraid I must request a meeting with my Chinese friend and ask him to persuade "Sainsbury" that trying to sell eggs or anything else to the prisoners was neither a sound financial transaction nor a sure way to 'Get rich quick.'

The further supply of medicines provided by our generous friends was again warmly welcomed by the medical men but a note included in the parcel gave us all cause for serious concern.

My Chinese friend was now giving the news to his friends in the underground movement and the note told us they had already carried out with great success two commando type raids, sinking two cargo boats in the Kuching river and sabotaging oil installations in Jesselton, the great oil port about 300 miles North of Kuching.

Opinion is divided in our circle. Are our bulletins influencing the Chinese or are they acting from a sense of patriotism in liaison with the beleaguered armies on the Chinese mainland?

The Colonel advises caution and agrees I should make arrangements to meet my friend and discuss with him the advisabilities of passing the news bulletins farther afield than Kuching and to emphasise the grave danger of "Sainsbury" compromising the whole project, should he be caught by the Japs trying to contact the camp inmates.

It is all very worrying and there seems to be substance in our fears as we learn Colonel Suga has disciplined his soldiers because of their 'slackness in relations with the prisoners.' They in retaliation have turned on a reign of terror in our camp and it is most unwise to be seen anywhere near the barbed wire fences. No-one leaves the barrack blocks unnecessarily as on the slightest pretext the Koreans will invent some excuse to beat the hell out of some innocent and guiltless soldier.

Even the women are suffering from this hate period and we know several have already been badly beaten.

The men on the working parties are having hellish treatment. Their rest periods have been stopped and they must eat their

sparse rations as they work, several have been seriously injured by kicks and blows from the Korean rifles.

The sick are not immune and the daily visits of Yamamoto to the hospitals are dreaded. Invariably some seriously ill patient is marked 'Fit to work' and, despite our protests, is forced to join the working parties.

It is pitiful to see the look of resignation in their eyes as Yamamoto orders 'Work.' They know, and we know, this is their death warrant.

How much longer can this go on?

Again our rations have been cut and today we had limed rice issued. This rice is filthy and foul tasting and I doubt if our pigs at home would even condescend to smell it, let alone eat it.

Now we know the reason for the flying display afforded us recently when Jap Navy fighter planes and Mitsubishi bombers circled the camp before flying off to the West.

A Chinese civilian managed to contact one of our men on the aerodrome working party and told him the Japs have occupied the Natuna Islands lying a few miles off the West coast of Borneo.²⁰ Sadly as part of their occupation programme they had found it necessary to annihilate the entire native population, leaving a force of Japanese soldiers and Koreans to occupy the islands.

The Chinese suggested that this move was prompted by the American and Australian forces advancing towards Borneo and the occupation of the Natuna islands was part of a defensive programme initiated by the Japanese High Command. I hope this is true but all the evidence is against such a rapid advance by the Allies in this area.

We have acquired about 500 tablets of the wonder drug M & B 693.

Unfortunately too late to save many lives and limbs, but our Medical Officer is highly delighted with them. Now it will be possible to help those in the first stages of cerebral malaria, tropical ulcers, acute dysentery and other more serious illnesses.

Sadly the very sick cannot be helped. There are insufficient supplies, and preference must be given to those who have at least some chance of recovery. I'm thankful I do not have any decisions to make on who shall live and who shall die. A terrible responsibility.

The Japanese and Koreans are aware we have this drug and have never asked any questions. Presumably they believe them to be part of our Red Cross issue. They also know it will cure V.D. sufferers. Most of the Koreans and a few of the Japs, including one officer, are suffering from the effects of a night out in the Kuching brothels. Desperately they beg for tablets, and are willing to pay a high price for them.

Even if we had millions of the tablets we could not supply the Japs and leave our own men to suffer.

Arthur, David and Freddie solve the problem in masterly fashion. They have manufactured a mould and invented, with the aid of powdered chalk, a tablet in appearance unmistakably M & B 693. With a careful eye to business they have persuaded us not to mention their plans to the Medical Officer and Arthur mentions something about ethics which greatly surprised me. "Not my ethics" denies Arthur. "The Medical Officer's."

The word is spread and soon the Japs know of the existence of a new racket in the camp. They are not long in making an approach and willingly pay the extortion price demanded. Business is terrific. I had little idea of the number of sufferers.

Ken suggests we should enroll the brothel keepers on the side of the Allies as they will in all probability "Kill more Japanese than we ever did!"

A valuable asset to the Allied forces agrees Bert.

By order of Major Suga all ranks will parade to pay due respect to the late First Class Private Saito as his funeral cortege passes the camp on its way to the cemetery. Not all the sotto voice remarks wish the late unlamented Saito a happy journey to Paradise, or wherever else dead Japs end up.

Arthur is overheard to say, "There goes our best customer."

The 'Old Lady' has told us Admiral Yamamoto, the man who planned the attack on Pearl Harbour was killed when the aero-

plane in which he was travelling was shot down by American fighter planes. This must be a severe blow to the Japs and I wonder how they will take it? When their Ministry of Information chooses, if ever, to tell them.

The Germans and Italians have surrendered Tunis. Sicily has been invaded by the Allies and the Americans have landed in New Guinea. No Allied ships have [been] sunk by German U Boats and the general impression is the tide of war has turned in our favour. Perhaps this accounts for the uncertain tempers of the Japs in Kuching and the greatly increased brutality of the Japs and Koreans towards their prisoners?

It is extremely difficult to keep a straight face when listening to the Japs boasting about their invincible armies and their often reiterated fact 'this war will last 100 years' when we are fully aware they will eventually lose this war, however long it takes. It is a grand feeling, but a dangerous knowledge, knowing we are better informed than they themselves about the progress of the war. How would they react if they knew we had information denied to them? This strikes me as a very daft question. There can be no doubt how they would react!

But we must exercise the greatest care in our private conversations, in our general attitude and our daily contact with the Japs and Koreans. One single word out of place could bring the most dire consequences on us all.

How did the Chinese know about the Natuna raid? Their underground movement must be better organised and stronger than we had believed possible. Do they have other sources of information available to them?

Surely the bulletins we give them cannot be responsible for such an increase in their hostilities towards the Japanese? There is no doubt they are intent in their efforts to increase activities, in the form of sabotage, towards the occupying power. I had left an invitation to my Chinese friend to meet me and on my last visit I was delighted to find him crouching in the ditch awaiting my arrival.

He was as much concerned as ourselves about the nocturnal ac-

tivities of "Sainsbury" and assured me he would do everything within his power to prevent him from attempting any further contact with the prison camps but, he pointed out, "Sainsbury" was an opium smoker and years of indulging in this habit had further lowered his already dim intelligence. We could only hope the old man could be restrained and my friend promised to keep a close watch on him.

The underground movement was growing in strength and although they placed great importance on our bulletins the increased growth of their movement was mainly due to the cruel behaviour of the Japanese towards the Chinese community in Borneo, the fact that the Japs were themselves short of food and many essential supplies had not passed unnoticed. These serious shortages the Chinese believed were brought about by the increased activity of the American and Australian navies against the Japanese merchant fleets. Many sinkings of Jap merchant and naval ships had been reported around the coasts of Borneo.

The activities of the Kempai Tai were increasing and every day brought about new reprisals for fancied or actual insults against the Japanese.

Passive resistance was being practised wherever possible and the Chinese farmers were deliberately restricting their supplies of produce to the Japs, although the Chinese were kept reasonably well supplied.

My friend offered, and I accepted, a gift of almost half a ton of sweet potatoes to be delivered within one week. This would indeed be a most valuable contribution to our food supplies, but ther[e] was one snag. How could I, by myself, shift such a load over a distance of almost one mile?

The details about the growth of the Underground movement given me by my friend were confirmed by reports from our men working on either 'Lekas Corner' or the aerodrome.

On several occasions Chinese workmen had been noticed surreptitiously going about some ill defined business of their own. This business invariably ended up with a derailed train. (A small rail-

way line connected the aerodrome with Kuching and two steam engines, the Bulang [*sic*; Bulan], (the moon) and the Bintang (the stars). Only British P.O.W.'s could have concocted such fanciful names.²¹

The mysterious disappearance of a fuel pump was not unknown and a fire of varying proportions was not uncommon in one of the hangers.

Whenever possible our men also engaged in sabotage, and were successful on many occasions in arranging some mishap which satisfactorily disrupted the work on the cherished Jap aerodrome enlarging project.

I suspect the sabotage was not solely arranged to disrupt the progress of the work but more likely to give the men an opportunity to snatch a little rest from their laborious work. The best of luck to them, and I hope they are never discovered.

The question of moving the huge load of sweet potatoes was solved by the Colonel. He nominated two volunteers. Douglas, a member of the R.A.F., from Glasgow, and Jack, a gunner from London. Douglas was delighted to join us, but I think Jack had reservations. He was far from enthusiastic.

We discovered [*sic*; considered] asking Arthur but realising he would in all probability forget about the sweet potatoes and instead try to steal the Chinese house we decide to ask him, with our remaining orderlies, to guard the approach on our return to camp. Freddie we did not even consider asking. Although he would have been an obvious choice, a combination of Arthur and Freddie was, we felt, asking too much of any one man to control on such a dangerous mission.

I waited one week before again visiting the ditch, this time accompanied by Douglas and Jack, and I carried with me a news bulletin containing all the information received since our last meeting.

Such wonderful items as Mussolini being a prisoner of his own people. The Americans have occupied Palermo and all resistance by German and Italian troops on the island of Sicily had ended.

I was certain this bulletin would bring fresh heart to the Chinese and help sustain them in their struggle for survival. I also hoped the Underground would not become too exuberant!

No trouble in reaching the ditch but horrified to see the huge pile of sweet potatoes and other vegetables awaiting removal. I had no idea half a ton would present such a mountain. Fortunately they were all in bags and this would simplify matters, but a formidable task awaited us and we quickly realised this would be a long and arduous task requiring a lot more time than I usually occupied on my solo visits. The usual note informing me of outside activities was in the tin box and after exchanging it for our bulletin we commenced the mammoth task of moving the vegetables to the camp.

This was one job I wish I had never started. The slow crawl (we could travel only in single file) from the ditch to the camp was sheer agony. Burdened with the weight of the bags we needed to be especially careful about noise and to take special care not to fall into a pig hole and possibly injure ourselves. We could carry no more than one bag each and that only by making a superhuman effort. For the first time I realised how weak I had become. Only after our first journey did we realise before we could complete the removal we would travel at least ten miles. Had we stopped to think possibly we would have abandoned the whole idea.

We decided to make a dump some distance short of the perimeter wire and to convey all the vegetables from the ditch to the dump before making the final effort to carry them into the camp.

Leading the file on the return journey for the second load I had almost reached the ditch when Douglas, following close behind me, grabbed my leg and whispered, "Jack isn't with us."

What the hell had gone wrong?

Had he fallen into a pig hole surely we would have heard him?

There had been no sounds of distress from him. What could have happened? Where could he be?

After a whispered consultation we decided to carry on and return with a load each. We could not spare any time to search for him but possibly we might find him on our return journey.

There was no sign of Jack on any of our subsequent journeys and reluctantly we agreed the effort had been too much for him and he had returned to camp.

The journeys completed and all the vegetables safely in the dump behind the perimeter wire we re-entered camp and asked for the help of Freddie and Arthur to assist in carrying the bags into our store room where, after being mixed with what remained of our rations, they would not be detected by any Jap or Korean prowler.

Jack I noticed was sitting looking very down in the mouth and disinclined to speak. Some time later I managed to find out from him what had happened. He confessed he had never been so frightened in his life. The darkness of the night. The eerie surroundings and the strange atmosphere had seriously affected him. He had panicked.

There was no point in reminding him he might have seriously jeopardised the whole expedition. I knew exactly how he felt. But never again would he be asked to help in any scheme and he would have to return to the main camp and join in the working parties. This would seriously affect his chances of survival but we could afford no risks, and any man who panicked must be considered a security risk. In the working parties he would be away from the centre of our activities and we would all feel much safer. The Colonel has ordered, "No more episodes such as your last pirate raid, much too dangerous and much too strenuous. . . ."

Fortunately we do have one staunch friend in the midst of our adversity. The 'Old Lady.' Never since her birth has she failed us. Occasionally she has depressed us with sombre tidings, but now she is beginning to tell us the things we are most anxious to hear. Russian advances against the Germans, British advances in the Middle East and Italy. American advances and occupation of Jap controlled islands in the Pacific. Australian advances in their theatre of war. But despite these heartening facts the struggle for survival continues and will continue to be grim, very, very grim.

All the Allied advances we hear of are taking place many

thousands of miles from Borneo and in our innermost hearts we know, and have accepted, that a long and harsh time lies ahead of us before the Allied armies approach within sight and sound of Kuching.

The bulletin I carried to the Chinese on my visit last night cannot fail but to give them cause for hope. Definitely the tide of war has turned against the Japanese and the Germans. The Italians are no longer a force to be reckoned with, if they ever were, but the Chinese will, as ourselves, realise that however far away the day of liberation lies there is no doubt it is approaching.

The bulletin I brought back from the Chinese, however, is most alarming. Japanese atrocities and cruelties against the Chinese population in Borneo and the lack of food and other essential commodities have prompted the underground movement to adopt even more direct and open action against their oppressors.

A Chinese guerilla formerly a resident in Shanghai, Kwok Hang Nam, has been appointed leader of the Borneo underground movement and under his direction the Chinese have collected a formidable arsenal of shot guns, police rifles and over 500,000 dollars from sympathisers.

On Chinese National Day the underground movement launched an attack on the port of Jesselton.

They made two amphibious landings at the Jesselton Customs wharves where they burned large rubber stocks and succeeded in burning down the entire dock warehouse system. A third force took the Japs by surprise in the Town centre and killed a number of Jap officers and soldiers.

The Japs inflicted severe reprisals. Rounding up every male Chinese they could find they machine-gunned them in a ditch, just outside the town, and bombed every village within the area.²²

This news means we must seriously consider our relationship with the Chinese in respect to the bulletins we are supplying to them. But how much effect can our bulletins have on their morale. Is it possible the scant, but heartening news we give them can seriously influence their decisions to undertake such drastic action?

I doubt it, and I believe these actions are prompted more by hatred of the Japanese than a full understanding of the war situation. Unless they are better informed than we ourselves?

Will they stop at the Jesselton raid or, despite the terrible reprisals, will they continue to plan and carry out further raids?

Can we risk the possibility of one of the guerrillas being taken prisoner and forced under torture to reveal the connection between our camp and the Chinese?

The Colonel has decided we are all in this war together and any help we can give in harrassing the enemy must continue to be given. It is our duty, he feels, to assist the Chinese and the risk of our part in the plot being detected must be accepted. I know he is right, but I wonder if we would not be better advised to lie low for a while before again giving our bulletin to the Chinese.

The Colonel will have none of it. We are at war, even if we are in a P.O.W. camp, and we must offer all resistance possible to the Japanese. The possibility of a massacre of all prisoners must be accepted.

Our situation must be unique in the annals of warfare. We are prisoners in a jungle camp, thousands of miles from our nearest armies. We are well guarded, regularly searched and subjected to a most severe discipline. We own nothing but a 'Jock Strap' and, if we are lucky, a tin from which to eat our food and an empty bottle used as a tea cup! The more fortunate may possibly have a worn blanket or an old rice sack to cover themselves at night, and here we are planning to aid and assist in any way possible acts of sabotage and active guerilla warfare against our captors. We must be completely mad.

But a more serious thought is:—There are only six of us directly concerned in our contacts with the Chinese. Have we the right to hazard the lives of our friends who are in ignorance of our outside activities?

We know we have the whole-hearted support of all in our radio secret, but what would the reaction be if they knew of our other activities?

Would they readily accept the risks of being actively concerned with Chinese guerilla bands? I have grave doubts. But we dare not take them into our confidence. . . .

A most alarming incident today.

One of our Dutch doctors, seen eating some hard boiled eggs, was asked from where he had obtained them. His answer almost unnerved me. From an old Chinese coolie who had attracted his attention near the perimeter wire and offered eggs for sale. Without any doubt this was 'Sainsbury'. The description fitted him perfectly.

Once again the Colonel ordered me to make an emergency visit to the ditch and leave a note informing my Chinese friend of 'Sainsbury's' activities and to force him to stop.

It was useless to appeal to this particular Dutch doctor not to encourage the old man and to cease buying from him. As a member of the hospital staff the doctor had knowledge of our contacts with the outside Chinese, but as he is a very greedy man, his action in eating his eggs without offering to share with his colleagues was typical of the man, we had little hope he would comply with our request. Preventing 'Sainsbury' from contacting the camp was our only hope.

That night I left a note telling my friend unless the prowlings of 'Sainsbury' ceased immediately we would have no alternative but to sever our contacts. There was no need to stress the importance of our contact and, I knew, no need to stress the urgency of the matter.

A week has passed without any further alarms from 'Sainsbury' and I am beginning to think my Chinese friend has found some way of keeping the silly old man far away from the camp.

But, somehow, I have a feeling of approaching trouble. I feel very depressed and apprehensive and I know the Colonel is also uneasy, but we can do nothing. The Dutch doctor has more or less told us if he can buy eggs or other foodstuffs he will, and refuses to recognise the danger in which he is placing everyone. Himself included. He is not a likeable man.

Arthur seriously suggests a remedy we gravely consider as we discuss 'Sainsbury' and ways and means of keeping him away from the camp.

"Kill the bastard."

Tragically this may be the only way we can prevent trouble. Such is my dislike of the Dutch doctor and my contempt for him that I would gladly dispose of him if it could be arranged. I suspect the Colonel would wish to know nothing of our ideas but would secretly agree!

We were too late.

David was the first to see the procession approaching from the direction of the perimeter wire. A procession of four Korean sentries and in the middle—"Sainsbury." He had been caught trying to contact our Dutch doctor, who fortunately for him, was not in the vicinity and now he was being force marched to the Jap guard room where no doubt he would be subjected to the usual Jap forms of interrogation.

* * *

Often I have heard of men, who, after receiving a severe shock, exclaiming that their hearts 'had dropped into their boots.' Now I fully understand the meaning of the phrase and I fully appreciate the feeling!

Several things immediately jumped to my mind as I watched the procession passing our hospital, (I kept well out of sight, afraid the old man would recognise me and call out). My first thought was for the safety of the 'Old Lady' and my second for our contacts with the Chinese and the underground movement.

I had no way of knowing whether or not "Sainsbury" knew of the existence of the 'Old Lady' but old and stupid as he undoubtedly was he must have known we, in our camp, would not have continued our regular meetings with the Chinese if we were only hoping to gain a little extra food. Most important of all, "Sainsbury" knew and could tell of my personal meetings with the Chinese.

After the Jesselton uprising the Japs will be more suspicious than ever before and more alert in their efforts to round up all the

underground workers and those who have offered and given support in any way.

Over-riding all my thoughts is the fact that if "Sainsbury" talks I am in real trouble and my life span strictly limited.

The Colonel is in complete agreement with my trend of thought but has suggested a reasonable excuse if I am apprehended by the Japanese.

Amongst the recent deaths was one of our more senior officers, and the Colonel suggests, "If 'Sainsbury' talks, and the Japs discover our connection with the Chinese and the underground and our possession of the 'Old Lady' and I am subjected to interrogation, I should hang on as long as possible and then admit I was acting under orders from the deceased officer."

Does he really believe the Japs would accept such a lame excuse? And does he really believe the Kempfi Tai would not institute severe reprisals which could easily bring about a general massacre?

The Colonel knows as well as I we are in deep water, and only a vast amount of luck will save us all. But we must try to keep secure the secret of the 'Old Lady.'

One of our men from the 'Lekas Corner' job has brought into camp a message in code from my Chinese friend, cleverly smuggled to him during a break in the work. The message reads:—"The Cat has caught the Rat, Brown Jack must not run again." This can only mean the Japs have questioned my friend, but still leaves us very much in the dark whether or not they have been able to extract any information from him.

Arthur brings a ray of hope by suggesting that as "Sainsbury" worked for the Chinese the first person the Japs would question would be my friend, but this does not mean they have learned anything of value.

Everything depends on "Sainsbury."

Various reports of "Sainsbury" being seen doing odd jobs, such as sweeping out the guard room and carrying water for the Japs reach us, and it would seem the Kempfi Tai have not yet taken the old man to their Headquarters. This can be construed as a good

sign but it can also mean they have not completed their initial inquiries.

The sword of Damocles still hangs over us, and by a very thin thread.

I have pondered long over my predicament. My friends, realising my position, have left me alone with my thoughts and I am grateful. I have much to think about. My family. How will they react to the news, when they receive it, that I have been executed as a saboteur [*sic*; *saboteur*]? There can be no doubt such will be my fate if the Kempri Tai arrest me. How will they feel when they learn all this unhappiness has been brought about by the greed and selfishness of one man? Our Dutch doctor is now ostracised by all, and well he deserves it.

So much hard work, scheming, planning and personal risk has gone into this project which has worked so well for a long period, and brought considerable relief to all. All this, sacrificed because of this man and his total disregard for the lives and wellbeing of many hundreds of prisoners.

It is an anxious and worrying time for us all, more so for those of us actively engaged in the operation of the 'Old Lady' and the doings of the Chinese underground. Often have I felt fear and often I have been very afraid of events and happenings involving me personally, but never before have I been so afraid as I am at this moment.

What lies ahead? In the fortunate event, and it will be a very fortunate event indeed, I escape the clutches of the Kempri Tai this time, how can I be certain there will be no further scares in the future? The Kempri Tai, in common with all secret police, have long memories and will never give up their search for suspects and culprits in their efforts to unearth the members of the Chinese underground, and those in any way connected with it. In the meantime we can only await developments and continue to hope against all odds everything goes in our favour.

One more week has passed without any sign of the Kempri Tai investigating anyone in the camp. "Sainsbury" is still at the Jap

guard room, and from information we receive does not appear to be having a bad time. He has been beaten, but not too severely, and according to our men of the working parties there does not seem to be any untoward happenings in the town of Kuching. No unusual police activity has been noted and the Chinese carrying on with their daily work are being subjected to no more indignities than usual.

We are continuing to operate the 'Old Lady' and the information we receive is very heartening indeed. Allied advances in every theatre of the war and a lessening of the disasters we had been accustomed to hear of our losses at sea. Unfortunately we cannot contact the Chinese and we have been obliged to issue an order that the 'Old Lady' must operate for us alone. The civilian internees are annoyed, but as they do not know the full circumstances, and we cannot tell them, they will just have to grin and bear it.

Much as we would wish to keep the women informed, this also we have decided to stop. We cannot allow sentiment to influence our decisions, much as we regret it. Times are indeed difficult, and growing more so each day.

The 'Speedo' periods are increasing and now the men are being forced to work from dawn until well after darkness has fallen. Shifts are lasting fourteen and sixteen hours a day.

Before leaving England I had become accustomed to hear those fortunate enough not to be in the forces complaining bitterly about the hardships of rationing and of the difficulty of obtaining essential and sometimes unessential items. How I wish those people who did most of the complaining could share the daily toilings in the heat and mud and the daily beatings we all of us have to undergo. Even the strongest are cracking up with increasing regularity. Men are beginning to die at treble the rates of just a few months ago and now we have the additional worry of our present crisis.

It is impossible to escape the feeling of hopelessness at present enveloping the camp. Despite the combined efforts of the 'Old

Lady,' the concert party and the entertainments committee who organise lectures and discussion groups, a deep feeling of foreboding is affecting everyone.

Now the Japs are really increasing the pressure to keep us subdued. No singing and no whistling from today onwards. Not that we often feel like whistling or singing but it is still one more petty and irksome restriction. The concert party will only give concerts when it pleases Suga to permit them.

Can these restrictions be the result of any suspicion the Japs may have about [t] our complicity with the Chinese? Or are they the result of a feeling amongst the Japs that everything is not well with their world and their newly acquired empire?

Our midday meal was interrupted today by a large car, wearing the standard of a full Colonel of the Japanese army, drawing to a halt at the entrance to the hospital compound. The occupants of the car were, by their insignia, members of the dreaded Kempri Tai. This then was to be my hour. No doubt they had come for me, and I steeled myself to face the expected outburst of rage, screams and blows before being unceremoniously carried off to gaol.

My friends, I callously believe, thankful the tumbril had not called to collect them, hurriedly gave me tobacco, a few dollars and wished me well. I could not imagine what use I would be able to make of the dollars, but the tobacco would be useful if the Kempri Tai allowed me to keep it. I had no great hopes of that.

A pompous, overfat, Japanese Captain stepped from the car and approached our barrack. I said farewell to my friends and asked them to inform my family if I did not return, and made my way to meet the Captain. Smartly returning my salute the Captain took the wind completely from my sails by asking in perfect English:—"Where is your chief doctor, my Colonel has toothache and wishes to be cured."

What an anti-climax. I couldn't direct him to our Colonel fast enough.

We gathered round to watch the operation, knowing our Colonel was not a dentist and wondering how he would cope with

this completely unexpected demand of his medical skill. The Japs had even brought their own anaesthetic and forceps! Gallantly our Colonel accepted the challenge and gallantly the Japanese Colonel underwent the extremely painful operation. After it was all over, cigarettes were handed round, many salutes were offered and returned and thankfully we resumed our interrupted meal. Without doubt that Japanese Colonel was a very brave man.

Lapping up the compliments of my friends I congratulated myself on my recently acquired haul of tobacco and dollars. I had reckoned without Freddie. During the commotion he had skilfully picked my pocket and recovered the lot! His thoughts had been similar to mine. What use would tobacco and dollars be in a Jap gaol? Freddie should survive this imprisonment. I wonder if the Japanese Colonel has lost anything? . . .

Today the Colonel is in a good mood. I am in a good mood. All the friends of the 'Old Lady' are in a good mood.

"Sainsbury" has been released!

The Japs have decided to treat him as a complete imbecile and after roughening him up, have kicked him out of the camp. I am now certain he will never again approach the camp. But we dare not approach the Chinese again. At least not for a long time. I am in no hurry to do so. The past few weeks have left their indelible mark on me and my friends.

How wonderful it is to be able to breathe freely again and not to scurry into hiding at the approach of a Jap officer or a Korean sentry.

It really begins to look as though we have had a lucky escape, but only by the narrowest of narrow margins.

When I contemplate the events of the past few months I am appalled at the risks we have all taken. Concealing in our camp a most dangerous instrument in the shape of the 'Old Lady.' Contacting influential Chinese. Borrowing a large sum of money from them. Keeping them informed of the progress of the war and becoming involved in the work of a powerful underground movement, and witnessing the arrest of the man who could so easily

have started the Kempri Tai on a trail which would inevitably have led to our arrests and subsequent death.

Situated as we are in a very isolated position, miles away from the nearest civilisation, and surrounded by Japanese and Koreans, all very security conscious and highly suspicious of every move we make, it is a wonder indeed we have been able to keep our secrets so long.

I am determined in the future not to become involved again in any schemes which might contribute to the shortening of my already heavily threatened life. We have all had a very bad scare and we must allow some long time to elapse before we again venture on any scheme which, if discovered, could only lead to our earlier than expected demise.

I have wasted a valuable hour trying to persuade the Colonel into my way of thinking. He has only one answer: "Whenever possible and however dangerous it may be, we must continue in our efforts to beat the Japanese." Again he tells me, "Although we are prisoners and closely confined, it is our duty to cause as much trouble as possible to the Japs and to be prepared to run any risks."

No hope from that quarter!

With the help of our men on the working parties we are kept reasonably well informed of events and life outside the prison camp and so far as we can ascertain no arrests have been made of any prominent Chinese in Kuching. Have we really got away with it? Is it possible the Japs have missed out on an opportunity to rid them of more than one thorn in their sides? I really believe we have. . . .

1943 had been for us a very bad year. A year of many deaths. Much brutality and starvation, yet even in the midst of our struggle for survival we had created the 'Old Lady.' We had engaged in clandestine warfare against the Japanese. A great deal of sabotage had been carried out on the aerodrome and at 'Lekas Corner.' We had acted as news couriers for the Chinese, bringing them news of the world outside Japanese domination, and the progress of the war against our joint enemies and we had carried from the Chi-

nese news of local events and happenings of great value and interest to us.

We had, by the kindness of the Chinese, been able to relieve a great deal of the suffering of our very sick men through the supplies of drugs and medicines they had stolen from the Japanese and passed to us.

We had borrowed a large sum of money and this was now being carefully released and used to purchase from the Japs any extra food they cared to supply us with.

Most important of all we had survived for one more year.

Now the Japs inflicted one more very severe hardship on us. The message came from the office of Colonel Suga, "No more electric light will be permitted in any camp." He softened the blow by kindly lifting his embargo on singing and whistling.

We, the caretakers of the 'Old Lady' welcomed the news of the lifting of the embargo with mixed feelings. We would much rather have had the electric power supply than the blessing of being able to break into song without the fear of being beaten up. How would we be able to keep the 'Old Lady' in full time work without the aid of the electric power? We had no batteries, nor the means of acquiring any, our greedy Dutch doctor had made contact with our Chinese friends impossible so an appeal to them was out of the question. But we do not wish to keep the 'Old Lady' in a state of idleness, she has been created to work and work she must. But how?

Several times I have mentioned in my diary the isolated position of our camp but still I find it difficult to write a description which will fully convey the complete detachment from all other forms of life, animal or human, we suffer here.

To say we are five miles from the small town of Kuching will convey little to those who have never visited the town. To say that less than one hundred yards from the outskirts of the town brings one to deep, and in places almost impenetrable jungle and deep undergrowth[,] will mean nothing to those who have never been in jungle areas.

To the North, South and West of the camp there is only deep

jungle. We are completely cut off from the outside world, and other than infrequent and strictly forbidden contact with Chinese workmen at the aerodrome site of 'Lekas Corner' we have no means of communicating with anyone outside the camp. Under such conditions how are we ever to obtain batteries with which to keep the 'Old Lady' in full employment?

No doubt about it, we face an almost insolvable problem.

What a tragedy. The greed of one man has ruined so many promising ideas and curtailed so many of our actions against the enemy.

"The Colonel is champing at the bit" said Arthur to me early this morning.

"Why."

"You can tell us when you come back. He wants to see you now. This minute. Immediately."

The Colonel was indeed champing at the bit. Immediately not being fast enough for the Colonel, but much too fast for me, I presented myself just as he was about to eat his midday meal. This did not please him in any way and I rapidly conceived the idea I was again becoming unpopular.

This time I think he has gone completely mad.

He wants to re-arrange the whole hospitalization of our sick.

Our present hospital arrangements are, as we all know, totally inadequate and he is now suggesting we seek the permission of the Japanese to utilise four additional huts in the main camp to house the men we cannot accomodate in our hospital huts.

This will mean little or no hardship to the men who will need to move from their present quarters. The number of deaths has greatly increased the space available in the remaining huts and there is absolutely no doubt we desperately need extra hospital huts. The idea seems reasonable but I had the feeling there was more to it than simply the care of the men.

I was correct.

I was to return to the main camp with Arthur, David and Ken, Bert would join us later.

Why? Was it not possible to recruit additional orderlies from the men in camp? Provided always the Japs would agree, and it is more than likely they will refuse.

Eventually I persuaded the Colonel to tell me of his main plan.

Now I know he has gone mad. He wants an electrical generator built to service the 'Old Lady.'

Len seems to think he can do it with the help of the R.A.O.C. technicians but he and his work will need so much extra protection and security he has insisted on the help of the original gang of pirates.

An electrical generator! Here? In Kuching P.O.W. camp? Why did not Len keep his mouth closed. He ought to know by now the Colonel will jump at any idea to keep the 'Old Lady' in operation, and he ought to know or to have realised the danger we have just so narrowly escaped without aiding and abetting the Colonel in any further ideas which would again involve us in considerable danger.

The Colonel is adamant. The scheme will go ahead. He has already arranged a meeting with Colonel Suga.

Arthur, David and Bert at first refused to believe me when I told them of the latest mad idea, and who could blame them?

The 'Old Lady' and an electrical generator here in Kuching camp? Impossible.

Surely this must be the maddest idea ever to be thought of by prisoners of war. Perhaps in Germany it might be possible. But here, with the Japanese? Never. . . .

Most remarkable. Colonel Suga has agreed to our plan to utilise extra huts in the main camp and to the general re-organisation of our hospitals.

I wonder? Is he so certain of a final Jap victory?

To even consider ameliorating the conditions under which our sick men are living is such a change of attitude it is almost unbelievable.

Immediately his consent was received, our plans to consider the building of a generator were set in motion. I firmly believe the

most important discussion should be to consider the advisability of having such a machine in our camp.

I cannot sufficiently emphasise the terrible danger we shall all face if it is decided to go ahead. I am in a minority. The Colonel is more than ever determined to have this infernal machine. Len is more than ever confident he can build it.

The mechanical geniuses of the R.A.O.C. are confident they can supply the necessary components. But they say it will take at least three months before they can make the tools to do the job. The Colonel has given them one month.

One month to collect the materials we need?

Miles of wire, magnets and all the other bits and pieces it needs to make a generator. Not to mention the metal work necessary to house all the coils and other components. Surely the most competent electrical engineer in 'Civvy Street' [civilian life] would run a mile from such a daunting task?

But here in Kuching P.O.W. camp we are fully prepared to attempt the job and face all the risks entailed. More than that we are prepared to gamble on the success of the undertaking, the gamble of course being our lives if the enterprise is discovered.

The move from the 'A' and 'B' hospitals to the new sick bay huts in the main camp was completed today. The Colonel has moved and made his H.Q. in a 'Lean to' hut built specially for him next to the hut where the R.A.O.C. technicians will be working. From this vantage point he will be able to oversee all their work, keep a sharp look-out on the sick bays and generally make himself a nuisance.

Once more we all have new jobs. David will be in charge of Huts Nos. 19/20. Hut No. 19 is already known throughout the camp as the 'Death Hut'. No-one has so far been known to leave it alive.

He will need a lot of endurance and a strong stomach to satisfactorily carry out this job but Bert is to be his second in command. Extra assistance will be given 'as and when available' which simply means the burden of this unhappy task will be theirs alone.

Arthur is to be in charge of Huts Nos. 17/18. He will be assisted by Ken and extra help has been promised 'as and when available.'

Security coverage for the 'Old Lady' and the proposed generator will be my responsibility. Personally I am totally convinced I have been given this task because of my confirmed beliefs that (a) It will not work and (b) we shall be executed if by any chance it does work and we are discovered.

The Colonel knows I will move Heaven and Earth to prevent discovery and, though he has not actually said so, he knows my fear of the Kempfi Tai and the executioner[']s sword will dedicate me to the job. He is not mistaken.

Knowing it will be impossible to hide from the Japanese the tools, the noise and the workings of Len, Dick and Alan, the Manchester magicians, as they attempt to build the generator, I have suggested they start a 'Watch repairing factory.'

All the Japanese, including Colonel Suga, are mad about watches, always tinkering with them, always adjusting them and fortunately always breaking them.

Arthur makes it known this is my first and only original idea likely to be of any use to the camp in general and offers to make it known to the Japs and the Koreans a cheap and efficient watch repairing service is at their disposal. No-one had thought of asking the technicians if they were capable of doing watch repairs. Just one more instance of being taken for granted! . . .

Len has a problem. Several problem[s].

How can we obtain the great lengths of special wire he needs to "wrap the armature?" How do we obtain magnets? How do we steal and then smuggle into camp all these necessities, plus as much scrap iron as can be purloined?

I could not resist reminding him of his tremendous enthusiasm when the idea to construct the generator was first conceived. My sarcasm was not appreciated.

Fortunately we have Freddie. Ready as always to cheat the Japanese, steal from them (or anyone else) Freddie is very willing to give up his relatively safe job in the hospital to join the daily working parties.

He will start tomorrow.

The Japanese supply a lorry to carry the midday meal from the camp to the aerodrome and 'Lekas Corner' and I have decided to go along as one of the servers. This will enable me to study the layout of the various workshops and supply depots and may help in forming some plan enabling Freddie, and any other helper we enlist, to commence their planned high-jacking of essential supplies. Essential to the Japs but vital to us.

The journey to the aerodrome and 'Lekas Corner' gave me my first sight of the world outside the barbed wire since my arrival at Kuching. I was able to see in daylight the home of my Chinese friends but unfortunately I was unable to catch any glimpse of any members of the family.

I wonder how they all are? Have they recovered from the scare and the dreadful days following the discovery of 'Sainsbury'? Will they ever be able to help us again?

What a desolate and isolated place the aerodrome is. There are few signs of any war-like activity and certainly no dumps of supplies such as I had been accustomed to see on our British airfields.

The rice and stew, hopefully known as the 'midday meal' is carried in five gallon oil drums and then handed to the senior soldier of the working party for distribution to the hungry men. This is not by any means a laborious task nor does it take any length of time. One scoop of rice and one tin of stew per man. The empty drums are then taken away by two men to be cleaned before being returned to the lorry.

I noticed Freddie, unusually for him, pushing himself forward, most anxious to be one of the drum cleaners and I wondered. Freddie does not ever willingly offer himself for additional work!

Shortly afterwards the drums were returned and I received a huge wink from Freddie. I noticed the drums were heavier than I had expected empty drums to be but I most carefully did not attempt to allay my curiosity. Which was just as well!

The next stop was 'Lekas Corner.' The same procedure but this time no winks from any of the working party. Then back to camp.

I had just one worry. Would the Jap driver or any of the sentries

examine the empty drums? I had then no idea of what Freddie had managed to smuggle into the drum at the aerodrome.

All went well. No inspections and no questions. Perhaps the Japs were hungry and ready for their midday meal?

I have the distinct feeling my friends are always trying their very best to land me in deep trouble whenever we plan to break the Jap rules and commands and once more I am not mistaken.

After returning the empty drums to our communal cook-house I carefully prized open the more than usually secured lids and found to my horror, and delight, several coils of very fine insulated wire, various bits and pieces of equipment obviously removed from motor bikes, cars and possibly aeroplanes, a large tin of grease and a small pulley wheel.

Just try and imagine the furor if the Japs had carried out an inspection!

Needless to say the technical men were highly delighted with the booty and began immediately to plan how best to use the various bits and pieces.

Freddie returned from his day's work tired but no[t] dispirited in any way. He had, or so he professed, thoroughly enjoyed the change of occupation. However he did admit he would not like it to be permanent.

Sticking to our usual routine of not asking too many questions of people engaged in dubious pursuits I purposely refrained from asking Freddie how he had managed to steal so much valuable gear.

His only admittance was, "A piece of cake, old man."

Gallantly he has volunteered to raid the aerodrome any time we wish him to do so. He has, however, suggested to the Colonel a Victory Cross would just about be an adequate reward for his services.

Arthur has commenced spreading the word about the 'Watch Factory' to the Japs and the Koreans. They are delighted, and are already making use of the services offered. They have even offered the use of various tools and other pieces of equipment and the offer has most graciously been accepted. I suspect some clever propaganda was used by the technical men!

The hut being used as the 'Factory' is now, with the full knowledge of the Japs and Koreans, assuming a most business like efficiency.

By some unexplained means a small but crude lathe has been assembled and it really is most amusing to watch some of the best hated Japs in camp peering at this machine and its operator. If only they knew! I hope they never do!

As the days slowly progress our main camp activities visibly gain in momentum. The technicians are hard at work every spare moment they have and their efforts are beginning to take shape. A sinister looking metal box, which might have been contrived by Fred Karno, occupies most of their attention and this they tell me is the 'Housing' for the generator armature. Our meagre but highly alert security force maintains a constant watch on any Jap guard who enters the camp and his movements are carefully reported. Usually these visits have no other purpose than that of 'treasure hunting.' The Japs and the Koreans are convinced many of our men still possess Parker fountain pens and Rolex wrist-watches. Any other make of pen or watch holds no appeal for them. Unfortunately we have none to offer them.

Our second daily activity regretfully continues to grow at an alarming rate. Burying our dead. Normally the first question asked by the men returning from the working parties was "Anything to eat tonight?" Now the first question is: "How many dead today?"

As we tell them the number of the names of our dead comrades the expression of dismay appearing in their eyes is pitiful to behold and it is difficult to hide tears.

I have made two further expeditions to the aerodrome and 'Lekas Corner' and on my second visit I was able to hold a brief conversation with a Chinese worker.

My Chinese friends are well but still under suspicion and need to exercise the greatest care in their daily dealings with the Japanese. One word out of place and they would be immediately arrested with all the horrible consequences we so recently narrowly

escaped. It seems as though the only people who do not know of our contacts with the Chinese are the Japanese! How very fortunate we are!

Food supplies even for the Japanese are in very short supply. Perhaps Colonel Suga is telling the truth when he says American submarines are responsible for the food shortages?

Materials, such as bed sheets and clothing are almost unobtainable and even half a bed sheet is worth about £50 English pounds.

Have we any bed sheets left in the camp? I must tell Arthur and Freddie of this new 'Racket' possibility.

More and more Chinese, Indian and Malayan workers are being conscripted into the Japanese work forces and even the women are being forced into labouring jobs.

The most heartening news is that the Japs are building air raid shelters and digging protection trenches. But only for their own use. Nightly 'Black-outs' are being practised and rigidly enforced.

Unusual precautions for an army still convinced they are winning the war?

The Colonel and all the Intelligence men in the camp are delighted at my report and are now busily engaged in planning their moves after the war finishes. Something they are certain will happen before very long, but I am still very sceptical. . . .

Work continues on the seemingly endless task of 'Wrapping the Armature' for the generator but now the technicians are talking as though the machine was an accomplished fact. Len has admitted they still have a long way to go and a major problem would be manufacturing a 'Step Up' transformer.

Not being technically minded myself Armatures and 'Step Up' transformers mean little to me although they apparently present no difficulties to Len and his fellow conspirators.

I have, however, presented them with one problem which I am certain they will not find easy to solve.

The generator will need to revolve at a speed of about 3000 revolutions per minute before sufficient current can be generated and a system of gearing will need to be thought up, but most important,

where will we find just one man strong enough to turn the damned thing? Len and company had never given this most important feature a single thought.

The construction of the generator has now reached such an advanced stage that the Colonel has decided we must have a conference to decide several most important matters: Where do we hide the machine, if it works?

We cannot continue to talk about a generator. What fancy name do we give it?

Is our internal security good enough to withstand the most probing Japanese searches?

In the event of discovery who will take the absolute responsibility?

Obviously these and many other questions must be decided as quickly as possible. We must hold our conference within the next day or so.

Arthur prefers not to use the expression 'Conference' but has already referred to us as the 'Board of Directors.' Gives the whole thing a feeling of real class he claims.

Several items are desperately needed before the work on the generator can be completed and as there is only one place from where they can be obtained [and] we have again 'volunteered' Freddie to work at the aerodrome. Very willingly he has accepted this most dangerous job and I really believe he revels in the opportunity to outwit the Japs, even at the risk of his life.

On my previous visits to the aerodrome I had carefully noted the position of two large huts used by the Japs to store spare parts of engines and the wreckage of motor cars and motor cycles, and offering the only help possible I briefed Freddie on the lay-out, and a possible method of penetrating the wire fence surrounding the huts.

The following day I again acted as a server to the men on the aerodrome and again met Freddie and his huge wink. The drums were loaded with contraband. Once more the Japs neglected to carry out any inspection and I was able, through the aid and craft

of Freddie, to deliver yet one more valuable cargo to the technicians. Apparently everything they needed had been expertly, or by fortunate accident, selected by Freddie from the Jap store rooms.

He had only one comment to make on his success. "If I had followed your directions I would by now have been in 'Boot Hill!' In future they can all find their own damned way to places and things."

The Board of Directors meeting was a stormy affair.

The Colonel is far from pleased at the seeming delay in completing the generator project and had we been in England many of the remarks passed for his benefit would undoubtedly have landed us in the 'Glass House' [military prison].

The generator in future will be referred to as 'Ginnie.' The 'Old Lady' will continue to keep her baptismal name, and both these infernal machines will be, we hope, securely hidden in the secret (under the cookhouse fire) hide out.

The Colonel believes, in the unhappy event of the 'Old Lady' and 'Ginnie' being discovered, the Japanese will hold him responsible. This I cannot accept. There can be no doubt should the Japs ever discover our deadly secret every life in the camp will be forfeit. This again raises the problem I have mentioned on several occasions. Have we the right to jeopardize the lives of all our friends by continuing with the enterprise?

The opinion is unanimous. Not one man in the camp would, it is firmly believed, have us discontinue.

The value of up to date news in our daily struggle for existence and survival is considered to be so essential any risk is worth taking.

Our methods of keeping track of strolling sentries is considered to be first class but everyone concerned must be constantly on the alert. Speech must be guarded and our ritual of giving out the news by way of inspired rumour must be maintained.

Len has now given us his plans for the setting up of 'Ginnie' when she has passed her final tests.

The hut occupied by the Cookhouse staff and the camp hygiene

men has been chosen as the safest place in camp to operate the 'Old Lady'.

The gearing devices will consist of the use of the lid covering the huge oil drum used to store our oil rations, the pulley wheel liberated by Freddie from the aerodrome and a fly wheel removed from a Jap motor cycle also by Freddie.

Tests have already been made and a training scheme for those actually operating the 'Old Lady' has been enforced. The training is largely concerned with acquiring a high degree of speed and accuracy in assembling and dismantling the complete installation.

Alan has been selected as the man responsible for turning the gearing mechanism. By general opinion he is the fittest man on the Board of Directors but we have all agreed he shall have extra food. Certainly he will need all the energy he can muster. Turning the rather primitive gearing to reach a speed of 3000 revs. per minute will demand every ounce of strength he has.

No inkling of our plans has been allowed to leak into the current camp gossip but everyone is aware we are 'up to something' and already there is an air of expectancy among the men.

There is no doubt the past months, when we have been completely cut off from authentic news, have been grim and harder to bear than usual. It is so easy, even for the strongest and most optimistic of men, to lose interest and I believe the Colonel when he claims the lack of news has been largely responsible for the greatly increased number of deaths. . . .

So this was to be the night of the trials. The night when all our hopes would be either dashed or vindicated. Tonight we might again be in touch with the world outside and perhaps we might hear of something affecting all our futures?

Never has an hour been so long in passing, but at last I saw Arthur and Bert with Ken, they had all apparently been given the same message as myself and true to the security arrangements had said nothing about it to each other, making their way in the direction of the cook house.

Joining up with them, after seeing our security men were at their places, we opened the door to the hut and came face to face with a sight never before witnessed or even imagined by any living person.

Here in the middle of Kuching P.O.W. camp deep in the jungle and surrounded by a force of Japanese soldiers and officers, 'Ginnie' could dimly be discerned firmly screwed to a newly erected bench. How had Freddie managed to steal the wood necessary to build it?

The illumination, afforded by three tin lids holding a few drops of coconut oil using pieces of rag as wicks, enabled us to see the two pulley wheels and the lid of the oil drum were in their places and the piece of Japanese belt that was to do duty as the driving belt was already in place.

Alan, looking like some machavallian [*sic*; Machiavellian?] monster, was stripped to the waist and standing at the handle which would turn the oil drum lid, this in turn speeding up the smaller pulley wheel and this in its turn forcing 'Ginnie' to turn at the required 3000 revs. per minute.

Dick was standing by with his watch, the only one the Japs had not been able to either steal or buy, ready to give the signal when a radio broadcast could be expected.

We waited with bated breath for this all important signal, inwardly cursing the slowness of time passing. Suddenly Dick gave Alan a nudge, no words were spoken, and taking a deep breath Alan commenced to turn the oil drum wheel. I felt, and probably correctly, that history was being made. Rapidly Alan speeded up his mighty efforts, sweat pouring from him in buckets, and 'Ginnie' was alive!

Len, bent over the knobs of the 'Old Lady,' gave a thumbs up signal and then we knew, we were back in business. The weeks of waiting, stealing, planning and hard work had not been in vain. All the calculations had been accurately worked out and one of the most audacious enemy defying schemes ever to be devised was now purring away in absolute triumph.

Needless to comment. The Colonel is over the moon but still maintains the whole operation could have been completed in about half the time!

Events appear to have been moving with unseemly haste during our enforced break from the news broadcasts. Len listened to names we had never heard of.

General Eisenhower? General Stilwell? The 'Chindits'?

The Germans retreating from the Russian armies? And we are at long last beginning to advance in Burma.

With everyone feeling as though they had won the first dividend on a football pool we poured our congratulations on to Len. He was the Mastermind. He was the architect of this wonderful machine. How difficult to resist cheering him loud and long. But we had to maintain complete silence. Sounds of revelry and high spirits would have brought every Jap within miles running into the camp.

A silent handshake all round. A sincere wish that the machines would continue their most valuable work without interruption and, most sincere wish of all—avoiding discovery by the Japanese.

Alan, who had by now recovered from his superman efforts, very definitely needed a shower. He must be at least two stones lighter in weight. What a tremendous effort it needed to coax 'Ginnie' into operation. I have the feeling it will need tremendous efforts on our part to induce Alan ever again to act as the 'engine.'

He was absolutely whacked!

We were all 'whacked' but jubilant and highly excited.

Lying on my bed space later in the evening I reflected on the audacity of our achievement and the more I reflected the more I marvelled.

Len, Dick and Alan are very modest men and seem to think little of their joint achievement but surely their efforts must be rewarded after the war ends?

I have no doubt the Colonel will bring to the attention of the War Office the bravery and skill of these men. Their work on the 'Old Lady' has already proven to be of great value in sustaining the morale of all and now this, their latest and greatest achievement,

must surely rank as one of the finest and most courageous acts of the war. True we are not in the front line and all the horrors of meeting the enemy face to face in mortal combat we escape purely by virtue of being reasonably safe behind the barbed wire and many thousands of miles from the war itself.

But we are completely surrounded by forces of the most cruel and sadistic army ever to be engaged in conflict.

Hanging over our heads was the certain knowledge cruel and vicious reprisals would be meted out to us if the 'Old Lady' and 'Ginnie' were ever discovered. The massacre that would inevitably follow would be unequalled in any other sector of the war of comparative size, we had no means of fighting back and we would not die easily.

Many of us have bitter memories of witnessing the punishment meted out to prisoners guilty of far lesser crimes than that we were now perpetrating. We were undoubtedly, because of our position, running greater risks than ever we might have faced in open battle. But as the Colonel repeated tonight—"We will continue to defy them in every way possible and whatever the risks."

His word is law, but I hope the results justify the risks!

Perhaps some day it will be possible to record in greater detail this momentous day and to have a permanent record of the machines and the room where they operate either photographed or sketched. . . .

'Ginnie' is now engaged every night but her protectors, operators and security guards are beginning to feel the strain of being constantly on guard against speaking out of turn, against dropping hints to anxious men who are constantly asking, "Anything good today?" and being alert against strolling Jap N.C.O.'s or Korean sentries. We have many false alarms and this means interrupted reception but it is better to be safe than sorry and no-one rebukes a security man who mistakenly calls "Eyes Down," meaning someone unknown is approaching.

The assembling and disassembling drill is now a fine art and in less

than thirty seconds the entire station can be safely stowed away, although I never cease to miss a few heart beats whenever a Jap or a Korean decides to visit the cook house to dry their clothes or scrounge a mug of tea.

Fortunately 'Ginnie' and the 'Old Lady' appear to be more than comfortable in their warm hide out and the presence of the enemy troubles them not at all. It does cause us a few anxious moments though and we are always very pleased to see them depart on their rounds.

Because of frequent interruptions it has been impossible for some time now to receive a complete broadcast and our news bulletins consist of items spread over a few days. From this collation we gather the Russians are doing extremely well and the Germans are being heavily defeated. There are constant references to activity in Burma and we gather the Japs are now in deep trouble, being forced to withdraw their forces nearer to Bangkok. We wish they were withdrawing nearer to Borneo. The Americans are enduring terrible conditions in the islands they have attacked and there is little news from England. The battle in Italy is being hard fought but it does appear we are advancing, although slowly.

Australian troops are making their presence felt in their theatres of the war and I can imagine the Japs will find them a very formidable force to oppose.

Altogether very heartening but still a long way off. As Bert has just exclaimed, "How long, Oh Lord, how long?" . . .

What a wonderful story! How terrible it is we must keep this story secret from all our men. Without exception.

Tonight we learned the Allied Forces had successfully invaded Normandy and were progressing well. General Montgomery, we had heard of him before, was obviously the man we ought to have had with us in 1942.

'Blood and Guts Patton.' Now there is a name for a General! It now begins to look as though someone had finally put the bomb under our War Office and watched it explode!

There will be great rejoicings in Britain tonight and how we wish we could share them. But we dare not tell anyone. Even the Japs will not yet know of this latest threat to their ambitions.

How difficult to meet your friends, knowing that could you but impart just this one piece of information it would give them an added incentive to live and a boost to their morale better than telling them they had become millionaires.

How difficult not to look jubilant and avoid the expression in the eyes that tells immediately: "I know something you would give your right hand to know."

The Colonel has rather dampened our enthusiasm by reminding us: "There are many miles of difficult territory and many months of hard and bitter fighting to undergo before the German armies are defeated, always allowing for our forces not being driven back from the invasion points."

Somehow though, we feel that with a General bearing the name of "Blood and Guts" there is little danger of the Germans dislodging his army.

So far we have had no indication the Japs are aware of the invasion and we are being extremely careful not to tell them about it!

Each evening we listen intently to the news broadcast and there seems little doubt that our forces are making great headway, although they are having a strenuous time. I suppose Herr Hitler will wish to hang on to his empire as long as possible but he appears to be in dire straits. The Russians are wasting no time in making advances, our forces in Italy, although held up for a long time are now well on their way to final victory.

How could we possibly release all this wonderful news to our friends?

We dare not take the risk of the Japs being alerted if we tell of these wonderful happenings. Once made common knowledge the men could not be expected to keep silent. They would be bound to discuss it and we still did not know the full extent of the knowledge some of our guards had of our language.

Our men must wait until either the Japs tell us or one of them indulges in careless talk.

Ken, whose clear calculating brain has obviously been working overtime, has given us an idea.

"Let the Padre drop a hint at the next burial party, it will be a change for him to give the men glad tidings. Instead of telling them of the next world he can tell them that things are brighter on [*sic*; in] this world."

But how could the Padre tell the men? We had not yet told the Padre!

Very well then, said Ken, we must take the Padre into our confidence and ask him to think up something from the Bible which might drop a hint to the bearers that something exciting has happened. The bearers would naturally be puzzled but by the time they had thought about it, perhaps the Japs would have released the news. In any case, continued Ken, we would not be releasing the true facts but just giving the men something to think about and something which would keep their minds occupied and away from the daily miserable grind.

We never have long to wait in Kuching before we require the services of the Padre. Usually we see him twice daily when he conducts the burial service for those who died during the night and in the late afternoon when those who have died during the day are interred.

Unfortunately we are not permitted to speak with the Padre but as accomplished P.O.W. law breakers, ways and means to circumvent this difficulty have been found.

I had the pleasure of telling the Padre the glad tidings coupled with the sad duty of attending the funeral of two men with whom I had become close friends.

Walking with the Padre at the head of the small cortege I whispered to him the news of the invasion and for one moment thought it was to be the daftest thing I had ever done. To write that the Padre was knocked completely breathless is an understatement. The poor man nearly collapsed with pleasant surprise but unfortu-

nately [*sic*; fortunately] managed to control his emotions. Pulling himself together the first thing he asked was "Could he pass on the word to his officer friends in the officers' camp?"

"Very definitely no! Start thinking about how you propose to start a new camp rumour in a few moments time, and you can use the same rumour to interest your friends. Your word of honour, please?"

Gladly given.

Slowly the cortege of two bodies approached 'Boot Hill.' We waited for the Korean sentry to take up his usual place at the graveside and to see if we were to be honoured by the presence of any of the Senior Jap N.C.O.'s or even one of the Jap officers. Occasionally they honoured us with their presence. Paying solemn obsecience [*sic*; obeisance] to departed enemy.

Today we had only the Korean[,] 'Scarface,' which meant we had to be especially careful.

As the Service progressed and the Padre repeated the prayers, he suddenly intoned, "Today I shall quote from Exodus, Chapter Fifteen, verses nine and ten."

9. "The enemy said, I will pursue."
I will overtake.
I will divide the spoil.
My lust shall be satisfied upon them.
10. I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them.
Thou didst blow with thy wind.
The sea covered them.
They sank as lead in the mighty waters."

This was such a change of routine for him I could see all the bearers trying to puzzle out why the change in the accepted burial service ritual but more so I could see them puzzling out the meaning of the verses.

I could understand their bewilderment. I found them difficult to understand myself and I knew the reason for the change in the service!

Whether or not the under-bearers at yesterday's funeral service read anything significant into the message by the Padre it is difficult to say.

There have been many questions asked today, including one which asked if the tropical sun had finally done for the Padre!

If we have achieved nothing else we have at least given the men something completely new to discuss and there is no doubt everyone in camp is now talking about the Exodus verses and "Is there any hidden meaning to them."

If only we dare tell them. . . .

The 'Old Lady' has informed us that far from being driven back into the sea our forces are making great headway and, although far from beaten, the Germans are in retreat and losing many men as prisoners and a great deal of equipment.

The Russians are ruthlessly pressing forward and it does begin to look as though the power of the mighty Reich is reaching the end of its days. I do wish we could hear of rapid advances in our direction but the 'Old Lady' has told us nothing calculated to raise our hopes of an early release.

The Japs and the Koreans are now talking openly about the battles in France and Italy but assure us they are still winning and will never cease to fight. They appear to be unworried about the possibility of the Germans being defeated and are seemingly prepared to continue on their own. I wonder how long they will last if they are forced to fight alone?

We are continuing to feed Alan with as much extra food as we can manage to enable him to continue his job as the 'Engine' but now he is developing huge muscles in the arm used for turning the flywheel and is, as Arthur has described it, "Mighty muscles on one side and P.O.W. on the other."

One disturbing item of news we have, by order of the Colonel, censored from the news rumours we release to the men. Some form of high powered rocket is being used against London by the Germans and is causing much damage and has been described as the 'New Blitz.' We have many Londoners with us and the Colonel

believes they have enough to put up with in Kuching without hearing of additional dangers to their families at home. . . .

The only good thing about February is that the month has fewer days, thus shortening our stay (or our lives) in Kuching. 'Ginnie' and the 'Old Lady' are performing admirably and Len, Dick and Alan continue to work their daily miracles. Through their skill and endurance we now know the war against Germany cannot be much longer prolonged. The Germans, if not in full flight, must be retreating as fast as possible to their Homeland. How can they possibly escape from the Russians in the East and our Forces in the West? Their position must be hopeless.

Sadly we also know the Japanese still occupy vast tracts of territory and there are no signs of retreat anywhere. They will be extremely difficult to dislodge and every occupied island will be bitterly fought over. . . .

March began in such a manner and for the first time since her creation the 'Old Lady' is in danger. The damp has attacked her and Len is having difficulty in tuning her to any of the transmitters. We can only hope his skill will cure her and we can resume normal services.

I have received a rather frightening message from my Chinese aerodrome contact. "Be on your guard, the Japs are planning to move all prisoners from Kuching." The Chinese had so far been unable to discover our ultimate destination but from details which had filtered through to the Chinese underground all prisoners on the island of Labuan, just off North Borneo, had been herded together and forced to march into the jungle. Their fate was unknown other than those who had been unable to walk had been put to death by bayonet.

Many bodies had been found by Chinese fishermen but the Japs had left the island and were believed to be in the neighbourhood of Sandakan, one of the principal towns in Borneo.

Does this mean the Australians are at last heading our way? . . .

Puzzling news from the western war? The 'Old Lady' would have us believe our forces and the Russians are almost living in

Hitler[']s Headquarters. Certainly the Germans have been knocked out of France, Belgium and Holland and Denmark.

Len is uncertain but he thinks he has heard reference to an invasion of Norway by our forces. The question posed by the Colonel is:—"How long will it be before the German army capitulates?" He thinks, in view of the news we have received, it will only be a matter of days. But if the Germans do capitulate how will it effect us? The Japs have already said they will fight to the death even without the aid of their Allies, and so far, other than our daily air raids, there is as yet no sign of relieving armies anywhere near Kuching.

We have certain knowledge the Japs are fighting with unbelievable tenacity on the occupied islands of the Pacific and the Americans and Australians are having a very tough time indeed.

Where is this reputed dare-devil Mountbatten? . . .

I could not be present during the evening operation of the 'Old Lady' and arrived a few minutes after shut down. But I sensed immediately something of great importance had happened.

The German Army has capitulated! The Western war is over. How relieved our families at home will be and how they must be longing for the capitulation of the Japanese army. No more than we are!

Because of the difficulty of operating the 'Old Lady' we have only a limited time to listen to the broadcasts and consequently we frequently miss any extended bulletins. But tonight a very special effort is to be mounted and if necessary we will listen all night through.

Once again we are in a dilem[m]a. How can we break this wonderful news to our friends? Again the answer is: We dare not. We must wait until the Japs decide to admit they are on their own. I suppose they will eventually do so, but how long must we wait?

Once again I have called on the Padre and asked him to think of some verses, if possible less obscure than on the previous occasion. He has promised to do so at the next funeral party. And we shall not have long to wait for that sad occasion.

The much too familiar scene of a Kuching P.O.W. funeral cortege with myself and the Padre in the lead arrived at the spot se-

lected on 'Boot Hill' for the internment of yet one more friend who had found the struggle for survival well beyond his strength. Solemnly we gathered round the open grave as the Padre commenced the service. We were accompanied on this occasion by no less a personage than Suga himself. As the final benediction was about to be pronounced the Padre intoned, "And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey."

Solemnly Suga saluted the grave and turning to the Padre congratulated him on "Very moving ceremony, pity so many have to die."

The mass murderer of Kuching conveniently overlooked the one essential point. A little pity, a little mercy from him and so many would not have died.

But obviously the verses meant nothing to him and I confess it conveyed little to me, but it was noticeable the bearers were puzzled and with memories of the last verses delivered by the Padre knew something good was either on the way or had already happened.

As we expected, the camp was alive with rumours within minutes of the return of the working party and how wildly astray were these rumours.

Never having been a steady church-goer in my youth and completely ignorant of biblical matters I asked Ken the meaning of the verses. "Read Exodus, Chapter three, Verse eight, and don't be so bloody ignorant." I did and I am still ignorant. What have the Egyptians to do with Kuching?

The discussion was not prolonged.

These are indeed wonderful days. Germany defeated. The Japs losing so much of their empire and the everyday air raids over Kuching. There is so much telling us the war is almost over. But there is still no sign of any Allied advance on Borneo. Until the day I see an American or an Australian soldier in Kuching P.O.W. camp armed with a machine gun or whatever weapon they are using now a days I will not accept I am a free man.

Suga has informed the various official camp masters the Western war is over and Germany is defeated. But he emphasised, "Japan is not beaten, we still occupy large territories and Japan will fight on until death."

He still believes the war will last 100 years. But I think in his heart Suga knows the writing is on the wall for Japan and although the Pacific war will not end overnight it must eventually end in defeat for the Nipponese empire.

Tonight we heard for the first time the name of Kuching town mentioned by the 'Old Lady.' Allied bombers had carried out several strafing runs over the town and had inflicted severe damage. We have first hand knowledge this news at least is accurate!

My Chinese friend at the aerodrome welcomed the news of the German capitulation with tears in his eyes. Although he can have little idea of what the end of the Western war means to us he is now firmly convinced before many days have passed all men with the exception of the Japanese will be free men.

He will pass on the news to my friends in Kuching and told me he had contacted the underground who are doing their best to advise our forces of our location.

There is still no let up in the Japanese attitude towards their prisoners, working parties are still demanded in increasing numbers and always there is trouble because we cannot meet their demands.

And so the days continue to pass with little change in our way of life. The sick roll is ever increasing and the road to 'Boot Hill' is now very well worn.

The 'Old Lady' nightly advises us of great advances by the Allies into Jap territory but still we hear nothing of advances towards Borneo. . . .

DOCUMENT 62

From the "Creators" of the "Old Lady" and "Ginnie"

Papers of E. R. Pepler. 88/33/1. IWM.

The Birth

Up to now, readers can see that nothing really untoward had happened except for our struggle for existence and it was at this time, towards the end of 1942, that the birth of the secret radio and generator took place. . . . [W]e were split into Units or Companies and onto our Unit had been tagged about twelve Royal Air Force personnel, who had also been trapped by the Japanese. Amongst these men, was a small, dark, young man by the name of Leonard Alexander Thomas Beckett, holding the rank of Corporal. This young man was an experienced radio engineer and had previously been on Radio Location in the South of England. An old deaf aid amplifier and a quantity of small torch batteries had been obtained from the male civilian internees camp and Beckett was asked if he could make a radio from these few parts. He replied that he would endeavour to so do and commenced within a few days.

Local security was set up to try and guard him whilst he was working, assembling his meagre parts and as we were allowed by the Japanese to keep some men in camp off the working parties, to do camp chores, he and the security men were numbered amongst them. One of the first things Beckett had to do was to make tools, such as a soldering iron and lathe for turning parts, etc. After a short while things began to take shape. The actual receiver was built into an army mess tin, in which the valve from the deaf aid amplifier; the tuning condensers, which were made from an old biscuit tin; the coil, which was made by winding copper wire around a Gibb bakelite shaving-soap container, were set. Some small condensers, obtained from old cars on working parties, were added, together humdinger or rheostat, made from old brass and wire.

We had obtained an old primus stove, which was powered by petrol stolen from the Japanese, to heat the iron for soldering. Luckily one of the prisoners had brought some solder and flux into the camp with him. The work was hard and hazardous as Japanese soldiers were always in and out of the camp and searches were

quite frequent. However, within three to four weeks of starting the receiver was finished and then the torch batteries were placed into a small box and soldered, together with copper wire. As it was well known that the radio reception was better during the night and also the security would be also better then, it was decided to operate after dark. The operation was immediately successful and news was taken down in shorthand as heard either over the B.B.C. Overseas Service, New Delhi or Chungking. At the beginning the news bulletins were passed on to all the prisoners and to the various camps around us, but as time went by we found that this was too dangerous.

The radio, for security reasons, was buried each night after completion of use, in the soil, under one of the huts, after being placed in a large biscuit tin. This operation each time did not improve the radio and deterioration set in very quickly and Beckett was hard put in trying to keep the radio workable. The batteries also soon began to fail and there were only a few replacements. Obviously the radio would soon cease to function unless something else was created to take the place of the batteries, so Beckett decided to make a power unit using the mains electricity for power.

Increased Power

The electricity had been installed in the camp by using barbed wire and during tropical thunderstorms there were many vivid moments. The Japanese had allowed us to do this as it was essential for medical and cook-house use to have light during the nights. Leonard Beckett was a very resourceful young man and he set about his task of making a power unit with determined precision. He made a bakelite casing for the transformer and then wound copper wire, obtained from an old armature brought in by one of the prisoners from an outside working party. Luckily one of the prisoners was an electrician and he had brought into the prisoner-of-war camp, a small avometer which Beckett used to check readings and resistances.

It was essential for Beckett to have a rectifier valve and one of the military police [G. W. Pringle],²³ who had been taken prisoner, went out one dark night through the wire to Kuching. He contacted some Chinese and, to our delight, he arrived back at the camp with a very precious rectifier valve; Beckett hummed with delight and I could sense that success was not very far away. He knew that one of the greatest obstacles for good listening was to counteract the hum and noise caused by the electricity so once again it was essential to have some condensers for smoothing purposes. Scotty, our Sergeant Major, was driving and maintaining lorries for the Japanese and he was able to obtain some condensers from the engines which he smuggled into the camp. Out of this array of spare parts was born the lower unit and with modifications and additions to the receiver, we were ready for testing. The first few efforts were not very successful as the interference from the mains electricity was terrible. Gradually Beckett reduced this interference to a negligible sound and he pronounced that the whole unit was ready for use.

I can well remember our first try with the new works and as we only had one earphone (detached from the deaf aid amplifier), Beckett tuned in and obtained the B.B.C. Overseas Service and then passed the earphone to me so that I could take the news down in shorthand. The reception was really good with minimum of fading and I was able to obtain most of the bulletin. I used a pencil but no paper as this was difficult to destroy in a hurry, what was used was a type of white perspex material which, when written on in pencil, immediately rubbed off when it was rubbed with a wet finger. Now that we had a fairly permanent radio we had to consider and overhaul our security arrangements.

Security

I must confess that up to then the systems used were rather of a hit and miss variety. As we operated during the night, we had look-outs posted near the two camp entrances who, if they saw a

Japanese enter the camp, had to make very hasty tracks towards the stores hut at the far end of the camp, where we were operating from. A look-out was posted outside of the stores hut and as soon as he heard or saw any movement he tapped the door to warn us of approaching danger. The equipment was the[n] very hastily hidden amongst the sacks of rice, stored in the hut and we slipped out into the cookhouse and started chopping wood for the fires.

This type of security was not very good as very often Japanese guards came into the camp through the barbed wire fence and not the main entrances. These guards were on nefarious business of swapping tinned food, eggs, etc. for watches and rings. As can, therefore be visualised, it was easy for a Japanese to be in our vicinity before proper warning could be given. Also it was very difficult and hazardous for anyone to make tracks across the camp in the dark as the Japanese were likely to use cold steel if suddenly confronted by a prisoner. Actually this did happen to one of our look-outs who was unlucky enough to run into another Japanese guard when hurrying to warn us of a Japanese who had entered through the main gate. He was wounded with a Japanese bayonet in his side, luckily it was only a flesh wound.

Leonard Beckett and myself, decided that our security arrangements would have to be really looked at and as we were now using the camp electricity, it was decided to phase the supply to the stores, via the two huts near both the main entrances. By doing this, we could then break the circuit from either the two huts by removing a home-made fuse, inserted in the wiring system of the huts near the look-outs window. As soon as a Japanese guard entered the camp the fuse was immediately pulled and of course, it cut off our current. Beckett had installed a small, heavily shaded lamp in the stores hut and this immediately went out, warning us of approaching danger. The next problem was where to hide the radio quickly. In the stores hut was a fairly large home-made table for use by our camp Quarter-Master, and this was examined very closely. We decided to fix a false bottom under the table top and put some drawers at one end and along one side. At the other end

a flap was hinged on the inside so that by removing three nails from the table top at this end, the flap opened down and therefore, we had a secret compartment. The radio parts were rested upon the shelf made by dropping the flap and when the warning was given, all I had to do was to disconnect the electric wire from the mains and Beckett pushed the whole lot into the compartment, drew up the drawbridge and inserted the three nails into their respective holes. This whole operation only took a few seconds and our security was now very well secured except for the stray Japanese who came through the barbed wire fence.

The stores compartment had been partitioned off from the main hut by a wooden partition and two-thirds of this hut was occupied by the cookhouse staff so we examined this angle. In our unit was a Canadian fighter pilot, Sergeant J. P. Flemming, who had been shot down in his Hurricane over the Dutch East Indies by the Japanese. As he was parachuting to the ground, he was shot-up by the Zero fighter and had been badly wounded in his arm. Although he had been operated upon by the British, his fingers were paralysed to a very considerable extent and he was not a very effective working prisoner. We therefore enrolled him in as Head of our security and he decided that he would post himself at the end of the stores hut in the cook-house staffs quarters, as this location commanded an excellent view of anyone approaching. Another fuse was inserted above his position and therefore, he could cut off our electricity supply without moving and attracting any attention. So it was laid on every time that we were operating that before commencing, the camp was thoroughly checked in order to ascertain whether we had any unwanted visitors or not and then our warning signals went into action. This arrangement worked perfectly the whole time we were using the mains electricity for power and only once was there a slip[-]up.

I may have been a bit superstitious, but everytime we were operating, Leonard Beckett and myself made our way across the camp from our quarters to the stores hut just before lights out at 10 p.m. Len was not very good in the dark, but I could sense or see my way

across the obstacles, although very often it was pitch dark. So in view of this, we always went together but alas, one evening Len went ahead of me as he was anxious to check part of the radio before news time. In view of this a full security check had not been completed and as Len was doing the adjustments behind the bolted doors of the stores hut, a knock on the door was heard. The Quarter-master, who slept in the stores, and Len, presumed it was me and shouted for me to hang on a minute. This resulted in heavy banging on the door and it was apparent to them that it was not me but a Japanese. The radio was hastily pushed into the compartment at the end of the table and the Quarter-master opened the door. On the steps was a very irate Japanese guard and was very suspicious because the door had been bolted. Luckily the lighting in the stores was very dim and also the Quarter-master could speak quite a lot of Malay, as could the Japanese. The Quarter-master explained that the door was kept bolted so that none of the prisoners could get in and steal any of the rice and other stores kept there. This allayed the Japanese guard's suspicions and he made tracks out of the camp. It was not discovered by Len until he checked the table, that one of the wire leads from the power pack to the receiver, was hanging out from the side of the compartment. At this stage I arrived on the scene and it was obvious that there would be no news that night as Len's nerve was very severely shaken. He made a vow then and there that he would always wait for me in future, and would never attempt to operate or check the radio before full security was in operation.

The question of a secure daytime hiding place was seriously considered as it was during the day that the Japanese were most likely to have an organised search. The table compartment was not considered secure enough, as quite a few Japanese were always paying visits to the stores. In another corner of the camp, there was a smallish hut with a dirt floor, banana leaf roof and corrugated tin sides to within two feet of the floor. In this hut we had constructed large oil drum containers as ovens for baking rice cakes, etc. The drums had been raised up off the floor onto brick walls we had

built, with the fires below. The walls were very wide and at the end furthest away from the fires, we took out some of the bricks and made a large hollow space into which we could put both the receiver and power unit. The bricks were mortared back into position with the usual mud and sand and this never took very long to dry. After a while, it was apparent that the operation was risky and time wasting, in having to remove bricks and remortar everytime the set was to be used.

A rather ingenious solution was thought of and this was in being [used] right up to the end. As the fire bars were about eighteen inches off of the floor, a hole was dug at the spot where all the ashes fell. Into this hole was inserted a large biscuit tin which could hold both the receiver and power unit. Over the top was set a shallow tray or box container, containing the same earth as the floor, when this dropped into place and the earth brushed around the edges, it was impossible to detect. Furthermore, when the ashes dropped down the camouflage was perfect and at anytime when the Japanese were in their searching mood, all that was needed was an extra large fire to be burning on the firebars.

This turned out to be the ideal place as not only was it secure, but the set was kept reasonably dry at all times as it had been found that any damp soon affected the workings of the set and corrosion soon set in.

DOCUMENT 63

The Black Market

Papers of G. W. Pringle. IWM.

Only one way of obtaining anything extra to eat is left to us. The 'Black Market.' All the Koreans are heavily engaged in it, so heavily they dare not take action against those of our men who are also engaged in 'Trade.' Colonel Suga would most certainly take drastic action against his soldiers if he ever discovered the ramifications

of the rackets they are engaged in and pity help any P.O.W. discovered dealing with them.

A few of the Jap N.C.O.'s are not above a little dealing, but they want only gold and strangely enough English pound notes. There are still a few floating around the camp. I understand the Japs are not permitted to return to their homeland with any foreign currency but no objection is raised to their having gold plated teeth. Any money they acquire is traded with Chinese dentists and this explains why so many of them possess mouths full of hideous gold plated teeth. The Chinese will also accept British money. This would seem to be a pointer to the final outcome of the war. Obviously the Chinese are not convinced of a Japanese victory. They are very wily birds!

The only gold I possess is the ring she [Pringle's wife] bought me for our wedding and I am very loath to part with this. But I am hungry and I know she would raise no objection. Sadly I have decided to contact the 'Racketeers.'

'Dodie' from Glasgow is the go-between. He makes a profit but manages to convince everyone he is doing it only for our sakes.

Two days I have waited to hear of the result, if any, of my first transaction with the Black Market and they have been two very worrying days.

What would happen if the 'Go between' and his Jap contact were discovered? My gold ring is engraved with my initials, presumably it would not be too difficult for the Jap Kempri Tai to trace its owner? . . .

I have worried needlessly. My gold ring has been successfully sold and I am now richer by 45 dollars. This I have asked 'Dodie' to use in buying some coconut oil, one or two eggs and a few bananas. . . .

Until tonight I believed that the only peaceful place in this hell-hole of Kuching was our cemetery. 'Boot Hill.'

But this night there is no peace in this resting place of the worn out dead. An act of such ghoulishness is in operation that even the brilliant moon and the scurrying clouds add their bizarre touch,

lighting the scene with a brilliance that lies like an evil cloud over the whole area.

"Quiet, for God's sake" I overhear a Gunner whisper.

His skeleton-like body admitting his own nearness to the company of the dead.

Undeterred, his companion, equally as skeleton like, and completely undismayed at the use of his Maker's Name in such surroundings presses forward with an almost insane stare in his eyes.

A new grave is the object of their search.

These two had, just a few hours ago, assisted at the burial of one of their comrades who had finally given up the unequal struggle to survive.

They had noticed as the burial blanket, which acted as the shroud for all dead P.O.W.'s was withdrawn from the body, a gold ring still adorned one of its pitiful fingers.

A gold ring meant trade with the Japanese who never refused to buy or trade for gold. And this trade offered a further period of survival for those who had gold to sell.

Survival was uppermost in the minds of these two men and had turned their thoughts to the gold ring buried with their companion.

They were unable to rest on their return from the burial party and planned to revisit at dead of night when the sentries were least alert, the last resting place of their dead companion.

Slowly and carefully the two proceeded, always listening intently for any sound of an approaching sentry. The mission on which they are bound [is] highly dangerous. A mission which the British P.O.[.J]W. might find just possible to condone, but which, were they to be discovered by the Japanese, would mean their own violent death.

The grave they seek is not very deep and the earth covering the body is lightly packed. Burial parties lack the necessary strength to dig deep graves and the earth which covers the body is always hurriedly returned.

Quickly the two set about the task of removing sufficient earth to enable them to reach the body. But they have frequent stops to

rest and breathe, for their breathing is loud and laboured and can easily be heard on this still and eerie night.

"I've got him, quick give a hand" I overhear.

A macabre struggle follows before an arm of the body is finally extracted and the gold ring quickly slipped from its finger.

Hurriedly the men return the partially exhumed body and replace the scattered earth until the grave again looks undisturbed.

The following morning at the working party on Kuching aerodrome they make their sale and receive in return a supply of coconut oil and a few eggs.

This will guarantee them a few more days survival.

Sketch by LIEUT. S. E. BAGNALL, R.A.



Foodstuff and medical supplies dropped by Allied planes over Batu Lintang Camp

SOURCE: Papers of Lieutenant S. E. Bagnall, 90/8/1. IWM.

濠洲軍總司令官トマスブレインー大將布告

宛、ホルネオ、チモール、セラム、アルア、ホムン、ケイ、アル、エ、ハバル、アラ
ラ、ラ、海峽、島、英領、ニ、ギ、ネ、ア、ニ、ウ、リ、テ、ニ、ニ、ア、イ、ル、ラ、ン、ド、ブ、
リ、ン、ヒ、ル、ソ、ロ、モ、リ、群、島、オ、ー、シ、ン、ナ、ウ、ル、ム、ヒ、ス、ル、ク、諸、島、に、は、
全日本軍、其指揮下の部隊、各司令官及麾下全員

天皇陛下の命により、昭和二十五年八月五日東京から日本政府より大本営代表團
印、米國、中華、民國、英國、及ソ聯の正式代表者の受納する降服書によつて
前記諸國に對する大本営及全日本軍の無條件降服宣言せらる。

大本営は全日本軍司令官に對し、大本営命令オオ号、を以て、加納作戦武
隊を以て現在地に於て聯合軍現地司令官に無條件降服の命を受け、
濠洲軍總司令官トマスブレインー大將は前記地域全日本軍の降服受諾
の責任を受け之に從つて左記司令官又は其の正式代表者日本軍無條件降
服受諾の任に指定す。

- (イ) アララ、ラ、海峽、島、チモール、エ、ハバル、ル、ケイ、ア、ラ、ホムン、セラム、アル
の諸島に於ては濠洲軍總司令官又はその代表者。
- (ロ) ニ、ギ、ネ、ア、ニ、ウ、リ、テ、ニ、ニ、ア、イ、ル、ラ、ン、ド、ヒ、ス、ル、ク、オ、ー、シ、ン、の諸島に
於ては濠洲軍第一軍司令官又はその代表者。
- (ハ) ア、ン、ヒ、ル、ソ、ロ、モ、リ、群、島、に於ては濠洲軍第一軍司令官指揮下の濠洲軍
オ、三、部、隊、司令官。
- (ニ) ホルネオに於ては濠洲軍オ、三、部、隊、又はその代表者。

前記地域の全日本軍司令官は、本軍、前記各司令官又はその代表に依つて
正當に簽せられたる總々の布告、命令指示に從ふべし。

昭和二十五年八月一日

濠洲軍總司令官陸軍大將トマスブレインー

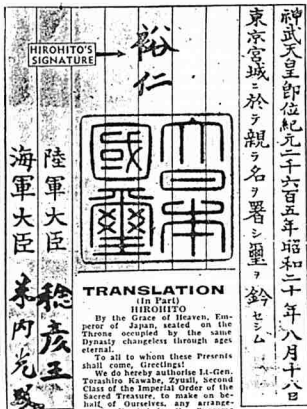


Leaflet dropped over Batu Lintang Camp by Allied planes on 3 September 1945

SOURCE: Papers of Lieutenant S. E. Bagnall, 90/8/1, IWM.

Hirohito's Surrender

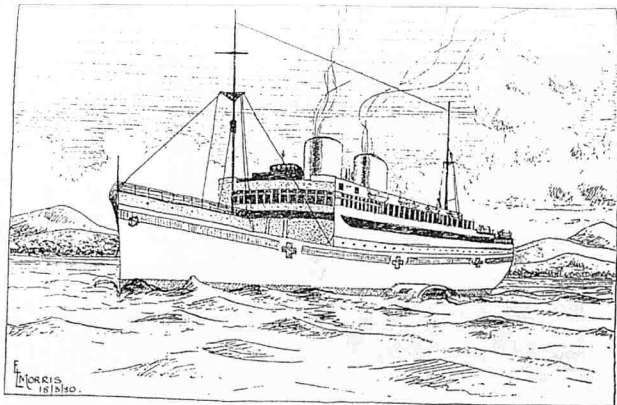
BELOW is one page of the Imperial surrender agreement presented to Lt-Gen. Sutherland, Chief of Staff to Gen. MacArthur, by the Jap envoys summoned to Manila. The figures enclosed in the square in the centre comprise the Seal of the Japanese Emperor.—Syd. Sun.



as stated in the second clause of the message of the Government of the United States of America, which was conveyed to Our Government through the Government of Switzerland on August sixteenth of this year. In witness whereof, We have herunto set Our signature and caused the Great Seal of the Empire to be affixed. Given at Our Palace in Tokio, this eighteenth day of the eighth month the twentieth year of Showa.

Hirohito's surrender

SOURCE: Papers of L. E. Morris, 91/18/1. IWM.



H.M.R.A.N. Hospital Ship Wangane 11a departing Kuching
SOURCE: Papers of L. E. Morris, 91/18/1. IWM.



Illustration of the Field Hospital, Labuan, September 1945

Australian 9th Division Field Hospital, Labuan Island, September 1945
SOURCE: Papers of Lieutenant S. E. Bagnall, 90/8/1. IWM.



COUNTESS EDWINA MOUNTBATTEN
TALKING TO POWS IN HOSPITAL
LABUAN SEPTEMBER, 1945.

Countess Edwina Mountbatten at Field Hospital, Labuan Island, September 1945

SOURCE: Papers of L. E. Morris, 91/18/1. IWM.



BUCKINGHAM PALACE

The Queen and I bid you a very warm welcome home.

Through all the great trials and sufferings which you have undergone at the hands of the Japanese, you and your comrades have been constantly in our thoughts. We know from the accounts we have already received how heavy those sufferings have been. We know also that these have been endured by you with the highest courage.

We mourn with you the deaths of so many of your gallant comrades.

With all our hearts, we hope that your return from captivity will bring you and your families a full measure of happiness, which you may long enjoy together.

September 1945.

Royal Letter Addressed to All Returned British Troops
SOURCE: Papers of L. E. Morris, 91/18/1. IWM.

CHAPTER 7

OF "MASSACRES" AND "MURDERS"

SARAWAK WAS fortunate that the Japanese occupying forces did not unleash a reign of terror and retribution upon the Chinese population, who, like their brethren in the Straits Settlements, also contributed to the China Relief Fund and the British war effort. Nevertheless the Chinese in Sarawak were not as politically active as their counterparts in Singapore or Penang. Likewise, the indigenous peoples did not encounter the wrath of the Japanese. No mass executions were carried out in Sarawak, nor were there any forced marches of P.O.W.s as there were in North Borneo, where Australians and British soldiers perished during the closing days of the war.

However, three incidents, two shrouded in mystery relying only on native hearsay and the other possessing high drama, provide the thrill in the chapter of the Japanese period in Sarawak. Both cases involve the death of senior Brooke officers, which consequently left an indelible mark on the small group of European survivors who were their friends, colleagues, and compatriots.

No clear facts or hard evidence remains of the purported "mas-

sacre" of a group of Europeans at Long Nawang, a military station in Dutch Borneo, including Andrew MacPherson, resident of the Third Division, and his six-months' pregnant wife.¹ The circumstances surrounding the death of Cyril Drummond Le Gros Clark, Sarawak chief secretary, appear to be a case of cold-blooded murder at the hands of his Japanese jailers. Comparatively, the murder of Le Gros Clark and several others, known as the "Keningau Incident," possesses more reliable eyewitness accounts than the alleged "massacre" at Long Nawang.

The disappearance and presumed murder of Donald Hudden, district officer of Baram, is another mystery in which it is difficult to ascertain the reliability of information gained from the native grapevine. Likewise, another victim, G. R. H. Arundell, resident of the Second Division, is shrouded in mystery. He was last seen at Lubok Antu in February 1942. J. L. Noakes in his report based on information gleaned from internees at Batu Lintang, recorded the following: "There have been persistent rumours of his death at the hands of Dayaks after the Japanese had placed a high price on his head, but the evidence is not sufficiently reliable to be recorded herein."² On the other hand, K. H. Digby in his recollections (1980) was certain of Arundell's fate—murdered sometime in August 1942 by Iban ex-prisoners whom he (Arundell) had once incarcerated. In 1946, Digby failed to bring the culprits to justice as the case for the prosecution was hampered first by the passage of the years, and second (and most damaging, in spite of circumstantial evidence of bloodstains seen on weapons and loincloths), by the unreliable Dayak witnesses, who contradicted one another.³ R. H. W. Reece disputed Digby's claim, believing that Arundell "was betrayed by some Iban ex-prisoners and massacred by the Japanese at Ulu Mujang in the upper Batang Ai."⁴

Few documentary materials exist regarding Hudden's and Arundell's alleged murders, particularly with regard to the latter.

McKerr[a]cher's "Report" is the only document on the Long Nawang affair (DOCUMENT 64). It describes how the party

came to be at this Dutch military post. Also included is a list of names of individuals in the party.

The case of the "murder" at Keningau of Cyril Drummond Le Gros Clark, Sarawak chief secretary, has several documents largely drawn from the papers kept together with other documents of the deceased deposited at Rhodes House Library (DOCUMENTS 65, 66, 70, 72, 73, and 74). Following his death, Le Gros Clark's brother, Professor (later Sir) Wilfrid E. Le Gros Clark, an academic at Oxford, received official and private papers of the deceased including several documents relating to the investigations into his death. Sir Wilfrid arranged for all these papers to be kept at Rhodes House Library under the Papers of C. D. Le Gros Clark: Sarawak and Borneo, 1941-59.

DOCUMENT 65 is a statement by Le Gros Clark, dated 24 January 1942, regarding his decision and reasons for staying in Kuching despite his position as chief secretary to the Sarawak government. Exemplary of his position as the senior officer, Le Gros Clarke adhered to the Brooke ethos of placing native interest above all other considerations, including his personal safety. Responding to the request by J. L. Noakes, Sarawak secretary for defense, in the preparation of a report on the occupation of Sarawak by the Japanese, Le Gros Clark wrote the narrative contained in DOCUMENT 66 of his capture and subsequent internment. DOCUMENT 67 is a letter by Noakes to the Sarawak government agent in London, dated 17 December 1945, telling of his relationship with Le Gros Clark during internment at Batu Lintang Camp, and the often untenable position of the latter as camp master for British male civilians.

DOCUMENT 68 is a letter dated 21 January 1942 written by Le Gros Clark during internment, requesting that the Sarawak government give assistance to his lady companion, Jane Jolly, and her daughter (his child), in the event of his failing to survive the war. This letter is kept in the collection of the Papers of Edward Banks, curator of the Sarawak Museum (1925-37) enclosed in the collec-

tion of Papers of the Brooke Family of Sarawak (1941-81), Rhodes House Library.

DOCUMENTS 69, 70, and 71 suggest the probable reasons for Le Gros Clark's arrest and subsequent murder. DOCUMENT 69 is an abstract from Noakes's letter to the Sarawak government agent of 17 December 1945, with details about the "camp newspaper," information about Le Gros Clark's arrest and the letter of exoneration given to him by Lieutenant Colonel Suga, Japanese camp commandant at Batu Lintang, which he apparently did not use in the trial at Jesselton. DOCUMENT 70 is an abstract from a letter dated 23 November 1945 from Stanley M. Collier, a fellow internee, to Le Gros Clark's brother, Professor W. E. Le Gros Clark of Oxford, relating the circumstances that led to his arrest and transfer to Jesselton. DOCUMENT 71 describes the clandestine system of the dissemination of news within the Batu Lintang Camp among civilian internees and British P.O.W.s.

On the arrival of Allied Forces in the form of a part of the Australian 9th Division during the later half of 1945, investigations into the fate of Le Gros Clark and four other prisoners were undertaken. DOCUMENT 72, entitled "Report on the Keningau Incident," contains the results of the interrogations and the conclusions thereof.

As a remembrance of the five civilians murdered at Keningau, a memorial was erected, and was unveiled by His Excellency the Governor of North Borneo, Sir Roland Turnbull, on 6 July 1959. The inscriptions are reproduced in DOCUMENT 73. DOCUMENT 74 is an abstract from Sir Roland Turnbull's address during the unveiling ceremony as reported in a letter of 12 August 1959 from R. N. Turner, formerly district officer, Kuala Belait, Brunei, to Sir Wilfrid Le Gros Clark, elder brother of the deceased.

DOCUMENT 75 relates the "murder" of Donald C. Hudden, drawn largely from information by C. H. Southwell, a missionary of the Borneo Evangelical Mission, as contained in Noakes's Report.

DOCUMENT 64
The Long Nawang "Massacre"

W. McKerracher, "Report on proceedings before, landing up to and covering the evacuation of the Borneo Co.'s Staff from Sibuh and the Rejang Timber Concession," 2 May 1942. Papers of Alan Griffin, Mss.Pac.s.109. RHL.

The writer [W. McKerracher, sawmill manager, Salim] left Salim at 7 a.m. on Saturday 27th, on the "Karang Mas," with the long-boat in tow, calling at Kanowit to pick up the District Officer [H. P. K. Jacks] and the R.C. Missionaries if they had not already gone (the Missionaries decided to stay) and later at the Rejang Estate for Mr. and Mrs. [G. D.] Kidd (who also decided to stay), and arrived at Kapit at 7 p.m. The Government Launch "Betty," and the S.E. [Sarawak Electricity Supply] Launch "Anne" ["Ann"] arrived later with the [Second Division] "Resident" [A. MacPherson] and party. After a night of preparation—this entailing the party discarding and destroying the major portion of the personal effects they had brought, boat parties were arranged, and got away, the last one leaving with Miles and the writer at 8 a.m.

The party at that time comprised: A. Macpherson "Resident," and Wife (approx. 6 months pregnant); N. A. Lee (Local Manager Sarawak Steamship Coy) and Wife; Mrs. [E.] Bompfrey (of the Island Trading Coy) and children, one boy 9 months, and one 5 years. Bompfrey himself had been at Miri when the Japs landed, and rumour had it that he was with our Mr. [N. A.] Lucas⁵ in the Jungle, i.e., Lucas knew of our scheme to get away via Dutch Borneo etc. and we had hopes that they would endeavour to make across through the Jungle to the Bintulu River and up to the Border, so meeting them at Long Noyan.⁶ This they *may* have done eventually (as will be seen later), the last news of them that the writer had, and which was presumably by radio, was that they had "taken to the jungle," but that Bompfrey was down with kidney trouble at a Dyak Long-house.

The rest of the party consisted of:—

Messrs.	Div.	P.W.D.	Servant
Reid	Engineer	Govt.	Sibu
Bache	Asst. (age 77 years)	"	Binatang
Mansel	Post Master	"	Sibu
Hansom	District Officer	"	Sibu
Jacks	" " "	"	Kanowit
Griffen ⁷	" " "	"	Kapit
Sinclair	Customs Officer	"	Sibu
Murphy	Superintendent of Police	"	Sibu
Cox	Food Controller	"	Sibu
Baron	Div. Surveyor	"	Sibu
Spencer	Office of Information	"	Sibu
Schotling	Asst. Food Controller	"	Sibu
Walter	Forestry Dept.	"	Sibu
Anderson	Engineer, Sarawak Elect. Supply		Sibu
Cobbold	Borneo Coy. Ltd.		Sibu
Miles	R.T.C. Borneo Coy. Ltd.		Kapit
McKerracher	" " "		Salim

a total of 24 souls.

The party reached the Pelagus Rapids at approximately midday, and disembarked to walk over the "path" around them, while the baggage was restowed in the boats, to enable them to work up the Rapids, except for the portion it was decided to portage—carry on the path. The writer supervised, whilst Miles and Griffen (the D.O. of Kapit) dashed back to Kapit to attend to a few things that had been overlooked. All the boats successfully negotiated the Rapids, with the exception of the last one, which contained Reid's, Barron's, Cobbold's and the writer's entire personal effects. This boat had the misfortune to get a stalled engine through shipping water, was seized by the current, and capsized, and all its contents were lost. These included 20 drums of Benzine, and 4 bags of Rice. The Benzine floated down, and was the first intimation to us at the foot of the Rapids that a capsizing had occurred. However, the crew got ashore, and so there was no loss of life. The accident left four of

us with nothing but what we stood up in, with neither food nor clothes, on the first day of the actual adventure.

The party slept that night at Pasir Naik, the next at Marrit, the following at Balaga, taking full advantage of all the facilities the R.T.C. Borneo Coy's Forest station offered. After Balaga, which is the highest up and last settlement on the Rejang River, the next seven nights were spent at Long-houses these also to a considerable extent[,] through R.T.C. goodwill, engendered and won through the Company's forestry activities.

With the ending of the Long-houses, it was the end of inhabited country, and also the end of the use of the power-driven boats; these were sent back to Kapit, and instructions given about hiding the engines. Miles and Griffen (D.O. Kapit) had on the way up negotiated and arranged for 11 (eleven) smaller and lighter paddling boats, together with the paddlers, ten to each boat, to carry the party on as far as it was possible to use the shallower, rapid-infested head-waters of the River, and then to act as bearers and guides on the walk through the jungle and over the divide.

We also, at this changeover point, sent on an advance party to the Border, to contact the Dutch Authorities. This consisted of Jacks (D.O. Kanowit), with [J.] Schotling [rubber regulation department, Sibul], who was a Dutchman, to act as interpreter. Jacks was a fair Dyak, Caen and Badon linguist. The outcome of this was that the Dutch Administration, through its native officers, on instructions received from Java, came over the Mountain with approx[imately] 40 Caen [*sic*; Kayan] natives. They cleared the track on the way, to meet us on our side, and had a salutary effect on our own people, who were at that time becoming difficult.

However, after an arduous crossing (on one morning between 7 a.m. and 12.00 we crossed one river 36 times, a raging mountain torrent sometimes knee deep, sometimes armpit deep, and particularly powerful) we eventually arrived at Long Noyan, a Dutch military post, this 28 days after leaving Sibul.

We had six people sick, two of them had done the last few days in a stretcher (bush made). McPherson, Reid, and Griffen were

down with bad bouts of malaria, Cobbold had sunburn turned septic, Murphy had an injured ankle and fever. We were out of medicine, and food was low, with the exception of Rice. The Post had a four-bed hospital, and a native assistant dresser, with a good supply of drugs, and food to last (our party) 12 months! . . . We had suggested to the Dutch Authorities that some, or all, of the remaining party might be rescued by means of a small float 'plane, which could land on the river at a place a few days' journey down from Long Noyan. The suggestion was for two or three at a time, women and children first, and this plan they were trying to carry out, but I have grave doubts whether they had time to put this into effect, considering the speed with which the enemy moved.

Miles, for some unknown reason, left the party 12 days after starting out, and returned to Kapit with the idea of later on crossing the border by a different route. The night before he had a consultation with Cobbold and the writer, and proposed to come right up to and over the border, and then return, but during the morning came to a different decision—this after considerable discussion with Cobbold (they were travelling together in the same boat). Rather to our surprise, he left the party at the mid-day halt, and with a few Dyaks built a raft and turned back. That was the last we saw of Miles. We made enquiries of the Sarawak Government Agent in Batavia, who had no news of him, so am afraid he walked in to Jap hands.⁸

Cobbold, when later at Long Noyan, and when it seemed impossible to get out, decided to return to Sibiu, and with Reid and Griffen made arrangements for Coolies etc. to proceed to this place on March 3rd. Am of the opinion this arrangement would possibly be cancelled by events which came to pass before that date, i.e., the fall of Singapore, and that they are most probably still at Long Noyan, for any move by the party after the fall of Java would prove "out of the frying-pan into the fire!" They were most comfortably fixed, had ample food for 12 months, Rice, fruit and tobacco in abundance (being produced all around there). The altitude was approx[imately] 2,500 ft., and so a healthy climate similar to a Hill

Station, but cold enough at night to need a couple of blankets, and about 300 miles away from the nearest Japs, who are not likely (with the internal resistance the Dutch are putting up) to get up to them under 12 months, if ever.⁹

DOCUMENT 65

Le Gros Clark's Reasons for Refusing to Leave Kuching

Papers of C. D. Le Gros Clark: Sarawak and North Borneo, 1941-59. MSS Pac.s.84. RHL.

I think it desirable that I should record my reasons for refusing to leave KUCHING or SARAWAK on the arrival of hostile forces.

Some days before the arrival of the Japanese in KUCHING I informed a meeting consisting of the Senior Government Officers and Heads of Departments in KUCHING that I intended to remain here whatever the consequences. I had made this decision some time ago. My reason for this decision is as follows:—

For long I have been appalled at the calamity gradually approaching this innocent people of SARAWAK. By the inexorable force of circumstances forced on this Government of SARAWAK by the clash of Imperialism, forced on a people who had little or no say in the development of these circumstances, war has come to SARAWAK with all its sufferings and hideous results.

With these people of SARAWAK, among whom I have spent many years of my life, and in whose interests I have I believe devoted my unselfish and loyal services, I have determined to remain, and to share with them their sufferings during this period of trial.

I do not regret this decision. I am glad I have abided by it. I am proud to share with my companions in captivity this honour of hardship during this war which affected the lives of millions throughout the world.

I would not have it otherwise.

(Sgd) C. D. Le Gros Clark, Kuching.
24.1.[19]42.

DOCUMENT 66

*Le Gros Clark's "Statement" to J. L. Noakes,
Secretary for Defense, Sarawak*

Papers of C. D. Le Gros Clark: Sarawak and North Borneo,
1941-59. MSS Pac.s.84. RHL.

J.L. Noakes, 17.12.45.

Formerly Secretary for Defence,
Sarawak.

"As long ago as June 1939 I discussed with my brother, Professor W. E. Le Gros Clark, in Oxford, the proper course of action that should be taken by Government officers of a State like Sarawak in the event that the State were invaded by the enemy and that due warning had been received of such invasion. I then decided that it was the undoubted duty of the Head of the invaded State, and certain of his officers, to remain at their post, whatever the circumstances or attendant risks, in the hope that their presence among the people might reduce the inevitable chaos and panic accompanying an invasion, and that the process of handing over the Civil Government to the occupying enemy forces might thereby be calmly and systematically accomplished. All my subsequent action and instructions have been guided and influenced by this decision and the secret instructions issued to Government officers in June [?] of 1941 put into effect this decision.

When news was received of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour on December 8th 1941, I moved from my house across river into the Residency. I did not return to my house again.

On 24th December news was received of a probable Japanese landing at Santubong. (The presence of Japanese warships off the mouths of the Sarawak and Santubong Rivers had been known since the previous night). I spent most of this day between my temporary office in the Maderas[a]h Melayu [Government Malay School] and the Post Office. On the afternoon of the 24th Decem-

ber I left the Post Office about [?] p.m. and proceeded to my office. From there I walked to the Japanese Internment Camp (Rest House) to see Mr. [A.] Keir¹⁰ and thence returned to my office. About 4 p.m. [?] I telephoned to Mr. Noakes at the post Office. I understood him to say that there was no reliable news of Japanese movements, but that they were believed to be coming up the Pending Road. I then had a final look through my papers, and in the safe, to make sure that all secret papers had been destroyed. I closed the office and walked over the hill towards the Rest House. As I walked I heard rifle shots from the direction of Rock Road, close to the Rest House and I could see Japanese internees leaving their camp, the gate apparently having been opened. I arrived on the crest of the hill to see Japanese soldiers coming up the other side of the Rest House from Rock Road. Directly the Japanese internees saw me, they called to me to stand in their midst for my personal safety. Two of them took me by the arm and asked me to stand close to them. On the arrival of the Japanese soldiers I was taken into the internment camp.

About half an hour later (5 p.m.?) the Japanese Commander arrived and I was taken before him. After enquiring, through an interpreter, as to my identity and official position, the Japanese Commander ordered me to tell him the name and rank of the British Officers commanding the defending troops. I refused to tell him. He then threatened me with punishment (the interpreter said "it would be very bad for me") if I did not reply. I again refused. The Commander then ordered me to write out an order as Head of the State, calling upon the military forces to lay down their arms. I refused to do so. I was then again threatened with punishment if I persisted in my refusal, the interpreter using the same expression as before. I again refused. The Commander then ordered me to write out an order calling upon all European civilians within the State to hand themselves over to the Japanese forces "for their own protection." I agreed to do this and wrote an order accordingly.

The following morning (Christmas Day) I was taken down with other Europeans to the Central Government Offices where

the Japanese forces were bivouacked. Here a Japanese ex-internee (Kurabayashi) made a provocative speech to the soldiers, having stood me out in front of them. As the same man had previously that morning shown considerable excitement towards me because of the destruction of the Treasury notes¹¹ and because of the removal of his brother and three other Japanese from the state[,] I could only infer that he was attempting to arouse the Japanese soldiers to perform acts of aggression against me and I was struck several times by the soldiers, Mr. Keir also being struck.

(Signed) C.D. Le Gros Clark,

4.12.1942.

DOCUMENT 67

J. L. Noakes's Relationship with Le Gros Clark during Their Internment at Batu Lintang Camp, Kuching

Papers of J. L. Noakes. MSS Pac.s.62. RHL.

234 Queen Street,
Thames, New Zealand.
17th December 1945.

The Sarawak Government Agent,
Millbank House,
Westminster, London, S.W.1
ENGLAND.

Sir,

(1) It was with deep regret that I learnt, a short time ago, of the loss of Mr. C.D. Le Gros Clark.

(2) From June to 24th December 1941 I was probably more closely associated with Mr. Le Gros Clark than any other European officer, and during our period of internment together I enjoyed his confidence, acted with him or on his behalf in matters requiring liaison with other groups of prisoners and with Sarawak friends out-

side the prison camp, and helped him with the various plans which he drew up from time to time for the common safety of our people. This I feel it my duty to place on record an account of the fine work done by this gentleman, and his sterling qualities which became more and more apparent as his trials and difficulties increased.

(3) . . . I wish to state, however, that every decision he made during that time was influenced by his regard for the welfare of the people of Sarawak. He was deeply distressed at the prospect of suffering which lay before the inhabitants and he did everything possible, whilst remaining a loyal British subject, to ensure that the Asiatic population should not suffer from the Japanese for their loyalty to His Highness the Rajah. For me, personally, he was a tactful, encouraging and resourceful leader.

(4) Towards the end of 1941, as the Japanese invasion became more certain, O[fficer]/C[ommanding] Troops [Major (later Lieutenant Colonel) C. M. Lane] and I attempted to persuade Mr. Le Gros Clark to retire inland. It was considered that if he should be captured by the enemy they would use his presence to their advantage and certainly his life would be in great danger. Furthermore, he was too valuable a personage to be sacrificed. Mr. Le Gros Clark refused to flee and I must admit that I was relieved by his refusal, as I recognised that he was taking the honourable course. He submitted that, as the representative of His Highness in Sarawak, it was his duty to remain with the people and suffer for them if necessary, and as he had issued instructions to certain European officers to remain at their posts in accordance with Colonial Office recommendations, he could not honourably desert them. . . .

(5) When Mr. Le Gros Clark was captured on 24th December 1941, the Japanese attempted, with threats, to use him to obtain the surrender of our troops, but he refused. . . .

(6) So long as he was interned with us Mr. Le Gros Clark acted as our Camp Master by order (from July 1942 to November 14th 1944) of the Japanese Commandant [Major (later Lieutenant Colonel) Suga]. He had no option but to carry this heavy responsibility. Once he wished to resign but the Japanese Commandant refused his request. By his energy, tact and courageous bearing he came to be greatly respected by the Japanese and thus gained for us concessions and assistance which no other leader could achieve, as

we found to our cost when he was taken to Jesselton. He never failed to intercede on our behalf whenever any of us got into trouble with the Japanese and we could always be certain that we had a capable and courageous counsel.

(7) Throughout our associations as prisoners Mr. Le Gros Clark ceaselessly drew up plans (which were altered almost from day to day as circumstances changed) for co-operation with incoming Allied force and re-establishment of the *de jure* Government. Though we had little hope of ever putting these plans into effect, and of course never did, nevertheless he insisted upon being prepared. The maintenance of such plans entailed discussions with our military friends, at considerable personal risk to himself.

(8) In August 1942 internees were forced to work on the Landing Ground at 7th Mile. We considered that the Japanese probably were using us contrary to International Law (though we were by no means sure of our case) and anyhow we had no desire to work on Japanese military projects, so Mr. Le Gros Clark made a strong protest to the Japanese Commander, one Capt. Kassia. We were paraded and told that we would be shot if we refused to do this particular work, so of course we had no option but to do as we were told.¹² Nevertheless, we were withdrawn from that area after a few weeks and it is my opinion that Mr. Le Gros Clark's protest influenced the Japanese decision to withdraw us. Many similar examples could be given.

(9) We used various methods to keep in touch with our Asiatic friends outside the camp. Our organisation was secret, limited usually to but a few prisoners, as death might easily follow discovery by the Japanese and we had no means other than persuasion of [f] enforcing disciplinary control over our personnel. Comparatively large quantities of food, clothing, tobacco, medicines, etc. were smuggled into the camp, and at times we were kept above the starvation line solely by these additional supplies. Special foods were sometimes passed to the children and the hospital benefited from our efforts. Had we been caught at this work our Camp master would have paid the highest penalty, but gladly he allowed the work to proceed and gave it all his assistance. Sometimes he would offer a word of warning but he trusted me so fully that I never failed to take the fullest precautions. All supplies obtained were

distributed fairly amongst the internees and Mr. Le Gros Clark never received, or expected, any advantage over the other camp members.

(10) At times it became absolutely necessary to obtain money from friends outside the camp, to purchase supplies from the Japanese for the maintenance of life. We succeeded in obtaining sums of [f] money from Mr. Ong Tiang Swee, Mr. Tan Bak Lim and Monsieigneur Hopfgartner through our secret organisation, and Mr. Le Gros Clark pledged the Sarawak Government to repayment after the war.¹³ (The amounts involved are known to Messrs. A. G. Taylor and [E. W.] Cousens and I understand that Lt. Colonel Gascoigne has been informed[]).

(11) Mr. Le Gros Clark always took a very great interest in the welfare of certain 2/15th Punjabis who were prisoners of war [at] Batu Lintang. These men courageously resisted all Japanese effort[s] to turn them from their loyalty to Great Britain, though some of them, particularly the "Doctor,"¹⁴ were tortured and treated brutally. They would accept no help from us, maintaining that we had nothing to spare, but they were ever ready to give us assistance. Their unexampled loyalty and courage deeply impressed Mr. Le Gros Clark and he stated that they should be rewarded by our Government after the war. It is suggested that his wishes in this matter might be respected. . . .

Your obedient servant,

[J. L. Noakes]

Formerly Secretary for Defence,
Sarawak.

DOCUMENT 68

*Le Gros Clark's Request to the Sarawak Government
Pertaining to the Welfare of His Companion
and Daughter, 21 January 1942*

Papers of Edward Banks, Curator of the Sarawak Museum (1925-1937), Papers of the Brooke Family of Sarawak (1941-1981). MSS Pac.s.83. RHL. Vol. 17 Section A f 20.

Kuching
Internment Camp
21.1.42

In the event that I do not survive this war, I most urgently request that the Sarawak Government will assist, in any way possible, Jane Jolly and her child, Ann. . . .

I am entitled to a pension, to part of which my wife is entitled in the event of my death. I have not, however, seen or heard from my wife for nearly three years, & have not cohabited with her for five years. Jane Jolly has been my constant companion for more than four years, & has borne me a child. I can never thank her enough for her kindness & unselfish attention to me during all that period.

If, therefore, a part of my pension can be directed & granted to Jane Jolly & her child, Ann, I shall be grateful.

Her address is:-

c/o Mrs. Ang Thiam Sang
26 Nanas Rd.
Kuching

(Sgd.) [C.D. Le Gros Clark]

21.1.42

DOCUMENT 69

*The "Camp Newspaper" and Circumstances Leading
to Le Gros Clark's Arrest*

Papers of J. L. Noakes. MSS Pac.s.62. RHL.

234 Queen Street,
Thames, New Zealand.
17th December 1945.

The Sarawak Government Agent,
Millbank House,
Westminster, London, S.W.1
ENGLAND.

Sir,

. . . (12) When Lt. Col. M. C. Russell and his "Java Battalion" of prisoners arrived at Batu Lintang Camp on 13th October 1942, they brought a few wireless parts. Assisted by our Mr. W. G. Tait [postmaster-general and chief censor], Lt. Col. M. C. Russell's mechanics concentrated upon making a secret wireless set. More parts were obtained from within our camp and still more were obtained through our secret channels from Asiatic friends outside. The set was run from torch batteries obtained by us, chiefly from outside sources and in this way we obtained B[.]B.C. news for som[e] time. Later, the battery supply ran out and the mechanic adjusted the set to the electric light power supply. In early March 1945 th[e] electric power was cut off, but in less than four months of hard work the mechanics succeeded in obtaining power from a hand driven dynamo, the construction of which was carried out, under extremely dangerous conditions, from odd bits of metal picked up here and there. Naturally the dissemination of the news received had to be extremely carefully controlled as the lives of so many people depended upon utmost secrecy within the camp, and until Mr. Le Gros Clark was taken from the camp for questioning in June 1944 he direc[t]ed the news service among the internees. When he returned to the camp in June after detention by the Japanese Military Police, his nervous condition was naturally bad and he advised the heads of the internee government communities to request the British Military Authority (Lt. Col. T. C. Whimster) to have the set destroyed. His advice was accepted and a message was sent to this Military Officer[.] Lt. Col. T. C. Whimster replied that he fully appreciated the reasons for the request but he could not agree—the set must be kept for military reasons. However, he would take steps to safeguard the internees by cutting off the news from their camp and by arranging for all suspicion and danger to be diverted from them to himself and his men. This was done. . . .

(13) The heads of our communities did not take any steps to inform internees of the reason for the sudden cessation of news, an[d] although the majority very sensibly took the view that the persons [in] charge had good reasons for their action, and in any case they were the people who would suffer most if caught and therefore must be allowed freedom of action, nevertheless there were a few

intolerant people who demanded news. They did not get it so a few of them decided to act independently. They effected contact with some Britis[h] prisoners of war who left the camp daily on working parties and who in turn made contact with a friendly Chinese named Herbert Dhing. He supplied copies of the unreliable Japanese controlled propaganda newspaper [*Haryan Kuching*] at a price paid by the group of internees. At one time t[he] Chinese asked for rice in lieu of money and this was supplied in a false-bottomed tin made by Mr. H. W. Webber, a U.S.A. internee. The organisation was lax and the members were unsuited to such work and inevitably Herbert Dhing and a prisoner-of-war "go-between" named Sergeant P. Bent, were caught in communication.

(14) Mr. Le Gros Clark (and all the other internees) knew tha[t] the paper was being smuggled into the camp. Several times he tried to get the group to stop purchasing the paper, but no notice was taken—in fact the group boasted that it would continue to flaunt his advice—and he was without the means to enforce his authority.

(15) Presumably when Sergeant Bent was "questioned" by the Japanese Military police, he had to admit certain details, and it was not long before Mr. H. W. Webber (U.S.A.), W. A. Knibbe (Holland), D. MacDonald (Manager, Sungei Tengah [Rubber] Estate, Kuching) and Dr. V. A. Stookes (of North Borneo) were called out. They appear to have implicated the Chinese Consul Dr. Cho Huan Lai, Messrs. R. S. Abbott and S. G. Hill of the North Borneo Civil Service, and Messrs. J. M. Crawford¹⁵ and Le Gros Clark of the Sarawak Civil Service, though th[e] gentlemen were not in their group and were opposed to their activities. All of them were taken away from the camp in 1944.

(16) Mr. Crawford was fortunate enough to be able to satisfy the Japanese Military Police and was released a few days later. Mr. D. Bunte, a Minister of the Dutch Reformed Church was at that time interned at the 7th Mile Landing Ground and he also was arrested, but it is probable that he and Mr. Knibbe were arrested for something u[n]connected with the newspaper affair, though the Japanese suspected connection. One other British soldier who operated with Sergeant Bent and whose name I cannot remember, was also arrested.

(17) After about two weeks some of the prisoners, Messrs. Le

Gro[s] Clark, Hill, Abbott, Cho and MacDonald were returned to the camp. M[r.] Le Gros Clark was extremely worried. He had not been questioned by the "Kampitai" [*sic*; Kempetai, Japanese secret police] and had been told by Camp Commandant, Lt. Col. Suga, that he had been exonerated from "plotting" but nevertheless he was most uneasy and one day he called a number of us to his room and explained all he knew of the matter.

(18) His fears were justified as he and the four others were informed one day to prepare to leave. They left camp on Novemb[er] 4th 1944 and we formed the opinion that they and the others still i[n] custody were being taken by plane to Jesselton. Before he left Mr Le Gros Clark was told by Lt. Col. Suga that they were wanted for a[n] enquiry and there was nothing to fear.

(19) We often enquired from the Japanese regarding their wel-far[c] and were always told that they were well. One newly arrived Japane[se] interpreter informed us that he had seen Mr. Le Gros Clark in good health in Jesselton.

(20) Early in 1945 we were informed that all the prisoners had been sentenced to terms of imprisonment for plotting against the Japanese, as follows:—

Mr. C. D. Le Gros Clark	2 years	Mr. D. MacDonald	10 months
Mr. S. G. Hill	9 months	Mr. W. A. Knibbe	2½ years
Mr. R. S. Abbott	6 months	Mr. D. Bunte	3 years
Mr. Cho Huan Lai	9 months	Dr. V. A. Stookes	2½ years
		Mr. H. W. Webber	6 years

I am not certain of the sentence imposed upon Sgt. Bent and his friend. All were probably sentenced in December 1944 and under the Japanese system they would commence their term from that date.

(21) Later, Lt. Col. Suga said that he had given Mr. Le Gros Clark a letter of exoneration when that gentleman was taken to Jessleton [*sic*], but it had not been used. He said also that after sentence he appealed to the Japanese "Chief Justice" for a revision of Mr. Le Gros Clark's case, but had been refused. I am disposed to believe Lt. Col. Suga as Mr. Le Gros Clark's refusal to use the letter (if it wa[s] of any value) would be keeping with his character. He

would not use such means to extricate himself while his comrades might be left to suffer.

(22) In conclusion, I would like to state that I feel deeply the loss of this very fine gentleman. I came to know him as a friend probably better than any other person, and as the principal confidant of his troubles and anxieties in internment I learnt to appreciate h[is] outstanding courage, generosity and ability. It would be appreciated if a copy of this letter . . . could be sent to each of M[r.] Le Gros Clark's principal relations. I feel that I have not done justice to his memory but even this little may help to give them a clearer picture of this man who bravely led us in our worst trials.

Your obedient servant,
[J.L. Noakes]
Formerly Secretary for Defence,
Sarawak.

DOCUMENT 70

Stanley M. Collier's Description of Events of Le Gros Clark's Arrest and Subsequent Removal to Jesselton

Papers of C. D. Le Gros Clark: Sarawak and North Borneo, 1941-59. MSS Pac.s.84. RHL.

13, Plesfield [?] Rd,
Bilton, Rugby.
Nov. 23rd 1945

Dear Professor Clark,

. . . I had heard the official report about your brother, with very real regret; when I left Labuan¹⁶ myself we had so far been unable to get any reliable news, though from rumours + our knowledge of the conditions we were much afraid that neither he nor those who were taken to Jesselton with him could still be alive. . . . I did not know your brother at all well before internment, though I had first met him when I was in Kuching for a year in 1930, when he was Sec[retary] for Chinese Affairs. Then I was

moved to Jesselton, + we only met on a few odd occasion between then + my arrival in Kuching with B.N.B. internees in Sept. [19]42. He was then, and until he was taken to B.N.B., Camp Master, and I was elected a member of the General Committee—which was, under the C.M., responsible for the running + organisation of the camp—at the beginning of 1943, + served on it consecutively for the best part of two years, I came to know him pretty well. The post of Camp Master was, as you can well imagine, under the circumstance[s] an extremely difficult + somewhat invidious one, for it meant that he had to hold the balance between the Japanese authorities, who used him as their mouthpiece + tried to hold him responsible for the discipline + general good behaviour of the Camp, on the one hand, and a vocal, and not always very well-advised element in the Camp, who were always clamouring that we should “take a strong line” with the Japs, + demand this, that and the other redress or concession, on the other. It is impossible to say more here than the bare fact, that knowing as I did from the inside the difficulties with which he had to contend, + the way in which your brother tackled the job, I had nothing but admiration for him. As far as I can remember, he was twice during the time he was in Kuching taken away by the Jap Military Police for interrogation. The first time in his capacity [as] Chief Se[cretary] of Sarawak, + was solely concerned with Govt. business as far as I know, + the second time was when he was interrogated in connection with the matter for which he was eventually taken away to B.N.B. On this second occasion, when he was only away for a few hours, he told us that he was treated quite civilly by the M.Ps., + they did not suggest that he was in any way personally incriminated in the matter. When he was at length taken to Jesselton for the trial, Colonel Suga (our Camp Commandant) told him that he would shortly return to Kuching, as his presence at the trial was only required as a witness. It came, therefore, as a surprise to all of us when we heard that he had been sentenced to three [*sic*; two?] ¹⁷ years imprisonment for allowing the Japanese newspaper [*Haryan Kuching*] to be smuggled into the Camp. The real trouble was, of

course, that the Japs were always scared stiff of anything in the nature of contacts between us [civilian internees], the P.O.W.s, + the Asiatic population of Kuching, which might lead to plots, and so always imagined a great deal which wasn't there! . . .

During the two years or more before he left Kuching he kept his health remarkably well, + never as far as I can remember[,] had any kind of serious illness, but the strain was of course beginning to tell on him. For a time he had given up the more practical side of the work of Camp Master to the Asst. Camp Master (Colonel Adams of the B.N.B. Armed Constabulary), but Colonel Suga refused to let him give it up entirely, as I know he would like to have done, + he continually felt that the responsibility was his. I had many personal chats with him about things in general, and perhaps there were times when he opened his heart to me in a way in which he felt he could not do to Govt. officials + others, so I know how anxious he was to do the best that lay in him for all of us under the exceptionally trying conditions. . . .

Yours sincerely,

[Signed]

[Stanley M. Collier]

DOCUMENT 71

The "News Network" at Batu Lintang Internment Camp, Kuching

J. L. Noakes, "Report upon Defence Measures Adopted in Sarawak from June 1941 to the Occupation in December 1941 by Imperial Japanese Forces; Also an Account of the Movement of British and Sarawak Military Forces during the Japanese Invasion of Sarawak," 15 February 1946. MSS Pac.s.62. RHL. Appendix II.

At the risk of appearing self-complacent, assumptuous [*sic*] and tedious on a matter of interest only to those who were interned in our camp, I take this opportunity to record for their information

and enlightenment (if they ever open the subject) my part in the dissemination of news at Batu Lintang Camp, and certain other duties carried out for our comrades the British Military prisoners.

British officers were segregated from the men and no communication was allowed. Breaches of this Japanese rule meant severe punishment, if caught by the Japanese. Similarly, internees were isolated, but by our situation between the officers and the men it was possible for me to convey messages between them. The wireless set was held and operated by the men. From about November 1942 (when the officers were segregated) to the end of the war, I acted as Liaison officer between the two camps, not only for the passage of news but also for exchanging the many military communications which were most vital to the welfare and discipline of the military forces. As their 'go-between' I had to act with great circumspection and I was never at liberty to divulge any information I might obtain as their agent except if the Military Commander gave me leave to do so. I was often hampered and spied upon by certain internees who resented, firstly, the safety measures enforced in our camp and, secondly, the cessation of news following representations to Lt. Col. Whimster by our Heads of Communities in June 1944. . . . A few internees failed to realise that the men who provided the news were in extreme danger—their lives depended upon adequate precautions and secrecy—and it was for them to decide upon the safety measures to be adopted.

In June 1944 Heads of Communities of I[n]ternees . . . decided to ask Lt. Col. Whimster to have the set destroyed. Mr. R. G. Aikman¹⁵ (my only intimate and reliable confidant and adviser) and I discussed the request and agreed that it was ill-advised, but I conveyed the message as instructed, informing Lt. Col. Whimster at the same time that I had no part in proposing it. Thus the news was cut off from our camp as the result of representations from Heads of our Communities. When Lt. Col. Whimster sent his reply he asked me if I would act as their personal agent as before, and I agreed, provided that I was allowed to inform Mr. Le Gros Clark of the continuance of my duties, and he concurred. Later I

obtained Lt. Col. Whimster's consent to divulge the news only, as it was received, to Messrs. Le Gros Clark, [R.A.?] Rutter and Aikman, and later still to Mr. [D. R.] Lascelles,¹⁹ who was selected to replace me as liaison officer should sickness hamper my activities too much.

We lost Mr. Le Gros Clark in 1944. Mr. Aikman was a wonderful help and a wise and sympathetic adviser, and Mr. Rutter and Mr. Lascelles never failed us.

[J. L. Noakes]

DOCUMENT 72
"Report on the Keningau Incident"

Papers of C. D. Le Gros Clark: Sarawak and North Borneo, 1941-59. MSS Pac.s.84. RHL.

JESSELTON FORCE

C/O 4/2 G.R.

JESSELTON 4 MARCH [19]46.

Report on the Keningau Incident

1. An Interrogation of Lt. NOHARA MASAKAZU of 14 Field Meteorological Unit, aged 29, whose pro-British sympathies and assistance to Englishmen in Japan and as P/W [Prison Warden] in Borneo are confirmed, volunteered the following information:—

A number of English civilians and a Chinese were shot on Keningau Aerodrome in June 1945. He did not know their names but gave an outline of what happened to them.

It seemed that, as the war was going badly, and landings had taken place in Borneo already, the Japanese (and particularly the Kempeitai [*sic*]) wanted to get rid of those people who might be able to give evidence of war crimes against them.

The following are the names of the Japanese said to be concerned in the shooting:—

W.O. KUICHI of the Keningau Airfield Defence Bn [Battalion]. This [W]arrant [O]fficer was in charge of the firing party.

Lt. AKUTAGAWA—Kempei-tai Officer

Lt-Col. ABE 37 Army Area Commander

Major AKUTSU The Officer commanding the Airfield Defence Bn.

KUMAYA The Police Commissioner at Keningau

(GUNZOKU) Okabayashi. The Resident.

Source obtained this information while ill in TENOM hospital when the patients in the next beds were discussing the matter.

He is largely vague, as might be expected, about details, but he talked of the killing as a 'plot' which was carried out quietly and, apparently, though he obviously cannot be sure, without proper authority. The 'plot' was hatched by AKUTAGAWA, KUMAYA and OKABAYASHI, well known as evil men in the [Keningau] district.

SOURCE did not know whether ABE or AKUTSU were implicated.

2. Interrogation of KIYAMA, KUNIMITSU (RI HAI RING)[,] a former Buddhist priest and a Formosan who was, until interned, a farmer in the Keningau area, confirmed all NOHARA's statements.

KIYAMA is a leading member of the Formosan Independence League, whose purpose was to break Formosa from the Japanese Empire and unite her with China and was banished from Formosa forever by the Japanese and sent to Borneo. He is very pro-British and has suffered at Japanese hands, as a result.

He states that he saw the party of men many times in Keningau and spoke to them several times. He gives the names of the executed men:—

LE GROS CLARK—British—Chief Secretary of Sarawak State

CHO HUAN LAI—Chinese—Consul General in Sandakan

DR. STOOKES—British—A Doctor formerly resident in Sandakan

[D.] MACDONALD—British—A rubber planter whose estate was near Kuching

HARRY WEBBER—American—Engineer

SOURCE had known LE GROS CLARK before the war and it is his opinion that CLARK was executed largely because of his influence on the local population.

He remembers nothing of what LE GROS CLARK told him that was anything but personal.

In the middle of September [19]45 he was walking along a jungle path near Keningau, when he noticed some English words carved on a tree trunk. SOURCE can read and write English although he cannot speak and he wrote these words down on a piece of paper and memorised them. The message read as follows:—

"I, together with the General Consul, DR. STOOKES, MACDONALD and WEBBER have been taken from JESSELTON to KENINGAU.

Now everyday Allied bombers are coming and I feel that landings will soon take place. But my life is soon to be taken and when victory come, only my words written here will remain."

In fact not even the words were permitted to remain. At the end of September, on information received from a native, KUMAYA, the Police Commissioner[,] ordered them to be erased. This was done.

(N.B. Later in KENINGAU, a witness stated that he had seen the erased trunk of the tree, and that he knew words had been written there. KIYAMA is the only known person who saw this message).

3. Interrogation of HENRY BRAND, EURASIAN, by [Interrogations] O[fficer] 24 Australian Inf[antry] B[rigade] on September [19]45 revealed the following:—

BRAND, born of AUSTRALIAN and FILIPINO parents and English speaking, left KENINGAU on 15 Septe[mber] [19]45 and arrived in PAPAR 26 Sept[ember] [19]45. He had been interned in JESSELTON gaol by the Japanese for spreading rumours. The other persons interned with him were:—

Dr. V. A. STOOKES
Mr. LE GROS CLARK
M. MCDONALD [D. MACDONALD]
H. WEBBER
F. S. HILL [S. G. HILL]²⁰
G. W. KNIBB [W. A. KNIBBE?]
R. S. BUNTE [D. BUNTE?]
— ABBOTT

The first five men were transferred from JESSELTON gaol in March [19]45. BRAND was in KENINGAU gaol until April [19]45 when he was moved 1. 1/2 miles from KENINGAU to work for the YAMATONOTO Com[pany] under an officer called YAMASHITA.

This was the last occasion on which BRAND saw these five men. At this time they were all well.

He heard however that they were taken from KENINGAU gaol in Aug[ust] [19]45 by the KEMPEITAI to mile 27. 1/2 or to RANAU.

HILL & KNIBB died of disease in prison but SOURCE knows nothing of BUNTE and ABBOT[T].

About Jan[uary] [19]45 a British soldier, Pte. GOLDSBOROUGH, and two Dutch soldiers died of dysentery in prison. Sergeant PERCIVAL BENT, British Army, captured in Malaya, shared BRAND's cell at JESSELTON with an Indian Army corporal. Both these men remained in JESSELTON when BRAND was transferred to KENINGAU gaol in Jan[uary] [19]45. The soldiers were then in good health.

Gaols at JESSELTON and KENINGAU were staffed by civilians. One warder in JESSELTON was called YAMADA. Head warders in KENINGAU were EDAU and LINGKANAD.

4. Interrogation of SIMPSON SUNDANG, aged 36, Chief Health Inspector at KENINGAU, confirmed BRAND's statements.

SOURCE stated that BRAND was suspected by the Japanese of being a spy and was under close surveillance.

SUNDANG heard the following story leading to the deaths of the five men:—

Mr. LE GROS CLARK had been in charge of the Civilian Internee Camp in KUCHING. Up to August 1943 a local paper HARYAN KUCHING had been permitted into the Camp. It was printed in Chinese and Malay.

In August 1943 permission to buy the paper was withdrawn. An English Sergeant in the Camp (presumably Sergeant BENT referred to by BRAND, though this is not confirmed) through a Chinese [Herbert Dhing] living in Kuching managed with the help of WEBBER to smuggle the paper into the camp.

Eventually the Japanese discovered the forbidden paper and all concerned in the secret were tried by Court Martial and presumably BENT and the four other internees in JESSELTON gaol.

The date of the Court Martial is not known but according to SOURCE, nine people were found guilty at the trial and sentence of [from] two [to] nine years imprisonment passed. There were no death sentences.

While the five men were in Keningau, during Allied Air Raids, they were used to take shelter in the jungle. This was a Japanese Order. During these periods in the jungle, the men often spoke to the natives about themselves and what had happened.

In June [19]45 owing to the very heavy bombing, the Japanese troops moved two miles N.W. to BULU SILAU. The prisoners were taken with them.

SOURCE states that all five were executed on 13 or 23 July [19]45. Local gossip suggests that owing to the Australian landings, which were being resisted, the Japanese feared the escape of these men, who would be able to give valuable information to the Allies. It was for this reason that they were shot, without trial.

OKABAYASHI, ABE and the chief of the KEMPEITAI, presumably AKUTAGAWA, held a conference in July [19]45 to consider what could be done with the prisoners. It was whispered in the village that this meeting decided the execution of the prisoners.

On 4 Oct[ober] [19]45 a party including Major IRVING, an Australian, and Mr. [R.F.] EVANS, the pre-war West coast Resident, went up to KENINGAU to investigate. At this time the

Japanese troops were still more or less free and although officially disarmed were known to have arms hidden. After the departure of this party, W. O. KUICHI and five Japanese soldiers came to Sundang's house with rifles and rope in order to prevent him giving evidence against them. Fortunately, SOURCE, realising the position, had decamped earlier[.]

On 13 or 23 July, the five men were taken to the town and put in a truck with a party of Japanese and the inhabitants thought they were being transferred to RANAU. They were driven a few miles away to the aerodrome and shot.

The five had every chance to escape but refused to do so because they would need the help of the natives and this would have meant certain death for these natives and perhaps for the inhabitants of the whole area.

Often whilst sheltering in the jungle during Air Raids, natives asked them to escape. They always refused.

A native called DOWER, since died of pneumonia, built a shelter in an inaccessible part of the jungle for them to hide in and had supplied food and fruit for a month. SOURCE is of opinion, having seen this shelter, that once there, they would never have been found. This offer, too, was refused.

The bodies of the five men were discovered by the A.I.F. officers led by Major IRVING and Mr. Evans and exhumed on 7 Oct[ober] 1945.

All five graves were found to be nearly empty. There were only a few fragments of bone and pieces of hair mixed with decomposed flesh and mud in each grave. Identity was established by a rubber shoe belonging to LE GROS CLARK, one woolen sock belonging to WEBBER and bits of a ragged shirt worn by the Consul the day before he was killed.

The colour of the hanks of hair found identified M[a]cDONALD and Dr. STOOKES.

Efforts were made in searching the surrounding bushes for likely graves where the skeletons might have been separately buried. None were found and although the natives have been asked to continue the search, no further remains have been discovered.

SOURCE states that the deceased might have been cremated.

5. The interrogation of L/Cpl. LADUM of Keningau Constabulary revealed that in July 1945, SOURCE saw five men in Keningau. WEBBER told him that they were being transferred to RANAU gaol and that since our troops would be in Keningau in a few days, LADUM was to inform the Allied troops of the men's whereabouts. SOURCE states that all the men were fit and well.

He watched W. O. KUICHI herd the men into the truck and ten Japanese troops with rifles and fixed-bayonets together with KUICHI drove off with them.

Later he was told in the village that the men had been shot on the aerodrome.

SOURCE states that a man known as IGARASI who acted as interpreter and deputy District Officer and was loathed throughout the area for his vicious cruelty, was concerned in the affair.

6. [IGARASI's] native mistress was interrogated but she was unable to give any information regarding this man. . . .

7. Notes made by Lt/Col. Hill of B[ritish] M[ilitary] A[dm]in[is]tration (B.N.B.) Interior[,] on information supplied by I[n]terrogations O[fficer] 24 AUSTR[ALIAN] Inf[antry] B[rigade] revealed that:—

(a) The following Europeans and Chinese were originally in JESSELTON:

DIERCH BOENDE	DUTCH
WILHELM ARIEKNIP	DUTCH
STANLEY JOHN HILL	BRITISH
RICHARD SCOBELL ABBOTT	BRITISH
RONALD McDONALD	BRITISH
VALENTINE ALEXANDER STOOKES	BRITISH
CYRIL DRUMMOND LE GROS CLARK	BRITISH
HENRY WILLIAM WEBBER	AMERICAN
CHOK [CHO?] HUAN LAI	CHINESE

(b) On 10 Sept[ember] [19]44 imprisoned in Army Detention Camp, JESSELTON

(c) 6 Dec[ember] [19]44 tried and sentenced by Military Court, JESSELTON

(d) They were subsequently moved at various times to

BEAUFORT gaol and then to KENINGAU gaol having been imprisoned in JESSELTON gaol on 12 Dec[ember] [19]44.

(e) The following died in JESSELTON on the dates specified:—

DIERCH BOENDE	14 Jan[uary] [19]45
WILHELM ARIEKNIPI	4 Feb[ruary] [19]45
STANLEY JOHN HILL	12 Feb[ruary] [19]45
RICHARD SCOBELL ABBOTT	23 Feb[ruary] [19]45

(f) The death certificates of these four persons are with the Australian Staff at LABUAN.

(g) When the remaining five persons were transferred from KENINGAU to RANAU, they [?] at mile 33 on 6 July [19]45.

Conclusion

Lt/Col. ABE, Major OKABAYASHI, Lt. AKUTAGAWA, S/M KUICHI and Civilian KUMAYA are held in custody in Labuan.

Major AKUTSU and IGARASHI, apparently implicated, are being traced here. It appears from the evidence of reliable witnesses that a prima facie case is made out against KUICHI since purely circumstantial evidence records that he set out with an armed party in a truck with the prisoners. The prisoners were never seen again. The inhabitants of the village were all under the impression that the men were killed. All were fit and healthy when they were last seen. Their remains have been found and identified.

If, however, the Japanese now held in custody are interrogated, no doubt full confessions will be obtained.

Two Dutch priests have second-hand information confirming the evidence in this report. They are Father GHENT and Father VAN HARRAN. . . .

(signed)

F.E. MOSTYN

Lieut[enant] I.C.[in charge?]

Interrogations Officer

DOCUMENT 73
Text of the Keningau Memorial

Papers of C. D. Le Gros Clark: Sarawak and North Borneo, 1941-59. MSS Pac.s.84. RHL.

This memorial, erected by subscriptions from the North Borneo public and the Governments of Sarawak and North Borneo, commemorates five civilian prisoners who were executed by the Japanese occupying forces at Keningau on the approach of liberating Allied troops. They are:—

Cho Huan Lai

C. D. Le Gros Clark

V. A. Stookes

W. H. Webber

D. MacDonald

Consul for the Republic of China

Chief Secretary, Sarawak

Medical Practitioner from Sandakan

An American Civil Engineer

A Planter from Sarawak

DOCUMENT 74
*Abstract from Speech of Governor Sir Roland Turnbull at the
Unveiling of the Keningau Memorial*

Papers of C. D. Le Gros Clark: Sarawak and North Borneo, 1941-59. MSS Pac.s.84. RHL.

They might have escaped, and the people of Keningau were anxious to help them do so, but they feared the consequences to those of the people here who might help them and whom they would needs have left behind. Instead they stayed, in full knowledge of what might might [*sic*] be their fate. So that, in truth, their ultimate sacrifice was for the people of Keningau. It is that which we recall to-day, and that sacrifice to which I bear witness and pay tribute in unveiling this memorial. May their souls rest in peace.

DOCUMENT 75
The "Murder" of Donald C. Hudden

J. L. Noakes, "Report upon Defence Measures Adopted in Sarawak from June 1941 to the Occupation in December 1941 by Imperial Japanese Forces; Also an Account of the Movement of British and Sarawak Military Forces during the Japanese Invasion of Sarawak," 15 February 1946. MSS Pac.s.62. RHL. Section XXV, pp. 106-7.

13. Father [H. C.] O'Brien's [R. C. Mission, Marudi] account of his travels has been of great value in preparing this Section of the Report.

MR. D. C. HUDDEN

14. Mr. Hudden probably left Marudi about the 21st December 1941 although wireless communication ceased on the 16th. His movements are reported again in para 4 and he is known to have arrived at Long Nawang on about 6th February 1942. . . . He left for the Kelabit Country on the 13th February. . . .

15. When Mr. [C. H.] Southwell [Borneo Evangelical mission, Limpasong, Limbang] was interned at Batu Lintang Camp in Kuching in December 1942, he passed the following report regarding Mr. Hudden to the Secretary for Defence:

"The following information I received from several Muruts who visited us from Dutch Borneo, chiefly from Sigar, a headman of a large Murut Community at Belawit, in late June. Hudden is reported to have built a hut about $\frac{1}{4}$ hour from a Kelabit village in the Ulu Baram. Two Ibans accompanied by two Punans (or Kelabits) came to this village and were known to have evil intentions towards Hudden. They said they had been sent by the Japanese and so prevented any opposition. They stayed at this Kelabit house for three weeks and ingratiated themselves with Hudden, finally borrowing his gun on the pretext of shooting pig[s]. That night they returned and murdered him with spears. Sigar said he got his in-

formation from Muruts who saw the murderers carrying the head. This took place in May. In September Sigar visited the Kelabit Country and on return confirmed the above account and reported that Penghulu Miri knew the murderers and would report them after the war. They are two Ibans who had been imprisoned by Hudden in Marudi. Another person from whom enquiries might be made is Mr. Singal, also known as "Tuan Adong," who is Native Officer at Ba Bawan in N.E.I. [Netherlands East Indies] territory contiguous to the Ulu Baram. We did not have any direct contact with him as although known to be sympathetic to us, he was acting for the Japanese regime."

(Sgd.) G. H. Southwell,
Borneo Evangelical Mission."

* See paras 6 and 7, Fa (or Ba or Pa) Bawang (or Bawan) is above Long Berang. Mr. Singal (or Tuan Agong [*sic*; Adong]) was in charge of Fa Bawang.

16. Though Father O'Brien (para 8, 9 and 11), [F. T.] Mr. Davidson [Borneo Evangelical Mission, Trusan] . . . and Mr. Southwell . . . all felt certain that Mr. Hudden was murdered, the crime has not yet been proved, and no doubt a thorough investigation will be made as soon as the country is settled again.²¹

PART IV

10 JUNE 1945
TO 15 AUGUST 1945

100

CHAPTER 8

FAREWELL HIROHITO, THANK GOD, AT LAST!

FOLLOWING TWO inconclusive naval battles in the Coral Sea and near Midway Island, Japan found itself gradually losing the supremacy of the sea which it had hitherto commanded since Pearl Harbor. It was the Allied's turn to inflict damage on Japanese shipping in the Southern Area. The initial Allied strategy was to bypass the Philippines, Borneo, and Java, and head straight for Japan through a series of "island hopping." However, military strategy was overruled by political considerations. President Roosevelt decided that it was politically advantageous to American postwar policy to honor General Douglas MacArthur's promise to return to the Philippines. Therefore, in the revised Allied plans, the responsibility for retaking former British North Borneo, Brunei, Sarawak, and Dutch Borneo was entrusted to the Australian Imperial Forces (A.I.F.) 9th Division.

The Borneo campaign was launched in early May 1945 with a brigade of the Australian 9th Division landing in Tarakan, Dutch Borneo. Other sections of the 9th Division headed for Brunei Bay and Labuan with landings in early June. The major landing by the

bulk of the Australian 7th Division was reserved for Balikpapan in Dutch Borneo, which was effected on 1 July. Ample naval and air support provided by the Americans made possible the Australian landings.

The Australian 9th Division successfully drove the Japanese into the interior. In some cases, the Australians were assisted by the advance landings of members of the Services Reconnaissance Department (S.R.D.) and their local allies. The atomic bombings and Japan's unconditional surrender cut short the fighting and brought an abrupt end to the Pacific War. The Australians received the surrender of Japanese forces in Borneo.

The Royal Australian Air Force (R.A.A.F.) dropped medical supplies, food, and clothing to internment and P.O.W. camps throughout its sectors of operation, which included Sarawak. Internees of the Batu Lintang camp gratefully and happily partook of all these supplies.

Thanks to the "Old Lady" and her companion "Ginnie," news of the Australian landings and the Japanese surrender was known to a small group of British officers. The Padre was taken into their confidence and through an ingenious way, these auspicious happenings filtered through the ranks as well as to the civilian compounds as "rumors," a jumbled package of true facts liberally mixed with fiction. No one except the "Board of Directors," who were close to the "Old Lady," knew for certain precisely what was happening beyond the barbed wires. Nevertheless, the "rumors" got every mouth whispering and every mind wondering; they knew something had happened, but what? Such "rumors" raised morale and to a certain extent gave hope and the will to live to those on their death bed.

DOCUMENT 76 presents a view of the Japanese defenses of northwest Borneo against a possible Allied landing. This document on Japanese military preparation and combat readiness is based on the interrogation of Lieutenant General Baba Masao, general officer commanding 37 Army. It is classified as Item 2183 of Intelligence Bulletin No. 237. For comparative purposes, DOC-

UMENT 77 offers another viewpoint, from the interrogation of Major General Kuroda Shigeru, chief of staff 37 Army and governor of West Coast, North Borneo, from June 1945. The preamble of the report states this of Kuroda: "Source is a regular soldier and his interests do not appear to be very far outside the Army. It is possible therefore that his views and opinions represented below, are truly an index of what he thinks." Information about the Suicide Craft Force (DOCUMENT 78), apparently a strategy to be employed in defense, is based on the interrogation report of Lieutenant Aita Hideo, commander of the 6th Suicide Craft Force and commanding officer of the 1st Flotilla. Lieutenant Aita was on his way to Mindanao but was stranded at Sandakan where he was captured by Australian forces. He was one of the few naval officers in custody.

From the Batu Lintang camp, internees recorded their experiences during those months prior to their emancipation. The Allied activities of reconnaissance fly-overs, air raids, and other happenings are recorded in DOCUMENT 79 (Pepler). The bittersweet feelings of the civilian internees and P.O.W.s are poignantly revealed in their writings and recollections of those momentous days. DOCUMENTS 80 (Pepler), 81 (Pringle), 82 (Miss Bates), and 83 (Morris) relate their feelings of apprehension, uncertainty, and anxiety, the relief and joy at the news of the end of the war, their release, recuperation at Labuan, and the return home. DOCUMENT 84 contains the hymns and prayers of thanksgiving upon the release of the inmates of Batu Lintang camp. This document is from Miscellaneous Papers 1057, Imperial War Museum Archives.

DOCUMENT 85 is a postscript of the situation in postwar Kuching that includes the fate of Japanese personalities familiar to those who spent the war years at Batu Lintang camp. It is a five-page typescript newsheet from the Papers of Captain H. D. A. Yates, Imperial War Museum Archives. Captain Yates served as R.A.O.C. Workshop Officer, 21 Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery (R.A.), in Batavia. He was captured and interned there (March-September 1942). Subsequently he was removed to

Singapore (September-October 1942), then to Jesselton (October 1942-April 1943), Sandakan (April-August 1943), and finally to Kuching (August 1943-September 1945).

DOCUMENT 76 *"Order of Battle"*

Intelligence Bulletin No.237, 15 June 1946; A.C.L. Dredge, Lieut.-Colonel, G.S.I.A. Officer Commanding. ITEM 2183. WO 203/6317. PRO.

1. Order of Battle

Appendix 'A' is a complete Order of Battle of all Units showing Commander's name and location at the beginning of Jun[e] [19]45 (just prior to the AUSTRALIAN invasion of NORTH BORNEO).

Appendix 'B' is a similar list arranged by areas.

(A) 37 ARMY

37 Army was formed at JESSELTON in Oct[ober] [19]44 from BORNEO Garrison Army. It controlled NORTH BORNEO as far south as KUCHING on the west coast and TAWAO on the east coast. It did not control BALABAK to the north, but did control the SULU Archipelago up to and including TAWITAWI. DUTCH BORNEO from TARAKAN round the south coast to PONTIANAK was a naval responsibility. In Jan[uary] [19]45, however, the whole of BORNEO was placed under 37 Army.

In May [19]45, 37 Army, previously under direct command Southern Army at SAIGON, came under command 7 Area Army at SINGAPORE. At the end of May, the HQ moved from JESSELTON to SAPONG where it remained until the surrender.

(i) *Reasons for the incorporation of DUTCH BORNEO into 37 Army area.* Until Jan[uary] [19]45 Dutch BORNEO was the responsibility of 22 Special Naval Base Force, with its HQ at BALIKPAPAN. This unit was commanded by Vice Admiral KAMADA and was under control 2 Southern Expeditionary Fleet at SOURABAYA. By Jan[uary] [19]45 it had become apparent that the invasion of DUTCH BORNEO was imminent, and the area must be reinforced by 37 Army troops. Communications with the Naval HQ in SOURABAYA were bad owing to lack of shipping, and the coordination of the defence of all BORNEO from one HQ was considered advisable. Accordingly, 22 Special Naval Base Force and subordinate units came under command 37 Army. However, communications between JESSELTON and BALIKPAPAN were poor and Vice Admiral KAMADA, whom [Lieutenant Colonel] BABA [Masao] [commander 37 Army] has never met (he has never been to DUTCH BORNEO at all), continued to have a more or less free hand.

(ii) *Reasons for bringing 37 Army under Command 7 Area Army.* While the PHILIPPINES to the north, DUTCH BORNEO to the south and the SULU Archipelago to the east were still under JAPANESE control, it was not thought that the Allies would attempt to come through the BALABAK Straits to invade the west coast of BORNEO. But by May [19]45 the PHILIPPINES had been lost and the AUSTRALIANS had secured bases in DUTCH BORNEO and the SULUs, and an attack on the west coast of BORNEO was therefore expected. The eventual objective of this attack was considered to be SINGAPORE. MALAYA to the north, SUMATRA to the west, JAVA to the south were already under command 7 Area Army at SINGAPORE. It was therefore decided that the defence ring should be completed on the now vulnerable east flank by bringing [BORNEO] under this command.

(iii) *Reasons for move of 37 Army HQ from JESSELTON to SAPONG.* It was considered that the anticipated attack on the west coast would come in Jun[c] [19]45. Bombing had already made JESSELTON untenable as an Army HQ, and should the invading force land there, Army HQ might soon be overrun. SAPONG was 185 miles south of JESSELTON, inland, nearer

LABUAN and BRUNEI, and connected with JESSELTON by rail, except for the last five miles where a road ran from TENOM. TENOM itself was a centre of population and so had been bombed. SAPONG was merely a rubber estate, and would not, it was hoped, attract the attention of Allied aircraft. The HQ could not be moved before the end of May as it took some time to set up the signals communication system and lay telephone lines to SAPONG. SAPONG was later bombed but BABA considered that this was merely one of a number of indiscriminate raids, and the AUSTRALIANS were not aware that they were attacking Army HQ.

(iv) *Relations with the Air Force.* 10 Flying Brigade with HQ at KUCHING was the operational air unit in command of JAAF¹ units in BORNEO. It was commanded by Maj Gen MITSUNARI Shozo and was under the command of 3 Air Army in SINGAPORE. MITSUNARI was killed in a plane crash at KENINGAU on 20 Jun[e] [19]45, shortly after the AUSTRALIAN invasion had begun, was replaced by Col. ANZAI Akio who came from JAPAN. JAAF Units in BORNEO were supplied and administered by 37 Army, but did not take operational orders from them. In theory operational orders were issued by 3 Air Army, but in practice 10 Flying Bde was given a free hand. General directives were issued beforehand by 3 Air Army regarding the course of action to be pursued in the event of invasion, but after that they acted independently. There was no difficulty about 37 Army's making requests for air support, as W/T communication between SAPONG and KUCHING was maintained throughout. That this support was not forthcoming, was due to lack of aircraft rather than to bad liaison, in spite of the fact that there was only one ALO at Army HQ and he only a 2nd Lieut.

(B) 56 INDEP MIXED BDE

56 Indep Mixed Bde, commanded by Maj Gen AKASHI Taijiro and consisting of six infantry bns. and ancillary troops, was formed in JAPAN and moved to TAWAO in Oct[ober] [19]44. Here it remained until Feb[ruary] [19]45 when the evacuation of DUTCH

BORNEO commenced. 370 Indep Inf Bn was left to cover the TAWAO-LAHAD DATU area and came directly under command 37 Army, while early in March 369 Indep Inf Bn was despatched by sea to BANDJERMASIN to reinforce the naval forces there and to come under command 22 Special Naval Base Force. The remainder of the Brigade marched via LAHAD DATU, SANDAKAN, RANAU and JESSELTON to the BRUNEI area. Bde HQ and 366 and 367 Indep Inf Bns went to BRUNEI, 368 Indep Inf Bn to BEAUFORT, while the remaining Bn, 371 went to LABUAN. To the south was 553 Indep Inf Bn at MIRI and to the North 25 Indep Mixed Regt whose area came down to just north of BEAUFORT. LABUAN and BRUNEI were invaded by the AUSTRALIANS on 8th [sic; June, and 366 and 371 Indep Inf Bns very soon disintegrated. 367 Indep Inf Bn had not arrived complete from TAWAO as half its personnel had fallen out on the way; after rather less than half of what had arrived had been killed, the remainder retreated across the mountains to TENOM, which they reached in late July. 368 Indep Inf Bn was the last to leave TAWAO and was originally intended for BRUNEI. It suffered many casualties on the way, however, and before it could reach BRUNEI the AUSTRALIANS had landed. It was therefore diverted to BEAUFORT. The landings at WESTON took place on 17 June, but they were opposed only by minor units and not by this Bn. 369 and 370 Indep Inf Bns in DUTCH BORNEO were engaged in no fighting and so were still relatively complete at the time of surrender.

(c) 71 INDEP MIXED BDE

71 Indep Mixed Bde, commanded by Mj Gen YAMAMURA Hyoe and consisting theoretically of four infantry bns and ancillary troops, was formed at KUCHING in November 1944[.] However, only the equivalent of two infantry Coys and ancillary troops arrived from JAPAN, the rest being sunk en route. The two infantry Coys were formed into 538 and 539 Indep Inf Bns, the for-

mer at KUCHING and the latter on the NATUNA Islands. 540 and 541 Indep Inf Bns had Bn Commanders but apart from that only existed on paper. The Bde remained in this area until the surrender and was not engaged in any fighting.

(D) 25 INDEP MIXED REGT.

25 Indep Mixed Regt commanded by Col IEMURA Shinshichi and consisting of three infantry bns and ancillary troops, was formed in JAPAN and arrived at LABUAN in Sep[tember] [19]44. An attack was at that time expected on the SULU Archipelago, so Regt HQ, 1 and 3 Bns were despatched by sea to TAWITAWI. 2 Bn arrived later at LABUAN from JAPAN and owing to bombing and lack of shipping was unable to proceed by sea to TAWITAWI. It set out to march there via JESSELTON[,] RANAU and SANDAKAN, but on arrival at SANDAKAN was ordered to remain there.

In early Feb[ruary] [19]45 the whole Regt (less 2 Bn) evacuated from TAWITAWI by sea to TAWAO, leaving only one Coy (9 Coy, 3 Bn) behind. The Regt evacuated to the mainland because of the difficulty of sending supplies by sea. It then proceeded with 56 Indep Mixed Bde on the march across to the west coast. 2 Bn left SANDAKAN in February and so was the first to reach JESSELTON. The remainder arrived in May, and the Regt was responsible for the whole coastal area from just north of BEAUFORT to TUARAN, 15 miles north of JESSELTON. The only place in this area to be invaded by the AUSTRALIANS was PAPAR at the end of Jun[e] [19]45, so that the Regt emerged at the surrender with a strength of over 900. 9 Coy 3 Bn on TAWITAWI opposed the landing there in April and then evacuated in small ships to the mainland to the area of HOG POINT. From there it continued in small ships along the coast to SANDAKAN, which it reached in May. From SANDAKAN it set out to join the rest of the Regt in JESSELTON, but by the time of the surrender had only got as far as RANAU.

(E) OTHER MAJOR UNITS

(i) *553 Indep Inf Bn*

In Nov[ember] [19]42 553 Indep Inf Bn, commanded by Major ARITANI Tatsuji and at that time known as 40 Indep Inf Bn, left JAPAN for MIRI, where it came directly under command BORNEO Garrison Army. In Oct[ober] [19]44 BORNEO Garrison Army was renamed 37 Army, and in the following month 40 Indep Inf Bn followed suit. The Bn's task was the defence of the oil at MIRI. MIRI was a constant port of call for ships on the JAPAN-SINGAPORE run, and an important refuelling station. It therefore met with the attention of Allied bombers, and to counter this, the Bn was reinforced by 64 Fd A/A Arty Coy. The AUSTRALIANS landed there on 20 June [19]45, and were engaged by this Bn, whose strength at the time of surrender was still over 500 men.

(ii) *554 Indep Inf Bn*

554 Indep Inf Bn, commanded by Col OTSUKA Mitsugu, left JAPAN in Nov[ember] [19]42 as 41 Indep Inf Bn and went to SANDAKAN. It was renumbered in November 1944 and remained in SANDAKAN, where there was no fighting, until the surrender.

(iii) *432 Indep Inf Bn*

In Jan[uary] [19]44 various minor units at JESSELTON were formed into 432 Indep Inf Bn, which was put under command of Major TAMURA Hatsuo. The Bn came directly under 37 Army and, shortly after it had been formed, marched to KUDAT, where it remained until Jul[y] [19]45. By that time it was apparent that the AUSTRALIANS were interested in points farther south than KUDAT, so the Bn was moved back to JESSELTON to reinforce 25 Indep Mixed Regt, under whose command it came.

(iv) *454 Indep Inf Bn*

454 Indep Inf Bn, commanded by Major TOKOI Tadao, was formed in JAPAN and in Dec[ember] [19]44 moved to TARAKAN. It fought against the AUSTRALIANS when they landed there on 30 Apr[il] [19]45, but in just over a month was completely destroyed.

(v) *455 Indep Inf Bn.*

455 Indep Inf Bn, commanded by Major YAMADA Mitsuaki, was formed in JAPAN and in Dec[ember] [19]44 moved with 454 Indep Inf Bn to TARAKAN. When DUTCH BORNEO came into the 37 Army area in January 1945, the Bn was despatched to BALIKPAPAN to reinforce the naval troops there. The AUSTRALIANS landed at BALIKPAPAN in Jun[e] [19]45, and the Bn put up an organised defence which lasted until the time of the surrender. Rather less than half was killed.

(vi) The other three major units in BORNEO were:

- 774 Indep Inf Bn at TENOM, OC Capt CHIBA Akihiko
- 20 Indep MG Bn at BEAUFORT, OC Capt SUGANO Motoe
- 22 Indep MG Bn at KUCHING, OC Lt Col IMAZEKI Mitsukane.

Lt Gen BABA could not recall the individual histories of these Units.

2. *Intelligence*

(A) SOURCES

There was no organisation within BORNEO for the collection of operational intelligence. Intelligence from all sources was passed to 37 Army from outside, notably from Southern Army at AIGON and 7 Area Army at SINGAPORE.

(B) INFORMATION RECEIVED

The most important single item of information received seems to have been what is known as the 'MOROTAI Report', which led to the evacuation of DUTCH BORNEO. As was pointed out in para 1.(a).(ii), the JAPANESE considered that while they still held the PHILIPPINES, DUTCH BORNEO and the SULUs, an attack on the west coast of BORNEO was unlikely. The 'MOROTAI Report' seems to have been received at about the same time as they lost these bases, so that it cannot be said to what degree the evacuation of 56 Indep Mixed Bde and 25 Indep Mixed Regt was due to deduction of Allied intentions or to accurate knowledge of them. It was not possible to elicit further information on this subject from Lt Gen BABA.

3. Operations

The actual operations in which individual units were engaged have already been covered, but the reasons why these operations did not meet with more success are:

- (a) Lack of troops and aircraft
- (b) Bad Communications

The basic cause of defeat was, of course, (a), but Lt Gen BABA thought that had it not been for (b) it might have been possible to put up rather more effective opposition.

Bad sea, land and signals communications meant:

- (i) lack of supplies;
- (ii) delay in moving troops;
- (iii) consequent lack of time for making adequate defensive preparations;
- (iv) casualties and sickness caused by marching hundreds of miles through some of the worst jungle and mountain country in the world;

- (v) consequent lowering of morale;
- (vi) lack of coordination, as Army HQ could not receive regular reports on the operational situation

Bad sea communications were due to Allied bombing. Bad land communications were inherent in the topography of the country. Bad signals communications were also largely due to Allied bombing.

Army HQ at SAPONG was connected by telephone with BEAUFORT, TENOM, KENINGAU, MELALAP, and RANAU, but these lines were broken so often by bombing that it was impossible to keep up with repairs. Army HQ was also connected by wireless with LABUAN, BRUNEI, MIRI and KUCHING. The set at LABUAN was destroyed by bombing two days after the landings began, so that Army HQ had no idea of the size of the force that had landed or how operations progressed. The set at BRUNEI was destroyed before the landings took place, so that they had no information on the situation there until the remnants of 367 Indep Inf Bn reached TENOM in late July after their withdrawal across the mountains. The MIRI set was bombed on 13 June, a week before the landings took place, but 553 Indep Inf Bn was occasionally able to contact KUCHING with a portable set which had to be continually moved about in order to avoid bombing. KUCHING remained in communication with SAPONG throughout, and so was able to pass on the occasional reports of the situation at MIRI. There were no communications between PAPAR and Army HQ.] Lt Gen BABA, then, had very little idea of what was going on, but admitted that even if he had, there was little he could have done about it, as reinforcement from other areas were impossible owing to bad sea and land communications.

4. Relations with the Native Populations

BABA stated that relations with the native population were uniformly good until late [19]44. JAPANESE Army units, civil ad-

ministration officials, and the KEMPEI all poured forth propaganda. Newspapers in MALAYA [Malay] etc. were published in JESSELTON and KUCHING,² and full use was made of collaborators. There were also INDIAN Independence League activities in KUCHING. But in late [19]44, food shortages, bombing, news of the tide turning against JAPAN, and agitation on the part of Allied agents, began to be felt and the population gradually became more and more anti-JAPANESE.

APPENDIX 'A'

LIST OF UNITS IN BORNEO WITH LOCATION AS IN JUNE 1945

<i>Unit</i>	<i>Commander</i>	<i>Location</i>
37 Army HQ	Lt Gen BABA Masao	SAPONG
56 Indep Mixed Bde HQ	Maj AKASHI Taijiro	BRUNEI
366 Indep Inf Bn	Maj SATO Yukimi	"
367 " " "	Capt TSUTSUI Yoichi	"
368 " " "	Maj KIMURA Jiro	BEAUFORT
369 " " "	Maj KUSHIYAMA Tahei	BANDJERMASIN
370 " " "	Maj SUGASAKI Moriyuki	TAWAO
371 " " "	Capt OKUYAMA Shichiro	LABUAN
Arty Unit	Maj KINOSHITA Shigoyoshi	BRUNEI
Engr Unit	Capt HASHIMOTO Kirin	BEAUFORT
Sigs Unit	Lt HOSHIKO Toru	"
71 Indep Mixed Bde HQ	Maj Gen YAMUMURA Hyoe	KUCHING
538 Indep Inf Bn	Capt AZUMA Kazuo	"
539 " " "	Lt Col SEKIYA Yoshio	NATUNA IS
540 " " "	Capt NODA Chiyomatsu	KUCHING
541 " " "	Capt INAOKA Kazuo	"
Arty Unit	Capt WATANABE Kaji	"
Sigs Unit	Capt KONAGAI Kentaro	"
25 Indep Mixed Regt HQ	Col. IEMURA Shinshichi	JESSELTON
1 Bn	Maj OKOCHI Tadao	BEAUFORT
2 Bn	Capt YAMAMOTO Shoichi	JESSELTON
3 Bn	Capt TAMAKI Yukio	"
Inf Gun Coy	Lt UCHIDA Seiji	"
Anti Tank Coy	Capt TOMINAGA Kazuji	"
Engr Coy	Lieut MUTO Hajime	"
553 Indep Inf Bn	Maj ARITANI Tatsuji	MIRI
554 " " "	Col OTSUKA Mitsugu	SANDAKAN
432 " " "	Maj TAMURA Hatsuo	KUDAT

APPENDIX 'A' (continued)

<i>Unit</i>	<i>Commander</i>	<i>Location</i>
454 Indep Inf Bn	Maj TOKOI Tadao	TARAKAN
455 " " "	Maj YAMADA Mitsuaki	BALIKPAPAN
774 " " "	Capt CHIBA Akihiko	TENOM
20 Indep MG Bn	Capt SUGANO Mateo	BEAUFORT
22 " " "	Lt Col IMAZEKI Mitsukane	KUCHING
<i>ARTILLERY</i>		
64 Fd A/A Arty Coy	Capt SUZUKI Kenji	MIRI
<i>SIGNALS</i>		
124 Indep Wire Coy	Lt FUJITA Takeo	SAPONG
119 Indep W/T Platoon	Lt TOMITA Tokio	"
121 " " "	Lt SHINOO Hideji	KUCHING
BORNEO Sector Sigs Unit	Capt SAITO Yoshio	SAPONG
<i>TRANSPORT</i>		
332 Indep MT Coy	Lt SHIRAKURA Mitsuura	MIRI
397 " " "	Lt KAMIMURA Eikichi	KUALA BLAIT
103 Fd Road Unit	Maj WATANABE Yoshio	RANAU
75 Constr Duty Coy	Capt MINAMI Bunjiro	SAPONG
<i>MILITARY POLICE</i>		
37 Army MP Unit	Col MACHIGUCHI Taku	SAPONG
<i>POSTAL</i>		
11 Fd Postal Unit		
224, 225, 226 FPO	Capt MURAKOSHI Hiroshi	TENOM
<i>HOSPITALS</i>		
11 Southern Army Hosp	Lt Col ABE Shinichi	BEAUFORT
147 L. of C Hosp	Lt Col OE Shojiro	MELA[L]AP
<i>DEPOTS</i>		
37 Army Fd Freight Depot	Capt DOI Toshikatsu	TENOM
37 Army Ordnance MT Depot	Lt Col MAEDA Toshizo	MELA[L]AP

APPENDIX 'A' (continued)

<i>Unit</i>	<i>Commander</i>	<i>Location</i>
Southern Fuel HQ BORNEO Depot	Col AIKYO Masao	MIRI port in KUCHING.

LINES OF COMMUNICATION

1 L of C Sector Unit	Maj OKADA Keiji	SAPLOT
5 * * *	Capt IKENO Takashi	BRUNEI

SHIPPING

1 Indep Shpg Engr Coy	Maj FURUTA Katsuhara	TAWAO
62 Anchorage HQ	Col TOHARA Kanji	BRUNEI
3 Coy 10 Sea Tpt Bn	Capt SEKINE	BEAUFORT
Shpg Sigs Regt (a part)		KUCHING
3 Shpg Tpt HQ (a part)		*
70 Anchorage HQ (a part)		*
Shpg HQ (a part)		*
10 Disembarkation Unit (a part)		*
2 Shpg Engr Regt (a part)		*
2 Fd Shpg Depot (a part)		*

POW CAMPS

BORNEO POW Camp	Lt Col SUGA Tatsuji	*
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AIR UNITS

10 Indep Flying Bde HQ	Col ANZAI Akio	*
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FLYING UNITS

83 Flying Regt	Maj AYABE Setsuo	*
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AIR GROUND UNITS

37 Air Sector HQ	Lt Col ABE Keiji	KENINGAU
100 Airfd Bn	Maj FURUICHI Tokuichi	KUCHING
110 " "	Maj MORI Mineyuki	JESSELTON
111 " "	Maj TAMADA	SIBU
130 " "	Maj AKUTSU Yoshitsugu	SANDAKAN
113 * Constr Unit	Lt UEDA	KUCHING
BORNEO Air Sigs Unit	Maj TAKEUCHI Keiji	*
Air Intelligence Unit		*

APPENDIX 'A' (continued)

<i>Unit</i>	<i>Commander</i>	<i>Location</i>
5 Coy 14 Fd Met Regt	Maj YOSHIDA Tsunao	KENINGAU
3 " 3 " " "	Lt TAKAGI Chubei	KUCHING
1 Sub-depot 25 Fd Air Repair Depot	Maj SEKI Naoji	"
1 Br-depot 20 Fd Air Supply Depot	Maj KITAO Junjiro	MIRI
4 Sub-depot 16 Fd Air Repair Depot	Maj NISHIJIMA Koichi	KENINGAU
1 Indep Maint Unit 16 Fd ARD	Capt SUZUKI Moritara	"
2 " " " " "	Capt YONEYAMA Kenichi	"
Southern Air Route Dept BORNEO District.	Lt Col SHIGEOKA Akio	KUCHING
Southern Air Tpt Dpet BORNEO Branch C.	Comdr YOTSUHASHI Minori	"
90 Airfd Bn (a part)		
<i>NAVAL UNITS</i>		
6 Suicide Craft Unit	Naval Lt AITA Hideo	SANDAKAN
33 Guard Force BALABAC Det	Naval Lt OCHIAI Otoichi	RANKONG
10 Sp Base Force BRUNEI Det.	Naval Lt KASHIO Tadashi	BRUNEI SANDAKAN
103 Naval Establishment		
2 Guard Force 22 Sp Base Force (a part)		KUCHING
3 Tpt Unit 18 Guard Force 4 SEF (a part)		
3 Met Unit 22 Sp Base Force		
22 Sp Base Force PONTIANAK Det	Naval Lt OKAYAMA Toshi	PONTIANAK
EAST INDIES Naval Air Unit	Naval Lt WATANABE Raishiro	KUCHING

APPENDIX B
 LIST OF UNITS IN BORNEO BY AREAS WITH
 LOCATIONS AS IN JUNE 1945

<i>Unit</i>	<i>Commander</i>
<i>KUCHING</i>	
71 Indep Mixed Bde HQ	Maj Gen YAMAMURA Hyoe
538 Indep Inf Bn	Capt AZUMA Kazuo
540 * * *	Capt NODA Chiyomatsu
541 * * *	Capt INAOKA Kazuo
Arty Unit	Capt WATANABE Kaji
Sigs Unit	Capt KONAGAI Kentaro
1 Coy 553 Indep Inf Bn (main at MIRI)	
22 Indep MG Bn	Lt Col IMAZEKI Mitsukane
<i>SIGNALS</i>	
[W]21 Indep W/T Platoon	Lt SHINOO Hideji
<i>DEPOTS</i>	
37 Army Fd Freight Depot KUCHING Branch Office (Head Depot at TENOM)	
37 Army Fd Ordn MT Depot KUCHING Branch Office (Head Depot at MELA[L]AP)	
Southern Fuel HQ (a part—HQ at SPORE)	
<i>HOSPITALS</i>	
11 Southern Army Hosp KUCHING Sub-Hosp (Head Hosp at BEAUFORT)	
<i>MILITARY POLICE</i>	
37 Army MP Unit KUCHING Det (main at SAPONG)	
<i>POSTAL</i>	
11 Fd Postal Unit (a part—main at TENOM)	
<i>SHIPPING</i>	
62 Anchorage HQ KUCHING Branch (HQ at BRUNEL)	
3 Coy 10 Sea Tpt Bn (a part—main at BEAUFORT)	
Shpg Sigs Regt (a part—main at SPORE)	
Shpg HQ (a part—HQ at HIROSHIMA)	
3 Shpg Tpt HQ (a part—HQ at SPORE)	

APPENDIX 'B' (continued)

<i>Unit</i>	<i>Commander</i>
70 Anchorage HQ (a part—HQ location unknown)	
10 Disembarkation Unit (a part—HQ location unknown)	
<i>POW CAMPS</i>	
BORNEO POW Camp	Lt Col SUGA Tatsuji
<i>AIR UNITS</i>	
10 Indep Flying Bde HQ	Col ANZAI Akio
83 Flying Regt	Maj AYABE Setsuo
100 Airfd Bn	Maj FURUICHI Tokuichi
113 Fd Airfd Constr Unit	Lt UEDA Shigeichi
BORNEO Air Sigs Unit	Maj TAKEUCHI [Keiji]
3 Coy 3 Fd Met Regt	Lt TAKAGI Chubei
1 Sub-depot 25 Fd Air Repair Depot	Maj SEKI Naoji
Southern Air Route Dept BORNEO District	Lt Col SHIGEOKA Akio
14 Air Intelligence Unit BORNEO Det	Lt YAMAGUCHI Shogo
18 " " " " "	Lt SAKATA Yoshimasa
<i>NAVAL UNITS</i>	
EAST INDIES Naval Air Unit (a part)	Lt WATANABE Raishiro
<i>NATUNA ISLANDS</i>	
539 Indep Inf Bn (under commd 71 IMB)	Lt Col SEKIYA Yoshio
22 Indep MG Bn (a part—main at KUCHING)	
<i>SIBU</i>	
553 Indep Inf Bn (one Pl—main at MIRI)	
111 Airfd Bn	Maj TAMADA Masatake
<i>BINTULU</i>	
111 Airfd Bn (a part—main at SIBU)	
<i>MIRI</i>	
553 Indep Inf Bn	Maj ARITANI Tatsuzo
64 Indep Fd A/A Arty Coy	Capt SUZUKI Kenji
332 Indep MT Coy	Lt SHIRAKURA Mitsuru
307 " " "	Lt KAMIMURA Eikichi

APPENDIX 'B' (continued)

<i>Unit</i>	<i>Commander</i>
BORNEO Sector Sigs Unit (a part)	
(HQ SAPONG)	
Southern Fuel HQ BORNEO Depot	Col AIKYO Masao
11 Fd Postal Unit (a part—HQ TENOM)	
37 Army MP Unit MIRI Det (HQ SAPONG)	
62 Anchorage HQ (a part—HQ BRUNEI)	
110 Airfd Bn (a part—HQ JESSELTON)	
1 Sub-depot 20 Fd Air Repair Depot	Maj KITAO Junjiro
BRUNEI	
56 Indep Mixed Bde HQ	Maj Gen AKASHI Taijiro
366 Indep Inf Bn	Maj SATO Yukimi
367 " " "	Capt TSUTSUI Yoichi
Arty Unit	Maj KINOSHITA Shigeki
147 L of C Hosp (a part—HQ MELARAP)	
62 Anchorage HQ	Col TOHARA Kanji
BEAUFORT	
368 Indep Inf Bn (under 56 IMB)	Maj KIMURA Jiro
56 IMB Engr Unit	Capt HASHIMOTO Kirin
56 IMB Sigs Unit	Lt HOSHIKO Toru
1 Bn 25 Indep Mixed Regt	Maj OKOCHI Tadao
20 Indep MG Bn	Capt SUGANO Motoe
103 Fd Road Unit (a part—HQ RANAU)	
11 Southern Army Hosp	Lt Col ABE Shinichi
3 Coy 10 Sea Tpt Bn	Lt SEKINE
TENOM SAPONG MELAJLAP AREA	
37 Army HQ	Lt Gen BABA Masao
774 Indep Inf Bn	Capt CHIBA Akihiko
124 Indep Line Coy	Lt FUJITA Takeo
119 Indep W/T Platoon	Lt TOMITA Tokio
BORNEO Sector Sigs Units	Capt SAITO Yoshio
75 Constr Duty Coy	Capt MINAMI Bunjiro
147 L of C Hosp	Lt Col OE Shojiro
37 Army MP Unit HQ	Col MACHIGUCHI Taku
11 Fd Postal Unit, 224, 225, 226 FPOs	Capt MURAKOSHI Satoru
37 Army Fd Freight Depot	Capt DOI Toshikatsu
37 Army Fd Ordn MT Depot	Lt Col MAEDA Toshizo

APPENDIX 'B' (continued)

<i>Unit</i>	<i>Commander</i>
KENINGAU	
1 L of C Sector Unit	Maj OKADA Keiji
37 Air Sector HQ	Lt Col ABE Keiji
130 Airfd Bn	Maj AKUTSU Yoshitsugu
BORNEO Air Sigs Unit (a part)	
5 Coy 14 Fd Met Regt	Maj YOSHIDA Tsunao
4 Sub-depot 16 Fd Air Repair Depot	Maj NISHIJIMA Koichi
1 Indep Maint Unit 16 FAR	Capt SUZUKI Moritaro
2 " " " " " "	Capt YONEYAMA Kenichi
RANAU	
103 Fd Road Unit	Maj WATANABE Yoshio
147 L of C Hosp (a part)	
1 Sub-camp BORNEO POW Camp (HQ Kuching)	
JESSELTON	
25 Indep Mixed Regt HQ	Col IEMURA Shinshichi
2 Bn	Capt YAMAMOTO Shoichi
3 Bn	Capt TAMAKI Yukio
Inf Gun Coy	Lt UCHIDA Seiki
A/Tk Coy	Capt TOMINAGA Kazuji
Engr Coy	Lt MUTO Hajime
432 Indep Inf Bn	Maj TAMURA Matsuo
BORNEO Sector Sigs Unit (a part—HQ SAPONG)	
37 Army MP Unit JESSELTON Det (HQ SAPONG)	
11 Fd Postal Unit (a part—HQ TENOM)	
11 Southern Army Hosp JESSELTON Sub-Hosp (Head Hosp at BEAUFORT)	
37 Army Fd Freight Depot (a part—HQ TENOM)	
37 Army Fd Ordn MT Depot (a part—HQ MELA[L]AP)	
62 Anchorage HQ JESSELTON Branch (HQ BRUNEI)	
110 Airfd Bn	Maj MORI Mineyuki
RANKONG	
33 Guard Force BALABAC Det	Lt OCHIAI Otiochi

APPENDIX 'B' (continued)

<i>Unit</i>	<i>Commander</i>
<i>SANDAKAN</i>	
554 Indep Inf Bn BORNEO Sector Sigs Unit (a part—HQ SAPONG)	Col OTSUKA Mitsugu
37 Army MP Unit SANDAKAN Det (HQ SAPONG)	
11 Southern Army Hosp SANDAKAN Sub-Hosp (Head Hosp BEAUFORT)	
11 Fd Postal Unit (a part—HQ TENOM)	
62 Anchorage HQ SANDAKAN Branch (HQ BRUNEI)	
130 Airfd Bn (a part—HQ KENINGAU)	
3 SEF 6 Suicide Craft Unit.	Lt AITA Hideo
103 Naval Establishment	
<i>TAWAO</i>	
370 Indep Inf Bn	Maj SUGASAKI Moriyuki
37 Army MP Unit TAWAO Det (HQ SAPONG)	
1 Indep Shipping Engr Coy	Maj FURUTA Katsuharu
<i>TARAKAN</i>	
454 Indep Inf Bn	Maj TOKOI Tadao
22 Special Naval Base Force 2 Guard Force	Comdr KOHARU
<i>BALIKPAPAN</i>	
455 Indep Inf Bn	Maj YAMADA Mitsuaki
22 Special Naval Base Force	Vice Adm KAMADA Michi- aki
<i>BANDJERMASIN</i>	
369 Indep Inf Bn	Maj KUSHIYAMA Tahei
22 Special Naval Base Force (a part—HQ BALIKPAPAN)	
<i>PONTIANAK</i>	
22 Special Naval Base Force (a part—HQ BALIKPAPAN)	Lt OKAYAMA Toshi

DOCUMENT 77
"Order of Battle"—Another Version

Intelligence Bulletin No.237, 15 June 1946; A.C.L. Dredge, Liet.-Colonel, G.S.I.A. Officer Commanding. ITEM 2184. WO 203/6317. PRO.

2. Order of Battle

Troops in BORNEO were all under the Command of 37 Army, with the exception of independent units e.g. 10th Air Bde. and 62 Harbour Unit. By Jun[e] [19]45, however, on the orders of the Supreme Commander of the Southern Army, these units were put under the command of 37 Army.

The distribution of JAPANESE units immediately prior to the surrender was as follows:—

a) YAMAMURA BUTAI (Major-Gen YAMAMURA commanding) included all troops in SIBU and KUCHING Provinces and PONTIANAK area.

b) AKASHI BUTAI (Maj-Gen AKASHI commanding) all troops in MIRI and LABUAN were included in this command.

c) IEMURA BUTAI (Col. IEMURA commanding) included all troops on the WEST COAST except BEAUFORT area.

d) OTSUKA BUTAI (Col OTSUKA commanding) all troops in the EAST COAST Province were in this command.

e) SUGASAKI BUTAI (Maj. SUGASAKI commanding) all troops in the TAWAU area were in this command.

f) ABE BUTAI (Lt/Col ABE commanding) troops in KENINGAU and BINCOL areas were included.

After the Allied landing in BRUNEL, Col TAKAYAMA was appointed to command the JAPANESE forces in BEAUFORT.

3. Army and Civil Administration

The policy of the Army in relation to the civil administration was that each should carry out its respective functions with the minimum interference from the other. After KURODA's arrival in BORNEO in Feb[ruary] [19]45 only one general order was issued by the Army to the Administration. This document was burned in an Allied bombing attack, but its outline was that it was vital to increase production of food and materials. A minimum required output was allotted to each province.

As Allied bombing intensified and landings grew more likely, particularly including paratroops, plans were drawn up putting the Administration under the orders of the Force Commander of the area. This was put into effect in May 1945.

4. Unit Areas

Every Unit had a limited area to control. If a soldier wished to leave this area, for any reason, he had to have the written permission of his commanding officer. In addition, he had to get a certificate confirming he was permitted to travel and obtain food wherever he stayed. This regulation was designed naturally to protect the local populace from mischief-bent soldiers.

5. Orders to Troops

The Army command laid particular stress in its orders to troops, to pay attention to the customs of natives and treat them kindly and courteously. A principle was that the JAPANESE authorities should always give the natives more than they took, but KURODA admits that this latter policy was not carried out. Administrative staffs only had power to negotiate with native traders; troops were forbidden to make personal dealings.

6. *Anti-invasion Plans*

The plans drawn up to oppose enemy landings were as follows:—

Garrisons were stationed at strategic points on the East and West coasts. These places were SANDAKAN, TARAKAN, TAWAU, BALIKPAPAN, BANJERMASIN, JESSELTON, LABUAN, BRUNEI, MIRI, and KUCHING. The first task was to prevent a landing at all—if this proved impossible, to smash bridgeheads by controlling beaches with medium guns that were easily mobile, and at all costs to prevent the use of airstrips and the storage of fuel.

There was ample warning of the landings:—bombing to soften up proposed landing areas was continuous; air fields were raked from end to end by bombs and M.G.'s for about a month before the actual operation. When bombardment from enemy warships began, it was known that landings would take place within a few days.

Flying boats also landed to reconnoitre and carry away spies and native informants.

The troops which engaged the AUSTRALIANS were:—

- | | |
|--|---|
| a) BALIKPAPAN | Vice-Admiral KAMATA, 22nd Base Force. 455 Ind. Inf. Bn. (YAMADA Butai) |
| b) TARAKAN | Comm. KOHARU, 2nd Naval Unit, 454 Ind. Inf. Bn (TOKOI BUTAI) |
| c) LABUAN, MIRI and BRUNEI Maj-Gen AKASHI, | 371 Ind. Inf. Bn (OKUYAMA BUTAI)
367 do do do (TSUTSUI BUTAI)
366 do do do (SATO BUTAI)
AIKYO Refinery unit (MIRI) |

7. Move of Army HQ

HQ 37 Army began to move from JESSELTON to SAPONG in March 1945. This step was taken as the Staff expected Allied landing on the west coast and communications would be easier and HQ safer in SAPONG.

The bulk of the Army had already moved to the eastern coastal Areas. 56 Bde. engaged the Allied landings at BRUNEI and retired to TENOM through the mountains between MIRI and the west coast.

The strength of troops which took part in the operations was:—

BALIKPAPAN	5000 men
TARAKAN	3000 *
LABUAN	800 *
BRUNEI	1200 *
MIRI	2800 *
BEAUFORT	1500 *

8. Allied landings expected

The Staff of 37 Army in considering what steps the Allied [forces] would take next after re-conquest of the PHILIPPINES, came to the conclusion that the following attacks were likely:—

a) An invasion of F.I.C. [French Indo-China], using this as base to drive into BURMA, SIAM[,] MALAYA and northwards.

b) A direct attack on FORMOSA, using this together with the YUO islands to make the assault on JAPAN.

c) Possibly to land on BORNEO and use bases to attack SINGAPORE.

In any event, BORNEO, generally considered until mid[-]1944, one of the safest occupied territories, sprang into importance as a danger-spot.

Reinforcements of men and large supplies of materials began to pour into BORNEO. The shipping problem, however, became grave owing to submarine and air attack, and many transports were sunk.

The garrisons covered the coast line from KUCHING, LABUAN to JESSELTON and SANDAKAN, as an outer defence line for SINGAPORE.

Troops in moving from the east to the strategic points on the west coast were necessarily transported overland, through SANDAKAN, BOTO and [R]ANAU, owing to the peril of sea-journeys. These overland marches accounted for many casualties from disease, and owing to bad weather conditions during March [19]45 there was considerable delay in movement.

The Allies had landed at TARAKAN in Feb. and in TAVOTAVO in March, and at first it was feared that large scale landings would take place while many units were immobilised in the interior.

It was generally thought that any Allied attack on BORNEO would have as its main object, the recapture of SINGAPORE. To this end, the Allied primary need would be for air and sea bases.

KUCHING and the NATUNA Islands were obviously the most suitable [a]erial bases and LABUAN the best sea base, for an attack on SINGAPORE. Having captured these places, it was expected that the next assault would be to capture the oil fields in TARAKAN, BALIKPAPAN and MIRI, to add to the Allied stores and prevent their usage by the JAPANESE. It was also thought that an attack would be made on SANDAKAN first, to be used as an airbase for operations on KUCHING and LABUAN.

It fact, the AUSTRALIANS landed at TARAKAN in early April [1945]; at BALIKPAPAN at the end of May and on LABUAN at the beginning of June.

Communications were bad, and it was sometime before we [Japanese] learned that the garrisons on LABUAN and in TARAKAN had been invested.

LABUAN was taken in June and BRUNEI, MIRI, BEAUFORT and PAPAR then assaulted. The MIRI garrisons retreated to the interior of the province, while that of BRUNEI to SAMPONG along the LIMBANG River, both counter-attacking.

The troops in BEAUFORT retired slowly along [R]ANAU path leading to the PADAS River and TENOM, while, the men in PAPAR met the BEAUFORT garrison while retreating, at a pre-arranged place where fierce fighting took place.

9. Intelligence Organisations

The Units which functioned to collect intelligence information were the 150 HIYO and SAKURA KIKANS, all under the direct command of 37 Army.

a) *ISO KIKAN* This was formed in Nov[ember] [19]44 in SANDAKAN and its duties were to pacify the native peoples along the coast of [S]ULU and the CELEBES Sea, and to collect information relating to Allied agents in those areas. Information received by 37 Army suggested that irregular forces would attempt an invasion through the east coast, being based on TAWI-TAWI.

The Commander of the Unit was Capt. HOIZUMI Kaoru, now dead. As bombing of SANDAKAN grew worse, the unit's activities decreased.

In Feb[ruary] [19]45 a branch of the KIKAN was established at LAHAD DATU to widen the area, but this branch completely failed to bring in information.

b) *HIYO KIKAN* This was formed in Feb[ruary] [19]45 and its functions were the same as ISO KIKAN. Its headquarters were at KOTA BELUD (N.E. of JESSELTON) and there were detachments at TAWAU and the foot of Mt. KINABALU. Very little is known of this KIKAN's success. The Commander was Lt. MORITA Toyojiro.

c) *SAKURA KIKAN* The KIKAN was formed in July 1945. Its functions were the same as the other two KIKANS and its area was the upper reaches of the PADAS River. It was also intended to pre-

vent irregular forces from reaching HQ of 37 Army at SAPONG, without the knowledge of the Army.

The Commander of the Unit was Lt. KAWACHI Kiroshi. The situation among the natives grew worse after the landings at BRUNEI and members of the Unit dressed as civilians, in order to keep closer in touch with the natives.

d) *ISO PARTY* This existed in KUCHING, but its Intelligence functions were subordinated to its trading and shipping activities.

To KURODA's knowledge, no spies were ever caught by these units.

In May 1945, the natives living along the upper reaches of the River MAHAKAM (Dutch BORNEO) revolted [*sic*; revolted], apparently on Allied instructions.

The JAPANESE strength in this area was too weak to crush it but Maj. OKADA, who commanded 1st Communications Unit in the district, sent a small party out. His main duty, however, was to concentrate on the defence of SABLOT and PENSIAGAN.

Along the banks of the River REJANG, the IBAN tribe revolted in June [19]45 and reports were received from the garrison at SIBU, giving details of the frequent murder of JAPANESE civilians.

Again little could be done, owing to lack of forces in sufficient numbers.

10. Kempetai in Borneo

Col MACHIGUCHI [Taku] was the Commander of the KEMPEITAI in BORNEO. Although normally an independent command, KEMPEI Units were in Jan[uary] [19]45 put under the control of Area Commanders. This step was taken because a duty of the KEMPEITAI is to ensure law and order among the civil population. Even at this date, however, Col. MACHIGUCHI still retained command of KEMPEI HQ then in JESSELTON, and the branches at TENOM and KENINGAU.

As communications worsened, it was found that KEMPEI Units were acting more or less independently. The Unit at JESSELTON was put under the command of Col IEMURA and at

KENINGAU under Lt/Col ABE, in Jun[e] [19]45. Col. MACHIGUCHI at this date only commanded KEMPEI HQ at SAPON[G] and the branch at nearby TENOM. All other KEMPEITAI units fell under the control of Area Commanders.

11. Events Leading to the Surrender

JAPANESE feeling by the end of [19]44 was that the war would end in late [19]45 or early [19]46. JAPANESE information lent credence to this feeling by showing that AMERICA, having lost an enormous number of men in the PACIFIC by middle [19]44 and having nearly exhausted her resources, wished to conclude a negotiated peace. It was thought that the other Allies would join with AMERICA in the negotiations.

The JAPANESE realised, however, that after the sea battles and landings by the end of [19]44, it would probably not be possible to defeat the Allies, particularly since GERMANY was now defeated. Since it was expected that the Allies, in order to defeat JAPAN, would have to take island after island, with an ever increasing toll of casualties, the JAPANESE plan was to try and make each Allied gain of territory as costly as possible, in order that at the end of a long period of attrition, the ALLIES would agree to come to terms.

To this end, all garrisons throughout the occupied territory, were ordered to fight to the last man. Parties were to be detailed to remain behind in every territory regained by the Allies, in order to force large Allied units to remain behind. These parties were to be supplied by submarine and to conduct guerilla warfare.

Although the JAPANESE no longer felt confident of winning the war outright, KURODA states that no one dreamed that the JAPANESE surrender would be so sudden or so complete.

When the Imperial Order to surrender was known in BORNEO, all JAPANESE soldiers and civilians were stunned. However, there was no choice but for the order to be obeyed.

A few days before the cessation of hostilities, the Allied offensive in the BEAUFORT area, abruptly ceased and air raids stopped.

The JAPANESE, having no knowledge of the surrender until the actual order was received, were unable to understand this and were planning an offensive. On 14th August [1945], however, the Imperial Order to cease fire was broadcast by TOKYO radio. The Comm[ander] 37 Army immediately ordered troops in the various fronts to cease fighting and awaited instructions.

On 20th Aug 7 Area Army in SINGAPORE signalled 37 Army that JAPAN had surrendered, all Allied orders were to be obeyed, that instructions regarding the hand-over to Allied forces would shortly be issued and all negotiations held between local JAPANESE Commanders and Allied units should be signalled to 7th Army HQ.

At the end of Aug[ust] the AUSTRALIAN Army proposed to begin negotiations with units in KUCHING, SAPONG, KEN-INGAU and SANDAKAN but this was not done since the JAPANESE Commander had not received the necessary instructions. On 6th Sept a signal arrived from SINGAPORE, ordering the Comm[ander] 37 Army to begin negotiations for the surrender, with the [G]eneral [O]fficer [C]ommanding 9 AUSTRALIAN Div[ision] at LABUAN.

On 10th Sept[ember] [1945] Lt/Gen BABA accompanied by his Staff, surrendered to Maj-Gen [G. E.] WOOTTEN at LABUAN.

The only Unit which continued fighting after the surrender was the KAMIMURA Unit, stationed at SERIA, which was fighting along the river LIMBANG. This was owing to the failure of communications and the unit did not know of the surrender.

All JAPANESE in N[orth] BORNEO were then concentrated in the areas, designated by the AUSTRALIAN Commander. . . .

13. Order of Battle

The following units and commands, as at Jun[c] [19]45, were stationed in BRITISH NORTH BORNEO:—

37th Army HQ

SAPONG

AKASHI Unit (TSURANUKI
Brigade) Commander

Maj.Gen AKASHI Taijiro

366 Ind. Inf. Bn

367 " " "

371 " " "

5th Communications Unit

BORNEO Refinery Unit

MIRI KEMPEITAI

YAMAMURA Unit (KANTO
Brigade) Commander

Maj Gen YAMAMURA Hyee

538 Ind. Inf. Bn.

539 " " "

A Company of the 553 Ind.

Inf. Bn.

22 Ind. MG Bn.

KUCHING KEMPEITAI

IEMURA Unit Commander

Col IEMURA Shinichi.

25 Ind. Mixed Rgt. (Minus one
battalion).

432 Ind. Inf. Bn.

A Company of 20 Ind. MG Bn.

OTSUKA Unit Commander

Col OTSUKA Mineru

554 Ind. Inf. Bn.

SANDAKAN KEMPEITAI

Naval Unit stationed at

SANDAKAN.

SUGASAKI Unit Commander

Maj SUGASAKI Morizo

370 Ind. Inf. Bn.

TAWAU KEMPEITAI

ABE Unit Commander

Lt Col ABE ...

37 Aerial Service Unit

130 Airfield Bn.

Army M.P. Unit Commander	Col MACHIGUCHI Taku HQ of KEMPEITAI (SAPONG) TENOM KEMPEITAI JESSELTON KEMPEITAI (was placed under command of Col IEMURA on 21 Jun 45) KENINGAU KEMPEITAI Unit (was placed under command of Lt. Col ABE on 21 Jun[e] [19] 45)
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Abbreviations in Documents 76 and 77

[ALO]	[Army Liaison Officer]
JAAF	Japanese Air Army Force
Bde	Brigade
Bn/Bns	Battalion
Indep	Independent
Inf	Infantry
Regt	Regiment
Coy	Company
Fd A/A Arty Coy	Field Anti-Aircraft Artillery Company
OC	Officer Commanding
Engr	Engineers
Sigs	Signals
Arty	Artillery
IS	Island
Gub	Gunners
Wire	Wireless
MG	Machine Gun
W/T	Wireless Transport
MT	Maintenance

Constr	Construction
MP	Military Police
FPO	Field Postal Office
L of C	Lines of Communication
Hosp	Hospital
Shpg	Shipping
Tpt	Transport
Airf	Airfield
IMB	Independent Mixed Brigade
Met	Meteorological
ARD	Air Raid Department
Sp	Special
POW	Prisoner of War
FAR	Field Air Repair
A/Tk	Anti-Tank
Det	Detachment
SEF	Special Expeditionary Force
Lt Gen	Lieutenant General
Maj	Major
Capt	Captain
Lt	Lieutenant
Lt Col	Lieutenant Colonel
Col	Colonel
Comdr	Commander
Naval Lt	Naval Lieutenant
Vice Adm	Vice Admiral

DOCUMENT 78
Japanese Suicide Craft Force

Source: Intelligence Bulletin No.237, 15 June 1946; A.C.L. Dredge, Liet.-Colonel, G.S.I.A. Officer Commanding. ITEM 2185. WO 203/6317. PRO.

3. Organisation of Unit

The unit originally consisted of 50 boats but 15 were lost en route, there was therefore a superfluity of personnel.

	<i>Officers</i>	<i>W.Os.</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Total</i>
(a) HQ:—(i) General Affairs	-	1	3	4
(ii) Sanitary	1	-	6	7
(iii) Signals	-	-	7	7
(iv) Pay	-	-	12	12
(b) <i>C.O.s and Crew</i>				
(i) 1st Flotilla (composed of 9 boats) Lieut	1	-	13	14
(ii) 2nd Flotilla (composed of 9 boats) Sub/Lt.	1	-	12	13
(iii) 3rd Flotilla (composed of 9 boats) Sub/Lt.	1	-	11	12
(iv) 4th Flotilla 8 boats	-	1	11	12
(c) Explosives Technicians	-	-	8	8
(d) Engineers	-	1	35	36
(e) Carrying Party (carrying the boats from the Depot to the Water)	-	1	172	173
TOTAL	4	4	290	298

(f) *List of Officers:—*

- (i) Lt. AITA Hideo—C.O. and Commander of the 1st Flotilla
- (ii) Sub/Lt. KUKITA Shinnosuke—Commander of the 2nd Flotilla.
- (iii) Sub/Lt. YAMAZI Takeshi—Commander of the 3rd Flotilla.
- (iv) Surg/Lt DATE Kazuo —Doctor.

4. Tactical Use of Suicide Craft

Intended originally to carry a crew of one only, but owing to extra personnel available through loss of 15 boats en route some of them now carried two. The plan of attack was to approach the target cautiously, if possible from ahead until within 3-4 kilometers then to open the throttles and go in at the full speed of 22 knots. No silencers were fitted to the engines and they could be heard at a distance of from 3-4 kilometers depending on weather conditions. Two boats were to attack each enemy ship aiming to hit amidships. When 50 meters from his objective the helmsman was allowed to leap overboard; there was no compulsion requiring him to remain in the boat and get killed. Stationary targets were preferred, but it was considered that they would have a fair chance against a slow convoy.

5. Details of Craft Used

Length	5.5 m.
Beam	1.5 m.
Freeboard (aft)	60 cm.
Draught (aft)	50 cm.
Displacement	1 1/2 tons.
Range	70 miles at 6 knots. 50 miles at 22 knots.
Engines	Single 70 H.P. car engine.
Explosive	Metal box in bows containing 300 kilograms of the same type of explosive as is used in torpedoes.
Detonator	The smashing of the bows presses a metal plate back onto the explosive box, this completes an electrical circuit and fires the detonator.
Armament	No weapons whatever are carried, and there is no protection as the boats are constructed entirely of wood.

DOCUMENT 79

Allied Activities—The Visible Signs of Hope

Papers of E. R. Pepler. 88/33/1. IWM.

During our long and enforced captivity, we were always looking forward to seeing some of our own planes overhead. As the news which we received over the radio became more encouraging, owing to Allied advances on all fronts, it became apparent to us in early 1945, that we should soon be seeing our planes in action. I can well remember that on Lady Day, March 25th, 1945, when J. P. Flemming, Leonard Beckett and myself were outside our hut having a rest from our cookhouse and other chores in the early part of the afternoon, when J. P. suddenly said 'Yank engines.' Len and myself looked up very startled as we had not heard anything, then we heard a drone of engines and, of course, we said 'Japs.' J. P. said, 'No, it's Yanks,' and at that moment as we were looking towards the airfield, we saw silvery objects falling. J. P. said it was Lockheed Lightnings jettisoning their extra petrol tanks and then I saw fifteen twin fuselage planes diving from about fifteen thousand feet in line towards the airfield. As can well be imagined, this was a thrilling sight to us not having seen any of our planes for just over three years. We had to await the return of our working party on the airfield, before we knew what the Lightnings had bombed or shot[-]up. There was great excitement when our men returned to camp and the Lightnings had destroyed the airfield. Apparently three Japanese Zero Fighters were in the act of taking off when our planes dived and all three were destroyed as they were taking off from the runway. Building[s], etc., were also destroyed but all our men were safe as they were working well away from the runway.

Just after this raid, it became a regular occurrence for a lone Flying Fortress to make an appearance over our camp and perhaps shoot up some craft or warehouses on the River Kuching. Only on one occasion did a Japanese Zero attempt to attack this lone raider and then it was a very feeble attempt. The Zero did fire its two ma-

chine guns at the Fortress from a very considerable distance as it was directly over our camp. The fortress replied with heavy fire and the Zero nipped very smartly away and from then onwards, the few Japanese planes we saw, only appeared after the Allied plane or planes had left. As I have said previously, some of our working parties were engaged in making a road in the jungle to act as a second runway for Japanese aircraft and our lone Fortress must have found this out, as one day in early June, 1945, we had to take to our slit trenches again. As we were sitting there, we heard a very heavy drone and looking up we saw twelve Fortresses flying at about twelve thousand feet towards us. As usual it was our expert on aircraft J. P. Flemming, who spotted that the planes' bomb bay doors were open and as he commented on this fact, we saw the bombs leave the planes. The planes were directly over our heads when they dropped their bombs and at first I thought we were being bombed but then realized the bombs had to be released at that point to hit a target approximately 1 1/2 miles ahead. Of course, we then realized that the target was the second runway being made by our working party and so as we heard the bombs explode and saw trees and debris fly high into the air, we became very anxious for the safety of our men. A few anxious hours went by and then, to our great relief, the working party returned to camp, some of our men had lost their meagre possessions which they had left near the runway whilst they were working. Apparently our men owed their lives to a Japanese sergeant who had spotted the Fortresses bomb bays open and had grabbed one of our N.C.O.'s and pointed this out to him. At first our chap said that as they were our planes they would not attack us but soon realised that as the planes were coming directly towards the runway and that the bomb bays were open, the situation was desperate. He gave the orders to run like hell into the jungle and to dive for cover. Luckily all managed to get into the jungle and stayed flat on the floor whilst the bombs exploded. Luckily again, the bomb aimers were good and practically all the bombs struck all along the runway, they completely wrecked all the work our men had done,

but other than being smattered by dirt and mud, all of our chaps escaped scot free. The Allies never attacked the second runway again as no further work was attempted by the Japanese.

In early July, 1945, we had one more concentrated rai[d] by the Allies during which there was another narrow shave for some of us. This raid was carried out by Mosquito Aircraft and it was made on the radio station and oil and petrol dumps not far from our camp. Once again we had to take to our slit trenches as the Mosquitos buzzed overhead and one of the planes suddenly dived towards our camp with all guns blazing. This time we did duck for cover but fortunately, the guns ceased firing before we were in range, however, a very few of the last bullets struck the ground only a few yards before one of our hospital huts. As J. P. said afterwards, it only needed the pilot to have kept his finger on the trip for a minute fraction of a second longer, and some of our huts would have been shot to ribbons. No further attacks were ever made in that direction and it was assumed by us, that the pilots had realized the danger to us. As the weeks dragged by, the lone planes of the Allies were a daily occurrence and as we had realized very early that they could do nothing to help us, we hardly took any notice of them. Towards the end of July and early August, we experienced a lone Allied plane circling over our camp during all daytime hours. The reason for which I will explain later, as it was not until our release that we knew the answer.

DOCUMENT 80
Victory and Release at Last

Papers of E. R. Pepler. 88/33/1. IWM.

During the first few days of August, 1945, we picked up parts of new[s] bulletins from Radio Chungking, it was not possible to obtain the full bulletins, as the longer our man had to turn the wheel, the more unsteady in speed he became and also we could not risk

having all our goods on display to all and sundry. What I received over our one earphone was very cheering indeed and when we heard of the dropping of the first Atom bombs, we knew that the end was in sight. The culmination of Leonard Beckett's stupendous achievements and our hopes came very early on the 14th August 1945. I think I shall remember the radio announcer's news from Chungking on that morning as long as I live. His words were 'The War is over, the Japanese have unconditionally surrendered.' I am afraid I was very excited and said to Len, sitting by my side, 'It's over, the Nips have surrender[ed].' Len said, 'Shush, Dickey, hear what else you can.' I heard very little more at that time and we decided to pack up for the time being. I made hasty tracks across the camp to our Campmaster's hut and hurr[ie]dly told him the glad tidings. He immediately summoned the bugler and told him to 'Sergeant Majors.' When all the Company Sergeant Majors were present, he told me to say exactly what I had heard. There was great jubilation and the Sergeant Majors high-tailed it back to their respective Companies to pass on the great news.

Within a very short space of time the camp was dotted with small fires set in holes in the ground well away from the huts, as this was permitted by the Japanese. Small stores of food, which men had been able to buy or scrounge all came out and anyone who had been lucky enough to keep chickens, disposed of them to the pot. Our small group decided to have a small celebration meal during the evening, so we killed off some of our hens and had them prepared for roasting in one of the bakehouse ovens. A few sweet potatoes were made into chips and some bananas were scrounged for dessert. Our small group, plus Colonel King (our Senior Medical Officer), sat down during the early evening to our slap up meal and to us it was the best meal that we had had for years.

The Japanese were very curious as to why all our camp were so happy and inquired of our Campmaster the reason. Luckily for us the day in question was an official camp holiday, given by the Japanese to celebrate the anniversary of the grand opening of the

Batu Lintang Encampment, the Kuching Prison Camps and our Campmaster told the Japanese that the men were happy because of this holiday from working parties given by the Japanese. The Japanese were apparently satisfied with this explanation and a trouble free day passed by. It became apparent during the next few days that the ordinary Japanese soldiers knew something had happened but were not sure what it was. Some extra rice and fruit were sent into our camp and no-one was beaten by the guards. We decided that it was possible something of great interest to us might be given on news bulletins so we continued to operate the secret radio. On one bulletin it was stated that Australian planes were dropping leaflets to the Japanese and local population telling them of the end of the War and also that messages were being dropped to the Japanese regarding prisoners-of-war. It was not very long after hearing this news that leaflets were showered over the Kuching area and our camps, and also Australian Mosquito aircraft swooped low over our camp and dropped leather pouches containing messages with coloured streamers attached. As we had forewarning of this, one of the three pouches was snatched by us without the guards seeing, and, of course, read by us. It contained a message, both in Japanese and English, asking permission to drop food for us prisoners. The messages were all handed over to the Japanese and we sat back to await results. The Australians had asked if permission was granted for a large white letter 'L' to be displayed on the ground in a prominent position by 3 o'clock that afternoon. We kept a strict watch on the Japanese area of the camp from behind our barbed wire, and as the time was approaching 3 o'clock, the Japanese had not placed anything resembling the sign on the open ground. Our Campmaster decided to place some of our few mosquito nets into a letter 'L' on an open space in our camp, and this was done. At about one minute to 3 o'clock, the Japanese also placed a large white letter 'L' on their open square. The Australian aircraft surveyed our camp area just after 3 o'clock and soon travelled back to its base but before 5 o'clock it again

swooped over our camp and dropped a message addressed to us telling us not to interfere with their messages to the Japanese, but to pass them over immediately to the Japanese. Next day during the morning, over came a Douglas C47 and dropped crates of tinned foods and long round containers, containing loaves of bread, in open ground between our camp and the women internees camp. This food was shared amongst all the camps and so our scanty rice rations were supplemented by ham, tongue, rabbit, tomatoes, butter, milk, sugar and bread. There was one tragedy from the dropping of food supplies and it happened on the first day that supplies were dropped. The C47 was perhaps flying somewhat higher than was required and the first few cases of food attached to the parachutes were released over our camps and fell into the jungle, unfortunately one of the cases came adrift from its parachute and dropped like a stone into the men's camp next to ours. One of the older men internees was apparently just coming out of his hut when the case dropped onto his head, killing him instantly. Having survived the rigours of captivity for so long, it was a terrible blow. The remaining supplies were parachuted down into the open space I have previously mentioned, from a much lower height, and no further accidents occurred.

Further supplies of food were dropped daily but our stomachs were in no condition for excess or luxurious living and we were well satisfied with just a little of the good and nourishing food daily. Our chief concern was to have our chronic sick cared for by experts with the necessary medical supplies and equipment, and in early September, our hopes were partly realized. Two Australian Colonels of their Medical Corps, landed by Catalina Flying Boat on the River Kuching and came to our camp with some medical supplies. Dr. Yamamoto came in for one hell of a time from these two Medical Officers when they saw the state of the majority of our camp. Up[-]to[-]date medical care and drugs soon began to show effect upon our sick and many lives were saved by these two officers. Out of the two thousand of us who entered that camp,

only seven hundred and fifty survived and of these well over six hundred were chronic sick. Our small band had all survived and did not need any medical treatment, the cares and worries of the Secret Radio and Generator must have kept us physically well. Although from August 15th, until 11th September, 1945, the Japanese were still in command, we did not suffer any beatings, but lived a quiet life inside our compound. We did not intend to try anything foolish at that stage as having survived our captivity, we intended to make the last lap. During this period, our Campmaster was shown a prepared speech by Colonel Suga, which was going to be read to all the camps on August 18th. In this speech, we were going to be told that all who could walk were being marched away into the jungle with Japanese guards, all sick persons were going to be placed in huts and the huts burned. On the march if anyone dropped out they would be left behind or shot. Apparently similar marches had already taken place in other parts of North Borneo.

On September, 11th, 1945, Australian and American Forces arrived at Kuching and it was then and only then that our faithful radio was on view for all to see. Newspapermen and Camera men thronged around and much was said and many photographs taken of both the radio and us. This was a happy time for all who had survived and all sat down to write our first letter home for nearly four years. There was so much to say, but how hard it was to say it in the written word. That evening we roamed a little further than our own compound and paid visits to the other camps. Although we had suffered bitterly under the Japanese rule, I saw no retaliation at all by our ex[-]prisoner[s] or internee[s] against the Japanese Officers or guards. Our liberators did not intend us to stay any longer at Kuching, and the next day we were taken by lorries and then by P.T. Boats, up the Kuching River to the mother P.T. Escort vessel. Only the ex[-]prisoners who could walk came, as the more chronic sick were being taken by either plane or hospital ship. We soon put to sea and it was absolutely marvellous to feel the wind upon ones cheek and to know that once more, one was free.

DOCUMENT 81

"I am going home."

Papers of G. W. Pringle. IWM.

Again a warning from my Chinese friend on the aerodrome. "The Japanese have orders no prisoners are to be recaptured by Allied forces. All must be killed."

I really cannot believe any people, however uncivilised, could deliberately plot the cold blooded murder of defenceless prisoners and yet the Japs, judging by their past cruelties and general treatment, could conceivably be capable of such a terrible crime. Coupled with my Chinese friend's previous warning about the possible move to a new camp I wonder if something drastic is afoot? Men in tight corners often resort to terrible practices.

The [Lieutenant] Colonel [T. C. Whimster]¹ is disinclined to believe my report, but I could see he was disturbed. [Lieutenant] Yamamoto [Japanese medical officer] had already carried out a medical inspection supposedly checking against dysentery before sending a party to Japan. Could it be he was checking on the strength of each individual and deciding how best to kill him? The idea is inconceivable but he is Yamamoto. Capable of any cruelty and atrocity. Perhaps we had better be on our guard against any surprise move by the Japs?

The fighters came today and it seemed as though they were working in relays. No bombs were dropped and no machine guns fired. Twenty Lockheed Lightnings circled the camp. Round and round they went until we were almost spinning like tops watching them. As their fuel ran low they were replaced by yet more twenty fighters. And so it continued the entire day long.

What could it possibly mean? Why all this observance of our camp?

Why did not parachutists land?

"I'm afraid," said Ken, "Your Chinese worker friend has been well informed. Our forces must know our location, they must have

been able to see us very clearly, and they did not bomb, perhaps they have heard of the suggested move to a new camp and the plan to kill us, this is why they have been watching all day, I'm willing to bet all I have at the slightest sign of anything suspicious parachute troops would have landed in our camp."

I hope they return tomorrow.

Now we are listening to the 'Old Lady' as often as is technically possible but still we hear no news of Allied forces near to Kuching. The oil port of Jesselton has been bombed and Sandakan has been re-taken. There is talk of a terrible atrocity from the town. Hundreds of murdered prisoners['] bodies have been found in the jungle. We interpret the news as meaning the prisoners had been taken on a forced march and as they fell exhausted so they were stabbed to death by the bayonet.

This then is a forerunner of the fate which will be ours.

The fighters have been circling our camp almost non-stop for a whole week, occasionally a lone bomber has bombed Kuching and on one visit our watching fighters were accompanied by a Typhoon fighter. Our resident expert is very well informed. The Typhoon fighter circled the camp only once and then made off to Kuching. We watched a new marvel. The Typhoon did not fire machine guns. Rockets were fired and deadly weapons they sounded. What next are we to see in the way of modern military equipment?

Today Yamamoto sprang a great surprise. Laughing, joking and handing round cigarettes he told us the Japanese Government and he, Yamamoto, deeply sympathised with us and the appalling conditions under which we were existing.

He had received orders from Tokio that a new camp was being built for us and would be equipped with the best medical equipment obtainable. There would be no working parties and food would be plentiful. The sick men would be especially well cared for.

Far from cheering us up he merely succeeded in putting us on our guard and confirming the information given to me by my friend at the aerodrome.

Now we believed the Allied forces were fighting towards Kuching and we also now believed the projected move to the new camp would afford the Japs a wonderful opportunity to carry out the Japanese Government order to 'Kill them all.' We knew there was to be no new camp. No advance working parties had gone ahead to prepare a site or erect any huts and never in our wildest imagination had we ever dreamed the Japs would exert themselves to bring us any comfort.

Doctor Yamamoto was lying in his teeth and well we knew it.

What a frightening thing it is to be aware of your future. Many times during my imprisonment I have said, 'What a good thing it is one cannot see into the future and all it holds.' But now our future was placed before us.

Death in a brutal and violent form.

And the tragedy was we could do nothing about it. Despite the intentions of the Colonel to fight off any attempt at massacre by using sticks and throwing stones we knew full well any effort on our part would be futile. One machine gun would be more than adequate to quell any uprising or defensive action we might organise.

And now with the certain knowledge our death was merely a matter of days away we discussed all manner of ways we might possibly postpone the undesirable event.

Escape was impossible. Only one thing could save us now. A successful invasion of our camp area by the Allies and even this was an outside odds chance. We all knew the moment parachutists were seen to be dropping towards us the massacre would start.

Myself and my immediate circle of friends decided that when we saw signs of the massacre starting we would cut and run for it, hoping that by losing ourselves in the jungle the Japs would not trouble to seek out a few missed victims. And we made our plans accordingly.

Although we are fully aware we face possible death if we escape into the jungle and certain death if we allow ourselves to be force marched from Kuching we are not depressed. Certainly we are not jubilant. Perhaps resigned to our fate would be the better descrip-

tion? But long into the night we discussed our chances and decided as we had successfully lived on a diet of fresh air and little else for the past few days we could not fare worse in the jungle.

We had only one worry. If we did escape into the jungle, would the native Dyaks be friendly? We had no wish to jump from the frying pan into the fire! Personally I think we have little to fear from any of the population in or around Kuching. Their treatment under Japanese rule will almost guarantee our safety.

But would our Allies be able to find us if they landed? And how would we know if they had landed? How easy it is to become confused and worried over simple matters. We have made our decision and we must stick to it. The questions will sort themselves out, and knowing something of the Chinese underground movement I have no doubt they will be informed of our every movement and we will be watched from the moment we first walk into the jungle.

With so much to think over I found difficulty in falling sleep and decided to partake in the midnight prow. Joining the 'old lags' who were perambulating, and lost in thought, I almost jumped out of my skin when I felt a hand on my shoulder and a voice, very far from steady, said, "A word with you, urgent."

Len looked as though he lost sixpence and found ten thousand pounds and could scarcely control his voice as he whispered the most magical words I had ever heard. "It's all over, the Japs have capitulated."

I made the only reply possible, "Don't be so bloody daft."

Literally dragging me away from the circulating insomniacs he again said, "The bloody war's over, the Japs have packed it in, tonight, NOW! you can go home." Still unconvinced I asked Len to be a little more specific, unless of course he had gone completely mad!

And then he told me the full story.

Two bombs of hitherto unknown force had been exploded over the cities of Nagasaki and Hiroshima and levelled them to the

ground. Thousands of Japs had been killed by the force of the explosions and rather than submit his subjects to any further such horrors the Jap Emperor had decided to call it a day.

This was the only time we could not keep a wonderful item of news from the men. This news could save lives. Many of the sick men had long ago given up all hope of surviving and were lying just waiting to die.

Now they would have something to live for. Freedom and Home.

But they must be warned. The Japs will not yet know and will be most displeased when they do find out. There must be no cheering, no shouting, no hunting for Korean guards who are on the wanted list and no Jap baiting. Yet.

Sleep was now out of the question and not needed. Gone were our fears of a massacre. Surely the Japs would not kill us in cold blood because they had lost their war?

"On the contrary" said Ken. "This is when they are likely to be most dangerous, we are in greater danger now than ever before."

And I had inwardly been complimenting myself on having missed the jungle excursion!

But again the clear cold calculating brain had been hard at work.

"Now we must mount a guard, if by any chance the Japs have heard the news and decide to do us in we must have some warning of their approach."

Even the Colonel thought this a good idea and a guard was detailed to keep an all night watch on the main approaches to the compound.

No guard duty for me. My detail was just the one I did not want at this particular time. "You must get out of camp somehow and warn the Chinese."

Just my luck. The war is ended. I have, with a bit of luck escaped the jungle and now I must break camp, struggle through the now much more overgrown undergrowth, find the house of my

friends, tell them the great news, and make my way back, hopefully without meeting any prowling guards who would, without hesitation, run me through with a bayonet or a sword, depending on the rank of the guard who caught me.

I shall be the happiest man alive when my feet are on board the ship taking me away from Borneo and mad Colonels.

Perhaps the fates are being kind to me at last. I had an uninterrupted journey to the home of my friends, and a reception that beggars description when I gave them the news. Unfortunately I could not stay to join in the celebrations and after warning them to be cautious returned to camp, unharmed and vastly relieved.

The Japanese officers must have some idea the war is over and they are on the losing side. The usual morning hymn of hate and the rousing cry of 'Tenno Heika Banzai' [Long Live His Highness the Emperor] was noticeably absent. No early morning working party parade was called and for most of the day we saw nothing of any Japanese[,] only the Koreans, who continued their normal guard duties and were still very belligerent. Apparently they were as yet unaware of the change in their fortunes!

A strange ominous silence brooded over the camp.

A silence we knew could not for long be contained. The men were beginning to realise their purgatory was almost over and it was inevitable they would want to give vent to their feelings.

Who could blame them?

Towards midday we saw a large column of smoke rising from the Jap quarters and this, said the Colonel, was the infallible sign the Japs had received official notice of the capitulation. They were carrying out the accepted ritual of all defeated armies. Burning the official papers and incriminating evidence.

But they told us nothing.

One week has passed and nothing official has been told us by Jap Headquarters. The Colonel has asked Suga outright for news of the progress of the war but Suga refused to be drawn and brusquely ordered the Colonel from his office.

Each day continues as before. No working parties. No morning

hymn of hate. No salute to the Emperor. The Koreans are very much subdued but are still apparently unaware the war is over.

Then suddenly the peace and quiet of Kuching P.O.W. camp was shattered by a totally unexpected and unwelcome shout from the still manned watch tower.

'Shikorki.'⁴ Dismay was written largely over the face of every man. Has it all been a weird dream? Is the war over? Why should bombers be heading towards us?

Apprehensively we watched as a solitary bomber flew steadily towards our camp. Rapidly losing height the gigantic aeroplane circled round the camp and we waited and waited. No man made for cover. We all stood as though mesmerised.

But no bombs were released. No shots were fired. Thousands and thousands of leaflets were showered into the camp.

And my first thought was for Arthur. "Too bad, now all the smoking paper you ever wished for is heading towards us and it is of no use to you in your business deals, every man will have more smoking and toilet paper than he needs."

Pandemonium broke loose. The Japs and Koreans dashed into camp and attempted to prevent us gathering up the leaflets. One or two nasty scenes developed. But the Japs were too late. We had read the leaflets.

"Take heart. We are coming to get you but owing to your location it is difficult. Be patient. Food and clothing will be dropped to you."

"Take no orders from the Japanese. THEY ARE BEATEN"

Now it was useless for the Japs to interfere with us. 'Fish Face,' attempting to stop leaflet gatherers was set on by one or two well known Jap haters and roughly beaten back. But we still needed to exercise care. The Japs still had rifles and bayonets and their tempers were uncertain.

Suddenly in the middle of the general fracas a fighter 'plane swooped over the camp and shooting three canisters into the camp proceeded to circle round, obviously looking to see if we had recovered the canisters.

More instructions, but this time from Allied Headquarters on Labuan island. Instructions to lay out in special design any blankets or spare clothing we still owned, this would tell the pilots what we needed in the way of medicines and special foods.

We proceeded immediately to carry out these instructions, and watched by a crowd of muttering Japs and Koreans we laid out the design telling our friends we needed everything they could send us, and quickly.

The fighter plane circled over the camp and either photographed the design or made notes of it and off he flew, to the cheers of everyone except the Japs.

Shortly after the excitement had subsided Colonel Suga sent for the Camp Masters and officially advised them the war was over. A general parade of all military and civilian prisoners and internees would be held one hour from now and he, Suga, would tell us the glad tidings.

The date, I noted, was August 28th.

A very depressed Colonel Suga, Commandant of All Prisoners of War Camps in Borneo, dressed in full regalia, addressed the only parade in the history of the British Army ever to assemble promptly and correctly.

We listened with interest as this vile, once pompous, now very much deflated murderer, explained to us about the bombs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. He was himself, he told us, a victim of this 'terror bombing' as he believed his wife and family had all been killed in the explosions. There were tears in his eyes as he spoke. But we shed no tears and no word of condolence was heard from any in our ranks.

The Japanese Army, continued Suga, was not defeated. They still occupied vast territories and the Japanese Homeland had not been invaded. Many Jap commanders he thought would not obey the Emperor but he, Colonel Suga, was a loyal and devoted subject and would obey the commands of his Emperor. Shortly we would go home and he wished us well. He was sorry so many had found

it necessary to die! And he ended his speech by thanking us all for our co-operation and valuable work we have carried out for him. How could he miss sensing the great surge of hatred which swelled across the parade square?

He saluted but no one returned his salute. No one commiserated with him, and we returned to our huts voicing no other opinion than that we wished Suga and his entire race be made to suffer and die as we had suffered and died.

Then a moment of pure delight. Our Colonel ordered Suga to present himself and receive his orders on the future running of the camp. This was indeed a grand moment. How had the mighty fallen? "From a very great height" Arthur declared.

Suga offered his sword to the Colonel who refused point blank to accept it, preferring to await the arrival of the Australian soldiers. Suga's fall from grace would be all the better emphasised if he capitulated to the Commanding Officer of the relieving forces when he eventually arrived!

September 5th, 1945. A date never to be forgotten by any prisoner in Kuching. A message flew through the entire camp with the speed of lightning.

"At 3.0[0] p.m. today Australian soldiers will arrive at the camp to take the surrender. If you wish to see the hand-over, do not be late!"

Only the bedfast men were absent when a squad of fierce, tough Australians rushed into the camp, surrounded all the Jap officers and began rounding up the Koreans and Japs. The rounding up was not conducted in a friendly manner.

We cheered and embraced these tough men who had fought many hard battles on their road to release us from a cruel and vicious bondage and we felt embarrassed and ashamed of ourselves as we stood almost naked and barely able to support ourselves. The comparison between their tough wiry sun-burnt bodies and our emancipated bodies was terrible to contemplate.

But we were not the only ones to shed tears. Many of these Aus-

tralian had tears in their eyes as they met for the first time the shattered remains of what were once men as tough as they themselves.

"Christ" said one huge Australian Sergeant. "Did you see that, the poor sod waved to us." One of the most sick men in the camp had dragged himself by sheer force of willpower to the scene of the surrender and bravely tried to salute our deliverers.

Now the peak performance of the day was about to be witnessed. The Australian Commander, Major General [Thomas] Eastick, a huge man by any standards, mounted the rostrum and after accepting the sword of surrender from Suga was about to dismiss him when a shout, rising simultaneously from the throats of the Board of Directors of the 'Old Lady' and 'Ginnie' stopped the proceedings.

"Hold on, we have something to show you."

Carrying the radio and the generator Len proudly showed them to the General and turning to Suga, asked, "Well, what do you think about it Suga?"

Now I know the full meaning of the saying "If looks could kill." Len would have died a horrible death.

We were all photographed and congratulated, fed huge bars of chocolate and given so much food to eat we were all suffering a great deal from over eating. Food by the ton load was brought into camp. The sick men were taken to Kuching hospital, now staffed by Australian nurses and Doctors, where we knew they would be in good hands.

This never to be forgotten day is ended. We are all sated with food and showered in talcum powder and hair lotions, anything we could find which would help make us feel clean again and take away the odour of the prison camp.

What else can we do this evening but talk? Talk incessantly about home and families and marvel at being permitted to write uncensored letters. Letters in which we could convey our innermost thoughts and hopes.

Tired and weary but disinclined to sleep we talked the night through.

Now I am going home. Tomorrow I leave Kuching accompanied as always by Bert, Ken, Arthur, David, Freddie, Alan, Dick and Len and, of course, the Colonel. We are to fly to Labuan in a Sunderland Flying boat. Roll on tomorrow!

Most of today has been spent in exchanging addresses, talking with the Australian soldiers and gloating over the discomfiture of the Japs and Koreans as they sit in the cages prepared for them. Our tormentors for the past terrible years can now savour the degradation of being prisoners behind barbed wire. They are not enjoying the experience.

There have been no attempts to even the score with any of the bullies and Suga, together with Nekata and Yamamoto, has already been flown to Labuan, there to await trial as war criminals. May their punishment be severe.

Tomorrow always seems a long way away but eventually the magic moment arrived when we boarded the truck to convey us to the river where the flying boat was ready to start us on the first leg of our road home.

We were welcomed aboard as though we were returning heroes and everything possible for our comfort was supplied by these generous big hearted Australians.

Each of us eating an apple we waited as the flying boat taxied out to mid-stream and then we were air borne. The pilot, poor misguided kind-hearted soul, thought we would like a final look at our jungle home and turned the seaplane to fly over the camp.

Looking down over the camp where I has spent so many unhappy and terrible days the memories came flooding back.

Memories of the hundreds of decent, honest men who now lie buried in the only cared for spot in Kuching . . . 'Boot Hill.' Decent honest men killed by the inhuman treatment meted out by a Government composed of maniacs and sadists and headed by the greatest War Criminal of all time. Emperor Hirohito.

Memories of the years of degradation, the hunger, the bestiality of our captors and the obscenities. Memories of the lost years—years which can never be recovered.

I could look no longer.

I do not wish to see Kuching ever again. I do not wish to hear the name mentioned in my presence.

I am going home.

DOCUMENT 82

"Can it really be true . . . ?"

Papers of Miss H. E. Bates. 91/35/1. IWM.

17TH AUGUST 1945

Can it *really* be true that we have reached the end of our tribulations? When the women went to see their husband[s] at the usual meeting in the pigsty, they were told by the men that the war was over. We did not believe this until the next day, when stores of all kinds just poured into the camps. Rice, pork, fish, and other kinds of food became plentiful, which indicated that better rations could have been supplied over the years but had been deliberately withheld by our captors.

The Japanese Commandant actually held a tea-party for the Headmen and Women of each camp, during which he stated that he was thankful for their co-operation over three years, and that he wept at the thought of the deaths which had occurred, and the hunger experienced, telling us that this was due to the American bombing of Red Cross ships! (This of course was sheer nonsense as food and particularly medical supplies sent by the Red Cross, had reached most internment camps in the Far East, but [were] not issue[d] until the Japanese capitulated). He then added that he looked upon us with affection,—as his children!

I could not sleep that night: It all seemed so improbable and I actually felt almost frightened at the thought of going [out] into the world again. Looking back over the years, I realised how comparatively fortunate we women had been, compared with the soldiers, who had the best years of their young lives wasted.

19. AUGUST 1945

It's actually happened, and our dreams have come true! At 2.30 to-day planes flew over and dropped pamphlets right into our compound. The Nips soon ran in to collect them, but we managed to grab and hide some. We have not been officially informed that the war is over, and we are carrying on as usual, deferring to the Japanese, and bowing to them.

23RD. AUGUST 1945

Still in ignorance of what is going on in the outside world, the Japs persist in saying that the war is *not* over. Nevertheless, they are furnishing the soldiers sick bay with bed chairs, and mosquito nets, and substantial amounts of medicine are being issued. Significant in itself, is the fact that the soldiers death list has fallen from ten to fifteen daily, to three or four—.

26TH AUGUST 1945

The Japanese Commandant has stated his wish to speak to all the women in the chapel. We duly gathered there, whereupon he said he had good news for us, and solemnly read one of the pamphlets which we of course had seen long before! He then went on to say that owing to the wicked bombing by the Americans the Japanese had asked for peace, in order to save the lives of millions of Japanese women and children, but that the Jap army wished to fight on. He was cut off from Tokyo and had received no orders, and we were to carry on as usual. Any unattached women with a

friend in the men's camp, would now be allowed to visit him for half an hour.

27TH AUGUST 1945

To-day seven planes came over, just skimming the roofs of our huts, dropping more pamphlets, tooth brushes and powder, which were much appreciated after years of cleaning teeth with soot or twigs. The soldiers received shorts, shoes, and blankets with instructions not to appear naked in future!

30TH. AUGUST 1945

At 11.30 a.m. today [a] sea-plane dropped twenty parachutes with packages attached. One fell outside our hut and was labelled 'bread.' Others contained flour, tinned rabbit, and other meat.

The goods were collected by the Japs under the supervision of Australian Officers who distributed them to the groups of internees. All sorts of what we had thought of as luxuries arrived; such as sugar, sweets, milk, bundles of clothing, and even fashion books!

The Tommies already begin to look better, and we women are making pillows out of the parachutes, for the sick people. When I went over to deliver some of these, I was horrified to see the condition of some of the men. I was pretty well hardened to sickness, dirt, and disease, but never had I seen anything like this in all my years of nursing. Pictures of hospital wards during the Crimean War show terrible conditions, but even those could not compare with the dreadful sights I met on this visit.

Shells of men lay on the floor sunken-eyed and helpless; [s]ome were swollen with hunger[,] oedema and beri-beri, others in the last stages of dysentery, lay unconscious and dying. They had no pillows or clothes, few cups, fewer bowls, or even medical appliances.

The R.C. Sisters immediately started cleaning up, and gave all the attention they could. By the end of the day they had made some improvement, but their task was almost impossible, as there were three hundred desperately sick men, many unable to help themselves, or to carry food to their mouths. Throughout our internment, we women had begged to be allowed to nurse the soldiers, but the Japanese refused our offer, saying that this would be indecent—.

One desperately ill soldier called out to me, "Are you from London? Please come and talk to me!" All those who were conscious were anxious to talk, and I was very touched when they told me that the sight of the ladies had helped them to keep going,—when we passed down the road adjacent to the camp,—looking so 'clean and cheery.' This surprised me, for I had often thought that they must hate us for looking reasonably well and fairly well dressed.

8TH SEPTEMBER 1945

A dreadful thing happened yesterday: One of the parachute packages broke loose and fell, killing a male internee, who was quite young and reasonably fit after his years of imprisonment.

We have been visited by two enormous Australian colonels from the Red Cross in Labuan, who told us that we would soon be evacuated to the island, and put into hospitals.

9TH. SEPTEMBER 1945

Yesterday the Tommies gave a concert, which was most entertaining, but also very sad. The female impersonator should obviously have been in bed; the crooner was carried on stage on a stretcher; and the leading comedian,—a man of about twenty-five, had to be held up to do his turn, which he spoke in a broad Lancashire accent. Nothing daunted him. Though 6 feet 3 inches in

height, this man weighed only seven stone. However, he used his infirmities as a source of humour; scratching his scabies etc.; and grinning from ear to ear. He succeeded in being uproariously funny!

The dancer of the team had formerly acted as agent to Miss Cicely Courtneidge. He appeared in Barbara's bathing suit, with the addition of two half-coconut shells in the appropriate place. Though this poor fellow could hardly stand alone, he forced himself to dance. As for the Band Leader,—whose name was Levy,—many of the tunes were composed by him, and were very catchy. In my opinion he should go far in his profession. (At the moment he works as a camp grave digger).

10TH. SEPTEMBER 1945

After the concert last night I went over to the male internees compound, to nurse a desperately sick patient,—one of our Government Officers in North Borneo. Having for over three years associated only with women, I felt shy at meeting so many men, but they were all so kind and helpful,—working under my direction, as the patient needed intensive care.

The first night passed quickly, but by the morning, I felt extremely tired, and found myself unable to sleep the next day, owing to the noise of aeroplanes. However, I felt happy to be doing a job for which I was trained. Unhappily though the patient died two nights later, leaving a wife and three small children in Australia.

11TH. SEPTEMBER 1945

The Army of Occupation arrived to-day, by air and river. A fine and handsome body of Australian men with a few U.S.A. Naval personnel. At 5 p.m. they took over the camps officially.

The [Brigadier] General [Thomas C. Eastick], a large man,

made a speech, which was followed by another one made by an American Naval Officer dressed like a fashion plate! Our cheers made the camp rock, and the ceremony was filmed. Then the Japanese [commander] gave up his sword, and the Union Jack was hoisted.

12TH. SEPTEMBER 1945

We have had a Thanksgiving Service conducted by Australian Chaplains,⁵ and when we heard that marvellous word 'Free', all of us developed large lumps in our throat, and found it difficult to speak—.

Afterwards our hut was invaded by American and Australian soldiers, also press photographers and reporters. They were all understanding and jolly, and nearly as excited as ourselves—not having seen European women for some time.

One of the men [who] had been responsible for dropping the bread etc.] and the first pamphlets [was present], and I managed to get him to sign one of them, this paper now being one of my cherished possessions.

Later we were shown the secret radio made by the soldiers in their camp, and referred to by the code name of 'Mrs. Harris.' The set was made from scraps of corrugated iron and other oddments, and the stories of the brave men who operated it, would fill a book. Its construction alone, was amazing, and the number of narrow escapes when it was in use, and the continual risk of discovery must have been a nightmare!

Life has become hectic, and some of us now could almost wish for less excitement and more peace. Troops swarm into our billets and stay for hours talking endlessly. Never have I known such talkers! We have no privacy, even to change our clothes, and are continually being photographed from all angles. Evacuation is now in full force, and most of the sick who could be moved,—have already left.

Yesterday I went to a luncheon party given by Australian officers, together with other internees, and we were driven there in a truck thoughtfully provided with a long settee so that we could sit comfortably, instead of having to crouch on the floor, Nip fashion!

We visited the wharf, and it was so good to see shi[ps] flying British and American ensigns. The officers brought us back to the billets, and stayed with us until 6 p.m.

The Australians in charge of the evacuation take little rest; Nothing seems too good for us, or is too much trouble to carry out.

There are still many very sick soldiers now in Kuching Hospital,—which has been entirely re-equipped. It is grand to note their improvement in health,—many having put on a stone in weight within a few days.

Our late Japanese Commandant [Lieutenant Colonel Suga] yesterday committed hari-kiri, after being interrogated by the Australians. His method was to plunge a blunt dinner knife into his belly with the assistance of his batman. The second-in-command [Captain Nagata] also tried to do this, but without success. Then the Jap doctor [Lieutenant Yamamoto] attempted to cut his throat by rubbing it on barbed wire, but was told to desist by an Australian, who remarked "That's enough, my lad; You can have another shot to-morrow!"

Official orders to the Commandant from Japanese High Command have been found in his quarters to this effect:—

On August 17th

1. All prisoners of war and male internees to be marched to a camp at milestone 21,—and bayoneted there.
2. All sick unable to walk to be treated similarly in the Square at Kuching.
3. All women and children to be burnt in their barracks.

These orders did not endear the Japanese to the Australian and we were thankful that we had not known of them earlier. It

seemed that we had only forty-eight hours to live,—before the actual capitulation.

We have been lucky compared with other camps. The official figures compiled later state the following:—

Prisoners & Internees in Borneo during the war	4,660
Known to have died	2,898
Missing and presumed dead	382
Alive in Kuching area	1,387

23RD. SEPTEMBER 1945

We have arrived in Labuan, carried by Douglas planes, which did the journey in two hours, travelling very smoothly. There we were met by Red Cross ambulances and driven 11 miles to a large tented hospital, which is fully equipped. Meals are served in a large canteen by Chinese girls, and we are strictly supervised by medical staff, who insist that we take their medicines. We are also given dental treatment.

A cinema is also provided showing films every night, and there is constant transport to the sea. I almost *live* in the [water?].

In addition to all this, we have been further helped by the Salvation Army, who came in with the Australians. The S.A. at once set to and made a rest-camp Café for the internees. They put tables on the beach with large umbrellas, supplied bathing costumes when needed, and handed out such luxuries as soap, toothpaste, and talcum powder.

It is curious how 'barbed wire friends' still tend to hang together, and so it turns out that I, and my particular cronies are all in one tent, and all enjoying ourselves! It is obvious however, that we are all growing nervous at the thought of reaching home and meeting other people.

Now that we are receiving letters containing news of home, it is only too obvious that for many of us the joy of our new-found free-

dom, will be tempered by sorrow at the loss of dear ones, either in the air-raids, or overseas. We realise too, that life in England may not be very easy now.

27TH. SEPTEMBER 1945

Yesterday we were suddenly told to prepare for a move, and are now aboard the troop ship *Manunda*, being treated as hospital cases. There is a certain amount of restlessness among us, but also a little pleasurable excitement, partly as romance is in the air, concerning a young girl from our camp, and a boy from the soldiers compound.

Frances, a pretty youngster with a charming disposition,—and Bill,—the young man, had exchanged smiles at a distance,—for over three and a half years, and recently during a water shortage, Frances, (like Rebecca!), had met Bill at the well, where he too, was drawing water, and from then on, they had an 'understanding.' The upshot was that they decided to marry one another while on board, so that on landing they would not be separated.

It was fortunate that Frances' parents were on board, and though taken by surprise, gave their consent, having taken to their future son-in[-]law on very short acquaintance!

We had a dental mechanic aboard, who cleverly made a wedding ring from an Australian shilling. Hospital sisters produced a wedding dress and a gauze veil, the officers dressed the bridegroom and his best man,—borrowed plumes,—and other oddments, such as shoes and a small trousseau, were provided by the rest of the women,—for the bride.

A simple but impressive service was conducted by the ship's chaplain, during which 'M. W.' sang "I'll Walk Beside You." This was followed by the cake and various toasts, after which the young couple departed to begin their honeymoon in the suite of the ship's doctor! I must also add that the nurses aboard provided the bridesmaids and a guard of honour.

2ND. OCTOBER 1945

We disembarked this afternoon at Singapore, and some of us were billeted at Raffles Hotel, which like the town,—is very dingy and needs painting. It is all so very different from when I was here before. The atmosphere had also changed since the earlier days of our release. I think our hosts have become rather bored with us, as they are now a little brisk in their manner. We miss our Australian friends, who were so good to us.

I was lucky in being able to get in touch with a doctor friend almost at once; [w]e were at University College Hospital together during the old days. He is an Indian, but very pro-British, so naturally had a very bad time during the Japanese occupation. He looks years older than he actually is, but was delighted to see me again.

4TH. OCTOBER 1945

I was so pleased to find that I could draw money from my savings account at a bank, as more shops are opening daily, though prices are fantastic; Ponds Cold Cream is 25/- for a small jar, and cotton voile 15/- a yard.

I am cheered at receiving three cables from home, and to learn that letters from me written after my release, have reached them.

23RD. OCTOBER 1945

We are now speeding towards England aboard the S.S. Ranchi, which is packed with troops and other ex P.O.W.s like ourselves. There is a good deal of sadness, as many have lost either husbands or wives, and there are even orphans travelling alone. In our cabin there are twelve women,—five of who[m] are returning home as widows.

Our journey home from Singapore was very like that of thousands of other troops and ex-prisoners. At Port Suez most of us were fitted out and given suit-cases etc., in order that we might look respectable on our arrival in England.

The last entries in my diary read as follows:—

24TH. NOVEMBER 1945

Last night we sighted the coast of England, and this morning docked at Southampton, where we were greeted by the Mayor, together with brass bands and cheering crowds, though most of us had to spend another night on board.

28TH. NOVEMBER 1945

Here I am, actually sitting in my sister Nora's flat,—by the fire, consuming chocolate which was given us on the train to London. Nora, Philippa, and the Coe family were all at the London terminus to meet me, and I was driven to the flat by the Red Cross. This flat is situated in the middle of Grays Inn, so peaceful, and over-looking lawns on both sides.

Poor old London! Such a different town from the one I used to know, and all the people look so tired and wan.

Sometimes I wake in the night, and wonder whether the three and a half year nightmare is *really* over. Then I think:—What of the future? It certainly does not look like a world of pea[ce] and plenty. I realise that at home they have had their own particular Hell. One can only hope that *whatever* happens, we shall have *PEACE*.

DOCUMENT 83

"I'm all right. I've come home"

Papers of L. E. Morris. 91/18/1. IWM.

The first tangible signs of deliverance from the Japanese yoke appeared almost without warning with the arrival of two Australian Majors who parachuted into Kuching.

These were very courageous men; one a medical officer and his companion a Japanese speaking interpreter, who bearded Suga in his Prison Camp Headquarters and arraigned him unmercifully in Japanese.

Documents concerning the total surrender of all Japanese troops and the authorisation of absolute capitulation signed by Emperor Hirohito himself, were displayed in testimony of the total reversal of the Japanese position in Borneo.

These Australians were the vanguard of the 9th Australian Division (A.I.F.) sent specifically by General [Sir Thomas] Blamey [commander-in-chief Australian Imperial Forces, Melbourne] to impress upon the Japanese hierarchy, the hopelessness of their position, and to forestall any attempt by fanatics, to liquidate the prisoners and internees still under Colonel Suga's jurisdiction.

Within a few hours of this event the supply of food and medical stores was stepped up considerably. The drone of DC2 aircraft in the vicinity of Batu Lintang was heard daily. Torpedo-shaped containers dropped by parachute from rather less than two hundred feet fell within, and around, the perimeter wire.

One internee was singularly unlucky as one parachute failed to open, plummeting a heavy case of food onto the head of the unfortunate man, who was killed instantly.

If the guards were surprised at the reversal in their fortunes, there were few outward signs. They remained tight-lipped, unsmiling, almost stoic, for they had received a new set of rules to be observed in their dealings with the P.O.W.'s.

Colonel Suga was a changed man. In place of the strutting cocky tyrant, we beheld a man consumed by private griefs, and almost surely aware that he would be tried as a war criminal. The first atomic bomb "Little Boy" which razed Hiroshima also wiped out Suga's entire family on August 6th 1945.

Stunned beyond belief he walked with head down and for days scarcely acknowledged the salutes of his own Nippon guards. We tried to assess his secret thoughts, and read how he would react to his own personal tragedy. At this time, plagued by a multitude of

sorrows, did this man feel any remorse, or any qualms of conscience for his leadership of the bestial organisation of the P.O.W. camp? Would he even at this late hour seek to erase all evidence of his infamy, and commit us all to perdition?

It is doubtful whether the rank and file of the Japanese Army were fully aware of the catastrophic horrors wrought by the Atom Bombs; they still believed in ultimate victory.

All working parties ceased with the arrival of the Australians, but the P.O.W.'s remained in their own camp, as did the inmates of the internees and ladies camps for their own safety sake.

No guards were then permitted to enter the confines of the camps, and this brought an immediate benefit to those who operated the radio.

Most of the dramatic news had been recorded, and some withheld for security reasons. Suddenly joyful news was received in a sequence of bulletins, which left the mind satiated and bemused. During the month of August 1945 the Japanese had been decimated on all fronts.

Eight hundred Super Fortresses had raided Japan on August 2nd and the ports were mined by aircraft. An armed transport disguised as a hospital ship had been captured off Manila.

There followed the dropping of the first atomic bomb on August 6th, a second such bomb, "Fat Man," destroyed Nagasaki on August 9th.

On August 10th 1945 Japan offered to surrender with reservations for the position of the Mikado [Japanese emperor]. This had been judged as unacceptable to the Allies.

There had been further reverses due to Russian action. Rashin naval base was in the hands of the Russian forces in Korea.

Troops of the U.S.S.R. had rolled over a 1,600 mile frontier of Japan's Manchurian arsenal, thus the infamous Kwantung Army on the Chinese mainland faced destruction.

Altogether the militarists of Japan had reaped the whirlwinds of disaster, and although the Ketsu-go Plan had been devised for the

defence of the Japanese motherland against invasion, the Japanese officially surrendered to the Allied Forces on August 15th 1945.

At this time there was still a sort of incredulity, and disbelief in the minds of most men. So much favourable news received all at once, seemed too good to be true. Truly there was a great lifting of morale at Batu Lintang, and w[h]ere formerly there had been scant hope of survival, even those seriously ill reviewed their chances of returning home to "Blighty" [soldier's name for Britain].

During the first week of September 1945 the 1st C.C.S. attached to the 9th Australian Division, set up an emergency hospital on the outskirts of Kuching (the main Australian force was not to arrive until September 13th when the official takeover of Sarawak took place).

On September 6th I was assigned to this hospital in Kuching, but before my final departure from Batu Lintang, there was a variety of duties to discharge.

Many of the internees were known to me. I knew we would soon be dispersed to our various places of origin. Goodbyes are not my strong point; so many persons each in his own way had contributed to my own survival, especially in the realms of encouragement, and maintenance of morale. To each in turn I bade farewell.

First came "Lofty" Batten, red eyed, distraught, for he had just received news of his wife's death in a camp on Singapore Island.

Don Tuxford shook my hand as if he never intended to let it go, and reintroduced his son to me. The boy was now a man in disposition, but I was appalled by his loss of weight.

Bishop Francis Hollis assured me, we would meet again soon, for it was his intention to return to England to recruit support in pursuit of his avowed intentions to rebuild the Kuching Cathedral.

As I was on the point of leaving, the Bishop made me a present of a mysterious bundle of papers. It transpired that the venerable gentleman had raided the Japanese H.Q., and restored to me my valuable pages of my diary. I treasure these tattered paper relics to this day.

I wished it had been possible to meet Alison Stook[e]s to tell her how brave her brother had been, and how sorry I was to learn of his death, but it was not to be.⁶

On arrival at the Kuching Hospital my weight was recorded as 5 stones and 3 pounds or 36.2 kilogrammes according to your point of view.

The Australian orderlies; all male began immediate treatment of the patients. In my case this entailed the use of M and B tablets, and acriflavine dressings for ulcers, supported by a strictly controlled diet in the fight against beri-beri.

During the long years of captivity I had forgotten the sensation of being hungry, partly because my brain told me that to do without food was quite normal; my stomach having become accustomed to not receiving much useful sustenance.

Almost overnight new sensations and murmurings in the abdomen warned me to be careful, not to overeat. The nurses were fully aware of our difficulties; there was clearly a problem of transition, away from carbohydrates to the richness of a European diet.

My strength was surely returning and the previous tendency for my legs not to obey my brain passed slowly. Meanwhile, Australian soldiers, security troops, were classifying Japanese officers, and guards according to their 'track' records in their treatment of P.O.W.'s at Batu Lintang and on the aerodrome. On September 12th 1945 Colonel Suga, 'Dr' Yamamoto, Lieutenant Nekata and Ogema were all flown to Labuan to answer charges of war crimes resulting in the deaths of two-thirds of the population of prisoners. Of 2,000 P.O.W.'s listed[,] only 700 still lived; of those 650 were desperately ill. A mere 30 were in a fit state to attend the final working parties.

The total number of deaths at Batu Lintang from war wounds, diseases and sundry other causes at the end of 1944 was 89. The analysis for 1945 read like a battle report; the statistics of monthly dead were:—

January 38	April 68	July 137
February 47	May 89	August 189
March 52	June 114	September Dozens still dying.

Colonel Suga had plenty of time to reflect on his stewardship, and to mull over the dismal prospect of being hanged as a common criminal. This fate above all others was dreaded by all Japanese officers as the ultimate disgrace.

From General Tojo [wartime prime minister of Japan], down to the humblest Lieutenant, the reaction of these guilty men was in essence identical.

Most attempted suicide by a variety of methods; those only partially successful were revived, so that the ultimate demands of the law could be accomplished. Weeks later as news of the demise of first one and then another, reached my ears, I was neither elated nor sorry. It was sufficient then to appreciate that never again would we be exposed to the whims and excesses of that unholy quartet.

The transition from "P.O.W." diet as we had known it, to something nearer the European ideal, continued for three days. Kuching Hospital was a first-aid station in a very special way. I had, perhaps rather foolishly refused to have a blood transfusion.

The doctor was appalled by my decision, but I reiterated strongly, "If my blood is not good enough, I shall have to take my chance."

"All the more for someone else" he said, and thereafter did not press me to alter my decision, but I knew I had taken a serious gamble.

Men so nearly fit only for the grave were being snatched back from the abyss of extinction by the hour. Others died en route from the main camp; for them liberation came too late.

The following day, September 11th, the 9th Australian Division sailed up the Kuching River for the occupation of Sarawak.

Only 200 Japanese were permitted to retain small arms for po-

lice work concerning their own troops. There was still no time to be lost in controlling Japanese soldiers, fanatical in their resolve not to surrender their arms.

Five thousand Nippon countrymen were still at large; the vanguard of Australians numbered only five hundred men.

The key to the situation was the number of patrolling aircraft, which seemingly never left the skies over Kuching. DC2's continued to drop much needed stores at strategic locations, and Mosquito fighter-bombers buzzed up and down the river, or guaranteed the safety of the roads leading to Batu Lintang.

P.O.W.'s were granted a weekly wage of £2.5s.od. for men and £2.10s.od. for N.C.O.'s.

Ninety Catalina flying boats based at R.A.A.F. (H.Q.) Labuan waited in the wings to ferry the sick to Labuan or Queensland, Australia.

My diary recalls that 1,500 Australians arrived in three transports, so the immediate threat of annihilation appeared to have passed. A few Japanese still imagined they could please themselves with regard to perpetrating mayhem.

As the Australian troops were disembarking, several local Chinese set out to meet them with gifts of fruit. Japanese military police (Kempi Tai) murdered two civilians with their swords, and injured many more.

During the night prior to the move from Kuching three more men died in the ward. They were, Private Hamilton, Sergeant Cook and Private Watson.

Relieving forces of the 9th Australian Division came hot-foot from heavy fighting in Eastern Borneo, particularly from Sandakan and Tarakan. "Camel" and "Lucky Strike" cigarettes were soon available to all with the strength to smoke them, and the local Chinese sent in presents of pork and fruit, true sacrifices which we knew they could ill-afford.

During the same evening a very strange request was received from a tidily dressed middle-aged Chinese lady. Quite seriously she offered fifty duck eggs to any British soldier who would render

her pregnant. The reason was, she avowed, that her admiration for the British P.O.W.'s was so great she desired a son most earnestly, with a British father. I did not volunteer.

I draw a veil over the many witty reactions to this flattering offer, except to affirm that nobody had strength to spare. It was going to take all our energy to climb aboard the relieving ships. In any case I was not all that fond of duck eggs.

The long hours of night brought no sleep. We all knew the following morning was scheduled for our departure. Excitement killed any prospect of rest, and long before 7 a.m. I had packed my kit, visited the sick not yet fit enough to move with us, and made friends with our deliverers. At noon the lorries arrived in convoy, and the move towards the docks began.

Crowds gathered in the streets to cheer us on our way, although it was yet hardly 8 o'clock in the morning. We halted at a Salvation Army Canteen; this was a complete surprise. Truly their claim "Where we are needed, there we will go" never was more fully vindicated.

At 9.15 a.m. precisely on September 13th 1945 the invasion barges and M.T.B. escorts slipped away from Kuching waterfront.

The weather was perfect as the little ships moved to line a stern. Suddenly without any prompting the ex-P.O.W.'s began to sing their own special song; just as they all said they would, long ago.

The lilt of their voices took me back in time, to the glory of that second concert in 1943. Words tumbled from my lips. I too was singing:—

"When we sail down the river to the sea,
And this jail is just another memory,
We'll be free as we were in days of yore,
And see sights we never saw before.
Let the Dyaks, Indonesians and Chinese fight about it,
They can have their Borneo, we can do without it,
When we sail down the river to the sea,
There will be happy days for you and me."

(Ascribed to A.S. Hardie).

These were emotional moments. Our passage down the twenty two miles of the Kuching river was hailed by the native population on either side of the convoy.

Sunken Japanese ships littered the river.

As we approached the estuary, dead Chinese and Japanese bobbed about on the flowing tide, some with heads others without. The local Chinese had finally resolved their own "Quisling" problem [revenge against collaborators].

Our helmsman grinned broadly and declared, "Bet you're glad to see the backside of that lot," hooking his thumb over his shoulder in the general direction of Sarawak.

"I will miss the rice!" I quipped.

"Like hell you will" he said, and altered course about five degrees to starboard. Ten minutes later we increased speed heading out to sea. Dead ahead a tiny pin-head of white began its climb out of an azure sea. This was the object of our journey.



My first real sight of the hospital ship occurred at a range of well over a mile, and as the M.T.B. bounced at high speed slicing through a moderate sea, we made an initial approach from dead astern. Distances and sizes of things at sea can very deceptive. It was only when Massey Harris steered in a wide arc, and headed for the ship[']s gangway, I realised she was far bigger in all respects than I had imagined.

Wanganella, for such was her magic name, rode quietly at anchor unperturbed by wind or tide, unreal, dazzling white, clinically neat, a heavenly ship waiting patiently as a lover to receive us.

One by one the convoy M.T.B.'s eased their forward speed and quietly nudged alongside the gangway.

The P.O.W.'s watched, waiting with a hushed sort of reverence; for a while there would be no more singing.

This was the moment of truth, of reassurance, the beauty of this ship had captured our imagination. Sombong Maru, Hideru Maru

or any other Maru; those were not proper ships at all; they had been but cattle boats compared with Wanganella.

Borneo territorial waters and all would soon be left behind as a bad dream.

I swayed with the motion of the M.T.B. My liberator Massey, laughed at my weakness, but enthused, "This is one hell of a good ship. You will be alright now cobber!"

It seemed a contradiction in terms to call Wanganella 'a hell of a ship'; to me she appeared as a vessel from another world, but I understood his concern to reassure me that indeed there was now hope of a future for us all.

The port side of the ship towered high above us. I viewed with dismay the formidable rank of steps leading from the launch to the main deck.

Nurses in various uniforms, some blue, some white and a few red moved with easy grace like ministering angels, pausing only momentarily to glance over the ships rail, as the slow energy sapping climb began.

Each patient; for that is what we had become; was escorted by male Australian nurses. They were taking good care, that even as we had been snatched from under the Japanese heel, we should not fall now, and be claimed by the sea.

At last I knew I was free of the Japanese; the miracle had happened. I was not going to be yet another statistic, or a name on a Boot Hill cross.

After an eternity of endeavour, advancing one step at a time, one by one we reached the deck.

Behind me a voice avowed, "I would not like to have to do that all over again." It was Slim Landers; I was not sure whether he meant the climb up the gangway or the three and a half years at Batu Lintang.

Somewhere way ahead Frank Fisher was already disappearing through the hatch of a saloon. It turned out to be the main reception ward.

Incredibly, within the hour, I had been checked in, bathed, deloused, fumigated, and put to bed in the whitest bed I ever saw; with white counterpane, white sheets, white pillow and new white pyjamas.

I lay on my back contemplating the rivets in the ceiling. Alongside my bed an Australian nurse held my wrist in one hand and a watch in the other. "Sorry we took so long to get to you," she purred and said by way of introduction, "My name is Elizabeth. What's yours?"

"Lionel," I said feeling totally inadequate for this sort of situation, "Call me Leo for short."

"You sure are one of the fortunate one's my lad. Thank your lucky stars you never went to Sandakan, we have not been able to find many survivors yet."

Elizabeth was a real beauty, I could have talked to her all day. Suddenly she looked serious and admonished, "You really must go to sleep now. What would you like to drink when you awake."

Good Gordon Highlanders, I really had a choice, of milk, cocoa or Bournvita! [chocolate beverage].

"Milk please" I said meekly as the sleeping tablets took hold. The joy of lying between clean sheets, quite overwhelmed me. I rolled over and over, extracting a comforting, almost sensual pleasure from the softness of the mattress. It had been three and a half years since I had slept in a proper bed. Here were no 'three boards' regulations, no bugs to nip out and feed on one's body, and nobody would tread all over me during the night.

I was smiling, utterly content, ridiculously at peace with God and Man alike.

The nurse returned. "Not gone yet?" she reproached.

"Here's your drink. Now go to sleep. I'll still be here when you awake, and so she was.

My sojourn in heaven terminated not too abruptly on the morning of September 17th.

Wanganella docked at Victoria, Labuan, and we were soon escorted to a convoy of ambulances. Within half an hour all the

P.O.W.'s were in beds again, in large airy marquees, within sight and sound of the sea.

Our parting with the 'heavenly ship' Wanganella was accomplished as scheduled. We left with reluctance. The great kindness and consideration shown by nurses, male and female, left the heart almost too full for words. Wanganella had given us the right to hope that we would be restored as men again. We entered into a period of experiment, learning to use neglected muscles, experiencing the surge of new strengths and general physical progress; yet this was often followed by relapses of sadness as news of each atrocity filtered through from Jesselton, Sandakan and other outposts. We lived for several weeks savouring an unfamiliar world of kindly persons, none of whom bawled and screamed, nor beat us with sticks anymore.

Labuan with its share of headless palms displayed its physical scars and the changes wrought by war. The dockside with its crates of aeroengines, and powered dukws[?]²—motorised pontoon troop carriers were busy all day long with the ferrying of supplies and men.

Our convalescence was to be spent in large marquees erected close to the shore and like children on a holiday we watched the surf screaming up the beaches, where at low tide souvenir hunters collected co[w]rie shells.

'Balanced' meals reckoned down to the last calorie were our lot, so the transition from 'native' foods to our own European diet was gradually attained.

Pills of various colours and sizes were programmed to expedite our speedy recovery. There followed three days and nights of orderlies, male and female, who 'stuck' needles of penicillin into various parts of my anatomy, until there was scarcely a square inch without its tell-tale quota of prick marks.

Occasionally as a sort of diversion there were visits to the dentist. Practically all my teeth, twenty-four of them, had remained reasonably sound and this in spite of not having seen a toothbrush in three years.

Within ten days most ulcers and carbuncle 'craters' were yielding to the penicillin and M. and B. 693 applied in dust form.

New trends in treatment nearly always began in the mornings. Sleep was not always easy; there were so many unfamiliar sounds such as the heavy booming of the surf and the rattle of pebbles sucked in by the undertow. The beach was only sixty yards away. Most patients slept during the afternoons, or at low tide when the noise of the sea was more remote, or until disturbed by the orderlies on their ceaseless rounds—of inoculations—of dressings and potions, but on the afternoon of October 1st 1945, we were told not to sleep between the hours of 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. A very important person was expected to visit the marquees and the 2/CCS wards by the sea.

All beds were made extra neat and the patients shaved and combed, and generally tidied up.

The V.I.P. turned out to be none other than the Countess Edwina Mountbatten of Burma and wife of Earl Mountbatten C. in C. of S.E.A.C. The escort of matrons and nursing sisters seemed rather small and rather overawed by the central figure of the group, who seemed absolutely at her ease. Countess Mountbatten began her tour—no one was missed and all had the opportunity for a chat with our distinguished visitor, who was dressed in the dark blue uniform of the Red Cross and had that day arrived from the Borneo oil port of Balikpapan. Just as I thought she had passed me by her ladyship turned, and to my amazement sat down on the edge of my bed and talked of the British victories in Burma; asking all sorts of questions about my family and hopes for the future.

With a twinkle in her eye she continued, "If it will make you feel better, I must tell you that our Burma Army has killed more than 150,000 of the little b - - - ds. All that can be done will be done to return you to your loved ones in England. You may find great changes on your return. The Old Country took a bit of a belting from the Hun, but its all right. I wish you Godspeed and a complete recovery."

Having delivered her words of encouragement the Countess smiled and was gone.

In her capacity as Superintendent-in-Chief of the nursing Corps and St. John's Ambulance Brigade Lady Mountbatten wrote the following report concerning her visits to Far East P.O.W. Camps.

"There is no doubt that had the war gone on for a few more weeks there would have been no prisoners-of-war left alive at all . . . but the men who came through were in amazingly good spirits, however ill and emaciated they might be.

This really applied to every single camp I have seen, and the brave spirits and real 'guts' have been unbelievable during all those ghastly years."

If any doubts about the innate savagery of the Japanese character still lingered they were forever dispelled by the accounts of the atrocities perpetrated in all theatres of war.

It was not as if certain happenings were brought about by individual Japanese soldiers alone, although plenty of personal vendettas had raged, but the appalling thing was that the pattern of treatment, and the general attitude of all Japanese soldiers towards subjugated communities, was the accepted policy of the military hierarchy to destroy all captives.

As the Japanese juggernaut was rolled back from countless island strongholds of the Pacific, at every stage the pathetic reports came in. The Australian Military Forces' newspaper 'Table Tops' issued in September 1945 recounted many disturbing reports; all based on the same remorseless theme of torture and mass murder.

To the question often asked after my return home, "Were the Japs really so bad?" I recall a selection from the reports which had become our daily reading and unhappily confirmed our worst fears of the fate of friends in other camps.

Thus we read with sadness:—

The fate of the Allied P.O.W.'s in the Kuching area alone is believed to be—dead 2,808; missing (probably dead) 382; alive 1,387. (This figure included all internees and military personnel).

It is estimated that altogether there were from 4,590 to 4,670 P.O.W.'s in N.E. Borneo.

Three death marches were ordered by the Japanese. Only 230 P.O.W.'s out of 553 survived the first and 183 out of 566 the second.

This grim account which covered the period from August 1943 to August 1945 was prepared by the Ninth Division Australian Army Intelligence Officers from information obtained from Japanese figures and other sources.

The first prisoners had arrived at Sandakan in August 1942, and during the following months the number was increased by arrivals from Singapore and Jesselton until it reached an estimated total of 2,700. In August 1943 150, mainly officers, were moved to Kuching. Of the remaining 2,550, only 6 are known to be alive.

Until September 1944 only 20 deaths were reported. In October there were 10 deaths, in November 23, in December 50 and in January 1945 83.

It was in January 1945 that 453 were sent out on the first of three death marches through the rugged Borneo mountains to Ranau about 100 miles to the west of Sandakan. Of these 230 reached Ranau, while 223 died on the way.

Amongst the remainder the mortality rate continued its sickening rise. During February (1945) the toll was 177, in March 334, April 250 and May 201.

Then another death march to Ranau was organised. This time 536 set out, but only 183 survived.

Between June and August 212 died and the remaining 20 are recorded as killed trying to escape.

Of the 413 who survived the death marches to Ranau 7 were killed attempting to escape and the remaining 406 died on the march.

* * *

There is no doubt that Lord Louis Mountbatten, Allied Supreme Commander of S.E.A. was shocked and horrified at first

hand accounts of treatment received by prisoners released from the Japanese.

"I am determined," he said, "to see that no Japanese responsible for these inhuman and bestial practices shall escape justice." He emphasised that this justice must conform to accepted civilised codes and he would not tolerate individual reprisals against Japanese prisoners and said, "If we behave in a bullying childish way we only descend to the level of those among the Japanese, which we fought to eliminate."

Such is the nature of the British soldier, I do not recall hearing any serious remarks expressing a desire for personal revenge. Most of the survivors were only too thankful to be alive and to go on surviving. All were still very weak and intellectually starved. We were virtually three years 'out of date' and knew next to nothing of what had happened in Europe.

News of a more intimate kind reached me via that indestructible character Frank Fisher. One morning during convalescence I had missed him—his bed was empty, so I climbed out of mine and took a stroll along the white sandy beach. It was early morning and the air was cool and very invigorating. The palms quaked and occasionally cocoa-nuts thudded ominously into the sand. I mused that it would just be my luck to have my skull smashed in by a cocoa-nut after three years of trying to stay alive. The beach was deserted except for a figure I knew well sitting on a fallen palm tree trunk. It was Frank idly skidding flat stones into the sea.

"Hello!" he greeted me, "Have you heard the good news?"

"What good news is that?" I enquired, none too sure that he was not just being funny.

"That fat pig Suga had cut his throat!"

"Is he dead?" I said, more in hope than with conviction.

"He is now," said Frank, "but he made a botch of the job. Apparently he found an Aussie table knife, all rusty and horrible, and it did not cut too well."

"Oh yes." I said still unconvinced.

"Oh he's dead all right—true to the last he ordered his batman, the 'Parrot' to fill his water bottle with sand and bash his brains out with it, and like the obedient soldier he was, he did just as he was told. The batman is dead too."

I suddenly thought that Lord Louis would not have approved of our elation, and yet I felt no pity for Suga, only a great sense of relief that the former Commandant of Lintang P.O.W. Camp, the perpetrator of so much evil and suffering, would trouble us no more.

"What is happening to Dr. Yamamoto, Nekata and Ogema?" I enquired.

"Going for trial and a long piece of rope, I reckon," said Frank laconically.

On October 10th 1945 I wrote in my diary, "It has now been established beyond all doubt that Suga intended to 'dispose' of all prisoners on September 15th." In a detailed order for the day, all people in captivity were placed in one of four categories and were to be "liquidated" in the following manner:—

- Group 1.* Women internees, children and nuns—to be given poisoned rice—arrangements under Doctor Yamamoto.
- Group 2.* Internee men and Catholic Fathers to be shot and burnt under the direction of Lieutenant Ogema.
- Group 3.* 500 British-American-Dutch and Australian P.O.W.'s to be marched by Lieutenant Nekata to the mountains on Sarawak-Dutch border carrying all Japanese kit and stores twenty-one miles. On concluding the march all were to be shot and burnt deep in the jungle. (Work had already begun on the pit designed to hide the bodies).
- Group 4.* The sick and weak left at Lintang Main Camp to be bayoneted and the entire camp destroyed by fire.

My instincts had been right from the beginning and my ever present distrust of the Japanese fully justified. The 'Death' directive found in the Administration Office at Batu Lintang con-

firmed that higher authorities had condoned the plan as a matter of policy.

This was also to have been Colonel Suga's revenge for the loss of his family at Hiroshima.

It seemed incredible that the Japanese hierarchy should have contemplated such a dastardly act knowing that the war had officially ended almost a month earlier on August 15th. The full significance of Dr. Yamamoto's sick parades and the classification of all prisoners was now apparent. Frank Fisher and I would have been shot after a march of twenty-one miles for we had been assigned to "Group 3."

Our Australian hosts and benefactors confided that in ten days time the S.S. Ranchi was due to arrive at Labuan, but before embarking for the journey home, we could, if we so wished travel to the battlegrounds.

The countryside had been savaged by gunfire; scarcely a palm tree remained intact.

Soldiers of the 9th Australian Division still toiled feverishly to maintain and extend the airfields and were joined daily by forlorn groups of Japanese P.O.W.'s, who then worked harder than at any time in their lives.

In the evenings I watched my former captors sitting exhausted in their barbed wired pens. I knew how they were feeling, for I had passed through the same darkness of days myself; yet could I not feel sorry for these men.

Many walked in daily fear of being tortured; plagued by their own standards and ethics. A few I knew would be hanged when the evidence of their complicity in atrocities unfolded. Most of the camp landlords were already dead, mostly by their own hands.

My own unit was then only a fraction of its original strength.

Dozens of Japanese had died in their foxholes on Labuan, rather than be taken prisoners. The Australians had learned from bitter experience that these fanatics often came out into the open, under a white flag, secreting bombs in their uniforms to be used in a suicidal last fling.

Nobody trusted the 'Nips,' so they died together with their camp women, often many feet below ground. Foxholes had been sealed by the bulldozers, and flamethrowers had denied the enemy even the necessary oxygen needed to sustain life.

War in the Far East had been bitter and total indeed. British ex-P.O.W.'s wandered throughout the island marvelling at the powerful new machines, earth transporters, tanks and wonderful new aircraft.

I saw a flight of Mustang fighters on the ground, and was amazed at their size and power.

Visits to Army shops were a delight. Everywhere the Australians lavished care, attention and encouragement, which bordered on devotion. They did everything possible to raise our morale.

We lived in a world of wonder, as men seeking to catch up on life in a hurry. There just was not enough time to read all the news bulletins, orders of the day, and magazines which flooded the marquees.

All the signs on Labuan Island pointed to a massive tidying-up exercise.

The ingenuity, invention and energy of these "Diggers" was boundless; they were truly masters of their own destinies.

Several of my newly found Aussie friends tried hard to persuade me to emigrate to Australia. The temptation to do so was great. "Come back home with us" they entreated, "We will see you alright cobber. We will even find you a wife!" Others said, "What is so important back home? You would be better off with us. We need people like you!"

I did not understand how anybody could want me in my physical state, but the offers were attractive and sincere.

Later that day, definite news was received concerning a ship bound for the U.K. I received the information with mixed feelings. Part of me wanted to stay on in Labuan, yet another instinct impelled me to return home with all speed.

An order of the day informed us:—"The following ex-P.O.W.'s

will prepare themselves for embarkation on the S.S. Ranchi for repatriation to the U.K. The sailing time will be 2 p.m. on October 16th 1945."

My name was on the list; a new excitement took me in its thrall. I had not seen England for over seven years. In that instant I knew any thoughts of emigration were just an unrealistic dream.

Frank Fisher as usual came to my rescue and chirped, "Not packed yet; I'm ready to go now! This is one ship I am not going to miss."

Forty-eight hours later, dead on schedule, S.S. Ranchi weighed her anchors, heading west for Singapore. At last we were on our way.

Two days later on October 18th 1945 we berthed almost at the exact spot, whence, three years previously we had begun our journey to Sarawak on Hideru Maru.

As usual the Singapore dock area was a hive of industry, with its fleet of sampans, junks and kolehs plying to and from larger ships at anchor in the roads.

I went ashore to visit two old friends in River Valley Road, namely Roland and Dulcie Nicolich. They immediately warned me not to drink any spirits, as the Japanese had planted 'bad' bottles in the city; some thirty-two persons had already died under mysterious circumstances.

Roland said quite seriously, "This city is not the sort of place you knew in 1938. Tong [Chinese mafia] fights take place on most nights, and the streets are very unsafe after dark."

It had been my intention to revisit Changi as a sort of pilgrimage, but Roland put his hand on my shoulder and advised, "If I were you Lionel, I would not go. It is better that you remember the place as it was, not as it is now."

At 8 p.m. I returned to the ship, and remained in my quarters until the ship sailed from Keppel Harbour en route for Ceylon. During the morning of October 20th considerable numbers of English and Dutch internees swelled the numbers on the passenger lists.

Boat drills were practised each morning at 10 o'clock, for the seas, although free of submarines, still produced the odd nasty shock from drifting mines.

Red Cross stores issued were:—ten cigarettes, two vests and two pairs of socks to each man.

The first two days were cool and bearable generally, but the wind howled, and heavy rain fell. Several of the crew members were sick, and one or two retired to the sick bay.

Some regimental clown then announced new bounds for the troops; which put practically all the promenade decks at the disposal of the civilian internees. Ex-P.O.W.'s crammed in the stern of the ship were furious, and tore down the ropes defining bounds. We had had enough of barbed wire, bounds and controls; the prospect of being hemmed in yet again was unthinkable. As the ropes disappeared over the ship's side the men were placated, but remained watchful.

I noted that on October 23rd the ship had logged 376 miles.

Towards evening signals of greeting and best wishes were received from an aircraft carrier heading east.

The Dutch families were returning to Holland after long years in Java as internees. Their party included many pretty girls, too well chaperoned for any "Tommy Atkins" to make such [*sic*; much] progress.

Quite by chance I met Lieutenant Colonel Crafter who enquired, "Will you be soldiering on after all this?" "I'm not sure," I replied. "My military career was not what anyone could assess as having been a roaring success!"

"You should try for a commission" he persisted. "Now," I thought, "we have truly entered the realms of sheer theatre," but he was sincere. The next day an envelope was placed in my hand by the ship's R.S.M. [regimental sergeant major]. It contained a very fine testimonial. As I read it over and over again, I thought, "Surely this does not refer to me," but I knew he meant well.

Early in the morning of October 26th, Ranchi docked at Colombo. The harbour was full of shipping both Naval and Mer-

cantile. Soldiers from a variety of units were agog, and eager to go ashore.

Just about the first person I met in the quayside was a former C.G.Y.C. [Colombo Golf and Yachting Club] member, Monty Mortimore of the yacht "Iona." We embraced as long lost brothers. Monty had become an R.S.M. (Regimental Sergeant Major) and I, not being able to resist the quip enquired, "How did you manage that?" pointing to the Royal Arms on his sleeves; but he would not take the bait and by way of reply pulled my hat hard down over my eyes.

Maurice Sheppard and Freddie North joined our group of former Changi Yacht Club members, and together we invaded the W.O.'s [warrant officer's] and Sergeants Mess. The foyer there was doubling as an information centre, complete with a huge black-board and a box of chalks.

As ships called at Colombo en route for the U.K. anybody of the Royal Engineers could leave a message on the board for those P.O.W.'s who followed later. By this means we knew if friends in other camps survived.

I added my name to the growing list; but as we were very nearly the last camp to be liberated, I held out no great hope of anyone reading my message. Many of the P.O.W.'s were already in America, a few had gone to Australia, and a lucky minority, chiefly R.A.F. personnel, had flown home days ago.

'Monty' Mortimore, fit and brown as a Malay, had always been a lucky fellow. Weeks before the fall of Singapore he had been sent to India, thereby avoiding three years in a P.O.W. camp.

I was rather more drunk than sober as our party left the R.E. Mess. On the hour Ranchi sailed for Bombay, its passengers loaded with presents of tea given by the planters of Ceylon. It was a reassuring gesture. Tea was very scarce back home in England.

Ranchi developed engine trouble and for four days was docked at Bombay. As the homeward journey resumed one of our associates, Private Trask was suddenly taken ill, and died during the afternoon of October 29th. In order not to upset other patients, he

was buried at sea at 1.30 in the early hours of the morning. How tragic to leave a ship in this way. Just hours earlier Trask sent a message to England, "On my way stop Home in three weeks stop Love Eric stop."

Once again Bishop Hollis, with the ship's Captain in attendance, directed the last rites of the burial at sea.

I hardly dared to contemplate the misery in the hearts of Trask's family; after three and a half years of waiting for . . . nothing.

Finnay of the Daily Mail had arrived on board chatting with all who were so inclined to divulge their own stories.

At Suez Frank Fisher and I spent a few hours shopping, buying trinkets for God alone knew who as and when we should arrive in England.

Eighteen hundred more troops had joined the ship at Bombay, and the decks were crowded to capacity.

All men were advised that the British were not very popular in Egypt. Shore leave was restricted to a special 'internee' canteen.

An issue of winter clothes arrived none too soon. I was surprised how cold the night air was considering that it had passed over from the deserts.

Secrecy concerning troop movements was still being observed in the Middle East. Our departure from Port Suez was delayed until midnight on November 14th. Ranchi then had a searchlight on her forecastle head as she entered the Suez Canal.

A day later the ship crawled through the Bitter Lakes then on to Lake Timsah. I thought, "Surely it cannot be seven years since I sailed a dhow [Arab sailing boat] here." Seven years it was, and so many of the ships of war I had seen then, were now, no more.

Holy Communion with the Bishop was celebrated in the First Class Lounge for the very last time.

Francis Hollis could pretend no more. He really was a very sick man; already he was afflicted with glaucoma.

I had visited him at his request as Ranchi cleared Malta, neither of us knowing that we were never to meet again. During the hurly-burly of the final stages of the voyage home, each in his own

way was a busy man. To the last Francis Hollis talked of his desire to rebuild Kuching Cathedral, but sadly, he was not to see the work completed. Our friendship, begun in November 1942, was to end shortly with his death at Leicester.

Meanwhile rumours of mail from Gibraltar reached our ears. Twice I had sailed the Straits of Gibraltar, but had not seen the fortress. In total darkness the mail was delivered from a launch miles out to sea off Cape Marroqui.

By this time the P.O.W.'s were restless and the excitement grew more as the loud hailer informed all passengers, "The next port of call will be Dartmouth, England, at last."

The overcrowded ship had called at Dartmouth for the mail shortly after 1 a.m. on Saturday 24th November 1945. It was to be a date I would remember forever, for I was at last coming home after seven long years in the Far East.

Very few men were asleep; the excitement and anticipated rapture of landing back in 'Blighty' had laid hold on the imagination of us all.

I had met an electrician on board the ship who lived at Carshalton. He produced a bottle of Joh[n] Haig 'Black Label', so we toasted each other, we toasted the ship, the Captain, and anybody else who happened to be near. At 4 a.m. precisely the S.S. Ranchi dropped anchors in the roads off Southampton, but not at the quayside. A great throng of men were soon sorting out their baggage in readiness for a move ashore.

There were ominous plops in the water as the souvenir hunters disgorged some of their booty overboard. Revolvers, Japanese ammunition, and a variety of bayonets disappeared over the side, together with a few hand grenades and . . . would you believe it a light machine gun.

It was 8.30 a.m. before the ship, now with an escort of tugs, nudged a way to its allotted berth. The former excitement of the men had now changed to impatience and disappointment, but there was to be no immediate release from the ship. In due course the Mayor of Southampton arrived and gave an official address of

welcome, and each soldier on board received a letter of welcome 'bearing' the Royal Arms and the heading "Buckingham Palace."

It read as follows:—

'The Queen and I bid you a very warm welcome home.

Through all the great trials and sufferings which you have undergone at the hands of the Japanese, you and your comrades have been constantly in our thoughts. We know from the accounts we have already received how heavy those sufferings have been.

We know also that these have been endured by you with the highest courage.

We mourn with you the deaths of so many of your gallant comrades.

With all our hearts, we hope that your return from captivity will bring you and your families a full measure of happiness, which you may long enjoy together.'

The letter was signed 'George R.I.'

After the letters came the disembarkation, and for the survivors of so many Far East Units came the realisation that officially, and historically, this was the end of an era. Even the S.S. Ranchi, which had borne us safely home to the Motherland, was soon to go to the breakers. Like so many of us, each in our own individual ways, the old ship passed beyond the reach of time.

There had been no prior briefing, and no hint of our programme once on shore, and there were murmurings of trouble as soon as the first troops came down the gangway. A posse of Military Police resplendent in red caps descended on the quayside checking first one, and then another, for trivial faults in dress. Clearly nobody in our contingent was going to stand any nonsense. The men perspiring under the weight of kit bags, suddenly set down their various loads, and converging on the 'Red Cap' R.S.M., told him quite bluntly to take his men away, unless he wanted a wetting in the dock. The old disciplines seemed to be forgotten.

A certain amount of jostling ensued. The face of the R.S.M. became livid with anger. He stuttered and almost frothed at the mouth threatening all in reach with arrest and dire trouble.

It was then that his crowning glory took wings, and the red cap, symbol of his *raison d'être*, planed down to the water twixt ship and dock. Falling upside down with a gentle splash, it filled with water and as he watched aghast, it sank slowly from view.

An R.S.M. without a cap is a pitiful sight. He was by now almost incoherent with rage, and the more he spluttered, the greater the delight of the troops.

Any further development of the drama was averted by the arrival of the motor convoy which then carried us through Southampton to suburbia. One could scarcely have anticipated the next change in the tide of our affairs.

After three and a half years in prison camps, and a journey of 9,000 miles, some 2,000 men suddenly found themselves herded together behind barbed wire again. The insensitivity and sheer stupidity of this move made happy men, bitter and resentful. We were to be put in quarantine; there seemed little possibility of our being allowed to reunite with our families that day.

Frank and I were billeted in the same hut. Soon most of the men were asleep or chatting quietly in groups. Lulled by the warmth of the stove I was soon asleep, but woke around 2 p.m. to find the hut totally deserted except for Frank, who once asleep, requires an elephant to get him out of bed.

Gradually I induced him into a state of wakefulness. He remarked, "Perhaps we are missing something. Let us go and see!" A cursory inspection of the huts confirmed the fact that we were indeed the only ex-prisoners in the camp. Ten minutes later Frank found a typical 'engineer' hole cut in the perimeter wire. All the severed ends had been neatly turned over, to afford safe access!

Once on the other side of the wire we struck off down the road in the direction of the city. We heard the singing of happy men, some five hundred yards away. I believe that I had known all along where they would be.

"They are all in the pub. They have had two hours start on us," pronounced Frank somewhat aggrieved.

Within minutes we had joined the congregation. The noise in-

side the bar was terrific. Men were singing at full voice, others propped up the bar and many more did a sort of "knees up Mother Brown" dance. At the height of the festivities shortly before 3 p.m. unwelcome visitors arrived, led by the Red Cap R.S.M., who so narrowly avoided a ducking earlier in the day.

"Outside everybody," he growled "and get in the trucks."

"No," shouted somebody else, "you get in the truck and go back to wherever you have come from."

A terrific cheer erupted. Once again the face beneath the cap stuttered and spluttered in frustration. Somebody poured a pint of bitter into his left earhole. The cheering became even more loud. The M.P.'s withdrew behind their discredited leader, whose last pronouncement was, "This is mutiny. You shall pay dearly for this, etc. etc.!"

Half an hour later most of the men were back in the huts scarcely able to contain their mirth.

"Poor chap," said Frank "he's lived in a totally different world to ours; I don't suppose anyone ever said 'No' to the R.S.M. during the whole of his life."

Our subsequent admittance to that holy of holies, the Q.M.'s store, was something in the nature of a prelude to a comic opera.

There were at least four hapless young men with books attempting to record every issue of knives, forks and spoons, etc. Their efforts to control the joyous crowd as it surged along the centre aisle stood as much chance of success as Canute on the seashore [Canute, king of England c. 995-1035, attempted to stop the tide].

The tide of humanity rolled through the building while the Quarter Master tried to impose his schedule at each stand, and failing miserably, just stood aghast as the shelves emptied. It was not as though anybody was really interested in the Q.M.'s wares intrinsically. It had been the sight of the books and the checking of everything that spurred their actions. The only important issue to these men was, "How soon am I going home?" All other issues paled before this theme.

The 'adventures' in the Q.M.'s store took about twenty minutes,

by which time the shelves were as bare as Mother Hubbard's pantry. In 30 years service the Q.M. had never failed to account for everything down to the last needle; for him it seemed like the end of the world.

When the Commandant visited the store he nearly had a fit and shouted to his Adjutant, "Get these men to hell out of here. Send 'em home. Send 'em anywhere bar [*sic*; but] here."

So it came to pass that the men lined up in orderly ranks receiving their railway warrants, departing jubilantly and content. Life would never be quite the same again.

I travelled with Frank to London. We knew that within the hour, we would go our separate ways, he to Luton I to Manchester. It was going to be like losing a brother.

In effect we said our 'goodbyes' at Euston Station. He looked me straight in the eyes, very serious and just a little sad. "Its been a very long road and a long time. Take care."

"And you too," I said, "We are the lucky ones. Keep in touch."

My heart was very full; a strange sense of thanksgiving for such a friend swept over me. A shake of the hand and he was gone.

To add to my sense of loss my train was late in its departure from Euston. Three hours and twenty minutes later it ground to a halt at London Road, Manchester. An hour after that I was at Altrincham Station hailing a taxi, and soon found myself ringing the front door bell at my father's home in Ash Lane, Hale Barns. Nothing seemed to have changed since I had departed from that self same house seven years previously. Communications between England and the Far East had been sketchy and inadequate. What I didn't know was that because of my escape from Singapore so early in the war, I had been posted "Missing believed killed."

My heart beat like a hammer. I rang the bell a third time. Several birds in the gabled eaves, disturbed by the unseemly din, exploded into flight and were lost in the night sky. A window opened above my head and my father's voice enquired, "Who is it?"

I answered, "It is Lionel."

He somewhat bewildered asked, "Lionel who?"

"It is Lionel, your son, who else should it be?"

He came down the stairs two at a time; the door flung open, and he stood gaping, unbelieving. I thought he was going to fall, but at last he got the message.

"I'm all right." I said, "I've come home."

DOCUMENT 84

Thanksgiving for Relief of Civilian and Prisoners of War, Kuching

Miscellaneous Papers 1057. IWM.

Thanksgiving for Relief of P[risoners of] W[ar] Kuching—Sarawak, Borneo

THE NATIONAL HYMN

God save our gracious King,
Long live our noble King,
God save the King.
Send him victorious,
Happy and glorious
Long to reign over us,
God save the King.

THE DOXOLOGY

Praise God from Whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him all creatures here below,
Praise Him above, Angelic Host,
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Chaplain: Lift up your hearts
Answer: WE LIFT THEM UP UNTO THE LORD,
Chaplain: Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.
Answer: IT IS MEET AND RIGHT SO TO DO.

- Chaplain: It is very meet, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto Thee, O Lord Holy Father, Almighty, Everlasting God. Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name; evermore praising thee, and saying
- All together: Holy, Holy, Holy. Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of thy glory, Glory to thee, O Lord most High. AMEN.

The congregation still standing, the Chaplain shall say:—

THE BIDDING

BRETHREN, we have come together at the end of a period of unparalleled anxiety and trouble to offer our humble thanks to Almighty God for His great mercies in causing war to cease with the hosts of Japan.

With deepest gratitude we remember—our preservation through all the dangers of those years, those who have carried the great burdens of responsibility, those who have braved the great dangers on land, sea and in the air, those who, by labour and industry, have contributed to the necessities of our forces and the needs of our peoples, who concord which has existed between us and our Allies and the manifold mercies which have been bestowed on us until this glad moment when we can humbly say that Victory has been granted. To God be all the glory and all the praise. We humbly realise our own unworthiness of all those mercies and desire in our joy and thankfulness to confess this to him. "It is of His mercies that we are not consumed and because His Compassions fail not."

May the remembrance of all His goodness never depart from us, may it lead us to greater worthiness of life, may it quicken our sense of deep dependence upon Him.

Then shall all say together:—

THE THANKSGIVING

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we thine unworthy servants do give thee most humble and hearty thanks for all thy goodness and preservation and all the blessings of this life; but above all for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.

And, we beseech thee, give us that due sense of all thy present mercies vouchsafed to us in the victory over enemies, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful, and that we show forth thy praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives; by giving up ourselves to thy service, and by walking before thee in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost be all honour and glory, world without end. AMEN.

All say together The Lord's Prayer:

Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed by thy name, Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses. As we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; [b]ut deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, The power, and the glory, For ever and ever. AMEN.

HYMN

O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home.

Beneath the shadow of Thy Throne,
Thy Saints have dwelt secure,

Sufficient is Thine Arm alone,
And our defence is sure.

Before the hills in order stood,
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God,
To endless years the same.

O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guide while troubles last,
And our eternal home.

LESSON—NEW TESTAMENT, Revelation 21: vv. 1a & 3-7.

THE REMEMBRANCE

Unto Thee, O God, be praise and thanksgiving for every splendid deed of sailors, soldiers and airmen, for every act of devotion of workers at home; may Thy blessing rest upon them and keep them in all their ways.

More especially we praise and bless Thy holy Name for those, who have been faithful unto death. Into Thy holy keeping we commend their souls, beseeching Thee to grant unto all of us, for whom they died, that their love and devotion may bear fruit in us more abundant love for others; for the sake of the great Captain of our Salvation, Jesus Christ, AMEN.

Unto thy loving kindness, O Lord, we commend all those who are stricken and suffering by reason of this war; the wounded and the sick, the prisoners and the homeless, all who are bereaved, or are in anxiety or fear; all whose faith in thee has been shaken by what they have suffered or seen. Bind up their wounds, O God, and strengthen them with thy Holy Spirit. Help us to do our part in ministering to them, for the sake of Him who bore for us the pain and desolation of the Cross, Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord . . . AMEN.

Eternal God, the Father of all mankind, we commit to thee the needs of the whole world. Where there is hatred, give love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is distrust, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; through Jesus Christ our Saviour and Redeemer. AMEN.

HYMN

God of our Fathers, known of old—
Lord of our far-flung battle line—
Beneath whose awful hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine—
Lord God of hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget.

The tumult and the shouting dies—
The captains and the kings depart;
Still stands Thine ancient Sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget.

For heathen heart that puts her trust
In reeking tube and iron shard—
All valient dust that builds on dust,
And guarding calls not Thee to guard—
For frantic boast and foolish word,
Thy mercy on Thy people, Lord.

Here may follow:—

THE ADDRESS

SOLEMN DEDICATION

TEACH us O Lord to serve Thee as Thou deservest; to give and not to count the cost; to fight and not to heed the wounds; to

toil and not to seek for rest; to labour and not ask for any reward save that of knowing that we do Thy will; for Thy Name's sake. AMEN.

GRANT, we beseech Thee, merciful Lord, to Thy faithful people pardon and peace, that they may be cleansed from all their sins and serve Thee with a quiet mind; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

HYMN

Now thank we all our God,
With heart and hands and voices
Who wondrous things hath done,
In whom His world rejoices.
Who, from our mother's arms,
Hath blessed us on our way
With countless gifts of love,
And still is ours today.

O may this bounteous God
Through all our life be near us,
With ever-joyful hearts
And blessed peace to cheer us,
And keep us in His grace,
And guide us when perplexed,
And free us from all ills,
In this world and the next.

All praise and thanks to God
The Father now be given,
The Son, and Him who reigns
With Them in highest heaven,—
The one, eternal God,
Whom earth and heaven adore;
For thus it was, is now,
And shall be evermore.

THE BLESSING

Go forth into the world in peace; Be of good courage; Hold fast that which is good; Render to no man evil for evil; Strengthen the faint hearted; Support the weak; Help the afflicted; Honour all men; Love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be upon you, and remain with you forever. AMEN.

KUCHING

13 September 1945

DOCUMENT 85

Postscript—News from Kuching

Papers of Captain H. D. A. Yates. Con Shelf. IWM.

(Some of you may have heard parts of it before—others may have more up to date news,—for me it is the most recent I have, and it is compiled to be of interest to as many people who are interested as possible).

JAPANESE. The last Japs were removed about the end of March [1946], and were sent to Labuan, en route for Formosa—the only real Japanese we knew were one and all war criminals and were sent earlier from Labuan to Morotai for trial. Amongst the last batch to go, and they were sent direct to Formosa[,] were the half dozen odd “good” boys, who had been marked down for special treatment. During their internment from September 1945 until March 1946 they had to be separated from the other ex-guards as more than once they had been attacked by their fellows. They included Yoshimura, Takechi (the Bull-Frog), Takko, Nichi and Mori. That they returned home safely to Taiwan and have now been demobbed [demobilized] and are happy is borne out by a

letter I have recently had from Yoshimura, written in the most astounding English imaginable, asking whether I was interested in importing soya beans from Taiwan, and exporting thence rice, rubber and manufactured products. He is a little premature, but he has evidently the right ideas.

The Australian War Crimes team worked in Kuching until the end of January, and did a very fine job. (One's normal concept of Army organisation received a shattering blow to find that they had two fluent Japanese-speaking interrogation officers with them—surely men with that gift should be sorting M. & V. rations in the Outer Hebrides!) A very full dossier was compiled listing the name of every guard together with every one of his nicknames, his description, his record, good or bad, and what had become of him. I really was pleasantly surprised to see for myself the thoroughness with which these files had been drawn up.

Of the total of about 120 guards, more than 70 had some crime or other ascribed to them, even if it was merely face slapping on one occasion only. There was one instance only of which I have personal knowledge, which was not recorded. One day in June 1945 I saw Takko lose his temper and mete out justice in the Jap approved method. However I said nothing about it, for otherwise he had an excellent record, and the victim in question was one of the worse specimens of the Dutch [O.H.?] camp, who in all probability merited a lot more than he received.

THE CRIMINALS THEMSELVES:

You probably saw in the "Times" a few days before Christmas 1945 that the four officers, Nakata [Negata/Nagata], Ojima [Ojema], Takino and Yamamota [Yamamoto], were all found guilty at Labuan and sentenced to death. Nakata and Yamamota met their due deserts and were hung in Morotai some weeks later. Their crimes were general brutality, torture and causing death, and in the case of the latter misappropriation and deliberate withholding of medical supplies. Ojima's crime was condoning ill-

treatment and being responsible for the deaths of prisoners, and his sentence was commuted to five years' imprisonment. The last information I had of Takino, who was charged with failure to supply sufficient food and supplies, thereby causing death, was that he was awaiting confirmation of death sentence from [Me]lbourne. I understand however that as a result of representations by POWs and internees, a very strong recommendation to mercy had been put forward to the authorities, and that it was probable that it would receive consideration. This was in April last [1946], since when I have had no news. For myself, if Takino is executed, or given anything more than a purely nominal sentence, I shall not be satisfied that justice has been done.

Purely for interest I had a long private chat with Yoshimura just before he sailed, when I endeavoured to persuade him to "let his hair down." He had absolutely nothing to gain or lose at that late stage by misrepresenting the truth. I was most interested in Suga, and the light in which he was regarded by his own guards. The result of my questions revealed that they all liked him immensely, although they admitted that *ex officio* he must be held responsible for ill-treatment and brutality. They all firmly believed that he was a "good" man, that he was undoubtedly on the side of the prisoners, and that he could have made things unbelievably worse for us than he did, especially if he had carried out orders. Independent investigation has substantiated beyond a doubt that when things were getting tough from May [1945] onwards, on no less than three occasions he received direct orders to send us all on the much discussed "death march," and that in each case he flatly refused to do so, saying that none would survive. There is no doubt that had he lived he would have been executed, if for nothing else, for his direct responsibility in the Sandakan affair, but I think he would have died honourably as did Gen. Homma and not in the disgrace that was quite rightly handed out to Yamashita, the "Tiger of Malaya." When I left Labuan in September I had finally made up my mind that Suga had a "Jekyll and Hyde" personality, and that he could be, if he wished, the Devil Incarnate. Now, for what it is

worth, I have been completely talked around, and I am quite convinced that but for Suga, not one of us would now be alive. It has been proved, in contradiction to several rumours that gained credence whilst we were in camp, that he had no official connection with the Kempeitai.

My conclusions regarding Suga have been reached from three different sources—talking with our late Jap guards, discussions with war crimes investigators, who have attempted to get every story corroborated, and most important of all, conversations with civilian Chinese and Malays to whom Suga constantly appealed for help in his endeavours to obtain better treatment for us. He undoubtedly had faults, but I think we owe him a great deal.

With regards to the N.C.O.'s, some have met their deserts—others have I feel been dealt with harshly. Life sentences were given to Shimitzu ("Clark Gable"), Yoshimota ("Fred Archer") about whom I am sorry, and the "Sailor," whilst fifteen years was handed out to Kogo (the "Bear"), Uwabe (the "Sword Swallower"), Osakasa ("Henry"), Beppo, Myamota (the medical sergeant-major), Furunisi, the "ex-ensign" assistant paymaster, and "Conscientious." Some of these are undoubtedly harsh, for I think we did receive some measure of protection from them. Still we shall never know exactly what did go on "up at the top" in the Jap. lines, and it is certainly better that they should be over-punished than that they should receive too lenient treatment.

The "plums" [Korean and Formosan camp guards] received varying sentences, in accordance with the enormity of their offences, ranging from life to a few months only.

Inagaki and Kubu, the interpreters, were given life.

Sometimes I think they should both have died—at others I reflect that possibly life imprisonment will make them suffer more. Against this latter, there is always the fear that they will receive far better treatment as prisoners than we did—they will be kept short of nothing and the only thing they will lose is their freedom. Probably in the unhappy event of their ultimately being transferred to serve their sentences in civil prisons in Japan, they will receive

preferential treatment, and in any event I am convinced that, as sure as fate, before many months have elapsed, there will be a general amnesty, and they will be completely free again. On the other hand, for those who like myself are afraid that British justice does not always deal out sufficiently harsh treatment where it is deserved, it gives me genuine satisfaction to report that both Inagaki and Kubu were last seen behind wire in Morotai as late as April being driven round the compound by a relay of suitably equipped Australian M.P.'s and were, in fact, "going through it" daily, to no uncertain degree.

The only man who has apparently escaped his deserts is friend Hidato, of fond memory. He is listed in the official record as "having escaped from custody in Kuching early in October 1945." He has apparently wandered off into the interior and defied all attempts to locate him. The Officer-in-Charge of War Crimes was a bit worried because he could not get a suitable description and was afraid that he would not be able to identify Hidato. He was very pleased when I assured him that whatever disguise the gentleman adopted I should pretty soon be able to spot him. Ultimately he is bound to be caught for as there are now no Japs left officially he will eventually be found.

About 10 of the harmless Japs successfully pleaded that they were Sarawak born and had never been away from Kuching all their lives and so were permitted to stay when the mass exodus took place. Among these were the Contractor, Fukumaru, now deprived of his profiteering, and poor little Iwanaga who has now lost another 2 inches round his waist. The latter has been in to see me three times asking for a job, but whilst I have nothing particular against him, I have many objections to having a Jap working in my office.

Ex POW Friends: During the past few months I have had so much work to do that my private correspondence has been completely neglected. Consequently not many letters are now reaching me

and so I am rather out of date with the latest news. In case any of you have not heard about some of the others I will tell you the latest information that I have.

"Shot" Spurway and Teddy Edwards both flew back to Kuching with the Rajah in April and have not altered a scrap. We frequently meet around the poker table and cannot possibly stop exchanging reminiscences. Subsequently Shot has flown back to England with the Rajah and returned again and is now more or less permanently installed as Conservator of Forest. Teddy is of course Director of Public Works.

Alec Bulford returned to Singapore in March and I had a few days with him there at the end of May. He is due to be married to a girl he found in Sydney on August 15th.

McKenzie passed through Singapore during May on his way back Tientsin but I just missed him.

Bertie Swain has returned to his rubber planting somewhere in the wilds of South Malaya.

Steve Day is working as before in Surabaya and he hopes to be married early in the new year.

For those of you who knew him I have had two or three letters from Jimmy Millner in Sydney and we have already started business negotiations. He tells me that Frank Mills is very full of life, making love furiously but apparently with not sufficient time to reply to any of my letters. I was very sorry to hear from Jim that although Harold St. John survived until release he unfortunately died in Morotai. Jim also told me that Anderson, the Dutchman, was murdered by Indonesians soon after his return to Java at the end of last year.

Col. King made his way to New Zealand, unbelievably shaved off his moustache, and is now in Hong Kong working as an UNRRA [United Nations (Allied Powers) Relief and Rehabilitation Administration] doctor.

Jimmy Grieve wrote to me from Australia in May and was hoping to return to England shortly.

J. D. Vincent has written to me from Somerset where he has returned to the land but somehow it appears that farming is not quite as simple as growing ubi kayu in prison camps.

Phillip Lovely is holidaying, under a masquerade of working in the Channel Islands.

John Baillie is I hear still in the Army, and planning to marry his gypsy Nina in September. I also hear that Reg Newman is engaged, as also is Tony Hare-Scott, Douglas appears to be working now in London and Bill Wallace's wife has not surprisingly left him.

Kuching itself: I went up to the [Batu Lintang] camp the other day and found it hardly recognisable—it is completely overgrown and neglected. Unfortunately until this last week I have had no camera nor have films been procurable so that I have not been able to keep my promise and take photos. I have just managed to borrow a camera however and am trying to put matters right now, but I am afraid that quite a lot of the snaps will not seem familiar to you.

One thing seems to me and to all of us who were in camp to be a very great pity. The cemeteries both adjacent to the camp and in Kuching itself have been complete[ly] dug up, and all the bodies have been sent to Labuan for reburial in a central POW cemetery there. This means that I cannot take photos of any of the graves as it may be many months before I am able to visit Labuan. I understand however that the Imperial War Graves Commission is intending to take individual pictures of all graves for sending to relatives.

You will doubtless have all been reading in the papers of the Political developments which have brought Sarawak more into the news than ever before and I do not think there is much point on my commenting on them now. Here whilst there are still some people who would prefer the autocratic Brooke rule the general consensus of opinion is that British Government rule will ultimately be more satisfactory.⁷

It will certainly lead to an opening up of the country which has

been very badly needed for many years now. The political changes have had their chief local effect in the visits of many V.I.P.s and during the last three months we have all seen and in most cases spoken to such people as the Rajah and Ranee, Mountbatten, Capt. [D.] Gamm[a]ns, M.P., Lt. Col. Rees Williams, M.P. and Malcolm MacDonald [British special commissioner for Southeast Asia]—the last named being in my opinion the nicest of the lot. Now that the final change over has taken place⁸ we have relapsed more or less into our own small world and such alterations as will take place will doubtless be done so that their effect is hardly noticed.

Peanut toffee, sago biscuits, local tobacco and gula spong [*sic*; apong, correctly kabong] are all obtainable in large quantities and at fairly reasonable prices. Does anyone wish to buy them from my canteen? For myself I have not touched any of them since I came back, which only goes to confirm what we all knew in camp—that when our own accustomed commodities would be available again there would be no heart-burning desire for the luxuries of prison life.

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Epilogue

Like their compatriots in other Southeast Asian countries, the inhabitants of Sarawak experienced privation as a result of the occupation and the Pacific War, but the territory faced comparatively fewer and lesser hardships than other, similarly occupied lands in the region. There was little physical damage to buildings or loss of property, and atrocities were relatively uncommon. Several Malay leaders in Kuching and young educated Ibans in the Second Division were favored by the Japanese *gunseibu*. Many Malay policemen were swiftly promoted in rank; Ibans, hitherto few in numbers in the police force, were urged to join, and a number received fast promotions. A young mission-educated Iban, Eliab Bay, was appointed liaison officer on Iban affairs to the Japanese military at Simanggang. Generally the Kuching and Sibu Chinese communal leaders and bazaar *toukays* in the outstations cooperated with the Japanese; few were enthusiastic but none overtly opposed.¹ Sarawak neither had any active anti-Japanese underground movements like the Malayan Peoples' Anti-Japanese Army (M.P.A.J.A.) of Malaya or Chinese-led guerilla organizations like the group that launched the ill-fated "Double-Tenth" in Jesselton, North Borneo, in 1944.

In terms of the impact of the Japanese occupation on political leadership, some viewed the developments during the brief period as "catalytic agents in the dissolution of the old order"² and "as a catalyst . . . [in] the last stage of foreign domination"³ of the countries of Southeast Asia. Willard Elsbree and Harry J. Benda, who studied developments in Indonesia, argued that the Japanese inter-

regnum was crucial in the emergence of new political elites. This thesis, closely identified with Benda, won the support of other historians.⁴ However, a group of scholars during the late 1970s became less convinced of, and subsequently challenged, the claims of the transformation argument and the "new elites" thesis. Instead, Robert H. Taylor on Burma, David G. Marr on Vietnam, and Alfred W. McCoy on the Philippines⁵ brought forth the "elite continuity" thesis; each from their respective country analysis argued that "the political elites which emerged from the war years were already influential in the prewar decade."⁶ They further demonstrated "that what appears, in the narrow context of the 1942-45 period, to be new political leadership was in reality the response of distinct social groups to changed political circumstance, creating the illusion but not the substance of change."⁷ In Malaya and Thailand, it was argued that the prewar entrenched elite survived and continued to wield power during the postwar period.⁸

A brief overview of Sarawak's situation favors the "elite continuity" thesis. Postwar developments witnessed little change in the faces of the Malay political elite nor in the Chinese leadership lineup.⁹ Likewise, the traditional Iban leaders and other indigenous chieftains remained preeminent as communal leaders.¹⁰ Conspicuously absent were young educated Iban upstarts, those who had enjoyed brief Japanese patronage during the occupation, on the grounds of the Astana for afternoon tea with Rajah Vyner, or later, after July 1946, with Governor Sir Charles Noble Arden-Clarke.

Therefore, if in British Malaya (West Malaysia) and the Netherlands East Indies (Indonesia), "war was an event of near cataclysmic proportions in its armed violence and political disruption" bringing about "lasting political consequence," or in Burma and the Philippines, which "left little more than a trail of physical destruction, such as might follow in the wake of a natural . . . upheaval,"¹¹ then it can be said that Sarawak did not share the same experience as its neighbors. The Sarawak experience, therefore, is more in tandem with the views that propounded the "continuity" thesis rather than in support of the proponents of the "transformation" argument.

Notes

CHAPTER 5

1. The term "Southern Area" in Japanese documents generally refers to the countries of mainland and insular Southeast Asia, primarily to the latter.
2. See Chapter 1, DOCUMENT 5.
3. See DOCUMENT 39.
4. Unable to locate aforesaid table 1.
5. Unable to locate aforesaid table 2.
6. Unable to locate aforesaid table 3.

CHAPTER 6

1. Peter H. H. Howes, "The Lintang Camp: Reminiscences of an Internee during the Japanese Occupation, 1942-1945," *JMHSSB*, No. 2, March 1976, p. 33.
2. Chupatties (*capati*) are flat, oval-shaped unleavened bread eaten with curries. It is a common food among Sikhs and Indians.
3. Besides being secretary for defense and director of air raid precautions, Noakes was formerly attached to the Lands and Survey Department, Kuching.
4. Following regulation no. 9, Archer appended the following: "[NOTE: To any Internee who reads this it is not necessary to say that hardly in one instance were these elaborate arrangements carried out. Either the Japanese authorities disagreed on their interpretation or were not informed; in any case the result was often chaotic and internees were generally blamed.]"
5. A "Letter of Protest," however, was despatched to the Japanese authorities which read as follows:

To
The Officer-in-Charge,
British Internment Camp,
Kuching.

SIR,

On behalf of the British civilians interned in this Camp I have the honour to refer to the verbal protest made by myself at the 7th mile landing-ground on Wednesday the 12th August, and, feeling that there may have been a misunderstanding of my words, I would like to state that my action on that occasion was not due to any desire or intention to disobey orders or to refuse work.

My intention was to protest against British subjects being required to perform work which is in our opinion, directly connected with war operations against our Country and our Country's Allies. It appears that the order violates the 1907 Hague Convention which provides that any work required of prisoners of war shall have nothing to do with military operations.

This protest I conceive it to be my duty to record in writing.

In reply to my verbal protest made on the 12th August, I was told that the death penalty would follow any refusal to work by any individual. This has since been confirmed by public statement made at the landing-ground on the 13th August. I have informed my fellow internees accordingly.

I have, etc.,
CAMP MASTER.

[Note—In the presence of us all Captain Kassia, Camp Commandant, drew his sword and threatened any one who refused to work on the landing-ground with death. On this occasion he assaulted the head of the Dutch community for speaking. 15.8.42]

John Beville Archer (collected and edited), "Lintang Camp: Official Documents from the Records of the Civilian Internment Camp (No. 1 Camp) at Lintang, Kuching, Sarawak, During the Years 1942-1943-1944-1945." March 1946, p. 23.

6. See DOCUMENTS 61 and 62.
7. Noakes letter to Le Gros Clark DOCUMENT 67.
8. Presumably the reference is to Agnes Newton Keith who wrote of her internment years in *Three Came Home*, Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1947.
9. More precisely, this should read, "This was the only railway in Sarawak." British North Borneo had a railway line on its west coast connecting Jesselton to Beaufort and Weston.
10. See DOCUMENT 54.
11. Chinese game played with 136 cube-like pieces.
12. See DOCUMENT 54.
13. Pungent smelling local fruit with a spiky exterior; considered by locals to be the "King of Fruits."
14. See DOCUMENT 56.
15. For the fate of the Chinese consul, see chapter 7, DOCUMENT 75.
16. See Chapter 7, DOCUMENT 72.
17. For this Chinese-led anti-Japanese insurrection, see J. Maxwell-Hall, *Kinabalu Guerillas: An Account of the Double Tenth 1943*, 2nd ed., Kuching, 1965.
18. See DOCUMENTS 61 and 62. "Old Lady" was the code name for the made-in-camp radio.
19. Lieutenant Colonel Russell, East Surrey Regiment, was the overall British Commandant of the P.O.W. and civilian camps during internment at Batu Lintang, Kuching. He died on 5 June 1943 and was buried at "Boot Hill" together with others who did not survive internment. See DOCUMENT 56. Lieutenant Colonel T. C. Whimster succeeded as overall British Commandant.
20. The Natuna Islands were occupied by the Japanese 539 Independent Infantry Battalion in late 1944. See chapter 8, DOCUMENT 76.
21. These names were not the invention of British P.O.W.s but of the architect of Sarawak's railway, Rajah Charles Brooke (1868-1917).
22. See note 17.
23. See DOCUMENT 61.

CHAPTER 7

1. A novel by Hugh Hickling entitled *Lieutenant Okino* dramatizes the Long Nawang affair.
2. J. L. Noakes, "Report upon Defence Measures Adopted in Sarawak

from June 1941 to the Occupation in December 1941 by Imperial Japanese Forces; Also an Account of the Movement of British and Sarawak Military Forces during the Japanese Invasion of Sarawak," 15 February 1946. MSS Pac.s.62. RHL. Section XXIII, p. 88.

3. See Digby, *Lawyer in the Wilderness*, pp. 76-79. Also, see chapter 4, DOCUMENT 23, where there is some reference to Arundell.

4. Reece, *The Name of Brooke*, p. 143 n.

5. Lucas was a staff of the Borneo Company at Miri. He was arrested in his home at Tanjong Lobang on 16 December 1941.

6. Long Nawang is mistakenly written as "Long Noyan" throughout McKerracher's narrative.

7. A. F. R. Griffin is incorrectly rendered as "Griffen" by McKerracher.

8. Miles was captured and interned at Batu Lintang, Kuching.

9. Noakes noted of the Long Nawang group as follows:

No further reliable news of the Long Nawang refugees was received during internment. Several rumours were brought in and many deductions were made following questioning by Japanese of internees who knew of, or had been with, the refugees. The worst was feared. . . . The Sarawak refugees left in Long Nawang were as follows:—

Bache	Mansel, F.L.
Bomphrey, Mrs. E. and two infants	Murphy, D.V.
Cobbold, P.C.V.	Parry, B.B.
Cox, S.H.K.	Reid, T.A.
Hansom, S.G.	Sinclair, R.F.
Mac[P]herson, A.	Spencer, H.J.
Mac[P]herson, Mrs. A.	Feldbrugge, Father
Lee	
Lee, Mrs.	

It is probable that Mrs. Mac[P]herson gave birth shortly after Messrs. Baron and Griffin left Long Nawang on the 24th March 1942.

Noakes, "Report upon Defence, 1946," Section XXIV, p. 95.

10. Keir was director of education and a member of the Sarawak Volunteers, Kuching Corps, holding the rank of captain. He was "Officer Commanding No. 7 Company" which was in charge of internment of enemy citizens and prisoners of war camp.

11. See chapter 2, DOCUMENT 19.

12. See chapter 6, note 5.

13. Messrs. Ong and Tan were Chinese Kuching merchants; Monsignor Hopfgartner was the prefect apostolic of the Roman Catholic Mission at Kuching.

14. This refers to Subedar Kalyan Singh Gupta, Indian Medical Service, "G" Section, 19th Indian General Hospital. Urged by J. L. Noakes after the war, he wrote an account of the harsh treatment received during his imprisonment. This letter addressed to the Officer Commanding, 2nd Battalion/15th Punjab Regiment, dated 11 September 1945, is attached to Appendix II in Noakes, "Report upon Defence, 1946."

15. Crawford served in the Sarawak Coastguards as assistant to the commanding officer and shipping master, Captain A. W. G. Gibson. The Coastguards was constituted in August 1941 for "watching and safeguarding the shores of Sarawak" but in practice only patrolled the coastal waters of the First Division.

16. The civilian internees and prisoners-of-war upon their release from Batu Lintang Camp were sent to Labuan for rest and rehabilitation.

17. See DOCUMENT 69.

18. Aikman was resident of the First Division, the most senior officer in the Brooke administration, second only to the chief secretary.

19. Lascelles was assistant secretary for defense, also district officer, naval reporting officer, censor, and food supply officer, Miri.

20. Stanley George Hill is the individual referred to. His name was mistakenly recorded as "Stanley John Hill" in the notes made by a British Military Administration (B.N.B.) Interior officer (see pp. 562-63). I wish to thank Dr. A. V. M. Horton for this information.

21. Digby stated that Hudden "had been killed, reputedly by Dayak ex-convicts, while taking refuge up-river." Digby, *Lawyer in the Wilderness*, p. 76. Also, see Reece, *The Name of Brooke*, p. 62 note.

CHAPTER 8

1. Abbreviations used in DOCUMENTS 76 and 77 are appended following the latter.

2. In Kuching, *Haryan Kuching* was the daily newspaper published in romanized Malay.

3. Lieutenant Colonel T. C. Whimster replaced Lieutenant Colonel M. C. Russell as overall British Camp Commandant after the demise of the latter in early June 1943.

4. There is no such word as "Shikorki," presumably misheard or misspelt. However, from the context of its utterance, it is quite likely to be "hikoki," which means an airplane.

5. See DOCUMENT 84.
6. See chapter 7, DOCUMENTS 72 and 73.
7. For the controversy surrounding the cession of Sarawak to the British Crown, see Reece, *The Name of Brooke*.
8. Sarawak became a British Crown Colony on 1 July 1946.

EPILOGUE

1. For the impact of the Japanese occupation on Sarawak's Malays and other indigenous inhabitants, and on the Chinese communities, see Ooi Keat Gin, *Rising Sun over Borneo: The Japanese Period in Sarawak, 1941-1945*, London: Macmillan; New York: St. Martin's Press (forthcoming).
2. Willard Elsbree, *Japan's Role in Southeast Asian Nationalist Movements, 1940 to 1945*, New York: Institute of Pacific Relations, 1953, p. 167.
3. Harry J. Benda, *Continuity and Change in Southeast Asia*, New Haven, Yale University, Southeast Asia Studies No. 18, 1972, p. 149.
4. See Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, "Japan: 'The Light of Asia,'" Dorothy Guyot, "Burma Independence Army: A Political Movement in Military Garb," David Steinberg, "The Philippine 'Collaborators': Survival of an Oligarchy," in Josef Silverstein (ed.), *Southeast Asia in World War II: Four Essays*, New Haven, Yale University, Southeast Asia Studies No. 7, 1966.
5. Robert H. Taylor, "Burma in the Anti Fascist War," David G. Marr, "World War II and the Vietnamese Revolution," Alfred W. McCoy, "'Politics by Other Means': World War II in the Western Visayas, Philippines," in Alfred W. McCoy, *Southeast Asia under Japanese Occupation*, New Haven, Yale University, Southeast Asia Studies No. 22, 1980.
6. McCoy, *Southeast Asia under Japanese Occupation*, p. 5.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
8. See Yoji Akashi, "The Japanese Occupation of Malaya: Interruption or Transformation?," Cheah Boon Kheng, "The Social Impact of the Japanese Occupation of Malaya (1942-1945)," Benjamin A. Batson, "Siam and Japan: The Perils of Independence," in McCoy, *Southeast Asia under Japanese Occupation*.
9. See Ooi, *Rising Sun over Borneo*.
10. See Ooi Keat Gin, "Japanese Attitudes towards the Indigenous Peoples of Sarawak, 1941-1945," Symposium of the Japanese Occupation in South-East Asia, National University of Singapore, Singapore, 13-17 December, 1995.
11. McCoy, *Southeast Asia under Japanese Occupation*, p. 8.

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