

Changi

the lost years

A Malayan Diary 1941 - 1945

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T.P.M. Lewis

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PREFACE

The publication of this book which describes the events that have taken place during the war years in Malaya from the end of 1941, by Mr. T.P.M. Lewis is most welcome. Very little has been written on the subject in such cogent details and with so many interesting anecdotes. It is indeed a unique complete record of what happened to the British Volunteer Units as observed and experienced by a person of good standing who went through a very difficult and crucial period with so much courage and conviction. In keeping his diary for 3½ years while he was in the Changi Jail and in the Sime Road Camp, he faced the danger of discovery and punishment which could prove fatal.

It is most fortunate that Mr. Lewis survived the trials and tribulations of war when life and livelihood became so uncertain because the whole country was thrown into disorder and solitude. It is my good fortune to have known Mr. T.P.M. Lewis who was my teacher and Headmaster in Clifford School, Kuala Kangsar, during the last couple of years when I was in the upper classes of the school. As his pupils, we were proud of him and respected him for his very painstaking efforts to teach and train us to become useful and loyal citizens of the country. I left the school on a very happy note in 1939 when I was awarded a scholarship by the Federated Malay States Government to study at the Raffles College, Singapore. He assisted and encouraged us to keep ourselves up-to-date with the current events happening around us in the country and in the world. His ability to write such comprehensive and detailed notes of what he experienced personally during the war is no surprise to many of us for he was always a paragon of patience and perseverance for his pupils to emulate. His appearance to the eyes of the young then might be awe inspiring because he was so huge in stature and build, but he was able to win all of us by his kind heart, sympathy and very fair comments on all of us inside or outside the school.

The book is a very useful record for all those who have survived the occupation period and have lived through the hectic anxious years. So many places and people are mentioned familiar especially to those who have been involved in the actual war. It is certainly worthwhile reading about a country which became the bridge for the large Japanese Armed Forces that invaded the Malay Archipelago, the Philippines and the islands in the Pacific.

The Malaysian Historical Society wishes to record its grateful thanks to Mr. Lewis for having written so vividly and objectively on events which otherwise would have been forgotten by many writers and historians of the present and the future. Thanks also go to Professor Khoo Kay Kim for having patiently combed through the lengthy notes and successfully presented to the readers a very interesting book that will surely enrich our library and provide encouragement for many others to write on the same subject.

I wish those who read and browse through *Changi – The Lost Years* an enjoyable time.

Hamdan Tahir

(TAN SRI DATUK HAJI HAMDAN SHEIKH TAHIR)
Chairman Executive Committee,
Malaysian Historical Society.

31st August 1984

INTRODUCTION

Prof. Khoo Kay Kim

For many years after the end of World War II, Malaysians everywhere continued to recapitulate the atrocities committed by the Japanese regime. Not a few books indeed have been written on the subject. Most of the stories concerned locals. Friends and relatives of those incarcerated or arrested during the Occupation helped to spread stories about methods of torture used by Japanese soldiers. Very little, however, was known about the plight of Europeans who were interned in the Changi gaol.

It was not even known that one person had courageously kept a diary throughout the period of internment in Changi. Now, about forty years later, the diary has been made available to the public. The author is not known to the younger generation of Malaysians but to those who lived through the twenties and thirties, his name is almost synonymous with rugby in Malaysia.

Like many expatriate officers who came to this country before World War II, T.P.M. Lewis was already actively involved in sports before he left his country. He captained Jesus College, Oxford, and played for Oxford University on many occasions including being first reserve for the team which played Cambridge in 1925. He was in the Oxford team which toured Scotland in 1923 and 1925 as well as the team which played in Germany in 1925. He also played for London Welsh 1st XV between 1923-1925 and again, in 1930-1931, when he was on home leave.

T.P.M. Lewis began his teaching career in Malaysia in 1926 at the Anderson School, Ipoh. Officially opened in 1909, Anderson School was then one of the three major boys' schools in the town of Ipoh. He taught four years in the school and it was during those years too that he gained fame in Malaysian rugby turning out for Perak in 1926 itself. In all he was to play for Perak for nine seasons. In fact, he played all his rugby in Malaysia for Perak. From 1928, he also turned out regularly for the North in the annual North South matches (inaugurated that year) which traditionally marked the end of the rugby season. Altogether he played six times for the North between 1928-1935 missing the game in 1931 only because he was on leave.

After teaching in Anderson School, he was transferred to the King Edward VII School, Taiping, which, together with the Penang Free School and the Malacca High School, was, for many years, an English school to which the Malay aristocrats were sent until, that is, when the Malay College Kuala Kangsar was established in 1905.

Both the Anderson School, Ipoh, and the King Edward VII School, Taiping, have since the early years of their existence become renowned for the very

excellent sportsmen they produced. T.P.M. Lewis played a major role in promoting the popularity of rugby in these schools. His colleague in Ipoh, Ung Khek Cheow, was the first Asian to play rugby for the state of Perak. In Taiping, he started the Inter-House Rugby system and a number of his pupils became star players – Alladad Khan and his brother Yusof Khan as well as the Ghows brothers, Rashid and Hanif. It is pertinent to mention that they excelled not in rugby alone but also other sports.

The tradition which educationists like T.P.M. Lewis established in Malaysia, since the beginning of the present century, aimed at maintaining a balance between academic pursuits and activities which, it was believed, would help to produce healthy, gregarious, responsible and broad-minded citizens.

In the circumstances, it was not surprising to find that T.P.M. Lewis' brother, G.E.D. Lewis, was no less famous for his fanatical interest in rugby. Although not an outstanding player like his brother – G.E.D. Lewis is better known for the series of geography text books which he produced in collaboration with Professor (later Sir) L.D. Stamp – excellent sportsmen in every school where G.E.D. Lewis was the principal could expect to be retained for many years in order to ensure that the school's prowess in rugby did not diminish.

Modern educationists would undoubtedly frown on the idiosyncracies of expatriate headmasters but let it be said at once that the schools under their charge produced as many scholars as they did sportsmen. Better than that they also produced outstanding sportsmen who were excellent scholars.

It would not be far-fetched to say that the courage and tenacity which T.P.M. Lewis showed while in Changi goal can be traced to the rugged sport which he loves so much. Rugby is not just a sport; it is a symbol of manliness. It is, as it has always been said, a ruffian's game but played by gentlemen. Among those who play together or against one another in the field of rugby, the spirit of camaraderie has always been very noticeable.

One has to be very sporting to be able to enjoy this sport. And when one reads through the pages of T.P.M. Lewis' diary, it becomes clear that that sporting spirit had a profound influence on him for it is difficult to detect any element of venom or vendetta in his words although he did not conceal the pain and tribulation which, at times, threatened to destroy his entire being.

Despite the war, T.P.M. Lewis served in the education service until the age of retirement in 1955. The last time he served in a school was on the eve of World War II when he became the Headmaster of Clifford School, Kuala Kangsar. After the War, his administrative duties were confined largely to educational departments. He retired as the Chief Inspector of Schools, Singapore;

Changi The Lost Years is an extremely important historical document. It does not merely give a graphic description of life in a prison camp; it helps to fill many of the missing links in the history of the war in Malaysia. It is also, in some ways, a *Who's Who* giving useful information on Europeans interned in Changi and names of those who did not survive the war. Among those who did not, we learn from the diary, were J.H.F. Robson, founder of the *Malay Mail* and S.M. Middlebrook, author of the well-known biography *Yap Ah Loy*. The diary complements a number of books written on the British retreat, cor-

recting, in some instances, errors made by previous authors especially those who did not have first-hand experience of the war.

There is no doubt that as the succeeding generation of Malaysians grow further and further away from the period of World War II, public appreciation of this diary will increase proportionately for the simple reason that it is the only record available of life within the Changi goal. With the publication of this diary, T.P.M. Lewis will have earned another niche in Malaysian history, perhaps an even more lasting one than his superb contribution to the development of rugger which, unfortunately, cannot keep abreast of soccer as one of the more permanent of British relics in this country.

Although now over eighty years old, T.P.M. Lewis remains a meticulous writer. He read the proofs of the manuscript and completed the index all by himself. Practically all the annotations are also his own. It is easy to see that T.P.M. Lewis is committed to the pursuit of excellence not only in sports but also in other fields of human endeavour. This publication, therefore, is not merely a history of the war but also a proof of the very fine breed of men who helped to found and nurture the growth of a modern system of education in Malaysia.



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The author



HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION —

Anglo-Japanese Relations, 1600 — 1941

The first Europeans to visit Japan were a party of Portuguese who arrived there in a Chinese Junk in 1542, for the Portuguese had already reached China as early as 1513. In 1549 the famous Portuguese missionary, St. Francis Xavier, reached Japan from Malacca and made some converts to Christianity.

The first record of an Englishman arriving in Japan mentions a William Adams, a native of Gillingham in Kent. In April 1600, a Dutch ship arrived with most of the crew in a dying state after a long and tempestuous voyage. Adams had been employed as a shipwright and pilot in this ship. He spent his first 6 weeks in prison but after interrogation by the Emperor Iyekasa he was set free and rose rapidly in the Imperial favour by plying his craft. So well did he instruct the Emperor's subjects in the art of shipbuilding that ocean going Japanese built ships were able to sail to both India and Peru. Adams's value was soon so great to the national economy that the Emperor refused to allow him to return to Europe to his family and granted him an estate in Japan. When in 1613, Adams learnt of the existence of the East India Company (founded in 1600), he was able to persuade the Emperor to grant permission for a factory to be established at Firando.¹ Adams also entered the Company's service on a salary of £100 a year.

Unfortunately the Emperor Iyekasa died in 1616 and his successor started a persecution of his Christian subjects for the Japanese officials had become tired of the continual bickerings of the various Christian sects, the Roman Catholics being supported by Portuguese and Spanish nationals and the Protestants by English and Dutch ones.

When Adams died in 1620 he left his estate equally between his English family and the Japanese wife and two children whom he had acquired during twenty years' residence. It is interesting to know that a road in Yedo² was named Pilot Street in his honour and a native festival was conducted annually to commemorate the first Englishman to live, work and die in Japan.

¹ See map on page 2.

² The old name for Tokyo.

The unhealthy political atmosphere caused by the persecution of Christians led to the closure of the English factory at Firando, only 3 years after the death of Adams and in 1638, the Emperor ordered the expulsion of all foreign nationals, leaving only one minute Dutch factory to remain on the small island of Deshima in Nagasaki Bay. From then on, for an incredible 200 years Japan was virtually cut off from all European trade and outside contacts. No Europeans were allowed to land in Japan and no Japanese was allowed to travel abroad and only small coastal ships were built in Japanese yards. It was as if the Japanese nation was living on a separate planet. Meanwhile the Japanese Nation surrendered itself to 200 years of feudal rule by its noble class, supported by the "samurai" or warriors who brutally tyrannised over the remaining 95% of the population.

Not until 1837 was this isolation broken when a foreign ship flying the stars and stripes flag sailed into Yedo Bay in order to land some shipwrecked Japanese sailors. Even this ship was fired upon and driven off.

In 1849, another American ship called to demand the extradition of 18 shipwrecked American sailors and this ship too, was driven off by gunfire.

In 1853, matters came to a head when Commodore Perry arrived with four American warships, which dropped anchor in forbidden waters and sent ashore a message to the two joint rulers of Japan in power at that time. A year later Perry returned but this time with ten American warships which, to the amazement of the Japanese, not only mounted big guns but were propelled by steam. Perry then proceeded to anchor and put ashore a guard of 500 men to safeguard the Commodore while he stepped ashore and compelled the Japanese to accept a treaty of trade and friendship.³ It is significant that the gifts handed over to the Japanese negotiators after the treaty had been signed were an electric telegraph, a small scale railway and cases of whisky.

The American intrusion into the Japanese world was soon followed by the ships of Russia, Holland and Britain. In 1863, for instance, a British subject was murdered in a Japanese street brawl and a Jap town was bombarded by a British fleet. At about the same time a Jap nobleman saw fit to fire on foreign ships in the Strait of Shimonoseki and was punished with the bombardment of his capital and his gang of "samurai" warriors by a fleet drawn from four nations, Britain, France, Holland and the United States. In 1865 another allied fleet entered Osaka Bay and forced the Japs to open even wider their ports to world trade.

In the case of the murdered British subject, the dispute had an unexpected result. An Englishman named Charles Richardson had refused to dismount from his horse when passing a procession of "samurai" warriors belonging to the Lord of Satsuma. He had then been attacked and killed for his insolence. The Lord of Satsuma refused to pay the compensation demanded whereupon seven British ships bombarded his capital at Kagoshima. Contrary to what might have been expected, the Japs displayed no resentment; indeed, they expressed the opposite sentiment, admiration for the power and efficiency of the British ships. So it was not long before young *samurai* warriors were being sent from Satsuma to Britain to train as naval cadets and naval ships were being purchased from British ship-

³ The treaty agreed to two Japanese ports being opened to trade with American ships.

yards. Such was the curious beginning of the close imitation of the training and methods of the Royal Navy which was to lead to the foundation and growth of the Imperial Japanese Navy.

The next 30 years saw an astonishing transformation in Japan. In 1865 she had been a mediaeval state based on the feudal rule of her nobles and their *samurai* retainers, by 1895 she had become a technologically westernised country on a level with the most advanced countries of Europe. Britain and the United States generally viewed her rise with sympathy and appreciation, but three other Great Powers, Russia, France and Germany, combined to oppose or at least hinder her progress.

Thus when Japan defeated China in the Sino-Japanese war of 1894-95, Japan was prevented by this coalition from reaping the full fruits of her crushing victory. For she was compelled to return to China the Liao-Tung Peninsula and the great fortress harbour of Port Arthur, keeping only Korea and Formosa (Taiwan). But Japan's English naval instructors must have felt satisfaction at the way a Jap naval force had destroyed a much larger but less well trained Chinese fleet off the mouth of the Yalu River in Korea.

This jealousy of Japan's meteoric rise probably hastened further occupations of parts of China by the European Powers. In 1898, Germany annexed Kiao Chow, a part of the Shantung Peninsula, while Russia took over the Liao-Tung Peninsula (which Japan had been forced to return to China in 1895), compelled the Chinese to agree to an extension of the Russian Trans-Siberian Railway to Port Arthur, and occupied the whole of Manchuria in 1900. Britain had helped herself to Wei-hai-wei in 1898 as a counterpoise to the Russian occupation of Port Arthur.

Japan's most dangerous opponent was obviously Russia for she was the only great power near enough to her shores to threaten her security. In 1904 war broke out between the two countries, when according to their habit the Imperial Jap Navy attacked their enemy before a declaration of war. They had done this at the beginning of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95 and they were to repeat this performance at Pearl Harbour in 1941. In 1904 a Japanese destroyer fleet made a surprise attack on the Russian Eastern fleet lying at anchor outside Port Arthur and severely damaged three Russian warships. War was not officially declared until 4 days later.

The Russians were badly led and their eastern war effort was greatly handicapped by its dependence on the single track Trans-Siberian Railway. The Russian Baltic fleet sailed round Africa and was annihilated in the Strait of Tsushima by Admiral Togo who commanded a largely British built and British trained navy. The Russian all weather port of Port Arthur was besieged and captured by a Japanese army at a cost of 60,000 casualties. In 1905, the Tsar was forced by these reverses to sue for peace, give up all his claims to Korea and Manchuria and agree to Japan's retention of Port Arthur.

This was the first time that an Oriental power had defeated a European one, a portent which caused no little alarm among the Great Powers with the exception of Britain. She had made the Anglo-Japanese alliance in 1902 and was to renew the agreement for a further period in 1907 and 1911. The chief aim of this alliance from the British point of view was to safeguard our interests in the

Far East against Russian designs in that quarter so that our main forces could be retained in Europe to meet the German danger. Thus it was that when World War I broke out in 1914, British possessions in the Far East were largely protected by the naval forces of our Japanese ally. Indeed Jap marines were to play a major part in suppressing the mutiny of Indian troops at Singapore in 1915. Japanese naval units also helped to track down German raiders such as the Emden and to convoy Anzac troops to the Middle East war zones.

For her own reasons, Japan herself declared war on Germany though the alliance did not call for this. Various German islands in the Pacific, of great strategic value to the Japanese, were captured as well as the German fortress of Tsingtao in the Kiao Chow territory and all were retained by Japan at the Peace of Versailles in 1919.

The Great Powers' involvement in the World War had provided Japan with a golden opportunity to intervene once again in the affairs of China. In January 1915 the so called "Twenty one Demands" had been made, designed to give Japan virtually complete control over the government of China. At the time China could do little except protest but this policy was to embitter Japan's relations with both the English speaking Nations. Equally contentious were Japan's attempts to restrict or even exclude the trade of other countries in the parts of China she controlled. A further cause of bitterness was the Japanese demand for more immigration facilities for her nationals wishing to enter the United States and Australia and the refusal of these countries to grant Jap Nationals equal rights with their own nationals.

Thanks to American pressure, the Anglo-Japanese alliance was not renewed in 1921 and a face saving Power Pact of friendship between Britain, Japan, France and the United States was substituted at Washington to replace the alliance. Japan was secretly much put out by this ending of an alliance which she had always regarded as a symbol of her acceptance as a civilised power.⁴ From now on she felt free to pursue her own selfish interests unrestricted by any other consideration. The pact was followed by a naval treaty to limit the size and number of the capital ships of the major maritime powers. The tonnage ratio agreed to was 5 : 5 : 3 for Britain, the United States and Japan while France and Italy agreed to a ratio of 1.75 each. A further clause of the agreement stated that no new naval bases should be constructed nearer to Japan than Singapore or Sydney in Australia.

Britain had already decided that the existing naval base at Hong Kong was no longer adequate for her needs or feasible as her main naval base in the Far East. In fact Admiral Jellicoe had toured the Far East in 1919 in search of an alternative site and had recommended Sydney in Australia with Singapore as an advanced out-post. Imperial Defence had turned down this recommendation and in 1923 the Cabinet chose Singapore. Construction of the Naval Base on the present site at Singapore then started, the New Zealand Government making a grant of £1 million and the Federated Malay States Government donating twice that sum. In 1924, however, work was stopped by the first

⁴ A Japanese General commented tersely to the British Military attache at Tokyo: "You had an alliance with us on Sunday, you broke it on Monday and started a base on Tuesday. Surely the inference is that you no longer trust us."

Labour Government on grounds of economy,⁵ it was recommenced in 1925 when a Conservative Government was returned to office, and then slowed down again when a second Labour Government was elected in 1929. But work still continued slowly until in 1933 it was officially announced that the base would be ready by 1935.

Meanwhile matters had been complicated by arguments as to how best to defend the base when completed. Naval experts were of the opinion that the base could reasonably be expected to withstand a siege until it was relieved by the arrival of the main British fleet from Europe within 70 days. These 70 days were the maximum time needed according to the experts, for the fleet to reach Singapore from Britain. But this estimate had assumed that Britain would not be at war in Europe at the time, a factor which the experts tended to forget in all their later calculations. Nor did they stop to think of Japan's already impressive record in storming other naval bases in the Far East. Port Arthur was heavily fortified both on the landward and the seaward sides yet the Japanese captured it in 1904 at a cost of 60,000 casualties to the amazement of the world. In 1914 the Japanese captured the German naval base of Tsingtao within a month of attacking it.

The Royal Air Force experts, on the other hand, and Lord Trenchard, the Chief of Air Staff, in particular, thought that the intended defence of the Base solely by Naval forces, backed by a few heavy guns, was outmoded. They wanted the naval defence of the base to be supplemented by torpedo bombers which would be able to attack enemy naval forces while they were still 150 miles away at sea. Unlike warships, reinforcements of torpedo bombers could be flown direct from India using a chain of airfields such as those at Tavoy, Mergui and Victoria Point⁶ and arriving at Singapore not in 70 days but in 4 days!

It is significant that little mention was ever made by the Service experts of the possibility of an enemy land attack down the Malay peninsula from Siam.⁷ For some reason, the military authorities were firmly of the opinion that the peninsula was largely covered by impenetrable jungle which made a land attack on the base impracticable. The one honourable exception to this line of thought was General Sir William Dobbie, who was General Officer Commanding in Malaya in 1936-37. By his orders, a defence line was actually started in South Johore to guard the Base on its northern landward side but this had to be abandoned when the money ran out.⁸

5 Another delaying factor was the official view that a World War was unlikely to break out in the next 10 years.

6 But when the Japanese War broke out, Jap forces broke the chain by capturing Victoria Point on December 15, 1941. From then on, planes could only be flown into Malaya by way of Sabang in Sumatra or sent by sea. Meanwhile a new airfield was authorised to be built at Seletar on Singapore Island in 1926.

7 This was not quite so. In 1937 Percival had been on General Dobbie's staff at Malaya Command Headquarters at Singapore. There he had produced a plan for an attack on Singapore from the point of view of the Japanese. The plan had been approved by General Dobbie and was handed in at the War Office by Percival when he returned home to the United Kingdom at the end of that year. It is ironic to add Percival's comment the plan did not differ very materially from that adopted by the Japanese when they attacked Malaya 4 years later. By then, Percival was himself General Officer Commanding Malaya.

8 Only a few hill-boxes had been built before the paltry vote of £60,000 had been expended.

Meanwhile, the views of Lord Trenchard and his R.A.F. experts, were also shelved and a compromise solution was agreed to in which the fixed defences of 15" guns remained the dominant element in the defence.⁹ Unfortunately these guns were destined never to be fired in anger in the direction for which they were planned as no enemy ship obligingly presented itself as a target within their arcs of fire.¹⁰ Meanwhile the northern shores of the island of Singapore remained completely defenceless even after the outbreak of war in 1941. Churchill's bitter comment deserves to be repeated, "The possibility of Singapore having no landward defences no more entered into my mind than that of a battleship being launched without a bottom."

Meanwhile Japan's plans for the gradual taking over of the control of Chinese trade continued almost unopposed. In September 1931 she created a pretext for capturing Mukden and starting a war. By January 1932 she had occupied the whole of the Chinese province of Manchuria and renamed it the Japanese puppet state of Manchukuo. Protests made to the League of Nations in 1933 proved futile as Britain was in the middle of a slump and her military strength had fallen so low that she could offer no opposition to Japanese territorial ambitions. Japan, on the other hand, had joined the Anti-Comintern Pact against Russia in 1936 and found herself useful allies in Germany and Italy. She, therefore, felt confident that none of the democratic powers would now be able to interfere with her expansionist policy in China. In 1935, she had invaded North China and by 1937 had taken over the key Chinese cities of Peking, Nanking and Tientsin (when much anger was aroused in Britain because British Nationals were stripped naked and slapped by Japanese troops in the streets). The Japanese hope was that the Chinese leader, Chiang Kai Shek, would be forced to capitulate, but this did not happen. Instead Chiang conducted an orderly retreat into the interior of China "selling space for time", and setting up his government at Chungking. From Mandalay in Burma regular supplies of war materials continued to reach Chiang Kai Shek for the next four years by means of the newly opened Burma Road. Eventually events in 1941 were to give Chiang Kai Shek the powerful help of Britain and the United States in fighting the common enemy and in removing the constant threat to China from her aggressive neighbour.

But from Britain's point of view the outbreak of war in Europe in 1939 had already gravely altered the strategic conditions governing the defence of the Singapore Base and had upset the previous calculations of the defence experts.

First of all, Britain was no longer at liberty to send her main fleet to the relief of the base. On the contrary she was involved in a life or death struggle for

9 The Sultan of Johore paid for one of the 15 inch guns in the Johore Battery and was allowed to fire the first shell at the opening ceremony.

10 But the commonly held belief that these guns had been sited so that they could not be fired landward has been discredited by Brigadier Bidwell who was at Singapore at the time. According to him most of the guns could fire both seaward and landward and did so until silenced by enemy aerial bombing or lack of ammunition. The snag was that armour piercing explosive shells might drill enormous holes in the ground but could do little damage to troop concentrations unless they scored a direct hit. Be that as it may, according to Lieut-Colonel Hipkin, his three 9.2 inch guns in Blakang Mati did fire 583 shells on targets between the Causeway and Bukit Timah Village between February 11th. and February 14th. The results were never recorded wrong to a breakdown in communication.

survival in Europe. Not only was she soon waging a campaign in North Africa and employing a major proportion of her fleet in keeping open the Mediterranean Sea, but she had to protect convoys sailing to many parts of the world, particularly across the Atlantic and to Russia. All this she had to do by her own efforts and without the help of the French fleets on which she had expected to depend. This situation had hardly altered when Japan added to Britain's responsibilities when she started a war in December 1941.

Secondly, Japanese invading forces had no longer after July 1940 to be based in Japan, 3,000 miles away, for an attack on the Malay Peninsula. The fall of France was swiftly followed by the Japanese occupation of the Northern part of French Indo-China in August 1940 and of the Southern part in July 1941. A certain Colonel Tsuji moved to Southern Indo-China in September 1941, a significant move as he was in fact the Chief Military planner of the Japanese invasion of Malaya. He was later to write a book describing the capture of Singapore from the Japanese point of view.

These momentous acts of territorial aggression gave Japan a first class Naval base only 750 miles from the Singapore base and provided the Imperial Japanese Air Force with bases less than 300 miles from Kota Bahru, the nearest town in the Malay Peninsula, and only 600 miles from the city of Singapore.

Meanwhile what steps had Britain taken to counter this growing menace? On February 15th 1938, Sir Shenton Thomas, the Governor, formally opened the great new £1 million graving-dock at the Base, big enough to take the largest battleship in the Navy or even the *Queen Mary* (which actually did dock there a few years later). A story current at the time told of how official photographs of the opening ceremony and of the base itself had been taken to a well-known Japanese photographer for development (there were few good non-Japanese photographers at that time). When second thoughts led to the hurried collection of the photographs, the common view was that prints of the photographs were by then already on their way to Tokio.¹¹

Though the total cost of constructing the base over a period of nearly 20 years was later estimated at £60 million it was still in 1941 virtually unprotected except along the sea approaches. It was still a base not a "fortress", as it came later to be called without any justification except propaganda. On the landward side defences were still non-existent and General Dobbie's 1937 uncompleted defence plans for South Johore had never been resuscitated.

However, in the summer of 1939, the British Government did agree to increase the stocks of food and other material stored at the Base from 70 days' to 180 days' supply. But this was small consolation for those charged with the defence of the Base. In the spring of 1940 the new G.O.C. Malaya, General Bond, stated

11 Long before the war, the Japs had organised a widespread and efficient spy ring throughout Malaya. Every town, large or small, had its quota of Jap residents, all potential spies but outwardly employed in such occupations as dry cleaner, barber, masseur, photographer and toy shop or small hotel keeper. Out in the countryside the Japs worked two iron-ore mines, one in Johore and the other at Dungun on the coast of Trengganu. Any rubber estates they managed were frequently sited in such strategic positions as the area in Johore facing the Naval Base. I recollect that during the F.M.S. Volunteers' embodiment held over a period of two months in Ipoh in 1940, many volunteers were photographed in their dress uniforms by an obliging Jap photographer named M. Itoh.

that he would now need to take over the defence of the whole of Malaya and not just the Base and for this he estimated his requirements at two tank regiments and three divisions. This added defence requirement was dictated by the Japanese threat to French Indo-China which was to materialise in August 1940. The validity of General Bond's requirements was accepted by the British Government, but owing to its inability to supply all the troop requirements asked for, it suggested that the R.A.F. should temporarily take over the major portion of the defence of Malaya. Unfortunately and for obvious reasons, the R.A.F. strength in the Far East was very much below a reasonable number. Whereas 336 1st Class aircraft had for some time been considered the minimum requirement for the defence of Malaya (it had previously been optimistically put as 566 planes), its actual strength was only 48 planes and none of these was a fighter.

Meanwhile some troop reinforcements did reach Malaya in February 1941 and these were the 8th Australian Division commanded by Major General Gordon Bennett.¹² In March 1941¹³ General Percival became G.O.C. Malaya in place of General Bond but he found his efforts to organise large-scale defence works hamstrung by the absurd wages offered by the War Office to Chinese and Indian labourers. In January 1941, only 11 months before the Japanese attacked, the War Office rates of pay were only 45 cents a day whereas the then going rate was 80–85 cents a day for Chinese labourer and 50 cents for a Tamil labourer, rising to 100 cents a day plus free food and quarters by January 1942. The services were therefore offering eventually less than half the usual rate with no other allowances to compensate.¹⁴

All this while, both the USA and to a lesser extent Britain had grown more and more impatient with the Japanese unrestricted exploitation and occupation of a large part of China. Britain was involved in the European War from September 1939 and tried hard not to become embroiled in a Far Eastern War as well. She, therefore, confined herself to protests and to some appeasement such as the temporary closing of the Burma Road along which war supplies reached Chiang Kai Shek's National Government at Chungking. The United States was in a position to take more drastic action. In 1938 it forbade the sale of more American aircraft to Japan. In July 1939 it abrogated the Japanese-American Commercial Treaty of 1911 and froze all Japanese assets in the USA in July 1940. When Japan invaded Northern Indo-China in the same month all the powers concerned, known as the A.B.C.D., that is America, Britain, China and the Dutch East Indies, combined to deny Japan 75% of her imports, including such important war materials as oil, rubber, scrap iron,¹⁵ chemicals and machine tools. The effect of this ban was to deprive Japan of the commodities which were required to carry on even the war in China. She could not end this war

12 The total number of men under General Gordon Bennett's command on December 8, 1941, was 15,200.

13 Percival did not arrive in Malaya until 5 weeks later because of breakdowns and shortages in R.A.F. transport aircraft.

14 Consequently, in December, 1941, Percival still had only 2 Indian labour companies instead of the six companies that Malaya Command had been authorised to recruit in April 1941. It had been impossible to enlist any Chinese companies.

15 One-third of the iron and steel scrap used by Jap industry came from abroad, most of it from the U.S.A.

without loss of face so the Japanese High Command had now either to submit or prepare for war with these Powers. The Japanese Navy had already been mobilised since early in July, now the Japanese Army was mobilised in the middle of August. In September 1940 Japan aligned herself with the Axis Powers by signing a tri-partite pact with Germany and Italy and in April 1941 even signed a neutrality agreement with Russia to safeguard her interests in Manchukuo.¹⁶

Though the A.B.C.D. Powers' ban on Japanese imports from these countries was soon biting deeply into Japan's war economy, Japan made one more effort in October 1941 to avoid war with the United States, the most powerful member of the A.B.C.D. alliance. The Japanese deadline for a peaceful settlement was the first week in December because, after that date, unfavourable monsoon conditions would make impracticable naval landings on the North-East Coast of the Malay Peninsula. Though the Japanese pretended to make some concessions, war became inevitable when President Roosevelt sent them a "ten-point note" demanding a total withdrawal of Japanese troops from both Indo-China and China as the price of the lifting of sanctions. Talks at Washington between Admiral Nomura and Mr. Kurusu, the 2 Japanese envoys, and the American Government continued for a little while longer but indications of impending war were becoming more evident. Japanese aircraft began to fly over Malaya and the number of Japanese aircraft based in Indo-China jumped from under a 100 planes in October to about 250 planes at the end of November. British and American Intelligence had in fact cracked the Japanese cipher code and already had a shrewd idea of what was about to happen.¹⁷

Meanwhile the Japanese High Command had been making far reaching plans for the outbreak of war. Colonel Tsuji had already started his meticulous planning inside an unobtrusive cluster of huts on Formosa Island where his research unit had been set up to work out the implications of fighting a war in the humid conditions of the Malayan jungle.¹⁸ Manoeuvres to test the best method of making landings from the sea were then carried out off Hainan Island. The fact that the total army grant for this research did not amount to more than 20,000 yen did not in any way damp the enthusiasm of the team of researchers! In September 1941 General Yamashita was appointed Commander in Chief of the 25th Army, one of the best in the Japanese army and one which had had several years' war experience in China. It was this army which was selected to invade Malaya and capture Singapore not only because it was one of the best armies but because the capture of Singapore was an essential feature of all future Japanese plans for South East Asia.

Defence preparations on the British side had been less comprehensive and

16 With her ManchuKuo flank secured from attack by Russia, Japan was now enabled to press on with her plans for the seizure of southern Indo-China which were put into operation in July 1941.

17 According to Churchill, the Americans had pierced the Jap ciphers by the end of 1940. The decoded messages, referred to as "Magics", were passed to the British Government within 2 or 3 days of receipt. See Churchill's *The Second World War*, vol III, page 5.32.

18 Colonel Tsuji's "Taiwan Army Research Council" had been set up on January 1 1941 and given only 6 months to collect "all conceivable data associated with tropical warfare".

thorough, chiefly because of our pre-occupation with the European War which had now been going on for over two years. General Percival's land forces in December 1941 numbered on paper as many as 3½ divisions, according to his own estimate, but a large proportion of this body was either base or administrative personnel.¹⁹ Most of the remainder, though full of determination to do their duty, were woefully under trained, particularly the Indian troops. None had any experience of war conditions.²⁰ In addition, Percival had little heavy artillery, only a few Anti-Aircraft guns, and no tanks at all (though these had first been asked for as long ago as 1937).

The Navy and Air Force were both quite incapable of resisting an enemy landing for any length of time. Until the arrival of the *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse* on December 2, 1941, there had been stationed at Singapore only a few light cruisers and destroyers. Even when the two capital ships did arrive, they had no air cover. *HMS Indomitable*, the new aircraft carrier attending them, had run aground outside Kingston Harbour, Jamaica, and had been left behind.

The Air Force was still in little better shape. Owing to the demands made by the Middle East Campaign and by Russia, only 141 operationally serviceable planes were available. This number included 43 Brewster Buffaloes, much inferior to the Japanese fighter, the Zero and 27 Vildebeeste torpedo bombers, 20 years old and hardly able to reach 100 mph and so quite outclassed by the Nakajima torpedo bomber which had a top speed of 270 mph.²¹ There was in fact no effective air striking force in Malaya to counter the Japanese Air Armada of an estimated 560 planes which were poised to attack from Southern Indo-China bases.

A weakness of the British plan for the defence of the Northern border with Siam was that our strategy would be dictated by political considerations and by the advice of our British minister in Siam, Sir Josiah Crosby, who constantly advised against any intervention in Siam which might alienate that country.

19 Indeed, by early February 1942, Percival had, it has been calculated, only 28 battalions of fighting infantry available for the defence of 85 miles of Singapore's coast-line. Even these battalions were often woefully under strength owing to losses sustained on the mainland and numbered only about 22,000 men, according to one estimate.

20 Indian Units had suffered especially because of the huge expansion of the Indian army permitted only in late 1940. According to Brigadier B.W. Key, who commanded 4 Indian battalions in Malaya at the outbreak of the war, each of his battalion had lost an average of 240 officers, N.C.O.s, and specialists, who had been withdrawn to raise new battalions in India. They had been replaced by young and new recruits who had fired only 50 rounds on a range.

21 The Vickers Vildebeeste torpedo bomber, or "the Flying Coffin" as it was called by its crew, had proved to be a disastrous failure long before the outbreak of the Japanese War. In 4 mid-air collisions suffered in the years 1936 and 1938, 15 lives had been lost. In August 1940, the planes were declared obsolescent since they still had open cockpits, a maximum speed of 99 miles per hours and an operational range of only 180 nautical miles. Furthermore, early in December 1941, it was decided that these aircraft were too vulnerable to be used for any day-light missions.

But this ban had soon to be lifted when a large convoy of Jap warships and transports, guarded by Zero fighters, appeared off Endau, on the east coast of Johore on January 26, 1942. Two squadrons, Nos. 36 and 100, composed mainly of Vildebeestes, took off from Seletar Airfield in day-light on what all knew was a suicidal mission. Inevitably both squadrons suffered crippling losses, only about half a dozen planes survived and both Squadron Commanders were killed. One of these was Squadron Leader R.F.C. Markham, a member of the Malayan Education Department and formerly of the Malayan Volunteer Air Force.

There existed indeed, a secret plan, code named "Matador", by which British forces were to occupy the Siamese port of Singora on the East Coast, 50 miles north of the border, as soon as a Japanese attack appeared imminent. The difficulty was to know the exact moment for intervention, for we were desperately keen to avoid being embroiled in a war with Japan if we could possibly avoid it. Our anxiety was particularly great as we were not at all sure that our intervention would be backed up by the United States. Though a member of the A.B.C.D. alliance, she was not yet at war. Another part of the "Matador" operation provided for another British force to cross the border from Kroh in North Perak and advance about 35 miles northwards up the road to Patani and occupy a strong defensive position known as the "Ledge". This was where the road had been cut out of the side of a steep hill and it was thought could be held by a small force against a large force of invaders, so long as it could occupy the position before the enemy did.

For the success of the plan, it was essential that our forces be given a 24 hours' start before the Japanese landed, but this amount of warning was never possible. Our few reconnaissance aircraft did report the westerly sailings from Indo-China of several Japanese convoys on December 6 and 7, but for several hours, too, they lost sight of the convoys in the bad weather.²² Later reports however stated that some Japanese ships had turned north west and might not be heading for the Malay Peninsula as previously thought. Because of this uncertainty as to Japanese designs, our Commander in Chief, Far East, Sir Robert Brooke-Popham,²³ held his hand at the crucial moment and did not order "Matador" to proceed. When definite news of Japanese landings at Siamese ports was confirmed, it was too late for "Matador" to succeed and the whole operation had to be called off.

Thus it was that the Japanese made unopposed landings at both Singora and Patani.²⁴ A few of our troops previously destined for "Matador" did cross the Kedah-Siamese border as far as Sadao, 10 miles inside the frontier. Here at 9.30 pm on December 8 only 3 hours after their arrival, they came up against the first Japanese tanks which had covered the distance from Singora in record time. A similar misfortune befell our troops on the Patani Road for they too lost the race to occupy the "Ledge". When they were still about 4 miles short of their objective, on December 10, they were roughly handled by Japanese tanks, something that many of the troops, being Indian, had never seen before. Thus contact had been made with the advancing Japanese only 2 days after they had disembarked at Patani on December 8, over 70 miles away by road.

The cancellation of "Matador" had a particularly adverse effect on the troops waiting on the Kedah border to make their dash to Singora. Suddenly the same

22 Twenty eight Japanese transport, escorted by numerous destroyers and cruisers, had been sighted in the Gulf of Siam early on the night of December 7.

23 Sir Robert Brooke-Popham had been appointed Commander in Chief, Far East, in October 1940, mainly to co-ordinate the efforts of the various services. He was already an oldish 62 years of age, having retired from the R.A.F. in 1937, but a very difficult job had been made even more difficult by the restrictions placed on his powers to act. He was replaced on December 23, 1941, by Sir Henry Pownall, but a week later, even this job came to an end when General Wavell took over as Supreme Commander.

24 By nightfall on December 8, the Japs had already landed 12,000 men, 400 vehicles and 5 tanks in Siam, mainly at Singora and Patani.

troops who had been gearing themselves for a rapid advance were ordered to retire 20 miles to the uncompleted defensive lines being constructed at Jitra.²⁵ When they arrived, they found their positions waterlogged because of the incessant rain and they were still unprepared when the Japanese onslaught supported by tanks came on December 11 and broke through their lines.²⁶

The success of the two Japanese forces which had disembarked at Siamese ports was repeated on the same day at Kota Bahru, the most northerly port on the east coast of the Malay Peninsula. Here a third Japanese column met stiff opposition for a time from the Dogras and, on their own admission, suffered as many casualties on this one day as they suffered on any other day in the Malayan campaign. A heavy swell delayed the Japanese landings for a time, many landing craft capsized and many men were lost. Gradually Japanese persistence had its effect and the Japanese command must have been encouraged by our premature evacuation of Kota Bahru Airfield. This had been due chiefly to a false rumour that Japanese ground forces were approaching it. A day later, December 10, two more airfields were abandoned, the unoccupied airfields of Gong Kedah and Machang, a few miles to the south of Kota Bahru.²⁷

The Japanese had already occupied other airfields in South Siam and these now provided them with bases for stepping up their air attacks. On December 9 they attacked Butterworth Airfield on the mainland opposite Penang. Here they caught our remaining Blenheim bombers on the ground and destroyed all of them except one. This bomber piloted by Squadron Leader Scarf, bravely carried out a solo bombing raid on Singora. Scarf carried out the raid in spite of the opposition of several fighters but was mortally wounded. He managed to pilot his plane back to Alor Star before dying 4 hours later. He was awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross in 1946.

Of the momentous events of the night of December 7 the sleeping civilian population of Singapore knew nothing as yet, but they did not have to wait long to discover that Japan had at last declared war. At 3.30 am that night, unidentified aircraft, 140 miles away, were reported to be approaching and all military establishments were informed. The Civil Air Raid Precautions organisation could not be warned as its Headquarters was not manned. As a result, the lights of Singapore remained full on throughout the raid and indeed until after the all

25 The position at Jitra had been selected not because of its defensive possibilities which were poor, but to protect the Alor Star airfield, 10 miles to the south.

26 The tanks used by the Japs in the Malayan campaign were of 2 types - (i) the Medium Type 94, weighing 15 tons and carrying 5 men; (ii) the Light Type 95 weighing 10 tons and carrying three men. Both types had a maximum speed of 28 mph and a range of action of 100 miles. According to General Percival's estimate, the Japs employed 2 tank regiments, numbering from 200 to 300 tanks, of which 175 took part in a Victory parade through Singapore on February 16, 1942.

27 It was an unfortunate fact that our airfields on the East Coast of Malaya had been badly sited as there had been no joint consultation by the Army and the R.A.F. before they were built prior to 1941. The R.A.F. preferred to build them as near to the east coast as possible so that invading forces could be attacked as far out to sea as possible. The Army, who were responsible for defending these airfields in wartime, would have preferred to build them further inland and in more defensible positions.

When war did come, the army had to disperse its inadequate forces widely to protect these airfields even when many were unoccupied because of the lack of planes. Thus airfields such as Kota Bahru, Gong Kedah, Machang and Kuantan fell early and easy prey to the Jap troops, who gratefully nicknamed them "Churchill Aerodromes".

clear siren went at 4.40 am. The raiders were 17 Japanese Naval bombers based in Southern Indo-China. They bombed both Tengah and Seletar airfields but caused little damage but one or two bombs which descended on Battery Road, next to Raffles Square, in the centre of the city, caused over 200 civilian casualties. None of the raiders was shot down and our 3 available night fighters were not permitted to take off in case they got hit by our inexperienced Anti-Aircraft gunners. Much criticism was levelled later, but not at the time, at the Civilian A.R.P.'s alleged lack of preparedness, but they had a good defence. The Military authorities themselves had ordered a first degree of readiness at 3.30 pm on December 6, but had not made a similar order for the night of December 7, and it was generally understood that the first degree of readiness did not provide for either a brownout or a blackout, unless there was a special order made for it. It was obvious that neither the military nor the civil authority had been expecting a raid from an enemy base 600 or 700 miles away. It had probably been made possible only because the Japanese aircraft had been fitted with supplementary petrol tanks. Nor had the Japanese plans required the lights of Singapore to assist them in finding their target, for the night of December 7 had been a bright moonlight night.

The series of reverses already sustained by us at Jitra, the "Ledge", Kota Bahru and Butterworth were not the last to occur in the "first week of disaster" as the Official History calls it. On December 10 we suffered a further grievous loss when the new battleship *Prince of Wales* and the older battle cruiser *Repulse* were sunk off Kuantan on the East Coast. These ships, as already stated, had arrived at the Base on December 2 but without their escort carrier. But in spite of this lack of air cover, the two ships sailed from Singapore at 5.35 pm on December 8, hoping that given the advantage of surprise and the assistance of poor visibility, they might destroy the enemy convoys in the Gulf of Siam before they themselves were intercepted by the Japanese Air Force based in Southern Indo-China. The ships also hoped for fighter protection in the Kota Bahru area, wrongly assuming that our three airfields in that region were still operating under our control.

For the first 12 hours, the ships remained undetected but an enemy submarine reported their position at 1.40 pm on December 9 and 3 enemy aircraft spotted them, halfway up the East Coast of the Peninsula, at 8.15 pm on the same day. The element of surprise had now been lost and Admiral Phillips had reluctantly to give the order to return to base. At this stage, the ships might still have escaped destruction if they had not been diverted to a search of the coast off Kuantan by a false report of enemy landings in that area. There had, in fact, been no landings and the only explanation forthcoming later was that some water buffaloes had strayed into a minefield, set off the mines and convinced the Indian troops present that the Japs had landed.

Meanwhile the Japanese had despatched a formidable striking force of 34 high level bombers and 51 torpedo bombers to seek out and destroy the two ships. The end was never in doubt given the ships' total lack of air cover. As a result of an air attack which started at 11 am on December 10, *Repulse* was sunk at 12.33 pm and *Prince of Wales* at 1.20 pm. The only loss the Japanese suffered

was 4 or 5 planes. As the Japanese did not interfere with the rescue work,²⁸ the total loss of life was relatively small for 2081 officers and men were saved out of a combined crew of 2912 for the two ships. On the following day, a Japanese plane dropped a large wreath of flowers over the watery grave of those who had died. The enemy were, perhaps, mindful of the example set by their old mentors at Taranto, where just a year previously, British torpedo bombers had destroyed a sizeable proportion of the Italian fleet.

The British command never recovered from the reverses of the first week. The Japanese Navy had won complete control of the Pacific Ocean by its destruction of the American Pacific fleet at Pearl Harbour on the same fateful December 8.²⁹ The Japanese Air Force had won complete domination of the skies over the Malayan front. Only 50 British planes out of an original total of 110 remained operational in Northern Malaya after the first 24 hours' fighting and all these were soon withdrawn to Singapore for the protection of the Base and of incoming convoys. The Royal Air Force could therefore no longer provide air cover for any land operations by our forces.

However the news of Pearl Harbour had struck an optimistic note in the heart of one man – Winston Churchill. In Vol. III of his Second World War, he writes, "Now at this moment, I knew the United States was in the war, up to the neck and in at the death. So we had won after all!"³⁰ The combined might of America, Russia and Britain, with two or three times the resources of the Axis Powers behind them, made victory inevitable. Again as Churchill wrote, "Many disasters, immeasurable cost and tribulation lay ahead, but there was no more doubt about the end." Similar thoughts were to cross my mind when I heard the same news on Taiping Airfield in the early hours of December 8.

The Japanese had planned to capture Singapore within 100 days, they actually took only 70 days. We shall never know whether, if reinforcements of men and aircraft, which were on the way, had arrived in time, defeat would have

28 This was carried out by three of the four escorting destroyers, *Vampire*, *Electra* and *Express*. The fourth destroyer, the *Tenedos*, a 1st World War Veteran, had been ordered back to port, before the battle began, because of her limited fuel capacity.

29 The idea of this surprise attack without a declaration of war had been the brain child of Admiral Yamamoto. A Jap striking force of 6 carriers, supported by battleships and cruisers, assembled secretly among the Kurile Islands and approached Pearl Harbour, undetected from the north. When about 275 miles from their target, 360 aircraft carrying bombs and torpedoes, took off and bombed the base early on Sunday morning, December 7th. The American losses were serious. Seven out of 8 battleships at anchor were either sunk or badly damaged. 2,000 American sailors were killed and nearly 2,000 others were wounded. The American Pacific fleet, whose presence might have discouraged the invasion of Malaya had been destroyed. Fortunately, the American carriers, with strong cruiser escorts, were absent from the base and were later to play a major role in restoring American prestige in the Pacific.

30 In his Mansion House speech on November 11th, 1941, General Churchill had declared this intention, if Japan attacked the U.S.A.; to declare war on Japan "within the hour." This promise was more than fulfilled. Owing to the difference in time between London and Washington, the British Declaration of War against Japan actually preceded the American one by some hours. Up to December 8th 1941, Churchill had been haunted by two nightmares, firstly, a Jap attack in Singapore not followed by an American Declaration of War on Japan and secondly, a situation in which the U.S.A. would be at war with Japan but not with Germany. Luckily, and to Churchill's intense relief, these nightmares did not materialise. Japan made her unprovoked attack on the U.S.A. and Hitler remained gratuitously loyal to Japan and declared war on the U.S.A, though under no legal obligation or pledge to do so.

been turned to victory. Estimates of the time required to tip the balance have been varied. General Wavell thought that another month of resistance would have been useful; General Percival estimated 2 or 3 weeks; General Yamashita later claimed that only one more week of fighting would have robbed him of victory. Only he knew the real straits of his army, for on the day of surrender, February 15, 1942, his men had only a hundred rounds of ammunition each left and were existing on two bowls of rice a day.³¹

31 Only the last minute landing of artillery ammunition by Jap supply ships at Endau on January 26 had made possible the artillery bombardment of Singapore Island on February 8. Reserves were limited to 250 round per field gun and 125 rounds per heavy gun.

Important Dates

- 1542 First Portuguese reached Japan in a Chinese Junk.
1549 St. Francis Xavier from Malacca made Christian Converts in Japan.
- 1600 William Adams, the first Englishman reached Japan.
1613-6 First English East India Company factory at Firando.
1620 Death of William Adams, in Japan.
1638 Dutch E.I.C. factory at Deshima became sole contact with outside world.
- 1853-4 Commodore Perry (USA) forced Japan to open country to world trade.
- 1863 British fleet bombarded Kagoshima, capital of Lord of Satsuma.
1894-5 Sino-Japanese War. Japan won Korea and Formosa.
1902 Anglo-Japanese Alliance.
1904-5 Russo-Japanese War. Japan won Port Arthur.
1914 Japanese captured German Fortress of Tsing Tao.
1915 Japanese helped to put down mutiny of troops at Singapore. Japan made the "21 Demands" from China.
- 1921 Anglo-Japanese Alliance not renewed.
Naval Treaty laid down comparative size of British, American and Japanese Navies.
- 1923 British Government chose Singapore as site of a new Naval Base.
1932 Japan occupied Manchuria renaming it Manchukuo.
1935 Japanese invaded North China.
1936 Japan joined the Anti-Comintern Pact of Germany and Italy.
1938 Graving Dock at Singapore Naval Base opened.
1940 (Aug) Japan occupied Northern part of French Indo-China.
1941 (March) General Percival appointed G.O.C. Malaya.
(July) Japan occupied Southern part of French Indo-China.
(July) A,B,C,D Powers banned all exports to Japan.
(Sept.) General Yamashita appointed to command 25th Army and Col. Tsuji moved his planning unit to Indo-China.
- (Dec. 2) "Prince of Wales" and "Repulse" arrived at Singapore.
(Dec. 7-8) Japanese landings at Singora, Patani and Kota Bahru. Japanese Air Forces bombed Singapore and Pearl Harbour, Hawaii.
- (Dec. 10) "Prince of Wales" and "Repulse" sunk.
1942 (Feb. 15) Surrender of British Forces at Singapore.
1945 (Aug. 6-9) Atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan.
(Sept.12) Japanese capitulation signed at Singapore before Admiral Lord Mountbatten.

2

PRELUDE TO INTERNMENT AT CHANGI —

The Malayan Campaign, December 1941 —
February 1942

(i) Taiping to Kampar

It was 11 a.m. on the morning of Monday, December 1, 1941. The international situation was looking very ominous. Kurusu the Japanese special diplomat who was attending the peace negotiations at Washington, was not, it seemed, making much progress and war appeared imminent. I was at my desk at the Clifford School, Kuala Kangsar, Perak, but not engaged in the work that I normally did at that time of the year. For though it was the first day of the Cambridge School Certificate examinations for which Clifford School was the centre for the two local secondary schools, I was not the invigilator. Owing to the tense international situation, I had had to provide a substitute.

This was fortunate as the phone rang at that moment and there was a message from Mrs. F.C. Vanrennan, wife of my commanding officer, to say that all volunteers were to be mobilised that afternoon and asking me to pick up Bill Harvey of Gapis Estate on my way to Taiping. The Taiping Turf Club was our mobilisation centre. Leaving several hundred School report cards and Leaving Certificates unsigned and many scholarship recommendations for the following year undecided, I duly picked up Bill Harvey and arrived at the Taiping Turf Club that afternoon. Here I rejoined all my old friends whom I had met at many a weekend camp and for Thursday afternoon drills over the past two and a quarter years. Most of them belonged to A/S Company, a Vickers Machine Gun unit. They included Lieut. "Whisky" Bruce, Lieut. Frank Vanrennan, Sgt. K.T. Lewis, Cpl. "Dusty" Miller, Sgt. Major "Starkie" Cameron, Cpl. Andrew Robb, Privates Guy McLeod, Melliush, and many others.

A day or two later, since war had not yet been declared, I was lucky to be given unofficial permission to return to my school for one afternoon to clear up my office work. In this way all my pupils received their Reports or Leaving Certificates before school broke up. I also learnt that Government had cancelled

all leave. I had already been due to go on leave and had been offered a passage on a ship which left for Australia on November 16, but I had given up that passage so as to teach my school Certificate Class for the fortnight before the commencement of their examinations on December 1. I had now obviously lost any chance of leave for an indefinite period but I never remember regretting the decision to stay.

The first few days at the Turf Club were spent rather boringly in bayonet and small arms drill and in filling belts of machine gun ammunition, but on December 5, things suddenly came to life when real army lorries arrived at 4 a.m. to take us out to the Taiping Airfield, a mile or two out of the town. It was understood that one of the duties of the F.M.S. Volunteer Forces would be to guard "lines of communication" and this included airfields.

The Taiping Airfield did not appear to be an important military one as we never saw more than one or two planes during the whole of our stay there but there were rumours that stocks of aviation petrol and bombs were stored there somewhere, though we were never given details. However, part of the perimeter at least was protected by a strong steel fence. Two of our machine gun crews were accommodated in an old corrugated iron Public Works Department shed and two more crews were sited near the Manager of the local tin mine's private bungalow at the other end of the Airfield. The mine was Tekka Taiping Tin Co. Elsewhere along the edge of the perimeter, 'B' Company, armed with rifles and Lewis guns, were also dug in under the command of Captain Perceval.

It was 2.20 a.m. on December 8 when we were woken up and told that Jap troops had landed on the east coast beaches of Kota Bahru³⁰ and from that hour onwards we were busy strengthening our machine gun positions until dawn. There was a full moon so it was fairly easy to see what we were doing. By 7 a.m. we had deepened our emplacements a fair amount, but they still seemed to us pretty inadequate protection against real aerial machine gun fire or bombs. Later we were to put up corrugated iron roofs to protect ourselves against the rain and sun and provide some camouflage, but we never really felt very safe in those positions.

One afternoon we had quite a scare when we were told to prepare for a Jap paratroop attack. For half an hour we waited in suspense until, to our relief, we were told it had been a false alarm. In fact the Japs never did attempt such an attack in Malaya but they did mount a parachute attack to capture the Palembang oil fields in Sumatra. With Kota Bahru in their hands, it would have been quite feasible for the Japs to launch an attack on Taiping only 120 miles or so away as the crow flies.

News of the Kota Bahru landings also brought news of the Pearl Harbour disaster.³¹ The loss of the American Pacific fleet was indeed a grievous blow but the thought uppermost in my mind was the fact that we had now the two most

30 See map on page 19.

31 It is noteworthy that the Japs had carefully co-ordinated the times of their strikes against Anglo-American targets in the Far East. If local times are related to Greenwich time, it will be seen that all strikes were made on the same day and within the space of less than 7 hours:—

The following table, taken from Churchill's *Second World War*, Volume III, page 548, explains.

powerful countries in the World fighting on our side whereas only a few months before we had been fighting alone. Whatever bad times the Japs might create for us in the immediate future, final victory was now assured. A day or two later we were stunned by the simultaneous loss of *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse*, though we found it hard to understand why it had happened. The lack of any air protection for these two capital ships and indeed the annihilation of our own meagre Air Force in Malaya were facts quite unknown to us at this stage of the war.

On December 11 it was decided to concentrate all our machine gun units around the offices of the Tekka Taiping Tin Co. and to take over the Chief Clerk's quarters. A deep communications trench was dug to connect all these buildings and all M.G. positions were now given much greater protection by the use of steel manganese plates "borrowed" from the Tin Company. Good camouflage made these new positions difficult to spot from the air and we all owed much to the advice of Corporal Andrew Robb who, as a qualified surveyor, was able to utilise his expertise to the full.

As I have said we sighted very few, if any, R.A.F. planes over the Taiping Airfield, but when one friendly plane did attempt to land, a tragedy was only just avoided. A Wearne's passenger plane coming in to land, unannounced, had one machine gun round fired at it by orders of Corporal "Dusty" Miller. The plane did not land after the firing of the shot, but reported at Ipoh that it had suffered a near miss. Thirty years later I received an explanation from the same "Dusty". The plane had been a Lysander carrying Brigadier Moir, who was in charge of all F.M.S. Volunteers. He had intended to pick up a certain private named Raja Musa,³² a son of the then Sultan of Perak, who until he had left school a few months earlier, had been a pupil of my school. But for the fortunate fact that the Machine Gun had been only half cocked a hail of bullets and not just a single shot might have hit the plane and with dire results. This incident occurred in broad daylight and was due not to jitters but to an honest mistake. Instructions had been given to fire at any plane attempting to land without due notice having been given beforehand. At night some of our sentries may occasionally, in a fit of jitters, have blazed away at unwarranted lights, fancied or otherwise, seen on the perimeter, but something like this was to be expected during a spate of rumours about fifth columnists.

For the next four or five days we spent a comparatively comfortable time in our new and well protected emplacements. Never again during the campaign were we to enjoy the use of beds, tables and chairs and have our meals cooked for us. Apart from putting the finishing touches to our emplacements, we just "stood to" each morning and evening and wondered how the war was progressing elsewhere. Local news, too, was very scarce but we did hear one sad and distressing account of an incident that had occurred in a Taiping Car Park. A

	Local Times	Greenwich Times
First Landing in Malaya	12.25 am Dec 8	4.55 pm Dec 7
Attack on Pearl Harbour	8.00 am Dec 7	6.30 pm Dec 7
First Air Raid in Philippines	DAWN Dec 8	9.00 pm Dec 7
First Air Raid on HongKong	8.00 am Dec 8	11.30 pm Dec 7

32 He died in 1983 while holding the office of Raja Muda Perak.

Malay syce who had gone to the Park to collect his "tuan's" car had been shot dead by a sentry who had mistaken him for a Jap infiltrator. At that moment the Jap forces must have been at least 50 miles away, but troops recently arrived from Europe or Australia were often to mistake Malay or Chinese villagers for Japs dressed in native clothes and this led to a number of unfortunate deaths among those friendly to our cause. Jap troops often wore casual clothing as opposed to set uniforms but many deliberately disguised themselves in Malay *sarongs* with great effect.

General Percival in his book *The War in Malaya*, however, gives two examples of when our troops were not deceived by bogus disguises. Both incidents took place on or near bridges in Kedah in the early days of the campaign. Brigadier Murray Lyon, the Divisional Commander, tells how he was standing on a bridge south of Alor Star watching his own troops retreating over it. Suddenly a motor cyclist, followed by two more, approached the bridge alongside one of our lorries. The leading motor cyclist waved and laughed as he passed. This unBritish behaviour alerted the Brigadier who exclaimed, "My God, that's a Jap!" There was just time to shoot down the second two cyclists before they too could escape south to join their leader. In the other case, early on the morning of December 16, a Punjabi sentry on the Batu Pekaka Bridge across the River Muda saw what appeared to be a British rubber planter signalling for permission to cross the bridge. Covering him with his tommy gun, the sentry signalled him over. But when the "planter" got near enough he suddenly sprang at and grappled with the sentry. Luckily the latter was alert and a few moments later as Percival remarks, "a plucky German lay dead on the bank."

Meanwhile, the Jap forces were advancing southwards along two roads – the Main Coast Road by way of Jitra, Sungei Patani and Taiping to Ipoh and also along the inland road via Grik and Kroh which joins the main road a mile or two north of Kuala Kangsar which is 22 miles south of Taiping. We had already evacuated Penang Island on December 16 and it must have been at about the same time that we received the totally unexpected order to evacuate the Taiping Airfield for the Ipoh Airfield, 54 miles to the south. There was a strategic reason for this: if the Jap Column advancing south from Grik had reached the main coast road before our forces retreating along this road could reach at least Kuala Kangsar they would be cut off.³³ Meanwhile R.A.F. men moved in to blow up certain installations on the Airfield just as we left in convoy. We were soon joined on the road by hundreds of other military vehicles and there were soon three lines of traffic all moving south. The traffic included 25 pounder guns, Bren Gun

33 There was a real danger that the whole of our forces operating in Kedah and Province Wellesley might have been cut off and annihilated if the Jap Column landed at Patani, said by some to number a division had pushed southwards from Grik and reached the main trunk road at Lawin before our troops had withdrawn. The original Jap plan had been to reach Lawin after only 2 days, though they actually took 11 days. This was due to the strenuous opposition provided by a battalion of the Argyles, a company of Punjabis and 2 platoons of F.M.S. Volunteers. The battalion of Argyles killed 200 Japs for the loss of only 10 men at the village of Titi Karangan. The success of the original Jap plan would have spelt early and irreparable disaster for all our forces in North Malaya. Luckily, Malaya Command had realised in time that the Grik-Kuala Kangsar road, while impassable to tanks and vehicles, was not so lightly equipped infantry, and took last minute measures to close this unguarded gap in their defences.

carriers, medical units and lorries of all descriptions. It was a lovely sunny day and it was a mercy that no enemy planes came to harass us though we did hear later that Taiping had indeed been bombed at 2 p.m. on that very day. An Argyle, driving a Bren Gun carrier, with whom we got into conversation near Lawin Halt, just north of Kuala Kangsar informed us that the Japs were well supplied with Tommy Guns. Each gunner would be fed with fresh supplies of ammunition by 2 or 3 carriers following behind him.

When the convoy reached Kuala Kangsar, I got off my lorry and proceeded to my house adjoining the school and only a few yards from the main road. My syce Nair and his wife were awaiting my arrival as I had warned them by phone early that morning. I had already decided to send them both off to Singapore that evening after they had dropped me at Ipoh. We could not abandon our pets so the car also took off my 5 cats and their dog called "Billy Boy". I had had the cats for a long time particularly "Hitam" who was 9 years old and also "Rimau" and "Ubi". At Singapore they would all be able to stay at 13, Fort Canning Road where my brother G.E.D. Lewis shared a house. At that time nobody believed that the Japs would advance much beyond North Malaya and my hope was that my servants and the pets would be perfectly safe in Singapore. I had tea at the Idris Club where Jomaron, the District Officer, told me how a senior military officer had asked him for help in billeting 2,000 men in the town. When all had been arranged to everybody's satisfaction, it was discovered that the officer had mistaken Kuala Kangsar for Taiping! The Club's Chinese boy was also in a quandary as to whether to send his young daughter, one of my school pupils, off to her aunt in Ipoh in my car or keep her in Kuala Kangsar. I was glad that he eventually decided not to send her. Everybody advised me, however, to send my servants off that evening and not delay any longer. There were already signs of a breakdown of services in the Town, it was with difficulty that I could get enough petrol to reach Ipoh from Guan Kee, my usual supplier, and my school coolies were complaining bitterly that they could not buy rice as all the shops were shut. I handed over the keys of the school to my senior assistant, Mr. Arumugam, and told him that, should the Japs approach Kuala Kangsar, he was to leave the door of the safe unlocked and pocket the \$30 in the safe.

It was already 5 p.m. when I left Kuala Kangsar just as some of our troops moved into my house. We had to drive fairly slowly as the car was overloaded with the extra burden of my cabin trunk, full of clothes, and numerous spare tyres in case of punctures on the way. When we came to the fine new Iskandar Bridge across the Perak River, the sappers were already preparing it for demolition and had cut away a foot of the structure at the apex. On the far side of the bridge was an upturned 25 pounder gun and carriage which had come to grief during the previous night.

We reached Ipoh without incident and Nair dropped me off at the Ipoh Turf Club where I found that my A/S Company was accommodated in the stables. I gave Nair \$100 to cover his expenses to Singapore and bid him farewell. I did not see him again for several weeks, but when I did, I discovered that his journey had not been uneventful, though he had eventually reached Singapore. Somewhere near Kampar, 24 miles south of Ipoh, he had been attacked by a gang of robbers who had stolen a suitcase containing \$80 and killed "Billy Boy", his

non-descript sheep dog when it had tried to defend his master's property. Provisionally Nair had been saved from further attacks by the approach of a lorry full of Indian troops who drove off the bandits and helped him on his way.

Meanwhile back at the Ipoh Turf Club, we volunteers had only been asleep for two hours when we were ordered out to make room for military reinforcements on their way north. In the circumstances we could not complain when we were moved in complete darkness to the empty Chinese Maternity Hospital where most of us slept, not inside, but outside in the open air wrapped up in our waterproof capes. I remember that I shared mine with my friend Corporal Robb. As soon as dawn came, we moved all our transport into cover under some adjacent rubber trees. These vehicles included "Dusty" Miller's old Albion P.W.D. Lorry which he had driven down from Taiping, and which frequently got stuck in the mud. Our destination, the Ipoh Airfield, was only about half a mile away from where we were camped and we could even see part of the air strip if we looked down the "rentas" or channel cut through the rubber trees growing round that part of the Airfield. Unlike the Taiping one, the Ipoh Airfield had already been bombed a number of times and even at that moment some Jap fighters were prowling in the sky overhead. Meanwhile on hearing that a Malay volunteer had been wounded in the thigh by bomb shrapnel we dug ourselves some trenches but we were unable to make much use of them as on the night of the same day we moved on to the Ipoh Airfield at 2 a.m. We took over the quarters of the R.A.F. ground staff who, we were told, had already moved south to Kuala Lumpur 140 miles away.³⁴ The huts which they had occupied appeared to have been abandoned in a desperate hurry and we were not impressed. The floors of each hut were littered with brand new R.A.F. overcoats, underwear, shaving gear, pocket books, letters ready for posting, brushes and combs and other more intimate articles of wear. We were disgusted by the utter waste of it all. We took our pick of what we needed, and early next morning moved out from this exposed position down to the concrete extension built at the southern end of the Airfield. Just off the runway we found a P.W.D. Shed which was partly concealed from view by a clump of rubber trees. This would have made a good shelter for our Machine Gun crews but we had to abandon the idea when we found it contained 56 cases of aerial bombs some weighing possibly 500 lbs each and other huts close by held several tons of gelignite, thousands of rounds of fighter plane Machine Gun ammunition and even a stock of propellers for attachment to aerial bombs. We had, therefore, no place to sleep in and even our two machine gun positions had to be placed only 100 yards away from the above mentioned lethal material in order to provide good arcs of fire to the left and right of the concrete extension.

Our cooking presented no trouble as Corporal Robb who as a surveyor had often camped out and cooked for himself in the *ulu*, was an excellent cook and had soon made a useful oven out of a converted petrol tin. Water for drinking and bathing purposes was obtained from a well belonging to a deserted Chinese hut. All the Chinese from several squatters' huts adjoining the Airfield had understandably left, abandoning not only their papayas, rambutans and pine-

³⁴ Hardly a week later, on December 21-22, a further 12 out of 18 Buffaloes were lost following a Jap raid on the Kuala Lumpur Airfield.

apples but also their goats, fowls, dogs and cats. I gave a stray kitten an egg that a fowl had laid.

We did not have long to wait for our first air raid which came at about 11 a.m. by which time we had already dug some rather shallow slit trenches. It was lucky that we had. Robb had just shouted, "Get in boys, here they come!" when down came the bombs. The 12 or 14 Jap bombers came over at perhaps 20,000 feet and dropped all their bombs at the same time, as was their wont, so we discovered later. Four of the bombs fell within 100 yards of our positions and as it was our first experience, the ever increasing swish of the descending bombs was not a pleasant experience. Andrew Robb, Andy Stewart and myself had all got into the same slit trench and by crouching low escaped unhurt. But one piece of shrapnel cut off a branch of the tree above our trench and brought it crashing down on us. But generally speaking the value of the slit trench was undoubted. For instance, on our left flank, Lieut. Hembry and his Malay and Chinese Volunteers also suffered no casualties though they reckoned that 12 bombs fell within 50 yards of their position. In fact only 3 men out of the whole Perak battalion on the Airfield were killed during our occupation.

After the raid was over we were able to assess the damage done. There were several bomb craters along the extension that we were occupying. In the distance we could see at the other end of the Airfield the red roof of the burnt out hangar and on our left a number of "atap" huts still intact, which contained, we were told, aviation oil and petrol. Three Brewster Buffaloes, casualties of the encounters of previous days were visible either on or near the Airfield. One was on the airstrip itself, another was on the perimeter and the third some way off it. Whether they had been damaged in combat or on the ground was not known as we never saw a single one in operation. But the rumour was that they had already proved no match for the Jap Zero fighter in speed, climbing power or ceiling. Our protection from further bombing was, therefore, almost nil and it was only on the last day or so of our stay that a solitary Bofors A.A. gun arrived. Some companies armed with rifles and Lewis Guns, did fire at hostile aircraft, but our Vickers Machine Gunners were under strict orders not to fire until the enemy was attempting to land. It was ironical therefore that the only plane our Lewis Gunners hit was an unidentified Dutch light plane, which was holed in the petrol tank and forced to land at Kampar, 24 miles away. The misunderstanding had arisen because at a distance the red triangles on the Dutch plane had looked too much like the red circles on a Jap plane.

About 15 minutes after the bombers had left, anti-British pamphlets began to descend from the skies, but their impact on those who read them cannot have been great, as they all referred to the "Changsha Incident", an incident in the Sino-Japanese War which was of little interest to those living in Malaya. The pamphlet sought to prove that Chiang Kai Shek's claim to a victory at Changsha was a lie.

The Japanese did not restrict their bombing of Ipoh to the Airfield and we heard that Ipoh Station had also been hit and an ammunition train had blown up causing much damage. We were not in a position to find out what had really happened but General Percival in his *War in Malaya* mentions that an armoured train was bombed and wrecked there on about December 20. This train had a

history. Apart from being General Heath's³⁵ mobile Headquarters, it had been utilised by sappers in Kedah to complete the destruction of an important railway bridge. Their idea was that the weight of the train would cause the half demolished bridge to collapse completely, but this did not happen. The driverless train passed safely over the bridge and steamed on for some distance before the driver could catch up with it and turn off the steam.³⁶

Another less important place to be hit in Ipoh was the object of some ribald laughter among the Volunteers. It was the Ipoh Hotel, a beer-selling establishment which had been kept by a good-natured and rotund Japanese "madame" before she had been rounded up and sent to a civilian internment camp in India.

Very soon after this raid, our unit was moved to less dangerous positions about 400 yards further away from the bomb and gelignite dumps. These were up on a ridge where we were well concealed by the *belukar* or scrub, by the pineapple and rambutan orchards and the Chinese vegetable gardens. But on December 23 we were again given the order to evacuate because the Japs were pressing south and, though we were not told so, were now in possession of all Perak north of the Perak river. Having moved off the Airfield at dusk, we spent the early evening sheltering from a torrential storm of rain under some Malay houses in the adjoining Malay Settlement. Our Quarter Master took advantage of a lull in the storm to issue a few stores and I was extremely lucky to obtain a new pair of army boots, size 12, which were then very scarce indeed. At midnight our convoy retraced its way back towards Ipoh and we slept the night in a large house belonging to a Chinese towkay in the Tambun Road. As accommodation was scarce, Robb and I spent the night in our own lorry and so did various other units such as the Armoured Cars and a Signals Wireless Unit in their vehicles in the same compound. We all had a disturbed night as the silence was continually broken by loud explosions coming from the Airfield where sappers were now blowing up installations.

Next day, December 24, we left in a convoy for Kampar at 9 a.m. before we could eat breakfast. It was a fine clear sunny day but the Tambun Road was deserted and most of the large Chinese mansions appeared to be shut up and unoccupied. The only sign of war was the burnt out remains of a petrol lorry ditched at the junction with Gopeng Road. But as we travelled further south we could see plenty of large black clouds of smoke rising from burning rubber stocks being denied to the Jap invader. An observant Malay sergeant claimed to have seen, presumably Jap fighters over the Ipoh Airfield, and if this was true, we were fortunate to have escaped their attention. What none of us could forget were the anxious faces of the villagers whom we passed along the road. The nature of their thoughts was both obvious and poignant.

When we arrived at Kampar, our convoy parked in the yard of a Chinese sawmill, which was on the opposite side of the main road to the Anglo-Chinese School, where most of our unit took refuge. Walking up the road a few yards, I got into conversation with an English speaking Chinese, an Assistant Master

35 General Sir Lewis Heath was the Commander of the 9th and 11th Indian Divisions stationed in Kedah and Kelantan at the outbreak of war. He had already won fame fighting the Italians in Eritrea in 1940 as Commander of the 5th Indian Division.

36 The driver was Lieut. Burns of the 2/16 Punjabis who had volunteered for the job.

evacuated to Kampar from the Anglo-Chinese School, Parit Buntar, in North Perak. His wife very kindly mended a tear in my only pair of trousers and gave me a welcome cup of coffee. Then Private Melluish and I went to buy some bottles of beer for "Dusty" Miller who was otherwise engaged looking for a new spring for his lorry. The rest of the day was spent in cleaning our machine guns and in watching the long convoys of grim-faced European civilians hurrying south in their cars. I did not realise then that I had cleaned my Vickers for the last time and that I would leave the Volunteer Force for ever next day.

When Christmas Eve dawned next day we found that Lieut. Frank Vanrennan and Corporal Bill Harvey had left us on some mysterious and adventurous scheme being organised down in Kuala Lumpur. During the day more details became known. Six volunteers had already been chosen to go off as guides on a behind the lines expedition in the territorial triangle bounded by Taiping, Trong and Kuala Kangsar. The selected six had been chosen, so we were told, because of their knowledge of the area and their knowledge of the language. They consisted of four planters, Lieuts. Vanrennan and Graham, Corporal Harvey and Private Andy Stewart and a Government Surveyor, Corporal Andrew Robb and Sergeant Williams of Tekka Taiping Tin Co. In spite of the call for secrecy, a number of us were annoyed that we had not been considered and loudly voiced our disappointment. My argument was that I had lived 10 years in the area, longer than most, if not all, of those selected and I was the only one who had passed two exams in the Malay language. I did not dwell on my other rather minimal qualifications! Anyhow my protest must have borne fruit as that evening I received a telephone call for "Private Lewis" summoning me at once to a house in the Kampar Road. There I was confronted by two slightly inebriated senior officers in Col. Staley and Major A.C. Smith who plied me with such pertinent questions as "Are you prepared to kill a man?" When I had stated that I was, I was informed that I had been selected to take the place of Sergeant Williams who had a bad knee or foot. I had to be ready to leave by car for Kuala Lumpur in 20 minutes. The object of the exercise, they told me in undertones, was to upset Jap communications by ambushes on both the coastal road passing through Trong and on the main road south over the Taiping Pass. I had just time to say goodbye to my friends and I can remember particularly how keen Privates Guy McLeod and Melluish were to come with us. The rest looked at us as if they did not expect to see us again. This proved to be all too true but it was many of them who died. On the other hand, within a year, 3 of the 6 guides would be dead and a fourth wounded and evacuated to Australia.

Having bequeathed my mattress to "Dusty" Miller I left Kampar for Kuala Lumpur at 9 pm. with Andrew Robb and Andy Stewart with Lieut. Graham driving the car. We made good progress in spite of the blackout until our car lights suddenly gave out at Rasa. We could only draw off the road and catch some sleep until dawn came. We arrived at Kuala Lumpur at about 7 a.m. after passing through a roadblock manned by the Selangor Volunteers on the outskirts of the town. I knew several of the Volunteers personally and they were surprised to see us, but as we had been sworn to secrecy we were not able to mention anything of our plans.

(ii) *The Trong (Perak) Raid*³⁷ conducted by "Roseforce"

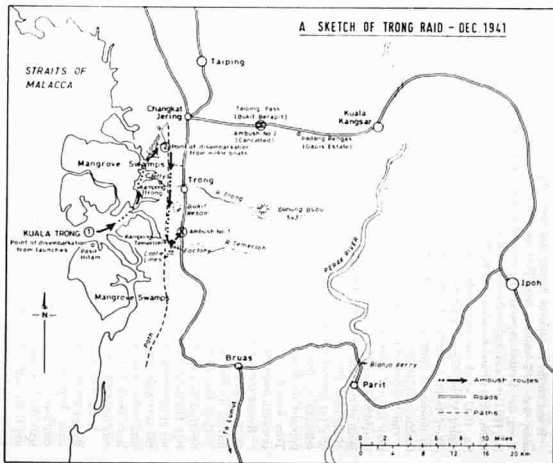
Our first destination was the Batu Road English School of which I had once been Headmaster. It had been repainted a dull grey colour for camouflage as it was now a military Headquarters. The person for whom we were looking was a Major Angus Rose of the Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders who, we understood, had been appointed Military adviser to our expedition. We eventually tracked him down to Room 25 at the Station Hotel and after breakfast he unfolded the details of his plan. The main aim was to sever the Japanese lines of communication at two points before they reached the Perak river. The first series of ambushes were to be sited along the narrow Taiping (or Bukit Berapit) Pass which connects Taiping with Kuala Kangsar from which the main road leads on to the big Iskandar Bridge across the Perak River, a mile or two south of this town. The other series of ambushes were planned to take place at a spot near Trong Village where the road follows the coast, crosses the Perak River at Blanja, where there was a pontoon bridge, and then turns east to Ipoh. If both these roads were effectively cut and kept cut for any length of time, it was hoped that the advance of the main Jap forces southwards to Kuala Lumpur and Singapore would be halted or at least thrown into disorder and delayed. Major Rose's original plan had been for a battalion of well trained British troops such as the Royal Marines to carry out this exercise, but they were not available at the time and he had to replace them with 2 platoons of 50 Australian soldiers with 3 officers and 6 local Volunteers who were to act as guide interpreters. Still one can't help wondering what might have happened if 600 or 700 men had suddenly attacked the enemy lines of communication and cut their supplies. All information tended to confirm that the Jap left their rear almost undefended, because no organised attacks were ever made on it until it was too late.

The 50 Australians had been specially selected from all the A.I.F. units in Malaya, six being selected from each battalion. All had to be unmarried and volunteers and Col. "Black Jack" Gallegan had warned them to regard themselves as a suicide squad.³⁸ The Aussies had been accommodated in some huts built behind the Cenotaph just outside the Railway Station at Kuala Lumpur and were busy cleaning their weapons, Bren Guns, Tommy Guns and Rifles, when we first met them. Among those I remember meeting were Capt. "Gaga" David Lloyd, Lieuts. Max Perring, "Sandy" Sanderson, and "Uncle" Hodge, Sergeants Allen and Donaldson, Privates Maxwell, Flanagan and Bill Flowers. The last named was still only 18 years of age and was said to have joined the A.I.F. under an assumed name at the age of 16! He was big enough to be taken for a good deal more than his age. On the same afternoon, lorries took us off to Port Swettenham, 28 miles away, which was to be our Headquarters, being handy for the S.S. "Kudat", the mother ship for this and all future naval expeditions. We slept the night under the billiards table at the Mariners' Club after being issued with our iron rations (biscuits, dates, raisins, etc.), a new haversack, a rifle, 3 lightweight bakelite bombs, and 150 rounds of rifle ammuni-

³⁷ See Map on page 29.

³⁸ The force later became known as "Roseforce" after Major Rose and is so called by General Percival in his *The War in Malaya*, pg. 163.

A SKETCH OF TRONG RAID - DEC. 1941



tion. In addition we were also given 100 rounds of Tommy Gun ammunition, in clips of 20, to carry for the use of those who had such guns. There was one item of equipment offered to us that we declined, Gurkha *kukri* knives for *belukar* bashing. We were able to convince those in command that the locally used *parang* would be a much better instrument for cutting our way through jungle.

It was on the morning of Boxing Day, December 26, that we eventually got under way in 2 launches from Port Swettenham.³⁹ The round trip to Kuala Trong, our destination, would be about 250 miles. No. 2 platoon left in Launch No. 1041 at 9 a.m. and included Capt. Lloyd, Lieut. Perring, Sergeant Allen with Robb, Stewart and myself as guides. No. 1 platoon left an hour later in Launch No. 1042 which was commanded by a young New Zealand Lieut. Commander named Victor Clarke, a survivor of the sunken *Repulse*. This carried, among others, Lieut. Sanderson, Corporal Wilding, Major Rose as military adviser (with no powers of command over the Australians), and the 3 guides Vanrennan, Graham and Harvey.

Our launches did not inspire us with great confidence. Though they had to keep about 2 miles out to sea, they were armed with (I think) only one 1896 Hotchkiss 3 pounder for which there was no ammunition. Our protection against aerial attack consisted of one Lewis Gun which was tied to the mast with a piece of old rope. For some reason, our launch was towing a small boat in the charge of a red-bearded survivor of the sunken *Prince of Wales*. Seven Jap bombers, followed by five more, passed over us at about 10 a.m. when we were just opposite the Kuala Selangor Lighthouse, but luckily they took no notice of us. They were on their way to Kuala Lumpur which indeed they bombed heavily as we discovered later.

Round about 4 p.m. we were off the mouth of the Bernam River where we hoped to pick up four small motor boats which were to take our two platoons further up the creeks from Kuala Trong than was possible for the launches.

Only two motor boats had turned up and Lieut. Commander Clarke was horrified to learn that the other two boats were lying high and dry on the low tide. His naval personnel had made a crucial mistake which immediately reduced the effectiveness of our force by half. For the boats could only be refloated at the next high tide and we could not afford to wait for that. However, a substitute motor boat was found and taken in tow by our launch but it was an old boat, really too small to carry the whole of our platoon and with a seemingly very unreliable engine.

It was now that we met an R.N.V.R. launch commanded by a planter named Riches whom I knew well. He told us that on the previous day he had shot up some Japs at Lumut, some 40 miles up the coast. We said goodbye and continued on our course northwards to the mouth of the Trong river where we were due to exchange the launches for our motor boats. After such a clear sunny day it was unfortunate that it now began to rain heavily as night fell and we all got wet through because there was little shelter to be had on our narrow deck space. By 4.30 a.m. we had reached as far north and gone as far up the river as the launches could go and, as it was already possible, as dawn came, for us to

³⁹ Now renamed Port Klang.

distinguish the shapes of the trees on the shore it was time for us to transfer to the motor boats. But all attempts to start the engine of our substitute boat failed. It was getting lighter every moment and an immediate decision had to be taken. Unless the whole project was to be put in jeopardy, half of it had to be sacrificed. It was therefore decided to scuttle our motor boat and for Platoon No. 2 to return immediately to Port Swettenham without even having landed. The last we saw of No. 1 Platoon was of their two motor boats moving off rapidly in the half light to the accompaniment of the roar of their engines. To us it seemed quite a possibility that the noise would be sufficient to alert the Jap planes known to be present in strength on the Taiping Airfield, only about 10 to 15 miles away.

Meanwhile our launch had to leave the Trong area as soon as possible to avoid possible attacks from the air. As dawn came, we could easily distinguish the outline of Penang Hill, 50 miles or so north, and Penang had been in Jap hands for the last 10 or 12 days. They were therefore well within striking distance of us if they had chanced to spot our launch. On one occasion we did think we were about to be attacked when we saw 4 fighters coming flat out towards us. We had already been ordered below to allay enemy suspicion and I had taken up a safe position below the metal base of our gun and had indeed undone the laces of my boots in case we would have to swim for it. Luckily the fighters were Dutch and did not open fire when they saw the flag on our mast. Once again we had mistaken Dutch red triangles for Jap red circles on the planes. However, I was greatly relieved not to have to attempt a two mile swim ashore as I am a poorish swimmer.

A more extraordinary incident occurred later that day when we were off Bagan Datoh, at the mouth of the Perak River. Some distance ahead of us we spotted a Malay *kolek* or sailing boat in full sail southwards. To our astonishment we found that it was carrying 2 Malay sailors, 2 elderly European men, a European lady and a girl of 12. They told us they had come originally from Langkawi island, about 60 or 70 miles north of Penang and off the Kedah coast. They had successfully avoided detection off the shores of Jap occupied Penang and had seen 2 dead Japs in a *sampan* when they had called in at Lumut for fresh water on the previous day. Presumably these were the Japs who had been shot up by Riches. As the *kolek* seemed well able to look after itself, we waved goodbye and arrived back at Port Swettenham without further incident at 6.30 p.m. As we entered the harbour we passed two R.N.V.R. launches commanded by two more men I knew, Gransden and Maynard.

Next morning we were off to Kuala Lumpur where we saw something of the damage done by the bombing to the Selangor Club, the Padang, the Post Office Building and the K.L. Book Club which adjoined the Selangor Club. The damage done to the "Dog" was not serious except at the Billiard Room end and we were cheered by a gift of a case of champagne, four dozen beers and cigarettes kindly presented to our unit by one McFee, but why I can't at the moment remember. Anyhow, the gifts were taken back to Port Swettenham and shared out with the other half of our unit who returned safely that evening from Trong with an adventurous tale to tell.

It is understood that a highly coloured and somewhat inaccurate account of

the raid appeared in the local press later and there was even mention of it in the B.B.C. Overseas News. But the only detailed and accurate account which exists is that which appeared in Major Angus Rose's own book, *Who dies Fighting* (Cape), Chapter V, entitled "The Temerloh Raid", first published in 1944. Even this effort borders on the egotistical and the author makes little effort to hide his contempt for the poor quality of the Australian leadership. No doubt many of the Major's criticisms are valid but both officers and men did their best within their training limits and they had not been regular soldiers for 12 years as had their critic. Bearing the above remarks in mind one can confidently accept the facts of Rose's account as truthful and accurate.

The two motor boats carrying No. 1 Platoon made their way without incident up the Trong River at a speed of 5 knots and reached the entrance to the creek leading eastwards to the Trong Jetty in good time. But to put themselves 2 miles nearer to the Taiping Pass, which was still their target, they decided not to enter this creek but to go further north and enter another tributary of the Trong River called the Langat River. It was just after they had entered this tributary that their luck deserted them. One of the motor boats broke down and refused to start and this so delayed matters that they had to give up any plans for reaching the Taiping Pass that evening, particularly as it took the platoon 3 hours to get through half a mile of mangrove swamp. On reaching dry land again, they soon hit a well used jungle path running south a mile or two west of and parallel to the Main Road from Trong Village to Bruas and the Blanja Ferry. This jungle path crossed over the Trong River and went on to the village of Temerloh 7 or 8 miles further south where there was a Rubber estate complete with a Factory, Coolie Lines and a Bungalow. The party had by now decided to take over the original target of No. 2 Platoon and arrange their ambush on the west side of the road south of Trong. This would save them up to 20 miles' extra marching. After one or two false starts, because their maps, 1915 versions, did not show all the jungle paths, they reached Temerloh village where they decided to spend the night preparatory to launching their ambush early next morning. Major Rose himself went off on a private "recce" of the ambush area before it got dark, reached the road and from a concealed vantage point surveyed the traffic.

First he watched 6 or 7 lorryloads of Jap troops pass by, then by way of contrast, a signal maintenance party of 6 under an N.C.O. in another lorry who proceeded to test the telephone wires only a few yards away. After that a party of 60 cyclist troops wearing their usual varied assortment of uniforms and head gear cycled past. The Major then returned to join the others and to sleep in the coolie lines before making an early start next morning. But sleep was to be only fitful because of the mosquitoes and the party got up at 3 a.m. and were on their way by 4 a.m. By 7.30 a.m. they had reached the edge of the road and the 3 sections of the platoon had been positioned along a straight piece of road on the west side. Rose, in his book, has criticised the Australian leader for not issuing more definite orders as to who was to open fire, who was to order a cease fire and how, and where the platoon was to rendezvous after the action. Also he asks, were there any instructions as to the recovery of documents and other information from dead Japs? Major Rose is no doubt justified in his criticisms but he forgets that the troops involved were not regulars and probably had never

had any instruction in the parts they had now been called upon to play. They were not even a homogeneous body, as they had been volunteers selected from several different units.

Meanwhile the platoon kept a watchful eye on what passed on the road. The first vehicles seen were a fleet of touring cars, transporting white suited locals accompanied by the odd Jap in green uniform. These passengers may have been, as Rose concludes, "an assortment of Quislings", but all the evidence at this stage pointed to the opposite conclusion that they were just frightened ordinary villagers being forced to comply with whatever orders the invaders gave. Then came two enormous Jap ambulances looking very much like huge furniture vans. Finally when Rose had just flattened himself against a tree at the approach of more traffic, he suddenly sighted the approach of a touring car flying a large blue pennant which indicated that the occupant was a high ranking Jap officer. "A brigadier, we must get him!" he exclaimed, and within very few seconds he had taken aim, pulled the trigger and shot the driver dead. The Brigadier's car crashed into a ditch and was quickly followed by a whole fleet of cars which must have been following closely behind. Tommy gun and rifle fire as well as our grenades must have taken a heavy toll of the Japs in the 3 staff cars and the 5 following lorries which they counted. But Major Rose says that he was disappointed that there had not been more control of our fire power in this action and that 2 or 3 more ambushes were not organised in the same area before the the Japs had had time to mount a counter offensive.

However the Australian command decided otherwise. A rapid return to the Trong River was made where Bill Harvey, one of the guides, had already been detailed to collect a fleet of *sampans* to ferry the party downstream to wherever the 2 motor boats had been hidden. Harvey had disguised himself as a Malay villager in *sarong* and *baju*, but he was really far too big ever to be mistaken for a Malay. When the party reached the Trong River at 11 a.m., they were met by Harvey who assured them that all the *sampans* were ready and the 2 motor boats had been located. Most of the party then set off down stream but a few men were delayed while more paddles were obtained for the remaining 4 *sampans*. It was well that there was this delay as two more swarthy "Malays" arrived at this moment who were in fact 2 Argyles in disguise, Sergeant Major Love and Sergeant Skinner who had trekked all the way from Grik in North Perak, also a Sergeant in the Leicesters who had come all the way from Jitra, 120 miles to the North and 3 Privates from the East Surreys who were in poor physical shape.

The *sampans* eventually delivered everybody on board the motor boats but these were not able to push off to the coast until 5.30 p.m. because of the tides. Once again one of the motor boats broke down and had to be towed by the other. However in spite of these mishaps they reached the appointed rendezvous at the mouth of the Trong River well before time. A four hour wait in the darkness was not improved by a heavy drizzle which soaked everybody to the skin. It took the launch longer to return to Port Swettenham than expected because it had to tow the 2 motor boats all the way back and because it had to take a circuitous route well out into the Straits of Malacca to avoid possible aerial attacks.

It is pleasing to be able to quote Major Rose's tribute to the local population in connection with the Trong Raid: "During the whole time we were behind the Jap lines I was most impressed by the way the locals, whether Malays, Tamils or Chinese, declined to exploit us financially and, moreover gave us every possible assistance within their power."

As we were all now given 3 days' leave, I decided to visit Singapore to see my brothers and find out how my syce Nair and his family, human, canine and feline had settled down at 13 Fort Canning, which was immediately below General Percival's Military H.Q. John, my elder brother had, I knew, been evacuated from Penang on December 16 from his post as Assistant Food Controller there. My younger brother, Gerwyn, was still so far as I knew, working in the War Tax Department. But just before I could leave I was caught in a heavy raid on Port Swettenham wharf which was to put an end to all future amphibian exercises that we might be planning. I was walking along the wharf with Bill Flowers, the 18 years old Aussie batman to Capt. Lloyd when several Japanese bombers came in low. We took refuge inside a shelter made of old railway sleepers which swayed ominously when the bombs hit the ground. Two barges set on fire were towed out to sea but several others were saved by the efforts of two Customs officers named Talbot and Jeffries, by an ancient Chinese who seemed to be the only Asiatic around and ourselves. The bombing had reduced the Customs Office Staff to 7 and the Port Police had several absentees too. Just as we were surveying the damage done 7 more Jap bombers arrived to bomb the 3 Bofors guns sited half way between the wharf and the Mariners' Club. The Bofors Crews were well protected by conical mounds of sandbags, but I sought refuge in a brick shelter close by which I shared with a Selangor Volunteer Officer. He had mounted a Vickers Machine Gun at the open end of the shelter and as the bombers flew over he let fly without however any visible effect. So low were the bombers that we were able to see clearly the bombs leave the planes and drop only 20 or 30 yards away. Though nobody was killed, much damage was done. Huge craters were left in the wharf area, the iron railings round the Mariners' Club were blown clean away and, most serious of all, No. 2 hold of the *S.S. Kudat*, then alongside the wharf received a direct hit and was set on fire. The ship was to become a total loss later. I did not at the time realise that the *S.S. Kudat* had been the depot ship for our naval launches but the Japs may have already guessed the connection. The Jap Air Force also put a stop to another amphibian scheme next day.⁴⁰ Five fast Eureka landing craft had been specially ordered from the USA and were due to arrive at Port Swettenham on January 2, but before that day arrived, the Japs had spotted the Eurekas on the way north and had sunk or damaged the lot.

We left for Kuala Lumpur by car that afternoon and had baths at the Station

40 The Australian Command of "Roseforce" had already planned another daring amphibian expedition up the Perak Coast. The targets would have been Taiping Airfield, reported to be crammed with Jap planes, and an adjoining car park said to be packed with vehicles. Major Rose would not have accompanied this force as, with some justification, he considered the Australians unsuitable for the trained demolition work which would have been required. The destruction of "the Perak flotilla" - the *S.S. Kudat* and the Eureka - luckily for us, put an end to the plan as also did the very rapid over-running of Perak by Jap forces.

Hotel. Temporarily sharing our room also to have a bath was a high ranking officer. It was only later that we discovered that he was Major General Murray Lyon who had been replaced in his command after the Jitra reverse. We found him a most pleasant man who was very interested to have details of our recent activities of which he had already heard.

That same evening after the raid, we left for Singapore at 8.30 p.m. There on the train I met Frank Vanrennan who was going to see his wife. I never saw him again. Also on the train was Talbot (Customs) who had with him the Captain and Chief Officer of the *S.S. Kudat*. They were both suffering from shock and confirmed that their ship had again been bombed and sunk while on her way back to Singapore. On Singapore Station, where we arrived at 10.30 a.m., I met an old volunteer acquaintance, Sergeant Major Jamieson, who told me he was in charge of Jap civilian internees being transferred by boat to India. My brother John told me that 1,000 people⁴¹ had been killed in the air raids on Penang and that the *S.S. Pangkor*, one of the ferryboats bringing the evacuees down to Singapore, had broken down on the way. His wife and daughter had already left for Australia and he was now in charge of the Food Control Unit in the Bras Basah Road. My younger brother, Gerwyn, had left the War Tax Department and was now a Sergeant with the Volunteer Red Cross Unit being run by Dr. Pavillard,⁴² a Singapore doctor. I also heard more details from my syce of his experiences while driving down to Singapore from Kampar.

After 3 days we were back in Port Swettenham where we found our unit at a loose end, if not forgotten, now that the *Kudat* and the Eureka boats were no more. Mysterious conferences were, indeed, being held in Kuala Lumpur and there was talk of stay behind parties based on Tanjong Malim in South Perak, but we were not consulted or informed about what was being planned. Only after the war when I read Spencer Chapman's *The Jungle is Neutral* did I discover what had been going on. Stay-behind parties had indeed been organised by Spencer Chapman and in Chapter IV of his book he tells how he spent the evening of December 30 at the Station Hotel with Frank Vanrennan and Bill Harvey. It is ironic that though the name of Spencer Chapman was never mentioned to me at the time, I had known him quite well in August 1938 when we had both attended a Vacation Course in Education at Oxford and I had sat next to him during a course of 90 lectures. In the circumstances, the 3 guides not involved in, or informed of, these new projects, Robb, Stewart and myself, naturally chose to stay with the original Australian unit. It was obvious that this unit could never have undertaken any further expeditions without the assistance of some local guides and interpreters.

We found that our Australians had been moved out of the wrecked Mariners' Club to some empty houses half way along the Port Swettenham Road to Klang but as it was intended to blow up the big Klang River bridge in the near future,

41 At 11 am on Thursday, December 11th, 27 Jan bombers had bombed Penang, killing 1,000 people and wounding several thousands more. There had been no opposition either from British planes or from anti-aircraft fire and the local population taken completely by surprise, and summarised by what they imagined, until the bombs dropped, was a free aerial show, had not attempted to take shelter.

42 Later the author of *Bamboo Doctor* (Macmillan), an account of his experiences on the Burma-Siam Railway.

we all had to move again to somewhere on the east side of the river. A police friend, Ian Macdonald, suggested that we moved into the High School, Klang, buildings, but as these had already been occupied by the engineers, we decided to occupy the empty house of the headmaster. He, a Mr. Pearson by name, was lying wounded in a Kuala Lumpur hospital and his wife was with him, but the Chinese "boy" was still in occupation and most reluctant to open up the house until some doors had been nailed up to prevent intruders entering some of the rooms. We assured him that we would take great care not to cause unnecessary damage to house and property, but I wonder what success the boy had later in repelling the hordes of looters who probably moved in after we were gone. We also took care to feed Mr. Pearson's two Siamese cats. The School playing fields, as indeed the *padangs* of all the Malay schools in the area, were littered with hurdles and obstacles of all kinds in the pathetic belief that they would discourage parachute landings.

In the *kampung* behind the house I spoke to an ancient Malay who told me that his family had lived there for over 100 years. Now they had all fled to a remote part of the *ulu*, but he (he claimed to be related to royalty) had elected to stay behind on his own.

Again we were not able to stay long in Klang for news now reached us of impending Jap attacks by sea with possible landings all along the coast at Kuala Bernam, Kuala Selangor and even at Port Swettenham itself.

It was Churchill himself who was to ask Sir Dudley Pound, the First Sea Lord, on January 22 to explain how it was the Japs had been able to out-manoeuve our forces on the West coast of Malaya without having a single warship in these waters. A number of factors had made this possible. When Penang had been evacuated on December 16, a number of small vessels and barges in the harbour were neither removed nor scuttled as they should have been, such had been the hurry of the evacuation.⁴³ Part of the blame for this can be attributed to the masters and crews of these crafts for they had disappeared from their posts with the first signs of bombing. The Japanese certainly made great use of these boats in the series of landings which they were to make all down the west coast. The enemy also supplemented this unexpected source of transport from their own resources. In the middle of December, a number of Jap made self-propelled craft had been landed at Singora in Siam and conveyed by road to the Kedah coast where they were launched on December 22.⁴⁴ Incidentally the same landing craft were to be used again on

43 The civilian evacuation of Penang on December 16, 1941 had been a military order by General Heath, given without prior consultation with the Governor at Singapore, who was incensed when he heard later that the evacuees had been restricted to the European section of the population. Asiatic Volunteers had, indeed, been given a chance to be evacuated if they so wished but the majority had elected to stay in Penang.

The only transport available was a handful of ferry boats, manned by 50 Naval Ratings, survivors of the *Prince of Wales* and the *Repulse*, so it would have been impossible to evacuate any more persons than were taken away. It must be borne in mind that this evacuation took place only 6 days after the Jap forces had crossed the Siam border into Kedah. The Penang Radio Station, unaccountably not destroyed, continued for several weeks to make the maximum propaganda use out of this event. The Japs also captured 3,000 tons of tin, a metal of which they were very short.

44 It is estimated that about 40 craft were used by the Japs in their landing at Singora on December 8 and relaunched in the sea close to Alor Star.

February 8 for the landings on the North West coast of Singapore Island. In this case they were transported overland from Pontian Kechil on the Johore coast to the Johore Straits at Johore Bahru, close to the Causeway which links the Malay Peninsula to the Island.

What made the threats from the sea more dangerous still was the fact that many of the Jap landings were made at points convenient for rapid thrusts inland which could have cut our main road communications between North and South. A further cause for concern was the strength of the Jap Air Force which gave its own forces full protection while annihilating any British force such as the "Perak Flotilla" and making impossible any repetition of the Trong raid. On the one occasion when a lone British plane reported a Jap Tug and 4 barges in obvious distress, stranded on a sandbank at the mouth of the Perak River on January 1, not a single British ship or plane was available to take advantage of the situation.⁴⁵

The first Jap landing was made at Hutan Melintang on January 1. This village is situated near the mouth of the Bernam river. A small force was landed from a flotilla of 7 small steamers which were accompanied by a large number of barges. As the Bernam river is navigable for small craft almost as far inland as the main trunk road, this was a serious threat to the communications of our main forces still defending Kampar to the North. Actually the Japs did not land their main forces here for, next day, January 2, their craft were sighted off the coast of Selangor, about 30 miles up the coast from Port Swettenham. On this occasion, the Jap-invaders were repelled by some excellent artillery fire in which the Gunners including an F.M.S. Light Battery Unit, scored direct hits, sinking one small steamer and damaging other craft.

This slight rebuff did not deter the Japs for within a day, on January 3, they had landed about a battalion of their troops at a point on the Selangor coast, 8 miles north of Kuala Selangor. They marched rapidly southwards along the coastal road, their probable objective being the neighbouring Batang Berjuntai Bridge, the only bridge across the Selangor River from which a good road runs to Rawang only 12 miles away. Once again our main communications were being threatened, for Rawang was on the main road and our forces were still fighting 70 miles to the north of this small town.

(iii) *The Incident at Batang Berjuntai Bridge*

It was to face this emergency that several platoons of F.M.S. Volunteers as well as the 50 strong Australian unit at Klang were ordered north to hold the Batang Berjuntai Bridge on the night of January 3. The drive northwards along the coast road leading to Kuala Selangor was made in darkness, during which we passed through a number of dimly lit *kampongs* such as Kapar and Jeram. It was at Jeram that I again met a surprised Lieut "Mustard" Burns of the East Surreys who had been our anti-gas Instructor at a Volunteer Camp in the previous year. Following the dim light of his bicycle we turned right from the main road and reached his Military H.Q., a hundred or two yards down the road on the left.

⁴⁵ In April 1940, General Bond, then G.O.C. Malaya, had vainly asked for 3 flotillas of Motor Torpedo Boats to deal with just such a situation as this if it arose when war broke out.

In more peaceful times it had been the Manager's office on the local rubber estate. There we rested and slept for about four hours on the cold concrete floor or on a table or bench if we were lucky. But at 2 a.m. we were on the move again and back on the main road leading to Kuala Selangor. It was an eerie feeling we had as we proceeded along the straight road, for a Jap ambush was not beyond the bounds of possibility. The road ran alongside the coast and a Jap landing might have been made anywhere under cover of darkness.

Captain Lloyd, who was in charge of our Australian unit, had been lent a decrepit old Standard car to go on ahead of our convoy and two Indian Officers and myself accompanied him as interpreters. Our orders were to contact a certain officer at the Kampong Kuantan Club. We were now constantly challenged by Indian sentries along the road, but when we reached the 23rd milestone we turned off right for a village called Bukit Rotan across a half demolished bridge which was now only wide enough for one vehicle to cross at a time. Two or three miles down this road we came to some crossroads and we had to wake up a sleepy P.W.D. Tamil coolie, who lived in quarters near by, to show us the way to the Kampong Kuantan Club. Half an hour later, a sharp turn left, and a windy piece of road with mangrove swamps on both sides brought us to the village of Batang Berjuntai which rather improbably contained not only a Post Office but also a Railway Station for Batang Berjuntai was the terminus of a branch line from Kuala Lumpur. During our short stay at the Kampong Kuantan Club, a modern building so far as we could see in the now bright moon light, we had contacted several officers, poring over maps by the light of a single candle. They had passed us on to a British Officer at the Post Office at Batang Berjuntai who was in command of the Indian troops in that area. In the semi-darkness which still prevailed the ground around the Post Office seemed littered with recumbent white ghosts. In fact they were Indian soldiers asleep with white sheets over their faces to ward off the mosquitoes which were particularly numerous and aggressive along the river banks. Captain Lloyd met the British Officer, a Major, on the steps of the Post Office and we were off again in our lorries which were now driven by Malays. These took us to within half a mile of the bridge. We got out of the lorries and marched in silence up to the southern side of the bridge which we found to be a substantial, concrete structure. About 50 Jats (Punjabis) were already stretched out in defensive positions along the bank, but we could not make any verbal contact with them as they spoke no English. However later on that day, when I innocently asked a Jat what the funny whining sounds were overhead, he smiled and said "boo-lets".

When the day became lighter we were able to examine the terrain opposite us on the north bank of the river. To our right flank it was covered with thick jungle, on our left flank there was an acre or two of *belukar* along the water's edge but behind this it was again thick jungle. Behind this patch of jungle was a small hill which dominated our positions. The hill itself was covered with scrub and small trees affording good cover for any Jap who might be occupying it. We learnt that a patrol of Indian troops had gone forward over the bridge and had not yet returned. A number of Armoured Cars had followed them and they, too, had not yet returned. These cars did in fact return without loss but the Indian patrol, consisting of one European and 4 Indian soldiers, lost their lorry

and had to get back by a circuitous route. It was typical of the stress felt by many that 2 Indian soldiers had been badly hurt on the previous night because one of our lorries had overturned on the way up to our front.

The British Major now arrived from the Post Office and despatched 2 more platoons of Indian troops over the bridge on foot. As the jungle came right up to the road edge on both sides, the troops had to keep to the edge of the road and advance in Indian file. Our Australian unit then followed them up the narrow road. Captain Lloyd, Lieut. Sanderson, Bill Flowers and myself were among those who kept to the left and Lieut. Perring, Andy Stewart, Corporal Wilding and Andrew Robb were among those who kept to the right side of the road. Some intermittent firing could now be heard ahead of us and when this became heavy, our two columns stepped off the road into the jungle on each side. The jungle was now not so thick that we could not still move forward along paths but at a slower pace. Soon the sound of firing ahead seemed to be getting nearer and the peculiar whining or humming noise of bullets passing overhead became more frequent. Some of us, in the absence of orders, wondered what we should do next. A few minutes later, a dozen or two Indian troops came running back aimlessly through the jungle shouting to us "Many Jipun! Many Jipun!" For a while we held our ground having seen no Japs to date. Meanwhile a Bren Gun crew out on the roadside were putting in some terrific bursts. How futile is human courage I thought when it is called upon to face up to modern sophisticated weapons! To avoid having to use the exposed road to get back to the bridge in the event of an order to retreat, Captain Lloyd now sent Bill Flowers and myself to find an alternative line of retreat using a jungle path. We did not find such a path, but we did come across some terrified Tamils hiding in a shelter. Eventually the order to retire came and we had to use the road as before. On the way I picked up and carried back a full Bren Gun Ammo box which was very heavy indeed. Because of this burden, I was one of the last to cross back over the bridge. One felt very unprotected at the thought that Japs with machine guns might be occupying that small hill and just waiting to shoot us down. Luckily they were not there or, if they were, had not spotted us. Earlier in the day we had heard some firing to our rear which some had claimed to be by the Japs. We did not really know where they were.

It was only then when we were safely back over the bridge that I learnt that Andrew Robb had been wounded in his left arm by a bullet. The later explanation, though never proved, was that he had been shot by a Jap up a tree wearing camouflage. Corporal Wilding, who had been with Robb, claimed that there had been two Japs up trees and that he had shot one of them. Whatever happened it had taken place only about 20 or 30 yards away from where I was standing in the jungle on the opposite side of the road. The bullet did quite a lot of damage to the nerves of Robb's arm and he had twice fainted while being escorted back over the bridge. An ambulance took him away to a hospital in Johore Bahru, but he did not get away to Australia until February 5 when he sailed on the B.I. S.S. *Madura*. I did not see Robb well again until after the Japanese capitulation in August 1945. The number of guides for the Australians was now down to two, Andy Stewart and myself, for Vanrennan, Harvey and Graham had now left on one of Spencer Chapman's stay behind parties in South

Perak and Pahang.

To prevent the Japs attempting to capture the bridge from the North bank, we then reoccupied the positions which we had previously held on the south side of the bridge. As this had been built out from a high embankment, there was a fair amount of cover along its sides. The whine of bullets continued and we may well have had a few Jap mortar shells fired at us too. After a while, however, we were told to cease fire while our 25 pounders proceeded to plaster the road beyond the bridge right up to some cross-roads two miles back, which we were unable to see from our positions. When the gunners had finished, there was a stunning, unreal silence.

The British Major, still playing his game of "Hide and Seek" with the Japs, thought it would be a good idea to occupy the small hill on our left flank which has already been mentioned. A number of Japs were said to have made an unsuccessful attempt to cross the Selangor River a little way upstream, so if we could now capture and occupy this little hill, it could be used as a base for an encircling movement to trap any Japs on the north bank. The reoccupation of the hill was carried out by our Australian unit in sectional rushes led by Sergeant Allen, but as some of us had suspected, the hill was unoccupied by the enemy. There I took the opportunity to recover Robb's rifle which was still lying where he had been wounded and where he had dropped it.

All this long day our unit had received no rations, apart from a cup of tea and 2 loaves of bread, for our cooks had prepared and stored our food 20 miles to the rear! Thus it was that I was deputed to go and search for what sustenance was available in the village. A mile back I came to some rubber estate coolie lines just behind the Railway Station. The coolies willingly made tea and I deposited money to buy more tea, sugar and milk for the next day. Meanwhile I brought back on a bicycle a large tin full of tea. Tea is an important item in the morale of all Aussies and it was most acceptable. That night each of our sections posted their own sentries to protect the hill. Sentries were placed on both sides of the bridge and the road across was also blocked with commandeered lorries. Indian troops armed with rifles and Bren guns again occupied the south bank, backed by one armoured car.

I personally spent the most uncomfortable night of my life in Malaya lying on a plank at the edge of the river. As I was wearing only a pair of shorts and a Khaki shirt, and had no mosquito net and no ground sheet, I not only suffered badly from mosquito bites but got soaked to the skin in the drizzle which fell during the night. Various patrols were sent up the road during the night (password—Rani) but none of them made contact with the Japs.

I was therefore by no means unhappy when on January 5 we were informed that a unit of the Leicesters and East Surreys had arrived to relieve us. Our stay at Batang Berjuntai had been a curious one. We had not seen a single Jap in 2 days yet we had suffered our first casualty. I collected a fresh lot of tea from the coolies which our unit consumed at leisure in the shade of rubber trees, about half a mile back, for we were not due to leave until that evening. A number of Jap planes appeared overhead but did not trouble us as they could not see us. It was here that I met two ex-F.M.S. Volunteers, Pollock, a planter, and Richardson of the Geological Surveys. They had now joined an Independent

Unit and gave us some brand new equipment and also some food for which we were equally grateful. Behind the Post Office we met several more Volunteer friends notably my friend Sergeant Major "Starkie" Cameron and Thurling, both members of my old unit, A/S Company, 1st Perak Battalion. As it began to rain "Starkie" very kindly presented me with his own waterproof cape, a very kind act in the circumstances. It was 6 p.m. when we left Batang Berjuntai for Kuala Lumpur by way of Kepong. Our convoy consisted of an assortment of transport, including a Fraser and Neave Mineral Water Lorry, an army lorry and a passenger bus. When we reached K.L. we rejoined "Uncle" Hodge at Rifle Range Road and found he had brought along all the equipment which we had abandoned at Klang. We were glad to have it again. We had dinner at the former Volunteer Officers' Mess and breakfast next morning when we met several of our old Volunteer Officers and also Major Rose who had not elected to join Spencer Chapman. We left soon after breakfast in case Major Rose tried to recover any of the equipment he had given us before the Trong Raid. Our new destination was Segamat in North Johore and our type of transport was again assorted, ranging from 2 Green Line buses and 2 Fraser and Neave lorries to "Uncle" Hodge's Utility Truck. As we did not have to travel far we did not hurry and found time to stop at a roadside rubber estate to buy rambutans and fresh coconuts. We also picked up a huge snake which had been killed on the road and tried to take it with us on the roof of the bus to exhibit it to our friends. But we had to abandon the idea when it began to stink. When we reached Segamat the only available accommodation was in huts opposite the Assistant Adviser's house, so next day we continued our journey south to the Australian Base Camp at the 5th mile, Tampoi Road, just outside Johore Bahru, where we were provided with two rows of tents. Here Andy Stewart and myself were formally introduced to the Officers' Mess as "civilians". The reason was that the authority for our Volunteer Commissions had not yet come through and it had not been possible for us to join the A.I.F. in any capacity. Indeed at no time did the A.I.F. accept any legal responsibility for us and we were paid throughout the war by the Malayan Government as Volunteer Officers attached to, but not members of, the A.I.F. It is noteworthy, too, that we had been appointed 1st Lieutenants from the start. Our argument was that there was no such rank as 2nd Lieutenant in the A.I.F. and no self-respecting Aussie would have obeyed a 2nd Lieutenant.

We spent about 5 days in all at the Base Camp awaiting orders, visiting Robb in hospital at Johore Bahru, and in my case, paying a fleeting visit to Singapore. Robb was in a bed on the 4th floor of the Military Hospital and very cheerful.

We did not realise at the time how serious the military situation had become, specially after January 7, for in our isolated camp outside Johore Bahru we were in no position to keep up with the latest developments up country. What had happened was that our main forces after they had evacuated their strong positions at Kampar,⁴⁶ had suffered a catastrophic reverse in the Slim river area

⁴⁶ The loss of Kampar had also been very damaging because it was by far the strongest position on the western side of Malaya. The evacuation of Kampar was almost entirely due to the outflanking and almost unopposed thrusts made by Japanese forces landed at Teluk Anson and Hutan Melintang on the Perak Coast.

of South Perak. A totally unexpected attack by a strong force of Jap tanks and our inadequate anti-tank defence had cost us very serious losses both in men and equipment.⁴⁷ So great had these been that our High Command decided on a 150 mile retreat which abandoned the states of Selangor, Negeri Sembilan and Malacca virtually without a fight. The new line of defence was sited in North West Johore along the course of the River Muar between Segamat and the sea. This river did provide some sort of water obstacle. Two road bridges and one Railway bridge cross the river just west of Segamat but from there to Muar town and the sea, there is not a single bridge by which the river can be crossed. This stretch of river was over 40 miles in length and only at Muar was there a car ferry where the river is several hundred yards wide.

*(iv) Our Reconnaissance of the Segamat-Tangkak area*⁴⁸

Our recall to the Segamat area was thus a logical move when it came on January 13, the very day on which a big convoy of ships was due to arrive in Singapore with more troops⁴⁹ and some much needed Hurricanes.⁵⁰ The Japs must have known about the convoy, too, for 95 Jap planes passed over our heads in search of it. This aerial armada missed the convoy, possibly because of the rain, nor did it deign to bomb our unprotected camp where we took refuge in our slit trenches as soon as it approached. Our unit eventually moved off at 2 p.m., Captain Lloyd, Lieut. Hodge, Bill Flowers and myself going ahead in Hodge's Utility Truck. We made very good time up to Labis which we reached at dusk. We stopped there for an hour at a rubber estate office now a military H.Q., but when it began to rain heavily again, conditions off the main road became very muddy indeed. For most of the second half of our journey we kept meeting the transport of an Indian Division which was being withdrawn from the Segamat to the Ayer Hitam area. The Indian drivers were often erratic in their driving and it was not uncommon for the road to be completely blocked by their lorries. Allowance had to be made, it was explained, for these drivers as they had no roads at all where they had come from! Anyhow both the Indian convoy and ourselves were lucky not to be attacked by Jap planes. Their preoccupation with the naval convoy and the heavy rain may have been the reasons why.

It was quite dark when we reached Segamat and called at the A.I.F. Headquarters, a house situated at the junction of the main road and a side road into the town. The Japs may have also known of this H.Q. for next day 4 bombs demolished the house on the opposite side of the road without damaging the H.Q. at all. The demolished house had belonged to a Mr. De Burgh Thomas, the

47 The main trunk road had been recently straightened and the loops of the old road were still there and perfectly usable. The Jap tanks made full use of these diversions in their 19 miles drive through our positions before they were halted just south of the Slim River bridge.

48 See map on page 43 for this area.

49 These troops were part of 18th Division and had been almost 3 months at sea power in no condition to be thrown into the fighting immediately. They, too, had had no training in jungle fighting as they had originally been intended for the Middle East.

50 These Hurricanes had some initial success. Eight unescorted Jap bombers attacking Singapore a week later were shot down, but on the following day when the Jap bombers were accompanied by Zero fighters, 5 Hurricanes were shot down, for the British pilots were still only half trained.

very house into which we had planned to move on the next morning!

That night Bill Flowers and I slept in the Utility Truck but Captain Lloyd and Lieut. Hodge found room for themselves and their valises at H.Q. Meanwhile the rest of our unit arrived in their lorries but missed us at the H.Q. building and had to sleep the night in the same old huts opposite the Assistant Adviser's house which we had rejected on our way down. It was only after a day's search that the unit came together again under one roof at the Segamat Malay School. One or two of us, however, found accommodation in a house next door to the school which had been previously occupied by a member of the staff of the Segamat Government English School. This occupant had obviously been taking a Correspondence Course for his Inter London B.A. degree and I was sorry that he was unlikely to get value for his diligence for the next few years for his papers were scattered all over the house. Next day several more bombs were dropped on the town and one of these cracked the face of the English School clock. The bombing also cleared the town of its few remaining civilian population. And when a Bofors anti-aircraft crew decided to site one of their guns only 10 yards from the Malay School, we decided to move too. At last we found an empty Chinese School about 2 miles south of the town near to Bukit Siput Halt on the railway but we were once again unlucky, as this building had been booked by the Royal Army Ordnance Corps to store spare ammunition and mines. Luckily we discovered just across the level crossing on the other side of the rail from the road a large brick factory. This suited us very well. It was protected by rubber trees and so hidden to some extent, from aerial view, it was quiet and spacious and a hundred yards off the main road. By now we had recruited an Indian cook nicknamed "Izzy" and the standard of our food was greatly improved, especially as we discovered a bombed lorry, abandoned on the main road, but loaded with a large supply of tinned food much of which was undamaged and so still eatable.

Air raids on Segamat continued to be both frequent and heavy, and on one occasion we counted 6 Bofors Guns all within an area of 100 yards square, a concentration which seemed odd at the time. We now know that vast supplies of military and other stores had been stock piled to the south of Segamat town. The intensity of the bombing had already caused a complete evacuation of the town by civilians. In fact in all the time I was there I saw only one civilian and he was Shorland the Assistant Adviser. His house had been commandeered by the military and he had just had his horse shot since there was nothing else that could be done. Most shops had been looted before we arrived and the Police had also gone. In fact our unit was made a free offer of all the Police capes or cloaks that we might need!

The Japs were now estimated to be using 2 divisions to attack us along two roads, one the Gemas-Segamat main road, and the other along the Malacca-Muar coast road.⁵¹ There was always a chance that, according to their usual custom, the coastal thrusts might develop into more inland encircling movements aimed at cutting off the retreat of our forces on the main road. It was to investigate two possibilities in this respect that our unit was now sent off to explore. Our

⁵¹ This was the Imperial Guards Division which had been brought down to Malaya by rail from Bangkok. This city had been seized and occupied overland from Southern Indo-China at the outbreak of the war.

first assignment was to investigate the possibility of a Jap thrust emanating from the Tangkah area. The plan was to divide our forces into two platoons of 15 apiece. One platoon would patrol southwards along the Segamat-Tangkah road and the other platoon would patrol in a westerly direction towards Asahan. Both platoons were then to report back in 2 or 3 days any Jap movements they had discovered. The two platoons were divided up as follows. The Tangkah platoon included Captain Lloyd, Lieut. Sanderson, Sergeant Donaldson, Corporal Wilding, Bill Flowers, myself, and Griffin, a new guide who had seen service as a Surveyor at Muar before the war and knew the area well. The other platoon, to which was assigned the Asahan patrol, included Lieut. Perring, Andy Stewart and another new guide named Williams who was also a qualified Surveyor.

Lorries belonging to the 2nd Loyals, who had just been moved up north from garrison duties in Singapore, took us as far as the demolished bridge at the 41st milestone, from where we would have to walk for all road bridges from there to Muar had been destroyed. The importance of having an interpreter for each battalion was illustrated soon after we met the Loyals. Captain Pasque, their Adjutant, sent for me to interpret between him and a "spy" they had caught near their H.Q. The spy turned out to be a Chinese squatter whose home was the very building that the Loyals had commandeered as their H.Q. I was glad to help the Chinese and possibly save his life. He was certainly very grateful for the help I could give him.

We started off on our patrol at 12 noon and most of us managed to get ourselves wet as we attempted to get across the Gementah River for there was no longer a bridge to walk over. There were very few local inhabitants about and those we saw at a distance took to flight as soon as they saw our uniforms. The reason for this panic I was to learn later.

In order not to be too conspicuous if a Jap patrol came along we kept to the south side of the road and usually about 100 yards off the road which ran for mile after mile between large rubber estates. Also in order that I might speak in Malay to any passing cyclist or pedestrian I stationed myself as near to the road side as possible. Those coming from the Tangkah direction were not allowed to turn back in case they warned the Japs of our approach. In this way we were able to cover two or three miles each hour in spite of the heavy rain which fell in the afternoon. Luckily our camouflage capes gave us good protection against the rain and incidentally against the cold at night.

It was at the small village of Gementah at the 36th mile that I went into the village alone so as not to alarm the inhabitants with the sight of too many uniforms. The news was that 100 Jap cyclists had visited Tangkah Police Station at the 16th mile on the previous day and after an hour's stay had retired the same way as they had come. When the villagers saw that there was only one soldier present and he could speak Malay, they soon returned and added what extra items of information they could. Otherwise everything appeared normal in the village except for a large Marmon-Harrington military lorry which had been abandoned up a side lane.

It was at the 34th milestone that we first met Mr. Ariacutty, who, he said was on his way by cycle to visit his children at the 26th milestone. He claimed to be an employee of the F.M.S. railways at their Transportation Branch at

Kuala Lumpur and correctly named the head of his department whom I happened to know. Mr. Ariacutty was to prove most helpful. He cycled on to the next demolished bridge on the other side of which he had left his ancient Austin 7 car. In this he motored on to the village of Sagil at the 24th mile, which was only 8 miles from Tangkah at the 16th mile. There he promised to collect any further news of Jap patrols and report back to us that evening.

Meanwhile we continued our march southwards and interviewed a group of Malays outside their houses, but they could not tell us anything new. One of them, a Malay Forest Department employee, had just bought a brand new motor bike and I remember advising him to hide it away for the duration of the war.

By about 5 p.m. we had reached another set of coolie lines by the roadside at the 32nd mile. We were all feeling hungry by now having had nothing to eat since we left Segamat. Again I went forward alone so as not to alarm the locals. The coolie lines were situated on a bend of the road and belonged to Tangkah Rubber Estates. Opposite was a row of Chinese Shop Houses so I decided to approach the lines from the rubber trees behind. When I saw that I had been seen by a Tamil woman washing clothes, I stood up and hailed her in Malay and in the few words of Tamil I knew. The atmosphere changed immediately as a small crowd of Tamil coolies crowded around eager to tell me all they knew, though they confessed that they had not seen a single Jap yet. At this point I called to Capt. Lloyd, who with the rest of our unit, had been hiding in the *belukar* near by. We were both given seats in the estate baby creche and regaled with fresh milk, bananas, and gingerbeer while buckets of *nasi goreng* (fried rice) and coffee were soon being prepared for the rest of our party still lying invisible in their jungle cover.

We all felt much better after our meal and it was with difficulty that we could persuade the coolies to accept payment for what they had given us. They were not rich at the best of times and their prospects then were very bleak. At about 6 p.m. Mr. Ariacutty returned with further confirmation of the news that no Japs had come beyond Tangkah. Capt. Lloyd decided to send this news back at once to H.Q. by 2 men mounted on bicycles, one of whom was Bill Flowers. The two were told to pick us up again at the 26th mile that evening where an estate road led off the main road to the deserted bungalow of the Estate Manager. No doubt H.Q. was relieved to be told that there was unlikely to be a Jap thrust towards Segamat from the Tangkah road. Mr. Ariacutty now gave us even further assistance by providing a shuttle car service for some of the more weary between the 32nd and the 26th milestones.

The rest of us marched on in the dark in Indian file keeping at 5 paces interval between each of us. In spite of periodic rests and marching in complete silence, at my insistence, the white posts marking the road sides loomed up fairly frequently. I particularly remember trudging up a long hill with what appeared to be tall pine trees on either side, reaching the summit of the hill and being surprised by a large white glow of light on the horizon. At first we mistook it for car lights, but in fact it was a large fire burning in Muar, over 20 miles away. The complete silence, except for the murmuring of the wind in the pines, produced a slightly eerie feeling. At last we reached the 26th milestone and marched in the pitch dark up a somewhat precipitous path to the Manager's looted bungalow,

formerly occupied by a Mr. Parker with whom I had played rugby some years earlier at Taiping in Perak. I managed to have a fairly restful sleep on the wire framework of Mr. Parker's bed and also made friends with his 2 dogs. Two sentries mounted guard all night at the entrance to the drive leading up to the bungalow.

Though we were off before dawn on our return march to Segamat, Mr. Ariacutty again brought us some food before we left. We thanked him once again for his great help and I am happy to add that after the war I was able to bring Mr. Ariacutty's good services to the notice of the Railway Department in Kuala Lumpur with whom he was still working.

We now kept to the road for a while as it was still dark but when it got light we reverted to our drill on the outward march and stayed off the road. After a while we met some Chinese looters who, with the help of sticks and iron bars, were about to steal food from an English speaking Tamil. We dissuaded the looters from carrying out their intentions and left with the Tamil, the Manager's two dogs who had followed us. The Tamil promised to look after the dogs and return them to their master some day. I rather doubt if he ever had the opportunity to do this.

Later that day we met an old Chinese vegetable gardener who kindly cooked us a mixture of rice and *Ubi Kayu* (Tapioca), a mixture that was new to the Aussies but which nevertheless proved a very acceptable meal. In the afternoon we had a further meal at a superior Chinese *Kongsi* house consisting mainly of coconut and coconut milk. We could not thank the *Towkay* as he was reported to have gone to Malacca. By the evening we were back again at the 32nd Mile with our old coolie friends. This time they were full of complaints. The chief one was that 100 Chinese shopkeepers had attacked them and stolen 3 goats, while others had stolen jewellery from other Tamils. We decided against punishing the said Chinese as it would only have resulted in a disproportionate revenge being taken on the Tamils after we had gone. But once again, their troubles did not deter the Tamils from giving us a sumptuous meal of chicken and *nasi goreng*. Our troops took cover in some jungle off the road and the approaching darkness gave them added protection. Once again we said goodbye to our friends and left for a pre-selected sleeping site in the rubber. This turned out to be half way up a small hill where a series of ridges or terraces, built to counter erosion, provided some convenient flat spaces. As we were all very tired, we slept comfortably, wrapped up in our invaluable camouflage capes.

Next morning when we got back on the road we were lucky to get lifts in two cars going towards Gementah village. We had more time to examine the village on our return journey as we had to await there the return of the other half of our patrol which had gone off on the Asahan-Relau road. Meanwhile we tried to destroy the Marmon-Harrington lorry that we had noticed earlier, but Corporal Wilding's bakelite bomb made little impression on it. On the other hand it panicked the villagers into another headlong flight from their homes. We reached the village Malay School at 12 noon and decided to remain there until the rest of our party arrived.

Next to the Malay School was an Agricultural Station belonging to the Johore Government which housed 40 or 50 Prize Rhode Island Red poultry,

each in their spacious pens, as well as 200 bags of seed *padi*. Owing to the dangerous times, the buildings also housed 26 Malay men and women. As they were a bit apprehensive at first I did my best to explain in Malay that no harm would come to them from us and that any complaints made to me would be investigated. This reassured them and our relations remained very friendly throughout. The Head Teacher of the Malay School, Abdul Aziz, had been a Volunteer himself and his wife very kindly cooked us yet another very good *nasi-goreng* and some delicious pancakes, each containing 3 prize eggs apiece. I could not help thinking what my friend, the Johore Agricultural Officer, Mr. Coleman-Doscas would have said if he had seen us consuming his prize poultry and eggs! By now the other members of our patrol had returned from their Asahan patrol, having seen no Japs. They had, however, picked up 4 stray Gurkhas who had got lost in the fighting further north, and this increased the total number of our force to 20. We slept that night at the Malay School as we had a day in hand, not being expected back in Segamat until the fourth day.

It was now that the Head Teacher explained to me the reason for the excessive fears of the villagers. It appeared that a day or two previously a Malay peasant and a Chinese had been shot at by a patrol of white soldiers as they stood by the broken Gementah Bridge. The two had merely gone to inspect the damage done when they were picked off from the opposite bank of the river. The Malay had since died and been buried behind the school, the Chinese had been badly wounded, but was still alive. When later I had an opportunity to question Captain Pasque of the 2nd Loyals about the incident, he admitted that one of his patrols had been called out to deal with 2 "Japs" who were repairing the bridge with planks and had shot them. What a pity that the Loyals, who had just come up from Singapore and possibly knew little of local conditions, had not had a Volunteer Guide to advise them and so prevent such tragedies!

Next morning, we said goodbye to Abdul Aziz and his wife and left. I also presented Abdul Aziz with two of my bakelite bombs as some protection against the gangs of Chinese robbers now roaming the countryside and who would be sure to steal the poultry and rice if they could. I also advised him to distribute these commodities to the villagers if the Japs were known to be approaching and I believe this was the advice that the Agricultural Department had also given. Our stay at the Gementah Malay School had a sequel after the war. From 1948 to 1951 I was Superintendent of Education for Johore and called once again at the school to find that Abdul Aziz was still there. He did not recognise me at first as I had never revealed my identity to him, though he had tried to get me to sign my name in the School Visitor's Book in 1942! So imagine the astonishment on his face when I asked what he had done with the two bombs I had given him. He had to confess that he had handed them over to the Japs and who could blame him, knowing the ruthlessness of the Jap military at the time.

When we arrived back at the 41st mile from which we had started out, we found that the Loyals H.Q. had been abandoned and there was no sign of their troops. We crossed 2 or 3 more blown bridges but saw or heard nothing unusual until we were suddenly hailed in English from a nearby hill and warned to keep to the centre of the road and not walk on the edges. The reason for this was that the sides had been sown with anti-tank mines. Presumably they would not have

gone off if we had trodden on them but we now picked our way carefully. Three more miles on we came to a party of Loyals setting more anti-tank mines, and further on again we came to a Lorry Park hidden under some rubber trees. Here the Loyals kindly provided us with some food and then supplied us with transport back to our brick factory base to the south of Segamat.

We were now given one day's rest during which I visited Segamat Police Station with Captain Lloyd and spoke to Captain Hawkins, M.C.S. who also happened to be there. All the Aussies we met were in a jubilant mood as they had celebrated their baptism of fire by carrying out a successful ambush of the Japs at Gemas on January 14. For some reason they always called the place "Gee-mas". In spite of this success the Japs were in such strength that it had already been decided to withdraw all troops to the southern bank of the Muar river and hold a line stretching between Segamat and the town of Muar. Most of The Aussie troops we saw resting alongside the road near our brick kiln were to march back to hold that line that night. Meanwhile the R.A.S. Corps Canteen at Segamat was thrown open to all and though a non-smoker myself, I was able to get 5,000 cigarettes for the others. While I was there I met an interesting character, a Major Black, who was in charge of an Aussie Transport Unit. His unit was unique in that all or most of its drivers were First World War veterans over 40 years of age who had seen action all the way down the Peninsula.⁵² They had done a magnificent job. Back at our brick factory we saw the last rolling stock steaming south over Segamat Railway Bridge before it was blown up. All the drivers were volunteer Australian drivers.

As fighting was about to develop only 2 miles up the road from our brick factory it was obvious that we would soon have to move south unless indeed we were given more patrols to carry out. What happened was that half our unit was ordered south and the other half was sent on another reconnaissance in the North Johore area and directed to investigate possible Jap infiltrations up, or across, the upper part of the Muar River.

As we moved out on about January 18, we noticed the body of a dead Australian soldier lying by the roadside, wrapped in his camouflage cape. On enquiry we learnt that the poor fellow, who was nicknamed "Titch" because he was the shortest and youngest in his unit, had accidentally shot himself dead under the chin as he had jumped off a lorry in the dark on the previous night. Apparently nobody had yet had time to bury him.

Meanwhile another tricky situation for our High Command was developing. Already the Imperial Guards division had occupied Muar and were pushing inland along the road leading to Yong Peng. If they reached this town before our forces could have retired there from Segamat, our main forces would again be in danger of being cut off. But the Australian platoon which was now despatched to the upper reaches of the Muar River knew nothing of this. They were told simply to reach the river and collect information of any Jap infiltrations and be back at Labis within 2 days. As Labis is 20 miles south of Segamat

⁵² This unit was the 2/3 Australian Reserve M/T. Co. They had first seen action on December 10, 1941, in Siam on the Patani-Kroh road where they had ferried troops up to a point 6 miles south of the "Ledge"

on the main road, this was a tall order which, for a variety of reasons, proved impossible to carry out.

(v) *The Muar River Patrol which ended up at Batu Pahat*⁵³

It was already late in the afternoon when our platoon, about 15 strong, left our camp. It included Lieut. Sanderson, Sergeant Donaldson and Corporal Wilding and also Griffin of the Malayan Surveys and myself as guides. It was fortunate that Griffin had personal knowledge of the Muar River area. As the Muar River is navigable for small boats as far up its course as Bukit Kepong, a small riverside village only about 15 miles away from the main Segamat-Labis Road, there was a good chance that we would come across a Jap patrol or even a larger force. Should the Japs make such an excursion it was essential that we get news of their approach back to our forces on the main road as soon as possible.

As we expected our patrol to last only about 2 days, we took only one day's rations consisting of a tin of bully beef and one packet of biscuits each. We all carried 3 bakelite bombs each but only 2 or 3 had Tommy Guns instead of ordinary rifles. As we travelled in our lorry a short way along the main road, our Australian platoon was again hailed by hundreds of their compatriots who were due to return to the defence of the demolished Segamat Railway and road bridges that evening. After half a mile or so, we turned right on to a laterite road leading into Pogoh Rubber Estate. This road terminated 3 or 4 miles inside the estate and at a point not far from the River Labis, a tributary of the Muar River. Here we debussed, said goodbye to our driver and plunged into almost virgin jungle. The going was marshy in places, especially when we approached the River Labis, but in any case we could not go far that evening as night was fast approaching. We selected a dry patch only 20 yards from the river and ate our rations. Luckily mosquitoes did not trouble us much and we were able to wrap ourselves in our light weight gas capes and sleep soundly, using our haversacks as pillows. No sentries were posted as we considered that nobody would have found us in that area in the dark and any movement in the jungle silence would have awakened us immediately.

When it was light enough to read our maps next morning, we saw that there was a jungle track leading straight to Bukit Kepong in a southerly direction. We crossed the Labis stream without having breakfast and after marching in a Westerly direction for 2 hours hit the track we wanted. A mile or two along this track we came out into open ground which showed signs of cultivation. There was a Chinese squatter's *atap* hut and a small rubber plantation attached to it. The Chinese squatter had a bad foot and was not very mobile. Nor was he, in such an isolated spot, very aware of the world situation. He had no idea that there was a war on though, if he had listened carefully, he would undoubtedly have heard the sound of the gunfire which was clearly audible coming from the Segamat area. We then followed the track which led off behind the squatter's hut and by and by came to a group of Malay houses built along a narrow path hedged in by *lallang*. A Chinese tapper indicated the way to a footbridge over another stream. This stream may well have been the River Twi, which is also a

53 See map facing page 43 for route taken by the Patrol.

tributary of the Muar River. As we were crossing some open land beyond this stream we had to hide when several Japanese planes unaccountably appeared and circled over us. When we came to a small Chinese Village adjoining a large rubber estate, all the inhabitants started to run away when they saw men in uniform. But they were reassured when they saw that all we wanted was to buy some papayas. We were still some distance from Bukit Kepong when we were lucky to contact two Malays, father and son, who volunteered to show us the way there. Our track still lay through many more rubber estates, the going in places being quite rough and difficult even for cyclists unless they wheeled their machines. When we did arrive at Bukit Kepong, the inhabitants again were on the point of fleeing at the sight of our uniforms but hesitated when they saw whom we were with for our guides were both policemen belonging to their Village Post. It is true that they, in common with all other policemen in the vicinity, had abandoned their uniforms but that was only as a result of instructions written in Japanese pamphlets dropped from the skies! Who can blame them in the circumstances? However, everybody was very helpful and the news they gave us was good if negative. No Japanese boats or persons had come up the river and the only Japanese living in the area, a photographer, had suddenly disappeared 3 months before. No doubt he was a Japanese spy who had safely rejoined the invading army. The other news was that no rice boats had come up from Muar for 11 days, and this was no wonder as the Japs had been bombing Muar since January 11 causing a general exodus from the town. As we had had little to eat all day, we now had a hearty meal of rice, bananas, ginger beer and stout for which we paid the Chinese shopkeepers. We had a friendly send off when we left for the next village down the river called Lenga, about 15 miles away by a jungle path.

As there was no news of Jap forces having passed through Bukit Kepong, it was decided to push on immediately to Lenga, the next village of importance downstream, in case by some chance the Japs had arrived there. We had already realised that there was little likelihood of our returning to Labis next day as planned. There seemed to be no recognised track to Labis marked on our maps and we had no guide to show us the way through the jungle even if there had been one. Also judging by the direction of the incessant gunfire, the Japs might have already taken Labis in their advance. We were also encouraged to go on to Lenga when told that both white and Indian troops had been in occupation of the village and might still be there. The local inhabitants gave the Indian troops rather a poor character for looting and even raping. From Lenga, a road runs for 30 miles to Muar and though this town might now be in Jap hands, there was still hope, we thought, of joining up with our troops still occupying the Muar-Yong Peng road, which runs a few miles to the south of the Muar-Lenga road.

One of the Malay Policemen who had guided us to the village now volunteered to show us the way on to Lenga. He started off at a brisk pace in spite of wearing football boots. The path we followed was often indistinct, tortuous, rough and quite unsuitable for a bicycle even if wheeled. After an hour's march we came to a Chinese woodcutter's *atap* hut, where 2 of the inmates were themselves just about to set off for Lenga. The Malay policeman handed us over to these two and, having thanked the policeman for his help we

continued on our way. For 2 more hours we wearily followed the uncertain traces of the track until we came out on another open space which showed signs of habitation. A Chinese squatter from a nearby hut cooked some rice for us and we spent half an hour eating this under the shade of a big tree. As the two Chinese were walking rather faster than was comfortable when we restarted our march, we placed one of them in the middle of our column in case he tried to run away. It was difficult to know really whether he was afraid of us or in a hurry. We arrived at the village of Lenga at about 4 p.m., following a laterite road which skirted the riverside.

We advanced into the village centre with caution. Everything was very quiet and we had an odd feeling that the Japs might have prepared an ambush for us. In fact the village was completely deserted with not a trace of either our troops or the local inhabitants, except that the latter had abandoned many of their goats, chickens, dogs and cats which were wandering about aimlessly. However, to make sure that no one who saw us had a chance to escape, I cut across the rubber trees and blocked the exit road leading south to Pagoh and Muar. The village contained a Police Station, a Chinese school and a number of shophouses, but all had been thoroughly looted and none of the cars parked around could be started up. But after a while our unanswered questions were answered by a group of rather bedraggled Malays we met. Yes, Indian troops had been there but had evacuated the village 2 days previously. The village was deserted because the military authorities had ordered the evacuation of all houses within 2 miles of the Muar River. After the Malays had kindly procured us some coconuts from the trees and a few of us had even bathed in the river, we decided to push southwards along the Lenga Road leading to the next big village of Pagoh. Here our maps showed a track running due south which eventually joined up with the Muar-Yong Peng Road to the south of the small village of Kankar. Once we reached this village we felt sure we could safely find our way back to Yong Peng.

Meanwhile the noise of gunfire seemed to be getting nearer both from the Labis area to our east and from the Muar area to our west. We might even be cut off by the two advancing Jap forces, each a division strong, if we did not hurry. When we left Lenga at 5 p.m. we found that the road was apparently newly made and tarred for most of its length but it was an unusually lonely road as it ran through a very sparsely populated region. All we saw for the first 2 or 3 miles were deserted Chinese huts and abandoned pineapple plantations. For the most part, the virgin jungle hemmed in the road on both sides except where patches had been recently felled and burnt clean. Once some padi-fields came into view where the Malays appeared to be absorbed in their work and took no notice of us.

At about the 27th milestone, the road makes a sharp turn to the right and for a long while before we reached it, because the road was very straight, we had noted a Chinese *Kongsi* house built on the left edge of the bend. When we reached it, we found a group of Chinese woodcutters were having their evening meal. They gladly invited us to join them in their meal of salted pork and rice. Unfortunately we were not used to eating so much salt with our meat, so the meal was not so palatable as some. However, a plentiful helping of bananas helped to take away the taste of the salt. The woodcutters were not able to give

us any news of the Japs as they had obviously not been there yet, as we had already guessed.

We had not proceeded more than another half a mile when we came upon some Tamil Coolie Lines belonging to the Public Works Department and built along the right side of the road. Once again the Tamil coolies were most helpful, cooking us 4 pots of rice where one would have been enough, and providing the usual delicious coffee, plentifully spiced with sugar but without milk, for milk was everywhere in very short supply. It was really remarkable that the coolies were able to supply any food at all. They had themselves only just returned from living in the jungle for the Indian troops had not only cleared the inhabitants away from the Muar River but also for 2 miles on either side of the road. It was also alleged that they had appropriated all the food they could find.

After resting our sore feet (I had two huge blisters on the back of mine), we decided to spend the night at the nearby bungalow of a Mr. Green, the late Manager of Glenmuar Rubber Estate at the 26th milestone. The bungalow was situated on a steepish hill a few hundred yards up on the right side of the road. It was only next morning that we were able to see in day-light what a beautiful situation it had for we could then see for miles from the back windows. The whole scene must have been most picturesque in peace time for the garden consisted of a series of terraces with flower beds laid out on each terrace with a summer house in a corner adjacent to the bungalow. But all I was to remember then was the evidence of the inevitable looting. A copy of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* lay in the garden, the plate glass top of a table was lying in pieces on the lawn and on the kitchen floor I picked up a grocery order book in which the last order was on January 12, a week earlier, for "One small loaf". I also picked up off the floor a snap of a baldish man sitting in his Morris Cowley car with his family. It was quite a coincidence that I was, a few weeks later, to occupy a cell in Changi Jail only a few doors away from the same Mr. Green known to all by the nickname of "Patchy". I am told that *Patchy* (pronounced pat-chai) in the Tamil language means Green. "Patchy" was later most interested in the news I gave him about his house and of his coolies, news which was so much to their credit.

That night we all slept soundly after our long trek and once again my bed was a spring frame without the mattress. As soon as it was dawn we were off again after saying goodbye to our friends of the night before. They were still few in number as the majority of the estate labour force had not yet returned after their enforced evacuation. It was about 6 or 7 miles to Pagoh, the next village, and those who had acquired bicycles went on ahead after being told to meet us at that village. The remainder of our patrol stopped at a Chinese shop where the proprietor boiled us some of his own pork and others supplied coconuts. A passing bullock cart driver told us he was on his way to Pagoh, too, so we piled most of our equipment, apart from our weapons on to his cart, and walked behind. One or two who had sore feet had a ride in the cart. I found that after stuffing some soft grass inside my boots, they were much more comfortable to walk in. We passed one abandoned Bren Gun carrier on the way which had been burnt out, otherwise saw no evidence of war. It was also along this road that we picked up an Indian soldier who had presumably been left

behind at Lenga and according to himself had been wandering about lost for days. He had no equipment of his own, so I gave him my light weight haversack to carry. He was a pleasant fellow and stayed with us for the remainder of our patrol.

When we reached Pagoh at the 17th milestone from Muar, we found that all the *atap* houses on the right side of the road had been burnt down. The cause we never discovered but Jap planes which were frequently overhead may well have been the culprits. Meanwhile Corporal Wilding had acquired an ancient Austin 10 car which still went and I and another with sore feet were grateful for a lift for we had said goodbye to our bullock cart driver. We now had to turn off the road to Muar and follow a narrow lane leading off on the left side which eventually would get us to Kankar. The lane was just possible for the old Austin for 3 or 4 miles and then we would all have to walk. But a short distance down the lane we came across a Chetty⁵⁴ who kindly gave us an excellent meal at his house which had been built on his rubber estate. After such a meal we all felt in much better fettle but the old Austin eventually gave up the ghost when the lane terminated either from lack of petrol or from lack of water in the radiator. From now on, we all had to walk.

It is probably 10 or 12 miles from Pagoh to Kankar and the track lay through some very wild country where there was little or no habitation. Most of the land was covered with virgin jungle, but woodcutters had been busy cutting down some of the taller trees, thus leaving some open spaces. It was on this lonely trek that we met two more Indian soldiers coming towards us. One had a new rifle concealed on his person and the other a bayonet. Both claimed to have escaped from the attacks of Jap tanks at Muar, so we invited them to turn about and join our patrol. They appeared to be happy to do this. At last we left behind the thick *lallang* and secondary jungle and came out to more cultivated land, scattered rubber estates and finally to an enormous area, several miles square, of felled jungle. Young rubber trees had been planted where the jungle had been cleared by burning but there was sufficient foliage on the trees to give us protection when Japanese planes came over. By the time we reached the outskirts of Kankar it was already getting dark. Those with bicycles were sent forward to explore the possibility of getting transport to Yong Peng. It had been a very hot afternoon and we would all welcome food and drink, but a false alarm of a Jap presence in the village delayed our arrival considerably as we had to approach it very cautiously. That the Japs were not far away was only too obvious from the continuous sound of rifle, mortar and other fire coming from the Parit Sulong bridge. This was connected with Kankar by a 5 mile long tarred road and easily accessible to a Jap patrol, so we advanced into the village spread out in two files along each side of the street.

Kankar was rather a small squalid, dilapidated village, one half of which was cut off from the other by a stream which ran across the road leading out of the village to the south. To cross this stream there was an old wooden foot bridge rainbow-shaped. After we had had some much needed food and drink at about the only Chinese eating shop in the place, I went in search of some transport to take us down the road to Parit Sulong bridge which we fondly hoped was still

54 A Tamil money lender.

in our hands. I did find a lorry parked outside a shop at the end of the village but the *towkay* who owned it was most unwilling to help us, explaining that the lorry had no lights, he had little petrol and the lorry was difficult to start. The real reason for his hesitancy was obvious. He knew well that the Japs were close at hand and might not like him helping us. Eventually after much cajoling and even threats we persuaded him to take us as far as the road junction but no further. The *towkay's* son was all for helping us from the beginning and reminded his father that he was a Chiang Kai Shek man and therefore anti-Japanese.

It was about 8 p.m. when we eventually started off in the lorry which was driven by the *towkay* himself. And it was at this stage that we lost one of the Indian stragglers whom we had picked up that day. It was suspected that he had decided to stay put with some of his compatriots in the village. As the moon was now out, the driver could see his way pretty well in spite of the poor lights of his lorry. We had perhaps covered about 2 miles when rifle fire, Bren gun fire etc. suddenly broke out on both sides of the road. The *towkay* immediately stopped his lorry in the middle of the narrow road, jumped out and we never saw him again. We all jumped down too and took cover in a low ditch on the left side of the road, though I had just time to go back and recover two packets of biscuits I had left in the lorry. The firing continued for a while and was then followed by a silence during which we heard footsteps on the road, but we did not investigate this.

It was now quite clear that we would not be able to proceed any further down this road as the Japs obviously held the crossroads at Parit Sulong bridge. We certainly did not know the real grim truth, that the Japs had had a road block there for some days and had cut off the retreat of 4,000 of our men retiring from Muar.

We retraced our steps almost to Kankar village and found cover in some secondary jungle close to a Malay settlement and just south of the village. Here we spent a troubled and sleepless night and as the moonlight had now disappeared and it was pitch dark, I doubt if the villagers ever discovered we had been there. We would have to find a new way of reaching Yong Peng without going through Parit Sulong.

Next morning we needed no urging to get away quickly in a roughly easterly direction so that we could eventually join the main road a few miles nearer to Yong Peng. Unfortunately there was no clear path or track, in fact no way at all in places. The ground was very marshy indeed, perhaps because it lay on either side of the Simpang Kiri, a small river which later flows under Parit Sulong bridge. In its upper course it also flows past the Sri Medan iron mine which, before the war had been Jap owned, and then to the south of Bukit Inas (1,134 ft) from whose slopes it receives more water.

Our platoon was soon up to their knees and often waists in black, stinking mud and at the mercy of any Jap plane for the marsh was as devoid of cover as any *padi* field. Luckily after a 2 hours' weary slog we reached the dry land of a rubber estate without harm. We felt pretty exhausted and were covered with mud, wet and miserable. Here an obliging Chinese rubber tapper showed us where we could refill our water bottles from a well, though he had no food to

sell. Generally, we drank the water without adding anything to kill the germs and I do not remember anyone suffering for it.

We could now plainly hear the rattle of machine guns and the firing of mortars coming from Parit Sulong, only a mile or two to our right, and the occasional dropping of bombs by enemy planes. Having found a better path, we followed this up and down the ravines on the lower slopes of Bukit Inas where the various shady paths reminded me of Penang Hill. Eventually we came down again to the foot of the hill to a cool refreshing stream where we replenished our water bottles. There we met a group of 20 happy-go-lucky young Malays who were camping out in a temporary *atap* hut. They said they were all evacuees from Malacca. One of them spoke good English as he had been at the High School, Malacca. The stream before us, we were told, was the Simpang Kiri, so called because there is another stream, a few miles to the south called the Simpang Kanan. The two arms join each other to become the Sungei Batu Pahat, some 4 or 5 miles up-stream from that town. The Malays, who were very friendly, ferried us across the stream, perhaps 20 or 30 yards wide, in a boat they had and warned us to keep well clear of Parit Sulong which was full of Japs. A large well-kept rubber estate still lay ahead of us but we hoped that when we had crossed this, we would come out on to the Parit Sulong to Yong Peng Road. There we would be almost sure to find transport for the few miles to Yong Peng if our troops were still at Parit Sulong as sounded likely. As we had had no set meal all day, we decided to finish what rations we had left, i.e. bully beef and biscuits and the contents of our water bottles. After another trek of 2 or 3 miles we at last came out on the road at the 13th milestone from Yong Peng. The road was unaccountably deserted, but as we were tired and felt we had walked far enough, we sat down and decided to wait until some transport turned up.

It was a hot sunny afternoon when we stretched ourselves out on the side of the road facing a hill called Bukit Payong (856 ft). This hill was situated some 200 or 300 yards to the south of our resting place, the intervening fairly flat green space being partly covered with lallang, some secondary jungle and scattered rubber trees which gave a little cover from the road. The road at this point had also been built on a bit of an embankment with sloping banks on each side. It was on the southern bank that we were lying, partly to get protection from the occasional Jap plane overhead, when a plane did in fact come over, flying so low that we wondered why. We did not have to wait long for the answer.

I had already heard the voices of some people in animated conversation coming down the road in our direction. But as they were hidden from view by a sharp bend in the road I had assumed that they were local Chinese. I had already got up preparatory to questioning them about the whereabouts of the Japs, but imagine my surprise when I saw instead, only 40 yards away, the advance guard of a large Jap force marching towards me. Unlike the usual Jap soldier, some of them at least were wearing green German type helmets, possibly green uniforms, and highly polished leather Jack boots. I immediately shouted, "Look out, Japs!" to my unsuspecting companions and we were all away as fast as we could move in the direction of Bukit Payong. The Jap main force was preceded by half a dozen scouts on what appeared to be racing bikes. At all

events, they had their heads down and, I think, did not really see us until they were close to us. They immediately swerved to the left and crashed down the embankment slope opposite to us, but not before somebody had given them a burst of Tommy gun fire. Whether any were hit I do not know as they disappeared down the embankment slope and were not seen again. This little engagement gave us time to get some distance across the open ground before the main body of Japs many hundreds strong, could open up on us. In spite of the angry roars of many commands the Japs must have been poor shots, or else it may have been difficult for them to hit moving targets in what cover there was. None of us was hit. When we reached the foot of the hill we found cover behind a denser concentration of rubber trees and we could start to return the fire of the enemy. Not that there was much chance of hitting any as they had all taken cover behind the embankment along the road. It was just as well they did not follow us, for we now found our retreat cut off by a high and well nigh impenetrable barbed wire fence which apparently ran right round the base of the hill. It was while we were returning the enemy's fire that I noticed that the leaves of the rubber trees were falling on us in greater profusion that was usual at that time of the year. It was only later that it dawned on me that the reason for this was that the Jap bullets were coming over too high and were hitting the leaves and not us.

Bukit Payong is rather like a bun in shape, round at the sides and flat on top and fortunately for us covered with jungle which gave us much needed cover. Meanwhile the Japs could still have trapped us all up against the barbed wire fence if they had known about it, but as they didn't, we had time to follow the wire round the base of the hill until we found a gap about 150 yards away. We all quickly got through this gap with some difficulty and collapsed exhausted in some thick jungle nearby. We felt a little safer when we had the wire between us and the enemy. Later, we were to discover that our opponents were the Imperial Guards Division, the same as those who had carried out the massacre of 150 Australian and Indian wounded soldiers near Parit Sulong bridge on the previous day.⁵⁵ After the war their commander Lieut.-General Nishimura was sentenced to death for this crime by the War Crimes Tribunal in 1950.⁵⁶

After quite a lengthy rest we reached the top of the hill after half an hour's climb. There we found the jungle less dense and the going much easier. We also took a cautious look down at the enemy forces which were still coming along the road below us in large numbers. They were still hugging the sides of the road as if they expected to meet more of us waiting in ambush for them. Thankfully they had lost interest in us as they could not see us from the road. From our vantage point we were able to get a good view of the various ingredients of the Jap army. There were, of course, the usual hundreds of men, some on foot, some on bicycles, their "secret weapon" as somebody called them, a few motor cyclists, a few staff cars and a few lorries. All vehicles were camouflaged with coconut fronds as protection against air attack, though the complete absence of

55 After this engagement only about 400 Indians and 500 Australians, many of them wounded, managed to reach Yong Peng. This action is described in some detail in Russell Braddon's *The Naked Island*, Book I, Chapter 9.

56 About 200 Japanese were executed by the British after the war for crimes committed against British subjects.

any British planes seemed to make this an unnecessary precaution. But there was quite a number of light tanks dispersed among the troops, something I had never seen in Malaya before. The main impression was one of organised chaos for nobody marched in step, nobody marched in line, and everybody seemed to be talking away oblivious of the enemy. No doubt those in command knew that our forces were in no state to renew the fight so soon after the recent débâcle at Parit Sulong.

We would have welcomed some drinking water at that moment but the only stream we could find had dried up in the hot dry weather. However, I traced the stream to its source and there I found that there was still a small spring from which water was emerging. By pressing a tin helmet into this area, everybody was eventually able to refill his water bottle with a helmet full of water. This time we added the anti-contamination pills which we had brought with us. By now it was nearly dark and we decided to sleep where we were, trusting that the barbed wire fence which at first had obstructed us in our ascent would now discourage any Jap patrol's attempt to make an ascent in the dark. Next day, we would have to devise some new way of getting back to our own forces, for we could no longer use the Yong Peng road.

Next morning we were up and away early as we were now surrounded by Jap forces on both our right and left and these would cut us off completely if we did not move quickly. We had decided to make for Batu Pahat, a small seaport town about 10 miles to our south. From the top of Bukit Payong we could clearly see Bukit Banang (1,410 ft), a hill situated just south of Batu Pahat. Our troops, we knew or guessed, were still in possession of the town itself though Jap forces had already reached the northern bank of the Batu Pahat River. We did not also know that a small Jap force had landed from the sea and occupied the lower slopes of Bukit Banang some days previously. There was another complication too. A look at the map showed that a direct approach to Batu Pahat might well lead us into a trap if a Jap patrol followed us up from behind. For the Simpang Kiri would be on our right flank and the Simpang Kanan on our left flank. Neither tributary could be crossed without boats and there was no guarantee whatsoever that these would be available when and if we reached their banks.

We were now about to begin the fifth day of our trek and several had badly blistered feet. Some found relief by rubbing citronella oil into the blisters. We descended Bukit Payong on its southern side and we soon found ourselves back on yet another rubber estate, many of which, incidentally, had been Jap owned in pre-war times. When we came to a clump of Malay houses, we found all the doors closed, but the people were inside and obviously petrified with fear. I hailed the unseen inhabitants in Malay, telling them not to be afraid and explaining that all we wanted was some drinking water to fill our water bottles. After a while, a hand passed a container round the door and I thanked the donor for his help without him saying a word. Obviously the Japs had already been there and I later met an articulate Malay who admitted they had been there on the previous day.

As we got further south, the landscape began to change. There were still patches of jungle and small rubber holdings but also some rice fields. These fields

had large deep *parits*, or ditches, to carry away excess water and some of these might extend for 2 or 3 miles in parallel lines until they eventually emptied their contents into the Simpang Kanan. As these *parits* were too big or too deep to jump across, small plank wooden bridges had been provided every 200 or 300 yards to enable peasants to cross from one section of land to the other. It was while we were proceeding along a narrow bicycle path skirting one of these *parits* that we had our next shock. The path, which we had now been following for 10 minutes, would eventually lead out, we hoped, to the Simpang Kanan at a point where there was said to be a crossing place. At the time we were stretched out in a sort of extended Indian file, myself in front in case we met any of the locals. Suddenly news was passed up that voices could be heard to our rear. Not for the first time, we were given warning of approaching danger by the garrulousness of the Jap soldier, for we had just time to conceal ourselves in some semi-jungle on our left before about 200 Jap soldiers on bicycles came up from the rear on the same path as we had just left. Our numbers were again down to 14 or 15, as the 2nd Indian straggler had now disappeared, so it was a relief not to be spotted. The Japs were dressed in a variety of clothes, for they had no set uniforms. Some wore Malay *sarongs* and could have been mistaken for the local inhabitants by those not acquainted with the country, some wore shorts, some long trousers, some the inverted bowl-shaped pith helmets, some khaki cloth caps, some no head gear at all unless it was just a piece of cloth or handkerchief. One was later to be strongly reminded of a similar scene described by Spencer Chapman in his book *The Jungle is Neutral* when he was viewing a passing horde of Japs in somewhat similar circumstances.

The problem now was how to avoid further meetings with the Japs before we had crossed the Simpang Kanan to comparative safety. I persuaded Lieut. Sanderson that our best plan would be to go back a bit on the path we had just used, cross one or more of the foot bridges and *parits* to our right flank and make our way towards the town of Batu Pahat through the numerous Malay villages which border the left bank of the Simpang Kiri.

Sergeant Donaldson was given the job of leading the platoon across the path but I could see he was a little hesitant in starting as we could hear voices down the road from our hiding place. The voices I knew were those of Malays discussing what they had just seen, so I volunteered to make my own little reconnaissance to see if the way was clear. I approached the path cautiously, but was soon able to confirm that the Japs had gone. I then concentrated our little force opposite one of the footbridges so that they could get across the path and the *parit* with the minimum of delay. When we had all crossed over, we set off in a roughly south westerly direction towards the junction of the two *simpangs* at a place called Sapekong. As the Japs could be clearly heard shelling Batu Pahat from the north side of the Batu Pahat River, we had to keep away from that bank. That meant that we would have to cross the Simpang Kanan at some point above Sapekong, so that we would have the protection of the Batu Pahat River on our right flank as we found our way into the town.

The going now was comparatively easy for several miles as the way lay through small rubber plantations and the *parits* became fewer and fewer. There were quite a number of Malay houses dotted along the banks of the Simpang

Kiri which flowed some distance off to our right and which we could not actually see because of the secondary jungle growing there. At first the local Malays who saw us coming would rush back into their houses in a panic, clutching their children and even the washing drying on the line. But after a while they got used to us and we were joined by a couple of Malay *Hajis* in their white caps⁵⁷ who volunteered to find us a boat to cross the river when we reached it. We followed a succession of leafy paths southwards for the rest of the morning. We were also accompanied by a number of young Malay boys who also wished to help us if they could. Unfortunately our first *Haji*, though a most loquacious talker, was not much help in finding us a boat. He was in fact, we decided, a bit simple-minded. He was succeeded by another *Haji* who promised to lead us to a *sampan* which he had definitely seen two days previously. It must have been about 2 p.m. when we at last arrived near to the confluence of the two tributaries at Sapekong, though we remained concealed in some tall lallang grass until our *Haji* had located the *sampan*. But the *Haji* delayed so long in putting in a reappearance that I decided to go forward myself and see what I could find. I do not know whether the *Haji* ever came back but probably his *sampan* had disappeared and he had not been able to face us with the truth.

Meanwhile I went forward to the edge of the Simpang Kanan, and saw that we had indeed reached the confluence of the two streams and that the Simpang Kanan which we had to cross was about 40 or 50 yards wide. There was nobody in sight so I walked forward a few yards to a Chinese *Kongsi* House next to what may have been a small saw mill. It was there that I met my lone Chinese wood-cutter. He was friendly but not able to help me to find a boat, in fact, he added, all available boats had been destroyed by order of the Government and on the previous day three white soldiers had actually swam across the river at that point. That was out of the question for our platoon as we could not afford to abandon our weapons and equipment. Then I had an idea. I produced a \$5 note (about 12/- worth at that time) and indicated that I was prepared to give the Chinese that for extra information. The Chinese's face lit up and he immediately told me that he knew of a boat a few hundred yards upstream if we would follow him. As our position was now pretty precarious as we were hemmed in by water on two sides and a sitting target for any enemy coming up from our rear, we followed him with alacrity. All the locals we met repeated the warning that we would find no boats, but we continued to follow the Chinese. In case he attempted to abandon our quest, I let him know that I would be following close behind him with a loaded rifle. He did not appear perturbed and just smiled at the implied threat. Within a very short time we had come to a boat house and, sure enough, under this, covered with palm fronds, we found not indeed a *sampan*, but something much better, a large barge with a number on its outside and easily capable of carrying as many as 50 passengers at a pinch. It was a heavy boat to manoeuvre and we had no oars or paddles. Then providentially I spied close by an old dilapidated wooden hut. It needed only a matter of minutes for each of us to provide himself with an improvised paddle from the planks taken from the hut. After we had launched the barge, we paddled furiously in a

57 A "Haji" was a Moh'ammedan who had made the pilgrimage to Mecca and was easily distinguishable by the white round cap he wore.

slightly upstream direction to counterbalance the current. We were safely across half of the river, when we spied coming downstream at a good speed and only 100 yards away, a medium sized motor launch which we could see was loaded down with Jap soldiers, who were already taking pot shots at us. Luckily, we were not far away from the far bank and we ran the barge aground into a tangle of undergrowth and marshy swamp land. The Japs on the launch may well have been some of those who had passed so close to us that morning.

We did not have time to realise then what a close shave we had had. Not only had we been exceptionally lucky to procure a boat at all, but we had been equally lucky to cross the river before the arrival of the Jap filled launch. A few minutes' delay would have been enough to leave us trapped on the wrong side of the river.

Meanwhile we all jumped into the marsh around us and pressed forward through the jungle in search of a path or road which would take us into Batu Pahat town. It would again be a close run thing as all the signs were, judging by the gunfire, that the Japs were already mounting a possible crossing of the Batu Pahat River, from the north bank, only a mile or two downstream.

After we had continued southwards for another half a mile we came to a Malay village, probably Gombak, where several score frightened villagers had collected in a few houses for safety's sake. Yet another *Haji* volunteered the good news that there were thousands of white troops in Batu Pahat and that he personally had seen no Japs at all. When we asked him to show us the way to the nearest road leading to the town he was reluctant to do so, making the excuse that he had already promised to take some children over the river. However when we promised him \$3 for his services, he agreed. We followed the *Haji* for about 2 miles along a winding path screened by tall lallang grass and occasional clumps of coconut trees. On the way we passed a Malay pupil from the Sultan Idris Training College who recognised me and asked for news of his former Principal, Mr. R.P.S. Walker. Latterly the college had been occupying temporary quarters at Kuala Kangsar, Perak, where I had been working before war broke out.

At last we reached the beginnings of a wide laterite road and said goodbye to our now anxious but still friendly guide. We proceeded cautiously at first for we did not want to be fired on by our own troops who were bound to be quite near to us. To identify ourselves clearly, we marched down the middle of the road singing a song in English unlikely to be known by any Jap. It was a slightly ribald song, often sung at rugby football dinners. It was some time before we got any reaction to this but at length we began to see faces peering out at us from concealed points along the road side. The troops turned out to be units from the 1st Cambridgeshires and the Norfolks. They were naturally astonished to hear that we had just crossed the river and walked all the way from Segamat. They gave us discouraging news about the local situation. "This town's surrounded", they said, and so it was. The road leading east to Ayer Hitam had already been blocked and the only way of escape along the coast southwards to Benut and Pontian was subject to continuous harassment, probably by the Japanese force hiding up the slopes of Bukit Banang who had been landed from the sea on January 16. Road blocks set up on the coast road

on two previous nights had been cleared with difficulty and in one incident 5 food lorries had been blown up. Two Japanese infiltrators had even been shot inside the car park, and not before they had shot one of our soldiers.

We now pushed forward in heavy rain to the town where we were provided with some beer and biscuits at battalion H.Q., a Chinese house close to the local Cinema. We were very glad of this as we had had little to eat all that day being sustained only by the excitement of our situation. The town looked a sorry mess in the rain. There were bomb craters everywhere, the streets were deserted because the whole of the civilian population had fled, a lorry lay gutted at a cross roads and a huge crater opposite the bombed Police Station in the main road had been converted into an anti-tank trap by the addition of coils of barbed wire and some anti-tank guns. I wondered how the Japs would be able to bring tanks across the river without the use of the ferry. Though Jap snipers were said to be active we ventured down the main street almost as far as the ferry which was of course not working, and saw few people. Our troops were no doubt there in concealed positions but we did not see a single civilian.

It was now 6.30 p.m. and getting dark so we returned to the car park at the top end of the town where we had been promised seats in a convoy leaving that evening at 10 p.m. by the coast road for Johore Bahru, a journey of about 80 miles.

Our patrol was split up among several vehicles. Four of us got a ride in a R.A.S.C. Utility Truck belonging to an Indian Supply Officer with whom I shared the rear portion of the truck. He confided to me that he had been 19 years with the Indian Army, but had never fired a rifle in his life, "not being a fighting man", he explained.

The convoy actually moved off at 9 p.m. in a torrential rainstorm. The night was very dark and this with the rain may have discouraged a Jap ambush. There was no question that several Jap patrols were now in a position to harass the convoy from both sides of the road. We inevitably came to a stop after travelling 2 or 3 miles in an open piece of country where the Japs had already staged several ambushes on our transport in the past.

Here we remained for the next 3 hours in complete darkness, cold, miserable and wet through from the incessant rain. At one stage we were ordered out of our vehicles and told to line the ditches for fear of a Jap attack. The Indian Supply Officer was understandably worried in case the convoy never started again and no one else was too happy about the situation. Eventually a number of Bren Gun Carriers turned up to escort us past the danger area.⁵⁸ At 1.30 a.m. the convoy started again, each lorry keeping a hundred yards distant from the next and using red lights to signal the all clear at each point that it had passed. We were not sorry to say goodbye to the sound of the distant gunfire that could still be heard coming from Batu Pahat.

Our journey from then on was uneventful and as dawn broke, the convoy was able to increase its speed through such small villages as Benut and Pontian Kechil, until it reached a lorry park, 13 miles from Johore Bahru itself. There we

58 These Bren Gun Carriers were no substitute for tanks, in fact they were considered by many to be absolute death-traps in jungle areas. The Japs had early developed the technique of disposing of them by lobbing grenades into them from the treetops.

got some welcome coffee and then went on to a Military H.Q. 3 miles further on. This had been the Manager's bungalow on quite a large estate.

We were probably the last, or one of the last convoys to get through by road from the beleaguered town of Batu Pahat, for when its garrison did have to retire a day or two later, 2,000 of its number had to be evacuated by sea from Senggarang. The remainder had to sacrifice all their guns and vehicles and retire to Benut, to the south, by a circuitous land route.⁵⁹

With the Batu Pahat-Kluang-Mersing front on the verge of collapse, it was understandable that no one had time to listen to our report. But we could derive some satisfaction from the fact that during our 5 days' trek from Segamat to Batu Pahat, we had maintained ourselves on only one day's rations, thanks to the generous help and goodwill of the local population, and by a series of lucky strokes had not suffered a single casualty.

We got back to our Base camp at Tampoi Road, Johore Bahru at 4 p.m. after having had little to eat all day. We learnt that our patrol had been posted as "4 days overdue, believed lost." The great new excitement in our camp was the arrival of 4,000 A.I.F. reinforcements.⁶⁰ It was difficult to get transport into Singapore, but I managed to procure a taxi as far as the Causeway, and once there I was able to thumb a lift to Fort Canning Road. A member of the Local Defence Corps, who was manning the causeway and who recognised me, allowed me to cross without the permit which I gathered was now required. Two days later I was informed that our unit had been disbanded, the obvious reason being that since we would all be back on the island within a week there would be no further use for our services. By 8 a.m. on January 31, our last force, the Argyles, had crossed back over the Causeway to Singapore and a 70 foot gap had been blown in it by 8.15 a.m. Yet when I visited the Tanglin Club, next day, which was a Sunday, very few members appeared to realise the gravity of the situation and were frankly sceptical when I told them that the Japs were already in Batu Pahat.

Apart from the blisters on my feet, I had kept very fit during my two months' soldiering and the loss of two stones in weight was a good thing too, as I could well afford to lose them. But now I noticed a nasty eruption of watery blisters on both arms. When I went to hospital for treatment I was told that I had Rengas Tree poisoning. Contact with the leaves of the Rengas Tree apparently produced just such symptoms as I had and consist of a large number of pustules which water profusely until new skin gradually grows underneath. I had obviously picked up this infection in the jungle.⁶¹ The blisters were not painful, but the arms had to be re-banded daily for some weeks until the cure was complete. This complaint was not really a great inconvenience and I was soon busy looking for some other employment with the A.I.F. to which I could be seconded as a Volunteer Officer. Having lost contact with my friends in

59 A column of 1,200 men managed to by-pass the road block and reach Benut in safety.

60 Unfortunately, very many of these were completely untrained. Some had sailed from Australia within two weeks of enlistment and hardly knew how to handle or fire a rifle.

61 The *rengas* tree did not necessarily always grow in the jungle. In 1954, when stationed in Singapore, I picked up the infection again as a result of a walk round the MacRitchie Reservoir, and again my arms took 2 months to heal. There was also a *rengas* tree growing in the grounds of Raffles College at that time.

the Volunteers, I was not anxious to return to their camp, which I gathered was situated at Telok Paku in the South East Corner of the Island. However, permission had to be obtained from my former unit before any new secondment could become permissible, so both Andy Stewart and I, the only guides now involved visited Telok Paku Camp. Major A.C. Smith gladly gave us the required consent. Telok Paku in peace time is a delightful seaside resort with a fine sandy beach, but looking round that camp we could not help noticing the volunteers' feelings of frustration. Many men, who would gladly have provided first class service as guides and interpreters, were never made use of and spent the war languishing in camps or on forgotten air fields such as Taiping and others down the peninsula.⁶²

Andy and I then went straight to Fort Canning to see what had to be done next to join the A.I.F. and there we met a Mr. Ansell, who had previously been Chief Engineer on Dunlop Estates at Batu Enam, just north of Segamat. Mr. Ansell told us that he had come to enquire about his missing son, late of the Loyals. His son had been a planter before he joined the Loyals and had disappeared in the Parit Sulong area. As I knew the Loyals and had recently been in the area where the son had gone missing, I suggested that I took him, his wife and daughter to the Loyals' barracks near the Bidadari Cemetery. They might now have more details about the son. Captain Pasque, the Adjutant of the Loyals and now an old acquaintance of mine, produced the 5 men who had been last with Ansell Junior. They could only say that Ansell had decided to go off on his own and try and get back to his old estate at Labis. They had not seen him since and, indeed, he was never seen again by any one. However, we had a lucky break when Mr. Ansell introduced us to Brigadier (Dr.) Maxwell, of the A.I.F., whose brother was a planter in Malaya. After an interview with him at his H.Q. in a Chinese Towkay's bungalow at the 9½ Milestone, Singapore Farm Road, we were both promised posts within 2 or 3 days.

Next day, January 30, was the date of a large exodus of expatriate women and children on the *Empress of Japan* and the *Duchess of Bedford*,⁶³ two Canadian Pacific ships on which I had crossed the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans respectively, just 6 years earlier. On the same morning I had also accidentally met Mrs. Jean Spence, the wife of a Perak planter and volunteer, in Raffles Square. I discovered that though she was due to leave on the *Empress*, she had

62 In a chapter headed Retrospect in his book, *The War in Malaya* (p. 303), General Percival strikes a similar note. He says: "Units arriving in Malaya from overseas are badly in need of men with local knowledge to act as their guides and helpers. This is one job for the Volunteers." Unfortunately this idea was not acted on until late and then only on a small scale. On the other hand, as Malaya was "the dollar arsenal" of the United Kingdom, the prime purpose of the white community was not just to enlist as Volunteers but also to step up the export of rubber and tin. In 1941, Malaya produced 38% of the world's rubber and 60% of the tin.

63 These two large ships had just disembarked the main part of the 18th Division, mainly from East Anglia, on January 29th, otherwise they would not have been available to repatriate about 2,400 refugees, mainly women and children, who painted in them on January 30th-31st. As late as January 21st Churchill had seriously contemplating diverting 18th Division to Burma to protect the Burma Road to Chang King, but was dissuaded by the very strong protests of the Australian Government led by Mr. Curtin. This decision meant that, while a large number of refugees escaped internment, most of 18th division became prisoners of war a fortnight later.

no ticket and no means of fetching it from the P & O offices now removed several miles down the Bukit Timah Road to Cluny Road. Luckily I still had my Austin 16 car to take her there. When we reached Cluny Road, we found large queues waiting for tickets and a fair amount of chaos to boot. Various young ladies, some of whom I knew slightly were debating in loud and nonchalant voices where they should go, Australia, India, England? When they appealed to me for advice, I said "Go where your boy friends are."

When Mrs. Spence had obtained her ticket I took her back to where she was staying, and where I left her making futile phone calls to trace her husband. He was no doubt incarcerated in some camp and knew nothing about her imminent departure. Eventually, Jean reached England safely and by some miracle of a coincidence sat next to my mother and aunt at a P.O.W. Relatives' meeting in London. I know now that Jean had been able to assure them that I had been well when she left Singapore on January 30.

That afternoon I picked up Mr. and Mrs. Ansell and their daughter Connie and made for the docks. The two great ships were almost alongside each other and were unscathed as yet but previous bombings of the docks had set fire to several godowns and cut off the approach road to the *Empress* for which we were heading. Thousands of cars, many abandoned, blocked the remaining wharf space and so an improvised ferry service was organised to take *Empress* passengers across a small inlet to avoid the other bombed approach road. As there were no dockers or porters to handle the luggage, you had the spectacle of high officials manipulating rather inexpertly a series of baggage laden trolleys. A further diversion was caused by a false alarm of an impending enemy air raid. If the 5 planes that came over had been Jap, and not ours, the casualties might have been horrific as the shelter space available for such large crowds was very small indeed.⁶⁴ At this moment the Japs had already reached the Causeway, only 17 miles away. When we had eventually been ferried across and boarded the *Empress*, it was soon clear to me that many more passengers could have been taken away if they had elected to go or, in some cases, been allowed to go. The spacious dining room had been cleared of all furniture and hundreds of mattresses had been placed on the floor to provide sleeping accommodation for the women. When I poked my head into this harem-like room, a lady whom I knew and wife of a high Government official, remarked, "Out of there, Tiny, this is no place for you." We said our last farewells and left the ship at 8 p.m., but I understand it did not sail until midnight. Though attacked by Jap aircraft later, the *Empress* was not seriously damaged and reached England safely. Incidentally

64 These planes must have been the last British planes left on the Island. The destruction of most of our remaining bombers and fighters over Endau on January 26 (see footnote on page 16) had led to the withdrawal to Sumatra of all our aircraft on January 27, with the exception of one squadron of Hurricanes. At Percival's request, this had been retained at Kallang Airfield which was then the only base not under observed artillery fire from the enemy. On February 19th, even the survivors of this squadron were also withdrawn.

The 2 aircraft carriers carrying 90 more Hurricanes were not expected to arrive before the end of the month, so were already too late.

Air Vice Marshal Pulford's departing words to General Percival as he left Singapore on Friday evening, February 13 were much to the point "I suppose you and I will be held responsible for this, but God knows we did our best with what little we had been given."

on the top deck of the *Empress* serving as some kind of anti-aircraft Vickers machine gunner, I had been surprised to meet again an Australian member of our Perak Machine Gun unit, named Chandler. Earlier on, I had been told that he had suffered some sort of breakdown, so I was glad to see him well again and back in action. In Perak he had worked as a tin miner but in Perth, I think, he had won fame as a professional rugby football player.

Two days later, February 1, I again took Mr. Ansell to visit the Loyals at their camp but regrettably there was no further news of his son. Meanwhile he had got a job as a Diesel Engineer in charge of the Singapore Harbour Board launches, a job which only a fortnight later was to provide him with a means of escape from a long period of internment.

(vi) *Up on the Causeway*⁶⁵

On or about February 3, Andrew Stewart and I duly took up our new posts with the A.I.F., which had been given the whole of the North-West sector of the Island to defend, from the Jurong river in the South West up to and including the Causeway in the North. Andrew's battalion, the 2/26th, was made responsible for the defence of the Kranji estuary, just west of the Causeway and my battalion, the 2/30th, for the area immediately east of the 2/26th area and covering a front of about a mile which extended up to and just beyond the Causeway.

The 2/30th was commanded by a Colonel Galleghan, commonly known as "Black Jack" among his men and later described as the toughest soldier in the Australian army. Though he had a reputation for being a martinet in some respects, his first order to me was to cut out saluting in the wartime conditions then obtaining, and secondly to hide the white bandages on my arms by pulling down the sleeves of my khaki shirt so as not to attract the attention of a sniper. He then asked that I should spend 24 hours with each company of the battalion in turn, starting with 'A' Company. 'A' Company was commanded by a Major Anderson with Lieutenant Boss as second in command and their H.Q. was a Chinese house immediately behind Woodlands Police Station near to a clump of rubber trees at the southern end of the Causeway. Normally this would have been the scene of much traffic on the road and much rolling stock moving up and down on the railway line which runs parallel with the road across the Causeway. But on the night of my arrival, there was an unearthly silence everywhere and a full moon which added to one's feeling of being in an unreal world. Not a soul was in sight anywhere and not a sound came from the town of Johore Bahru, only three quarters of a mile away across the strait. The great cannonade which we were to hear in a few days had not yet started.

Lieut. Boss took me on a round of inspection of 'A' Company at 11 p.m., the way being brilliantly lighted up by the full moon. I was told that our defences at the water's edge consisted of 6 Vickers Machine Guns manned by a West Australian M.G. Unit from Perth, two guns commanding one side of the Causeway, two the other and 2 more guns covering the mouth of the Sungei Mandai Kechul, a small stream on their left flank. In addition there were 2 Anti-Tank guns covering the Causeway itself, and some 25 pounders behind them.

65 See map on page 67.

Coils of barbed wire had been stretched along half the length of the Causeway on both sides, where booby traps had also been laid.⁶⁶ In daylight and using binoculars, one could also see the 70 foot gap blown in the Causeway itself, though if the truth was known, even this gap could easily have been forded when the tides were out, as it was then only 4 feet deep in water. A number of slit trenches and weapon pits had been dug by the men since their arrival but all the work had had to be done at night. This was partly to avoid giving away their positions to the Japs but, also because the now dominant Jap Air Force would have made daylight digging almost impossible. No attempt had been made in the past to instal any permanent defences and the only evidence of any previous defence work I saw was one solitary strand of barbed wire along the water's edge.⁶⁷ In daylight the men pointed out to me the hole in the Clock Tower of the massive Government Buildings in Johore Bahru – the same building as housed my own offices after the war. Our artillery had denied the clock tower to the enemy as an observation post, but a day or two later, the Japs had substituted an observation balloon, which did the job equally well as we had no planes available to shoot it down. After we had strolled down the Causeway a bit, we came back to our H.Q. along the railway line to the point where the branch line to the Naval base leaves the main line to Singapore. It was still very quiet, the only sound being the echoes of our footsteps on the concrete road. The Naval Base, a few miles to our east, had already been abandoned, and looters, official and otherwise, had helped themselves. At all events, 'A' Company was well supplied with food from that source.⁶⁸ Some of the oil tanks at the base were also on fire, either from Jap bombing or from our own erratic attempts at a denial of stocks to the enemy.

Our supply route to the rear was a good one – it was the Marsiling Road, which was well protected from view by a large rubber estate. But when one came out from that road on to the main Bukit Timah Road, camouflage netting, rather like cricket nets, had been erected to give cover to lorries using the parts of the road which were clearly visible across the straits from Johore Bahru. Another precaution was the compulsory removal of all the former inhabitants

66 The Causeway was very solidly built to carry both a railway line and a main road. It was 1,100 yards long, 40 yards wide and the 70 foot gap had been blown about two-thirds of the way across from the Singapore side.

67 According to Brigadier Ivan Simson, Chief Engineer, Malaya Command, General Percival had refused him permission to build defences on the north side of Singapore Island facing Johore as late as December 27, 1941, giving as his reason his belief that the construction of such defences would be bad for the morale of both troops and civilians.

68 On about January 28 1942, the Admiralty had moved all the skilled dockyard staff out of the Base and by January 31 had shipped them away to Ceylon. The only personnel left behind were a few demolition squads to aid the army to complete the "scorched earth" policy which the Navy had neglected to carry out. To carry away and distribute all the movable gear and equipment abandoned in the Base no fewer than 120 army lorries each made 21 trips during the following week.

Much later, on Friday evening, February 13, Rear Admiral Spooner sailed for Java with up to 50 small naval craft carrying 3,000 persons, of whom about 1,800 were selected army personnel. Many of these never reached safety as they were intercepted by Japanese warships in the Banka Straits. (see pages 118 & 119 and 127 & 128).

Meanwhile news of the evacuation of the Base even before our forces had been withdrawn across the Causeway, was a serious blow to morale.

living within a mile of the north and north west coast of the island. Otherwise Japanese infiltrators might have got in and passed themselves off as local residents. Even then a few Chinese squatters still continued to occupy their huts in spite of the ban and in spite of the later heavy bombardment of this area.

On the day after my arrival at the Causeway, I was summoned by Colonel Galleghan to attend a meeting at Battalion H.Q. which was the old Indian Hospital just off the Marsiling Road. There I met a Sergeant Major Clayton who had been given the job of leading a patrol of 12 Volunteers across the Straits to find out what the enemy's intentions were and where and when he was likely to attack us. There was a great deal of uncertainty about this as we had no air force available to find out, though I did witness one brave reconnaissance flight over the Causeway by an unarmed Club plane, piloted, it was said, by Captain Dane of the Perak Flying Club.⁶⁹ It received a hot reception all along the Japanese occupied side of the Strait but was not hit. While many expected the attack to come from the obvious direction of the North-West Corner of the island, there were also a number, including Lieut. General Percival, who believed that the main landing would come from somewhere east of the Causeway.⁷⁰ One apparent pointer in this direction was the Jap occupation of Pulau Ubin on February 7, an island commanding the eastern approach to the Naval Base. The Jap General Yamashita also encouraged us to believe that his attack would come from the North-east by simulating heavy lorry traffic moving by daylight to dummy camps opposite the Naval Base, while bringing the lorries back after dark and repeating the strategem next day.

As Sergeant Major Clayton had already recruited his 12 Volunteers it was resolved that he and his men should cross the Straits that night to collect what information they could. Apart from the obvious questions needing answers, they were also asked to find out what had happened to the Sultan of Johore, his wife and a Mrs. Aziz, who were both Europeans, and whether it was true that the Sultan had been deposed in favour of one of his sons. It was said that two European ladies had appeared on the Johore side of the blown Causeway soon after the demolition had taken place.

As a back-up to Sergeant Major Clayton's patrols I was deputed to go into Singapore and recruit ex-Asiatic Police or Customs Officers, who had a personal knowledge of the Johore Bahru area, and who would be willing to accompany future patrols and help with the collection of information.

69 He received special praise from General Percival for his tireless and fearless work as a pilot in his book, *The War in Malaya*, p. 248.

70 According to Brigadier Ivan Simson, Chief Engineer, Malaya Command, General Percival had been warned by General Wavell during his visit on January 20, to expect the Jap attack to come from the area to the west of the Causeway and to dispose his forces accordingly. Percival however, obsessed by the likelihood of the attack coming from the area east of the Causeway, ignored Wavell's advice, and ordered Simson to move vast quantities of defence material, hitherto stored in the North-west sector of the island, over to the North-East Sector. By a superhuman effort, this move was accomplished by the Royal Engineers by February 6. But when news arrived next day of heavy Jap troop concentrations opposite the North-West sector, Simson was ordered to move the stores back to their previous dumps, but by then it was too late for this to be done. Percival was also to be criticised later for attempting to defend the whole coast-line when it was obvious that the Japs would attack at a carefully selected point. A strong reserve should, it was said, have been kept available for the immediate counter-attack of any Jap bridgehead.

I wasted no time in getting back to Singapore that night as I thought that my brother John in the Customs Department could be helpful in finding some of my Asiatic Volunteers. By following the direction of the huge water pipe which brings fresh water across the Strait from Pulau in Johore, I soon struck the Mandai Road at the 13th milestone. From there I was able to get a lift into Singapore in a lorry by way of Nee Soon Village. John was still in charge of the Food Control Centre in the Bras Basah road and Gerwyn was with a Red Cross Volunteer Unit at Katong. John and I first paid a visit to the Customs head office at Maxwell Road, where the name of a Revenue Officer, who knew the Kranji area very well was given to us. Next morning we followed up his last address at Bukit Panjang, a village 4 miles south of the Causeway, but it was unfortunate for the success of our mission that the Jap bombardment had now started. Bukit Panjang was already under attack, a rubber factory set on fire by bomb or shell was belching thick black smoke and a nearby food depot had been badly damaged by shell-fire. We also found that our Revenue Officer had moved from his last address and was now living near a match factory at Kranji, a more dangerous area still, even if we could find him. In any case the first Jap landings took place very soon after this i.e. on February 8, so we could not pursue the matter further. Next morning, we followed up another possibility, a retired Forest Guard, who lived behind Bukit Timah Village. We did manage to contact him, but quite understandably he confessed he was too *takut* (afraid) to undertake such a dangerous mission. The Jap bombardment, which had continued, was now so intense that we had to give up all hope of recruiting anybody for our purpose. All I could now do was to report back to Colonel Galleghan on the Causeway and hope that all was well there.

On our way back to Singapore, we came across a Bren Gun Carrier and crew which had a machine-gun mounted on a tripod. The crew were taking cover from an air raid under a tree. They said that they had been in action on the previous night on the west coast and they showed us where a Jap bullet had gone right through the tripod crosspiece. The Japs had landed in their thousands, they added, but their Colonel had led a counter charge which had driven the enemy back on a 500 yards front. This was very disturbing news and appeared even more disturbing when the crew moved off to Singapore to report and not back in the direction of the enemy advance.

Having failed to find any recruits for our patrols, I decided to return immediately that afternoon to the Causeway and report to Colonel Galleghan. The Japs, unknown to us, had in fact evacuated all the local population from a 12 mile strip round the Johore side of the Straits, so it is debateable whether any Asiatics whom we landed in this area would have made any impact. Most probably they would have been picked up long before they could have gleaned much information. My syce, Nair, who was not lacking in courage, bravely drove me back in my car via Nee Soon Village, half of which had already been burnt down. But as we proceeded westwards along the Mandai road, the shell fire became more and more intense, until at the 12th milestone, I sent Nair back. I hoped to complete my journey to the Causeway in a passing lorry.

In a field nearby I was fortunate to meet a Captain in charge of 2 Bofors anti-aircraft guns, which he was about to withdraw from near the Causeway.

Naturally I accepted a lift in his green coloured Austin 7 car, but we had only gone a mile along the Mandai Road when intense shell fire caused us to stop and seek shelter in a quarry just near the point where the Johore Pipeline crosses the road. The Jap guns were, it seems, being directed towards some of our own artillery sited on top of one of the neighbouring hills. Two Tommies, whom I met filling a water cart from a roadside standpipe, advised me not to attempt to walk over this hill because of the obvious danger. I therefore plunged into a largish rubber estate nearby and continued my walk northwards for another half mile or so. Once again I met the Captain of the Bofors whose crew were just about to hitch one of their guns to the back of a lorry. All this time a great deal of shelling was going on all around and a Chinese squatter's house *atap* roof "close by, was burning fiercely because of its inflammable *atap* roof." The Captain had another Bofors gun to withdraw from Woodlands, so I was glad of a lift in his lorry to my destination. This proved to be rather a nightmarish ride. The remainder of the Mandai Road was pitted with shell craters, cars had been wrecked and lay abandoned by the roadside, trees had been cut in half and clouds of dust revealed the progress of our lorry as we careered along at 50 miles per hour. When we came out on to the main Bukit Timah Road and turned right, the next 3 miles from the 12th to the 15th milestone was covered often in full view of Johore Bahru, as the camouflage nets had now all perished in the continuous shell fire. At the 15th milestone, I and two Australians I had picked up, jumped off the lorry and started to walk across country to our Battalion H.Q. in the Marsiling Road. Most of this area was well covered with rubber trees or secondary jungle, but even then we came across several shell craters and even Chinese squatter huts still occupied by their owners who had refused to abandon their pigs and other animals in spite of the fighting. At one house, we counted 5 dead pigs where a shell had made a direct hit on the pigsty. Those pigs still alive were hiding away in the undergrowth. But the swarms of flies which hovered over the dead pigs added to an unpleasant and pathetic sight.

On arrival at H.Q. my first visit was to Captain Taylor, the Battalion Medical Officer to have my arms rebandaged as I had not had time to visit a hospital while in Singapore. Both arms were "weeping" profusely and clean bandages were badly needed.

The increased bombardment of the Causeway area that we were now experiencing had a purpose. As the 5th and 18th Jap divisions had successfully completed their crossings to the North West sectors of the Island by the morning of February 9, the supporting Jap barrage of 440 guns could now be switched to the Causeway area. What we did not know then was that the Imperial Guards Division planned to land in the Kranji estuary that night and that area lay only a short distance to the west of the Causeway. This intensified shelling had meanwhile killed 4 of our battalion and wounded 20 more. The likeable Sergeant Major Clayton, in charge of the boat patrols across the Straits, had disappeared while out on a patrol on the previous night and only two men had been accounted for so far. These two had managed to swim back to our shore after throwing grenades at a boatful of Japs. There was some suggestion that one or two of our men had been killed by their own grenades falling too close to themselves. Colonel "Black Jack" Galleghan, who had appeared indestructible

to me had had to go into hospital with malaria and the battalion was now commanded by Major Ramsay, the previous second in command. Meanwhile it had been decided to abandon the old H.Q. Wooden building, the so-called Indian Hospital, and to construct a series of dugouts and slit trenches to replace it. It was good sense to abandon the wooden *atap* roofed building as one shell would have set it ablaze.

Even as I was being attended to by Captain Taylor at his First Aid post, the poor wife of a Chinese squatter living nearby was brought in with a nasty shrapnel wound in her back, which obviously needed hospital treatment. I explained to her husband in Malay that our ambulance would take his wife into a hospital in Singapore that night and that I would tell him next morning to which hospital she had gone. As we were unexpectedly ordered to withdraw that night, I was never able to keep my promise and I have often wondered what became of the wife and how long her husband took to find her, as I hope he did.

By the time evening had come, all the troops had provided themselves with deep slit trenches with earth and timber roofs which would give adequate cover against all but a direct hit. I was very happy to accept an offer of shelter from Captain Hawes, who was in charge of our Mortar fire. But I left my two kit bags behind in the old H.Q. as there was no room for them in the dugout. This dugout must have been 6 or 7 feet deep, about 6 feet square and had, what was most reassuring, a very strong log roof covered with a depth of earth on top of this. It was enough to keep out most of the shrapnel that was now flying about in considerable quantity.

From about 7.30 p.m. the increased bombardment of our area gave us a turbulent night but to me it was also a very interesting one. Our dugout was in telephonic communication not only with all the Companies, A, B, C, D, of our battalion but also with our advanced Observation Point at Woodlands and the battery of 25 pounders behind us, so we knew roughly what was going on everywhere on our front.

Our main attention was of course focussed on our observation post at Woodlands, which would have been the first to give us news of a Jap attack. In reply to our frequent enquiries, they reported no immediate Jap attacks in prospect across the Causeway.⁷¹ On the other hand, as the night advanced, they reported great activity at the Sultan's pier across the road from the Old Palace at Johore Bahru, a working party doing something at the Northern end of the Causeway and heavy traffic on the coast road, west of Johore Bahru town. When after a while, it was reported that numerous enemy craft were making for the estuary of the River Kranji, to our left flank, Captain Hawes directed his own mortars to fire on these craft and the 25 pounders on to the coastal road on the other side of the Straits. The Japanese mortars were reported to have a much greater range than ours and we certainly suffered a heavy bombardment from them which continued throughout the night. As we were so well protected by our dugouts, I do not think we suffered many casualties, but it would have been a different matter if we had ventured out. I

⁷¹ Two other Australian battalions, the 2/18 and the 2/20, stationed in the area, north west of Tengah Aerodrome, had suffered the full force of the Japanese attack. The 2/20 battalion lost rather more than half its total strength, 334 killed and 214 wounded.

recall a messenger arriving at our dugout and showing me the butt of his rifle. Embedded in the hard wood was a jagged piece of shrapnel, two or three inches long and still very hot, which he had collected just outside the door of our dugout. It was impossible to pull the shrapnel out of the butt by hand. Apart from the mortar fire we could also distinguish the metallic sound of much bigger guns and the whizzing of their shells overhead. I cannot guess what they were but some sounded like our own captured Bofors guns being used against us. So things continued throughout the night until 4 a.m. with no sign of a Jap landing on any part of our sector. All the action was taking place in the Kranji area defended by our sister battalion, the 2/26th to which Andy Stewart had been attached as a guide interpreter.⁷²

Then came the surprising order to evacuate our positions and retire south along the Water Pipe line until we reached the Mandai Road at or near the 13th milestone. The reason for this order remained a mystery to us until after the war. At the time, some of us vaguely imagined that it was due to the growing pressure of advancing Jap forces to our left flank in the Kranji area. At all events most of us were bitterly disappointed and Captain Hawes had to dispose speedily of his surplus stock of mortar bombs. As he had no means of transporting them across an area of the country which had no roads, he ordered the whole lot, amounting to 480 bombs in all, to be fired into the estuary of the Kranji river. It was hoped that this bombardment would do something to obstruct the Imperial Guards Division, the perpetrators of the Parit Sulong massacre, who were crossing the Strait at this point. At the same time other A.I.F. units set fire to a million gallons of Aviation petrol stored at Kranji. Whether any of this flowed into the sea or into the estuary to interfere further with the Jap crossings I do not know. The Imperial Guards Division's General Nishimura was certainly very apprehensive that this would be our strategy. One thing the blaze did very effectively; it turned night into day, and made it easy for our men to follow the path which ran alongside the pipeline southwards. The oil fires started at Kranji and also at the Naval Base continued to burn for days and cast their murky shadows over the whole of Singapore Island, adding to the gloom that all of us felt. Having had to abandon my two kit bags, my worldly possessions were now reduced to a shaving kit, two tins of pressed beef and one bottle of Australian K.B. beer. Somehow I felt strangely free.

When we reached the Mandai Road, dawn was already breaking and we had to take immediate steps to disperse ourselves on either side of the road using whatever cover we could find. Jap planes would be looking for us early and no doubt directing their artillery on to us. Renewed heavy shelling was not long in coming and for half an hour we were not able to move at all. Shells were dropping all around us every few seconds and we had no slit trenches to protect us as we had on the previous night.

It was in these somewhat discouraging circumstances that Major Ramsay informed me at midday that he did not require my services any further as the new conditions had put an end to my usefulness as a guide interpreter. This had become obvious to me, too, since the Jap landings of February 8 and 9. Further-

⁷² Andy Stewart survived the war and returned to work in Malaya until his retirement. He died in Scotland in about 1978.

more my arms needed clean bandages twice a day and it was unfair to burden Captain Taylor, the Medical Officer, with this extra work when he already had plenty to do attending to his own men. Some of my Aussie friends, had indeed, wondered why I had bothered to come back at all to the Causeway on the previous evening. I explained that I was in duty bound to report back and what opinion would they all have had of me if I had not done this? At last when a lull in the shelling came I started off on foot along the Mandai Road in the direction of Nee Soon Village. The road was well pitted with still more shell craters and obstructed by fallen trees, but just before I reached Nee Soon I managed to pick up a lorry driven by an Indian. I was not sorry when he deposited me safely not far from Fort Canning Road, where my brother had his house.

As for the unaccountable order which had taken us away from the Causeway, a partial explanation, but only a partial one, has been provided by Volume I of the *Official History of the War against Japan*, written by Major General Woodburn Kirby. According to this authority, Brigadier Maxwell, who commanded both the 2/26th and 2/30th battalions of the A.I.F. in the Kranji and Woodlands areas respectively, had as early as the morning of February 9 been apprehensive of Jap advances on his left flank which were likely to out flank or imperil his position at the mouth of the Kranji River, particularly his 2/26th battalion. At 11 a.m., he had asked General Gordon Bennett, the Australian Commander in Chief, for permission to withdraw the 2/26th from the Kranji area to face the threat on his left. General Bennett had refused to grant permission. Nevertheless, later on the same day, i.e. February 9, Brigadier Maxwell had warned both the 2/26th and 2/30th Battalion Commanders at a conference that such a withdrawal might still become necessary, but not until the oil tanks at Kranji had first been destroyed.

Meanwhile General Percival, conscious of a possible break through by Jap tanks in overwhelming strength down the Bukit Timah Road, had drawn up an emergency plan for a general withdrawal of his forces to meet such a possibility. The troops would be withdrawn within a perimeter which included the whole of the City of Singapore and the two reservoirs which supplied it with water. But the emergency had not arisen yet as there had been no Jap break through. However, some time after midnight, that is, in the early morning of February 10, Percival issued his plan as a secret emergency instruction to all his senior Commanders. Brigadier Maxwell did not receive his copy through General Gordon Bennett until that afternoon, yet he had already ordered the withdrawal of his two battalions in the Kranji and Woodlands areas at about 4.15 a.m., many hours before. Nor did Maxwell inform Gordon Bennett that he had issued this order. Indeed it was not until late that afternoon that Percival himself knew that the Causeway area – “the Key to the Northern defences”, he calls it in his book, had been left undefended.

Brigadier Maxwell claimed that he had been given permission to retire by Gordon Bennett, but the latter denied this.⁶² The Official history sums up the

73 At this stage in the war, Major General Gordon Bennett, the commander of the Australian forces, was himself responsible for some controversial decisions, none of which he communicated to his superior, General Percival. Firstly he sent a telegram to

situation as follows: "It must be assumed that Maxwell had acted under a misapprehension of Bennett's intentions." He also appears to have anticipated Percival's emergency plan without the authority of his immediate superior to do so.

Meanwhile on the opposite side of the Causeway a little drama had been played out between General Yamashita,⁷⁴ the Jap Commander in Chief and General Nishimura, the Commander of the Imperial Guards Division. The dislike of these two generals for each other was mutual. Yamashita had ordered Nishimura to cross the Straits and occupy the Kranji area on the night of February 9, the night on which I had returned to the neighbouring Woodlands area. But Nishimura fearing that the 2/26th, who had fiercely contested the fight so far, might unload a torrent of burning oil from the neighbouring tanks on to his men when they crossed, asked permission to delay his crossing by a day and then cross further west in the wake of the two divisions which had already crossed there on the previous evening, i.e. February 8. Yamashita did not grant the request, but as if to rub salt in the wound, sent one of his senior officers to investigate the true proportions of this alleged danger. This was also the moment when Brigadier Maxwell had withdrawn his battalions from Kranji and Woodlands, so that at 4.30 a.m., Yamashita's officer could truthfully report that enemy opposition had slackened, if not ceased, and the occupation of the Kranji area could now proceed without further delay.

(vii) To the Capitulation

I now took up residence at No. 13, Fort Canning Road temporarily, as I thought, so as to obtain treatment for my arms at the General Hospital where Dr. Devine attended to me. Sharing the house with me were two members of the Customs Department, my brother John, and my friend Arnold Gridley as well as my school friend "Panjang" Evans who was employed by the Food Control Department, a Lieutenant Davies in charge of some Labour Corps and 2 Captains in a Signals unit who worked nearby. As the house was in a direct line of fire between the Japs' artillery and Military H.Q. at Fort Canning just behind and above us, we were fortunate to be well provided with shelters.⁷⁵ Our

his Prime Minister in Australia advising him of his intention in certain circumstances, to surrender his forces to the Japs without previous consultation with General Percival. Then he ordered his artillery, because of a shortage of ammunition, to fire only in defence of the Australian perimeter, ignoring the possible needs of the Malay Regiment fighting alongside him. Finally, after the capitulation on February 15, in Percival's own words, he "voluntarily and without permission relinquished the command of the A.I.F." Bennett arrived safely in Australia, but to his surprise was told that his escape had been "ill-advised". An enquiry held after the way in Australia confirmed that "he was not justified in handing over his command or in leaving Singapore." He died in 1962.

74 Yamashita had established his H.Q. in the Sultan of Johore's new palace overlooking the Straits of Johore. His operation room, situated in a 5 storey observation tower, gave a splendid view of the north shore of Singapore. However, Yamashita was not to know that Malaya Command had forbidden their gunners out of deference to the Sultan, to engage the palace.

75 Government was much criticised for not having provided more shelters, especially in the densely populated parts of Singapore. But owing to the land being so low-lying and swampy, many shelters that were constructed tended to fill with water and so breed mosquitos. The shelters or slit-trenches mentioned here were exceptional in that they had been dug on the rising ground leading up to Fort Canning.

servants, including my syce Nair and his wife, used the shelters at the back and we had another available at the front of the house. I do not recollect ever using this one as I had better protection, so I thought, in a small storeroom at the back of the main building against everything but a direct hit. This building was also well buttressed all round the outside with a wall of sacks of bran or some similar substance. The shells landing in our area were more numerous than one would expect because the Japs had mounted a battery of long range guns with a range of 24,000 yards. These guns were therefore fully capable of hitting their targets at both Fort Canning and Government House, not far away. The latter, in fact was hit more than once.

In addition to this shelling, there was always the possibility of bombing raids by the groups of 8 or 9 Jap planes which appeared frequently above us. These planes were now totally unopposed as our depleted air force had already been moved to Palembang in Sumatra. As a rule, however, the Jap planes restricted their bombing to the dockyards at Tanjong Pagar, Kallang Airport and similar targets.⁷⁶

As the other members of the household were all busy during the day I made myself responsible for the daily purchase of provisions and I was able to buy all our bread and meat at the Orchard Road Cold Storage. As it happened, my brother Gerwyn had just moved there with his First Aid Post and was occupying a garage at the back of the Cold Storage Building.

My first job was to contact the Australian Liaison Officer at Fort Canning and hand over to him the First World War revolver which Brigadier Maxwell (for a reason I cannot now remember) had entrusted to me for safe keeping. As I could not return it to him personally – he was rumoured to be somewhere in the Pierce reservoir area – the next best thing was to hand it to somebody likely to contact him soon. I also went off to the General Hospital each day at 6 p.m. to have my arms rebandaged.

Numbers of unconfirmed rumours were already rife. For instance both the Navy and the Airforce had left the Island, Bukit Timah Village and Pasir Panjang had fallen to the Japs but attempts to land at Changi had been twice repulsed and in some sectors the Japs had been driven back two miles. There was a ring of truth about these rumours but none about the story concerning General Wavell who had just paid us a farewell visit.⁷⁷ His farewell message, it was said,

76 Estimates of civilian casualties from bomb and shell in Singapore are difficult to make, but Brigadier Simson, the Chief Engineer, Malaya, thought that about 2,000 civilians per day were either wounded or killed or went missing and that an average of about 150 persons were buried daily, not counting others buried in the rubble of their houses. Dockside ware houses, crammed with food stocks to withstand a long siege, also suffered greatly. 46 out of 64 large godowns were destroyed by air attacks and all the others were damaged.

77 General Sir Archibald Wavell, the hero of the victorious campaign against the Italians in North Africa in 1940–41 and then Commander in Chief, India, had been belatedly appointed Supreme Commander of the so-called Allied South-West Pacific Command on January 2, 1942. When appointed he is reported to have exclaimed, "I have heard of men having to hold the baby but this is twins". From the start, he was handicapped in his efforts to co-ordinate allied efforts in an area stretching from Java to Burma, by the primitive communications of his base at Bandoeng in Java. He visited Malaya three times but his appointment had been made too late, and at the end of his final visit to Singapore in February 11, he slipped on some steps at Kallang Airfield

encouraged the troops to hang out for another 48 hours as American troops were already landing at Penang, Port Swettenham, Batu Pahat and Mersing and were even then marching on Johore Bahru!

But in some ways life carried on as usual. The Adelphi and Raffles Hotels continued to advertise their dinners and dances, it was said, but I was never able to confirm this by a personal visit. The streets seemed full of troops who had allegedly lost their units but appeared content to remain put at the Union Jack Club, the Anzac Club, the Capitol Buildings, the Fullerton Building and Raffles Place. Banks, too, remained open, but for a week it had been impossible to remit money home. On the other hand, I was able to draw out most of my current account, about \$600, out of which I paid Nair double wages for the month and my brother's boy Abu, one month's salary.

As the Japs advanced nearer to us down the Bukit Timah Road, the shelling of the Fort Canning area naturally became more intense and it was not long before our house was hit. Early one morning, at about 8 a.m., 2 or 3 days before the capitulation, just as Arnold Gridley and I were shaving in a bedroom facing north in the direction of the Jap guns, two shells hit the house. One shell damaged a corner pillar of the covered car porch and another exploded inside the porch and right opposite the front door. Several bits of shrapnel sprayed my brother's car parked under the porch and set on fire the car parked next to it belonging to "Panjang" Evans. A splinter must have hit the petrol tank of this car, which had 10 gallons of petrol in it, for the whole car was soon in flames. This fire might easily have burnt the whole house down, but luckily some Volunteer Firemen were standing nearby. They very expertly broke open the locked door next to the driver's seat, released the brake, pulled the burning car clear of the porch and soon put out the fire. As the shell which landed in the front porch had burst on the outer side of my brother's car, the car had partially shielded Gridley and myself in the front bedroom upstairs. Still one wicked looking piece of shrapnel did come up through the wood floor and buried itself in the wall inside our bedroom and between the beds. My brother John had also had a lucky escape, for when the shells burst he had been sheltering downstairs behind a low wall on the inside of the front porch. Both Gridley and I escaped from our bedroom by climbing out of the window and dropping down on to the pile of sacks of bran stacked on the outside of the house. On reflection, we could all claim to have had very lucky escapes.

That same morning I went down to the Orchard Road Cold Storage as usual where I contacted my brother Gerwyn at his First Aid post. When I arrived he had just received a report of 4 people injured in a house in Killiney Road off the Orchard Road. As he had no ambulance available I volunteered to provide the transport required. I proceeded down the Orchard Road avoiding a number of craters on the way. The people hurt turned out to be 3 Municipal Coolies and an old Indian woman all of whom I was directed to take to a hospital opened up at Raffles Institution which faces the sea front. I noticed that several slit

in the dark and seriously damaged his back. His command was dissolved on February 25. In 1943, he was appointed Viceroy of India, a post he held until succeeded by Lord Mountbatten in 1947. He died in 1950.

trenches had been dug in the school grounds and some had already been used for burying bodies. Just across the way I noticed that a battery of our bigger anti-aircraft guns had dug themselves in only a few feet from the sea. They at least could not retreat any further I thought. During the hour's wait, I had a talk with Dr. Macpherson until my 4 casualties, who were not too badly injured, were ready to return to Killiney Road. The shelling was still heavy as I returned and there were a number of dead bodies lying about. One I remember vividly. He was a Chinese lying at the entrance door to Borneo Motors Main Entrance. It was clear that he had run for shelter behind a concrete pillar but had been too late to escape whatever killed him.

I had continued to have treatment for my arms each day and that evening I left as usual at about 6 p.m. for the General Hospital when there was usually a lull in the shelling and there were fewer people on the roads. But that evening it had to be different. I accidentally ran into a poor old Chinese man in the middle of the very wide part of the road approaching the hospital. I had slowed down to what was almost walking pace to avoid him, but instead of turning away from the car he turned towards it. He was not badly hurt and I took him along to hospital for a few scratches to be attended to. The shelling had probably confused his sense of direction. All in all, it had been an eventful day.

On the same day I also obeyed an order to store as much drinking water as possible in every possible receptacle or container we had, particularly the long baths and wash hand basins. It was clear that the greater proportion of the tap water was being lost through the hundreds of fractured pipes. Only one pumping station was still working and that was at Woodleigh. There, an unknown hero and his wife (their names were never discovered) kept the pumps working even when the enemy was only 800 yards away. Indeed, the Japs allowed them to continue their work even after they had overrun the station, though the lack of water was one of the main factors which hastened capitulation.⁷⁸

Next day was Friday, February 13, - we had another Friday the 13 in the following month too! As usual I paid a visit to the Cold Storage. There I heard that the Governor had issued an order banning the future sale or even possession of any liquor on pain of a heavy fine. One authority claims that 1½ million bottles of alcoholic drinks and 60,000 gallons of Chinese *samsu* were destroyed as a result of this order. The Governor had been moved to issue this order because it was known that drunken Jap soldiers had committed bestial atrocities after the fall of Hongkong on Christmas Day 1941, and the Governor wished to avoid a possible repetition of similar atrocities after the fall of Singapore. Actually General Yamashita, to his credit, did not permit his main forces to enter Singapore at all or allow them to get out of hand. To carry out the Governor's order, the Manager of the Cold Storage invited his customers to help in the destruction of his precious and expensive liquor stocks. For over an hour, therefore, I and others were employed in breaking several thousand bottles of whisky and wine against a brick wall in a godown. After a while we were knee deep in broken glass and even the atmosphere had become intoxicating. No

⁷⁸ Even in peace time, two fifths of Singapore's water supply had come from Pulau in Johore through a pipe-line which crossed the Causeway alongside the rail and road links with Singapore.

doubt, the order would have had more impact if large numbers of Jap soldiers had been allowed into the city, but thankfully this did not happen.

On Sunday, February 15, this time accompanied by my brother John and "Panjang" Evans, I again drove down to the Cold Storage building, little thinking, even at that late stage, that it was the last day of the fighting in Singapore. Rumours informed us that the enemy had at last landed at Changi and were already approaching Kallang Airport. We did not pay any particular importance to that news as we were diverted by a little excitement at the Cold Storage building itself. Three soldiers stoutly maintained that they were being sniped at from an upstairs room of a Chinese shop on the opposite side of Orchard Road, about 60 yards away. While the soldiers fired back at their invisible enemy, real or imagined, I removed my car from the line of fire to round the corner for safety. The mystery was still unresolved when we returned to our house at 5 p.m. where momentous news awaited us.

On arrival, a Signals Officer, Captain Taylor, who had a bed in our house, informed us that they had been officially ordered to destroy all their equipment and to regard 4 p.m. as the hour of capitulation. We were, of course, astounded by the news and suspected that it was the work of Fifth Columnists. However, we drove down to the Customs Head Office in Maxwell Road to inform Mr. Phear, the Deputy Controller of Customs, in private of what we had heard. We also told the Detective Office across the way. To make doubly sure we then drove back up to Military Headquarters at Fort Canning, taking Captain Taylor and Lieut. Sutherland Brown, a Volunteer Signals Officer, with us and asked to be told whether the rumours were true. One Brigadier said he did not know, but another contradicted the rumours and said that the war was still on. Reassured by this good news, we then drove back to Stamford Road and Cecil Street contradicting, when we could, the rumours of capitulation now rife. The streets were full of troops who had been brought in by hundreds of lorries parked alongside each side of the roads. Among many volunteers whom I met was Captain Vanrennan, a planter brother of Frank Vanrennan, of our Perak Battalion. He had got hold of a printed declaration denying all rumours of a capitulation. This was to us conclusive evidence that the rumours were, indeed, the work of Fifth Columnists. So when another officer in Cecil Street still maintained that the capitulation story was true and that Percival had been trying to surrender for the last two days, we were all very angry. We therefore arrested our "fifth columnist", bundled him into my car at the point of a revolver, and again drove up to Fort Canning H.Q. But once again we could learn nothing positive about the situation and we had to allow our prisoner to go. Our misjudged officer had, in fact, been perfectly right, for at that moment Generals Percival and Yamashita were about to meet each other at the Ford Motor Factory at 6 p.m. Once the capitulation became a certainty we decided to sleep that night at the Customs Head Office in Maxwell Road. I therefore made two trips in my car to collect a few of our belongings at Fort Canning Road and also to bring down our servants, who included my brother's boy Abu, his wife and child and my syce Nair and his wife. I also brought with me one bottle of whisky having poured all the remaining bottles down the drain. A Government fine of \$2,000 had been prescribed for anyone harbouring alcohol, but I planned to consume my

bottle that evening and this was what I did.

Up till then, nobody had given much, if any, thought to the consequences of capitulation, including a long period of internment under our semi-barbarian foes. But Arnold Gridley had in fact bought or hired a small motor launch in which he proposed to cross the straits of Malacca to Sumatra that night, a distance of about 50 miles. On being offered a place, I managed to find five gallon empty petrol drums and filled them all with free petrol. To do this, all I had to do was to go round the deserted petrol pumps and fill up the drums with what petrol I could find in each pump. This did not take long but when Gridley went to collect his launch, he found it had been stolen and the whole expedition had to be cancelled. It was probably just as well that this had happened, for too many heavyweights had been invited to go in such a small launch. Also many of those who escaped in similar circumstances subsequently lost their lives, for instance, Rear Admiral Spooner and Air Vice Marshal Pulford in a similar craft.

This was not the only minor disappointment that came my way that night. On the same afternoon, I had met Mr. Ansell, whose son had gone missing at Parit Sulong as already described. He told me that he and others would be leaving Singapore that evening at 9 p.m. from Gate No. 9 at the Docks in one of the Singapore Harbour Board motor barges and that there was a place for me if I cared to be there. After some difficulties in finding the gate in the pitch dark I did reach it a little after 9 p.m., accompanied by my brother John. But when we arrived, the whole place was in darkness and deserted. No doubt the barge or launch had already left and I heard later that Mr. Ansell had got safely away to, I think, Australia. I have never regretted that I did not get away under such uncertain circumstances.

We all slept on the concrete floor of the Customs House that night and were informed first thing next morning that the capitulation was now official.⁷⁹ I had finished my bottle of whisky during the night with the help of others and had slept very well for the night had been singularly quiet after our past nightly experiences. Several Volunteer friends passed through during the night on their way to various military camps. Those I met included Talbot, Jeffries, Egan, Barr and Wiseman, some of whom I was never to see again. I wondered which camp I might end up at. All our servants chose to return to Fort Canning Road and left at 9 a.m. I understand that when they arrived, they found the house had already been looted with little left. But when I was able to visit the house on foot a few hours later, I was just in time to catch a glimpse of a Tamil coolie making off with my Victor Cabin Trunk on his head. The coolie gave me a sheepish grin as he passed, though he had no idea that I was the owner of the cabin trunk. But I could not help wondering what he would do with my evening dress and tails which were inside. At least he would look better in them than any Jap! Incidentally I had already parked my Austin 16 car inside the backyard which was behind the Customs Building. I had removed the 5 drums of petrol and immobilised the engine; there it remained, unknown to the Japs, for the next

⁷⁹ The signatories to the capitulation, Generals Yamashita and Percival met at the Ford Motor Company building, 8th Mile Bukit Timah Road, and the surrender terms were agreed upon at 6.10 p.m., the ceasefire to commence at 8.30 p.m. (Singapore time) the same day, Sunday, February 15, 1942.

2½ months. Eventually, I understand, it was taken away.

As soon as I had had some breakfast, I hastened out to dispose of my revolver which I had carried with me all through the campaign. I walked down the road a short distance, crossed over to some waste land bordering on to an inlet of the harbour and threw my revolver into a deep pool. Down by the Seamen's Institute I met an officer who volunteered the information that on the previous night the Military Police had been going round the docks setting fire to all sampans to discourage futile attempts at escape. I can't say that I ever met anybody who could confirm this story. In a trench nearby were the bloated bodies of two Chinese who had, I suppose, been killed some days previously. At any rate some attempt to cover them with earth had been made but not very effectively. All around was very quiet — no gunfire, hardly a moving vehicle in sight and very few pedestrians either. But what there were in abundance were hundreds of empty military lorries parked on either side of the road, motionless and silent.

The first members of the enemy army appeared in private cars from the direction of Pasir Panjang, which lies a mile or two west of the city. They were wearing the inverted bowl shaped helmets which I had seen before, with their heads and rifles sticking out of the sunshine roofs of their cars. They appeared a villainous and scruffy lot. Back at the Customs House, I noticed that 2 or 3 Jap sentries had now sealed off the top end of Maxwell Road. They were stopping all cars, but for no apparent reason, were allowing European or army driven vehicles to pass. All others had to abandon their cars and walk. I returned to the Customs House with very mixed feelings, still barely able to realise the realities of things. It was time to reorientate my thoughts to fit the new conditions which we would all have to face for the next few years.

(viii) Life at the Customs House, Maxwell Road, Singapore

Altogether 52 persons took up temporary residence at the Customs House. About 40 of these were genuine Customs Officers and their wives and most of the others had been working as temporary Food Control Officers. Among the Customs Officers group were Mr. Allen, the Malayan Civil Service head of the department, and his wife; Mr. Phear, the Deputy Controller of Customs, and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Keet, Mr. & Mrs. Burgess, Mr. and Mrs. Elkins, and Messrs. Auten, Curtis, Foster and Holland. The latter four were called upon to assist the Japs in running the Food Control Department while two others, Messrs. Wilbraham and Salter, who were engineers running the Opium Packing Plant, were also called upon to run the plant for the whole of the Jap occupation of Singapore. The only person with no previous connection with either the Customs or the Food Control departments was myself and the fact that I was allowed to stay with my brother was entirely due to the good offices of my friend Mr. Phear. But for his kindness, I would have, no doubt, landed up in some Prisoner of War Camp without the company of either my Volunteer or my Aussie friends. For his consideration I have been eternally grateful. Apart from those officers called up to assist the Japs with the distribution of food to the population and of opium to addicts which were both considered humanitarian in nature and therefore permissible, the remainder of our residents not only

did no work for them but never spoke or met any Japs. We were, however, issued with Japanese passes stating that we were ex-Customs Officers, and allowed to wander freely around Singapore. I still have my pass, but it is noteworthy that I was never called upon to produce it during the two months that we remained at liberty. In this relative freedom we were fortunate as the 25 Municipal Officers, who were forced to work for the Japs, had to put in 8 hours a day, 7 days a week, for only \$50 per month, about 15 times less than they would have been paid before the war. There were a number of doctors, Fire Brigade Officers and 60 Engineers who were also kept out to provide certain necessary services.

We were particularly fortunate that the Customs House was well stocked with large quantities of such basic foods as tinned peas, "Ayam Brand" pilchards, rice and sugar which made it unnecessary to purchase much food outside even if we had had the money to buy it.

The daily chores to be performed by each resident were apportioned early. Some were given the job of sweeping or cleaning out the floors, including the concrete drains outside. Others buried our rubbish and waste in any of the numerous shell holes in the area, for the Municipal Cleansing Department did not get back to the disposal of putrifying matter for another month. Then there was the cooking of our meals, the cutting up of firewood, the cleaning of dixies and the washing up of crockery. The front and back entrances of the Customs House were also washed down daily and one responsible person was always on duty at the front door to direct curious Jap intruders to wherever they wished to go. Mr. and Mrs. Phear took on the main responsibilities of organisation at first and Mrs. Allen's attempt to take charge of the keys of the stores was voted down by the rest of us!

Our daily rather boring menu was really decided by whatever food items were available in the stores and from the very beginning our masters insisted that we kept to Tokio Time which was 2 hours ahead of Malayan time. So breakfast was at 9.30 a.m. (really 7.30 a.m.) lunch at 2.30 p.m. (i.e. 12.30 p.m.) and the evening meal at 7 p.m. (i.e. 5 p.m.). This meal had to be over early as we had no electric lights working in the building. Breakfast would consist usually of porridge, tea, bread and marmalade. Lunch would be soup or stew, prunes and custard and tea. The evening meal was often cottage pie, peas and tea. The consumption of too much coarse poor quality rice with the sardines made several people ill and at one time as many as 14 of us were down with some illness at the same time. Often it was slight dysentery, caused perhaps by the myriads of flies which settled on any food unless it was carefully covered. The walls of the building shielded us from worse sights outside. Two bodies were found in a drain, a Sikh's head outside the Boustead building not far away and an increasing number of old and sick Chinese were put out to die in the streets around us.

After we had completed our chores, we would spend the mornings reading, playing cards or, in my case, writing up the notes on which this narrative is now based. In the afternoon, we would go out for a walk or to do some modest shopping with our friends, in my case, with Arnold Gridley, Johnny Johnston or Dick Darby (who found a plate of bacon and eggs irresistible). In the evenings

we would congregate in groups in the dark and discuss the latest wireless news for, at that stage, the Japs had not yet banned listening in to the B.B.C. news, mainly we guessed because they had not had time to think of it. All of us had varying experiences in the war to compare with those of others. The vexed question as to whether civilians should have been evacuated earlier was often debated but no conclusion satisfactory to all was ever reached. Some of these evening gatherings even gave vent to some jollification. We had discovered in a room at the back of the Customs Yard hundreds of sample bottles of whisky and other alcoholic drinks which had somehow missed the Governor's ban. When these samples were mixed with the soft drinks of Messrs. Framroz, whose aerated water factory had just reopened up the road, they made quite a palatable drink.

There were very few beds or mattresses available but there was plenty of space and Arnold Gridley and I shared a very spacious double "bedroom" on the top floor. It is true that the rain came in through the damaged roof and windows, but our friend Coney replaced some missing tiles and made the room almost waterproof again.

One of the most important chores was performed by our Izal disinfecting squad. Everyday it disinfected all the drains running round the Customs House. In addition, in order to encourage good relations with the enemy, it sprinkled the floor and drains of an adjacent Jap sentry guard room, housed in a Chinese ground floor shop. But one Jap's request it steadily refused to obey was to squirt the Izal over the prisoners they had tied up there. It was the Jap's practice to tie up malefactors or looters, invariably Chinese, with wire. The prisoners' hands would be tied behind their backs and a wire noose put round their necks which if pulled tight gave the prisoners excruciating pain. These poor wretches were made to kneel, trussed up in this fashion, for hours. We never knew what happened when they were finally taken away, but the usual assumption was that they were executed. It is a fact that the heads of several Chinese alleged looters were displayed on spikes in another part of the city though I did not see these personally.

In the early days, many of us concentrated on buying A, B, C and D Vitamin tablets either at the Chulia Street branch or at the main branch of the Sincere Dispensary. We heard that Lady Heath, wife of General Heath, had been able to buy \$1,000 worth of the vitamins to send to the P.O.W. troops in Changi Barracks. My brother John managed to pick up a cask of syrup in his capacity as Quartermaster and this went down well with our morning porridge. Meanwhile prices of every item were beginning to soar. An 8 oz jar of Marmite now cost \$5 (about 12/-), a tin of 50 cigarettes \$3.50 and a gallon of petrol, for the few who still had cars, \$6.50 a gallon. Other important purchases made at the time were 36 safety razor blades to fit my razor⁸⁰ and a visit was paid to a Chinese dentist to have my teeth polished.

Gradually all kinds of rumours about what was happening up country and in Singapore filtered through to us. Here is a sample. Eurasians and Chinese were having a particularly bad time in Johore. Gang robbers were busy at Rawang in

⁸⁰ Not knowing how long internment would last I economised and still had 15 blades left at the end of the war.

Selangor. 5,000 Chinese had been massacred at Kuala Pilah in Negri Sembilan. Dr. Chelvam was now in charge of the Perak Medical Department; Mr. Savanaramuttu, a well-known cricketer and journalist was Mayor of Penang and a Mr. Ragavan was Chief Justice. Nearer home in Singapore we heard with more certitude that most of the Europeans had been ordered to parade on the cricket padang on the day after capitulation and had been marched off the same day to Katong, several miles away. The Governor, aged 63, had headed the march but many of the rest had been older and a few had even died subsequently. The other news about Singapore was grimmer. Several thousand Chinese had disappeared without trace and a young Chinese girl had enquired at the Customs House about the whereabouts of her father, formerly a clerk employed by our Education Office.

After a month of Jap occupation we were able to collect a few impressions of the Jap soldiers. In many respects, one must admit that their outward discipline was correct, though we Europeans in the Customs House came much less in contact with them than did other races. They were usually pretty brutally disposed towards the Chinese and much of their effort was concentrated on rooting out those whom they suspected were Communists or supporters of Chiang Kai Shek's Chungking Government. Jap sentries were much in evidence in the first few weeks at the many check points, where 10 or 12 pedestrians at random would be stopped for their passes to be examined. Sometimes the sentry might also make them sweep the road or cut firewood before he let them go. But after a while, the sentry posts were reduced in number except for such important Jap H.Q.'s as those in Orchard Road and Stamford Road. We had not then realised that these were the H.Q.s of the dreaded Kempitai or Secret Police. Jap soldiers visiting shops always paid for what they bought though they might sometimes only pay prices which they thought reasonable. The marching of the average Jap soldiers can only be described as a shamle as they dragged their feet and were frequently out of step. They also had the peculiar habit of urinating in the public streets and in the early days were not above confiscating people's wrist watches. As already mentioned, General Yamashita did not allow his front line troops to enter the City limits and this in itself may have prevented many nasty incidents.⁸¹ However, a Jap tank unit did occupy the Detective Station right opposite our Customs House. We often watched the tank crew doing their daily exercises either on the road outside or on the flat roof of the building. The men would wear any old clothes for this and even *topis* were worn by those who objected to the heat of the sun. The same men would meet again at 9.30 p.m. (Tokio Time), face in a North Easterly direction and offer up prayers

⁸¹ General Tomoyaki Yamashita's later career was an anti-climax. Instead of, as he hoped, being appointed to lead the army for the invasion of Australia, he was instead transferred in July 1942 to Manchukuo, then a remote non-operational area. The reason for this implied insult and disgrace was Premier Tojo's professional jealousy and also the Emperor's continued displeasure because of certain political indiscretions that Yamashita had committed in 1936. However, in September 1944, he was summoned to take command of the forces opposing General McArthur's Invasion troops in the Philippines. For a year he held out in Luzon against superior odds until finally compelled to surrender on September 2, 1945. He was tried by an American court in Manila as a war criminal and charged with responsibility for 57,000 civilian deaths in Malaya and the Philippines. He was found guilty and executed by hanging on February 23, 1946.

in unison to the Emperor, the Fatherland and their parents. This unit remained at the Detective Station for a month until they were ordered way to Java, so we were told. One morning I fell into conversation with the Officer in charge of the 10 tank unit. Most of the conversation related to Rugby Football for this Jap had learnt to play rugger at Kyushu University and had played against a New Zealand University Students XV. After we had compared scars obtained playing rugger, the officer got on to the war and delivered himself of a number of opinions. The latest Jap fighter, he claimed, was faster than the *Hurricane* and he himself had in fact shot down one at Gemas with his revolver! His friend had been killed in a tank just because one shell had penetrated it. British and Australian troops were good, but Canadian troops were bad. Somewhere, possibly it was in Hongkong, he alleged that the Canadians had not played fair by Red Cross rules because having put up a white flag they had then discharged pistol shots. As my position was fairly precarious at the time, I was careful to express no opinion on military matters but I did agree with the Jap's astonishing assertion that the USA might have 42,000 tanks ready by the end of 1942!⁸²

There was one subject which was always a potential cause of misunderstanding between us and the Japs and this was the bowing ritual, where the humblest Jap private had to be bowed to in his sentry box because he represented the Emperor. As the average European did not attach much importance to this, this led to several nasty incidents throughout the occupation. One day, a Dane who had not bowed was beaten up and given 20 minutes' enforced drill in bowing; European women were slapped for the same offence; and two P.W.D. Engineers, being driven to some job by an Indian driver, were hauled out of the car and hit for not halting before a sentry box.

Incidentally transport in Singapore was very scarce for the very good reason that we had effectually destroyed all supplies of petrol before the capitulation and the Japs had used this shortage as a reason for making the Europeans walk all the way to Katong and eventually to Changi, a distance of about 12 miles in all.

What cars had survived the capitulation had been taken over by Jap officers but even they may have found their cars expensive to run at \$6.50 a gallon of petrol. All unuseable cars were collected at central dumps, in Tank Road, The Esplanade, The Stadium or in Moulmein Road from where they were taken off to the docks for shipment to armament firms in Japan. It was, indeed, a common sight to see a lorry dragging 5 or 6 cars chained together along the road on their hubs to a dump. Municipal Lorries, too, worked in pairs. While both would be crammed with coolies going to work only the front one would be using its engine and pulling the one behind so as to save petrol. Within a month, the Singapore Sanitary Board had cleaned up the main streets but it took much longer to clear the side streets. Because of staff shortage, the Mortuary had often to keep bodies for up to a week before they could be buried. Much confusion had been caused by the Jap order to clear the General Hospital within 24

⁸² An astonishing assertion, but nevertheless, quite accurate. According to Terraine's *Life and Times of Lord Mountbatten* (Hutchinson), page 91, the U.S.A. War Weapons Programme for 1942, as fixed in January 1942, included 45,000 tanks.

hours — which had been the signal for all the ancillary staff to disappear as the Japs intended to use the hospital for their own wounded.⁸³

As a number of the clergy, including the Anglican Church Bishop Wilson and his assistant the Rev. Hayter, were still out and were conducting Sunday Services at the Cathedral, some of us started to attend these. The Cathedral grounds themselves were still being used as a lorry depot for repair work and were guarded by Sikhs, probably ex-policemen, who allowed no smoking within the compound. A Jap officer, reputed to be a Christian, attended all services to check that no sermons or addresses were given. Instead, we were allowed to sing extra new or unusual hymns. Sometimes we travelled up to the Cathedral in style by the newly opened trolley bus service. While Jap officers travelled 1st class, we were quite content to travel 3rd class, sitting well to the rear of the tram.

Occasionally we received visits from other Europeans who, like ourselves, had not been interned as yet. Apart from the Bishop and the Rev. Hayter we were visited by Dawson, ex-Secretary for Defence, who had been staying with the Governor, at the Tamagawa Gardens, incidentally a Jap owned establishment before the war. It was from there that Sir Shenton Thomas had set forth to head the famous march of Europeans to Katong and on to Changi later.⁸⁴ On another occasion, members of the Singapore Cold Storage called and gave us the interesting news that they had still 80 tons of meat stored in their refrigerators. There were also many tons of butter which miraculously survived 3 years of Jap occupation and was eaten by us in bulk at the end of the war. The Japs, it seemed, did not like butter. Several doctors called upon us and two, Dr. Grey and Dr. Green, visited us twice to vaccinate us. We heard that the 25 members of the Fire Brigade had had to deal with two big fires, one in Jalan Besar and the other at the Geylang Malay and English Schools site. The latter had been a very serious incident in which, it is rumoured, 2,000 casualties were sustained, including 200 Japs. What it appeared had happened was that the fire accidentally set fire to one of our ammunition dumps which totally demolished the two schools which had to be rebuilt after the war. The 60 P.W.D. and other Engineers continued to work in the Outram Road area for some time but were paid only 50 cents a day, the same as any labourer, but the Power engineers were lucky to be sent in early to Changi Jail after a dispute with their masters over a power failure or breakdown. Another visitor, an unusual one was an Irishman who had been set free from Changi because he claimed to be a "neutral" resident from the Irish Free State. He described conditions in Changi as being not so bad. He was now earning a living as a barber and I have wondered how he got on during the next 3½ difficult years.

It was only on very few occasions that a Jap invaded our privacy at the Customs House and we were of course thankful for such forbearance even if unintentional. I can only recollect 2 visits by Japs and both might have ended

83 1,000 civilians able to walk were simply sent home or to a mental hospital. Military wounded were transferred to a variety of places — the Cathedral, the Singapore Club, the Cricket Club or Raffles Institution.

84 On this subject see also Tan Sri Dato Mubin Sheppard, *Taman Budiman Memoirs Yan Unorthodox Civil Servant*, Kuala Lumpur, 1979, page 118-120.

unpleasantly for the people concerned, but fortunately contact was avoided. In the first case, a Jap sentry rushed through the front door one evening flourishing his rifle and bayonet in a particularly angry mood. What had happened was that a Customs Officer, who should have known better, had got drunk on some hoarded drink and had urinated out of a window on the fifth floor. The urine had unfortunately landed on the head of a Jap sentry patrolling the street. The culprit took care to hide himself while the rest of us placated the sentry.

In the second case I was sitting in a small room upstairs when I heard a Jap officer come into an adjoining room and address the occupants in good Malay, an unusual accomplishment if the Jap had not lived in Malaya for some time. As my curiosity was aroused I took a peep at the speaker round the open door and was shocked to recognise him as the former Jap photographer who had lived in Kuala Kangsar for many years. I knew him well and he would have known me well, too, as he had been the school group photographer until about 1940 or early 1941. He had been a good photographer but when "the China Incident" had occurred and British men and women at Tientsin and elsewhere in China had been insulted and humiliated by Jap troops, I had given him the sack and given the business to a Chinese photographer. I had left "Robin and Co" — the name by which the Jap photographer had traded — in no doubt as to why I had dispensed with his services. Luckily I was not seen or recognised and took avoiding action by hiding in the lavatory until the Jap had gone. No doubt he had been the resident spy in Kuala Kangsar for many years, but had retired across the border to Siam as soon as war became imminent.

As all our troops, still left on the island, had now been concentrated in P.O.W. Camps out at Changi barracks, 12 miles away, our opportunity to meet either them or members of our Local Volunteer Forces was only occasional. Fairly early on, however, I met some Volunteers whom I knew and who had come into Singapore on some fatigues from Changi, who assured me that my younger brother Gerwyn was with them and well. But when I relayed to them the latest B.B.C. news, as heard that morning on our set at the Customs House, they were frankly unable to believe the bad news I gave them about the continued withdrawal of our forces in South Burma. In their camp they were evidently being fed with the most fantastic rumours, to keep up their morale, perhaps. Anyhow, when I was unable to confirm these rumours, they went away quite convinced that I had turned Quisling and gone over to the enemy. I did not hear about this until years later.

There was, of course, always this danger of being mistaken for an enemy sympathiser or collaborator, for, if we were not, they argued, why were we still at liberty? To their mind there could be only one reason. So there was an awkward situation one day when I passed a batch of my former Rose Force Aussie comrades who were working on the road under armed guard. When they recognised me, their surprise was evident and some black looks were directed towards me but I dared not show any signs of recognition because of the guards. Fortunately an Aussie officer, who accompanied them, was allowed to go into a nearby chemist shop. I followed him in and had just time to explain matters and pass on a message to my Aussie friend Captain David Lloyd. I knew he was still in Singapore and later I was to receive a letter from him when I had gone to

Changi Jail. I still have the letter which had come in by the secret post organised by the various camps.

As our stay at the Customs House lengthened into weeks and even months, we came more and more to expect that sudden order to move to Changi Jail. Fewer than a quarter of us were doing any kind of work for the Japs, so we could only guess at the cause of the delay in moving us. Meanwhile there were a number of false starts before we finally left. On the first occasion, over half of us were suddenly ordered to march off on foot for Changi that morning. Fortunately, as I thought, I had found an old hand trolley, such as is used in moving sacks of flour around, on which Arnold Gridley and I piled our worldly possessions and we started off through the streets with the others. We had covered a mile or two and had almost reached the Kallang bridge when a Jap officer caught up with us in a car and for no apparent reason ordered us to return to the Customs House. All along the streets we were greeted with sympathetic cries of "Adohi, adohi!" (Alas!) from the local Chinese population. If the Japs had expected the Chinese to express scorn and derision for us they did not hear any such sounds. On the second occasion, we were again told to have our *barang* ready for a swift move, but once again nothing happened. On the third occasion, we were warned to be ready for a move on the following day, but the plan again fell through. Lack of motor transport to take us seems to have been the likely cause of the false starts.

By now we were almost looking forward to joining our friends in Changi. We had heard that 2,500 Europeans had been put into a jail built originally for 500 convicts and we had been told that we would remain there for 2 months as a punishment. Our local government had, it seems, kept a few Jap civilians there, pending their removal by ship to India, for a period of 2 months. It was not clear what was to happen to us after this period, but it was suggested that we would then be moved either to St. John's Island just off the shore or even to Formosa. Meanwhile we stayed on where we were until the Japs once again woke up to our existence.

On March 13, 1942 I started to keep the diary that now follows. I was to continue keeping it every day for the next 3½ years, first in Changi Jail and then in Sime Road Camp.

Diary

1942

- March 13 We were visited by Dr. Wilson, Bishop of Singapore, and Canon Adams, late headmaster of St. Andrew's School, a C of E English School. They tell us that the Jap official in charge of internees is also in charge of religion and education. He is a Christian and attends all services held in St. Andrew's Cathedral. The former Government English Schools in Singapore are to reopen again shortly with Japanese as a compulsory language to be taught for 2 hours daily. Singapore has been renamed Syonan and Penang Tojo-ko. The Straits Times daily paper is now called the Syonan Sinbun.
- March 14 Arnold Gridley, who shares my "bedroom" has bowel trouble. We understand that about 180 internees have been taken out of Changi to do civilian work outside. The Jap official in charge has openly admitted that conditions at Changi are not good enough and must be improved. There is already talk of a possible exchange of internees within 2 months.
- March 15 I attended a Sunday morning Communion Service at the Cathedral at which the Bishop officiated. We then spent the rest of the morning collecting garbage and tins around the precincts of the Customs House and burying them in shell holes. It is rumoured that 150 alleged Chinese Communists have been "liquidated" in the past few days. The Cold Storage staff are all to be sent to Changi shortly.
- March 16 Dr. Dugdale, late of Johore, called to attend to 14 of us said to be suffering from dysentery. Though we keep the place as clean as we can there are still mountains of filth in the streets outside which breed myriads of flies, some of which may occasionally settle on our food. The Singapore trams are again running along Maxwell Road, Moulmein Road and Tanjong Pagar Road. On the opening day, the front and rear of each tram were decorated with a Jap flag. The red circle on a white background is now a commonplace sight everywhere and I have even seen a white bullock pulling a cart, with a red circle painted on its forehead.
- March 17 We were all inoculated (or was it vaccinated?) at the Customs House by Drs. Grey and Green. My arms were now completely healed and I have to thank Mrs. Phear for her daily rebandaging.
- March 18 The following books have been read; they are borrowed from the Junior Customs Officers' Library which is kept here — Blunden's *Undertones of War*, Dickens' *Tale of Two Cities*, Tolstoy's *Resurrection*, Jock of Dartmoor's *Human Stories of Prison Life* and John Buchan's *The Power House*.
- March 19 Two of our inmates have mysteriously disappeared. They are Messrs. Wilbraham and Salter, the Opium Plant engineers, but it is suspected that the Japs have been borrowing their services to get the Opium Plant working again. Another explanation may be that they have been erecting a wireless mast for use with a Jap wireless set. We have

- established friendly relations with the Japs at the nearby Guard House, though it cannot be said that they show much consideration for the hapless Chinese looters they have trussed up with wire.
- March 20 Not feeling too well – have a chill and pain between the shoulder blades. Messrs. Wilbraham and Salter have now returned. They had been staying “with friends” is all they would say as explanation.
- March 21 Today I went for a walk with a Customs Officer named Dick Darby whom I have known for many years. We visited the house at 13 Fort Canning Road where I had stayed and where I met my syce Nair and his wife who were still living there at the back of the house. I gave Nair \$50 and advised him to return to Kuala Kangsar as soon as was possible. The house was empty, having been completely looted but all around the inside walls of each room at a height of 2 feet from the floor level, hundreds of small nails had been driven into the wall about 2 feet apart. The Jap soldiers quartered there had used these to hang their mosquito nets from. Nair’s opinion of the Japs was very low; they behave “like animals” he said in Malay. For instance when they wanted hot water they filled the bath with water and lit a fire on the outside of the bath in the bathroom! Darby and I also called in at a café in Orchard Road, had two small whisky waters each and spoke to two Danes. The Jap regard, or treat, all Danes as neutrals.
- March 22 Attended Church service at St. Andrew’s and used the tram for the first time, travelling Third Class. At the Cathedral we met a Municipal Engineer who had just been released temporarily from Changi to do a job in Singapore. He painted an unflattering portrait of some internees. Or at any rate he claimed that they were too lazy to keep the drains from clogging or to unload lorries when extra help was required. There is also a peculiar story going the rounds. A recent mission from the Axis Powers visiting Singapore are said to have criticised the Jap authorities for imprisoning civilians in a jail. Messrs Binnie and Gordon-Hall of our Customs Office have just been sent off to hospital with suspected dysentery. I have volunteered to give extra help in washing up the dixies in the kitchen. Much of the office furniture on the first floor of the Customs House has now been removed to the Municipal Offices which appear to be the main centre of local government under the Japs. I notice that many Jap occupied offices bear the words “Djangan Masoe” on the outside of the doors. This is the Dutch spelling of the Malay words “Jangan Masok” (i.e. Do Not Enter).
- March 23 Dick Darby and I went for another walk, this time to Dick’s former house in Grange Road. He was fortunate to recover some old family photographs not taken by looters. We again treated ourselves to a couple of whisky waters at a café and bought two papayas in the Orchard Road market.
- March 24 I ate my papaya and spent the day washing clothes, including one bedsheet. We hear that hundreds of the local population are dying of dysentery.

- March 25 Drs Grey and Green called to give us our second inoculations. Darby and I went for another walk during which I bought the Works of Shakespeare to study in Changi, a tin mug and a pair of sun glasses.
- March 26 Another false alarm of a move to Changi. Once again I went through my belongings to see that I had bought all the necessities for a long stay there.
- March 27 Went for a walk with Darby and Coney and had my teeth polished by a Chinese dentist for which he charged me \$5. At "The Polar Cafe", one of our favourite haunts I met Moller, an ex-Volunteer Officer, formerly planting on Jenderata Estate, Teluk Anson in Perak⁸⁵. This cafe is well patronised by Jap officers but they have never asked to see our passes. When they had all departed, I was able to have a chat with Moller who now described himself as a "neutral civilian". He was expecting to be sent up to the Cameron Highlands to join his Danish compatriots there. To help with my studies at Changi I bought Compton Rickett's *History of English Literature*.
- March 28 Went for a walk with Darby and bought a stock of tooth brushes and toothpaste. We met two Municipal Office employees temporarily released from Changi. They said that most people were very bored there and would welcome a supply of reading material. There had been 20 cases of dysentery.
- March 29 Attended a service at the Cathedral with Arnold Gridley and Johnny Johnston, where we met a Miss Ulrich, now an employee of the Swiss Consul, but formerly of Penang. I gave her my home address in case she was ever able to cable my mother. We also met Dennett and Coombes from Penang. My syce turned up and kindly gave me some fruit. I wish he would return to Kuala Kangsar.
- March 30 It was Darby's birthday, so went for a walk together and tucked into a plateful of ham and eggs at the Anzac Cafe in Moulmein Street. I have an attack of impetigo on the face so am unable to shave for the time being. A new lot of sentries have taken over at the Guard House near by, which makes for uncertainty as we had gradually established a fairly friendly relationship with the previous lot. Most of us have decided to lay in a store of vitamin tablets. I bought a bottle of hair shampoo, the first for many years,
- March 31 I have ordered some Vitamin B tablets at the Sincere Dispensary and bought 125 A, B, C, D tablets and 50 Abidol tablets. During our walk we met Dr. Macmahon, the Rev. Amstutz of the American Methodist Mission and Lady Heath, wife of General Heath who had been allowed out of Changi to visit Singapore. They told us that 17 Health Officers had just been sent in and advised us to delay our

⁸⁵ Jenderata Estate is situated only a few miles upstream from Bagan Datoh, on the south bank of the Perak River. From November 1942 onwards, it became an important staging post and depot on the supply route from Ceylon to the Anti-Japanese guerilla camps to the east of Tapah and Bidor. Among the stores landed here from submarine and junk were two portable B2.W/T sets. See Spencer Chapman's book, *The Jungle is Neutral*.

- move there as long as we could.
- April 1 Out on another walk with Darby and Johnny Johnston, we met two of my former King Edward VII School, Taiping, pupils, Lee Yan Sau and Ram Dass. I had no difficulty in remembering them as they had been prominent in school life when I had been there 7 or 8 years previously. I was very pleased to see them and was sorry to hear from them that one of the School Staff, Khoo Heng Peng had been killed during the war. We met another Municipal Employee at the Orchard Road Cafe, where we had our usual ham and eggs and whisky water. I also added to my store of Vitamins by buying 800 Vit. B. tablets, 250 Vit. A.B.D. and 250 Vit. A.B.C.D. tablets. The trams are now running as far east as South Bridge Road.
- April 2 I have started consuming 1 Vitamin B and 1 Vitamin A.B.C.D. daily and have ordered some Vit. C tablets. Went for a walk with Arnold Gridley and Dick Darby and were visited at the Customs House by three of our policemen, including Calderwood. We hear again the rumour that the Axis Powers Mission have criticised the Japs for putting civilians in a jail. The Jap excuse for doing so is that when the Jap forces entered Changi Jail during the fighting they found that several of their civilian compatriots had been found in the cells, possibly forgotten by the warders. The vast majority of Jap civilians, numbering perhaps 1800, had been taken away by ship to India, so those Japs found in Changi must have missed the boat.
- April 3 Good Friday - I went for a walk alone and completed my Vitamin purchases by buying 550 Vit. C and 25 A,B,D tablets. I also visited a few second hand book shops in the Bras Basah Road and found that the English book trade was as to be expected, in the doldrums.
- April 4 Went for another walk with Johnny Johnston, Dick Darby and Coney and met Mrs. (Dr.) Smallwood and Mrs. Shelton Palmer out on a visit from Changi. They told us that the Women's Block there contained about 400 women⁸⁶ and about 50 children of all colours. I again met the Swiss girl, Miss Ulrich; she tells me that her normal job had been teaching music in Penang.
- April 5 (Easter Sunday) Stayed at home. It is reported that 84 Jap planes have either been shot down or damaged, but where I don't know.
- April 6 Went for another walk with my brother John and Dick Darby and met some Siamese photographers who had just been released from Outram Road Jail. One wonders why they had not been treated as neutrals. I met my syce Nair in Tank Road and again advised him to return to Perak. The Fire Brigade was suddenly called out to a fire in the Changi area today but there are no further details. We had a Tiger Beer at the Orchard Road Cafe and I bought 5 Everymans to read in Changi when the time comes. The 60 P.W.D. Engineers are still working for a pittance on reconstruction work in the Outram

86 These women had already shown commendable spirit on March 8th after a 7 mile trek from Katong by marching into Changi Jail, singing "There'll always be an England".

- Road area. They get 50 cents a day.
- April 7 I went for the usual walk with Darby and had a meal of ham and eggs at the Orchard Road Cafe. There we met a Mr. Scully, a clerk from our Education Office. He had much to complain about the pro-Jap attitude of another clerk in the office, the unemployment and the high prices of food which made it difficult to make both ends meet. Nair again called with a gift of fruit. He now had employment but I would still be glad if he would return to Perak where he is better known and the food situation may not deteriorate so quickly as in a big city. I bought some Penguin books.
- April 8 We had heavy rain all day and the whole of the third floor was flooded out, including my "bedroom", so I did not go out.
- April 9 Darby and I went for another walk and saw the Sultan of Pahang and the Tengku Mahkota of Johore in Gian Singh's shop. Both were looking well and prosperous. I bought John 75 Abidol Vitamin tablets. We noticed a big Jap cruiser in the "roads"; incidentally we have lost two County Class cruisers somewhere but details are lacking.
- April 10 John and I paid a visit to the Sincere Dispensary this morning and in the afternoon Darby and I went for our usual walk. I met an old pupil from the English College, Johore Bahru. He told me that all the Sultans had been summoned to a conference at Johore Bahru by the Jap High Command. During our afternoon walk Darby and I came back by way of River Valley Road. A big empty space running alongside the eastern side of this road was being used as a dump for captured British artillery. It was sad to see several hundred 18 and 25 pounder guns, which had served us well during the campaign now relegated to the scrap iron yard. All the guns had had their muzzles blown off before the capitulation so as to render them useless to the enemy.⁸⁷
- April 11 Went shopping with Darby and bought another 200 Abidol tablets and also a 1 lb jar of Marmite. I met a Mr. Christostom from Ipoh who told me that Mr. Savanaramuttu, ex-Mayor of Penang, was now in prison and that all Chinese were being forced by the Japs to pay a levy of 8% of their possessions towards the Jap War Fund.
- April 12 There has been a large influx of Japanese Warships to the "roads", which, it is rumoured, have been actively engaged recently in an attack on Colombo and on the naval base at Trincomalee in particular.⁸⁸ Johnny Johnston and I went for a walk and found the Collyer Quay area swarming with Jap sailors. We were just browsing over some magazines at a bookstall on the quay when I became aware of another head under my armpit. It was that of a diminutive but friendly Jap sailor who was anxious to display his limited knowledge of English. Pointing first to me, he said, "You, one man?"

⁸⁷ General Wavell had also given orders by wireless to destroy these guns just before the capitulation was signed.

⁸⁸ For further details see Appendix A.

- and then, pointing to Johnny Johnston, he said, "You, two man?" He must have kept up this formula for several minutes. Altogether I counted as many as 40 naval craft at anchor of which 6 were aircraft carriers, 10 were perhaps battle cruisers or cruisers and the remainder destroyers. This formidable armada may have been intended to capture some part of Ceylon. If so, it must have failed in the attempt.
- April 13 Today, the whole of the Japanese fleet left and I did not go out.
- April 14 I went for a walk with Darby to Trengganu Street, reputed to be the centre of the black market in stolen goods. Word has come in from somewhere that the Crown Agents will pay full salary to the wives and dependents of all Government officers while they are interned. So my mother and aunt will continue to draw the allowances that we had been sending them.
- April 15 I have received news that my younger brother, Gerwyn, is still safe and well in Changi Military barracks. Arnold Gridley is attempting to manufacture his own brand of tobacco. Darby and I went for another walk.
- April 16 A new Committee, consisting of Messrs. Binnie, Gordon and Steeley has been appointed to take over the running of the Customs House in place of Mr. Phear who has retired after doing well a thankless job.
- We hear that certain sewage engineers brought out from Changi are working for only 10 cents a day plus free food. I have taken over the job of cutting up firewood for the kitchen. John, Darby and I again visited the Orchard Road Cafe where we met four "neutral" Danes. They kindly gave us a welcome lift home in their car - quite a treat! Their news was that the demolished Iskandar Bridge, near Kuala Kangsar, had been replaced by a wooden structure, food was very scarce at Penang and the Ipoh Goods Station had been destroyed, presumably when the ammunition train had blown up there. They also said that the Japs in Singapore had reserved the 1st class seats in every other tram for their own people; as we always travel 3rd class, this ruling will not affect us! The good news is that the Jap authorities have at last agreed to a list of internees at Changi Jail being sent home through the Red Cross. The Swiss consul, Mr. Schweitzer, has been appointed our Red Cross Representative and no doubt this is chiefly due to his efforts. So far the Japs have refused to supply any information regarding the names or the conditions of life in the various Prisoners of War or Internees Camps under their control. So Mr. Schweitzer has not visited Changi Jail yet.
- April 17 I went for a walk with John and Dawson, but there is no news to report.
- April 18 Stayed in all day. There is a rumour that American planes have bombed Tokio.
- April 19 (Sunday) Went to church with Arnold Gridley and met Holmes of the Water Department, Penang. Our late Financial Secretary,

Weisberg, called and confirmed that full salaries would be paid to the wives of all Government servants and also allowances from bachelors to their dependents. We hear that among those who got away before capitulation were Messrs. Bisseker and Bagnall, two Legislative Councillors.

- April 20 There is a rumour that 60,000 tubes of "chandu" (opium) have been stolen from the Singapore Opium Packing Station.
- April 21 We hear that the Japs have installed microphones in some shop-houses to listen in to possible anti-Japanese talk. Went for a walk with Arnold Gridley, Darby and Coney. We met Captain Morris, late of the Malay Regiment, and also an Australian A.I.F. officer by whom I sent a message to my friend, Captain David Lloyd.
- April 22 We left for Changi Jail.

CHANGI AND SIME ROAD CAMPS —

A Diary of Daily Events April 1942 —
September 1945

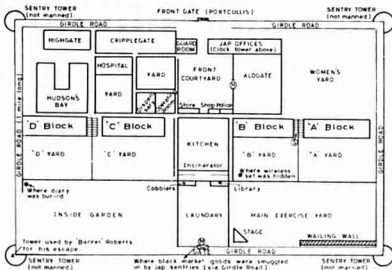
1942

- April 22 Ordered to move to Changi Jail at 11 a.m. and finally left at 3 p.m. Two lorries transported 39 men and women,⁸⁹ luggage, and large stocks of food for the Camp Store — 600 tins of sardines, 1,200 tins of peas and 3 sacks of sugar. We were searched on arrival for revolvers, radios and cameras and one person, Aplin, lost his radio. As there was no cell available, I slept the night under the stairs in 'B' Block and on the concrete floor. Johnny Johnston also spent the night under the stairs with me.
- April 23 I was allotted a place in Cell 39 on the third floor of 'B' Block which I was to share with two others, Garcia and Hunter, both of the British American Tobacco Co. Garcia's father, aged 67, whose place I had been given, was suffering from a weak heart and had probably suffered further because of the long walk from Katong to Changi made by all Internees on March 6. He died a few days later in hospital, so from then on his cell place was occupied by me permanently. Complaints of a shortage of oatmeal and sugar.
- April 24 There are two genuine convicts here, one is — late manager of the Pavilion Cinema, Kuala Lumpur whose sentence expired on February 14, and the other is Loveday, an ex-Army Officer convicted of embezzling army stores. Our food is cooked by *Empress of Asia*⁹⁰ kitchen staff aided by former Prison Staff. Breakfast consists of *Kanji* (boiled rice), molasses and tea. Tiffin (or lunch) is Rice with Bully beef stew and the evening meal consists of Rice Pudding, stewed fruit and tea. Sir Harry Trusted, late Chief Justice, F.M.S., doles out the molasses. The deep drain which carries away water from the Laundry cum bathing shed is used as a lavatory down which the water runs, carrying away the excreta. It is known

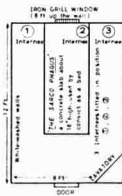
89 About 10 or 11 persons still doing various jobs for the Japs, remained behind at the Customs House, but most of these, but not all, came in a few months later.

90 This ship was bombed and sunk off Singapore Island on February 5, 1942, only the Kitchen Staff was interned with us.

ROUGH PLAN OF CHANGI PRISON (Ground floor) 1942-45.



PLAN OF TYPICAL CELL



- (H) Where wives handed over rubbish bins to their husbands
- (S) Where operator slept - on top of lift shaft of 'B' Block

Note

Each of the blocks A, B, C and D had 3 upper floors, each floor having 40 cells each.

as the "Wailing Wall." The laundry shed provides showers between 8 and 8.30 a.m.

April 25 Rumours of the outside world are rampant, but most news or rumours are brought in by Long,⁹¹ the driver of the Ambulance bus, who visits outside hospitals daily. Naturally there is a great rush for outside fatigues which provide opportunities for outside purchases from hawkers or Singapore shops. The Governor, Sir Shenton Thomas, has been put in an uncomfortably hot cell over the kitchen. I had a talk with Dr. Linehan, late Director of Education. He has compiled a record of all Education officers and can account for all except two, Strickland and J.N. Davies. I weigh 15 stone (210 lbs) wearing trousers, clogs and towel. We hear unofficially that many who escaped from Singapore have been captured at Padang on the west coast of Sumatra. Many European women who did not attempt to escape are in 'A' Block of this prison. Several old people, 20 in number, have already died here. These include Stevens aged 91, Braddon aged 84, and Garcia whose place in Cell 39 I now occupy. I have met Coleman-Doscas, the Agriculture Officer for Johore and told him how we had enjoyed eating his prize poultry at Gementah some weeks ago.

April 26 69 Instructional classes have been organised and are attended by 1,000 people out of a present jail population of about 2,800. In spite of the lack of space, books and blackboards, subjects include German, French, Russian, Chinese, Spanish, Malay, Japanese, Siamese, English Composition, book-keeping, Music, Bible Study, Drawing and History. There are also a Literary and Debating Society, Lectures, Concerts, Bridge tournaments, Choir singing and a school run for 6 young boys.

Sentries attempted to sell us two bottles of brandy for \$25 each and when there were no takers, drank them themselves. I understand that outside woodcutters receive extra food rations of bread and tea because of their work.⁹²

Two newspapers, the *Changi Guardian* and the *Changi Times* are published by two ex-journalists Messrs. Miller and Wade. They contain camp news, topical verse, and the personal reminiscences of internees. I understand that Changi internees had been collected on the City Padang at Singapore on February 17, marched to Katong where conditions had been bad and then on to Changi on March 6. Most had marched all the way, even the old.

Today I met M.C. ff Sheppard and also the Dutch Resident of a neighbouring Dutch island. The latter had been badly beaten up for

91 For his activities in this direction, J.S. Long was unfortunately condemned to death and executed on November 27, 1944. He was a former employee of the Asiatic Petroleum Company, a subsidiary of Shell.

92 The woodcutters were employed solely to provide firewood for the kitchen boilers. These boilers had originally been oil-fired but very soon after the internees entered Changi on March 6, they had been converted to burn wood by our engineers. The Japs refused to supply any oil because they said we had destroyed any available stocks just before the capitulation.

alleged withholding of information. I also met Allen, a Kedah rubber planter who had been in the Armoured Cars. He told me that Tyndale-Powell and Miller, two Volunteers, had both been bayoneted to death when wounded at Simpang Pulai on the Gopeng Road, Ipoh. He himself had been captured unhurt and forced to drive Japanese lorries all the way down to Singapore. We are not allowed to smoke in the corridors and have to stand to attention when Japanese officers approach. I met a Welsh baker named Roberts, a native of Holyhead, who is off the *Empress of Asia*. Mr. Garcia Senior died today, so I shall now occupy his place permanently in Cell 39.

April 27 There is talk of an exchange⁹³ of 5,000 Jap civilians interned in India for the 2,700 internees in this camp. I have started work as a cleaner in the laundry where I have two spells, one at 10.15⁹⁴ a.m. and the other at 2.30 p.m. Daily routine is : Get up 8 a.m.; Breakfast 9 a.m.; Tiffin 1 p.m.; Evening Meal 6 p.m.; Lights out 10 p.m.; and silence 10.30 p.m. The 'B' Block Representative is Mr. Edmonds, late head of the Sime Darby & Co, Singapore.

April 28 There is a great shortage of cigarettes and R.L. German, M.C.S. is the first to be seen picking up fag-ends! A sentry is said to have hit an Eurasian woman in A Block across the face with his bayonet. Somebody has paid \$20 for a bottle of whiskey, \$10.25 for a tin of 50 cigarettes and \$10 for a 14 oz jar of jam. We are getting rice polishings to put on our *Kanji* once a week; this we store in tins and eat spread over a few days. This is to make up for the molasses which has now given out. There was a cricket match today between the Blocks and the Malayan Non-benders XI⁹⁵ in which the Governor played – he lives in the kitchen block. There is a call for contributions to the Camp Fund to purchase vegetables, eggs, medicine, etc. News or rumours emanating from, or heard at, the "Wailing Wall" are called "Latrinograms". The Dutch Resident of the neighbouring Island says that Herr Spitz (?), Dutch ex-Governor of Sumatra, is here in solitary confinement. The Resident was ordered away by a sentry when he tried to approach his cell. The Camp Police, consisting of internees, is headed by a former Police Officer named Beck. An Australian officer is also said to be in solitary confinement here for refusing to divulge the name of the person who beat up a sentry in the A.I.F. camp. The total number of internees is now estimated at 2,688, including 380 women and about 50 children in 'A' Block. Food has been stolen from the kitchen and the *Empress of Asia* crew are blamed. Had an evening chat in Welsh with fellow compatriots Trevor Hughes, T.J. Thomas and Osborne

93 Exchange talk never ceased to occupy our minds throughout our internment and was even more prevalent than talk about food and the shortage of it.

94 All times were based on Tokio Time, about 2 hours ahead of Malayan time, so if we got up at 8 a.m., it was really only about 6 a.m. and barely light.

95 In pre-war times the Non-benders had been a Malayan Cricket Club whose members were 45 years of age or over.

April 29

Jones. I have started on my laundry fatigue.

Birthday of the Emperor of Japan – we received a gift of pineapples from the High Command of the Nippon army. The Japs supply only rice, flour, tea, sugar and oil for cooking, but all vegetables, cheese, eggs, papayas, sweets, etc. have to be supplied from internees' own money. Efforts are being made to stop the black market run by sentries by locking the kitchen passage at night. There has been an issue of 10 cigarettes and matches at 50 cents a time. Noel Rees has described in the *Changi Guardian* how he and his party escaped from Kuala Trengganu to Kuala Lipis, 120 miles over the Pahang range. I have a small library of 50 books which I brought in from the Customs House and there is also a small Prison Library. Old men spend up to an hour reading books while queueing up for the use of Laundry latrines and have priority in the use of the pedestal type.

Each block consists of a ground floor (containing a dining room and two large workshops) and 3 floors rising above it, each with its own floor representative. The BIII representative is Martin of Harrisons, Barker & Co, Penang. Each floor above ground level has 44 cells to hold 3 internees each (132 in all), while the ground floor has 45 in the dining room and 100 in each work shop, a grand total of about 650 in each block.

A common subject of debate is whether people were justified in escaping before actual capitulation since permission to do so had been given in only a few cases. People are beginning to lose weight. Heavy weights such as Vaughan Jones (lost 5 st 8 lbs) and Latimer (lost 4st) have lost a lot while many have lost 1 or 2 stones.

There is a rumour that thousands of Americans have landed in Ceylon. Ramplen Jones showed his film, "My trip to Australasia (E. Australia, Tasmania and New Zealand)."

April 30

Visited the Punishment Block (renamed Hudson's Bay by us). It is a favourite place for holding classes as it is quiet and has grassy plots about it. Denison-Smith a former Policeman is mentally disturbed and is in Miyako Hospital.⁹⁶ Noticed women internees bowing to sentries, those who refused being slapped on the face or behinds, and punished, too, for failing to stand up at the approach of a High Official. Coconut collecting parties are sent out four times a week to collect. Today 250 were brought in and sold at 5 cents each for Camp funds. Jap officers have stopped their sentries selling goods to us so the sentries will not now allow outside parties to buy from Indian Sikh hawkers. Those who attempt to do so are beaten up. Hughie Fraser, formerly Federal Secretary, says the payment of Government salaries during internment is still "a moot point". The

⁹⁶ This was the only outside hospital frequented by witness. Before the war and until renamed by the Japs, it had been the Woodbridge Hospital. Denison-Smith recovered from his illness and retired from the Police. He then studied for a degree at Oxford and was teaching at the Dragon School, Oxford, when he died suddenly in harness in about 1967.

possession of alcoholic drink is now declared a serious offence by the Camp Committee.

May 1 Some of the *Empress of Asia*⁹⁷ crew to whom I spoke today tell me that Liverpool firemen had refused to stoke the boilers when the ship was in the Straits of Malacca. As a result the *Empress of Asia* was stationary when bombed and there was no power to man the fire hoses when fire broke out. The captain of their ship had been afraid to take action against the firemen demanding better wages and food. 134 of the kitchen staff were left behind when the rest of the crew was evacuated before the capitulation. The kitchen staff had recently been working at the General Hospital.

There is a story from the Customs House that on the Emperor's birthday Auten and Foster had hoisted a Japanese flag and Curtis, Burgess and Allen had pulled it down. Then the flag had been rehoisted only to be pulled down again. Received a pot of marmalade from Mrs. Burgess (Customs). She is in 'A' Block with the other internee women.

May 2 There is a fair method of distributing food on each floor. Each inmate of the 44 cells takes it in turn to be served first and eight cells or more, again in rotation, go up for official "seconds" (second helpings) each day. Tubs of rice, etc, are brought up to the floor daily and each cell occupant queues up in the order of his cell. My cell number on Block B, Floor 3 is no. 39. Similar systems of distribution are employed elsewhere. Gordon Hall has procured 55 sacks of flour, sugar and lentils and some books from the Maxwell Road Customs House, but the sentries took 10 sacks of sugar as their commission.

The sentry⁹⁸ who took \$45 from our Camp Representative on April 28 is reported to have been fined \$140 by the Jap Commandant and the sum given to Camp funds! A list of names of all civilian internees, compiled in book form, has been handed to the Japs on April 30 for onward transmission to the Red Cross at Geneva. Meanwhile the Jap government has apparently refused to provide any information to the Red Cross regarding living conditions in either Prisoner of War or Civilian Internee Camps or even to consider a Mail service for such inmates. Rumours of a heavy air raid on the Heinkel Plane factory at Rostock. There are still 800 people in our jail without mattresses to sleep on. According to T.A. O'Sullivan, late Senior Inspector of Schools Perak, School Certificate 1941 Answer scripts sent to Penang have probably been lost.

⁹⁷ *The Empress of Asia* was an ancient Canadian Pacific Liner which was bombed a few miles off Singapore Island on February 5, 1942. It had been carrying not only troops but valuable equipment. It was the only ship bringing reinforcements or equipment to be sunk in the whole campaign. The ship was set on fire and burnt for several days before it eventually sank.

⁹⁸ The Jap sentry in question had claimed that he had been robbed of \$700 worth of drink and cigarettes on April 28. Major General Macrae, our Men's Representative, at the time, had paid him \$45 from Camp Funds to placate him and avoid further trouble.

Apparently 15 Police Officers left the country 5 days before capitulation though the Governor had expressly forbidden any Government servants to leave. Lieut. Okasaki, the Jap officer in charge, promises that fresh vegetables (from Johore) and meat will be supplied and paid for by the Japs in future, but there will be no milk supplies until they can be imported from Java. The main bottle neck is the lack of transport. There must be no communication between husbands and wives in the 'A' Block, according to the Japs' latest order. There is in any case no access from the Men's Blocks to the Women's Block except through the Front Court Yard and this is guarded by a sentry.

May 3

Previous to coming to Changi on March 8, the women had marched from the Cricket Padang to 2 houses next to the Roxy Cinema at Katong. Present inmates of 'B' Block and the Punishment Block had been accommodated in 4 houses inside a compound called Karikal (formerly the property of the late Kadir Sultan) and in an adjacent Chinese Doctor's house. Present 'C' Block occupants had stayed at Joo Chiat Police Station and 'D' Block, which included the L.D.C., had stayed at the Convent at Katong, which is alongside Karikal and faces the sea. All civilians, with the exception of some women and a few of the older men had walked the 6 miles to Katong, though the heavier baggage had been conveyed in lorries which arrived 3 days late. The same arrangements applied when the march from Katong to Changi took place. Conditions were bad at Katong for no food was provided for the first few days by the Japs though some rice and meat came in later. The march to Katong started at 1 p.m. and ended at Katong at 6.30 p.m. after a long wait near the Sea View Hotel. The march to Changi began at 11 a.m. and reached Changi at 2 p.m. The Governor, Sir Shenton Thomas, who had been confined at the Japanese Tamagawa Gardens, headed the march at 63 years of age.⁹⁹ Many internees carried much of their baggage with them, the remainder came on by lorry later. Any men given a lift by lorry had to be over 63 since the Governor had been fit enough to walk all the way at that age. More talks have been given by individuals. Stallworthy has spoken about Road Transport problems during the War, and Miller on the difficulty of publishing a Singapore paper under siege conditions. There is more talk of a possible exchange of Malaya and Hong Kong internees for the Nipponese ones in India. R.D. Macleod, Harrison Barkers, had died at 43 from a duodenal ulcer.

⁹⁹ According to M.C. ff. Sheppard's eye witness account given in his book *Taman Budiman* (Heinemann), the true facts were slightly different. The Governor was not confined in the Tamagawa Gardens. He and Lady Thomas vacated Government House in February 13 after it had been damaged by shell-fire and they lived for the next few days, February 14 to 24, in a room at the Singapore Club (part of the Fullerton Building). On February 24, they were ordered to move to Selkirk House, Katong, once a Japanese boarding house. On March 5, the Governor was ordered "to lead the column" of all internees under 63 years of age to Changi Jail and this he did next day. As Lady Thomas was quite ill with dysentery, she was provided with an ambulance.

- May 4 In a statement to the Camp Committee on May 2, Lieut. Okasaki admitted that there is a possibility of cases of beri-beri or scurvy in our camp. There have already been cases of swollen feet in this camp and some dysentery in the past but military camps in the Changi area have, it is reported, had 1,000 cases of dysentery and some beri-beri cases. I myself have been taking A, B, C, D Boots capsules daily since April 6, as well as Berin B pills. Coconut collecting parties were cancelled today because someone had been caught buying cigarettes outside, which is now forbidden. A sentry in the Women's Block is reported to have slapped both husband and wife caught talking to each other, when the husband was over there on a fatigue.
- May 5 We have had our first organised bathing expedition to the sea, which is 1½ miles away. 280 of 'B' Block took part, the walk there taking 40 mins, the walk back by a short cut only 20 mins. The site was near Alsagoff's bungalow. Horace Hunter, my cell mate, went out on a ration-party to Singapore but they were forbidden to buy anything. Attended an enjoyable concert in 'C' Block – J.L. Woods' party being the most enjoyed. Woods is an ex-Ipoh lawyer, whom I know well.
- May 6 Laundry fatigue as usual. Reading Monckton's *Some experiences of a New Guinea Magistrate*. There have been two issues of 17 Cheroots and 13 cigarettes which I donated to Messrs. Shaw, Meade and Neilson of our Education Department, as I am a non-smoker.
- The *Changi Guardian* contains an account of the first days of the Jap Blitz on Kedah with mention of the rescue of the Europeans from Langkawi Island, probably the same as we met off Bagan Datoh at the end of December 1941. The rations recently brought in are of better quality. Churchill is reported to have said that there is every likelihood of Malaysians spending next Christmas in their own homes! Attended a General Knowledge Quiz in 'B' yard.
- May 7 Permission is being given to purchase fish twice a week from fishermen at Changi Village. There is a rumour that British P.O.W. troops are being sent from Singapore to Saigon. The Governor has been moved from his cell in the kitchen block to one over the Entrance Porch where, it rumoured, he is being refused either visitors or exercise. Talk on Actuaries and Life Assurance given by Robinson of the Great Eastern Life Assurance Co. Death of W.H. Green.
- May 8 John's birthday – he is 33. More talk of exchange said to come from Jap Chief Police Officer. The *Changi Guardian*, a copy of which is posted on the notice board, contains an article by Wade on the Work of the Medical Auxiliary Services in Singapore. On ration fatigue to the kitchen with Sir Harry Trusted in charge – the first time I have been on it. Had talk with R.O. Jenkins, a Welsh speaking Visiting Agent. The Camp Committee has staged a protest walkout on the Jap Commandant for his refusal to forward a letter of complaint regarding the Governor's close confinement.
- May 9 There is a report that Mussolini has been replaced by Prince

Umberto in Italy. The Japs are said to have suffered heavy losses in ships off the Solomon Islands. Attended 'D' Block concert and heard songs lampooning a certain Bisseker who left before the capitulation and skits on the "Wailing Wall".

May 10

The Camp Committee, it seems, are sending a letter of protest to the High Command regarding the confinement of the Governor in the Armoury. The British are reported to have occupied Madagascar. During my laundry fatigues, where internees have their showers, I notice that the lack of food is reducing all the nude bodies to a more standard pattern, which makes them only a little less displeasing to look at. Large expanses of sagging flesh are not pretty. Reading Samuel Butler's *Erewhon* and *Erewhon Revisited*. 800 bags of rice have been brought in, enough for a 100 days at 8 bags a day. Average numbers in blocks are now 'B' 650, 'C' 680, 'D' 670, Hospital 45, Women 350, Children 50, Infants 6. There is a report that all Eurasians are to be released.

May 11

It is reported that, when at Katong, a Mrs. R Hospital, mother of a Mrs. R committed suicide by throwing herself out of an upstairs window. I have also heard details of the doings of a certain Colonel Kaito who had harangued civilians first at Raffles Hotel on February 17 and then at Katong. He had slapped Evans, a legal officer employed lately at the Supreme Court Singapore, and then told the internees that they ought to be shot for disobeying orders. They had started the war, he said, they had nearly starved to death certain Jap prisoners in Changi Jail and the Americans had massacred 600 Jap prisoners elsewhere. The truth apparently is as follows. 27 Japs had been found in Changi Jail when the Jap forces had arrived there and they were there only because they had given themselves up after the rest had been taken away to India. They were being kept there temporarily until there was a ship available to take them to India and also for their own safety. They had been given proper food and also blankets preparatory to their sea trip to India. Husbands and wives here manage to see each other regularly by synchronising the collection of rubbish bins from the women's block, each bin being carried out by a wife and delivered to the appropriate husband for emptying and return. In this way they at least see each other and sometimes can converse.

May 12

Cricket is played in the exercise yard every afternoon between 3 and 5.15 p.m., chiefly by the *Empress of Asia* boys. Had a talk with Sir Harry Trusted. He knows Mrs. Wakefield, wife of W.W. Wakefield, very well - she comes from Neath. He had often fished at Newcastle Emlyn in Wales. Sir Harry has taken a great interest in the fair distribution of food on our floor and gives out the helpings of molasses, pineapples and, today, morsels of plum pudding! Lieut. Okasaki has informed the Camp Committee that the Governor is being "interned separately" but "is not being punished" and is well treated. The question of his receiving visitors will be considered. The

- reason for his solitary confinement is still obscure and has not been explained.
- May 13 Bought a bottle of cod-liver oil. Have now completed 3 weeks in jail. Reading Forster's *Life of Dickens*. Met Dr. Cecil Wilson, he has been 5 weeks in hospital with scalp trouble and has just been discharged. The *Changi Guardian* has an article on "*The Civil Side of Preparations at the time of the Jap attack on Kelantan*" by Innes Miller.
- May 14 Visit of High Command Officials.¹⁰⁰ A blackout is being enforced this evening for the first time and the reason is unknown. I am suffering from a septic impetigo rash on the neck and face, caused probably by prickly heat and poor food. C.C. Brown gave a talk on "Singapore to England in 4 months."
- May 15 Carl Lawson, formerly an actor, is reported to be broadcasting from the Jap Station at Singapore. Garcia, my cell-mate has been allowed to visit his widowed mother who is interned in the 'A' Block. Redfearn, the brother of a well known trainer, has died from heart failure aged 64, so has Rogers, aged 67, a Singapore contractor. Today we were allowed a fire hose to flush out the Laundry floor. A letter asking about the Governor's living conditions in solitary confinement was handed in to the High Command. Attended Concert in 'B' Block at 7 p.m., the evening meal time having been advanced to 6 p.m. "Rule, Britannia" and "God Save the King" sung. Told that Paxton-Harding had been killed in the fighting on February 13. He was a well known Rugby footballer and a planter by profession. There is a report that 3,000 Australian P.O.W. s had been taken away, clothed in greatcoats, and that the Japs are putting up sand bag barricades in Singapore in anticipation of air raids. The blackout first enforced on May 14 is being continued. Vertice, an amateur self-styled "pathologist" from New York, has given me a new mixture which has much improved my impetigo.
- May 17 There is a shortage of water in the laundry today. One of the 2 pumps which work the water tower tank at the front gate is under repair. As a result of this breakdown, only 2 meals could be served by the kitchen. There is a rumour of troop movements from Singapore to Java. For the first time camp pies were issued today to replace the missing meal. There was a free issue of 13 cigarettes. An outside fatigue were lavishly rewarded with 9 tins of tinned food,

¹⁰⁰ Visits from officers of the Jap High Command were occasionally paid, particularly at Changi, though I do not remember being personally confronted by any of them.

On some occasions samples of our meagre daily rations would be put out on display in the kitchen for their inspection. Much tut-tutting might then take place among our visitors but the net permanent effect was usually nil.

On one occasion when some high Naval officers visited us (at a time when according to our version of the news, the Japs were suffering heavy losses at sea) some foolhardy internee in the kitchen called out, "Mana Kapal?" This is the Malay for "Where are (your) ships?" Luckily none of our visitors heard this remark or probably understood Malay even if he heard it. It was just as well as the reprisals taken for such an insult would certainly have been severe.

besides meals, when employed in transporting goods from Japanese Officials' houses. The Jap Commandant paid a surprise visit to our block.

May 18

As those over 50 years of age are exempted from fatigues only about half of our floor do active fatigues and this has led to some recrimination. These older men include Capt. Palmer of Collier Oscar II, De Muth a Singapore lawyer, Davis the Manager of Kelly and Walsh the Booksellers, Roeper a Travelling Salesman for Dr. Williams's Pills and R.L. German of fag-end fame.

Outside fatigues have lost some of their popularity since scrounging has been restricted. There are 4 food fatigue parties which carry up the food each day and number 44 men and 6 proper fatigue parties which number 60 men. Outside fatigue parties to Singapore are selected in rotation from each block every 10 days or so. Fatigue parties around the jail may be called upon to stack wood, bring in on lorries (without engines) or on hand carts fire wood from the adjoining rubber estate where it is felled and to flatten empty tins which, after burning in incinerators, are then collected in sacks for export to Japan as scrap iron. They may also grind rice for making bread, wash down corridors, the front courtyard and guard room and even the "wailing wall." There are also permanent fatigue parties which cut down trees for firewood for use in the kitchen, clean out the laundry daily, produce vegetables in the vegetable garden, work in the hospital and maintain such services as the library and the water and light supplies. There are also men who work in the carpentry, tin-smiths and shoe-repairing shops.¹⁰¹ Lieut. Okasaki promises improvements in our accommodation now that he has moved his office into the front porch. Future "askings", he says, must be made to him the No. 1 not to the No. 2, Lieut. Okuda. Had a Welsh chat with D.R. Swaine, Osborne Jones and R.O. Jenkins. Some are trying to flavour their *kanji*. They grate some coconut with a grater made from half a tin, tie the gratings in a handkerchief, squeeze out the milk or *santan* and add a littler water before pouring on the *kanji*. We are able to buy certain articles from a Camp shop set up near the kitchen, i.e. razor blades, soap, toothpaste, shaving cream, bromo, hair cream, and cod liver oil. Where any article is in short supply, what is available is divided between the blocks and drawn for. The Jap Commandant refuses to increase our daily salt ration of 5 grammes per person in spite of our Committee's repeated requests. A Dr. Evans, who stayed behind in Penang, has just come in and brings news of that place. A well-known resident, Balfour Ross has died in Penang Jail because of the rice and water diet supplied. He had stayed behind to look after an invalid sister. Penang itself was back to normal, all bridges had been repaired and the scars

May 19

¹⁰¹ In addition to routine maintenance work, the carpenters fashioned wooden food containers and ladles as well as stools or chairs to sit on, the tinsmiths made drinking mugs (with handles) or coconut scrapers out of old tins and the shoemakers sandals out of old motor car tyres.

of war and bombing removed and only the scarcity of traffic was noticeable. The Japs suggest that we should evaporate sea water to supplement our salt supply. High Command officials again visited us and another black out was ordered. Air raid precautions are being organised in Singapore. There is a report that the Russians have retaken Kharkov and that the Japs lost 27 ships and 30—40,000 men in their attack on Ceylon about a month ago.¹⁰²

- May 20 I have now completed one month's incarceration. One of the recently admitted internees here named Moore was rescued in the Java Sea after spending 3 days and nights on a raft after his ship was sunk. A Malay girl on the raft was also saved but an Australian soldier died before rescue. Bisseker and others got away in a Dutch transport, when marooned on an island, and reached Sumatra safely. Another man named Salmon and others set sail from Padang on the West coast of Sumatra in a Malay *perahu*. They had covered 300 miles of the way to Colombo when they were arrested and brought back to Singapore by a Jap tanker. Some 'B' Block internees have been playing badminton and having boxing bouts in our yard. More Jap officers have visited us and Lieut. Okasaki has given each block a piano. Dr. Evans just come in, says that Penang was twice heavily bombed even after the European evacuation and there were heavy casualties when bombs fell on the Central Coolie lines.
- May 21 The Governor is reported to be well and is allowed to have exercise but no visitors. Rumours of air-raids on Kallang, Seletar, Penang etc. are very probably untrue. Other reports speak of 50 Flying Fortresses bombing Tokio and of the Germans losing 175,000 when Kharkov was recaptured.
- May 22 Garcia, one of my cell mates, has found bugs in his sleeping mat. Very heavy air raids on Mannheim reported. The *Changi Guardian* has an article on the part played by the Supreme Court during the War. One or two have found means of obtaining "seconds" at the foot of the block stairs. Well to the fore in this queue are Chief Justice Sir Percy McElwaine¹⁰³ and Justice Murray Ansley.
- May 23 Death of North-Hunt, an M.C.S. officer, aged 48 from heart failure. Another attempt is to be made to buy fresh fish outside twice a week. Bugs have been found in nearly all cells on our floor. The remaining Customs Officers and Food Control Officers and their wives were brought in today, leaving behind at the Customs House only Messrs. Auten, Foster, Holland, Wilbraham and Salter. The last two named have been compelled by the Japs to work in the Chandu (Opium) Processing Plant. A former Customs Officer named Russell,

¹⁰² Very many of the "reports" and "rumours" received in our camp were wildly inaccurate. B.B.C. News would often come in disguised as "rumours" or "reports" read in the local press and we were not to know which were genuine and which were not. For the true facts of the Japanese attack on Ceylon in April 1942, see Appendix A.

¹⁰³ Sir Percy had won, perhaps, undeserved unpopularity when internees first entered Changi by prophesying that we would remain there 5 years. If there had been no atom bomb, his prediction might not have proved so pessimistic.

who joined the Malay Regiment, was killed during the fighting at Pasir Panjang. Others who joined the R.N.V.R. may have been lost on their way to Java.

May 24 The Russians are now reported to be pushing southwards from Kharkov. Jap sentries are reported to be selling cigarettes in the courtyard again. There was a Cricket match, F.M.S. v. Colony captained by Dr. Hopkins and McNamara (Police), both well known cricketers in peace time.

May 25 Wood collecting parties are again buying goods outside with the consent of the sentries. The *Changi Guardian* has an article by H.R. Cheeseman on the work of the Boy Scouts during the War. Del Tufo's mother pretended to feel faint in the Courtyard today, a stratagem to enable her to see her son, people say. P.O.W. soldiers are reported to be allowed to roam free around Singapore without guards and to buy from shops so long as there is no looting.

May 26 Today the Governor was released after 18 days' solitary confinement and put in Hudson's Bay (named after an internee of that name). There is a suggestion that poultry should be reared on waste land and fed on waste rice. Today we had a very tasty vegetable soup made from potatoes and mince but *No* rice! So tasty was it that everybody felt hungry afterwards. Beck, the head of the 200 strong Camp Police, has resigned on medical grounds. Coconuts are now being brought in on every other day and sold at 10 cents each, a welcome supplement to our meagre rations. There is an apparently false rumour that the French fleet at Dakar has joined the Allies because the Germans had massacred 1,000 French hostages. The originator of another false rumour about the fall of Malta, is to be traced, if possible, and punished.

May 27 Lieut. Okasaki attended the Concert given in the Courtyard for the benefit of the women and gave permission for "God Save the King" to be sung after he had departed. The F.M.S. has won the Cricket match against the Colony. Sydney Dant of Pitmans, who had come in recently, gave us a word for word report of Churchill's speech of May 10, which he had taken down in shorthand. Welsh talk with T.J. Thomas and R.O. Jenkins.

May 28 The Camp Administration has been reorganised by Lieut. Okasaki. Major-General Macrae, an ex-Red Cross man, has been nominated by the Japs to be our Camp Representative and a new Committee has been appointed, consisting of the Block representatives of B, C and D with E representing the kitchen and the rest, Macrae having the casting vote in all decisions. The *Changi Guardian* carried an article by Dawson, Secretary for Defence, on life at Government House during the last days of the siege. Owing to the shelling the Governor moved to a room at the Singapore Club in the Fullerton Building towards the end. Japanese rations of meat, flour, salt, rice, fresh vegetables (such as sweet potatoes, pumpkins and gourds), sugar and ghee as well as 35,000 cigarettes are to be brought in every 10

days. Peanuts are also to be issued occasionally as an extra.

Each Block has a couple of doctors who attend to minor ailments daily at fixed hours. The Women's Hospital has been removed to the Women's Block (A) and this will curtail opportunities for husbands and wives to meet or see each other. On the other hand, it will ease our accommodation problem which has been increased by the recent influx of several Free French which includes Mr. Dillon-Corneck of Ipoh. The Japs are reported to have said that the Free French would be sent for trial in Saigon when a ship is available. It is rumoured that a local lawyer, has been murdered by Communists because of his support for the Japanese, i.e. helping with the collection of the forced loan demanded from the Chinese by the Japs, accepting Japanese honours, and supporting the purchase of Japanese Cement during his tenure of office as a Legislative Councillor in peace time.

May 29

Ferguson, an ex-P.W.D. Engineer at Muar in Johore, tells me how when attached to the Madras sappers and Australians south of Muar during the war, he was wounded in the rump and looked after by a Malay at Batu Pahat for 2 months. He had then given himself up and become a batman to a Japanese General. He said that the Jap tanks had been got across the Muar River on steel hawsers stretched from bank to bank. The Japs had cut the throats of our wounded and shot their own wounded. The family of a Chinese Towkay, who had supported our War Fund, had been exterminated and then buried while some of the children were still alive. Six Australian prisoners had been made to climb coconut trees and then been shot down. An American pilot, captured at Batu Pahat, had been tied up and thrown into the river to drown. Ferguson had been obliged to join in 4 drinking bouts to celebrate "victories" and things had become dangerous for him when the sentry with a fixed bayonet had joined in and got drunk too.

Many here are ill today as a result of eating meat which had been kept too long. Sydney Dant read out his shorthand version of Churchill's speech on this floor. He had listened in to this in Singapore before he was interned.

May 30

Foster, a Selangor planter and a member of the well known Worcestershire cricket family, has succeeded Beck as head of the Camp Police. The High Command have been asked to relieve the pressure on accommodation by allowing us to use the girdle road which runs between the double walls round the jail and, on parole, the green space outside the walls. They have also suggested that the old men be allowed to live in the Warders' Quarters also outside the walls.

Today, I had a talk with some Dutch Fathers brought in from the Carimon Islands off Singapore. They had been imprisoned first in the Globe Building, Singapore. The Japs were very angry that the Wireless Station on the Islands had been destroyed by the Dutch.

- The British Military authorities at Changi Barracks have asked us for a loan of \$100,000 to buy hospital and medical necessities for their P.O.W. Camps. Attended a Variety Concert in 'D' Block. The star turns were Gurney as an elderly demi-monde, and "Barrel" Roberts. There were the usual jokes about runaways such as Bisseker and Bagnall who were identified with lavatories renamed "The Pisseker" and the "Bognall". Two planters have died, A.N. Wyld, aged 54, and A.B. Kinsey, aged 64.
- May 31 An 11 hour raid on Berlin is reported but no one knows if it is true. Jarrett the ex-British Resident, Selangor, has made himself an acceptable pair of pants out of 3 dishcloths. Heavy rain has caused water to seep through the cell wall. 37 Eurasian internees have been released.
- June 1 The Tin-smiths have moved to the vegetable garden where they have erected a new shed to carry on their work. There are a number of ways by which unofficial communication with the women's block is maintained. These include a ladder over the wall at night, throwing a tennis ball over the wall, pushing notes through the drain grating, paper boats via the "Wailing wall", messages through the Camp Police and fatigue parties working in 'A' Block and during Concerts given to the women in the Court Yard. Apparently some internees in this camp are able to receive parcels from inmates of Miyako Hospital. There the patients are able to order whatever they like from Singapore and outside friends of theirs are allowed to deliver the goods at the hospital without hindrance. Dr. Hopkin tells me that, when he was on his way out to St. John's Island, a week after the capitulation, he saw the Japs throwing batches of Chinese into the water from barges and then machine gunning them!¹⁰⁴ The Chinese were in batches of 4 with their hands tied behind their backs. The blackout precautions have been relaxed and lights out are now at 10 p.m. not 8.30 p.m. It is reported that in a very heavy raid on Cologne by 1,200 planes, 3,000 tons of bombs were dropped leaving not a house standing. A sentry was reported to be selling goods in the kitchen at 11.30 a.m. Two tons of cheese have been brought in by our block fatigue party.
- June 2 I continue to work in the laundry fatigue. It is estimated that the Camp Committee is spending \$18,000 per month on extra food, chiefly tinned goods, an average of 22 cents per head per day. Twelve elderly men are to be accommodated in the new hospital block now vacant. The Germans are said to have suffered 20,000 killed and 40,000 wounded in the recent Cologne raid. Had a talk in Welsh with Osborne-Jones and R.O. Jenkins. Two more have died:

104 It is now well known that several thousand Chinese were despatched in this way shortly after the capitulation. The story was that anti-Japanese elements in the population had been weeded out by local informers hooded to avoid recognition by their unfortunate victims. Those selected for extermination were taken away in lorries and never seen again. A few, however, did escape by feigning death and so lived to tell the tale.

Gray a Kajang planter, aged 54 and Durand aged 37, an assistant to Dawson, Secretary for Defence.

- June 3 The Japs are said to have lost 87 ships of all kinds and 130,000 troops in the recent Coral Sea naval action. The blackout precautions have been re-imposed. Statistics (complete up to April 29) give our enrolment as follows: — Men 2,361, Women 369, Children 61. Total 2,791. Nationalities are British 2,555 (made up of 1,887 English, 487 Scottish, 136 Irish, and 45 Welsh). The average age of the men is 44 years (68% are over 40 and only 9% under 30) and the women's average age is 42. Today, however, new arrivals, less the Eurasians released, have reduced the total number of internees to 2,784. It is interesting to note that the jail was originally built to accommodate a maximum of about 500 convicts.
- June 4 Hunter, my cell mate, bought 2 tins of milk at \$1.50 per tin while out on a wood loading fatigue and sentries were again selling goods in the kitchen during last night's blackout. 1,000 planes are reported to have raided Essen. Six civil engineers have been called out of camp to work for the Japs in Singapore.
- June 5 For the first time I was on the meals fatigue, helping to serve out the food. Sir Percy McElwaine tells me that he is a distant relative of the 1924 Cambridge Rucker Blue of the same name whom I once played with. C.C. Brown, once British Resident in Pahang, tells me that his father knew Strand Jones, my father's cousin, a famous Rugby full-back very well. 300 planes are said to have raided Bremen. Heydrich, the so-called "butcher of Prague" has been killed.
- June 6 The Japanese Ration Scale per head per day for British internees is as follows — Rice 500 grammes (17½ oz), Flour 50 grs (1¾ oz), Milk 15 grs (½ oz), Sugar 20 grs (7/10 oz), Tea 5 grs (1/6 oz); Salt 5 grs (1/6 oz); also, when available, tinned meat 10 grs (7/20 oz), Vegetables 100 grs (3½ oz). Cooking oil (1/6 oz), cigarettes 40 per month per man. The Japs have again been asked to arrange regular meetings between husbands and wives. Steps are being taken to keep a proper record of those who die in this camp and to look after their property. Today we received our ninth egg in 3 months' captivity.
- June 7 To celebrate Hunter's birthday, who is 38, a tin of condensed milk was opened. Fred Bailey, one of the "Asia boys", and who is in the next cell, and is our floor barber, has won the kitchen Sweep Prize. There is a story that Air Vice Marshal Pulford and 6 others died of starvation on an uninhabited island while on their way to Java. Their launch was sunk by a Jap destroyer and they took refuge on an island. Later about 18 survivors were taken off and brought to Singapore.¹⁰⁵ There was a concert in 'B' Yard and some fun was

¹⁰⁵ Both Air Vice Marshal Pulford and Rear Admiral Spooner, who had commended over air and naval forces in Singapore, lost their lives in this incident. On February 15th, their Ranch was driven ashore and its engines dismount led by a Jap landing party on a small uninhabited island, 20 miles from Banka. Meanwhile, a young New Zealand officer set off in a native boat to get help in Java which he safely reached on February

- produced at the expense of Cronin, who is in charge of the kitchen staff, and Hackworthy, the wood cutting fatigue's "chief scrounger". J.L. Woods' choral party sang some Latin and Old English songs well into the blackout. R. Don, aged 64, has died.
- June 8 A two months old European baby has died in the Women's Block. A report says that the German Offensive in Libya is being held and 14 Jap ships have been sunk or damaged off Midway Island. The Rev. Bennett has described "The Experiences of a M.A.S. post at Katong during the War" in the *Changi Guardian*. 1,000 books donated by the Singapore Chinese have been brought in through the good offices of the Salvation Army. More exchange rumours.
- June 9 A Naval Officer recently brought in to the Military P.O.W. camp at Changi from Palembang, Sumatra, where he had been in hospital, is said to have a complete list of internees and others interned there. Messages are occasionally dropped for us by Volunteers passing in lorries. Herr Spitz, the ex-acting Governor of Sumatra, continues to be kept in solitary confinement at the front porch. He has been there 3 months now. The Japanese have banned applause at Hudson's Bay Variety Concerts as being too noisy. The blackout has again been put back to 9.30 p.m. I took part in a Quiz General Knowledge Competition between Bill floor and the B Dining Room teams. They got 40 points and Bill 39 points (of which I contributed 17 points). A report of landings by General McArthur at Timor Island, and also that internees over 60 years of age and medically unfit may be released. Talk in Welsh between Trevor Hughes (M.C.S.) T.J. Thomas, my brother J.S.A. Lewis (Customs) and self.
- June 10 There is an Exhibition in Hudson's Bay of articles made in the Camp such as stools, chairs, coconut graters, etc. The latest rumour is that internees *under* 60 years of age and medically unfit may be considered for release in this country and if they are unwilling to go, Lieut. Okuda suggests that one sentry with a fixed bayonet would be sufficient to see them out. A boxing tournament was held in 'B' Block by the younger people.
- June 11 Today is the King's birthday and to celebrate we have received an extra sausage for lunch and plum pudding at the evening meal. There was also a special concert in 'D' Block. Another report of a 1,000 plane raid on Emden, the capture of Timor and of 75,000 casualties suffered by Germans in an Air raid on Cologne. The 'D' Block concert consisted chiefly of popular and patriotic songs covering George VI's life from the Boer War to the present. We hear that the following are still interned in Penang Jail - The Rev. Scott from Butterworth, Major Harvey of the Salvation Army, E.V. Thomson an

27th. An aircraft was sent to rescue the 45 castaways, but unfortunately failed to make contact and during the next 2 to 3 months, the party suffered agonising provations. Eventually, on May 14, a few starving fever-stricken survivors managed to cross to Sumatra where they surrendered to the Japs.

accountant with Evatt & Co., and Macgill and Lewis, two horse trainers. Red Palm Oil rich in Vitamin A, is to be issued daily to all internees.

- June 12 Reading Frank Oliver's *Special Undeclared War* (between China and Japan). It is reported that the Singapore Docks were bombed at 11.30 p.m. last night but we heard nothing.
- June 13 36 Jap ships reported sunk or damaged off Midway Island. In future, owing to the shortage of flour, we shall receive a 3 oz loaf only every other day. Lieut. Okasaki "thinks" that our official list of internees has now been forwarded to Tokio. He complains of the dirtiness of the corridors and of "gambling" with cards during the visits of High ranking Jap officers. The following have died, C. Farquharson, aged 49, an Estate Engineer, and John Carbry, aged 25, who had been a ship's fireman and cook.
- June 14 Fresh lime juice, rich in Vitamin C, is to be provided every other day, presumably to avoid scurvy.
- June 15 Four months has now passed since the capitulation. Lieut. Okasaki has again issued instructions banning trafficking with sentries inside and hawkers outside, the camp on pain of his stopping the issue of our tobacco and cigarette rations. 51 Jap ships are now estimated to have been sunk in the combined Coral Sea and Midway Island battles. A new craze has started in the main exercise yard, tea brewing on home made stoves fitted with long chimneys. The Gardeners have planted large numbers of papayas in the hope that they will produce fruit in a year's time. The new hospital block, just opened, has been named Labrador, as it is next to Hudson's Bay. Cells in this area are nicknamed "igloos".
- June 16 A 1½ oz loaf is to be issued daily from tomorrow. Our Men's representative tells us that only \$9,000 now remains in the Camp Fund out of the \$125,000 originally subscribed to the first loan, but we have \$72,000 worth of tinned goods still in the store. An appeal for \$50,000 more is now being made to buy more goods before the supply at Singapore runs out. Had a talk in Welsh with Osborne-Jones, Trevor Hughes and T.J. Thomas.
- June 17 The women internees have now been ordered to make 5,000 badges for Jap soldiers' uniforms within 20 days after they had refused to do this voluntarily and had some "privileges" taken away. Red Palm oil, rich in Vitamin A, has been issued for the first time — a teaspoonful per day per person.
- June 18 There are daily Tote competitions and occasional race meetings of the board ship variety, held in the kitchen, a percentage of the takings going to Camp Funds. Donated \$50 as a loan to the Camp Fund. A list of Volunteers in the Military Camp enquiring after friends and relatives in this camp has been posted on the notice-board. I doubt if my brother, G.E.D. Lewis, in the Military Camp knows that his two brothers are now in this camp and not still in the Customs House, Singapore. A rumoured landing of British and

- American forces in France is patently untrue. I have started keeping any second helpings of food for eating in the evenings as I am more hungry then.
- June 19 Another plea has been made to the Japs to transfer the internees in the Penang Jail to this camp. Buying from outside hawkers continues in spite of the official ban and the "Asia boys" are reputed to be making large profits by resales. I have today sent off a message to my brother Gerwyn by unofficial channels,¹⁰⁶ and hope he will receive it. We are to be allowed to send off postcards to our relatives informing them, in not more than 10 lines, that we are "safe, healthy and happy" in this jail, though this may not be revealed and it must be described as a "camp".
- June 20 It is understood that all Free French internees are to be sent off to Saigon next week. Meanwhile the whole camp is much exercised as to what to say on their postcards. John is typing my message for me. Troops in the military camp nearby are said to be in good spirits, though 3,000 Australians have departed "overseas", wherever that may be.
- June 21 Municipal Engineers, still out working in Singapore, report many acts of goodwill by the local population such as leaving tins of food in their cars. In the course of a talk with Ward M.C.S., he mentioned that the Governor was never informed of the seriousness of the military situation, that Sir Lewis Heath would not believe Ashton, late D.O. Teluk Anson, when he said that it was quite possible for the Japs to approach them through so called "impenetrable jungle." Our troops, while still on board ship on their way out had been told that so long as they held the roads, the Japs could not get through as the jungle was "impassable."
- June 22 Reading Frank Swinnerton's *The Georgian Literary Scene*. Hunter went out on a wood fatigue and managed to buy 2 tins of milk at \$1.50 per tin. Chinese hawkers continue to sell us food, but disguise their transactions by passing the goods sold through or under the collapsible wooden boards of their houses. The sentries object to this trade as it takes away from the profits of their own trade.
- June 23 Two elderly internees have just arrived by rail, via Siam, from Kelantan, a Dr. Geale aged 67 and H.J. Baker aged 73. \$9,000 has so far been subscribed towards the Camp appeal for \$50,000. The Jap authorities have been asked to forward the names of those who have died in this camp. John and I have forwarded our names to be included in the list to be sent to Volunteers in the military P.O.W. Camp. Our cell have won a raffle prize of a bottle of chutney. The fall of Tobruk to the Germans is reported. I attended a Promenade Concert in which Van Hien, a Singapore accountant, played a major

¹⁰⁶ One of the people responsible for passing on such messages was M.C. ff. Sheppard (M.C.S.). Unfortunately he was caught some time later by a Sikh sentry and given "the water treatment" to force him to divulge more details of his doings. I received two messages during my time in Changi, one from my brother G.E.D. Lewis, and one from my friend in the A.I.F., Capt. David L'oyd, 2/30 Battalion.

part as conductor. Van Hien deserves great credit for his hard work in keeping up our morale.

June 24 200 of our troops are said to be interned in Pudu Jail Kuala Lumpur. Many of these must have given themselves up up-country. Messrs. Geale and Baker say they were imprisoned first in the Mercantile Bank, Kota Bahru, and then taken to Tumpat to await a ship. Then they were taken by train up to Padang Besar in Siam where they were put on a train for Singapore. Only the stations at Bukit Mertajam and Kluang had been badly damaged. They said that 9 out of 15 Europeans imprisoned in a house on Pinyok Tin Mine at Yala in Siam had been killed by grenades thrown in on them by drunken Japs. All Asiatics had been very friendly to them while on the train. Around Alor Star, Kedah they had noticed a number of our troops repairing the permanent way. Very few ships now called in at the Kelantan ports. Garcia was allowed to visit his mother for $\frac{3}{4}$ hour. Today we had "steamed rice" for the evening meal instead of rice pudding. It was not very filling and we were all very hungry. 6 Japs turned up to watch a boxing tournament and seemed to enjoy seeing Europeans knocking each other about.

June 25 The blackout is again to be enforced from 8.30 p.m. at night to 8.30 in the morning. Hunter was out on a wood fatigue and bought 2 tins of milk from a Chinese woman hawker. The goods were handed through a hedge and had to be quickly buried when a Jap sentry approached. The other day a man managed to cut off the heads of two live chickens and bring them into camp hidden in the wood cart, right under the nose of the sentry. Later the chickens were plucked and roasted in the kitchen. A fair number of internees manage to buy goods on these wood fatigues, when out collecting coconuts, or when they go into Singapore with the ration fatigues. One sentry is said to have made a profit of \$280 in 3 days. The rumour is that Rommel is preparing to attack us at Sollum with 2 fresh divisions.

June 26 Sworder, a Survey officer, gave a talk on a survey expedition carried out at Kulim in south Kedah where 3 Malays lost their lives through falling down a water fall. The Japs have been asked to give the names of internees being detained in the Dutch East Indies. Many here are anxious to hear news of wives and families said to be detained there. A 3-day cricket match started today between elevens representing the Selangor Club, Kuala Lumpur and the Singapore Cricket Club. There was a Variety Concert in 'B' yard. Tea at the evening meal was for the first time served without either milk or sugar. Our position in Libya is reported to be serious. The Camp concerts are run chiefly by the following - "Barrel" Roberts, Gordon Osborne and Peter Gurney who are the comedians, Van Hien and J.L. Woods the choir conductors, and there are a number of good instrumentalists - Farrell (saxophone), Merrifield (accordion), Kauff (double bass), Gluhoff (flute), Ross and Eber (violin) and Eisenger and Van

- Hien (pianists). Some of the above were peacetime professionals playing in bands. My friend A.H. Gridley (Customs) has been sent to the Miyako Hospital suffering from dysentery.
- June 27 Eleven of the oldest men, aged between 63 and 75 years, are now living in "Labrador" and are looked after by two volunteer orderlies. A concert due to be held in 'D' yard has been postponed because Lieut. Okasaki required the services of the "artistes" at a private party being given at his house. Shebbeare, a Game Warden, gave a lecture on snakes. He had served in India and taken part in one of the Everest expeditions.¹⁰⁷
- June 28 Lieut. Okasaki informed the Camp Committee that, because of a suspected case of cholera on a ship in Singapore, there would be no more sea-bathing or buying of fish for the time being. I sold a second hand torch for \$5. Lieut. Okasaki's music party were given only cold tea at the party because, perhaps, of the presence of a Japanese General. Apparently a number of Sikhs, one British officer and 6 N.C.O's were also present.
- June 29 Archdeacon Graham White preached in 'C' Block. All Protestants have United Services on Sundays, each clergyman or minister taking it in turns to take the service, read the lessons, and preach the sermon. The Roman Catholics have their own services. There are also occasional lectures on religious subjects and study groups which study the Bible and the New Prayer Book.
- June 30 The Jap Commandant has called up to his office all Tin Miners and Prison Warders. The reason is unknown. The Camp Committee have also been banned from buying any more tinned goods from Gian Singh or any other trader. No one knows why, but some guess that we may be moved out soon and the place again become a prison staffed by European Warders. We are told that the *Asama Maru* will shortly arrive in Singapore to join the Italian liner Conte Verde, whence they will both sail to Lorenzo Marques in Portuguese East Africa. According to the rumour the ships will be carrying United States, Canadian and South American diplomats and Nationals from the Far East – who will be exchanged for 1,800 Japanese Nationals now in America. The latter will be brought to Lorenzo Marques by the Swedish ship *Gripsholm*. 41 American and Canadian Nationals in this camp have also asked to be exchanged. The kitchen is experimenting with rice cakes made out of rice and coconut gratings in view of the shortage of bread. Took part in another Quiz competition between 'B' Block floors and 'B' Workshop which was won by the latter. Two more have died, Isaac Pitt aged 74, a Bagan Serai

107 E.O. Shebbeare had been stationed at the Gap, on the borders of Selangor and Pahang, before the war and had narrowly missed being recruited to join one of Spencer Chapman's Stay-behind Parties in that area in 1942. Early in 1945 it was decided in Sime Road Camp to breed giant snails for eating and Shebbeare was appointed O/C Snails. When his friends suggested that this was a bit of a come-down from being O/C Elephants, he replied that he was not so active then and this new job might suit him better.

- planter, and N.C. Begg aged 51, of Singapore.
- July 1 The blackout has been put back to 10 p.m. again. My friend Darby (Customs) has received news of his brothers in the military camp but I have no news of my brother G.E.D. Lewis. Birnie, aged 52, and employed in the Food Control section of the Customs Dept., tells me what happened to him after capitulation. Apparently he and 3 others had been told by a Jap officer to stay in their house which was opposite Karikal. They had, therefore, been unaware of the Jap order to parade on the Cricket ground and then to proceed to Karikal. As a result when they were discovered their explanation had not been believed by Colonel Kaito and they had been given 15 strokes on the back with an 8 foot pole. They had had no chit from the officer who had told them to stay out and he had gone away just when his testimony might have saved them a beating.
- July 2 The new rice-coconut cakes have been issued for the first time. Dillon Corneck and 11 other Free French have been sent off to Saigon. The Jap High Command have agreed to supply us with rice "polishings" from today. These are the husks of the rice and are very nutritious. The Japs have fixed our free rations of vegetables at 16 pikuls twice a week or 2 tons a week or 9 tons a month. The Germans are said to be only 95 miles from Alexandria. The Camp Committee are to give Lieut. Okasaki a detailed report on the treatment of Japanese Civilians from December 8 onwards. This is in response to a letter received from a former Japanese internee complaining of "ill-treatment" during that period. Flour prices in Singapore are now exorbitant, hence the shortage of bread in this camp. Murray Jack gave a talk on Palestine.
- July 3 Had bad earache and visited the doctor. I sold a torch and 2 bulbs for \$7 and a second hand razor for \$5. Reading Bruce-Lockhart's *Guns or Butter*. Listened to a very interesting lecture on American Literature up to 1900 by the Rev. Dr. Amstutz. 150 tins of food have been stolen at night through a grille right opposite the Camp Police Station. There have been previous petty thefts of this kind but this is the largest to date.
- July 4 American Independence Day has been celebrated by the Americans. We have received a list of Volunteers in the Military Camp, but a large number are now "ex-Malaya". One volunteer, Hughes, a former Negri Sembilan Rigger player, has lost a leg. I sold 3 bottles of Palmolive Shampoo for \$6. The Rev. Dr. Amstutz, leader of the American group in this camp, has been informed by Lieut. Okasaki, it is said, that they may be "exchanged" in the next ship. A reward of \$200 has been offered for the capture of the kitchen store thieves. 'D' Block had a concert in 'B' Block yard. Sebastopol is said to have fallen to the Germans. Death of a woman internee, a Mrs. S.J. Vincent, aged 59. Her husband is in our camp.
- July 5 A cool chamber, sufficient to keep meat fresh for 8 days, has now been installed in the kitchen. Insulation is provided by coconut

- husk. A new kind of bread made from flour and rice polishings has been issued for the first time. It is dark brown in colour and rich in Vitamin B. The Jap meat ration is now so small that even mince can only be provided on 3 days in every 10 days.
- July 6 H.R. Cheeseman, our Deputy Director of Education, preached the sermon last night. The Germans are now reported to be held 75 miles west of Alexandria. Sabotage is said to be rife, both in Singapore and up country on railway bridges; for instance at the Enggor Railway Bridge near Kuala Kangsar. Hunter bought nine tins of milk while out on a wood fatigue. Dr. Amstutz gave another lecture, on American Literature in the 20th Century. One of the outside woodcutters, Sansom of BIV, was taken away by a Japanese patrol because he had wandered away slightly from his usual pitch. He was given 2 days' solitary confinement.
- July 7 We are assured that all the postcards written by the internees for despatch to relatives have now passed the Jap censors. The Japs now admit that past deficiencies in the supply of vegetables have been due to a miscalculation of our needs and not to a shortage! The Rev. Colin King of my Department gave his first lecture on English Literature. It is calculated that there are 175-200 units of Vitamin B in each of our new Rice Polishings loaves. Had a talk in Welsh with Osborne Jones, T.J. Thomas, R.O. Jenkins, Williams (of the Singapore Cold Storage), my brother John, and Evans of the Singapore Supreme Court.
- July 8 The first issue of "the Scrounger", a humorous pictorial magazine has been displayed on the noticeboard. It is edited by Maxwell (Police). A new system of floor fatigues has been instituted. There are to be 10, not 8, meal fatigue squads and 8 pairs of the older men to empty refuse bins. I shall therefore be carrying up meals only every 10 days from now on. About 60 Jap planes passed over today. In the past week there has been much more aerial activity and practice A.A. fire. Long, the Ambulance Car driver, has lost his job. Apparently a love letter from a girl in Kandang Kerbau Hospital to a doctor fell into the hands of Lieut. Okasaki. In the letter it states that it was possible for parcels to get into Changi Jail through the Ambulance Car driver.
- A list of those interned at Palembang in Sumatra is now available. It is reported that the *Vyner Brooke* and *Giang Bee* were sunk and the *Tapah*, *Mata Hari* and *Siang Woo* were captured!¹⁰⁸ Moore, an

108 This refers to the flotilla of small ships which left Singapore for Java 2 or 3 days before the capitulation, of which only 4, according to one authority, out of a total of 44 ships managed to elude the Japanese forces guarding the Banka Strait through which the ships had to pass to reach Batavia. The bombing and sinking of these defenceless ships led to an appalling loss of life. For instance, the *Giang Bee*, an ancient Chinese coaster of 1,200 tons had carried 262 passengers, mostly women and children but also the staff of the Government Information and Broadcasting Services, when it sailed from Singapore on Thursday night, February 12. Sometime after the first bombing off Banka Island the 4 ships' life boats had been launched but only 2 survived to reach

Engineer, tells me how only five of them out of 75 who clung to 3 rafts for 3 days and nights were saved from the *Giang Bee*. These were Moore, Gutteridge, a Malay girl, and two sailors off the *Prince of Wales*. 3 lifeboats of women and children got clear of the ship, but a fourth boat tipped into the sea. Several Jap warships, sailing in convoy, passed within 40 yards of them but did not stop. Eventually they were again spotted by a seaplane on the third day and rescued by a Jap destroyer. The ship itself was sunk by shell fire by 2 Jap destroyers, only 12 miles from the island of Banka. Moore and the other survivors were taken first to Kota Bahru, Kelantan, and then to Saigon where 14 of them spent a month in the jail. Japanese traffic police are in control there. Oggier, an internee, has received a letter from his brother-in-law a Volunteer in the military camp. He makes the usual complaints, cramped accommodation, no electric light, a restricted water supply, shortage of cash to buy more food and meagre food rations, mostly rice. Lieut. Okasaki appears to be in a difficult mood. He has stopped parcels coming into this camp from Miyako Hospital and the exchange of parcels between husbands and wives within the camp. The following have died G. Brown aged 54, of Sungei Patani from cancer and V.E.H. "Dusty" Rhodes aged 48, from T.B.

July 9

Cheeseman discussed with me what appointment I might hold after the war. It is said that General Yamashita has sent the Governor gifts of butter, cheese, beer and sherry, but this cannot be confirmed. R. Walker, the Art Master, is completing a reredos depicting a scene with the Virgin Mary, her child and the Magi as the central figures, painted by him in the laundry. The Ambulance car has been transferred to an Indian Unit, whence it can be borrowed when required. Tin Miners in this camp have refused to work the mines for the Japs and the recent curtailment of our "privileges" may be due to this refusal. It is reported that 8 Javanese caught stealing rice in Singapore have been executed and their heads exhibited in public. Another variant of this story is that a Malay father killed 2 Japs who had raped his 15 year old daughter at Tanjong Pagar and then the Japs had killed 8 Malays in reprisal.

July 10

Dr. Linehan showed me a list of our department held in the military camp. It includes my brother Gerwyn. Some such as Frisby had left before the end under military orders, but a number, some of whom were in the R.N.V.R., are unaccounted for. There is a rumour that the Gurkha P.O.W.s have blown up a big ammo dump at Seletar killing 300 to 600 Japs. About 42 Assistant Fire Service Officers and Municipality employees have come into this camp from Singapore. The German army now in Egypt is surrounded, so the rumour goes.

land and when Jap destroyers finally sank the ship, there were still 100 passengers on board, most of whom then perished. One of the few survivors was Robert Scott, then head of Singapore's Information Services and later to become a prime target of Kempital attention. (see page 283).

- Greig showed a film of the King's Coronation in 'B' Yard.
- July 11 It is reported that the German battleship *Tirpitz* has been sunk. News has come in of the death of several Volunteers and officers of the Malay Regiment during the War. There are rumours of guerrilla attacks led by Europeans in the Taiping area, including the killing of 19 Japs in an attack on an Officers' Mess and 30 more killed in another raid. The Malay Regiment has lost many officers killed and wounded; Wort has lost an arm, Hughes a leg and Law, Russell, Harrison and others have been killed. Colonel André has won the D.S.O. and Capt. Denaro the M.C.
- July 12 Two men have been posted by the Disciplinary Committee for offences, one for insulting a Camp Policeman and the other for falsely accusing someone of stealing from the kitchen. Both offenders have been punished with loss of "privileges" and extra fatigues. The Ration lorry is reported to have run over and killed a Jap on the road to Singapore. Rev. Dr. Amstutz preached the Sunday sermon in 'B' Yard.
- July 13 Today, I traced one of the fugitives whom I had met at sea south of Penang and who had come from Langkawi Island. He is Legge, a tin prospector, who had crossed over to the Island from Alor Star. The others in the boat had been a Mr. and Mrs. Miller, planters, and their 14 year old Eurasian daughter. We had caught up with them as they were sailing south in a *kolek*, manned by 2 Malays. Originally they had hoped to use a Chinese junk but the Chinese crew had refused to man it. It is reported that many Gurkhas are dying of dysentery and malaria in their camp for lack of medicines. The Japs refuse to help as the Gurkhas refuse to work for them. Vanrennan and "Canary" Campbell¹⁰⁹ and 200 others are said to be in Pudu Jail, Kuala Lumpur. Birch (Police) is reported to have been brutally tortured and murdered in front of the Fire Station, Brewster Road, Ipoh. Major Wylde our Adjutant in the Volunteers, is said to have died of beri beri. The Dutch Chief Police Officer in the Carimon Islands is reported to have been badly beaten up by the Jap Kempitai (Gestapo) at their headquarters in the Globe Building, Singapore, and then condemned to death for "sabotage" of the wireless station on the islands. He was put in a condemned cell, beaten again and starved for 2 days before being brought into Changi. I heard a lecture by Dyer, Professor of History at Raffles College, on the Seven Years War and Earl Chatham. A.H. Gridley and Mrs. Edge, wife of a Volunteer, have returned from Miyako Hospital.
- July 14 A British advance of 5 miles is reported in Libya and the capture of 2,000 prisoners. News of those still in the Customs House has been brought in by Salter who had just spent 19 days in Hospital. Holland is said to be doing Preventive Work, Auten and Foster are working in

109 A Kedah planter, so nicknamed because of his good singing voice which he was wont to exercise on all festive occasions.

the Packing Plant. In two places in Singapore the heads of Malays can be seen stuck on pikes, two outside the Post Office and two opposite the Cathay Building. Two doctors are working at Miyako Hospital, Dr. Roy Smith and Dr. Lowther, aided by Brigadier Lord of the Salvation Army. Reading H.G. Wells' *The Work, Wealth and Happiness of Mankind*. Screens have been put up in the front Courtyard to prevent husbands and wives catching a glimpse of each other through the expanded metal. Vegetable fatigues going out to work are now searched for money and bags to stop the buying of food. The Jap No. 2, Lieut. Tokuda (nicknamed "Tai-Kuda" = horse manure) is said to be in a bad mood. Heard a talk by Spotswood on P.O.W. life in Germany in 1918. Some of the conditions in that camp were possibly worse than here but frequent parcels were received through the Red Cross so that the meagre German rations could even be thrown away! Also there was no strict obedience of authority in the German camp and frequent refusals to obey were not met by drastic reprisals as would be the case here.

July 15 It is 5 months since the capitulation. Only \$16,000 has been collected towards the projected camp loan of \$50,000 and of this \$6,000 has already been spent on milk and medicines. The supply of money in the camp appears to be beginning to run short. All Engineers in the Camp are meeting Macrae, the Men's Representative, today in view of the Jap request for volunteers to go to work in Japan! I am since told that all Engineers have refused to go to Japan to do any kind of work. The Japs are short of mechanics and engineers, it appears. Death of H.R.W. Lobb, aged 64, formerly Secretary of the Singapore Swimming Club.

July 16 A sentry has slapped the face of an internee for having \$2 in his pocket as he was about to go outside on a fatigue. The Germans are reported to be reinforcing their army in Egypt from Tunisia and the Russians seem to be in a serious position on the River Don. Attended another of Professor Dyer's lectures on the Seven Years War. The Camp Committee have protested to the Japs against the taking away of 11 "privileges" in the last few days. For instance, the banning of parcels from Miyako and to and from the Women's Block, and also the purchase of essential items of food - eggs, bread, etc. - from outside sources. H.L. Weir, aged 63, who had owned a cinema at Segamat, and lived at Muar, has died of dysentery. Only a few days before, he had been very interested to hear my description of incidents that had taken place in that area during the war. The Japs are now complaining that men on the top floor of 'C' Block are making signals to the women in their block. Incidentally that top floor also gives a good view of the sea coast round the Changi shore, and of ships (possibly "exchange ships") sailing the sea beyond. Heard a talk by Edwards on "Forestry, Utilisation and Marketing".

July 17 The use of the "Wailing Wall" as an open air lavatory is to be dis-

July 18

continued. More permanent "bogs" are to be erected along the adjoining wall. There is more talk of exchange and repatriation. It is reported that the Russians are holding the German advance on the River Don and the Rumanians have invaded Hungary. A "Bandwagon" Concert was given in 'B' Block. Lieut. Okasaki tells our Committee that wheat is now very scarce "until we capture Australia" and that "we must all learn to eat rice". He added that the diet the Japs provided was, in any case, much better than that given by us to Japanese internees, a statement which was strongly refuted and denied by the Committee. Two British nationals have been brought back to this camp from Palembang and lodged in solitary confinement along with the Dutchman Herr Spitz. One is R.H. Scott¹¹⁰ ex-head of the Malayan Information Dept., and Morgan,¹¹¹ a Policeman who had been engaged in anti-Japanese propaganda and security work. The Committee advises all internees to stop all forms of fraternising with the Japs. The "Bandwagon" Concert Musical items included representative pieces from 20 countries including Germany, Italy, Hungary and even Japan, a striking example of British tolerance in the present discouraging circumstances. The orchestra also included artistes from 12 different nationalities.

July 19

It is rumoured that the Governor, the Chief Justices of the F.M.S. and the S.S. (Sir Harry Trusted and Sir Percy McElwaine), the Attorney General (C.G. Howell) Major General Macrae of the Red Cross and the acting Governor of Sumatra are to be sent off to Tokyo in 2 days. Another horror story just heard concerns 15 Argyles and a Lieut. Macpherson who surrendered to the Japs near the village of Mandai on Singapore Island. The officer was taken away, but the remainder had their hands tied behind their backs and were then bayoneted to death by an N.C.O. Those who moved on the ground after this treatment were then shot, but a corporal and a private escaped by feigning death. The corporal managed to undo the wire holding both him and the private but the corporal died next day. The private had six bayonet wounds in his body, but he was cared for by a Chinese who eventually got him admitted to Miyako Hospital where in time he recovered. The private's name was Anderson. A Malay working for the Japs reports that Hubback, an elderly man who used to be Game Warden in Pahang, and was rumoured to have gone into hiding in that state, has now been killed by "Chinese", he alleges.

July 20

Before he left for Japan, I gave Sir Harry Trusted some handkerchiefs,

110 R.H. Scott, an officer of the Foreign Office was the main target of the Kempitai (or Secret Police) investigation which started with the "Double Tenth" Incident of October 10, 1943.

111 I recollect that while the war was still on, I had met him in his office in the Cathay Building, shortly after our faces had evacuated North Johore, in order to give him a first hand account of what I had recently experienced and to answer his queries.

socks and towels and a battered copy of Milton's *Poetical Works*. I listened to a good lecture by Professor Dyer on the French Revolution. Another man has had his name posted by the Disciplinary Committee for stealing vegetables from the kitchen. 6 Australian soldiers are reported to have been shot in the Y.M.C.A. compound (the Japanese Kempitai Headquarters in Singapore) for attempting to escape.

July 21

It is said that the Chinese are killing off certain hostile elements in Singapore after dark and British P.O.W.s are being used to construct new roads. There was a farewell concert in honour of the six senior internees who are going off to Japan. 4 internees have been punished and posted for taking money out on fatigues and for trying to smuggle in milk and cheese. Lieut. Okasaki threatens to (1) close the shop and send its contents back to Gian Singh, and (2) take away all the money still in our possession. There is a rumour that 4,000 men under 35 years of age and 900 officers above the rank of major are to be taken off to Japan and that both Volunteer and regular army engineers are to go too. Even civilians in this camp under 35 may also go in time. George Walker, aged 73, a chemist from North Bridge Road, Singapore, has died.

July 22

In his farewell speech last night at the concert, the Governor said that we were here because we could not have deserted the Asiatics in their hour of need and that anyone who had accepted a post abroad had to accept as well the responsibility attached to it for the good of the people we governed. All elderly men had had their chance to go but the Government had had no power to force them to go if they had elected to stay. In fairness it must be said, nurses had not been permitted to go until it was almost too late and the same was true of many of the older men. For instance, very few old men had been allowed to leave on the *Duchess of Bedford* and the *Empress of Japan* on January 30 unless they had medical certificates of unfitness. Burt, an ex-Government Analyst at Penang, gave us a talk on the detection of Crime by the examination of bullets and bombs and Tony Churchill (M.C.S.) gave an account of his Experiences in a German P.O.W. Camp in 1918.

July 23

Reading Benson's *As We Were* — memoirs of a Victorian era. The Australians are said to have captured 4,000 prisoners in Egypt. Weisberg, the ex-Colonial Treasurer, and Meredith, Motor Vehicles Office, have been brought into the camp. The Governor is down with dysentery. An internee has been posted for stealing a towel, but unlike other offenders he is an old lag with a genuine "criminal" past. Young gave a talk on Sweden. A rumour says that many of our troops have been removed from Singapore. In one case a ship carrying 2,000 Australians was torpedoed and 1,000 lives lost. As an American submarine was probably responsible, the Jap Propaganda Dept. are making the most of this incident to stir up anti-American feeling in Australia. A Welsh rally included the usual, Osborne Jones,

- T.J. Thomas, Evans, Noel Rees, my brother John and myself.
- July 24 Professor Dyer gave a good lecture on Thinkers who had influenced the French Revolution — e.g. The Encyclopaedists (Diderot, Rousseau); The Physiocrats (Turgot) and the Philosophers (Voltaire). Many internees are still debating the meaning of the Governor's Farewell Speech, particularly the part in which he mentioned that "all" had had the chance to go. It is generally agreed that what he meant was "all" women and children, and all "old" men, but excluding all able-bodied men. The Japs have refused to allow the Governor to be removed to the Miyako Hospital until he has been examined by a Japanese doctor. 300 of our planes are reported to have bombed Duisberg in Germany. Visited M.R. Holgate of our department in the camp hospital.
- July 25 I am informed by Jackson (Police) that Birch went out from Telok Anson, Perak, to investigate a report that Japanese barges had got stuck on a mudbank off Bagan Datoh. He never returned from this trip and nothing further was heard of him as Burns (also Police) had to leave Telok Anson hurriedly on the same night, leaving Birch's car behind. It is unlikely that the boats in question were the same as those for use in the Trong raid as that had happened some 4 or 5 days earlier. Jackson also told me that the Bedfordshire and Herts had later fired on the Malay Regiment units by mistake on Singapore Island and an Indian Mortar Unit had accidentally killed the Colonel and 2nd in Command of the Beds and Herts near Alexandra Hospital, Singapore. Some clarification of the Governor's speech has now been forthcoming. It had not been the policy of the Government to give exit permits to any able-bodied man who might be required for the defence of the country. No old men, women or even children had been forced to leave unless they had wished to go and the choice between staying and leaving had been theirs alone. The Jap doctor has now taken specimens of stool from the Governor and 4 others in hospital with suspected dysentery. We had a concert, better than expected, given by the "Beachcombers", (alias the *Empress of Asia* boys).
- July 26 My birthday — now 38. To celebrate, a tin of mushrooms was opened. A party of 30 Japs toured the camp and 3 ex-bakers from the kitchen staff were posted and punished for stealing cooked food.
- July 27 Reading Edgar Allan Poe's *Tales*, also Trevelyan's *Life of Lord Grey of Fallodon*. The Black Market is again thriving; one of the key men is Gus Davis who has just bought \$600 worth of contraband from the Jap sentries for resale openly in the camp. The sentries bring in their supplies and hand them over at the back of the kitchen¹¹² after dark. Meanwhile the searching of outside fatigues continues! As Major General Macrae has now gone, there have been fresh elections for the post of Men's Representative. The successful candidate was

112 Marks the spot on the rough plan of Changi on page 97.

Dr. Johns, a surgeon from New Zealand with 1,515 votes, the runner-up being Adrian Clarke, ex-Solicitor-General F.M.S. with 693 votes. The kitchen bakers have gone on strike because of the conviction of 3 of their number for theft by the Disciplinary Committee. Cheeseman, ex-Deputy Director of Education, and M.R. Holgate, also of our department, are in the Camp Hospital with Singapore foot and fever respectively. There is a rumour that Turkey has entered the war against Germany.

- July 28 The rice polishings are now being put in our morning *kanji* and give it a light brown stodgy appearance. Still it will stop us getting "Beriberi". A scarcity of water is been felt owing to the breakdown of a pump and, as a result, the present consumption of 43 gallons per day per person is to be reduced to 30 gallons.
- July 29 Some feel that the addition of rice polishings has spoiled the taste of the *kanji*. The Germans are reported to have invaded European Turkey.
- July 30 There is said to have been a 1,000 plane raid on Hamburg and British forces have re-occupied Mersa Matruh in Egypt. There was a very good Art and Craft Exhibition but it suffered from lack of space so it was difficult to view the exhibits properly. New Volunteer bakers have replaced those who went on strike in the kitchen. Holgate has been sent to Miyako and Lady Heath has, it is said, been seriously ill in Kandang Kerbau Hospital having a baby. She has had two blood transfusions.
- July 31 I bought a Bible from a missionary named Tipson, a good Chinese scholar, for \$1.50 and read the first 42 chapters of Genesis. There was a Quiz Competition between 'B' Block and Hudson Bay which was won by 'B' Block.
- August 1 We washed and cleaned out our cell using wood ash. Crofts the ex-Conductor of the F.M.S. Police Band, has now taken over control of the Camp Orchestra. A Vichy minister is said to have escaped to Britain. News has come in to say that Carey Foster was killed in the fighting but that Major Fox is alive in Sumatra. Various women and girls who went away in ships towards the end are described as "missing". They include Peggy Green, Betsy Spicer and Diana Stafford.
- August 2 Three men have been posted and punished by the Disciplinary Committee, one for stealing a wooden bedstead! and two more for having money in their possession when about to go on an outside fatigue. Darby (Customs) has heard from his brother that 2 drafts of P.O.W.'s are about to leave for Japan, but that their food position has improved.
- August 3 It is reported that C.U. Stafford is in Pudu Jail but poor Crosbie-Hill, a planter, who had joined the Malay Regiment was killed in the fighting. There is also a story that only 5 out of 30 people interned in a house up-country survived a machine gun attack by the Japs. One of the survivors was Elphinstone (Police) and another was a

woman now in the Convent at Kuala Lumpur. There is more talk of exchange, this time on August 16! Lady Heath has given birth to a still-born child at kandang Kerbau Hospital. We have also news of an incident which took place at the Alexandra Hospital just before the capitulation.¹¹³ Certain Indian troops had fired on the Japs from within the hospital compound. Jap troops had then entered the hospital building and bayoneted all and sundry, doctors, nurses and even patients on the operating table. One doctor killed was a Dr. Donaldson of Malacca. A Jap Officer is said to have apologised later and shot 6 of his own men. I have now read through Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy and Joshua.

August 4 Received a letter from G.E.D. Lewis, my brother in Changi Military Camp; he in turn has received a note from Frank Vanrennan (Volunteers) who is in Pudu Jail, Kuala Lumpur. The German armies are said to be only 25 miles from Stalingard and the Russian position is serious. The Camp Committee has sent another strong letter to the Jap High Command protesting against the non-appearance of the International Red Cross representative, the Swiss Consul. Not once have we seen him yet, possibly because he appears to be too pro-British. Rice polishings are becoming quite popular in our morning *kanji* now. The Rev. Greer gave a talk on the authorship of the Pentateuch.

August 5 A Welsh Language class, with Osborne Jones as the instructor has been formed. There was a bathing picnic to Alsagoff's beach bungalow attended by about 500 from 'B' Block. 34 of the crew of the New Zealand ship "Hauraki" have come in. The ship, loaded with food, drink and medical supplies, was on its way from Fremantle to Colombo and Bombay, when it was intercepted by two Jap armed merchantmen, 1,200 miles S.E. of Colombo. The ship, with 63 of its engine crew has been taken on to Yokohama. I sent off a letter and 300 Vitamin 'B' tablets to my brother Gerwyn¹¹⁴ who may be in a camp near Bukit Timah race course.

August 6 Two of the 34 brought in from the *Hauraki* are Malayans. One was Fosdyke an A.P.C. Engineer evacuated from the Shell depot on Pulau Bukom on February 6 and the other is Kenneison an engineer from Tanjong Rambutan who had been building aerodromes in Malaya, Java and Australia. He had been on his way to rejoin his wife at Bombay to where she had been evacuated. The Committee have again protested against the gross overcrowding caused by the

¹¹³ This massacre took place on February 13th. In spite of the hospital staff displaying their Red Cross badges and waving white cloths as a token of surrender, Jap troops entered the hospital wards bayoneting to death all they met. Other patients, scarcely able to walk and numbering about 200 in all were herded together into the servants' quarters at the 'back of the hospital. These, too, were done to death next morning and only 3 managed to escape with their lives when a shell blew off the doors of the rooms in which they were confined. All the evidence suggests that General Yamashita, who visited the hospital next day, had neither known of nor consented to the massacre.

¹¹⁴ I discovered later that none of the vitamins I sent ever reached him.

new arrivals, but the *Hauraki* crew think we shall all be exchanged in September! The latest interpretation of the Governor's speech, as seen by the legal authorities, is that no fit man under 55 years of age had any option but to stay in Malaya as he was required either in the active or in the passive defence of the country as decided upon by the Man Power Bureau. Van Hein gave us a 2nd Promenade Concert with excellent piano recitals by Edyvean and Soul. There is again much talk of an exchange following the appearance of an article in the Syonan Times which I have not seen.

August 7 News has come in of the death of Ingram (B.A.T. and F.M.S. Light Battery) who was killed in the last days at Newton Circus off Clemenceau Avenue. Three Malay Regiment Officers, Haggett, Horsburgh and Russell received a direct hit from a mortar shell which landed in their slit trench in Reformatory Road, off Pasir Panjang. Russell was wounded and the other two killed instantly. Andre and another officer went to get help but when they returned they could not find the slit trench, and the Japs were by then only 100 yards away. Lieut. Tetley, also of the F.M.S. Light Battery, was killed in the same action. There was a debate as to whether Malaya should not have a unified system of government after the war, doing away with the distinction between Colony, Federated and Unfederated State. Read Salmond's account of the sinking of the *Kuala*, *Tien-Kuang* and *Kung Wo* in the Riau Archipelago.¹¹⁵

August 8 A Carnival Fair was held in the Big Exercise Yard including a log cutting competition. One of the *Hauraki* arrivals is a well-known Greek wrestler named Con Ballasis, who has wrestled in both America and Australia. He is short but very broad. The Japs have tried to get three mining engineers to volunteer to go out to supervise the construction of underground oil tank installations but they have been unsuccessful. On the other hand, it is said that military engineers and 10,000 P.O.W. troops, including the Loyals, have departed for Bangkok (Siam) and Burma, where new P.O.W. Camps have been prepared for them.

August 9 News has come in of the death on Blakang Mati¹¹⁶ of Barnes, a planter, from Sua Betong Estate, Port Dickson while serving with the

115 These 3 small ships had sailed from Singapore at 7 p.m. on Friday, February 13th, crammed with women and children, nurses and P.W.D. Engineers, but, as with the other ships already mentioned, they were nearly all either sunk or captured. For just at this moment Jap Naval and Air Forces had launched a full-scale parachute attack on the Palembang oil fields, thereby blocking the only escape route through the Banka Strait to Batavia. All 3 ships had had to anchor off Pompong Island where all 3 ships were later sunk by bombs. A small Dutch coaster, the *Tanjong Pinang*, which attempted to rescue 250 of the survivors stranded on Pompong was intercepted at sea by night and sunk by a unit of Admiral Ozawa's powerful Naval force of one carrier, 2 cruisers and 3 destroyers. The resultant loss of life was terrible. Incidentally, the Dutch Naval Authorities in Sumatra had made desperate efforts to warn their Singapore counterparts of the presence of Admiral Ozawa's fleet, but had been unable to make contact. Nobody in Singapore had been able to decode the Dutch messages as the only man able to do so had already been evacuated along with the only copy of the Code.

116 An island adjoining Keppel Harbour and now re-named Sentosa.

Gunners, and of two other planters Thompson (Sepang Estate) and Rowe (from Malacca). A Volunteer, Burstall (of Caldbeck MacGregor) whose wife is in our camp, was accidentally killed when he fell while mending a water tank in the military camp. A woman in 'A' Block has been caught in possession of 2 notes received from her husband in the Volunteers. We had a very enjoyable concert given by Eisenger playing the piano along with 4 others playing the flute and 3 violins.

- August 10 It is reported that all P.O.W. military engineers and all officers above and including the ranks of Lieutenant-Colonel and Colonel are leaving for Japan tomorrow. A list of internees at Padang in Sumatra is now available. It contains the name of Samuel, the Penang lawyer, but not that of his wife. Jap visitors alleged to be off the exchange ships *Asama Maru* and *Conte Verde* visited the camp today. Reading George Moore's *Confessions of a Young Man*.
- August 11 Reading John Buchan's *Memory Hold the Door*. The recent Carnival Fair made a profit of \$1,000 for the Camp Funds into which Gus Davis, one of the Black Market men, is reported to have paid \$2,000. The Americans are reported to have landed in the Solomon Islands, and 8,000 lbs of meat, more extra flour, sugar and vegetables have been brought in by the ration lorries - nearly 3 times as much meat as usual. This may be due to the alleged disgust expressed by the recent party of Jap visiting exchangees, especially at the overcrowding and general discomfort and particularly the absence of all beds. It is said that the American Jap internees had lived in a hotel, listened to the Radio and enjoyed swimming and tennis facilities! I have now read the Bible up to Kings II. Exchange rumours are still strong. In India, we are told, the Congress Leaders have been lodged in jail and martial law declared.
- August 12 It is again rumoured that the Americans have landed in the Solomon Islands and 13,000 Jap prisoners have been captured near Port Moresby. Dalley (Police),¹¹⁷ Sim (Customs) and Christie (Education) the latter two being R.N.V.R., are said to be at Padang, Sumatra. More P.O.W.s are being embarked in a big ship at the Naval base according to another rumour.
- August 13 800 of our internees are now said to be "broke", but are being provided with credit up to \$5 per month from Camp Funds. Two more men have been posted by the Disciplinary Committee for using bad language towards the Camp Police and for stealing sandals. Brigadier Lord (Salvation Army), who is still at Miyako Hospital, is of opinion that exchange is certain as soon as ships are available.

117 J.D. Dalley, Special Branch, F.M.S. Police, had won temporary fame as the organiser and leader of a Chinese guerilla force known as "Dalforce". Its members were mostly members of the illegal Malayan Communist Party, and so it was not until Christmas, 1941, that Dalley was belatedly given permission by government to arm and train these men to fight the Japs. In the mangrove swamps of the North-West Sector of Singapore Island the force gave a good account of itself while the war lasted. Its estimated strength was 4,000 men when the siege of Singapore began.

- We had the biggest helping ever of meat for lunch, the improvement being possibly due to the visits of Ambassador Nomura and of Kurusu who have seen the true size of our food rations.
- August 14 Reading Stebbing's *Thinking to Some Purpose*. Chapman, who is a barber here, has been punished by the Disciplinary Committee for disobeying the orders of his Floor Representative. We had a good Variety Concert in which the best item was a comic skit depicting Peter Gurney still an inmate of Changi in 1985!
- August 15 Again there is a rumour of the capture of 12,000 Japs by the Australians in the Port Moresby area and of the sinkings by Flying Fortresses of a Jap cruiser, a 15,000 ton liner and 2 Jap Transports. Reading *T.E. Lawrence by his Friends*. The Nipponese have sent in a lorry load of maize flour said to have come from South Africa in the *Asama Maru* a gift from the Red Cross. Lieut. Okasaki has been asked to inform the Committee as soon as official news of Exchange is received. The latest rumour is that 1,500 people, including women, children and men over 45 years of age, will go first. The *Tatuta Maru* with a fresh batch of exchanges on board, it is said, has already been anchored off the Changi Straits for the last 3 days. Pessimists are, however, already calling the *Tatuta Maru*, the "Ta' tentu Maru" = "Not certain Maru".
- August 16 After a 4 weeks' delay, the Governor, the Acting Governor of Sumatra, the Chief Justices, Sir Harry Trusted and Sir Percy McElwaine, Major General Macrae and C.G. Howell left for Japan at 11 a.m. today.¹¹⁸ The ship was a 4,000 ton tramp which also carried 1,300 P.O.W.s (including 300 men of the Loyals, 300 Royal Engineers and from the Artillery and 100 Australians). The 300 officers were put in a specially built superstructure and 1,000 others were put into the hold. Listened to Archdeacon Graham White's sermon and finished reading Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther.
- August 17 There is a rumour that Wake Island and Kowloon have been recaptured and that the fall of Hongkong is imminent. The Americans appear to be consolidating their gains in the Solomon Islands.
- August 18 A number of internees have come in from Pudu Jail, Kuala Lumpur and from prisons at Singora, Alor Star and Taiping, including tin miners from Yala, in Siam. They said that on August 13 Bill Harvey, Frank Vanrennan, R. Graham and another planter called Macdonald had escaped from Pudu Jail by smashing the lock of an outside door. Young and others had spent 19 days in solitary confinement in

¹¹⁸ The same ship also took away many senior army officers of the rank of full colonel and upwards, including General Percival, and conditions were not improved by a further delay of 2 days in Singapore Harbour before the ship sailed. Fourteen days later, the prisoners were landed in Taiwan where they were to spend the next 2 years in 2 separate camps. In October 1944, when there was a danger of an American invasion, they were hurriedly removed to a camp at Selan, 200 miles north of Mukden, from which they were liberated on August 24, 1945, by a Russian mechanised unit, part of the Russian army which had recently invaded Manchukuo.

Singora Jail and they said that 1,000 P.O.Ws, including Archer and Stafford, still remained in Pudu. Frank Vanrennan, Harvey and Graham had escaped with 2 other officers, one named Capt. Nugent. Macdonald, an Australian Kedah planter, had escaped with a Dutch pilot. Vanrennan was heading for India, Macdonald for Java. They also had stories about Taiping where the Japs claimed 130 "Communists" had been killed and about Titi, in Negri Sembilan, where there was a well organised Chinese Communist force equipped with rifles.¹¹⁹ At Taiping, 50 Chinese had been arrested because Chinese flags had been found put up in the market, allegedly by certain hostile elements who wished to get the Chinese into trouble. Conditions at Taiping jail were bad. 14 had died of dysentery, there was only one doctor, he had no medicines and the sanitary conditions and the flies were appalling. A European couple, Peters and a Mrs. Stratton had come all the way from Singora in Siam to Sungei Siput in Perak where they had been helped by a Tamil dresser. Among the new admissions are 4 Norwegian sailors from a ship sunk in the Gulf of Siam on December 7, 1941!, a day before war broke out.

- August 19 The above-mentioned Peters had weighed 17 stone when he started out from Singora but weighed only 10 stone when he gave himself up after 5 months in the jungle. Mrs. Stratton weighed only 5 stone. Three new internees have come in from Malacca Jail, the Rev. Eales, a C. of E. padre, Brother McNamara, a R.C. priest, and Matthews, a Salvation Army officer. They all complained of harsh treatment at the hands of local Warders. All now think that they have been brought here with a view to exchange. Another recent admission is Pease, an artist, who continued to live in his bungalow at Port Dickson, for weeks after the arrival of the Japs. He had personally watched the Japs moving loot in British Bren Gun carriers.
- August 20 An internee who washed his clothes in a clean water tank in the Laundry has been posted and punished by the Disciplinary Committee. Lieut. Okasaki has informed the Committee that he knows nothing of any Exchange plans. Consequently there has been a severe slump in all the hopes which some internees had entertained. 26 (Male) internees have died here in the first 6 months of incarceration. There is a rumour that Jap sentries will be partially replaced by Indian or Malay guards. There is a report that there has been a big commando raid on Dieppe and that a big convoy of 60 allied ships have reached Alexandria.
- August 21 The Governor's farewell speech included also a request that "we do what we can for the people of Malaya and try to help them. They will need it." The Camp Committee has again advised internees not to go out of their way to do unnecessary voluntary fatigues for the

119 Titi, a Chinese tin mining centre in the Jelebu District of Negri Sembilan, had been the victim of a most brutal massacre in March 1942 in which thousands of guerilla supporters, men, women and children, had been rounded up and killed as reprisals for earlier guerilla attacks on Japanese forces.

Japs such as cleaning out their houses! More positive action to stop this practice is not being attempted because of the fear of reprisals being taken against women and children and the old men. The Red Cross lorry has brought us supplies of sweets, soup-mix and jam. Leach of the Selangor Volunteers has been awarded the D.C.M., we hear, and Wraight, Quartermaster of the Malay Regiment, is reported to be well.

- August 22 I continue with my Laundry Fatigue which I have been with ever since I came in. There is a rumour of an American landing in Burma. Among those at Pudu Jail, Kuala Lumpur are "Canary" Campbell, who is ill, and one Hardy (of Osborne and Chappel at Chenderiang, Perak). Hardy is credited with derailing 3 trains with 130 casualties.¹²⁰ The Chinese are said to have blown up the Enggor Railway Bridge soon after the capitulation. Sikh police have arrived to relieve a number of the Jap sentries. Lieut. Tokuda has given us a lecture about bowing to sentries and returning other people's bows. An interpreter was struck by a Jap corporal for standing to attention when one of our wood fatigues passed by! No one knows why he was bowing unless he had seen one of his own officers approaching. Have finished reading St. Mathews's Gospel and am now reading Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*.
- August 23 We heard anti-aircraft fire over Singapore. 70,000 Americans are said to have arrived at Alexandria in a convoy. The new Sikh sentries appear very awkward in their new duties.
- August 24 There are more strong rumours of our repatriation. The Jap interpreter is said to have told Dr. Johns the Men's Representative, and Parker that Tokio Radio had broadcast the news that all civilians in Malaya were to be repatriated soon. "Tinggi" Rees says that when he was out with a squad collecting bamboo poles, his squad was hit about the head by an irate Jap sentry. This particular sentry is one of the few really nasty ones and as he cannot speak either English or Malay, the reason for his conduct cannot be learnt. Between 700 and 900 Japs are reported killed in a counter attack in the Solomons. Brazil has declared war on the Axis Powers and Moslems and Hindoos have clashed in India. Our block representative, Edmonds (of Sime, Darby & Co.) admits to believing that there is an element of truth in the recent Exchange rumours.
- August 25 The 3 occupants of Cell 39 (mine) have been debating the advisability of eating or not eating our meagre supply of tinned food in view of possible exchange. I have finished reading St. Mark's Gospel. The capture of the islands, Florida, Isabel and Guadalcanar in the Solomon Group is reported. The Committee have pointed out to Lieut. Okasaki that the Sikh sentries now employed here are *not* Japanese subjects, not at least until the peace treaty is signed. The

¹²⁰ Spencer Chapman in his book *The Jungle is Neutral* devotes a whole chapter to train derailments carried out by Bill Harvey, a Sergeant Sartin of the Royal Engineers and himself in the Tanjong Malim area between February 1 and February 14, 1942, but he does not mention Hardy, who may have been operating further north in Perak.

- number of internees in Changi Jail is now exactly 2,800.
- August 26 I heard today the extraordinary story of a Capt. North of the Indian army, who is still in Pudu Jail, Kuala Lumpur. Apparently, Captain North had been captured and ordered to be shot. The bullet had passed through Captain North's right shoulder and so missed his heart. The Jap officer had ordered the Jap soldier to aim at the Captain's left side but the soldier had fired to his own left side. The Captain had been stunned and fallen down, but had recovered consciousness later and escaped along with another officer shot alongside him and who had also recovered. The Captain's wound had healed up of its own accord before he was captured again and put in Pudu Jail. Captain North had learnt Japanese in Japan and had understood all said by the Jap officer to his soldier. Today a Sikh sentry was slapped 3 times across his face by a Jap N.C.O.
- August 27 It is reported that there has been a big naval battle off the Solomons in which 14 Jap ships were sunk or damaged. Judge Aitken, who had spent 23 years in Nigeria, gave an interesting talk on that country. The *Syonan Times* states that the Malay College, Kuala Kangsar, is to re-open shortly. I have just finished reading Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* and started *Tristram Shandy*.
- August 28 Dr. Ando reports that all civilian internees in Malaya are to be exchanged before the end of next month. 19 Engineers, including heavy weight "Tiny" Richards, have been brought in from Singapore, a hopeful sign say those who believe in the repatriation rumours. Another letter of protest has been sent to the High Command regarding the poor food and living conditions in this camp. The letter has adversely criticised our treatment compared with that meted out to internees in other civilian internment camps described in the local press. The letter also points out that the rations given are far short of the rations formerly given to European and Asiatic Convicts in this jail in peace time and, indeed, the Japanese civilians temporarily confined here too. Those brought in recently from Yala in Siam say that 18 out of 26 confined in the house were killed by grenades thrown at them at 8 p.m. one evening by drunken Japs. A young girl of 18 who lost both her parents in the massacre, was wounded but was sent to hospital by the Siamese where she recovered. There is a report that the Russians have made a big break through at Briansk. 4 Engineers have confessed to repairing Chenderoh Dam and Malim Nawar Power Stations in Perak for the Japs, but presumably this was done for the benefit of the local population too. Batu Arang Colliery is too badly "scorched" for repair, though 3,000 Jap troops are stationed there. 22 Tin Dredges are working in Perak. There are few private cars moving up country but buses do run on producer gas. Queen Elizabeth is reported to have had a son.
- August 29 The Japs are said to be removing big cranes and lathes from the Naval base to Japan and the Bukit Timah Cold Storage Plant has

been removed to Johore to start a fish canning industry. A sea wall is being built at Tanjong Rhu, Singapore, and European houses at the Batu Gajah Tin Dredging site have been pulled down. All the Engineers working up country have been uniformly well treated by the Chinese, they report.

August 30 A Libyan offensive is reported to have started, presumably conducted by us. Adrian Clarke, ex-Attorney-General, F.M.S. has been elected 'D' Block representative (382 votes). The other candidates were Hudson (82 votes), Weekley (230 votes) and Greig (41 votes). There is a slump in repatriation hopes with rumours that we are to be moved to Alexandra Army Barracks, Singapore, or to the new Police Barracks at Johore Bahru. There is also a report that Eden has stated on the B.B.C. that the Japs have refused to consider the exchange of civilians in Hongkong and Malaya. The only exceptions appear to be some Jap internees, formerly of Malaya, who are now in India.

August 31 Thomas and Joseph (Education Dept.), Harrison, a lecturer at Raffles College and Miller, a former Singapore journalist, have been invited by the Japs to go out and write articles and pamphlets for them. Also certain Eurasian girls have been asked to go out and work as typists. All have refused. The Dutch internees, staged a concert to celebrate Queen Wilhelmina's 62nd birthday. There was a reading of Motley, the historian's account of the siege of Leyden in the 16th Century. The two chief Dutch internees are Parlievidt, who had been Controller of Tanjong Pinang, Riau, and Veling who had been D.O. and Magistrate of the Carimon Islands. Veling had been responsible for the destruction of the Wireless Station on the Carimon Islands. For this, he had been tried by a Japanese judge, sentenced to death, kept in solitary confinement for 5 weeks and then taken out for a mock execution at 5 o'clock in the morning. Then he had been sent in to Changi. A former warder, W.E. Jenkins, aged 50, has just died of dysentery and internal haemorrhage here. Exactly 7 months ago he had been taking his wife down to catch a ship when they were both wounded by a bomb splinter which had come in from behind their shelter. His wife got away and one wonders, why, being wounded, he could not have gone too.

Sept. 1 The Changi Camp Choir have been asked to go out and broadcast but it is very improbable that they will go. The Camp has today been taken over by the Jap Military Administration and a Mr. Asahi is now in charge as Custodian of Enemy Civilians, Malaya and Sumatra. He is reputed to have spent 7 years being educated at Harrow and Cambridge. Lieut. Okasaki, we hear, has left to become Adjutant of the Changi Garrison. Lieut. Tokuda has also gone. More Sikh sentries have taken over from the Japs and a Sikh sergeant slapped the face of one of the Wood Fatigue today. As a result, all outside fatigue parties have gone on strike! The Ambulance has been returned to the camp along with 6 lorries and Long has returned to his old job as

driver of the Ambulance. Mr. Asahi has promised to wipe out dysentery and to provide all necessary medical supplies. I filled up an official form for Dr. Linehan, ex-Director of Education, giving details of salary, increment, leave due, etc. J.L. Woods and his Glee Singers party gave a Folk Song Recital.

Sept. 2

Yesterday one of the Wood Fatigue party, Fitzpatrick, an ex-Singapore butcher, refused to number when called upon to do so by a Sikh sergeant. When the internee was slapped on the face, the whole fatigue refused to go out. Later, a Sikh sentry brought some dirty dishes into the kitchen to be washed. When the kitchen staff refused to wash them, one of the Camp Police did so to avoid trouble. When Dr. Johns, the Men's Representative, went to protest he, too, had his face slapped and was locked up in a lavatory until 8.30 that night. Only when Mr. Asahi had turned up was Dr. Johns released. Fitzpatrick got belted 4 times for refusing to sign a statement admitting that he had called the Sikh sergeant a bastard. There was a further incident involving Cherry of the Printing Department. He got hit in the stomach because he was alleged to have stood in the way as some Sikh sentries passed the office where Cherry's fatigue party worked. That party also went on strike! A Mrs. James, mother of several Eurasian children here, has died at the age of 56. Three men have had their names posted for taking money out on a fatigue and for accepting without authority 3 eggs from the kitchen. Hitler is supposed to have made a gloomy Winter Relief Fund speech, making no promise of victory but stressing the necessity for further sacrifices.

Sept. 3

Third anniversary of the Outbreak of War. Five men are to go out to collate information regarding civilian internees for the Tokio Information Bureau. What this means I don't know, but I do know that no Red Cross representative has yet been allowed to enter and inspect the camp. It is said that the Japs have never ratified the Geneva Red Cross Agreement.¹²¹ Repatriation hopes have again risen with the reputed statement of Sir Robert Craige at Lourenco Marques in Portuguese East Africa (and quoted in the *Syonan Times*) that arrangements have been made for the repatriation of "about 4,000 British Civilian Nationals still remaining in East Asia." There was an Intercession Service to mark the outbreak of war in 1939.

Sept. 4

The latest rumour is that 887 Jap civilians (including 400 former residents of Malaya) have left Lourenco Marques for Singapore on the *Tatuta Maru*. We have just had a big bug hunt¹²² in our cell and

¹²¹ There were two Conventions which governed the treatment of Prisoners of War, i.e. the Hague Convention of 1907 and the much more comprehensive Geneva Convention, but the Japs had never ratified the Geneva Convention and had always ignored any provisions of this Convention which did not suit them.

¹²² Bugs were a major pest at Changi where we must have inherited them from the previous occupants. Sleeping material and clothing, etc. had to be taken out regularly and aired in the sunshine and the bugs destroyed, otherwise things soon became un-

killed 50. 4 ants have been introduced in the hope that they will eat the eggs remaining. There was a Magic Circle Concert and a debate on State-controlled Prostitution.

- Sept. 5 It is reported that both the *Empress of Japan* and the *Duchess of Bedford* were bombed for 5 hours after they left Singapore on January 30. Asahi has informed the Men's Representative (Dr. Johns) that the Sikh sentries are now Japanese Agents (if still British subjects) and must be bowed to. Otherwise Dr. Johns will be held responsible for any offences committed by internees and will be punished accordingly. The name of the new Camp Commandant, working under Asahi, will be Mr. Toyoda, believed to be a Warrant Officer in the Japanese Gendarmerie.
- Sept. 6 Mr. Toyoda has now issued explicit instructions regarding bowing to Officers and sentries at the Main Gate, in front of the Guard Room and before the entrance to the Women's Block. The important words to know and remember are - (1) *Klotski* (= attention), (2) *Kiri* (= bow), (3) *Yasume* (= Stand at ease). The latest repatriation news is that the *Kamakura Maru*, the second ship to take part in the exchanges, will leave Lourenco Marques with 870 Jap Nationals shortly, while the *Tatuta Maru* will arrive shortly at Singapore with the first batch of 887 Jap Nationals (400 of whom came originally from Malaya). Another Arts and Craft Exhibition held. There were some very good drawings and articles made from coconut shells on show and also needlework from the Women's Block.
- Sept. 7 Toyoda is turning out to be a worse menace than Tokuda. Last night he harangued the Camp band for 20 minutes for failing to pay him the proper respects and threatened to close down all musical activities. The band had been busy as usual practising in the room next to the shop and had not noticed the presence of Toyoda. This gentleman also has a habit of drilling fatigue parties for 3 or 4 minutes for the purpose of catching them out. Any Chinese who fails to bow to the Sikh sentries is beaten up and tied up for 1 or 2 days without food or water.
- Sept. 8 Another rumour reports the fall of both Canton and of Hongkong, presumably to Chinese forces. Our new floor representative is Jennings, ex-manager of the E. & O. Hotel Penang. He succeeds Martin who has resigned because of sciatica. Have just finished reading Conrad's *Typhoon*; now reading Herman Melville's *Typee*. I have also just finished St. Luke's Gospel. 1,400 new books have just arrived from Raffles Library¹²³ - a very welcome addition.

comfortable. Not all internees were particular about this and one judge and a magistrate, whose bug-ridden cell was notorious in 'B' Block, excused their apathy by pleading that they had never been brought up to deal with bugs. If squashed, the bugs gave off a smell of aniseed, but their bites did not itch or raise lumps, as a rule.

123- These books proved a great boon. A devoted group of librarians issued the books daily and, what was most important, repaired those books in need. All books had to bear the 'chop' of the Japanese Censor to indicate his approval. We were really quite well off for books, the difficulty was the lack of privacy for readers in a very over-crowded

Camp expenditure, mainly financed from the internees' own money, now totals \$298,000, which is well over \$100 per head and equal to .77 cents per head per day. Asahi has asked whether the camp would like a radio or a film projector. The answer has been that while no propaganda programmes were wanted, a good American film would be welcome. It is understood that the radio, if supplied, would be a medium wave set, the only kind now permitted in Singapore since August 7.

Sept. 9 Tipson, a missionary and author of a Chinese-English dictionary, gave an interesting lecture on the various translations of the Bible. He mentioned Mary Jones, the little Welsh girl whose love of a Welsh Bible, at Bala in 1804, led to the founding of the British and Foreign Bible Society. It is said that only 600 out of 2,000 Gurkhas who fought for us were still alive when capitulation came. 12 husbands are now able to see their wives daily in this camp. 6 rubbish bins have to be emptied and returned daily from the Women's Block, so there is a special roster of husbands who accept the full bins from their own wives and another roster of husbands who bring back the empty bins and hand them to their wives!¹²⁴ But any conversation has to be very brief because of the presence of the sentries. The Educational classes held during the first 6 months of our incarceration numbered 95 and were attended by 1,854 internees studying 22 subjects, according to a report.

Sept. 10 It is reported that Japan was bombed by 1,000 planes of which 35 were lost. As a result Jap Army and Navy officers, rumour says, drew swords on each other at the Southern Hotel, Singapore, the Army blaming the Navy for letting them down. The Chinese are said to be jubilant at the reported capture of Canton and the alleged bombing of Hongkong. Edmonds has been re-elected 'B' Block representative. Another story relates that Jap officers were seen leaving a High Level Conference in tears but where or why is unknown! We learn that the S.S. *Lee Sang* (?), which left Singapore on the last Wednesday before capitulation with the *Gorgon* and *Empire Star*, was sunk later. It is reported that the Japs have shot 2 British and 2 Australian other ranks for attempting to escape. The other story is that the Japs tried to force 17,000 P.O.W.s in the neighbouring Changi military camp to sign parole cards. The troops refused and held out for 3 days without food or shelter from the tropical sun until the Japs threatened to bring out the sick and wounded from their beds. The troops were then advised to sign "under duress".¹²⁵ The 4 soldiers mentioned above were shot by Sikhs and finished off by the Japs.

camp. My own particular haven of peace was the manhole cover over the septic tank in the Main Yard.

124 H on the rough plan of Changi on page 97 marks the spot where this daily confrontation took place. Miss Foss, formerly Headmistress of a Girls' school at Kuala Lumpur, was in charge of arrangements on the women's side. She died in 1983.

125 This incident took place at the Selarang Barracks, Changi.

- Sept. 11 Reading R.L. Stevenson's *New Arabian Nights*. The "Beachcombers" (i.e. The 'Asia' Boys) gave another Concert in the Main Yard. Garcia has been refused permission to visit his mother in the Women's Block. This is the first time this has happened and no reason is given for the refusal.
- Sept. 12 There is a scheme to provide 'free' issues of coconuts, dates, bananas and sweets for those "on the parish" i.e. 'broke', but there is a difference of opinion as to whether ducks' eggs (which cost 12 cents each) should also be on the free list. It is not, however, planned to provide the 'broke' with a credit of \$5 per month indefinitely. A Japanese spokesman has revealed that there are still thousands of Americans and British Nationals in Shanghai, many more than Craigie's estimate of 4,000, but many of them may be Indians.
- Sept. 13 There is good news that the Russians are holding on to Stalingrad and that Rommel had lost a third of his army while retreating in Libya. Listened to Archdeacon Graham White's Sunday sermon and then to the usual Sunday evening concert of popular music given by the band.
- Sept. 14 De Muth, an elderly Singapore lawyer, has lost 7 stone in weight in 7 months, having come down from 18 stone to 11 stone. I am reading Mark Twain's *Hucklebery Finn*. Cell 40, next door, has had a major de-bugging campaign. The walls have been blow-piped, the holes in the concrete walls filled with soap and then the cell has been white-washed anew. Any new bugs, which are black in colour, will be easy to see on the white-washed walls.
- Sept. 15 Seven months since capitulation. Re-reading Majoribanks' *Life of Sir Marshall Hall*. The 5 selected to collate information about civilian internees in Singapore, went out today. They include the 2 Editors of the *Changi Guardian*, whose places on the paper have been taken by Dr. Devine and Peter Gurney of my department.
- Sept. 16 There has been a fresh outbreak of dysentery in 'B' Block. The *Tatuta Maru* has now arrived here from Lourenco Marques. Exchange hopes are still high in the belief that, in fact, few British Nationals still remain in China or Japan. This belief is supported by the evidence of Salvation Army personnel who left these countries just before the outbreak of the war.
- Sept. 17 The rumour is that a British offensive has begun in Burma, and 2,000 planes are being used, and 3,600 tons of bombs have been dropped by us on Bremen. To kill the bugs in our cell, we have been plugging holes in the concrete walls with soap. Reading Conrad's *Mirror of the Sea*.
- Sept. 18 I hear that E.H.S. Bretherton (Education) and an officer in the Malay Regiment, escaped to Sumatra on February 15 and was last seen being put on a ship bound for Colombo.¹²⁶ There is a fresh

¹²⁶ Bretherton and his companion were said to have slipped unnoticed by the guards, down a lane while on a march to a prison camp just after the capitulation. They managed to reach the coast, found a boat to escape in, and eventually reached Ceylon.

- crop of rumours; The Germans are using gas in their attack on Stalingrad, two German warship crews in the Baltic have mutinied and the Americans have captured a Jap aircraft-carrier with 75 planes intact on board!
- Sept. 19 There is a report that G.A.T. Allen (Customs) was killed when his Battery Unit received a direct hit at Changi. A number of Customs Officers, who joined the R.N.V.R., appear to have lost their lives; but two, Tufnell and Cantrell, are said to have reached Colombo. Another Customs Officer named Langdon sailed a boat for 150 miles, reached Sumatra and was free for 19 days before capture. I received a cake from Mrs. Edge, wife of a man in my department, who is now in the Military Camp. R.C. Weston a Seremban planter, aged 59, has died of a cerebral tumour.
- Sept. 20 40 more Engineers have come in, leaving about 26 still out. Two Customs officers, Pickthall and Arnold, are said to be imprisoned in Palembang. Some Australian soldiers caught looting Pirate cigarettes in Singapore are said to have received 50 lashes each with a dog-whip and then been locked up in a Cold Storage Van for several hours until they were nearly suffocated. Two Eurasian girls, who had said that the British would soon be back, were stripped and tied up in Raffles Place for a day. The Chinese are reported to have stolen 3 million rounds of ammunition from a godown. Stalingard is still holding out against the Germans.
- Sept. 21 We have had our first ever Roll Call because a European internee was found outside the walls at 3 a.m. this morning. The culprit is a very rotund ex-Prisons Officer nicknamed "Barrel" Roberts who is also one of the Camp's best comedians. Roberts had got out over the double walls with the help of an improvised rope-ladder¹²⁷ and gone in search either of food or a woman. The story is that he was too drunk to pull himself up on the rope to return to jail and had been obliged to knock on the prison door to be allowed in. A Tamil who is alleged to have given an internee a cigarette, is reported to have been tied up at the front gate for two days. It is reported that one of the engineers who had been working outside, named McFee has been given two years' hard labour for striking an Austrian who was attached to the Japanese Kempitai (= Gestapo).
- Sept. 22 A Eurasian named Dumbleton was beaten up today for being implicated in the "Barrel" Roberts incident. The latter was beaten up yesterday before and after he had explained how he had got out. Reading Buchan's *Mr Standfast*.
- Sept. 23 I sent my brother Gerwyn another packet. The Sikh sentry was complaining today that they, too, had suffered through "Barrel" Roberts. He wished he had run away properly, he added. Four are

At some stage in his escape, Bretherton suffered a temporary paralysis of one side of his body.

127 The sentry tower marked 'G' on the rough plan of Ghangi on page 97 is where he got over the wall.

- now implicated in the Roberts "escape" – Dumbleton, two Canadians Paul James and McDonald, as well as Roberts. I understand that 3 Malay women outside have also been questioned. 2¼ acres of maize are now being planted outside the front gates in spare land.
- Sept. 24 The Russians are successfully counter-attacking at Stalingrad with reinforcements under General Budenni brought from Siberia. The Solomon Islands are also reported to be clear of the Japs. The 4 prisoners detained at the front gate have now been set free from the Guard Room. Reports vary as to the severity of their punishment but Dumbleton is said to have suffered the most for calling his attackers names, though all are said to have black marks on their backs and have been sent to hospital.
- Sept. 25 Reading Fielding's *Joseph Andrews*. There is a strong suspicion that Pearson (Survey Dept.) was captured and killed when a Jap force landed at Bekok near Batu Pahat. Talk of repatriation is strong again as a result of Jap questioning of an Eurasian woman in 'A' Block.
- Sept. 26 2,000 tons of "comforts" have arrived by the *Tatuta Maru* but as they are intended for Prisoners of War, none is likely to reach this camp. The 2nd Exchange ship, the *Kamakura Maru*, has also now arrived at Singapore. The report is that the Russians are making big advances in the Stalingrad and northern sectors of the front.
- Sept. 27 It is reported that both Akyab and Mandalay have been captured in Burma. The Governor and his party were reported to have reached Formosa on August 31. The Rev. Colin King of our department preached the Sunday sermon.
- Sept. 28 Reading Smollett's *Roderick Random*. The Japs say that they will be providing no more cigarettes or flour after October 8. As there is no news of the "comforts" mentioned above, the food situation looks gloomy at present. The Camp Committee are now rooting out "deserters" from the regular forces for return to the Military Camp. Names have to be in by September 30.
- Sept. 29 I did my last Laundry fatigue today as I am giving up this work. A ration party which went out to Kranji (near the Johore Causeway) today, were offered sums of money amounting to \$5.50 in a Chinese eating shop. The Chinese population take a very optimistic view of the future.
- Sept. 30 There was another bathing picnic today. Meetings between the Men and Women internees have now been approved for those who are *not* husbands and wives. The Sikh sentries today beat up an internee for refusing to clean out their guard room. The latest rumour is that women and children and "selected" men will be sailing for Lourenco Marques in 10 days! It is reported that the Japanese are now building a concrete runway at Kallang Airport, 100 yards wide and 2 miles long. The *Syonan Times* is singularly devoid of war news these last few days; the days of Jap and Axis victories appear to be past.
- Oct. 1 Two lorry loads of comforts are to come to this camp instead of

- going to Indian troops; they include sugar, flour, dhal, ghee and cigarettes. The Japs refuse to give anything to the Gurkhas because they refuse to co-operate and work for them.
- Oct. 2 Today, I have completed 16 years' service in Malaya. I am reading *Tom Jones* by Henry Fielding. A mock Changi "Parliament" has been set up with three parties in it, the Commonwealth, Constitutional and Independent parties, each with their own programmes.
- Oct. 3 All internees are to receive one extra pound of sugar each, this being part of the 5,000 lbs of comforts mentioned 2 days ago. 6 lorry loads of comforts arrived today. Stalingrad is still holding out against all German attacks. The camp orchestra gave its usual concert.
- Oct. 4 It is reported that the postcards sent off on June 20 have now arrived home. The *Syonan Times* reports that there are still 4,000 British and 1,500 Americans in Shanghai – a blow to our repatriation hopes. On the other hand, there is a rumour that Hongkong internees are to be repatriated because of the shortage of food in that area. Colonel Lord of the Salvation Army preached the Sunday sermon.
- Oct. 5 More comforts have come in but there are no details of what they are. It is reported that an Indian in Singapore found listening in to Calcutta or New Delhi radio illegally has had his ear-drums pierced. There is also a story of the massacre of 60 Eurasians in Johore because a Eurasian named Carvelho had protested at the rape or maltreatment of his daughter. The Japs have placed a ban on our mock Changi "Parliament". Internees are generally debating whether "comforts" brought in recently should be distributed direct to the internee (as with the sugar) or whether they could not better be distributed mixed up in our rations from the kitchen. There is a rumour that the Japs have almost been driven out of New Guinea.
- Oct. 6 The *Syonan Times* reports that 20,000 families are on the verge of starvation in Singapore, not because of the shortage of food – "there is plenty of food" – but because the people will not share out the available supplies fairly. The camp newspaper, the *Changi Guardian*, thinks that the recently received comforts should not be handed out now in case our needs become more acute in the next four months should the Japs cut down our rations still further. 34 Asians and Eurasians have petitioned to be released from our camp.
- Oct. 7 The Japs are reported to have evacuated the Aleutian Islands and the Germans, Tobruk. Three more engineers have come in and the Camp Committee are now asking that the remainder of those still out be sent in, too. The Japs are busy extending the runways at both Tengah and Kallang airfields. The Men's representative gave a talk on the distribution of comforts. It has been decided to issue only 3 tins of milk per person for the time being and to lay in 6 months' stock of milk. It is stressed that none of the present comforts was specifically intended for "civilian internees". At the same time we hear that 2,500 P.O.W.s are ill in hospital in adjacent camps.

- Oct. 8 There is a leading article in the Syonan Times dealing with the "grumbles" of the people living in the Japanese "New Order". Husbands and wives are now allowed to write one letter per week to each other. The first of the Comfort tins of milk were distributed today. In addition to the 6 months' reserve stocks of tinned milk being built up by the Committee, there will also be a reserve one ton of Marmite in case rice polishings become unavailable. We are no longer buying \$40,000 worth of food per month as in July, now it is only \$4,000 per month, for even if the money was available to buy more, the food isn't. A 6 months' reserve of medical and other supplies for women, children and invalids is also being built up. All the Committee's decisions have been generally approved and well received, now that there is an assurance of a very strict supervision of the kitchen staff and there are accountants to check the issue of all supplies. It is very doubtful whether internees at Palembang and Padang in Sumatra are faring as well as we are, as they can have had little money to supplement their rations. In our case this has amounted to £ 35,000 or about \$300,000 to date.
- Oct. 9 There is a rumour that Spain, Portugal and Argentina have broken off diplomatic relations with the Axis. I received a note from "Ga-Ga".¹²⁸ The *Syonan Times* reports that the *Lisbon Maru*, 7,000 tons, with 1,800 British and Australian P.O.W.s on board was torpedoed on its way to Japan on October 1 by an American submarine. "Hundreds" were saved.¹²⁹ We received a comfort issue of Vitamin A, Caramels and ½ lb of Cocoa each.
- Oct. 10 Repatriation hopes have again been dampened by a reported remark of Asahi that no more repatriation ships will be calling at Singapore. Some were hoping that, if one did call, Lady Heath who has been, and still is, very ill would be able to go. She has had several blood transfusions, it seems. The Japs have been calling for a list of all important executives, e.g. General managers of estates, banks etc, members of Legislative Councils, and Chairmen of Sanitary Boards. The Japs conducted an examination in the Japanese language

128 "Ga-Ga" was the nickname of Capt. David Lloyd, 2/30 Battalion A.I.F.

129 On September 27, 1942, the *Lisbon Maru* a Jap freighter of 7,000 tons left Hongkong for Japan carrying 1,816 British P.O.W.s, made up of units from the Royal Navy, the Royal Scots and the Middlesex Regiment, as well as 800 Jap troops. On October 1, when the ship was off the Sing Pang Islands, just south of Shanghai, the ship was torpedoed by the U.S.S. *Grouper*, which fired 6 torpedoes of which not more than 2 hit the ship. The ship did not sink for over 24 hours, but after taking off their own soldiers, the Japs made no effort to rescue the P.O.W.s who were trapped in their 3 holds by heavy tarpaulins placed over the hatches.

Eventually a few hundred P.O.W.s managed to break out of their holds and reached the nearby islands, only to be rounded up later by Jap Marines and taken on to Shanghai. Only 973 P.O.W.s survived this ordeal and a further 244 of these died during the following year.

The Jap attempt to make anti-American propaganda out of this incident failed because 3 P.O.W.s were helped by the islanders to escape to Chung King, from where the true facts of this tragedy reached the Foreign Office in January, 1943.

For further details, see Chapter 12 of Oliver Linsay's *At the Going Down of the Sun (1941-1945)*, Hamish Hamilton, 1981.

(Nippon-Go) at the Clifford School Hall, Kuala Kangsar, on October 2. 75 men and 2 women took the exam. Only a few months ago I was headmaster of this school! Naiffe, ex-D.O. at Victoria Point in Burma has arrived here from Banpong near Bangkok. There are 1,000 British P.O.W.s at Banpong and the rail journey from Bangkok to Singapore had taken 2½ days.

Oct. 11 The Japs are said to have evacuated Buna in New Guinea. Selfe, an old school friend, and 2 others have received official radio messages from their families via New Delhi Radio and 5 internees have received letters via the Red Cross. Colonel Lord preached the sermon. Reading R.L. Stevenson's *St. Ives*.

Oct. 12 Yesterday I made my first trip on a lorry to collect vegetables from Singapore and managed to speak to Eng Chen, a Chinese clerk in the accountancy firm, Evatt and Co. He spoke of a shortage of food. Singapore looks cleaner than it was at the time I came in here and many houses have had a fresh coat of white-wash especially in the Stamford Road. A Chinese shopkeeper gave us one pineapple and 2 bananas each. I was recognised, I think, by a number of Volunteers, at a point on the road about 2 miles from here. About 15 regular soldiers left us for the military camp today; luckily the Japs did not appear interested in the Volunteers.¹³⁰ One of the soldiers who left, a Corporal Chatwin (or Chatkin), had been impersonating Ansell,¹³¹ a former planter, who had joined the Loyals and gone missing in the Central Johore area. I also met in Singapore, Storch, the Jeweller who is now manager of the Adelphi Hotel, Singapore, and also Messrs. Wade and Miller and Mrs. De Moubray, who are all working for the International Red Cross. They report that my car is no longer in the garage at the back of Customs House where I had left it. They also said that the Japs are building a huge concrete runway at Kallang right across Grove Road and that many Korean soldiers were now guarding the roads. For the first time, I went out on a wood fatigue. We made two trips, pulling an engineless¹³² lorry, and filling up with large pieces of timber which are to be burnt

¹³⁰ There were really very few Volunteers in our camp, probably not more than 3 or 4 at the most. The only ones I knew personally were M.C. ff. Sheppard (M.C.S) and Allen (Kedah Volunteers)

¹³¹ This was a curious story. For some time Corporal Chatwin, a regular soldier in the Loyals, had been passing himself off in our camp as the son or nephew of the planter Mr. Ansell whom I had met in January 1942. Chatwin knew that Ansell Junior had been posted as "missing" by the Loyals, so he had no doubt thought it safe to impersonate him as a civilian in our camp. When I saw his assumed name in the list of Changi Internees I had naturally contacted him. He had seemed very vague about his relationship to the true Ansell family whom I now knew well. But on the day he left for the military camp, he did confess that his name was not Ansell and that my questions had given him some anxious moments. I could only assure him that there had been no intention of giving him away but only to collect any new facts about the disappearance of Ansell Junior at Parit Sulong.

¹³² The Japs always blamed our government for the lack of transport because we had destroyed all the available stocks of petrol before capitulation. Each wood fatigue lorry would be hauled by perhaps, ten rows of four men per row (one row behind the other), and pulling at poles attached to the lorry by steel hawsers.

- under the kitchen boilers. Attended the first of a series of historical lectures to be given on Malaya by Neilson of our department.
- Oct. 13 News has come in that Frank Vanrennan, Bill Harvey and Graham and another, possibly Captain Nugent, have been caught and shot on the Malayan coast. Certain of their effects have been produced by Japs as proof of their deaths, but this is the only proof so far. Two others, who escaped at the same time from Pudu Jail and who were caught almost immediately, were also sentenced to death but were eventually pardoned and are back in Pudu Jail, Kuala Lumpur.
- Oct. 14 An internee named Harrison of Robinson and Co. has been locked up for boasting to a Sikh sentry that the Japs were being beaten in the Pacific and would be beaten here, too, before long. Neilson gave his second lecture on Malaya.
- Oct. 15 I went out on a second lorry trip, this time to Joo Chiat where we delivered two bedsteads and a refrigerator at a house now occupied by Japanese Interpreters and once owned by Laycock, the Singapore Lawyer and orchid grower. Reading Joseph Conrad's "*The Rover*". We hear that 90 Red Cross parcels are on the way – the first that we will receive.
- Oct. 16 Bob Chrystal,¹³³ a Sungei Siput, Perak, planter is reported to be in Taiping Jail, so Dr. Lawrie was told by Dr. Moreira at Miyako Hospital. Our Block representative has been explaining to us the meaning of the Jap "parole" forms that we are expected to sign tomorrow. We have to promise to obey the rules of the Camp and not to escape.
- Oct. 17 All internees were paraded at 9.30 a.m. in the Girdle Road, i.e. the space between the outer and inner walls, and by 12 Noon all internees whose initials ranged between 'A' and 'L' had signed the parole forms. The rest had signed by 1 p.m. Only 4, it is said, refused to sign immediately, but they, too, signed later. Reading Cervantes. *Don Quixote*.
- Oct. 18 I have now had loose bowels for over a week. The Japs seem to have lost more ships off the Solomons.
- Oct. 19 Adrian Clarke gave a talk on the Constitution and Administration of Malaya. Gridley went on a fatigue across the Causeway to Johore Bahru and brought back some news. All Asiatics they met made them very welcome. The Japs had erected shrines wherever Jap officers had died and there was one only 5 yards from a petrol pump!¹³⁴ The spot opposite the Yacht Club from which the Japs

133 This was not true. Bob Chrystal spent the whole war in the jungle and kept alive in spite of the poor health, including an ulcer, which was troubling him when war broke out. Eventually after another spell in Malaya after the war, he retired to Perth, Australia, where he died well over 80 years of age, I believe.

134 The Japs also erected a massive War Memorial or Shrine to their dead on a hill west of the Bukit Timah Road and a few miles south of the Causeway. It is understood that the shrine was blown up by our army very soon after the British Administration took over in September, 1945. There then remained only a vacant open space, 100 yards or so square, approached by a concrete stairway of several hundred steps.

- had set out across the Johore Strait to Singapore in barges was marked with a detailed plan to show the 15 places at which they had landed on a 1½ mile front. The 70 feet gap in the Causeway had been bridged with a wooden bridge and there was still a hole through the Government Offices Tower at Johore Bahru which our guns had shelled because the Japs had used it as an observation post.
- Oct. 20 Garcia's birthday — we had salmon from a tin and cake from Garcia's mother to celebrate. There is now yet another repatriation rumour. 4 Exchange ships, including the City of Paris and the Narkunda have left England. Apparently a fresh agreement for the exchange of civilians is being negotiated in Switzerland, which may or may not concern us. A Jap officer is reported to have commented; "Maybe, I think." A batch of 12 Japs visited the jail and we had dried fish for lunch for the first time — not very appetising.
- Oct. 21 Adrian Clarke gave his second talk on Malayan Administration and Decentralisation. The Japs are reported to have landed troops and artillery on Guadalcanar Island. The Americans have occupied Liberia and there has been a heavy raid on the Creusot Works in France. The Japs have asked for lists of internees in this camp grouped under professions.
- Oct. 22 I have now completed six months in this camp. The first Variety Concert with a mock "Pig and Whistle" as the stage background, was held. Went out on a wood fatigue using a tumbril type cart for the first time. The Camp Committee have donated \$100 towards the Distressed Asiatics Fund. Trevor Hughes M.C.S. gave a talk on Portugal, a country in which he is particularly interested. Food riots are reported at Singapore and it is rumoured that 9 Japs were killed.
- Oct. 23 Certain personal parcels have arrived in the camp, but only clothing items have been distributed to the addressees, any food or tobacco being confiscated. In the case of sweaters, the seams have been cut open in a search for hidden messages. The parcels are said to have come from South Africa. One internee, named Llewellyn, received only the wrapper of his parcel and one parcel had come from an ex-Dunlop Estate planter named Ames, who had been seen getting away in a boat on the Thursday before capitulation. Some medical supplies received are to go to the hospital.
- Oct. 24 We hear that Dawson, No. 1 of Guthrie and De Piro, No. 1 of McAlister and Co. were killed when the *Kuala* was sunk. An ex-warder named Bolton, very ill with beri-beri, has been rushed off to Miyako Hospital in a very low mental state. The Camp choir and orchestra gave a very good concert of Russian songs, including the Volga Boatman.
- Oct. 25 News has been received of the death of Miller, Chartered Bank, from enteric at Colombo, also of the death of McKerrow, No. 1 Patersons Simons. A number of people who set off from Clifford Pier in a sampan on the Sunday night are now in London, but another who decided not to go with them because his water bottle was leaking is

still with us! It is reported that large numbers of P.O.W.s at Changi are being sent to Bangkok in Siam. Letters have been received from Seabridge, ex-editor of the *Straits Times*, who must have got away to England.

- Oct. 26 There are reports of air-raids on Tokio and Osaka, also on Genoa and Trieste. A volunteer named Yates aged 28, is reported to have died of dysentery in the P.O.W. camp and so have two soldiers who had only recently given themselves up and were very ill with dysentery and malaria. The Japs are reported to be moving away 3 to 4,000 P.O.W.s a day and yesterday lorries were passing our jail continuously from 5 a.m. onwards. I personally saw 5 lorries pass us today when I was out on the wood fatigue. Broadhurst, a Policeman, is reported safe in Australia and so are several Police Inspectors who left early. Reading Scott's *Guy Mannerling*. T.J. Thomas of our department gave a talk on the Geography of Malaya. More rumours tell us that Turkey has declared war on the Axis and we again have a battle fleet in the Bay of Bengal to back up our reconquest of Burma.
- Oct. 27 Rumours again mention the mass exodus of P.O.W.s for Siam. 650 leave on each train and there is a 3 days' march at the end of the rail journey. All Volunteers are leaving for Siam tomorrow, some Australians are being sent by sea to Formosa or Japan, Indian troops, who refused to sign the parole forms are being sent to St. John's Island, off Singapore, but 2,000 sick and wounded are to remain behind in Singapore. It is understood that a number of Volunteers got away on the last day (February 15), including Ambler (of our department) who had been in the Malay Regiment. The rank and file of that regiment suffered 200 casualties in the fighting. 'B' Block had another bathing picnic. There is more news of possible exchange negotiations to include all British and American Nationals in East Asia and possibly even P.O.W. wounded.
- Oct. 28 According to letters received from South Africa, we are believed to be living in some comfort in our own houses! Goodale, No. 1 of Roneo Limited, even sent instructions for the disposal of his effects and for the sale of the stocks of his firm, not forgetting his car for which he thought \$1,500 was a fair price! The *Changi Guardian* carried ironic comments about Bagnall and Bisseker's reported safe arrivals in South Africa and England respectively. The Japanese fleet off the Solomons is reported to have been annihilated and there is good news, too, from Libya where Rommel's first line of defence has been broken. Comforts for Sumatran internees have come into our camp and this is taken as an indication that Sumatran internees are to be sent over here prior to exchange! Captain Palmer who commanded the Collier Oscar II has become deranged and was unable to recognise his own wife at Miyako where she, too, is very ill. A bomb, it is said, has killed 2 or 3 Jap officers outside Cyrano's in Singapore and 4,000 Chinese have been arrested as a result.

- Oct. 29 Two Volunteers, Riches a Selangor planter and Tulloch (Surveys) were recognised as they passed in lorries yesterday. The Japs now claim big naval successes off the Solomons. There is a big epidemic of dysentery in the camp. An internee named Triggs who went down from 20 stone to 9 stone and then recovered to 11 stone has just gone back to Miyako Hospital.
- Oct. 30 The latest repatriation rumour is that women, children and the old men will leave on November 15 and that postcards have been provided for despatch to our relatives on November 3. One of our lorry drivers, named Colato, has died of a heart attack. He was 48.
- Oct. 31 We have been filling up our postcards and are allowed to describe our jail as "Changi Internment Camp" on the cards. We hear that policemen, Marrable, Fenner, Macdonald and Godwin are all now in the Nigerian Police Force. They claim that everybody was free to leave Singapore from the last Wednesday, 4 days before the end! Wagstaff (P & T) and party who got away on Sunday evening, are also safe; and Wheeler (Customs) who left on the Saturday, reached Australia safely. Our 'B' Block representative, Edmonds, has retired and Penseler, a mining engineer has been elected in his place with 397 votes, followed by Souter and Bill Adams who got 132 votes each. There is a curious story of the man who bought some toffee inside the camp and found that the wrapper round it was his own Engineering Diploma. It is claimed that the American fleet is now in complete command of the Pacific right from the Coral Sea up to Formosa. We had a very good concert, including a play written by Jenkins (Customs) about the mythical "Block" head of 'E' Block. Started to read Melville's *Moby Dick* but found it too uninteresting to read further — the only book I have ever found so!
- Nov. 1 It is rumoured that Admiral Cunningham's fleet has joined up with the American fleets off the Solomons and that Penang has been bombed. Archdeacon Graham White preached the sermon. Bishop Wilson of Singapore, is to come in from Singapore tomorrow for a confirmation service; he is still allowed a certain freedom outside.
- Nov. 2 I was out on wood fatigue and heard that Jimmy Egan a Perak planter, had left for Siam with other Volunteers. Reading Priestley's *Rain upon Gadshill*. Weisberg gave a talk on the Malayan Budget and the Bishop confirmed 28 Candidates. Dr. Johns, our Men's Representative, has sent a letter of protest to the Japs regarding the state of the parcels recently received through the Red Cross. Certain British soldiers passing the jail in a lorry were slapped and made to walk for giving us the V sign.
- Nov. 3 The women, children and men over 60 were allowed to go outside for a walk — this is in honour of the birthday of "the greatest of the Mikados", one Meizo. Mrs. Palmer, wife of Captain Palmer, has died in Miyako. She was paralysed and he is now mental. An internee in 'C' Block has gone mental too; he is a Eurasian named Skinner and the second such case in that block in one week. Since November 1,

all drinking water drunk in this camp has had to be boiled, as the Japs have temporarily (?) run out of chlorine for the chlorination of the city's water supply. We hear that the Japs are now training pro-Japanese Indian troops in street fighting.

- Nov. 4 The Japs are strictly enforcing the blackout regulations tonight and tomorrow. Flying Fortresses are reported to have bombed the remnants of the Japanese fleet causing 53 Jap losses and sustaining 27 losses themselves. A Sikh sentry is reported to have been tied up for 4 days for trying to run away from his job.
- Nov. 5 Reading Conrad's *An Outcast of the Islands*. Another Jap blackout during which we heard plenty of pipes being banged and the jingling of bells to no apparent purpose. The offensive in Libya is said to be going well for us with the capture of 15,000 Germans. Waldock (Forests) and Shippton, a planter, were apparently shot at Kuantan, having been mistaken for spies by the Japs. The Japs are said to have lost a total of 96 ships off the Solomons and both Penang and Sungei Patani station have been bombed. Six ships were sunk in Penang Harbour. Major Spencer Chapman, accompanied by Vanrennan had entered the jungle in December 1941 near Tanjong Malim on the Perak border, having been shown the way in by Cuthbert (Forests), so we are now informed.
- Nov. 6 Four repatriation ships, including the City of Lancaster and the Worcestershire, are reputed to have left England. A great victory is reported in Libya, with the capture of 10,000 Germans as well as 250 tanks and 270 guns. We hear that Proctor, a Muar rubber planter, was killed at Parit Jawa, Johore, by a mortar shell when he was cut off from retreat along with Ferguson of the P.W.D. Stalingrad continues to hold out against German attacks.
- Nov. 7 Reading Sassoon's *The Old Century*. Opening of our mock "Parliament" — it has 3 parties, Constitutional, Opposition and Independent. Two German army corps are reported to be surrounded in Libya.
- Nov. 8 Brigadier Lord (of the Salvation Army) preached the sermon. The looseness of the bowels from which I have suffered for some time is now cured. There is a rumour that we shall be able to send out messages not exceeding 50 words over the Jap Radio.
- Nov. 9 On outside wood fatigue. M.C. ff. Sheppard (MCS) was arrested on an outside compost fatigue for attempting to pass messages to the military camp in a cigarette box. Since then he has been locked up in a cell at the front Court Yard. We hear that there are only 15 Volunteers left behind in Changi Military Camp. There is great news of our victories in Libya where we have captured 40-50,000 men, 1,000 guns and 500 tanks. We also hear that American forces have landed at Casablanca, Oran and Algiers along the North African coast. Reading Conrad's *The Shadow Line*.
- Nov. 10 There is great excitement at the news that the French have surrendered in Morocco and so have 6 German and Italian divisions

- in Libya. Sheppard is still locked up but I gather that few of his papers have been found.
- Nov. 11 We celebrated Remembrance Day with a service before a life-like Cenotaph model erected on the Camp Stage by McDermot and held a 2 minutes' silence at 11 a.m. There is a rumour that both Sardinia and Bizerta have been captured. We are holding A.R.P. practices for the next 2 days, but for no apparent reason. Reading Conrad's *Almayer's Folly*.
- Nov. 12 Met two Volunteers, Wainwright and Reynolds (Perak Hydro) on an outside wood fatigue. They tell me that my brother, G.E.D. Lewis, is either in Singapore or "up-country". There have been two cases of diptheria in the Women's Block. Mather has been had up by the Japs for sending a letter to the P.O.W. camp through Sheppard, who remains locked up still. Hitler has now occupied the whole of France. It is estimated that we have taken 100,000 prisoners in Libya.
- Nov. 13 Both Sheppard and Mather were seen being taken for an escorted walk at 4 p.m. today. It is understood that both were taken to Singapore for questioning, were beaten up there and then brought back here. The Camp is much exercised as to the possible outcome of the occupation of all French North Africa, especially as Darlan is said to have joined the Allied side. Even the Singapore papers fully admit that the Axis forces in Libya have had to retreat.
- Nov. 14 Reading Thackeray's *Henry Esmond*. There is a report that we have captured Tobruk, Derna and Bardia and also Dakar on the West African Coast, and that General Petain has fled to Gibraltar!
- Nov. 15 Another rumour states that Italy has capitulated and that Tripoli has also fallen to us. The Axis are said to have suffered 80,000 casualties and had 80,000 taken prisoner as well.
- Nov. 16 Today Dr. Devine and Peter Gurney, the joint Editors of the *Changi Guardian*, were locked up for an hour and their papers seized by the Japs, following a comic misunderstanding of British humour. It had been decided to discontinue the Sunday edition of the *Guardian* known as the *Changi Times* and mock "obituary" notices regarding this paper had appeared in the *Guardian*, purporting to come from outside papers such as *The Dredgemasters' Weekly*, *The Feathered World*, *The Convent Times*, *The Railway Gazette* and the *Financier*, in fact, all fictitious papers. The Japs wanted to know for instance how the *Railway Gazette* could say that the *Changi Times* "had been a good little publication run on the right lines and with many good points." How, the Japs argued, could the editors of the *Railway Gazette* in England have known anything about a paper in our camp? R.O. Jenkins, a well-known Visiting Agent, gave his second lecture on "The Rubber Industry - the threat of Buna" (= synthetic rubber). A cake sent by Mrs. Del Tufo to her son in our camp was wrapped up in a paper covered with code words (according to the Japs). It was later explained to them that the words were not code, just some notes in Italian written by Mrs. Del Tufo herself, for she is

- Italian.
- Nov. 17 Sheppard has now been returned to the front porch (from Singapore) and Davis (also M.C.S.) was interviewed by the Japs for 20 minutes. The *Changi Guardian* is back in circulation, but now has a "chop" on it to indicate Jap approval. Reading Buchan's *Path of the King*.
- Nov. 18 Davis and Clements, who were formerly "aides" to the Governor, have been ordered to go into Singapore to do work, but what it is is not known. The Japs are rumoured to have had another big defeat off the Solomons.
- Nov. 19 The rest of the Fire Brigade came in today from Singapore. It is reported that Rommel got only 15 out of 500 tanks out of Egypt and that both Derna and Benghazi have been captured by us. The French Foreign Legion of 30,000 men have also declared for the allies. Off the Solomons, the Japs are alleged to have lost 22 ships and 30,000 men.
- Nov. 20 Reading Neville Henderson, the Ambassador to Berlin, *The Failure of a Mission*. The *Syonan Times* admits that Darlan has turned traitor to the Axis and that fighting in Libya is now west of Derna.
- Nov. 21 Hunter went out on a fatigue to Singapore and had both lunch and tea out! The Chinese population are very confident and very helpful. The local paper admits the evacuation of Benghazi by the Germans. We had a great orchestral concert using a brand new stage setting, with the Eiffel Tower as the background and with an illuminated "V" sign going off and on overhead. A great success.
- Nov. 22 Reading Conrad's *Lord Jim*. The Sikh sentries have started prowling round the inside of the camp and searching cells 2 or 3 times a day. What they are looking for is a mystery. One of them stopped at the Quartermaster's cell in Hudson's Bay and stared hard at an advertisement for "Sikh's Beard", (our nickname for the Javanese tobacco shag that we receive). The Japs have objected to the use of the word "Radio" in "Radio Play", an item in a recent concert programme. They will next be objecting to "Radio Malt". Last night the Sikh sentries seemed to be looking for possible radio sets hidden in the swill pits.¹³⁵ One, at least, picked up an old truss appliance used by hernia sufferers and applied it to his ears thinking it might be a pair of ear phones.
- Nov. 23 The *Syonan Times* admits the German evacuation of Benghazi and reports President Roosevelt's statement that "the Third Solomons Battle had been a major U.S. Victory." More rumours about repatriation reveal that negotiations are now completed except for decisions affecting the category of internee and the territory to be dealt with first. I saw a performance of "An Experimental Play" by John Sefton (a detective and murder story). Coats drew rather a

¹³⁵ These pits in the Main Exercise Yard had one redeeming feature. A kingfisher had made its nest in or near by the pits and daily gladdened our hearts by a display of its vivid colours, in sharp contrast to the depressing grey walls around, beyond which only the tops of the trees were visible.

- gloomy picture of the future when he gave a lecture on "The Mining Industry in Malaya."
- Nov. 24 We had another bathing picnic and saw the new bungalow once owned by a Major Henley, Manager of the North British Mercantile Assurance Co. The Jap interpreter, who accompanied us, had been an internee of ours at New Delhi. He volunteered the information that the food at his camp had not been bad except for the absence of fish, and that they had not been badly treated. However the climate had been bad and they had even had sleet. Our latest exchange date is now December 12! I gather from the local press that in a Jap language competition in Nippon - Go held at Taiping, Chin Goon won first prize, Ooi Cheng San the second, and Atma Singh the third prize. Chin Goon is well known to me.
- Nov. 25 Adrian Clarke, the ex-Attorney General F.M.S. gave a talk on "The Lighter Side of the Law." Another Welsh get together included a Captain Hughes, Morgan (of Batu Arang), T.J. Thomas, Osborne-Jones and myself.
- Nov. 26 Went on an outside wood fatigue but saw no one. I am told that Captain Dane (of Perak) has been taken away to Formosa. Dr. Reid (of Sungkai) was caught by the Japs on Pahang Consolidated Premises: he had apparently not been warned in time of the Jap approach. C.N. Lembruggen (alias "Charles Nell") has given up the post of Editor of the *Syonan Times* after 10 months and has returned to his previous engineering job.
- Nov. 27 I had a talk with an A.P.C. passenger off the captured *Hauraki* and he gave me news of Australia. The American troops there were better paid and had better uniforms than the Australian forces and so stole all the girls. One taxi-driver he met, had objected to our bombing of Tokio in case Sydney got bombed! Many Dutch (including Javanese) troops had escaped to Australia and the number of our troops captured at Singapore was now estimated at 61,000 men.
- Nov. 28 Reading Buchan's *Castle Gay*. St. Andrew's day was celebrated with a concert, which included Highland flings, Scottish airs and jokes and sword dances, all accompanied by some broad Scottish accents not always easy to understand!
- Nov. 29 A Kelantan miner, W. Sasse, aged 67 has died at Miyako Hospital after a long illness. A sacred concert was given by the Camp Choir, the Elijah Oratorio being sung with a Church background depicted on the stage.
- Nov. 30 More strong rumours of repatriation, the magic date for a possible quick get away is still December 12. We are told that 650 Australian, 150 British and 1,000 Dutch troops are leaving for Formosa. Belgrave gave a talk on the future of Agriculture in Malaya, particularly of crops such as pineapple, rice and local tobacco.
- Dec. 1 The French are said to have scuttled their fleet at Toulon. Reading Buchan's *39 Steps*. As a result of the reported intercession of the

Bishop of Singapore, Sheppard and Mather have now returned to cells in the Tower at the front Courtyard. Two reconnaissance allied planes are reported to have flown over Singapore last Wednesday and Saturday.

- Dec. 2 Reading Buchan's *Greenmantle*. It is now said that a Red Cross ship will arrive here on December 7. Four ships are said to have left Yokohama, two for Hongkong and two for Singapore, for repatriation purposes.
- Dec. 3 Listened to a speech by our 'B' Block representative. The football pitch in the main exercise yard has been extended and the younger elements have formed two teams, Rovers and Wanderers. We are told that a bureau has been set up in Tokio to deal with the property and exchange of Jap Nationals interned in enemy countries.
- Dec. 4 Reading Scott's *Ivanhoe*. The Sikh sentries are continuing their searches round the camp and a Memo on the Malayan War, reputed to be written by General Percival, is appearing in the *Syonan Times*.
- Dec. 5 It rained all day and 8 more engineers have come into our camp.
- Dec. 6 Again it rained all day and made us all miserable. The Japs have organised another A.R.P. exercise from 8.30 p.m. It is now known in London that we are in Changi Jail. 14,000 P.O.W.s are still thought to be in Singapore, 90% of the Indian army is said to have remained loyal, while 6-8,000 of the Indian Independence Army are said to have deserted to us in Burma where they had been sent to fight.
- Dec. 7 First Anniversary of the Outbreak of War in the Far East. Another wet day and another A.R.P. exercise. Perhaps the Japs are expecting raids? Reading Conrad's *Some Reminiscences*. We learn that 200 Volunteers are in a Town Camp in Singapore under the supervision of L.V. Taylor. Sheppard and Mather have at last been released from detention. Mather was not beaten up but Sheppard was for 3 days and given the "water treatment" until he gave Mather's name. Both were herded into a cell at the Y.M.C.A. Singapore (the H.Q. of the Kempitai) with 4 other Tamil and Chinese prisoners, and were not taken out of the cell even once for 12 days.¹³⁶

136 Three years later, after the Jap surrender, Sheppard was to play a crucial, almost a one man part, in bringing about 70 members of the Kempitai to trial and justice in the Singapore Courts. Many Kempis had fled to the Riau Archipelago, to the south of Singapore, en route for Java, in the hope that these former Dutch owned islands would remain in Indonesian hands and be outside the jurisdiction of the British Military Administration. Various expeditions were therefore organised to round up these fugitives before they could escape south.

On September 24th 14 members of the Kempitai were arrested on Kundur Island. A very unexpected bonus was the discovery and recovery of almost the complete Mess silver of the Argyle and Royal Scots Regiments. No doubt the Kempitai had planned to melt down the silver and dispose of its for cash.

At Singkep, a further 31 members of the Kempitai were captured on October 2nd, including one Miyazaki who had been prominent in ill-treating Bishop Wilson of Singapore. Miyazaki was later sentenced to 15 years imprisonment at his War Crimes Trial.

At Bintan, a further 24 Kempitai were arrested on October 8th, 1945.

[For further details, see Chapter 6 of Sheppard's *Taman Budiman* (Heinemann Educational Books (Asia) Ltd.)]

- Dec. 8 Two more Engineers, Fletcher and Clark have come in. The Americans now admit the loss of 8 Battle ships and 3 cruisers at Pearl Harbour one year ago today. Reading Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey*.
- Dec. 9 Another rainy day. Holland (Customs) came in from Singapore at 4 p.m. today. Singapore prices are now as follows – whiskey \$95 per bottle, lipstick \$35, and Aspro \$1 per tablet. A convoy of 40 transports, according to the Syonan Times has left India for Chittagong carrying our troops.
- Dec. 10 Only one load of wood, instead of two, was brought in today because of the heavy rain. There is a rumour that 200 women interned at Palembang in Sumatra are to be brought in to this camp. Reading Buchan's *Midwinter*.
- Dec. 11 There is a new rumour that we are all to be moved to the Central Mental Hospital, Tanjong Rambutan, Perak on December 19. At last we have a fine sunny day which is badly needed for drying our clothes.
- Dec. 12 868 letters from relatives in the U.K. and South Africa arrived, some of which are for our camp. We have now a list of 200 women and children interned at Palembang, about 3 or 4 of whom have already died. Reading Buchan's *John McNab*.
- Dec. 13 The letters which have just arrived are in fact those that arrived here weeks ago but were sent on to Japan by mistake. 6 Norwegian sailors have just come in and have a grim story to tell. Their ship was originally sunk off Java and they were machine-gunned while in the water. They then spent 88 days in an open life-boat and attempted to reach both India and Australia according to where the tides took them. 3 Europeans and all the Chinese on board died but the survivors eventually landed in the Andaman Islands, an Indian Convict settlement. The Japs, who were in occupation of these islands, treated them well and so did the convicts. They were now sent south to Singapore because of the continual Allied bombing of the Andamans. In the lifeboat they had lived largely on the blood and flesh of captured seagulls. One of our internees, Edlin, suspected of mental trouble, has been sent to Miyako Hospital.
- Dec. 14 I went out on my usual wood fatigue but our usual routine was upset by a Jap General's inspection of Jap recruits lined up outside the front gate. Those interested and young and fit enough are running a Football League competition on the enlarged pitch and teams which call themselves "Arsenal" and "Everton" play there. Reading Buchan's *The Courts of the Morning*. Watson gave a talk on "Forestry in Malaya". The lately arrived Norwegian sailors say that the Andaman Islanders are very patriotic and firmly believe that both Singapore and the Dutch East Indies have been recaptured. There is a garrison of 800 Japs at Port Blair which is frequently bombed. Their captain and chief officer had been killed when their ship was sunk.

- Dec. 15 According to letters received here from South Africa, our postcards have not yet been received by relatives in that country. Rommel is reported to have retreated to Misurata, 120 miles east of Tripoli, according to the Syonan Times. This represents a retreat of 260 miles from El Agueila.
- Dec. 16 I had a chat with Dickinson,¹³⁷ ex-C.P.O. Singapore regarding the attitudes of Civilians and Military during the course of the fighting. One J. Beaumont, aged 66, has died.
- Dec. 17 I had a second chat with Dickinson. A not so good Variety Concert witnessed last night. A Doll's House, made by Henderson and Cherrington, complete with furniture to match, is to be presented to the Orthopaedic Hospital, Singapore. Three of "the Asia Boys" have been posted for stealing poles, soap, clothes etc. Rumours spread easily. somebody exclaimed "The rations are increased!" Rumour made that into "The Russians are in Greece!" Asahi considers Changi "Camp" the best of 20 Internment Camps that he has visited. Its advantage is a permanent well-built building and a good water supply and up to a point this may be true.
- Dec. 18 I visited the dentist and was told that my teeth are in good condition. Mrs. Clements, wife of a Customs Officer interned here, informs us, in a letter from U.K. that she is getting f 50 per month and that another f 35 is being put by for him, which is not far short of his full pay of \$775 per month. Reading Buchan's *The House of the Four Winds*.
- Dec. 19 Several heavy explosions were heard this morning but no reason has been forthcoming. Several Posts and Telegraph people have come in today — including T.P. Coe, Graham, Macintosh, Evans, Neyland and Gilliam. There is some criticism of the long time they have been out working for the Japs. One Barrett, a Southern Ireland man, who claims to be a neutral, is still out and has now had his wife let out of this camp to live with him in Singapore. This action has received the support of a number of other P & T men.
- Dec. 20 There was an Arts and Craft Exhibition in 'B' and 'D' Yards. Reading Churchill's *My Early Life*. It is reported that 10 heads have been displayed in Market Street, Kuala Lumpur. Near Batu Caves a Jap officer was killed and as a reprisal 26 people living in a nearby village were executed in a morning attack and their bodies were then buried alongside the road. There is some talk that Vanrennan and his friends are still in Pudu Jail, but all this is uncertain as all P.O.W.s in Pudu Jail are said to have gone north last September. There are also more rumours of exchange, 2 Jap Civilians for each of our civilians, the exchange to start in January or February. Apparently a Eurasian

137 On the evening of the capitulation on February 15th, he had been the victim of a dastardly bomb outrage at the Police Station in New Bridge Road. Somebody unknown, lobbed a Mills bomb up at him as he stood on a balcony. A fragment of the bomb went through his jaw and it was three months before he was well enough to leave hospital and go to Changi.

- clerk previously employed by Kenneth Archer, played a prominent part in Kuala Lumpur in keeping outside touch with the prisoners in Pudu Jail.
- Dec. 21 Listened to another lecture on "Forestry in Malaya" given by Watson. There is tension in Kuala Lumpur between the races, and lists of enemies to be liquidated are being drawn up, so a report states.
- Dec. 22 A.W. Brisk, aged 62 has died. Edlin, who was transferred to Miyako a week ago, has now been certified as mental. The Post and Telegraphs people who had been working in Kuala Lumpur were given \$200 as a gift by a Eurasian family before they left. The Camp Committee have been informed, only 3 days before Christmas, that there will be no more meat! It seems that the former Jap hairdresser at the Selangor Club, is now the Food Controller for Selangor, he having been a Jap officer in disguise!
- Dec. 23 The Changi Choir sang Christmas Carols throughout the Camp today. I received a Christmas present from Mrs. Warren, wife of a Food Control Officer, also in this camp. News from Kuala Lumpur reveals that there is very little business being carried on there and a great deal of time is spent drinking tea supplied by Chinese office girls. The railways are the only place where work is continuous. Venereal disease is very prevalent among Jap troops. State schools are open for only 3 hours a day, 1 hour being spent on the Jap Language (Nippon-Go), 1 hour on Gardening or Crafts and 1 hour on Arithmetic etc. The Victoria Institution (a Secondary School) is being used as a Military Barracks.
- Dec. 24 Saw a very good presentation of Dickens's Christmas Carol with Reid as Scrooge. Received a gift of biscuits from Mr. and Mrs. Phear and an invitation from Mrs. Margaret Edge to visit her in 'A' Block tomorrow. I understand that a total of 1,200 men will be visiting there too. A supply of pork has come in today to replace the usual meat ration.
- Dec. 25 Christmas Day. For Breakfast there was *kanji* (but with both milk and sugar!), Coffee (with milk and sugar) and Stewed Prunes. For Lunch (or tiffin): Corned Beef, Cream Soup, Macedoine Vegetables, Christmas Pudding and Custard Sauce. For Dinner, a Sardine, Rice Pudding (with milk and sugar), Bread, Dripping, and Tea (with milk and sugar). I went over to 'A' Block to visit Margaret Edge and was there from 10 a.m. to 12 noon. I also saw Helen Wills, Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Phear, Mrs. Allen, Miss Nobbs, Mrs. "Stiffy" White, Mrs. Elkins, Miss Macdonald and Miss Walker (of Batu Gajah). The women looked very well, considering, and were in very good spirits. Some Volunteers from the P.O.W. camp also came in to visit mothers, sisters or wives. Margaret said that Edge was making roads up in Tavoy in Burma, though some Volunteers had come back to Malaya because of an alleged outbreak of cholera in Siam. In the circumstances we have had a very happy Christmas Day and thoroughly

enjoyed the tasty soup, pork and pudding. In the evening the camp choir and orchestra combined gave us a very enjoyable concert, the Choir singing several more Christmas carols and the Alleluia Chorus. I had tea with Phear.

- Dec. 26 Reading Buchan's *Witchwood*. We hear of the reported assassination of Darlan, the Vichy minister, at Algiers. We wished each other "a Nippy Christmas and a Japless New Year". We watched a second staging of Dickens's *Scrooge*.
- Dec. 27 17 more engineers have come in. Several British P.O.W.s have been seen marching back to Changi, including Forbes Wallace of the Police.
- Dec. 28 Out on the wood fatigue today, I saw more of our troops marching back to Changi Barracks. There is a rumour that the rice ration in Singapore is to be cut even further next month.
- Dec. 29 Reading Buchan's *Prester John*. There is talk of putting another 30 acres of land, outside the prison walls, under garden cultivation to increase our supply of vegetables. This is probably due to the feared shortage of rice in the near future.
- Dec. 30 Reading Duranty's *I write as I please*. There is a rumour that 350 more internees are coming in, but one wonders where from: possibly Palembang? The Jap Prime Minister, Tojo admits that the war has just begun and may last a long time before "final victory". Stolen tinned food, bananas and a camp key have been found when the property of 2 "Asia Boys" was searched in 'B' Dining Room and they have been sentenced to 2 or 3 weeks on a bread and water diet (so it is alleged). A camp policeman, my friend Trevor Hughes, was assaulted by them and A.H. Gridley (Customs) was able to tackle one of them. However, the Greek wrestler, who was standing by did nothing to apprehend the other culprit.
- Dec. 31 I went out on the outside wood fatigue. There have been 2 fights among women in the 'A' Block and the camp police were called in to separate them. One woman has been locked up in a cell for 24 hours and another for 6 hours. The culprits include Mrs. Dietz and a Miss (or Mrs.) Hancock. We have all been given a tin of Chicken Curry to celebrate the New Year and somebody even gave me a nip of "brandy" on New Year's Eve. Singing by some was heard as late as 12.30 a.m.!

1943

Jan. 1

The Camp Committee are considering the possibility of Corporal Punishment as a result of the latest outrage by the 2 "Asia Boys". They remain locked up in a cell at the front courtyard pending trial. Meanwhile, Trevor Hughes, is reported to be seriously ill as a result of the blow, sustained on December 30, for he is diabetic. 27½ cases of Pineapple Brandy, presented by the Japs, are to be distilled so that the alcohol thus produced can be used for medicinal purposes. There is a queer story of 6 lorry drivers, who used to drive hearses collecting dead bodies, and who have been locked up since March

- 1942 in solitary confinement in Outram Road jail. Two of the six have already died and have been given paupers' graves in Bidadari Cemetery, Singapore. They were named Davies and Logan. A third is very ill with beri-beri and there is no news of the other three.
- Jan. 2 The Pantomime arranged for this night had to be cancelled because of heavy rain. There are rumours of Allied landings both in Java and also at Sabang at the northern end of Sumatra.
- Jan. 3 We learn that Aitken-Berry, a Singapore Architect has died of dysentery at the Palembang camp. Listened to a good sermon given by the Rev. Colin King (of our department). We also hear that a Sergeant Chalmers of the Perak Volunteers has died. He was first wounded in the leg when his lorry was blown up by a land mine. The attention given to him in hospital was lax and his leg injury was left unattended for 5 days. Bob White from Kuala Lumpur is still in hospital as a result of a wound in the back sustained at Batu Tiga, Kuala Selangor. Reading Thackeray's *The Virginians*.
- Jan. 4 The outside wood fatigue took us along the Tampenes Road today — this was a new route for us. It was a very hot day and one man, Foster, fainted on the way back. According to Corder-Jones, an Osborne and Chappel Miner from Ipoh, Major Cockman of the Perak Volunteers, was killed by the Japs under a white flag of truce near Changi. Another man named Veitch was killed by the Japs while lying on the operation table at Alexandra Military Hospital. Fresh fish has been brought in today to replace the meat rations no longer provided. We had a very enjoyable Pantomime called "Dick Whittington", in which the Camp's best comedians excelled, 'Barrel' Roberts as the Town Crier, and Goodrick as a Fairy. The 2 "Asia boys" have now been sentenced, one to two weeks' solitary confinement and the other to 21 days. There is a rumour of the capture of Akyab Aerodrome in Burma and of Kupang Aerodrome on Timor Island.
- Jan. 5 The latest repatriation date for Malayan and Hongkong internees is now March 7!
- Jan. 6 There was another excellent showing of the pantomime "Dick Whittington" in which 'Barrel' Roberts and Goodrick again excelled. The Russians are rumoured to have recaptured Riga.
- Jan. 7 Two Volunteers, McCall (Customs) and Chappel of Osborne and Chappel, have been seen waiting at the barrier outside the jail for permits. They were kept waiting from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. McFee, the Engineer previously mentioned as having hit a Hungarian Gestapo man, was set upon by 8 Japs and beaten up every 2 hours for 48 hours during his stay in prison.
- Jan. 8 The Rice Ration in Singapore, which in our time was 34 katis per month, is now only 17 katis, plus 1 kati of Soya Bean. According to the *Syonan Times*, the fighting in North Africa is now centred at a point 230 miles from Tripoli. 12 more Norwegian sailors have been brought in, but the 6 previously admitted Norwegians think they

may well be "Quislings". They were originally captured by a German raider when their tanker was sunk off Durban and were taken to Yokohama. There they were put on board a German ship, loaded with food, which was to attempt to get back to Germany. This ship was torpedoed off the Sunda Straits by an American submarine and was brought into the Naval Base, Singapore, for repairs two months ago.

- Jan. 9 The ladies staged a Concert for us in the front Court Yard which, it is estimated, was attended by 1,500 of us. It was a very good entertainment, and the solos sung by Miss Xenia Billieciewz were greatly enjoyed. Fatigue parties going into Singapore are to be banned from entering any shop in future. This appears to have something to do with an "Anti-White Week" being organised by the Japs.
- Jan. 10 There is a rumour that the German general, Keitel, has followed Hess's example in fleeing to England.
- Jan. 11 Reading Conrad's *Twixt Land and Sea*. Our outside wood fatigue today took us on a 5 mile walk along the Tampenes Road. There are grim stories of the Jap punishments meted out to those who offend in Singapore. Those who spread false rumours have their mouths sewn up, those who listen to B.B.C. news have their ear drums pierced, those who steal have their index fingers chopped off.
- Jan. 12 Reading Somerset Maugham's *Ah King*. Mrs. Mulvaney, the Canadian Red Cross Representative in the Women's Camp, is criticised for replying too effusively to the Christmas Greetings received from The Canadian High Commissioner. Her reply gave no clue to real conditions in this camp and so created a false impression, the critics say.
- Jan. 13 The Medical Committee of the Camp has warned that we must lay in good reserves of pulses, rice polishings and ground-nuts, etc. in case our rice rations come to an end.
- Jan. 14 One of our wood fatigues saw 5 lorry loads of Dutch and Javanese P.O.W.s passing. They are opening up an extra room underneath 'B' Dining Room in preparation for the admission of more internees, so many of us think.
- Jan. 15 I am informed that Sergeant-Major Rand (from Bruas) and of the Perak Volunteers was killed in the fighting, but McCall, a planter, is safe. The Japs are reported to be willing for 100 older internees to move outside into Sikh Sentry Quarters to provide more room for the large influx of new internees — both men and women — expected shortly.
- Jan. 16 Reading Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind*. 40 more engineers and others who have been engaged in "essential services" under Jap supervision have come in and we are told to expect shortly a further 250 women and children and "a large number of men". They will be accommodated under 'B' Dining Room, in the Rice Store and in the Women's Camp Office.
- Jan. 17 Listened to a sermon by the Rev. Colin King. It is reported that the Chinese chief clerk of the Singapore Improvement Trust has died in

- hospital as a result of Jap brutality. He had had his jaw broken by Kempitai agents and had suffered other internal injuries before he was released only to die. The surviving drivers of the hearses collecting dead bodies, previously mentioned as being in Outram Jail, are now said to be in Miyako Hospital.
- Jan. 18 Messrs. Miller, Wade, Salmon and Mrs. De Moubray and Miss (Dr.) Cicely Williams who had been working out in Asahi's Singapore Offices on Red Cross work have now returned. Miller thinks that all hopes of repatriation are now dead. I listened to a talk by Dr. MacGregor on the Malayan Medical and Health Services.
- Jan. 19 The latest rumours report the capture of Kharkov and Rostoff by the Russians and of Tripoli by us.
- Jan. 20 I much regret the death in our camp hospital of W.A. MacMichael, aged 47, a planter friend of mine from Kuala Kangsar whom I had known for many years. He died in a diabetic coma.¹³⁸ Three more Europeans have come in from Alor Star Jail in Kedah. They had frequently been threatened with death, been denied any soap during their year's imprisonment, and indifferently fed by an indifferent local jailer. Dr. MacGregor gave his second lecture.
- Jan. 21 I went out on the usual wood fatigue. MacMichael was buried at 10 a.m. today and Messrs. Howard, Tweedy, Mustard and Fletcher attended the funeral. We now hear that Harvey, an employee of the Alexandra Brick works, died of dysentery soon after the capitulation. The Alor Star people tell us that Chinese suspects were tortured in their prison by having fires put under their dangling feet while they were hanging by their hands.
- Jan. 22 It is understood that MacMichael's insulin had become ineffective and that when injections were made, the punctures went septic. Internees are to be allowed to send a 50 word message by radio to relatives in Australia. The Alor Star people say that the cost of the food supplied to them in jail was only 8 cents per day and they estimated that hundreds of Chinese were executed while they were detained there.
- Jan. 23 The Europeans who have just come in from Alor Star include (1) Cummins, a planter who had escaped from the Yala Massacre¹³⁹ and walked all the way to Kulim in Kedah with a bayonet wound in his leg sustained at Yala. He gave himself up at Kulim. (2) Settle, an Australian Miner, who had come from a spot 200 miles north of the Kedah border with Siam, and (3) a Dutch Eurasian who had made his way northwards from Singapore to Siam after the capitula-

138 It was said that the Japs had plenty of insulin in Singapore but steadily refused to give us any. MacMichael was only the first of 4 diabetics to die in our camp because of the refusal of the Japs to supply the insulin.

139 The full details of the Massacre at Pinyok Tin Mine near Yala on December 13th, 1941 may be read in H.L.H. Harrison's *The Sarong and the Kris*. (Harrap). The 18 year old daughter of a mine employee was one of the few survivors, thanks to the help of friendly Thais. Even then, it took nearly 4 months for her very serious injuries to receive proper medical treatment at a Bangkok Hospital.

- tion and had been 8 months on the journey.
- Jan. 24 Both Iraq and Chile have declared war on the Axis. I am told by Dr. Ansley-Young that Lieut. Sutherland-Brown, ex-Manager of Vallambrosa Estate, Kuala Lumpur and attached to the Royal Signals, died of dysentery 4 months ago. I had been with him on the eve of capitulation. Gomm, another planter, is alive and with the Gurkhas. The Camp population now numbers 3,011. Reading Priestley's *Let the People Sing*.
- Jan 25 Went outside with the wood fatigue. A Burns Night concert given by the Changi Caledonians Society. Over one hundred internees are to move out of the prison to live in the Sub-Warders' Quarters, but a barbed wire fence is to be erected outside to give these internees access to the main prison. Reading Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*.
- Jan. 26 Another bathing picnic. There is now talk of Portuguese ships being sent to repatriate us. The name of the Dutch Eurasian who has come in from Alor Star Jail is Van Dommalen. He had escaped from a Japanese ship at Penang Harbour, swam ashore to Butterworth on the mainland and headed for the Siamese border a month later. A companion had died in Alor Star Jail of quinsy. He had been on one of 5 ships taking Dutch P.O.W.s up to Burma, but his ship had later been torpedoed in the Gulf of Bengal.
- Jan. 27 H.R. Cheeseman gave a talk on "Education in Malaya". The Axis admit the loss of Tripoli and their retreat into Tunisia.
- Jan. 28 Went out on the wood fatigue as usual. Today is the first day on which we were given neither butter nor margarine. There is a rumour that 900 more internees are to be expected.
- Jan. 29 It has been decided that butter or margarine will only be issued with bread every other day. Once again we are told that we shall be allowed to send off a 50 word radio message but despatch by the Japs is still not guaranteed! 8 more internees came in yesterday; they include a Dutch engineer from Tanjong Pinang, Dr. Chitty and Dr. Landor. Attempts are to be made to extract badly needed salt from sea-water. On one or two occasions recently our rice lorries sent out to Singapore have returned empty. Evidently there is already a rice shortage. An internee named Newberry, ex-Chief of the Singapore Fire Brigade, has died. There will be no more free issues of bananas after January 31.
- Jan. 30 We hear that Churchill and Roosevelt have had a Conference at Casablanca. More former municipal employees have just come in from Singapore. My brother John has a bad leg.
- Jan. 31 The Japs have failed to provide the usual rice rations and we have today had to fall back on our small reserve of limed rice. The Camp Committee are very worried by the situation. 9 internees have come in from Penang Jail after a year's confinement and are in poor condition because of the poor food they have been receiving there.
- Feb. 1 Went out on wood fatigue. Cheeseman gave a second lecture on "Vernacular and Technical Education in Malaya." The Penang Jail

- internees had been kept in solitary confinement for the first month. Their food had been just rice, vegetables and stew twice a day only and they had seen no tea for a year. They had no mattresses to sleep on and Balfour Ross, a Penang lawyer, had died because he could not stomach the diet. He had remained behind at Penang to be with 2 elderly sisters and one of these had been raped by Jap soldiers, it is said. Some British soldiers had continued to live up Penang Hill where, they had been fed by the Chinese. A few of the locals had been pro-Japanese to begin with but all were now pro-British. . .
- Feb. 2 My mother's birthday – she is 65 I think. The latest rumour is that we are all to go to Formosa on February 15. John has gone into hospital with his bad leg. The Penang internees have some grim stories to tell. Lewis, a Penang trainer of horses, who used to weigh 8 stone now weighs only 6 stone and for 7 months he was mad because of the close imprisonment until he was sent to hospital where he recovered. Staines, who has a Jap wife, was set free and so was Templeton who used to run "Funland". Another internee personally heard 40–50 Chinese being shot and actually saw one poor mad Chinese being shot at for revolver practice. When he was dead, his dead body was kicked about amid the roars of laughter of the Jap soldiers. When the internees had complained about their food, they had been called up before the High Command and beaten up. One of them was thrown up in the air and broke his leg when he fell. One Eurasian girl had been raped 3 times in one night by Jap soldiers.
- Feb. 3 The Camp population is now 3,041. We learn that a Penang Eurasian doctor, Dr. Emile Smith, was shot by the Japs. The latest rumour is that internees over 45 are to repatriated and those under 45 years sent to Formosa.
- Feb. 4 Went out on wood fatigue. Reading E.A. Brown's *Indiscreet Memories* (of Singapore) and also Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. John had an operation on his leg this afternoon, but seemed quite well when visited at 7 p.m. The Japs claim another big air and naval victory off Rennell Island.
- Feb. 5 Went outside on a Gardening fatigue. The *Syonan Times* states that concrete negotiations for the repatriation of Jap Nationals and the arrangements for exchange ships are being carried on with the British Government. It is estimated that there are 120,000 Japs interned in the U.S.A. and Canada and that there are 118,000 British troops in Japanese hands.
- Feb. 6 We have in our midst one Osterhaus, who claims to be a Dutch Nazi, but he may be mad. The Block Representatives read out a letter which he is supposed to have addressed to the Japs in which he stressed his "loyalty and sincerity." The Central Committee had intercepted the letter before it reached the Japs and opened it. Meanwhile Osterhaus has taken refuge in the front Court Yard. He is obviously a man whom we shall have to watch carefully.

- Feb. 7 We had another Variety Concert called "Quiet Please!" written by Messrs. Jenkins and Hopkin. Osterhaus is said to be still "in protective custody" in the front Court Yard. Names have been given to the new accommodation space being provided, one is to be "Piccadilly" (under B Dining Room) and the other "Golders Green" (it is outside).
- Feb. 8 Two "Asia Boys" were arrested by Sikh sentries today and handed over to the Japs. They were accused of attempting to scale a ladder in 'B' Yard with the object of getting over the wall into the Women's Block. After being detained in the front Court Yard for a while, they were later set free as the charge of scaling the ladder was not proved. I went out on the usual outside wood fatigue and noticed that Jap flags had been put up by the Japs to celebrate the successful landing on Singapore Island a year ago today. The *Syonan Times* admits that the capitulation of the 6th German Army at Stalingrad is the first major defeat for the Axis Powers. Reading Douglas Reed's *A Prophet at Home*.
- Feb. 9 I spent 2 hours, using a *changkul* (hoe) digging up extra land in a garden fatigue today. The land is to be used for planting extra vegetables and potatoes to offset the expected shortage of rice likely to take place soon. Heavy rain has put a stop to further digging.
- Feb. 10 Count Ciano, Italian Foreign Secretary, has been removed from his post by the Italian Government. It is reported that Peall, of the Ocean Assurance Co., Kuala Lumpur, was killed during the fighting. His father had been in our department. I was to go on a fatigue party to Singapore today but it has been cancelled because of rain.
- Feb. 11 We have had more heavy rain. Osterhaus is still confined to the front Court Yard.
- Feb. 12 Women are to see their husbands for the first time in a year (excluding Christmas Day). This concession may be to celebrate the Japanese Victory of a year ago. Jap and Sikh sentries, carrying fixed bayonets, went round the camp at 9.45 p.m. last night and took away about 30 electric kettles, hot plates etc. The reason for all this is not known. Reading Norman Douglas's *The South Wind*.
- Feb. 13 Another hot plate was confiscated in "Piccadilly" today. My brother John's leg is getting better, but he will be another 3 weeks in hospital before all the scabs are gone. The Japs are organising a whole week's celebration throughout Malaya to celebrate their victory of February 15, 1942.
- Feb. 14 Once again there is talk of repatriation as a result of "what the interpreter told" somebody! The Camp Choir gave a Concert of Sacred Music, it being Sunday.
- Feb. 15 It is a year since Singapore fell and the Japs organised some sports on our football pitch which I did not attend. The Sikh sentries, however, celebrated the day with a search of the camp during which 23 of them took away a pair of binoculars, two electric light bulbs, some belts, half a bottle of brandy, a pair of handcuffs and the

- "Victory House" sign! I went out on the usual wood fatigue and Dr. Linehan, ex-Director of Education, gave a lecture on "The Aborigines of Malaya."
- Feb. 16 I went out on a Garden Fatigue, did some more work with a *changkul* and weeded some *lallang*. Reading Buchan's *The Three Hostages*.
- Feb. 17 I white-washed my side of our Cell. The bugs will be easier to spot if or when they appear again! Linehan gave his second lecture on the Aborigines - "The Jakuns, The Sakais, The Semangs."
- Feb. 18 Went out on the usual Wood Fatigue. Mrs. Mulvaney, the Red Cross representative, is supposed to have said that repatriation is again imminent. Reading Aldous Huxley's *Jesting Pilate*. The Jap and Sikh sentries have again been searching various parts of the camp. One wonders what they expect to find.
- Feb. 19 Two internees with past security connections, Scott and Morgan, have been released from the Tower after a whole year's solitary confinement. My two cell mates have now white washed the other side of our cell. John's hands, which were also affected, are getting better.
- Feb. 20 The *Syonan Times* makes mention of a speech by Anthony Eden which relates to the negotiations which are apparently going on for the exchange of internees, particularly women and children. This obscure reference has again raised our hopes. The paper also mentions that Kharkov is encircled by the Russians.
- Feb. 21 At last we are to be allowed to walk outside the prison walls between 6 and 8 p.m. on certain days, but the walks will still be inside a barbed wire fence which has recently been erected to enclose more land for cultivation. Reading D.H. Lawrence's *Women in Love*.
- Feb. 22 Went on the usual wood fatigue and saw Northcote-Green and Sergeant Major Lee of the Perak Volunteers. Our sentry reprimanded a soldier for giving us the 'V' sign. Reading Churchill's *Into Battle*.
- Feb. 23 Went out on a Gardening fatigue and for the first time in a year we were allowed outside the walls of the prison between 6 and 8 p.m. Göbbels has made a speech stressing the colossal size of the Soviet army, which has now recaptured Kharkov. Van Hien conducted a Concert given in the Laundry where Waddle played Beethoven and Hay Shubert. Coney (Customs) sang. A list of 45 women interned at Padang in North Sumatra, has been posted but it does not contain the name of Mrs. Samuel (Penang) my brother's mother-in-law.
- Feb. 24 Much of our food is now being cooked in sea-water to make use of its salt content. News has reached us of the last days of the *Giang Bee* which left Singapore in the last days and was sunk. One of the ship's lifeboats capsized as it was being launched and only 2 out of 4 lifeboats reached the Sumatran Coast and they only after 3 days' rowing. There were 47 people tightly packed into one boat and

about 30 in the other boat. About 180 out of a total of 262 on board are therefore unaccounted for. This news has been brought in by a Chinese Eurasian girl on the same ship who was rescued and brought to Singapore in a Malay Customs Officer's boat and sent on to Changi.

- Feb. 25 On the outside wood fatigue today I saw 200 P.O.W.s march past carrying shovels. Bull, an ex-Singapore Magistrate, was given a hiding in the laundry this morning. He is an eccentric who refuses to do any fatigues!
- Feb. 26 On the outside Garden fatigue. I am informed that my younger brother Gerwyn E.D. Lewis, is now a Malay Interpreter for the Japs at their Headquarters in Outram Road. The Military have informed us that they require the garden that we have created along the Tanah Merah Road by 5 months' intensive cultivation. This will be a big loss to the camp as our garden will now be restricted to the less fertile land inside the recently erected barbed wire fence. 13,000 cuttings had been planted by us on the land now to be taken away.
- Feb. 27 Rex Charton produced the "Chu Chin Changistan" extravaganza. The costumes and scenery were better than the play. Two laundry tanks are now being used for the storage of salt water brought in from the sea.
- Feb. 28 The price of eggs has been raised to 20 cents each as from March 1, owing to the lack of further Camp Funds. It is reported that Begg, Kendall, Tyacke and 150 others are in the 60 year old Palembang Jail, four in a cell. They were already short of food, when Scott and Morgan left there in April 1942, and they are not in a position to obtain or buy extras. Dutch residents of that area were being kept in houses outside the jail. The Rev. Colin King preached the Sunday sermon.
- March 1 All Welshmen in the camp had a meeting on St. David's Day. On the outside wood fatigue, I saw my brother Gerwyn on a lorry which passed us on the Tampenes Road and he appeared to be well. I am not sure whether he saw me. Hopes of repatriation have been raised again, this time because of the loss of our outside garden!
- March 2 The *Syonan Times* is again talking of repatriation and quotes the numbers of Jap Nationals interned in the various allied countries — e.g. 2,100 in India, 3,400 in Australia, 345 in England, 15 in Africa, 600 in New Zealand, a total of 6,460, of whom 1,700 have already been repatriated. There are also 122,000 in Hawaii, 150,000 in the USA and 23,000 in Canada.
- March 3 Reading A.G. Macdonell's *Flight from a Lady*, and also Hugh Clifford's *Since the Beginning*. The *Giang Bee* story continues. Scott and Langdon (Customs) got away from this ship in a small canvas flat boat in which they rowed 150 miles to reach the Sumatran Coast. They picked up another two on the way, an 18 stone Boots Cash Chemists employee and a young sailor, just out of hospital, who could not row at all. Their lifeboat which had sank had done so

because it became water logged when bombed and they could not scoop out the water fast enough. The survivors of the Corpse Collecting Squad are now in Outram Road Prison Hospital, but the Japs say that one of these has disappeared. The men had originally got into trouble by mentioning in a bar that many of the corpses they had collected had been disfigured or maimed.

March 4 The latest talk of repatriation is being linked with the cards which we have recently filled up and which have been sent to Tokio and London for this very purpose. Asahi has told Dr. Johns (himself a New Zealander) that 45 Japs were killed and 60 wounded in a riot which took place at a Jap internment camp in New Zealand.¹⁴⁰ He added, however, that he did not intend to retaliate on us! Today's *Syonan Times* states that the Jap Diet has passed a vote of sympathy regarding Jap Nationals who have been illegally imprisoned, who have lost all their property, been made to do hard labour on barren land, and been subjected to torture without any right of appeal! Reading Buchan's *The Blanket of the Dark*.

March 5 Father Moran, a Roman Catholic priest, has been sentenced to 3 days' solitary confinement for being drunk! Apparently he had gone out on a fatigue, called at the Convent and partaken too liberally, on an empty stomach, of the wine given him by the Nuns. There is a story that some German sailors have been put in a P.O.W. camp for defending some British P.O.W.s against Jap ill-treatment. There is a vague rumour that Vanrennan and Harvey have been brought down to Singapore.

March 6 I went out on a lorry fatigue to Diethelm and Co., Singapore, to collect tins of soup and chicken curry and collected several items of news. A Chinese clerk told me that his own brother and 4 others in his office had been taken away and killed by the Japs and that the total executions may have been as many as 10,000 since capitulation.¹⁴¹ Out of 2 lorry loads of Chinese taken out to Ponggol on the North East side of Singapore Island all had died except for one who escaped by hiding under some cotton matting. The clerk had received only 10 katis of rice last month and there was no medicine available to cure beri-beri, not even rice polishings. 99% of all cars were Japanese owned. When I went to a Chinese shop to buy shoes etc. I met one Tan Ah Tah, a friend of C.O. Lim, a Penang lawyer, whom I know. He said that C.O. Lim was back in Penang but his wife, Mrs. C.O. Lim had got away to India. We then went on to the Municipal Offices where we had a cup of coffee. Two Europeans employed there had, it was alleged, been reported by Indians to the

140 Asahi may have mistaken New Zealand for Australia. It is a fact that hundreds of Jap prisoners at Nowra in New South Wales did stage a suicidal mass breakout from their P.O.W. Camp and inevitably quite a number were either killed or wounded by the camp guards.

141 For details of several massacres of Chinese Civilians on Singapore Island between February 16th and March 2nd, 1942, see Lord Russel's *The Knights of Bushido*, Chapter 13, (PAN) 1958.

Jap Mayor of Singapore, for Anti-Japanese propaganda. We were told that another of the Corpse lorry drivers had died, making 3 in all out of 6. The remainder were still in hospital and one of these was believed to be a pacifist named Smith. He could be the Perak Miner who had been a conscientious objector to Military service in 1940. We then went on to Albert Street where we all had a good lunch. We even had a chat with our Japanese Guard who had been one of our Japanese internees in New Delhi before he was exchanged. He said that conditions at their camp at Port Swettenham had been bad and his own father had died of dysentery on the exchange ship. The guards in charge of the Jap internees had been the Hyderabads and at New Delhi they had been fed on buffalo meat and some had lived in tents. We also stopped in a market and spoke to a Eurasian woman and again at Katong, where two Eurasian girls gave the 'V' sign. In general, Singapore appeared to be back to normal except that the streets were full of the new type tricycle rickshaws. Young girls were numerous, going about in couples, Chinese, Eurasian and Japanese. Robinson's shop and the Singapore Cricket Club had been repaired after the bombing and a new coat of paint given them. Some cars, probably non-Jap owned, had producer gas equipment to drive them. A mine had been washed up near Bedok and at Geylang we saw the damage which the munition explosion had caused in March 1942. The English school there and two European houses (in one of which I had once stayed a while) had been completely demolished and so had the surrounding area, 150-200 yards square. 12 wooden junks were in the process of building on the beach alongside Beach Road. Today nearly every house in Singapore had a Jap flag flying over it as it is the birthday of Emperor Tenno Heika. These special days for celebration occur about 4 times a month we were told. The house where I had stayed, 13 Fort Canning Road, Raffles Hotel and Tank Road were still as they were but new hangars were going up at Kallang Aerodrome. Those living at the Customs House in Maxwell Road (where I had been) had been moved out but there is no news of Foster, Auten and Wilbraham who are still out and had been living there. Boot leather and electric light bulbs were very expensive to buy in Singapore. A few waverers are now much less pro-Japanese after having seen the heads of some of their looting compatriots displayed on poles in public. A Jap officer is reported to have slapped the face of a Chinese on a tram because his watch did not show "Tokio Time." (This is 2 hours ahead of G.M.T. and is the time to which we have to keep in camp.)

The Medical Report for the 1st Year of our incarceration reports that there were 49 deaths or 17.2 per 1,000 internees. The first case of beri-beri occurred in May 1942, and there has been a total of 16 such cases. However, there have been no fresh cases since the arrival of rice polishings, though there have been 3 or 4 cases of pellagra.

- March 7 There is more talk of repatriation, this time in 3 weeks' time, a Jap officer having said that he had seen the signed forms for use in the exchange! Several internees have come in from Ipoh, Perak. They include Charlie Cummings, an Australian miner, a family of Trevors by a Jap wife, and Simpson, an ex-warder from Taiping. They say that rice is now \$3.50 per gantang, and rubber is being tapped and then stored. Sir David Galloway, who was not interned because he had a Jap wife, is dead and Jonklas, the brother of the cricketer, is said to have been bayoneted to death at Sitiawan in Perak. Rubber tappers, are paid 50 cents a day but have to do 2 hours' compulsory gardening as well. Some of the new internees had originally come from the Cameron Highlands and had been brought into the Elim Hall, Ipoh, only a month ago. The Chinese had treated them well there and in fact all races were now wishing for our return, even those few who had once been pro-Japanese.
- March 8 Reading Tuohy's *The Crater of Mars* (1914-18 War). 60,000 letters are said to have arrived, chiefly from Australia and chiefly for P.O.W.s Went out on the usual wood fatigue but could only manage one load of wood today. This was because we had to take a longer route - a new earth road cut through the rubber estate. The Tampenes Road is being used by the P.O.W.s who use engineless, lorries (which also have no bodies) to collect their wood.
- March 9 It is said that 70 Volunteers will arrive at our camp tomorrow to visit relatives. There has been a British air raid on Berlin, so the *Syonan Times* says.
- March 10 My brother Gerwyn did not come here today, perhaps he is no longer at Changi, but Darby (Customs) did get a visit from his brother. According to him, 5,000 P.O.W.s are to leave for Siam next week. 60 Chinese Volunteers in the F.M.S. Light Battery were shot by the Japs after capitulation.¹⁴² However, Chinese guerillas are waging constant war between the towns of Sungei Siput and Kampar in Perak against all isolated Police Stations. This is to capture rifles and ammunition. The Jap Governor of Perak had a bomb thrown at him at the Jubilee Park at Ipoh, Perak. There is a story that Birch (Police) was shot dead by his own police at Telok Anson, Perak, but this cannot be confirmed.
- March 11 Went out on the usual wood fatigue. Reading Buchan's *The Moon Endureth* and *The Watcher by The Threshold*. The Camp Committee have sent a letter to Asahi making a long list of complaints. They are (1) The Non-Arrival of any Red Cross Representative so far. (2) The lack of proper accommodation for 3,041 internees. (3) The poor food - especially the lack of proteins and fats (i.e. eggs, meat, butter, fruit), (4) The lack of funds to supplement the basic diet -

¹⁴² The officer in charge had neglected to destroy their nominal register, which fell into the hands of the Japs after the capitulation. The unit concerned had, in fact, belonged to the Singapore Volunteer Forces.

a loan of \$250,000 is requested. (5) The lack of medical supplies, drugs, etc. (6) The lack of bedding, clothing and footwear — there are still 465 without any mattresses or beds. (7) The maltreatment of certain men and women. (Three women were struck by Jap sentries over bowing, two of these Japs being office staff). One woman was kept at Joo Chiat for 8 days during which she was struck three times and where she had no bed or privacy. 8 other internees had been beaten with sticks and ropes, 2 more had been kept in prison for 18 days where one had also been tortured. The Governor had been kept in solitary confinement for three weeks, Scott and Morgan for a whole year and Herr Spitz for several months. (8) We had been allowed no communications with relatives in the outside world. (9) There had been Jap interference with the comforts received from South Africa. (10) There was still no communication allowed between husbands and wives, though they were in the same camp.

- March 12 I am informed that my younger brother, G.E.D. Lewis, will visit John and myself tomorrow. More repatriation rumours, this time based on a reference to it in the Sikh Vernacular News sheet read by the Sikh sentries.
- March 13 Saw Gerwyn. He had unfortunately not received the two packets of 300 and 200 Vitamin tablets that I had sent him so I gave him a further 200 Abidol C and 150 Vitamin B tablets. He had worked first at Bukit Timah, then at Outram Road as a Malay Interpreter and then at Changi Barracks as a Sergeant with the Red Cross Unit. He was hoping that, being with the Red Cross Unit, he would not be sent to Siam with the 5,000 likely to leave shortly and that his pay might be raised from \$3 to \$20 per month. He had met the following in the course of his travels, Col. Newey (Volunteers), Dr. Turner, Lieut. Sanderson and Capt. Lloyd (A.I.F.), "Starkie" Cameron, A.C. Boyd, Brook (Volunteers). Boyd thought that the rumoured fates of Harvey and Vanrennan were only too true and they had definitely been shot. Gerwyn stressed that nearly all the Indian troops had remained loyal to us and any who had joined the Independence Army had been forced to do so by the Japs. He also said that the troops were working many rackets in the camp to the disadvantage of the Japs, for instance selling back to them goods which they had themselves stolen, lorries in some cases!
- March 14 Rev. Dr. Amstutz, the head of the American Methodist Church, preached the sermon. Reading Halsey's *With Malice towards Some*. We had no rice polishings in our *kanji* today. There is only 20 days' supply left, anyhow, and we are already on half-rations of this.
- March 15 On outside wood fatigue. Reading Mary Webb's *Gone to Earth*. We hear that they are sorting letters received from abroad for both us and the P.O.W.s.
- March 16 Professor Dyer gave a further lecture on the French Revolution in which he dealt with the Robespierre Era. A Jap Admiral visited the

- camp and is supposed to have wished Dr. Johns "Bon Voyage". Dr. Johns has sent a further letter to Asahi stressing the grave shortages of medical supplies, food, clothing, boots, etc, and suggesting that the British Government be empowered to remedy these shortages through the Red Cross. Kharkov is said to have been recaptured by the Germans.
- March 17 Today, being St. Patrick's Day, there was a reading of an Irish play, called "The White-Headed Boy". The Jap interpreter has again expressed the opinion that we shall all have left Changi within 6 months.
- March 18 Reading Emerson's *Malaysia*. No wood fatigue today.
- March 19 The Camp Committee have asked the Japs for information relating to 862 British subjects known to have been in Malaya before the capitulation and who are now missing. Saw Lennox Robinson's Irish Play.
- March 20 There is a further story in the Indian Vernacular Press of repatriation ships which are due to leave Goa in May and July. A urinal in 'B' Yard has been named "The Pisseker", (Most urine is in fact stored for use in the garden as a fertiliser.)¹⁴³ A Variety Concert attended.
- March 21 There is a call for more volunteers to go out to work the garden plots outside the walls. Permanent workers out there will work 16 hours a week. Volunteers (who also do the ordinary fatigues) will do 12 hours, and casual labour will do what they can.
- March 22 Out on Wood fatigue. The Free list allowance will be reduced from \$5 to \$3 per month next month and will cease altogether after that. Camp Shop sales will also cease then.
- March 23 I went out on another garden fatigue - in fact to the area on the outside opposite the "Wailing Wall". The Japs have now banned the singing of "God Save the King", and in face of air raids, we are not to dig slit trenches, disperse outside the buildings or indicate in any way that this is an internment camp! Only in the case of really heavy bombing are we to leave the buildings and disperse outside.
- March 24 A.H. Gridley (Customs) has been made Deputy 'B' Block representative.
- March 25 Out on a wood fatigue. A speech by Churchill is mentioned in the *Syonan Times* but I have no details. Trevor, a Sungei Siput planter, who has just come in, reports that there is a serious shortage of food in Perak and considerable unrest as indicated by the heads of executed malcontents stuck on pikes at Sungei Siput and Chemor in Perak. The Estate Coolies, who had at first been anti-British because of agitators, are now longing for our return, as indeed are all other races. A list of men interned at Palembang is now available. The following are dead: Wynne (Police) who died of dysentery, also Atkin Berry, Robbins (Malayan Collieries), Chasen (Museums), F.L.

¹⁴³ Urine was an important factor in our garden economy, for apart from the occasional lorry load of sludge brought in from outside, it was our only fertiliser. The urine was carefully collected in tanks and then mixed with water. Above each camp urinal there was a sign exhorting us to "Pee for the Garden".

Jones (*Malay Mail*), Fisher and Brown (Johore Marine). Those still alive are Kendall, Dr. West, Dr. McKern, Sir John Campbell, Begg, Tyacke (Perak Hydro), Prior (Kuala Kangsar), Penrice, Sim (Customs), Page (R.R.I.), S.A. Mountain (Muar), Strong (Allagar Estate, Taiping), and Matheson (Police) who had left with permission.

- March 26 Attended Garden fatigue. The hours for this have been changed to 10-12.30 p.m. and 6.45 to 7.45 p.m. Apparently Justice Aitken practises the piano in the laundry every morning from 8.30 to 9 a.m., but unfortunately he always practises the same tune. 1½ bags of mail (about 4,000 letters) have arrived in the camp. Saw performance of Sutton Vane's "Outward Bound". According to Churchill's latest speech, the war may go on to 1945.
- March 27 Apparently we are now attacking Rommel's Mareth Line in Tunisia. Some letters, posted in Australia, India and England have now been delivered to some internees.
- March 28 Mr. Schweitzer, the Swiss Consul in Singapore, has at long last been recognised by the Japs as our International Red Cross representative. We all hope that this body will now be able to help us with money, food and other necessities and that lorries will again be allowed to visit Singapore to collect purchases. We also hope that the I.R.C. representative will be allowed at last to visit our camp. More letters have now been distributed among us but there have been none for me so far, unfortunately. The rumour that repatriation ships will be leaving Goa in May and June is being revived and that in addition, we shall be able to post our mail on the same ships returning to India. Reading Swettenham's *Malaya*.
- March 29 We were inoculated. Bishop Wilson of Singapore, Sennett, the Rev. Hayter (the Bishop's assistant), the Rev. Adams and three Nuns came in today. The Bishop wore his Episcopal top black hat with white shorts. On the wood fatigue I saw Ken Archer (Volunteers) looking fit and well. Hunter, my cell mate, has received a letter from his wife dated June 26, 1942. John has come out of hospital after 7 weeks' treatment. Gridley has received news of the death of a prematurely born son who had lived for only 8 hours after birth. Long, the Ambulance Driver, has informed Binnie (Customs) that his wife was drowned on a ship lost with all hands while on a journey from Australia to South Africa. A B.A.T. employee named Darvel is also missing off this ship. The Bishop has been put in the cell next door to myself on Floor 3 of 'B' Block.
- March 30 Moore, a Trade School Instructor, Laurence Henderson and Carl Lawson, a theatrical producer, are reported to be working for the Japs. Gian Singh, the textile firm, has, it is said, been fined \$81,000 for selling cloth at above the fixed price. J.N. Davies (Education) is reported to be in Perth along with his wife.
- March 31 The latest is that the Japs have at last agreed to exchange, one Jap for one British Internee, and the date for the ratification of this

- agreement is April 27! We are also informed that several of the Government servants, doctors, forest officers, etc., who got away have now been placed in similar posts in other Colonies.
- April 1 Livingstone, a Police Officer, aged 44, has died here. He was a brother of Helen Wills, and, I think, had cancer of the lung. The Japs have been searching the cells of the recent arrivals and taken away books belonging to the Bishop, Rev. Adams and Sennett. As I have now exhausted all my money, I have gone on the "Free List", for what it is worth.
- April 2 Garden fatigue — I attended a "fair", between 4 and 7 p.m., organised by the women in aid of their chicken farm. Doughnuts and and curry puffs were on sale. I met Mrs. Margaret Edge, Mrs. Phear, Mrs. White, etc. The Japs were turning people out of their cells today. It is due apparently to some misunderstanding between our Japs and the Jap Military Police.
- April 3 A Jap General is reported to have interviewed Lady Thomas, wife of our Governor, and in an abusive manner, told her that the Japs would be here for ever, an opinion which she flatly refuted!¹⁴⁴ We

144 I am indebted to Dr. Cicely Williams, who was present as the Women's Camp Representative, for a verbatim record of the interview which was written down immediately afterwards.

The following are a few examples of the questions posed by General Arimura and the replies given by Lady Thomas:

General: You, Mrs. Thomas?

Lady Thomas: Yes.

General: I came here special to see you.

Lady Thomas: That is very kind of you.

General: You told them to hang out the white flag at Government House so Singapore had to surrender.

Lady Thomas: No, certainly not. I did not want to surrender.

General: But you told them to hang out the white flag at Government House.

Lady Thomas: Certainly not, nothing of the sort. You have been misinformed.

General: Then, who surrendered? Your husband?

Lady Thomas: The military were in command. We had to do what they advised.

General: During the British regime, Singapore was a very dirty city.

Lady Thomas: No, it was very clean.

General: No, it was very dirty.

Dr. Cicely Williams: As a matter of fact, it had less epidemic disease than any other city in the East.

General: Oh, you do not like to be here. Here, it is very tiresome.

Lady Thomas: Yes, very tiresome. No one likes to stay in prison.

General: I think you stay here 10 years. The food is very bad.

Lady Thomas: Yes, it is not at all nice.

General: You have been bombed?

Lady Thomas: Oh yes, we were bombed.

General: Government House was quite safe. Only the Chinese and poor people were bombed.

Lady Thomas: No, that is not at all true. Government House was bombed and shelled and badly damaged. Many of our people were killed.

General: You ran away.

Lady Thomas: No, I did not run away. I stayed here. You see I am here now.

General: Why did you stay here?

Lady Thomas: I wished to stay with my husband and my friends.

General: Your friends are only Europeans?

Lady Thomas: Not at all. I have many friends who are Chinese, Indians and Malays.

With respect to Lady Thomas' above-mentioned wish to stay with her husband.

are told that a further 100 Jews or Eurasians are to be brought into our camp and one wonders why. The following are now deemed to have lost their lives since the fall of Singapore — Mrs. Binnie (Customs), Mr. and Mrs. Nunn (P.W.D.), Mrs. Selfe, Mrs. Kitching, Mrs. Colin King, Mrs. Staunton, Mrs. Collett and Mrs. Robinson. Guthrie and Co. are said to have sacked all employees who left Singapore before capitulation and these may include Peter Taylor. The Banks are said to be treating their employees in the same way, if they left prematurely.

- April 4 We have been asked by the I.R.C. representative in Singapore to give him a list of our most urgent requirements. Reading Louis Bromfield's *Night in Bombay*. The Archdeacon Graham White preached the Sunday sermon.
- April 5 I went out on the garden fatigue as the wood fatigue had been cancelled. Professor Dyer gave a lecture on Napoleon's Italian Campaign and on the subsequent reforms he instituted. The Radios of both San Francisco and Tokio have announced, so it is reported, that all Civilians are to be repatriated next September.
- April 6 On garden fatigue. Certain of our letters or cards which were sent to Singapore for quick censoring have now been returned still uncensored. We have a new Jap Commandant, a Mr. Tominara,¹⁴⁵ who has replaced the late Commandant, dismissed (we think) because of some incident at the Women's Fair. Mr. Tominara has already refused to allow the Camp Band to play to the Women's Block this evening — a privilege which had been granted once a month by his predecessor. Dr. Linehan gave his second talk on the Malays.
- April 7 We washed out our cell floor. Over a hundred Eurasians and Jews, chiefly from the Change Alley area of Singapore, have been brought in today. They had been routed out of bed at 5 a.m. this morning! Dr. Linehan's third lecture on The Malays. He ended his talk with an appeal to his audience to withhold prejudiced judgements on the wartime conduct of all races until all the facts are known and they have had a chance to defend themselves.
- April 8 On wood fatigue. Many of the Jews are being placed in the Rice Store. Reading Purcell's *The further Side of No Man's Land*. It is reported that the Colonial Office is guaranteeing the salaries of all Malayan Officials now in this camp. It is rumoured that we have captured Sfax in Tunisia.
- April 9 We are told that Bretherton, Pearce, Frisby, Hill and Bayliss of our department are all safe in Perth (where Pearce is retiring); W.S. Morgan is in England. I have started re-studying Malay with the help

It is relevant to add that General Wavell sent a special aircraft from Java to evacuate Lady Thomas on about February 12th, but she refused to leave.

145 Tominara, believed to be a sergeant in the Jap army, was to remain a thorn in our flesh for the rest of our incarceration and internment. When the war ended, he was condemned to death for "war crimes", then reprieved at the insistence, I believe, of some of our clergy and given life imprisonment. However, within a year or so, he was allowed to return to Japan and eventually set free.

- of Winstedt's *Malay Grammar*.
- April 10 It is reported that Langworthy (Police) is missing and Nicholson, a Perak Volunteer who enlisted in the R.A.F., has been killed. We are told that Government servants who got away were given 3 choices: (1) leave on no pay; (2) Retirement; (3) Service in another Colony possibly on reduced pay.
- April 11 The Bishop of Singapore preached his first sermon in camp. It is reported that Dr. Irvine (Taiping) was killed at the Alexandra Hospital, and that Wicks (Austral Malay Tin) of Taiping is missing. It is also rumoured that Mrs. Colin King was killed on a ship while getting away. An internee, named Edmett, aged 68, has died in this camp; his wife also here is very ill too.
- April 12 On wood fatigue. A list of letters received in this camp for people we know are missing has been posted. The list includes: Tulloch (Surveys), McK. Cooper (Customs), Simpson-Gray (M.C.S.), (whom some say has been killed), Clark-Walker (Surveys), Cicely Smith (Teluk Anson), F. Cobb (Education) and Christie (Education) but he is believed to be in a P.O.W. Camp. A letter from Hicks (Education) tells us that he has been posted to a new post at Lagos, Nigeria, and that Hill (Education) has gone to a job in Kenya. My brother John has received a letter from his wife Gwynedd in Australia who said she had heard from our mother who is well and receiving her allowance. There is no mention of Gwynedd's father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Samuel, who left on a late ship.¹⁴⁶ Dyer gave another lecture on the Napoleonic theme.
- April 13 On garden fatigue. It is reported that 20 more bags of mail have arrived in the P.O.W. Camp.
- April 14 For the first time ever, we have had an issue of Maize bread. Trevor Hughes gave a lecture on The Eurasians. Finch, an internee, aged 51, on B.4, the floor above mine died suddenly at 8.10 a.m. this morning. My friend Johnnie Johnston (Customs) had been speaking to him only 5 minutes before he died. Nelson, a Singapore Stock-taker, has been sent off to Miyako Hospital suffering from religious mania.
- April 15 On wood fatigue. My boots, army issue, and my shoes have both worn out and I shall have great difficulty in getting replacements. Size 12 is unobtainable either here or in Singapore.
- April 16 On garden fatigue. The capture of Susa and Khaironan, two towns in

146 It was only after the war that the sad true facts became known. Mr. & Mrs. Samuel had sailed from Singapore on the *Kuala* on Friday, February 13th, 1942. They both survived the bombing and sinking of this ship and got ashore on the nearby island of Pompong. After 2 or 3 days' stay here, Mrs. Samuel and 250 other women and children were taken off by a small Dutch ship, the *Tanjong Pinang*. Unfortunately this ship, too, was sunk at night by a Japanese warship within hours of its departure from the island. The vast majority of those on board lost their lives then. Mr. Samuel left the island a day or two later on another small ship - and ended up at Padang on the Western Coast of Sumatra. He died from pellagra in December 1943 in an internment camp there without ever hearing of the tragic fate of his wife and her fellow passengers on the *Tanjong Pinang*.

Tunisia, by our forces is reported. I am informed that my old school, Clifford School, Kuala Kangsar, is now a Military Barracks, but the Malay College, nearby, has been re-opened by the Japs to teach Nippon-Go, P.T. and Gardening.

- April 17 I am informed that Miffie, Gwynedd's sister, has been informed that her mother, Mrs. Samuel, is safe either in Malaya or Java, but there is no confirmation of this here. Asahi is said to have told Lady Heath that "she will soon be gone now." More mail for us is said to be undergoing sorting in the P.O.W. Camp.
- April 18 Palm Sunday — Mr. Tipson, the Chinese expert and missionary preached the sermon. One of the women internees was called back by the Jap sentry for not bowing her salute as she passed him at the main entrance.
- April 19 On wood fatigue and got soaked to the skin in the rain. Dr. Johns has been locked up at the Front Court Yard for refusing to believe that Jap internees at New Delhi had been maltreated. This is the work of the New Jap Commandant, Tominara.
- April 20 On garden fatigue. Dr. Johns, the Men's Representative, continues to be locked up and has been given only *kanji* and salt to eat. Reading Somerset Maugham's *Theatre*.
- April 21 The Bishop has been refused permission by the Japs to conduct an Easter Service over in the Women's Block. Rained all day.
- April 22 On wood fatigue. It is reported that Asahi is leaving us for good to go over to Sumatra to reorganise internment camps there. I have now completed one year in this jail. On 3 occasions now I have heard lorries passing us in the early hours of the morning. Perhaps P.O.W.s are being moved. Reading Hugh Clifford's *Studies in Brown Humanity*.
- April 23 Good Friday. There was a morning service at 11 a.m. and in the evening the Camp Choir sang Stainer's Crucifixion. Dr. Johns was set free from solitary confinement this morning. An internee named H.W. Gregory, aged 64, has died.
- April 24 All fatigues were cancelled today because of the visit of a Jap General. The newly admitted Jews have donated \$44,000 to the Camp Funds, a welcome gift as the Japs had turned down our previous request for a loan. The "Free List" allowance is now raised from \$3 to \$4 per month. Morgan has now been appointed the official interpreter of Japanese to the Camp Committee. It is hoped that this will lead to less misunderstanding between the Jap Commandant, Tominara, and the Committee, which has hitherto been frequent. It is reported that the Japs shot two of the American pilots who raided Tokio last year and were captured.
- April 25 Easter Sunday. There was a breakdown of the Camp pumping installations at lunch time and there has been no water available for the last 6 hours. The Easter Church service was assisted, for the first time, by both the Camp Choir and the Camp Orchestra. A Capt. A.E. Macdonnell, aged 75 years, has died here of cancer.

- April 26 On wood fatigue. Dr. Jelani gave an interesting lecture on "the Arabs in Malaya." Studying Maxwell's *Malay Manual*.
- April 27 The Japs have demanded the resignation of Dr. Johns, the Men's Representative. This demand may be due either to the recent disagreement with him or to the fact that he is a New Zealander and there was trouble recently in a New Zealand Jap P.O.W. Camp. 24 Eurasians interned in Palembang have been allowed to return to their families in Singapore. We have been given extra tins of stew on two occasions recently because the Jewish inmates do not wish to consume stew which is to them just plain vegetable. However the Committee warn us that, in spite of the Jews' recent donation, our financial position is still precarious as the Swiss Consul has still not been officially recognised as our Red Cross representative. There is more evidence that our P.O.W.s are being sent away from Changi Barracks, possibly up-country.
- April 28 An internee named Elbury reports that Vanrennan, Harvey and other escapees were caught near Bentong, on their way to Harvey's old rubber estate in Pahang, Batu Balai, at the 39th Milestone. Capt. Nugent was hit in the chase and shot again before being put into Bentong Hospital. Harvey, Graham and Vanrennan were seen by Elbury to be taken away in a lorry to Kuala Lipis, whence they were transferred later back to Pudu Jail, Kuala Lumpur. According to a Jap Officer, they were shot there. He described their behaviour as truculent and rude.¹⁴⁷ Tominara, the new Jap Commandant, went on the war path today. During his inspection tour, several were hit or kicked for not standing up at his approach. They had not seen him. Arnold (of my department) was fisted three times on the nose, cracking the bone, and a Jewish Master from Raffles Institution was kicked so hard in the kidneys that he had to be taken off to hospital on a stretcher. Another old man was also hit. When Tominara visited the Main Exercise Yard he saw the 'V' sign over the stage which has

147 The full story of this tragedy can be read in Russell Braddon's *The Naked Island*, Chapter 5, Book 2. Braddon was an inmate of Pudu Jail at the time of their escape, recapture and execution. As all the participants in this breakout of Pudu Jail were apparently executed, very little declined of what really happened has ever come to light. Russell Braddon gives a first hand account of what he saw and heard as an inmate of Pudu, but his knowledge was necessarily limited. According to him, 8 men took part in the escape, Vanrennan, Harvey, Graham, an Australian named Bell, a Dutch pilot named Jan and 3 others. Their aim was to reach the Selangor Coast and sail on open boat to India. Dressed in "Sarongs" and "bajus", so as to pass as natives in the dark, they slipped out of the jail one night by a side door using a skeleton key. Unfortunately, their plans did not work out as they had hoped. Even before they had left the outskirts of Kuala Lumpur, they had been spotted three times by the villagers, surrounded, and forced to fight their way out using grenades. This lack of co-operation on the part of the villagers was due not to any regard for the Japs, but because of their wish to survive. The Japs would inevitably have executed the inhabitants of any village where the villagers had allowed the escapers to pass through unimpeded. At dawn, the escapers were surrounded by a large Jap patrol and forced to surrender. By lunch-time, they were back again in Pudu Jail, shackled hand and foot and in solitary confinement. For 2 days there they remained, without food or water. On the third day, still shackled, and according to what the Indian lorry driver said later, were driven to the Kuala Lumpur cemetery, made to dig their own graves and then shot into them.

now been there for some time. He immediately ordered the demolition of the whole stage before the evening, locked up all the electricians responsible for the stage lighting and also one of the Sikh sentries who had refused to hit them. Further, Tominara has banned all walks outside the camp for two weeks, the stage electricians are to get no food until tomorrow and all communication with the Women's Block is cut off until further notice. I also went on a wood fatigue on this momentous day.

April 29 The Emperor's Birthday. There were no outside fatigues in celebration. The Camp electricians have been let out today, black and blue, after beatings from the Sikh sentries. Meanwhile Worley and Penseler, the respective Block representatives of 'D' and 'B' Blocks, have been beaten up, tied up and locked up. Worley is being punished for not allowing Dalton, a Wireless expert, to repair Jap officials' Wireless Sets outside the Camp and Penseler because he does not know (or refuses to say) who produced the illuminated 'V' sign. Meanwhile, all 'V' signs in the camp, maps, references to "Victory House" etc. have been hurriedly removed for safety's sake.¹⁴⁸

April 30 There were again no outside fatigues today. The football pitch levelling is now practically complete. Reading Sheridan's *The Rivals*.

May 1 On garden fatigue. Penseler and Worley were allowed out today for further questioning. They were given their bare ration of *kanji* but no water or tea yesterday. Today over 100 internees who had been living outside the walls in "Golders Green" have been ordered to be inside not later than 6 p.m. today. They have had to leave behind their gardens and the ducks that they were keeping. Tominara has admitted that "he hates the British". He had been wounded at Shanghai at some time but presumably not by the British. The rumour that he has stopped all classes in Malay is apparently untrue. One, Clunies-Ross, aged 55, has died here from a perforation of the stomach.

May 2 Elections have been held for the new Men's Representative to replace Dr. Johns. Votes were as follows: Adrian Clarke (1,100 votes), Collinge (900) and Stone (300). Tominara seems to suspect the presence of a Churchill in the camp, who is running some sort of secret society in opposition to him. His present suspect is Worley. The Bishop preached the sermon.

May 3 On garden fatigue. Adrian Clarke has been elected the new Men's Representative. Meanwhile Penseler and Worley have been moved into a larger cell, in fact the same cell as was occupied by Morgan and Scott for a year. The former inmates of "Golders Green" have been given until tomorrow by Tominara, to return the doors, etc. missing from their rooms or else he threatens trouble! A brutal attack was made by one of our Jap interpreters in Singapore

¹⁴⁸ A group of cells near the camp hospital collectively known as "Victory" were also hurriedly re-named "Highgate. See map on page 97.

- yesterday on a former Police Clerk, who had tried to speak to one of our Police Officers out on fatigue. Several hundred people saw the unfortunate man made unconscious by blows from the steel shaft of a golf-club.
- May 4 Garden fatigue. More talk of repatriation for internees and badly wounded P.O.W.s. All others appear to have been taken away from Singapore.
- May 5 Reading Morton's *In Search of Ireland*. On the wood fatigue, the men in a lorry were all slapped because they had not all got down and bowed to a sentry. In the afternoon an officer appeared and said it was all a mistake, one was enough to bow in future! Worley and Penseler are still locked up, but Tominara (or "Tomahawk" or "Tominakers", as some call him) is gradually calming down. Gridley, Harper Ball and Bill Adams, prospective candidates for the post of 'B' Block representative, have all made Election Addresses preparatory to the Elections. We are being given extra stew daily out of the women's rations but why or how it works, I don't know. A Capt. Phillips has died here, he was 66 years old.
- May 6 On wood fatigue where I saw some Volunteers who assured me that Gerwyn is well. Ratcliffe, a former magistrate, was caught watching ships with binoculars from the top floor of 'C' Block, from which there is a good view of passing ships. He was slapped and locked up.
- May 7 On garden fatigue. Ratcliffe has been freed and given back his binoculars. A hunchback named Jordan has died here, aged 55 years. We had a debate on Public Schools.
- May 8 John's birthday — 4,000 more letters are said to have arrived in this camp today. It is reported that Bizerta and Tunis have capitulated to us at last. Reading Sheridan's *Rivals*.
- May 9 More rumours of the likely repatriation of internees with 700 wounded P.O.W.s within 3 weeks' time. All internees must have had at least 18 months' incarceration in all which rules us out for the time being! An "Asia Boy" has been sentenced to 3 weeks' solitary confinement for stealing *gula melaka*.
- May 10 A Captain Palmer, aged 62, has died at Miyako. He had been insane ever since the death of his wife here some months ago. We were allowed to go for evening walks again for the first time since the ban. On wood fatigue. I received a letter from Mary Flower dated June 25, 1942. I was very disappointed that there was not one from my mother.
- May 11 On garden fatigue. Paley, one of the "Asia Boys", was sentenced to 3 weeks' extra fatigues for stealing a lamp bulb in "Labrador." A Jew named Ezechiel, aged 55, has died here. He is reported to have left 8 children behind in Singapore. Preedy tells me that he saw Tiddeman of our department out on wood fatigue today.
- May 12 Seven women and 2 children have recently been brought in here from Palembang, including the Eurasian family of Stanley, one of our internees in 'B' Block.

- May 13 On wood fatigue — I saw Cook (Agriculture) and also Lieut. Wort of the Malay Regiment. Poor chap, he has lost his left arm but seemed well otherwise. Our new Men's Representative made a speech in which he warned us to pay proper respects to the Jap sentries and to behave tactfully when out on all Singapore fatigues. Worley and Penseler remain still locked up "pending more investigations."
- May 14 On garden fatigue. Perry tells me he saw John Ford (Volunteers) while out on the wood fatigue. It is reported that the names of all Civilian Internees were published in the London Press on November 11, 1942 (but the names may have been the names of P.O.W.s only). The Japs are now allowing us to listen in to the Singapore Radio News at 10 p.m. on a Japanese Controlled Wireless Set. The island of Attu in the Aleutians has been captured, but by whom is not clear.
- May 15 It is now 15 months since the capitulation. Adrian Clarke has warned internees not to pass adverse comments in public on the Tokio News Broadcast, however they may feel about the news.¹⁴⁹
- May 16 In our cell we unofficially celebrated the surrender of Tunis by opening 2 tins of Curry Chicken. The Archdeacon preached the sermon.
- May 17 The wood fatigue was cancelled owing to heavy rain. Reading Dudley Stamp's *World Geography*. We welcomed the arrival of the first Red Cross lorry to bring goods from Diethelm and Co., which I believe is Mr. Schweitzer's firm. Those out on wood fatigue saw Col. Bretherton (of the Malay Regiment) and also Chappel (of Osborne and Chappel).
- May 18 Garden fatigue. Penseler and Worley have at last been set free from their close confinement.
- May 19 We have received a free issue of soap and toothpaste, paid for out of Red Cross Funds.
- May 20 The wood fatigue was cancelled again because of rain. We have received the first issue of a 12 oz. loaf; it is large in bulk but rather tasteless. A.B. Jordan, of the Chinese Protectorate, gave his second lecture on "The Chinese in Malaya."
- May 21 Studying Winstedt's *Malay-English Dictionary*. The Japs now require our wood fatigue to dig out the roots of all trees already felled and to use them for stoking the kitchen fires. Western Germany appears to be suffering from very heavy rain.
- May 22 Churchill's speeches in America are being reported in the local press, but the Japs have cut out several passages not for our consumption.
- May 23 The Rev. Adams, late Headmaster of the Anglican English St. Andrew's School in Singapore, preached the sermon.
- May 24 I went in on a rice fatigue to Singapore. We took in several sacks full of old tins and loaded up two of our six lorries with 35 sacks of rice in each lorry at St. Andrew's School, which is now no longer a school but just a rice store. The population was obviously glad to

¹⁴⁹ This warning should not have been necessary, but some internees very foolishly used to discuss and compare in public the Tokio & B.B.C. Versions of the news.

- see us. A rickshaw puller¹⁵⁰ surreptitiously threw some cigarettes into our lorry and another of the locals gave us a packet in the Albert Street Restaurant. We noticed that fresh barbed wire had been installed along the East Coast Road, particularly where it ran along the sea coast. All military posts had been surrounded with wooden fences and barbed wire to prevent people seeing inside them. The Geyland road area, including Kallang Airport and Grove Road, had been completely boarded off to all public view. I bought 100 packets of cigarette paper for resale in the camp.
- May 25 On garden fatigue. Spent the time manuring beds with compost. My bedfellow, Graham (P & T), whose mosquito net I share has kindly made me a pair of sandals out of a rubber tyre and straps from a suitcase.
- May 26 We have been issued with postcards to send to our relatives. Football play has been re-started on the newly levelled ground. The papers announce the death of the Jap Admiral Yamamoto, a sort of Jap Nelson in Jap eyes.¹⁵¹
- May 27 On wood fatigue – met Capt. Denaro, Malay Regiment, who told me that Gerwyn was well and still in Changi.
- May 28 Several high ranking Japs visited the Jail and we were all ordered to bow to one bigwig with gold braid all over him. We have now handed in our Third Postcard to the Japs for onward transmission to our relatives. An internee named Phillips (of Brown, Phillips and Stewart) collapsed in the Main Yard today and was taken to hospital where he is still unconscious, having possibly broken his arm as well. Another internee was nearly drowned at the "Wailing Wall"! He had gone to rescue a football from the deep drain when he was overwhelmed by a rush of water, released from the laundry. He was lying helpless on his back and unable to get out when he was rescued by two "squatters" who happened to be near and attending to their own business.
- May 29 John's leg is giving him trouble again, and he is seeing the doctor.
- May 30 Two Japanese girls, possibly "Comfort" girls, visited the Camp today, but stopped short of the laundry possibly to avoid seeing many nude bodies in process of ablution. There is again a vague talk of repatriation. The Bishop preached the sermon.
- May 31 On wood fatigue. Dr. Williamson, the Singapore Eye Specialist, has just come in after being out for 15 months. A Jew named Isaac has just been tortured for 2 hours with the bamboo torture by the Japs. His so-called "crime" was to submit a request that some canvas he

150 I remember feeling very touched by this gesture of goodwill and sympathy from one of the humblest and poorest of workers.

151 Admiral Yamamoto met his death in a plane in the Rabaul area of the South Pacific as a direct result of the Americans having broken the Jap Secret Code. This knowledge had enabled them to intercept Yamamoto's plane while in flight and shoot it down into the sea. Yamamoto had been educated partly at Harvard University and had opposed a war with America and England, having no confidence in ultimate victory over these countries.

- owned be handed over to the the Red Cross for the use of the camp. There must be more to it! Meredith, his Block representative, was also slapped 3 or 4 times over the same affair.
- June 1 One of the Jap interpreters apparently got drunk with some of our lorry drivers in the front Court Yard and then called for "three women" from the Women's Block. Dr. Cicely Williams and two other women then appeared but were allowed to return unmolested. Osterhaus, the Dutch Nazi, has been set free by Tominara and he has threatened anyone attacking him with death! The Jap Radio now admits the loss of Attu to the Americans but in Saturday's paper they were claiming that the Americans were being driven into the sea.
- June 2 Tominara has locked five of the camp band up in the front tower, and on the top floor, for playing their musical instruments in the Girdle Road too near to the Women's Block. He suspected that they were more interested in the women than in their music practice. Five Christian Brothers, 4 from Kuala Lumpur and one from Ipoh, have just come in. They report that 50 Chinese recently escaped from Pudu Jail, Kuala Lumpur and that the Jap Governor and the Director of Education for Selangor have both been killed in a motor-car accident, possibly engineered by Chinese guerillas.
- June 3 The Band members, including Beverley (Police), are still up on the top floor of the Tower, and exposed to the tropical sun without any shelter. They were given a blanket each to sleep on last night but nothing else. I went on the wood fatigue, but my boots are now nearly dropping off me. Tominara has torn down photographs of Stalin and General Percival that he found in the laundry. The band was set free at 5 p.m. today after Beverley, who is very fair, had been sent to hospital with sunstroke. Tominara's latest act is to commandeer hundreds of electric heaters and appliances owned and used by the inmates of this camp.
- June 4 Garden fatigue — My job was watering, the liquid being used a mixture of 9 parts of water to 1 part of human urine! Some more high Jap officials visited the camp and everybody was warned beforehand to have everything tidy, all clothes off the drying lines and off the rails outside the cell doors. The Gardeners were kept outside the camp until 12.55 p.m. Reading Young's *Outposts of War*.
- June 5 Garden fatigue — a very hot morning during which I did some more watering. The latest repatriation rumour promises our exodus from this camp at 4 a.m. tomorrow!
- June 6 The Jap Radio now admits that a pro-American Revolution has taken place in the Argentine and they have joined the Allies. Reading Morton's *In Search of Scotland*. The Rev. C. Gibson (Presbyterian Church) preached the sermon.
- June 7 Strickland (of our department) is reported to be teaching in a school in Sydney. He is said to have left on the S.S. *Bulan* on February 10

- (a Tuesday).
- June 8 Garden fatigue – H.A.M. Parry, a planter from Kajang in Selangor, has died here aged 56. There is more repatriation talk of a move overseas or at least to St. John's Island, just off the Singapore Mainland. Buchanan (Henry Waugh and Co) tells me that Mrs. Herbert is safe at Hobart – Australia, and now has 2 daughters. From June 15, all internees will be given \$5 per month each and the "Free List" and Shop will cease to exist. According to the *Syonan Times* rural England is being ravaged by hordes of wild dogs!
- June 9 W. Blythe, Chinese Protectorate, gave his concluding lecture on "Chinese Labour in Malaya."
- June 10 Wood fatigue. More internees have come in from Singapore and they are all Health Officers – Drs. Blakemore, Gater, Canton, Benjafield and Lander. Hockey is being played on the new pitch for the first time. The Red Cross is now sending in much more fruit, chiefly papayas.
- June 11 Garden fatigue – I continued watering. Vernon Jones and a Eurasian, said to be his son-in-law, have been detained in the Guard Room at the Entrance for the past 2 days but the reason is unknown.
- June 12 I have been asked to teach School Certificate History (British Empire) to a Eurasian boy, Simmonds, but the trouble will be to find a textbook. The Jap News on the Radio for today was a repeat of that given last night.
- June 13 I attended the first of a course of lectures which the Bishop is to give on "The Modern Use of the Bible". The Whitsunday sermon was also preached by the Bishop. Today, a Jap sentry chased one of our Sikh sentries into the Jail, beat him up with his fists and belt, had his hands tied up, beat him up again and had him taken away. Tominara appeared but seemed to have no authority to interfere although the incident took place within his own sphere of authority. It is conjectured that the Sikh had checked the Jap on the road outside the jail.
- June 14 The Japs have suddenly stopped all fatigues going to Singapore. A Rumanian named Urmossi, aged 46, has died here and so has a Miss Aitken, aged 75, in the Women's Block. Vernon Jones and his son-in-law have been taken to Singapore.
- June 15 Garden fatigue. Reading H.A.L. Fisher's *History of Europe*. The Jap Radio quotes alleged reports by New Delhi Radio stating that we as internees are being equitably and fairly treated here in Singapore.
- June 16 The latest rumour is that men under 41 are to be moved to Malacca, the older men to Changi Barracks, and that the women and children are to be repatriated.
- June 17 Wood fatigue – I saw Dr. Wolfe, former Health Officer. He estimates that there are still 6,000 P.O.W.s in Changi of whom 3,000 are wounded.
- June 18 Garden fatigue – it has been a hot day, and especially so in the cells.
- June 19 I have started to teach Simmonds having procured a junior text-

book: Newton's *British Empire*. Dr. Cicely Williams has been locked up in the Tower having spent the previous night in the Sikh Sentry's Guard Room. The reason is that a cigarette lighter had been found in the Women's Block and the senior Jap Interpreter wished to get Dr. Williams into trouble, for some obscure reason. I attended the Bishop's second lecture on the Bible.

- June 20 The Bishop preached the Sunday sermon. The latest rumour is that some of us are to go to Formosa, some to Port Swettenham, Selangor, and some home! Dr. Williams and also Vernon Jones have been set free again.
- June 21 Suffering from prickly heat and I am using limes to cure it.
- June 22 Informed by Buchanan (Henry Waugh and Co.) that Gerwyn is going "up-country". Tominara has banned the use of any electric lights between the hours of 9 a.m. and 8 p.m. and has ordered the return of all Rice Sacks by 10 a.m. tomorrow. Several Jews were beaten up today for having used such sacks for bedding. Several women's beds have been stripped of such sacks though these sacks were the only bedding many had. Others were beaten up today for having used certain wood materials, the property of the Japs allegedly, to make their beds.
- June 23 Tominara has been searching 'D' Block for forbidden books and took away Dr. Braine's valuable book *Pagan Races in Malaya*. Orders have also been given to hand in all tin-helmets, daggers, stilettos, binoculars, etc. by 10 a.m. tomorrow. No cell may have more than one electric light and all glass electric light covers must be returned to their former positions. Bose, the Indian Nationalist leader, has sought to damp down our successes in North Africa, by referring to them as "victories in the barren land bordering the Mediterranean." Dickinson, ex-CPO Singapore, gave an interesting second lecture on "the Police Forces in Malaya."
- June 24 Wood fatigue - I saw Dr. Wolfe and delivered a message from Clancy for Dr. Puleston-Jones. Tominara searched the Women's Block and found some more helmets. As all whistles had been confiscated, whistles had to be borrowed to umpire last night's hockey matches. Chandra Bose is to broadcast to Malaya tonight from India, it seems.
- June 25 It is reported that all fit P.O.W.s will have left Singapore by next Sunday for "up-country". My prickly heat is better.
- June 26 Attended the Bishop's second lecture on the Bible, entitled "The Idea of God". We had a concert in the Big Yard, on the new stage for the first time.
- June 27 Tipson preached the sermon. A European named Stables, who has a Japanese wife has just come in.
- June 28 Wood fatigue - saw 30 to 50 P.O.W. woodcutters going home at 3.30 p.m. They told us that about 200 P.O.W.s had been either killed or wounded on the Siamese Border recently, presumably as a result of an air raid by us. They are constructing some sort of road or rail to connect Siam with Burma. Robert Burns collapsed on the

- wood fatigue today.
- June 29 Sam Hall (Customs) was called up and reprimanded today for carrying a dangerous weapon to the garden; it was just a pointed bamboo stake! Adrian Clarke, the Men's Representative, has been given 10 days' solitary confinement for failing to hand in some key, but what key is not known.
- June 30 Adrian Clarke was to have given a lecture on "Law and Justice" today! Meanwhile the Japs have been searching the Jews' quarters and took away more "lethal weapons" – cricket stumps and bats! They also searched 'C' Block and took away more flashlights, private papers, exercise books and matches. One man was given half an hour's bamboo torture and otherwise beaten up because he owned a brooch with a 'V' sign on it. Another was slapped for not understanding Japanese when spoken to in that language.
- July 1 Wood fatigue – we used a lorry for the first time to collect the wood, but saw no P.O.W.s. The expected search of 'B' Block did not materialise but they did take away the diary of one Gerrard, but they returned it later. W.H. Barnes, aged 71, has died here.
- July 2 The Jap Radio admits that the Americans have landed on more islands in the Solomons Group. I have now read 600 pages of *Fisher's History of Europe*.
- July 3 The Women's Block 'A' organised a "Circus" in the front Court Yard. Several Japs, including Tominara and Suzuki watched and appeared amused.
- July 4 The Rev. Eric Scott preached the Sunday sermon. The sunburn blisters on my back are getting better.
- July 5 Wood fatigue – I saw more P.O.W. woodcutters. A Dutch sea captain, who has a Jap wife, has just come in. The Jap Premier Tojo is visiting Singapore today. Osterhaus has now been given his own private hut in "Labrador" compound. He is thus insulated from the rest of us.
- July 6 J.H. Winters, a famous tailor in Singapore, has died here at the age of 67. The Japanese Radio reports the death of General Sikorsky, the Polish leader. Tojo is still in Singapore.
- July 7 The latest Jap orders are that there must be no cheering or clapping after 8 p.m., all private carpentry tools are to be handed in and there is to be no looking out of Block Windows! Adrian Clarke has been set free after 8 days' solitary confinement. For 6 days he was given only rice and water and was on camp rations only for the last 2 days.
- July 8 Wood fatigue – during which we collected the tree stumps into heaps for burning. We saw no P.O.W.s. There is to be no "over-looking"¹⁵² of Jap officials from upstairs grille windows. Both my pairs of trousers now have holes and I have only one pair of shorts not requiring repairs.
- July 9 I saw "The Wind and the Rain" acted for the third time. We are told

¹⁵² The Japs were self-conscious about their lack of stature, but one Jap solved the problem of slapping the face of a tall internee (an ex-policeman) by standing on a box.

- that when Jap Premier Tojo visited Singapore, all people were ordered to shut their windows and remain downstairs and only children were allowed out to line his route. All streets were patrolled by numbers of lorries carrying troops armed with machine-guns.
- July 10 The Bishop gave his third lecture on "The Modern Use of the Bible". According to the Jap Radio, the Germans have launched a new offensive against the Russians using 3,000 tanks and 500,000 men, but have taken only 2 villages to date.
- July 11 The Rev. Eales preached the Sunday sermon. There is said to be heavy fighting going on in New Georgia in the Pacific.
- July 12 Garden fatigue – Two of my shorts have gone over to the Women's Camp to "tailors". Nelson, who had been suffering from religious mania, has come back from Miyako.
- July 13 The Current Prices in Singapore are as follows: A second hand car \$7,000; a set of secondhand tyres \$1,900 a secondhand battery \$75; a pikul of nails \$750.
- July 14 The Jap paper reveals that the Allies have landed in Sicily. Garden fatigue. The latest is that Women, Children and Men over 60 are leaving us next week!
- July 15 Gordon-Hall (M.C.S.) gave us a lecture on "The Work of a District Officer in the F.M.S." We notice that some fit P.O.W.s are still in Changi Barracks, as we saw 70 or so marching past yesterday.
- July 16 The Jap Press again admits Allied Landings in Sicily. Two Eurasian women, a Mrs. Lancaster and a Miss Hancock, have been put in the Tower at the front gate for fighting.
- July 17 The Bishop lectured again on the Bible. Heavy fighting seems to be going on at Munda in North Georgia.
- July 18 A. Gow, aged 74, has died here. The Archdeacon Graham-White preached the Sunday sermon.
- July 19 On wood fatigue and saw about 50 P.O.W.s. Watched a performance of Oscar Wilde's "The Importance of Being Ernest."
- July 20 On garden fatigue – The Jap Press again mentions the subject of repatriation and says that the Exchange Date will be given "not in the distant future."
- July 21 On garden fatigue – The Jap paper admits the capture of Agrigento in Sicily and the bombing of Rome. Fred Bailey (next cell mate) and Roberts are in hospital.
- July 22 On Wood fatigue – Nelson has been moved to a hut erected in 'B' "Sanctuary."¹⁵³
- July 23 I have finished reading H.A.L. Fisher's "History of Europe" and have now started H.G. Wells' "Outline of History".
- July 24 The Bishop gave his usual lecture. A.R.P. exercises are to be started on July 28, so the Japs tell us.

153 The "Sanctuary" was a group of cells occupied mainly by the clergy. Other Changi cells with special names were "Cripplegate" for the aged and infirm, "Hudson's Bay" named after one of the occupants who had been Singapore's A.R.P. Chief in pre-war times and "Aldgate" which was occupied by the Jews. See Map on page 97.

- July 25 The Rev. Hayter, the Bishop's assistant, preached the Sunday sermon. More talk of repatriation in 3 weeks.
- July 26 My birthday – on wood fatigue. We had the first roll call ever of the whole Camp in the Main Yard.
- July 27 On garden fatigue – The Jap Radio tells us that Mussolini has resigned because of ill-health. There was the usual indoor concert held in the laundry.
- July 28 On garden fatigue – A.R.P. exercises started today and there is a "Brown Out" tonight. The Jap Radio assures us that these exercises have no connection whatsoever with the Italian crisis and that the war in Italy will go on! Allen gave us a lecture on "The Posts and Telegraphs in Malaya."
- July 29 On wood fatigue – The A.R.P. exercises have suddenly been cancelled and the Japs have, it is reported, informed the Camp Committee that repatriation is imminent!
- July 30 The latest news is that Tominara is leaving us to go to Singapore to direct A.R.P. exercises there and that 900 repatriates will leave this camp shortly.
- July 31 The Bishop's lecture. Certain Nips came round the camp to inspect the jail and take measurements, but what for nobody knows. The fighting in Sicily and the toe of Italy seems to be hanging fire.
- Aug. 1 Nelson seems to be recovering a bit in the "Sanctuary".
- Aug. 2 Wood fatigue – The two remaining Power Station Engineers in Singapore have just come in. Of course, the Japs told them it was for repatriation!
- Aug. 3 Garden fatigue – there is now a ban on watering before 3 p.m. because of the water shortage. The women are giving up their duck farm because of the noise the ducks make at night.
- Aug. 4 Garden fatigue. The Jap Radio admit an Allied air-raid on the Rumanian Oilfields at Ploesti.
- Aug. 5 Garden fatigue. Mrs. Mulvaney is reported to have shown some high Jap Official her 'V' sign needlework – by mistake of course.
- Aug. 6 The latest rumour is that the under 41 men are to be moved to St. Patrick's School at Siglap, on the Singapore sea coast, and the others are to remain at Changi.
- Aug. 7 The Bishop's lecture. The "Asia Boys" gave a Concert in the Big Exercise Yard.
- Aug. 8 There was a "United Church" service in 'B' Yard this Sunday, the Rev. (Dr.) Amstutz of the American Methodist Mission preaching the sermon.
- Aug. 9 The Germans have admitted the evacuation of Orel in Russia and of Catania in Sicily.
- Aug. 10 Garden fatigue. Eisenger, our pianist, got knocked out by an "Asia Boy" today. The reason for the quarrel is not known. The Japs have issued an order that no book on the Malay Language, Customs, etc., may leave the country. This appears to be a superfluous order so far as we are concerned.

- Aug. 11 Garden fatigue.
- Aug. 12 On wood fatigue. I saw 40 P.O.W.s including Hunter (of my department), Cook (Agriculture) and Lieut. Wort again. They told us that Morice, a P & T engineer, had died and I have informed Dowse (of the same department) who is in our camp. Morice, normally a fairly heavy man, weighed only 8 stone when last heard of.
- Aug. 13 There is a shortage of water so there were no baths this morning, and until 5 p.m. this afternoon.
- Aug. 14 The Bishop's usual lecture on the Bible. Saw the play "French Without Tears" performed in the laundry.
- Aug. 15 The Archdeacon preached the Sunday sermon. Somebody has committed a *faux pas* by announcing the death of Phillips, which is not true.
- Aug. 16 No fatigue today possibly because of a cholera scare. No more fresh fruit or *gula Melaka* are to come in until a case of suspected cholera near Changi Village is investigated. The Japs took away 12 boxes, each containing 48 tins of sardines, and also 1 tin of Red Cross biscuits from the kitchen. Whether this has anything to do with the cholera scare is not known, but we are all to be inoculated.
- Aug. 17 On garden fatigue. I dug a compost trench. Mrs. Edmett, aged 57, has died of sprue after 1½ years' illness. As there is a shortage of axe handles, it is necessary to cut down the consumption of Dover Stove wood. There is a report that the Red Cross have run out of funds – a bad lookout for us if true. Reading H.B. Morton's *The Heart of London* and Somerset Maugham's *The Gentleman in the Parlour*. Mrs. Edmett weighed only 3½ stone at death so they say.
- Aug. 18 On garden fatigue. Adrian Clarke made a speech setting out our position with regard to supplies of food, water and wood fuel. The Red Cross at Berne, it is reported, have given orders that further credit for this camp is to cease at the end of this month. It is also said that the Red Cross Agent has sent Suzuki a letter, dated July 20, in which he informed him that exchange negotiations were making good progress and that women, children and invalids might leave "at no distant date." We wonder if there is any connection between these two Red Cross statements.
- Aug. 19 On wood fatigue – and got wet again. A drunken Jap sentry, known to us as "Puss in Boots", hit 12 people in the camp last night and 4 women were also struck in the Women's Block. Four of the men had to have hospital treatment.¹⁵⁴
- Aug. 20 I went into Singapore on a rice fatigue and visited St. Andrew's School to collect sacks of rice and the Albert Street Restaurant for food. The Chinese dish *Mah Mee* cost 60 cents and the eggs 35 cents each. We saw the Police remove lorry tyres from lorries and take them in rickshaws to Police Stations and also people queueing up at the shops to buy charcoal for their cooking pots. All the Police and

154 This was typical of the oft repeated behaviour of this sentry when drunk. His real name was Karzuey.

- the Trolley Bus drivers now wear Japanese style caps. The road between St. Patrick's School and Singapore has been widened but there is little activity really except for Jap troop movements. My old friend, Dr. E.S. Lawrie, aged 44, committed suicide in the Camp Hospital today. It is said that he had had stomach pains for some time, could not sleep and feared he had cancer. It is understood that he cut his throat with a scalpel this morning at 7 a.m. For some time he had not wanted to see visitors and had hidden himself from them. H.R. Cheeseman gave a lecture on "Books about Malaya."
- Aug. 21 Adrian Clarke headed a deputation to the Jap authorities to complain about the behaviour of "Puss in Boots".
- Aug. 22 The Bishop gave his usual lecture on the Bible in which he made a plea for a more modern attitude and castigated the views of the Old School of thinkers regarding the Bible.
- Aug. 23 The Japs have issued orders forbidding the sale or buying of all articles made from cloth, cotton, etc, bedding materials, all medicines, etc. until there has been a stock-taking. The penalty for doing so is a fine of up to \$100,000 or 10 years in jail! This order can hardly apply to us in this camp. On wood fatigue and got wet again. Poor Dr. Lawrie had apparently had a spinal injection when he was circumcised some months ago. This had resulted in lack of sleep and in melancholia and the knife he had used had been the one he normally used for carving wooden objects. Borrie, one of the Wood Fatigue bosses, has been put in the Tower for 7 days as a result of a quarrel with a Sikh sentry over resting with a load at the top of a hill. The *Syonan Times* says that the Japs have evacuated Kisha in the Aleutians.
- Aug. 24 On garden fatigue. Borrie was unexpectedly freed from the Tower today. In future, we must bow to all Jap and Sikh sentries both when going out of camp and when coming in. There is a report that 1,500 American Nationals are to be exchanged at Goa in mid-October.
- Aug. 25 On Garden fatigue. 200 Canadian Nationals are to be included with the Americans when the "Gripsholm" calls at Goa in October.
- Aug. 26 I spoke to Nelson last night - he seems to have quite recovered his mental balance now. The Jap Radio admits that the recent orders relating to Stocktaking have caused much apprehension, yet the orders have now been extended to the whole of Malaya and also include Motor Cars!
- Aug. 28 There was a Boxing Exhibition in the Main Yard, but where they get their energy from is not known! The Bishop's lecture dealt with the meaning of suffering in the Bible. The Jap Radio admits that negotiations for the exchange of British Nationals are continuing, but Malayan Americans are expressly excluded from the exchanges planned at Goa in October, for some reason.
- Aug. 29 The Jap Radio reports that the Rice Ration in Malaya has now been cut to 12 katis a month, though they also admit that "starving"

- India is still getting 18 lbs per month per person.
- Aug. 30 On wood fatigue. We had our second anti-Cholera injection. Professor Dyer gave a history lecture on "Affairs after 1870". The Jap Radio reports the death of King Boris of Bulgaria.
- Aug. 31 On garden fatigue. It is reported that 10,000 letters have arrived for both Civilians and P.O.W.s. They are dated August to November 1942. Ogilvie of the Great Eastern Life Assurance Company has cancer of the throat. Radium is required for treatment and within 3 months at the latest if he is to have any chance, poor chap.
- Sept. 1 On garden fatigue. There was a lecture on "The Flora of Malaya." Reading O'Faolain's *Irish Journey* and Beale's *Word from Nowhere*.
- Sept. 2 On wood fatigue. John received his second letter from Gwynedd, but I have not yet received one from anywhere!
- Sept. 3 I had a tooth stopped by the Dentist — the second filling since I came in. There was a Memorial Service to mark the 4th Anniversary of the Outbreak of War and the Bishop gave the address.
- Sept. 4 The Bishop gave his usual lecture. The Japs were listening to the B.B.C. News in the front Court Yard last night.
- Sept. 5 It rained all day and there was no Sunday sermon. The Rev. Adams is to oppose a planter, Harper Ball, for election as our 'B' Block Representative.
- Sept. 6 Wood fatigue. Death of the Hon. R. Williamson, aged 57, a Singapore lawyer from a clot on the brain. He had been unconscious for 2 days.
- Sept. 7 Garden fatigue. I handed in a Radio Message to be transmitted to my Aunt Let¹⁵⁵ in Australia. I saw "Arms and the Man" (G.B.S.) performed in the laundry.
- Sept. 8 Rained, so there were no fatigues. G.N. Magill, aged 59, had died here of a heart attack.
- Sept. 9 Wood fatigue. Saw Lieut. Wort again. Reading Swettenham's "Un-addressed Letters."
- Sept. 10 Rained all day. Japs say that they are now ready to give the *coup de grace* to India and Australia! I am informed that the names of P.O.W.s and Volunteers (but not of Internees) have been received at home.
- Sept. 11 The surrender of Badoglio's Italian Government has been admitted by both Jap Radio and Press. A Mrs. Macintyre, aged 63, has died in 'A' Block. John has received a letter from our mother.
- Sept. 12 It is reported that a Jap Exchange official is to visit this camp tomorrow and that the Red Cross has donated a \$1,000,000 (through the British Government) to be spent on us. We hear that the Free French in Saigon, sent there from here, have communicated our conditions of life to a Banker who was subsequently exchanged.

155 The message duly reached my aunt in Perth through the monitoring service of the Australian Broadcasting Company. Included in the message was an assurance that my Australian friends, Captain Lloyd and Bill Flowers (A.I.F.) were alive and well so far as I knew.

- Sept. 13 Therefore the British Government must know all about us now. Wood fatigue. The Jap paper reports the flight of the Badoglio Government in Italy.
- Sept. 14 Garden fatigue. An official Radio Message is said to have confirmed that the postcards we sent off last November have now reached home.
- Sept. 15 Garden fatigue. The Jap Radio reports that the Allies have evacuated Salerno.
- Sept. 16 Wood fatigue. I saw Lieut. Wort, Ford and Hughes (who has only one leg). Their injuries must have kept them from being sent off up-country. C.T. Davies, aged 44, has died here.
- Sept. 17 There is again a shortage of rice, which I hope is temporary only. Only 8 days' rice has been received in the last 18 days.
- Sept. 18 Today's Jap Paper admits that the British army is still at Salerno. R.E. Cox, aged 41, has died here. The exchange report is that the S.S. "Gripsholm" will not be bringing us any food and that no Americans from Malaya will be exchanged on it.
- Sept. 19 The Archdeacon preached the Sunday sermon. H.J. Ridgewell, aged 55, has died here. The Rice position seems to be back to normal again.
- Sept. 20 Wood fatigue. Professor Dyer continued his lectures and has now reached the Boer War Period.
- Sept. 21 Garden fatigue. There is an advertisement in the *Syonan Times* (or *Simbun*) offering a reward of \$500 for the recovery of a stolen bicycle. The latest ration of cloth or khaki under the latest Jap regulation is 3 yards per person per year!
- Sept. 22 No fatigue — I have unfortunately got a clot in the vein of my left arm and it has been diagnosed as thrombosis. I shall have to rest the arm in a sling for the next month. I have a rash extending right up the arm from the thumb.
- Sept. 23 The doctor confirms that I shall have to rest my arm for a month and do no more active fatigues.
- Sept. 24 Oswald Gilmour, a Singapore Municipal Engineer, who got away before capitulation, is said to have written a book in which he blames Singaporeans for lack of enterprise in not getting away in time and that it was their own fault if they were caught!¹⁵⁶ Reading Andre Maurois's *Disraeli* and Asquith's *Genesis of the War*. A Chinese was brought in today from a wood fatigue by the Sikh sentries and beaten up.
- Sept. 25 Many Americans and Canadians think or hope that they will get away on the *Teio Maru* due to arrive in Singapore in the next 10 days.

156 A reading of his *Singapore to Freedom* (Burrows Co.) does not bear out this allegation. What he said, in a nutshell, was that (assuming one could get away) it would have been stupid to remain in Singapore when one could have continued to use one's skills to promote the war effort in other theatres of war, possibly in Java. His case was all the stronger as he had a pass from his Municipal President authorising him to leave.

- Sept. 26 Major Harvey (of the Salvation Army) preached the Sunday sermon. The Bishop was ill. The Japs have called up all American and Canadian Nationals for consultation.
- Sept. 27 Reading Kipling's *Plain Tales from the Hills*. The Jap Press claims that they have bombed the "City" of Onslow on the Western Coast of Australia. In fact Onslow is a very small place indeed, I am told; amounting to only a few huts in all!
- Sept. 28 Reading Pepys's *Diary*. The Jap Press admit the crossing of the River Dneiper by the Russians and the evacuation of Poltava and of Smolensk by the Germans.
- Sept. 29 J. Kelly, aged 54, has died of a gallstone. He had done good work which was much appreciated, as the Camp Librarian.
- Sept. 30 The Jap Paper admits a "strategic withdrawal" by the Germans from Naples and the evacuation of Foggia, an important Italian Air Base.
- Oct. 1 There is a rumour that there are more letters waiting for us at the P.O.W. Camp. Saw the play "The Amazing Dr. Clitterhouse" acted in the laundry; a thriller involving a crooked doctor.
- Oct. 2 The latest rumour is that arrangements for the repatriation of all internees in Malaya have been completed but that none will go on the *Teio Maru*.
- Oct. 3 The *Teio Maru* arrived here yesterday afternoon and is lying at anchor about 7 miles out at sea. It is clearly visible from the 4th floor of 'C' Block. The hopeful Americans have still had no information about the ship's intentions. Nelson, back from Miyako, two weeks ago, has taken a turn for the worse.
- Oct. 4 My arm is feeling much better thanks to the rest. Reading two of Kipling's works: *Puck of Pook's Hill* and *The Light that Failed*. One of the American Methodist Mission, the Rev. Summers, preached his so-called "farewell sermon" last night. I hope he is not disappointed.
- Oct. 5 Reading Kipling's *Jungle Book*. The Camp have now been informed that no Americans will be repatriated on the *Teio Maru* but our recently written postcards have been put on board. We are told, too, that there are letters on board for us but they will not be unloaded until the ship returns from Goa! Some Jap officials now tell us "to wait patiently and hopefully" for a British Exchange ship! Our rice ration for the whole camp has now been fixed at 9 sacks a day.
- Oct. 6 A certain Mr. Hatta tells us that the Exchange Ship has now left and so the Americans appear to have been "forgotten." He says our postcards will now go to Tokio on the return trip of the *Teio Maru*. A letter of requests has been handed in to Prince Shikada, a Red Cross Representative.
- Oct. 7 Reading Rose's *History of Poland* and *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen*.
- Oct. 8 Reading Kipling's *Second Jungle Book*. 9,700 letters are reported to have arrived in the camp. 90% are from England and are dated July 1942 to January 1943.
- Oct. 9 Watched a Musical Show called "Monterey". The Jap paper says that

- the Battle for Rome has started. The Bishop gave his last lecture on the Bible. Archdeacon Graham-White will speak next week, I gather.
- Oct. 10 The "Double Tenth"¹⁵⁷ and the Day of the Great Search. We paraded at 8 a.m. for a roll call in the Main Exercise Yard hoping to return to our cells by 9.30 a.m. The Kempitai (Gestapo) Police, however, had arrived and started a thorough search of the whole building. In the course of the day the Police interrogated a large number of people. It was 9 p.m. before we were allowed back in our cells having spent 13 hours outside in the tropical sun without either food or water or any shelter. As our last meal had been the evening meal at 6 p.m. on the previous day we were without a meal for 27 hours! When we were allowed to eat at 9 p.m. last night, many were unable to eat at all and people like myself who were unaffected ate several helpings of *kanji*. Nothing was taken from our cell except Garcia's torch, but others on the same floor lost money, Cundy \$220 and Spragg \$190.
- Oct. 11 The Kempitai were still here today and Sikh sentries have patrolled the Girdle Road, between the two sets of walls, all day. About 19 people have been taken away by the Kempitai for further questioning in Singapore. They include Dr. Johns (former Men's Representative), Dr. Stanley, Dr. Gilmour, Stevenson (who sleeps on top of the disused lift on the Ground Floor of 'B' Block) and Hebditch and Waddle (who are the camp electricians). Reading Kipling's *Limits and Renewals*. There were no outside fatigues again.
- Oct. 12 Tominara has informed the Committee that any money taken will be returned "when we go"! One Jap is supposed to have told Barnard (Police) that we are all off to England soon! One Hopkins (kitchen staff) has told the Japs that both our treatment and the food is far from satisfactory. Staley, an Engineer, was brought in yesterday but so far he has been detained in the front courtyard.
- Oct. 13 Still no fatigues have been allowed to go out and only supplies of bread have been allowed in. Richard Sidney (the Rotarian) has been taken away, possibly for questioning regarding his Diary confiscated on October 10. Another taken away is Macintosh (P & T), the instructor of a Radio Class, some of whom have also been taken away. The local Japs had given permission for this class. Reading Kipling's *Just So Stories*. The search has had its funny moments. One Jap ate six laxative pills thinking they were saccharine tablets, another mistook tooth-powder kept in a Klim tin for powdered milk and drank it and another was told that the contents of a bottle was

157 Please refer to Appendix B and Appendix C for the full facts. Appendix B gives the full story of the Commando Raid on Singapore Docks on September 27th which, in a way, triggered off the Double Tenth Incident, the consequences of which are given in Appendix C. The inmates of Changi Jail, of course, knew nothing of the Commando Raid of September 27th and there is no mention of it anywhere in the diary. Messrs. Sleeman and Silkin's book *The Double Tenth Trial* is published by Hodge (Edinburgh). As mentioned elsewhere I was extremely lucky in that a Kempitai searcher overlooked a biscuit tin in which I had put my diary to date. If this has been opened, I would have inevitably been called up for "questioning" with quite possibly fatal results for me.

a stomach cure when in reality it was real brandy! Meanwhile all lectures, classes, discussion groups, and outside fatigues have been banned since October 10. "Patchy" Green of a nearby cell has lost some gold cuff-links and suspects the civilian members of the Kempitai who searched his cell, but it is quite true that Darby (Customs) has lost his gold cigarette case. Johannes, aged 62, of this floor has died.

- Oct. 14 Still no outside fatigues. Fresh searches have been carried out in "Piccadilly". Stevenson, who slept in the well of the lift at the foot of 'B' Block, was brought back today to reveal the hiding place of a wireless set in 'B' yard.¹⁵⁸ The set had been built into a wooden stool which, in the daytime, was buried in a cavity under removable turf in the grassy part of 'B' Yard. The Nips have also been seen searching the Main Yard and mistook one internee named Michael Jennings for a woman when they searched "Aldgate"! Reading Sitwell and Barton "*Sober Truth*".
- Oct. 15 Still no outside fatigues. More Japs came to re-examine the hiding place of the wireless set in 'B' Yard and the whole area has now been cordoned off. Among those taken away today are three of our Lorry Drivers (one was released later), Curtis the (Japanese) interpreter and Perry from 'C' Workshop. The evening meal will be served at 4 p.m. not 6 p.m. tomorrow in order to conserve our fire wood supply which is getting short.
- Oct. 16 Still no outside fatigues. We understand that a Mrs. Stanley in the 'A' Block, the wife of an internee in our Block, has been taken away to Singapore. Reading Kipling's *Kim*. The Japs amused themselves yesterday drilling the Sikh sentries all day. My friend Phear (Customs) set out early this morning to collect a rubbish bin from 'A' Block in the hope of meeting his wife. Instead he was directed into the Guard Room and made to sweep it out and so never saw his wife at all!
- Oct. 17 Tominara has asked for the names of the 29 internees so far taken away by the Kempitai. He did not seem to know that the interpreter Curtis was among those already taken. The Gestapo have been back and taken away Long, the Ambulance driver, Dalton, a wireless expert, and Earle who is the "Secretary" of 'D' Block. They also dug up a sack buried in Hudson Bay, which may also have contained a Wireless set. There are some optimists who think this search is a

158 The exact spot is marked R on the rough plan of Changi on page 97, where Stevenson listened in and slept is marked S. We may never know how many sets were operating in Changi at the time, but there were at least two. (i) The set which Stevenson had assembled and built into a wooden stool and which he listened in to lying on his bed on the roof of 'B' Block lift (this was stationary on the ground floor and not working) (ii) The set assembled, complete with ear piece, and operated by John Long, the ambulance driver. The parts had been supplied by Choy Koon Heng, husband of Mrs. Elizabeth Choy, and who ran the canteen at Miyako Hospital. Neither set was discovered on October 10th, but both were found and taken away a few days later. Nor did the Kempitai find any parts of a third set - which was being gradually assembled but was not completed. (For details of this set, see the footnote on Mr. Cornelius, p. 287.

- prelude to Repatriation. One Nip who has returned here from New Delhi had told them that our present search was nothing to the search carried out in New Delhi prior to their repatriation to Malaya. A Eurasian named Jones from Alor Star, Kedah, was brought in yesterday. Cherry, the Printer, and the Bishop of Singapore (who is in the cell next door to us) were taken away to Singapore at 2.30 p.m. today. From 3 to 4 p.m. the Bishop's cell was again searched and also the cupboard on the outside of the cell. I stayed in my cell all the time the search continued in order to guard our food reserves so nothing important was taken except for some unimportant papers which Garcia had hoped to use as toilet paper! One of the Nip soldiers did in fact kick me, presumably for getting in his way.
- Oct. 18 The Kempitai returned again and took away Travis (of Henry Waugh & Co.) at 11 p.m. last night and beat up another named Reed for possessing a Kodak Film. This morning they took away Adrian Clarke, the present Men's Representative, Blakstedt, the Camp Committee's Secretary, and Burns, the Chairman of the Camp Finance Committee. In addition, all Garden tools, Cobblers' Tools, Carpenters' Tools and even kitchen choppers have been confiscated too! About 34 in all have now been taken away. Reading Marriott's *The Tragedy of Europe*.
- Oct. 19 Nobody has been taken away for 24 hours and all are hoping that the Japs now have all the people they require. The Sikh sentries themselves brought in a lorry load of firewood today. One fell off the lorry and broke his arm. Another Sikh collapsed during the strenuous P.T. that the Japs have put them through during the last few days. The lorries have also brought in the Japanese rations of vegetables and dried fish though our rice rations are still reduced: viz. ½ ration of rice for breakfast, ½ ration for lunch and none for tea. Reading Buchan's *The Free Fishers*.
- Oct. 20 The position has eased a bit today with the return of 8 people from Singapore. They are not allowed to say what happened to them, but one or two bear marks on their bodies which suggest what did happen. Worley was called up by Tominara today, slapped across the face and then told that he was the new Men's Representative! "Tiny" Smith of this floor queued up for his own rations today – usually he has persuaded others to do this for him – he is reputed to be well off for money.
- Oct. 21 There is a rumour that Suzuki, the overall Chief of P.O.W. Camps, is to be replaced by a Col. Okubo, the Singapore Propaganda Chief. Two elderly internees were hit across the head, one being Laville, for not standing up soon enough in the kitchen at the approach of a Jap. An unnamed Jap Colonel took over control of the camp yesterday and has pushed Suzuki and Tominara out of their offices upstairs in the front courtyard. He is also said to have spoken sharply to Tominara about Camp affairs. Reading Buchan's *Huntingtower*.

- Oct. 22 The Kempitai took away Dr. Williams from 'B' 4 and also Mrs. de Moubray. She was allowed to return after 2 hours, then Mrs. Bloom was taken. It may be that they had meant to take Miss (Dr.) Cicely Williams, not Dr. Williams. Reading Kipling's *The Day's Work*. We continue on short rations.
- Oct. 23 As anticipated, the Kempitai returned Dr. Williams late last night and took away Miss (Dr.) Williams instead. Food is very scarce today and some were reduced to eating scraps of bread put in rubbish bins. I started to teach my pupil Simmonds again. For some weeks I have had to stop because he had some eye complaint. The Jap radio has twice admitted further Russian advances on the River Dneiper. The Kempitai took away a person named Hartfield, who was in charge of bananas in this camp. Our new men's representative, Worley, has had a long interview with the new Jap Commandant who says we are all to be punished for various unspecified "offences".
- Oct. 24 There has been great aerial activity overhead today. As many as 10 fighters have been seen stunting above. Macintyre, a chiropractor, has been taken away for questioning this afternoon and has since been taken in to Singapore. Reading Kipling's *Departmental Ditties* and Strabolgi's *Battle of the River Plate*.
- Oct. 25 There is only enough rice left for this morning's breakfast *kanji*, there is none for lunch or tea. Instead we had to make do with 1½ loaves of bread each for lunch and no tea. Luckily the lorries were allowed to go in to Singapore and later they brought back 97 bags of rice. Also about 10 gardeners were allowed to go out to the garden for the first time since October 9 to collect vegetables. Over 800 lbs were cropped. The Nip Radio states that Chandra Bose's Provisional Indian Government has declared war on Britain and the U.S.A. Reading Kipling's *The Seven Seas*.
- Oct. 26 We have adequate supplies of *kanji* again! The new Jap Commandant is a Col. Nomita and he has promised Worley that he will do his best to supply our food rations regularly, though he admits there is a scarcity. Reading Buchan's *Salute to Adventurers*.
- Oct. 27 Three Lorry drivers and also Chettle, Jackson, Coulson the Municipal Water Engineer, and a Dr. Jelani were taken away by the Kempitai today. The Electric Light is to be used in future only between 8.30 p.m. and 10 p.m. (Tokio Time, of course). The Japs have ordered a general disposal of litter and unwanted articles so hundreds of bottles and empty tins have been deposited at the incinerator. 800 lbs of potatoes were cropped yesterday afternoon. Reading Buchan's *Sir Quixote of the Moors*.
- Oct. 28 There will be a blackout exercise tonight and tomorrow. 6½ tons of food chiefly tea, sugar and salt came in from Singapore today. The sugar ration will now be 12 ozs. per person per month, but 600 lbs are being ear marked for the hospital, women and children. Reading Conan Doyle's *Micah Clarke*.
- Oct. 29 There is another blackout tonight. Another roll call of the whole

- camp is ordered for tomorrow, so breakfast will be at 8 a.m.
- Oct. 30 The roll call was taken and lasted until 11.45 a.m. It is reported that another 40 people are to be brought in. Reading Lockhart's *Life of Sir Walter Scott*.
- Oct. 31 It is reported that the extra uniformed portion of the Kempitai staff have at last left the camp. 30 letters are said to have arrived recently, chiefly from South Africa. One letter received from Egypt informs us that nothing was known of us there as late as April 1943—which is only 6 months ago. Lewis, the Penang Horse trainer, tells me that he knew Mr. Flower of Chilmark and Shorland (M.C.S.) of nearby Fovant quite well. Sermons at Sunday Church services continue to be banned by the Jap authorities.
- Nov. 1 It is rumoured that 5 Wireless Sets were found in the P.O.W. Camp at Changi and that the inmates were put on rice and water for 2 days as a punishment. Reading Buchan's *Life of Scott* in conjunction with *Lockhart's Life*.
- Nov. 2 Small parties of gardeners have been allowed to go out to the outside garden, but no water may be put on either the inside or the outside gardens. We have also not been allowed to listen in to the Jap Radio for several days now, so are completely cut off from the World outside. We are still not allowed to approach the Jap Commandant with requests, so long as the Kempitai remain.
- Nov. 3 There is still no news of those of us who were taken away to Singapore 3 weeks ago. There is again a shortage of *kanji* today.
- Nov. 4 Bryning, an Electrical Engineer, the first for a week, was taken away to Singapore today. We are still anxiously awaiting letters from our relations. A Russian woman was brought in yesterday – hence the rumour that Russia has declared war on Japan!
- Nov. 5 There is to be yet another roll call tomorrow and on each succeeding Saturday, it seems. No bread came in today and with the already short rations of *kanji*, we are all very hungry. No reason is being given for the shortage.
- Nov. 6 This was another very hungry day for the whole camp, as for the second day our rations of bread failed to arrive. All we have had to eat today is – 9 am. One pint of rice and water (i.e. *kanji*) and one pint of tea (with no milk or sugar); 1 pm. half a pint of dry rice and one spoonful of spinach (home grown); 4 pm one pint of tea. Nothing else whatsoever! The Japs had another Roll Call this morning which ended at 11 am. Thomson, who is in the cell next door, was taken away at 9 am. by the Kempitai but was returned at 10 am. Those addicted to tobacco are now smoking a mixture of tea leaves and *bayam* leaves.
- Nov. 7 We were again very hungry as no bread came in. I ate only half of my morning *kanji* and kept the rest for eating in the evening when one is most hungry. I was only able to teach my pupil for one hour, instead of two, today. Reading Buchan's *The Dancing Floor*. A drunken Jap turned on the Radio at 10.15 am. and got on to B.B.C.

- London. But all we heard was the announcer announcing a programme of songs.
- Nov. 8 160 bags of rice were brought in today and our ration is henceforward to be 8 bags per day we are told. Still no bread came in, but the Jap interpreter says he will enquire further tomorrow. We understand that there was a row in the front Court yard, involving blows, in which Tominara, "Puss in boots" (a sentry), a Sikh, and some Kempitai men were involved.
- Nov. 9 There is great excitement among smokers in the camp because a consignment of "Sikh's Beard" (= tobacco) and cheroots has come in, also some other goods which may herald the end of the great "siege" of Changi which started a month ago. I have been very hungry for 5 days now because no bread has come in.
- Nov. 10 We had a better lunch today. It included duck soup made from the ducks which the women had kept in 'A' Block, but unfortunately they could not find enough scraps to feed them any longer. I was able to get "seconds" of both soup and dry rice! For the first time I bought my ration of cheroots for exchange for second helpings of *kanji*! We still have no bread delivery. The local papers mention fighting going on around Florence and Odessa, it appears, but we have not seen any local papers ourselves for a month. Reading a biography of a Capt. Brown, a Penang ship pilot, who retired in 1927.
- Nov. 11 There is a rumour that there will be no more wood fatigues as the Japs will supply the kitchen boilers with coal! This seems most unlikely. Tominara has refused a request of the Committee to send clean clothes to those detained in Singapore for the last month. There has been some pilfering of potatoes in the kitchen and no real wonder as many of us have lost 5 to 10 lbs in weight in the last week alone. A visiting General has ordered the lowering of the portcullis at the front gate but the purpose of this is not very clear! Reading Victor Hugo's *Toilers of the Sea*.
- Nov. 12 1,300 lbs of meat have arrived but still no bread! I am able to get an extra helping of *kanji* by exchange with two "Asia Boys". The Japs were seen measuring out our Football Field today. One explanation is that huts are to be erected there to house internees from Padang and Palembang in anticipation of an Allied Invasion of Sumatra. The portcullis is only half lowered now.
- Nov. 13 Another roll call but no incidents. We had beef stew for lunch. The Main Exercise yard (and football field) is now out of bounds! the huts for Sumatran internees theory seems a possible explanation. Still no bread. Reading Scott's *Talisman*.
- Nov. 14 A Sikh sentry is reported to have told a Jew "Germany sudah jajah," i.e. "Germany has fallen." It is now 5 weeks since the Double Tenth and several of those detained in Singapore have still had no change of clothing since they left us.
- Nov. 15 A "Big Noise" visited the camp today. We were all alerted at

- 3.30 pm. to make our cells neat and tidy but we saw nothing of him on our floor.
- Nov. 16 The whole of 'C' Block Workshop, numbering 80 men, were locked up in the Tower for making a noise after a High Jap official had left them yesterday. Men over 50 were exempted and all but 4 of the younger men had been set free by 1 pm. today. While they were in the Tower, they had all been compelled to kneel down until those who had laughed during the official's visit had confessed. One internee named Buchanan passed out during this ordeal. Meanwhile the Kempitai carried out another thorough search of Hudson's Bay using a metal detector but found nothing.
- Nov. 17 The Japs have ordered the return of all so-called "Camp Property". All chairs, soup bowls, etc, and all tools in the Carpentry shops have been confiscated. Once again the question is being asked - Is this repatriation? I weighed myself today and was only ½ lb under 15 stone - a great surprise in view of the recent general loss of weight. A European named Staley, who had been working in Trengganu, has just come in.
- Nov. 18 Various new Jap rules have been introduced for the more tidy arrangement of our meagre property in the cells. I managed to listen in to the last 5 minutes of the Jap news last night. We have been practically without any news since October 10. Parker and Brettell, who have lived in a disused rice store ever since they came in, were beaten up for not declaring that there were 90 bags of limed rice in their store. The fact that the rice did not belong to the camp and had been there before we ever came in, made no difference to their punishment. Now we have orders to consume this old rice at the rate of 4 bags of old rice to 4 bags of our own stock until it is used up. A new American-born and educated Jap has joined the staff. He has come back, so it is reported, in a recent exchange ship. "You can't blow raspberries at our generals", and, referring to the limed rice, "those guys upstairs think you have been holding out on them", are two of his reported statements.
- Nov. 19 2,000 lbs of meat came in today. Reading Barrie's *When a Man's Single*.
- Nov. 20 We had another roll call and no books or smoking were allowed while it was in progress. Dr. Gilmour, taken away to Singapore 6 weeks ago, has returned wearing a long beard. Reading George Moore's *Esther Waters*. Blackout shades are being installed in the camp.
- Nov. 21 There is a rumour that someone heard a Jap discussing a possible landing in Sumatra.
- Nov. 22 The Main Exercise Yard is to be closed tomorrow, the reason is unknown. The Women are reported to have refused to put up A.R.P. shades in their cells. Reading Stevenson's *The Master of Ballantrae*.
- Nov. 23 The Japs have ordered all ropes and long lengths of string to be handed in. There was great congestion in 'B' Yard today as

- admission to the Main Yard was banned. The American born Jap has told Groves that 2 exchange ships are due to arrive here on December 6.
- Nov. 24 I was lucky to get a second helping of Beef Stew today. Reading Stevenson's *The Black Arrow*.
- Nov. 25 Concrete Cement Mixers have arrived in the main yard and this gives grounds for a fresh wave of repatriation rumours. There is a report that the Japs expect a fresh batch of their Nationals from India in December. Two men who have been supervising the manufacture of Tiger Beer have been brought in.
- Nov. 26 The 4 internees from 'C' Workshop are still locked up, but one has been removed to hospital as a result of which the Japs are demanding a substitute. Trevor Hughes (M.C.S.), Pease (an artist) and Owen (an ex-lecturer from Raffles College) are all diabetic and have now been confined to hospital on a special diet which includes a reduced dose of insulin. Even at this reduced rate, there is no means of extending its use beyond June. Another patient who needs urgent and speedy treatment is Ogilvie who has cancer of the throat.
- Nov. 27 Another roll call was held this time in 'B' Yard, but again no smoking or reading was allowed. The inmates of 'D' 4 have been told that they must evacuate their cells by Tuesday next, no reason being given. Last night, the Camp Electrician was ordered to turn on all the Camp Lights and to lower the portcullis following phone instructions from Singapore. Nobody knows the reason for this and the portcullis remained down all day. The Singapore Lorry was overturned on the road yesterday and all the maize, eggs and honey were thrown out on the road.
- Nov. 28 Reading Jane Austen's *Persuasion* and Barrie's *The Little Minister*. We had a full blackout exercise this evening.
- Nov. 29 There is a rumour that the women's block have been told to expect another 250 inmates and that the kitchen staff have been told to prepare 250 extra meals tomorrow; also 80 men have been told to stand by to collect luggage from the docks. The Japs appear to be erecting 2 rows of rough "atap" roofed huts on the football field, so what is the reason? — a real landing in Sumatra? We had another blackout tonight.
- Nov. 30 The 4th floor of 'D' Block is being white-washed, but for whom? The Kempitai had taken away from Upton, some documents which he was keeping for the Bishop. Reading Barrie's *The Little White Bird*.
- Dec. 1 The Kempitai have again searched Dr. Johns' cell and have taken away Worley, Middlebrook (M.C.S.) and Bennet (Borneo Co.) for questioning. We are still mystified by what is to be done with D4. Some think it is destined for pro-British Asiatics in Malaya, for Sumatran internees, or for the solitary confinement of those still confined in Singapore. Reading Kipling's *Captains Courageous* and Clifford's *In Days that are Dead*. Thanks to Fred Bailey, next

- door, we have been able to get some extra *kanji*. Worley and Middlebrook are now accused of burning some of Dr. Johns's papers: what they burnt were in fact harmless literature dealing with the Red Cross.
- Dec. 2 Dr. Gibson-Hill has lost his mattress. He had unaccountably left it in D4. The Kempitai have now taken away Hodgkin, an entomologist of the Rubber Research Institute. Later he was allowed back, but Gibson-Hill was called up and given a black eye by "Puss in Boots". The reason for this is unknown.
- Dec. 3 Reading Davies *The Early Stuarts* (1603-1660) and Meredith's *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*. Davies was once one of my tutors at Oxford. Harper-Ball, a Johore planter, has been elected to replace Worley as Men's Representative, so there will now have to be an election to replace Harper-Ball as 'B' Block Representative. The Jap Commandant has informed the new Men's Representative that the "offences" of those detained in Singapore amount to "mutiny" and that if there is a repetition of such offences dire consequences will ensue.
- Dec. 4 The roll call in 'B' Yard was organised today by A.H. Gridley who is the 'B' Deputy Representative. There is a move to cut out any more "automatic seconds" on this floor which have been drawn by those doing extra work in carrying up rice tubs. The result is that the "Quartermaster" and the four permanent rice tub carriers have resigned! Once again we are told that the Kempitai have at last left us.
- Dec. 5 The Japs have ordered us to take breakfast at 8.30 am. tomorrow as the front courtyard is to be closed at 9 am. Nobody will be allowed to peep out of windows or through grilles or remain in the passages in the hope of seeing who is coming in! All this on pain of execution! Well, who is coming in? everybody is asking.
- Dec. 6 About 48 men and 44 women have come in today from Singapore. They include the Jewellers, Storch Bros, Attias and Dan Hopkin (of Raffles Hotel), and Dr. Green. Many of the new internees were given only a ½ hour of notice before being taken away from their homes and some do not even possess plates for their food. The Malay News on the Singapore Radio last Saturday emphasised Japan's intention to fight on and win even if Germany is forced to give in.
- Dec. 7 14 more internees, chiefly Eurasians, have come in today. The Japs suddenly ordered a complete blackout at 9.30 pm. last night and the same applied to Singapore. Nelson has again become deranged and has been moved to a section of the camp known as "The Sanctuary" which is mainly occupied by the clergy. There are 3 candidates for the post of 'B' Block Representative. They are A.H. Gridley, Gutsill and Smith.
- Dec. 8 Today is the 2nd anniversary of the outbreak of the Far Eastern War and the Japs ordered a Public Holiday. A rumour states that a

certain village at the 16th Mile. Pontian Road, Johore, has been wiped out by the Japs for aiding Chinese Guerilla forces. Two well known Eurasians, Roy Smith and Dr. Oehlers, are reported missing. There is a story that 50 German Air Force pilots (or instructors) were stunting over Singapore recently, also that somebody had been given a graphic description of the destruction at Kiel caused by our bombers from a German submarine crew in a Singapore dock. Jap authorities in Singapore have, it is reported, taken over control of all butchers' shops, sales and prices.

- Dec. 9 The Japs asked us today for our proposed Leisure Hours Programme for Christmas. Today's breakfast *kanji* consisted of a mixture of soya beans and ordinary rice with soya beans the dominant ingredient. Osterhaus's wife is said to have come in today.
- Dec. 10 Reading G.N. Clark's *The Later Stuarts (1660-1714)*. Our *kanji* is now called "Beanjee" owing to the high bean content. Thanks to the exchange of tobacco for food, Fred Bailey is able to supply me with extra helpings of rice and soup, which are very welcome.
- Dec. 11 The roll call was organised again by A.H. Gridley as Deputy but the Block Elections have since led to the following results:- Gutsill 265 votes, Smith 312 votes and Gridley 127 votes. There was another blackout tonight. The latest rumour says that Hitler has resigned and Rommel has taken charge instead.
- Dec. 12 Johnny Johnston tells me he saw Miller, formerly Inspector of Mines, when out on fatigue. There are more rumours of Germany's capitulation and an improbable one that a former British pilot has escaped from Sembawang Aerodrome in a British plane.
- Dec. 13 Thanks to Fred, I have been able to procure John some extra helpings of rice. Jennings has now succeeded Gridley as Deputy 'B' Representative. The latest Rice Ration laid down for those living in Singapore is - Men 12 katis, Women 9 katies and Children 6 katies per week.
- Dec. 14 Another of those from 'C' Workshop, by name Smith, still interned in the Tower, has been taken ill with lumbago. Tominara has again insisted on a Volunteer named Deighton to take his place and says that the internees are to remain there until the person who laughed at the General's visit owns up! Tominara has refused to acknowledge Mrs. Mulvaney as a Red Cross representative when she made a request for a meeting with relatives in the P.O.W. Camp. However, we are told that the censoring of incoming mail for us has at last started. There is an absurd story that Rommel has flown to Croydon for terms!
- Dec. 15 MacDermott has received a reply to the Radio Message that he was allowed to send to Western Australia. At Christmas the Japs will allow only half an hour each for both Protestant and Roman Catholic services and the evening Concert may be either sacred or solemn, but no burlesque will be permitted. Relatives and husbands and wives will be allowed to meet each other for only one hour over

- in the 'A' Block. There are further rumours about Rommel and the imminent collapse of Germany.
- Dec. 16 We have been refused permission to walk in the Girdle Road on Christmas Day. I am not sending a parcel over to the P.O.W. Camp as allowed. I have no guarantee that Gerwyn is still there and if he is not, that the parcel will be returned. We are told that when 'V' sign cigarettes reached Singapore when the exchange ships arrived, they were soon on sale throughout the city. The Japs in Singapore are now using loud radio speakers to counter Allied propaganda about Germany. Reading *Evelyn's Diary* (1665-1705).
- Dec. 17 Two days ago, the Kempitai took away the draft of a book on Malaria, the result of 10 years' work, by Dr. Field of the Institute of Medical Research. Today they returned and took away various papers belonging to Middlebrook (M.C.S.) and examined the property of Dr. McNab. About 30 parcels arrived yesterday from the U.S.A., some it is said addressed to Changi Jail!¹⁵⁹ I have sent Gerwyn a token Christmas Present (in case he is still in Singapore), a pair of socks and handkerchief. The latest improbable rumour is that Hitler is dead and 3 of his supporters are in prison.
- Dec. 18 We had another roll call at 10 am. Tominara's latest orders ban any smoking in the corridors or passages as one walks along them and bridge-players playing out in the yard must provide their own ash-trays. Reading Chesterton's *Life of Dickens*.
- Dec. 19 It rained all day. Tominara has warned 'C' Block internees not to cross their legs during roll calls. There are rumours that 200 tons of "comforts" have arrived.
- Dec. 20 More rain. Boys under 15 are now to be provided with extra rations in the laundry. This is to prevent their hungry fathers and other adults eating these extra rations! The *Syonan Times* quotes Anthony Eden as saying that it will be necessary to wipe out Germany before the Allies deal with Japan.
- Dec. 21 More internees have come in, 10 men and 29 women and children. They are chiefly Eurasians, but one is the European wife of Tengku Ismail.¹⁶⁰ Dr. Egan has received a gift from his brother in the P.O.W. Camp. It is reported that thousands of Tamil Coolies are being sent north to Siam.
- Dec. 22 Some British troops have returned from Siam and report that at least 10,000 men have died of cholera and malaria while building a railway from Siam to Burma. Only 6,000 out of 16,000 P.O.W.s are reported to have returned to Malaya from Siam and Tamil Coolies have been sent north to replace P.O.W.s who have died.¹⁶¹

159 We were never allowed to describe our Camp as a Jail, but some of our inmates had, it is said, in postcards described our food as "just as good as that at Wormwood Scrubs", a reference which would probably not have occurred to a Jap censor.

160 He was of Negeri Sembilan origin, a lawyer by profession and the President of the Selangor Malay Association before the War.

161 It was only gradually that we learnt of the terrible mortality resulting from the building of this railway. See Appendix 'D' for more details of this tragedy.

Certain Allied airmen who escaped are now said to be in Chungking. It is reported that an Italian mine layer which escaped from Singapore just before the Italian surrender reached Colombo safely. It brought with it a number of Japs who had happened to come aboard "to see how it worked", just before the ship sailed from Singapore.

Dec. 23 At last I have received a letter from my mother, dated November 26, 1942, and posted on December 2, 1942. It had actually arrived here in Changi on about October 1. Our relatives had been informed of our names only in June 1943 and they had been told that we were in "Changi Internment Camp." (though some letters from the U.S.A. had been addressed to "Changi Prison".) It appears that many R.N.V.R. people who got away have been posted by the Colonial Office to similar posts in other Colonies, e.g. Aden. Hughes, who has a Japanese wife and lived in Benut in Johore, relates that when he returned to his house after the capitulation he found 4 dead Chinese in it. All around were hundreds more who had been bayoneted by the Japs and their bodies left on the jetty or thrown into the sea. The Japanese wife had saved the lives of many. Warner, a Kuala Lumpur assistant in a Mercantile Firm, was killed at his own house by a bomb.

Dec. 24 The roll call was held today instead of on Christmas Day, and lasted only a few minutes. Over 500 parcels and 20 boxes of medical supplies have arrived from the American Red Cross. Each American will receive one parcel each and the rest will go into the Camp Store. We were all presented with a packet of 20 Black Horse cigarettes by the Japs, though our Jewish "Camp traders" had paid \$3 or \$4 a packet for them in an attempt to corner the market. Four of our Education Officers who got away, Hicks, Hill, Davies and Laidlaw, have all been reposted to jobs in Africa. The Japs are allowing the first Concert and Choir Singing for months and the Choir will also be allowed to sing to the Women. Reading Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park*.

Dec. 25 Christmas Day – A half-hour church service was allowed in 'B' Yard from 10.30 am. to 11 am. The Menu was as follows – Breakfast: Beanjee and Tea (but no milk or sugar). Lunch: Chicken Curry (½ tin each!), Rice, Beans, Vegetable Soup and Spinach. Tea: Rice Pudding, Tea (no milk or sugar), Maize cake, Kremolene, Honey and Sardine. There was plenty of extra soup available at the kitchen door for lunch. I took Trevor Hughes, the diabetic, a small present of soap, handkerchief and cheroots. He has now been 7 weeks in hospital on a starvation diet so as to economise with the dosage of insulin required. I am informed that Bretherton of our department got home safely but is paralysed down one side from a stroke. The four unfortunates from 'C' Workshop were set free from the Tower at 1 pm. today. Everybody is feeling fuller than usual, thanks to the extra rations provided today.

- Dec. 26 The Americans are said to have occupied New Britain in the Pacific. I have had an itchy back for the last 3 weeks due, perhaps, to some deficiency. There are more reports of a possible repatriation now we know the British Government have our names. There are some, it seems, who wish to blame the Malayan Civilian Government for the debacle of 1942, which is manifestly unfair.¹⁶²
- Dec. 27 30 more internees have come in and many are Czechs. They however included Dr. Ryrie and Hewitt from the Sungei Buloh Leper Settlement. According to Dr. Ryrie¹⁶³ only 1,700 out of the 3,000 original lepers remain at Sungei Buloh, the rest having died from dysentery and malaria. Dr. Ryrie himself has malaria and is in poor shape. Chinese guerrilla bands appear to be very active round Klang. Blacklin of the Rubber Research Institute has also come in. Reading Jane Austen's *Lady Susan and the Watsons*.
- Dec. 28 Three Allied landings in the Celebes are reported. We are to be allowed to send another Wireless Message of up to 50 words to Australia.
- Dec. 29 The American parcels in the camp store are to be divided up at the rate of 7 men to one parcel. As a result I received as my share - 1 tin Bully Beef, 1 tin Coffee, 1 tin Chesterfield cigarettes, 14 small cubes of sugar, 7 prunes, 1 small piece of chocolate and cheese. I exchanged my tin of coffee for a tin of butter. The distribution caused great excitement and our Jewish traders were offering \$4 for a packet of Chesterfields and \$5 for a tin of coffee. Reading Arnold Bennett's *Mr. Prohack* and G.K. Chesterton's *G.B. Shaw*.
- Dec. 30 We were all put on fatigue to clean 'B' Yard in preparation for the visit of a high Jap official but he did not turn up. The Jewish "traders" are offering \$5 for a 4 oz tin of Red Cross Coffee, Jam or Butter. Reading May Sinclair's *The Three Brontes*.

162 It is true, however, that Stanley Jones, the Colonial Secretary at Singapore, had been sacked by the Colonial Office in mid-January 1942 at the insistence of Duff Cooper, the British Cabinet representative in the Far East. Jones left the country almost immediately after handing over to Hugh Fraser, until recently Federal Secretary at Kuala Lumpur. But for this unexpected appointment Hugh Fraser might have escaped the sad fate which overtook him 2½ years later at the hands of the Kempitai. See footnote on page 227.

163 Dr. Ryrie had some grim tales to tell me privately but these could obviously not be included in the diary. He was in fact in constant touch with the guerrillas operating outside his Settlement and he was frequently asked by them to give medical aid to their people. A Jap officer would occasionally visit him at his bungalow but he was the exception as most Japs were very scared of leprosy. On one occasion, Dr. Ryrie was attending to a wounded guerrilla when he saw the Jap officer coming down the drive towards his bungalow. The Chinese guerrilla was in no way put out. Walking out of the room to the "boy's" quarters at the back, he soon returned dressed up in the "boy's" white uniform and asked the Jap whether he would like a drink. Eventually the Jap officer became suspicious that Dr. Ryrie might possess a banned Wireless Set and the doctor, driven to desperation by the thought of the consequences, managed to give the Jap a lethal dose which killed him. His body was then surreptitiously buried in the compound of the house. This story I heard in confidence from Dr. Ryrie's own lips and it is no wonder that he was in such a bad state of nerves when he came into our Camp. Luckily for him there were no repercussions but the Japs must have wondered what had happened to their officer.

- Dec. 31 We had another roll call. New drastic rules restrict bathing (from showers only) to the hours of 3.30 pm. to 6 pm. There is to be no bathing in the mornings. The restriction is due probably to a break down of the pumps rather than to a shortage of water. Bowden, an ex-Posts and Telegraphs employee, has just come in from Miyako where he has been suffering from some mental complaint for the last 18 months. There are rumours of Allied landings in the Celebes and of the Russian capture of Odessa. The Women sang the New Year in from their cells at 12 am. There was no reaction from the Japs as they appeared to have all gone off to Singapore.
- 1944
- Jan. 1 Relatives and husbands were allowed to visit the women in 'A' Block for half an hour. We opened a tin of bully beef and a tin of tomatoes to celebrate the New Year in our cell.
- Jan. 2 I saw Bowden, who has just returned from Miyako, in the laundry. We hear reports of anti-Jap clashes and feelings among the Siamese. Reading Neale's *Queen Elizabeth I*.
- Jan. 3 Our men's representative is to ask the Japs for the return of certain "privileges", e.g. the provision of newspapers and regular visits between husbands and wives. My itch is much better thanks to the doctor's treatment.
- Jan. 4 38 more internees have come in from Penang. They include Europeans, Dye and Patterson (of the *Malaya Tribune*), and Stubbs (P & T Dept.). Several Radio Messages have been received, one dated March 3, 1943. There is a rumour of a great British Offensive in Burma involving one million men and the capture of Prome. I had a long and interesting talk with Dr. Ryrie. A former Kelantan planter named Carswell, aged 51, has died of cancer of the lungs.
- Jan. 5 We are so short of wood, that the usual type of coffin cannot be made any longer. In future the corpse will lie only on a bare board when buried. The rest of the coffin will be removable so that it can be used again and again as internees continue to die.¹⁶⁴ There are more reports of a big Burma offensive.
- Jan. 6 Tominara is supposed to have asked Morgan for a definition of a "First Generation Eurasian." The optimists take this as another hopeful sign of imminent repatriation! Reading *Borzoï* by Igor Schwezoff.
- Jan 7 I again-visited Trevor Hughes in Hospital. He is one of 3 people in urgent need of more insulin and there are 2 more cases of cancer patients in need of radium. Kitching has to be fed through a tube leading into his chest. Apparently no schools are open in Penang,

164 Funeral attendances now became very popular among our black market kings, for when a body was buried at the Singapore Cemetery, the empty top of the coffin would be detached from the bottom plank and put back in the lorry. As opportunity arose, this would then be filled with contraband goods bought from Singapore shops with or without the knowledge of the guards. This profitable smuggling racket was usually presided over by a diminutive Jap known as "the Jockey of Death."

- a great centre of education in normal times, and the Penang Free School is being used as the Headquarters of the so-called Indian Independence Army.
- Jan. 8 There was no roll call today – the first time this has happened since October 10, 1943. There is a rumour that Singora in Southern Siam has been bombed.
- Jan. 9 Two clerks employed in our Men's Representative's Office have been ordered to make a list of all internees in the camp with "Repatriation Card" numbers attached. More rumours speak of the "fall" of Rangoon. The Japs have installed a submarine base close to the Penang-padang.
- Jan. 10 It rained all day and I read B. Ifor Evans's *The History of English Literature*.
- Jan 11 My brother John has another boil on his leg. The Jap Press apparently admits some retreating of their troops in Burma. I won a packet of Old Gold cigarettes in a Sweep.
- Jan. 12 Dr. Pallister is reported to have held out some hopes of repatriation to the 3 diabetic cases. Reading Thackeray's *The Newcomers*.
- Jan. 13 More rumours report that some of our letters are to be sent off to India shortly; also the capture of Moulmein.
- Jan. 14 Still more rumours speak of an attack on Mergui and Victoria Point in Southern Burma, but how true are any of these rumours?
- Jan. 15 One of the recent Penang arrivals, aged 76, has died but I do not know his name.
- Jan. 16 The Kempitai have returned for the further questioning of internees. Apart from questioning a man from the kitchen staff they have also seen Dr. McNab and Embury and taken away Dr. Bowyer and Gorsuch (M.C.S.) to Singapore. The Japs have also removed all books dealing with Tropical Medicine still in our doctors' possession.
- Jan. 17 The "Military" have again taken over control at the Front Gate, whatever this means.
- Jan. 18 The "Military" are reported to be making an inventory of all articles in the kitchen and all its inmates were told to stand to in case of more possible inspections. We white-washed our cell for the second time. Reading Buchan's *Life of Montrose*.
- Jan. 19 The Japs have now removed all but one microscope from the hospital so that proper diagnoses are impossible. A new Jap Officer took the roll call today. Tominara has ordered various packing cases to be made for him and some of the planks being used bear the inscription "Britain Delivers the Goods." This is taken as another repatriation pointer by some but the pessimists facetiously label the mythical Repatriation ships as the "Ta' Guna Maru" and the "Ta' tentu Maru." Reading Shakespeare's *Anthony and Cleopatra*.
- Jan. 20 We have a new Jap interpreter who was himself until lately interned in Hawaii. According to him much of the past friction in this camp has been due to the Jap interpreters' inability to speak or to understand English properly. There is a big row brewing between the

Camp Executive Committee and the Gardeners as to whether their daily bun is to be a half or a whole one for their fatigue.¹⁶⁵ Colonel Lord, of the Salvation Army, has issued a statement denying that he has ever been fined for some "offence" or that his extra fatigues were ever done for him by his assistant. I visited Trevor Hughes and another diabetic, Owen (Raffles College) in hospital and saw also Pritchard Davis also there. Today we did an extra fatigue, washing out and scrubbing clean the top floor of the hospital.

- Jan. 21 The new Jap interpreter from Hawaii tells us that his internee's daily menu in Hawaii was as follows: (1) Two eggs, coffee, bread and butter. (2) a Fish or Meat Course. (3) A bottle of beer at 5 pm. (4) a Fish or Meat Course. They were also given Roast Meat 3 times a week!
- Jan. 22 The 'A' Block now houses 500 women and 168 children. Jap sentries appear to be taking over gradually from the Sikh sentries and the latter may be all gone by the end of the month they say. A Mrs. Bidewell has died at Miyako. The latest rumour speaks of a three pronged Allied attack on Siam.
- Jan. 23 I have been reading Acts, Chapters 1-10 with the help of Dr. Peake's Bible Commentary. The Japs have banned all smoking in camp between the hours of 10 pm. and 8 am. They also say that we may expect no more supplies of tea. We continued white-washing our cell.
- Jan. 24 The number of gardeners allowed outside the walls is now restricted to 50 at one time. This surely has no connection with the latest rumour of a 5 pronged attack on Siam!
- Jan. 25 I scrubbed out the cell floor with wood ash and water. The new Jap interpreter has been questioning various members of the S.S. Police about our food conditions, but why I don't know. A few letters have come in from South Africa. According to these, the names of internees in this camp reached there in either May or June 1943, the second Post Card we sent was received in September 1943, but there is no news of our first Post Card¹⁶⁶ Reading Buchan's "*Sick Heart River.*"
- Jan. 26 Our men's representative's office in the front Courtyard has now been taken over by the Jap doctor. The latest rumours speak of fighting north of Akyub in Burma.
- Jan. 27 The Gardeners are up in arms because the extra bun they had received for their garden labours has now been reduced to half a bun

165 The gardeners had a legitimate grouse for they provided the Camp with almost half its daily ration of *bayam* and *kangkong* (i.e. spinach) and sweet potatoes. At their best, the gardeners produced daily over a ton of green leaf (equal to 10 ozs per person) and nearly half a ton of root vegetables (chiefly sweet potatoes). But the gardeners were rarely able to share in the lucrative 'scrounges' of coffee, *gula melaka*, palm oil, etc. open to those (many of them ex-gardeners) who worked outside the camp on the Dunearn Road site and later on the "Tunnels".

166 "After the war we heard that the plane carrying this mail crushed and all the cards were lost."

- each. Angus, late Manager of the Chartered Bank, Ipoh, has died of cancer and so has a Captain Ramsay, a retired sea-captain. Reading Belloc's *Richelieu*.
- Jan. 28 A new Jap official named Bamba (?) seems to show more interest in our welfare than some. More salt, sugar and tea have come in and some sentries told the people extracting tree stumps from the ground not to work so hard! They also told them to wear hats when out in the blazing sun! Their solicitude is unusual!
- Jan. 29 Dr. Calderwood has been taken away by the Kempitai. Dr. Field tells me I have a scabies infection on my hands, so I am to be given a new sulphur ointment to cure it. Reading Paul's *Epistle to the Romans* – it is difficult to understand even with the help of Peake's Commentary.
- Jan. 30 A Brown-out is ordered permanently from February 1. I visited Trevor Hughes in hospital.
- Jan. 31 There was more food than usual today as it was our turn to benefit from the food returned from the Women's Block; but the "beanjee" tasted sour. Reading Dumas' *The Three Musketeers*.
- Feb. 1 There were two surprises today – fresh fish for tea and a Jap dish called *tsukemone* for lunch, but there was grit and sand in the rice again. Reading *Corinthians 1*.
- Feb. 2 We had Beef soup for lunch – the first time for weeks. It is my Mother's birthday – she must be 66.
- Feb. 3 I have decided to believe no more rumours! There is just no chance of proving or disproving them. I went out on a wood fatigue again and we brought in 3 cart loads of tree stumps from an area directly opposite the jail. We saw a few of our soldiers cleaning a tennis court.
- Feb. 4 We had an issue of 6 ozs. of sugar each – enough to last 10 days. The latest rumours speak of the capture of Ye, 100 miles south of Moulmein, and that Rumania has made a separate peace with the Allies, Bulgaria has capitulated and Churchill says that only 8 out of every 20 Jap ships which sail from Japan ever return.
- Feb. 5 12 to 14 Dutch Nationals arrived here at 11 pm. last night and were made to sleep in the Front Courtyard.
- Feb. 6 The Dutchmen left again this morning – some say that they were railway engineers from Java. We are to be allowed to send another 25 word radio message to England. The Germans are said to have evacuated both Greece and Crete. Reading Philip Gibbs' *Ways of Escape*.
- Feb. 7 There is great news of an extra 3 sacks of rice for the camp each day from tomorrow. A Sikh sentry slapped the face of an internee today and the Japs threaten to deal out "summary punishment" in future for any offence. Phuket in South Siam is now in the news.
- Feb. 8 There will be an evening meal of "beanjee" starting tomorrow. I visited diabetics, Trevor Hughes and Owen in hospital last night. A big gamé hunter named Hartley from Tapah, Perak, has died here.

- Reading Cecil Chesterton's *History of the United States*. The latest in the news is Haadyai, just across the Siamese border.
- Feb. 9 As we had a roll call at 9 am, we had to have our breakfast in semi-darkness at 8 am. (Tokio Time). It turned out to be another search organised by Tominara in "Piccadilly" where a cubby hole was discovered. Kelly and Dr. Byron were detained and asked for an "explanation" of this cubby hole. As their answers were considered unsatisfactory, they were kept standing all day in the guard room without food. In 'C' Block, some Japs wrote in chalk on a "sarcophagus" (concrete slab) "Japan will defeat her enemies, Britain and America."
- Feb. 10 Today, Dr. Byron and Kelly were still facing the wall in the guard room. Out on wood fatigue, we brought in more tree stumps from across the road. Dr. Byron and Kelly have now been sentenced to 48 hours without food, but their offence, if any, is still not known.
- Feb. 11 We are feeling a bit better fed, thanks to the evening meal of "beanjee" which we now get. Meanwhile Dr. Byron and Kelly have been sentenced to further days without food; so far it has been 3 days. Tominara says that they know what the questions are and the answers that are required. Dr. Byron is reported as having said he could go 10 days without food. We are told that the Japs are conducting a reign of terror in Singapore. The latest place in the news is Kantang, south of Phuket in Siam, but what is happening there is not known here.
- Feb. 12 I have had a recurrence of the thrombosis in my arm and will have to rest. I have been reading Calendar's *Naval Side of British History* with my pupil. More vague rumours about Penang and Kota Bahru in Kelantan.
- Feb. 13 Major Tanaka, a new Jap official, has refused to intervene in the case of Dr. Byron and Kelly who have now been without food for 4 days. It is the affair of another Jap named Neomoto (?) A Norwegian sailor named Hagen, who used to pass notes to a Miss Biliewicz, through a grille in Piccadilly, has been detained all night at the Guard Room where he has been confronted all night by his girl friend, with a Mrs. Chowns acting as chaperon!
- Feb. 14 Hagen and his girl friend, Miss Biliewicz, were set free this afternoon but Dr. Byron and Kelly are still unfed. When Dr. Byron told Neomoto that he was feeling very sick, he merely leered back and so matters remained. It is still not clear what he is supposed to have done and what can be done to break the impasse.
- Feb. 15 Dr. Byron and Kelly were given some milk and fish this morning after 6 days' starvation (though it is possible that they did receive one meal on each of the last 2 days). But they still remain in the Guard Room. A Sikh sentry saw another Sikh giving cheroots to Al Rivers in the Rice Mill as a reward for milling some flour for him. The sentry reported the incident to Kobiashi who put both the Sikh and Al Rivers in the Guard Room. At 11 pm. Kobiashi, now

- drunk, reappeared waving a stick which he used to beat up the Sikh for 15 minutes. Then he sent for all the rice crew, past and present, and they have all been at the Guard Room all night. Re-reading Swettenham's "*British Malaya*."
- Feb. 16 The Japs have announced their new daily Ration scales – Heavy Fatigue Workers, 500 grammes; Light, 400 grammes; Women, 300 grammes; children, 200 grammes. No fatigues have been allowed to operate outside today. The Rice Crews are still detained in the Guard Room so no rice has been brought in for tomorrow's rations. Meanwhile the Rice Crews were made to kneel down all this morning and had their arms and legs tied together. 4 Sikhs were also tied up in the Girdle Road. A Jap doctor saw Trevor Hughes a fortnight ago but no extra insulin has been received to date though it is urgently required by at least 3 diabetics. I understand there are supplies of insulin in Singapore.
- Feb. 17 We had our usual breakfast, but there is no rice for lunch (only a little soup instead) because of the rice incident. It is commonly thought that Kobiashi has invented a "plot" to cover his own defalcations in the rice business. It is well known that our men were grinding their flour for the Sikhs. For tea we were given dry rice, curry sauce and tea. At last Dr. Byron and Kelly have been set free after 8 days' confinement. The doctors agree that they may not have suffered any permanent harm, but they are being kept in hospital as a precautionary measure.
- Feb. 18 The Jews have been ordered to move out of the old Rice Store and go into newly made huts in the Main Yard so that Rice can again be stored in the old Rice Store. The Jews may get wet in their new quarters if it rains heavily. The Rice Crews have had no food since 6 pm. on February 15 and are now sitting on the floor in the Armoury. Re-reading Emerson's *Malaysia*.
- Feb. 19 Hughie Fraser, late Federal Secretary, F.M.S., has been taken away by the Kempitai to Singapore. The Main Yard has been opened again. One of the Rice grinders, James, has been set free and a new crew of grinders has started work in the former Jews' Rice Store. We are again, however, on short rations because of the arrest of the former rice grinders.
- Feb. 20 My arm is again painful. The vein in the left arm is badly inflamed from the elbow to the thumb.
- Feb. 21 The Rice grinders have been set free at 12 noon after 5½ days' starvation, during two of which they did not even have water to drink. They had been beaten up by about 5 Japs in all – Neomoto, Tominara, Kobiashi (who was drunk), "Puss in Boots", and the drunken Jap Guard Commander. All that one of the Rice grinders named Parker had done was to give some Sikhs the sweepings of rice off the floor. Yet they had all been tied up and denied food or even water. Fred Bailey (from next door) bears the marks of beatings and of long kneeling on the ground, but he appears to be surprisingly

- well otherwise. He is younger than some of the rice grinders involved.
- Feb. 22 My arm is still inflamed and painful. The Japs have taken away another sack of rice from our store, in the ambulance. This makes 4 sacks of rice taken away from the store this month.
- Feb. 23 We have enough food again and it includes soya beans and some new potatoes.
- Feb. 24 It rained all day, but we had an Air Raid Practice between 12 and 12.30 pm. The Carolines and Ladrones are in the news today but what is happening is not known. Reading Lytton Strachey's *Elizabeth and Essex*.
- Feb. 25 A Jap High Official named Tanaka has informed us that we must become self-sufficient in the supply of vegetables as soon as possible. Maybe he will provide us with enough tools, manure and manpower.
- Feb. 26 I am being troubled by some septic sores on my feet. Any scratch goes septic very rapidly. The Japs are becoming very finicky about smoking. Ash trays must be used on all occasions and smokers must sit down and not smoke in the corridors or passages.
- Feb. 27 The pumps have broken down again so we have had no water all day. We have not been able to wash, to make the usual "beanjee", or use the lavatories. Everybody has been compelled to use the boreholes in the main yard.
- Feb. 28 We are back on short rations again. We had very little rice for lunch and no "beanjee" in the evening, owing to some miscalculation of the amount required. Reading John Buchan's *Augustus*.
- Feb. 29 The septic sores are getting better and my arm is less painful. We have had another lean day with no bread. An internee named Edwards has died. Reading Beverley Nichols's *Cry Havoc*.
- March 1 Another hungry day with only bread for the evening meal and no beanjee. 8½ sacks of rice and 5 of Soya beans are our ration for 2 days! My leg and feet sores are bad again. Some Sikhs were beaten up today by the Japs and kicked in the testicles. An elderly man named Hackett was hit 3 times across the face by a Jap sentry for walking while smoking a pipe. Reading Anson's¹⁶⁷ (once Lieut. Governor of Penang) *About Others and Myself*.
- March 2 It rained all day and we had another hungry day with no "beanjee" at the evening meal. I have now 5 bandages on my sores and my arm is in a sling!
- March 3 My bandages are now 6! The food situation is still serious but I gather soya beans but no rice came in today. Reading (American) *Ambassador Dodd's Diary* (1933-1938) written while in Germany.
- March 4 I was admitted to the Camp Hospital at 2 pm. today. What was originally a scabies itch, has become infectious sores, through scratching, on the legs, feet, arms and back.

167 After whom, Teluk Anson was named in 1882. In early 1982 the town was re-named Teluk Intan.

- March 5 I feel far more comfortable in hospital and with better facilities for bathing, both scabies and sores are already better. The whole of my body was painted today with a yellow sulphur lotion which will kill the scabies infection. The food here is slightly better than outside.
- March 6 Among those in hospital is an elderly man named Manasseh who has been here for the last year suffering from water blisters and sores. Ogilvie, who has cancer of the throat, has been operated on and has lost a lot of blood because he burst a blood vessel. With radium, he might be cured but this is not forthcoming. Reading Morgan's *History of Malaya*.
- March 7 "Puss in Boots", in a drunken mood, attacked Andrew Mustard after 10 pm. last night and cut his head open. Andrew was lying in bed half asleep and was unaware of his approach. Reading Linehan's *Notes on Malay History*.
- March 8 We had a very good meal today, which included pineapple, papaya, tsukamone, spinach, rice and soup!
- March 9 More good food so the sores are getting better already. Much Jap plane activity today. Reading Muggerridge's *The Thirties* (1930-40).
- March 10 A Dr. Evans has been elected Men's Representative vice Harper-Ball. Votes were - Dr. Evans 900, Nelson Jones 800, Wheatley 400 votes.
- March 11 They say the wood fatigues were made to do the goose-step as they passed the sentries today but I find this hard to believe! My sores are now very much better after a whole week in hospital. Reading Buchan's *The Island of Sheep*.
- March 12 Roll Call - there is a rumour that all Newspapers and Wireless Sets have been prohibited outside.
- March 13 An internee named Paramour was hit in the mouth by a sentry because he was smoking in the Yard.
- March 14 There is a rumour of a great Allied Naval Victory off Java and of seaboard landings in Sumatra. Reading Hilaire Belloc's *Shorter History of England*.
- March 15 We have had another visit from a Jap General. My arm is again painful with thrombosis. Reading Philip Gibbs's *Since Then*.
- March 16 There is news of action in the Sunda Straits but what it is is not known. Reading Owen Rutter's *Raja Brooke and the Baroness Burdett-Coutts*.
- March 17 We are told that the death certificate of Stevenson, who ran the Wireless Set in 'B' Block, has been received in this camp. The certificate is said to state that he died of beri-beri and dysentery at Miyako Hospital on January 26, yet when he left our Camp in October he was fit and well and about 35 years of age! Further comment is superfluous. It is also reported that another taken away after the "Double Tenth" by name Buchanan, died at Miyako of dysentery and heart failure on February 6. One wonders what the fates of the 30 odd still detained by the Kempitai will be.
- March 18 Food is again short today. Reading Halliday Sutherland's *A Time to Keep*.

- March 19 The Jap papers admit that their war front extends from Victoria Point in Burma to Indo-China – a distance of 1,000 kilometres. Kobiashi must be in a good mood. Today he distributed \$40 among a Wood Fatigue Party and allowed them to buy tobacco from Chinese outside the camp. Negros in the Philippines is reported captured.
- March 20 Our men's representative has been asked to sign a statement in Japanese to the effect that all our fatigues have been voluntary. All internees have also been given Japanese identification discs. The gardeners have been given an additional 2 acres of land for cultivation. Food is again short, but both my arms and the sores are much better. There are unconfirmed rumours of Allied landings in Sumatra at Bencoolen and Palembang. Reading Sitwell's *Bath* and Linklater's *Juan in China*.
- March 21 I was discharged from hospital today. My weight is 14 stone 3 lbs, having lost 4 lbs in one week.
- March 22 My legs appear to be getting thin and I am also thinner round the shoulder blades. Poor Kitching, who has cancer of the throat is slowly dying because he cannot swallow. Reading Maurice Collis's *Siamese White*.
- March 23 The Japs have now prescribed new hours for our "voluntary" fatigues. They are 9.30 to 12 Noon, 2–5 pm. In addition to the 2 acres already given, the Japs are now planning to give us a further 56 acres for vegetable cultivation. There is a wave of depression in the Camp since an Internee Wireless Repairer accidentally heard that the Japs were still fighting at Rabaul. Reading Winstedt's *Shaman, Saiva, Sufi*.
- March 24 We counted 74 Jap planes in the air at the same time yesterday. Breakfast from now on is to be at 8.45 am. not 9 am. The Japs have put on display four newspapers called "the Voice of Nippon." They are dated February 7, 14, 21 and 28 and are a weekly 2 page paper printed in Java. They speak of Allied landings in New Britain and the Marshalls and of a flare up in Burma on February 4. Food is again very short. Reading C.E. Montague's *Disenchantment*.
- March 25 Seven men (Messrs. Dr. Johns, Dr. Fisher, Jackson, Hardman, Waddle, Macintosh and Stevens) and 2 women (Miss (Dr.) Cicely Williams and Mrs. Bloom)¹⁶⁸ have been returned from Singapore by the Kempitai. All were able to walk unaided except Waddle. The investigations are now said to be completed and a statement may be forthcoming. Another internee, not returned, is Dr. Stanley and the rumour is that he is dead.
- March 26 The Kempitai prisoners were fed only on rice and hot water for the 6 months they were away and only occasionally were given vegetables. 5 were confined in a cell only 6 feet by 6 feet at th

168 Mrs. Freddy Bloom's book *Dear Philip, a Diary of Captivity, Changi, 1942–1945* describes her personal experiences and reactions while in the Women's Section of Changi Jail and also her 5 months' detention at the Kempitai's Headquarters.

- Central Police Station. The 2 women were in a cell with several men, including a Sikh and a Eurasian Clerk. Reading Winstedt's "*History of Perak*".
- March 27 The morning blackout made the early cooking of rice impossible and the breakfast due at 8.45 am. could not be eaten until 10 am. There is news of 2 more men taken away by the Kempitai; Bryning and Adrian Clarke are reported to have died in Miyako Hospital, where there are a further 17 internees now recovering from their treatment. A Mrs. Orr, aged 72, has died in this Camp.
- March 28 We were given an evening meal of rice and maize last night. "Patchy" Green, a Johore planter, has received a letter from his sister in Scotland dated July 1943 and addressed to "Changi Camp". Three others have received parcels from South Africa. Gridley has received a letter from his father indicating that his father had had no news of him at the time he wrote in July 1943.
- March 29 A boil has developed on the side of my face. I am making notes from Winstedt's "*History of Perak.*"
- March 30 The Japs have issued a questionnaire dealing with our Camp conditions. Questions include "What do you think of internment?" "What demands do you make from the Military Authorities?" "What about the Camp rations?" "Answer these questions frankly, just as if you were writing to your father"! "There will be no punishments for unfavourable answers!"
- March 31 Classes formerly held in the "Sanctuary" are to be discontinued. This is because of the noise which disturbs the inmates of this place. The answers given to the Jap questionnaires are said to have been very frank in their criticisms. My arm appears to be much better.
- April 1 Pensler, Ross, Rendle and Sheppard have been interviewed by the Kempitai; subsequently Pensler, Ker (of Singapore A.R.P.) and Rendle were taken away to Singapore. Robertson, a Hospital Orderly and an ex-Tronoh Mines employee, has died from a brain tumour; also an internee at Miyako named Macnamara has died there. It is also reported that Kneebone of Taiping has died in a P.O.W. camp.
- April 2 There are persistent rumours that Germany capitulated on March 16. The Kempitai have now taken away to Singapore Mrs. Nixon, Birse of 'B' Block and Dunlop of 'C' Block. This makes 6 taken in 2 days. Rowswell, who apparently distributed the news in 'D' Block, was not taken as he was in hospital.
- April 3 Mallard, Brett, Boswell and Burnham, who had distributed the B.B.C. news on various floors, were called up by the Kempitai and made to sign a statement admitting that there had been a news distribution organisation. Of this the Japs were now well aware. There is a welcome report that some insulin has come into the camp at last.
- April 4 Today is the 777th day of incarceration! It is also the 4th day of the 4th month of 1944!

- April 5 The Nips claim the capture of Chittagong in India. We had a kind of steamed corn for lunch in place of rice and "munji" for tea. A lot of maize full of weevils has just come in, hence the "munji".
- April 6 Dalton, the radio expert, has just been returned from Singapore. His hair has gone white and he can't hear or see or walk properly. He says that Worley has a skin complaint and that Blakstedt is in hospital with very bad septic legs.
- April 7 Good Friday — Relatives were allowed to visit the Women's camp for an hour and the Camp choir sang the "Crucifixion". Lady Heath has received a letter from her husband now in Formosa to say that he has reason to believe that we shall all be repatriated soon and that she is to go to South Africa. Somebody has received a postcard from a Volunteer now in North Japan.
- April 8 It is reported that C.G. Howell, one of the senior officers taken away from this camp, has died in Formosa. Worley and 4 lorry drivers (Chettle, Haggard, Milne and Hiltman) have come back from Singapore. They all looked deathly white and could hardly stand or walk. It is said that Dalton suffered a mock execution ceremony and did not have a bowel evacuation for 28 days while he was kept in Singapore.
- April 9 As I was teaching my pupil Simmonds this morning, a Jap sentry came along and confiscated the Phillip's Atlas that I was using. Many of the Singapore internees have suffered long periods of interrogation — they include Long, Curtis, Cherry and Yoxall (9 hours). I have apologised to Gordon-Hall (M.C.S.) for the loss of his atlas that I had borrowed from him to teach Simmonds.
- April 10 My cell mate, Horace Hunter, was called out to dig holes for some Japanese who wished to plant castor-oil plants. Vaughan-Jones who used to weigh 23 stone, now weighs only 11 stone — a Camp record for loss of weight. A Mrs. Bateman at Miyako is said to weigh only 48 lbs. The Jap official named Tanaka has admitted to our Men's Representative that food is very scarce in Singapore and that only supplies of food to last one day at a time are brought in from up-country, so we must continue to expect only short rations. Our guess is that Allied submarines are sinking the ships bringing in supplies of rice from Siam.
- April 11 The Japs claim to have invaded Manipur, a province in Assam. An Arab has been brought in to our camp as an internee. Reading Raneé Margaret's *Good Morning and Good Night*.
- April 12 A Mrs. Laurence, the Russian wife of a Pahang planter, also came in yesterday. The Arab has turned out to be an Egyptian, and Religious Instructor to the Sultan of Pahang. We hear that American submarines are said to be very active off our shores. Rumours of repatriation are again strong.
- April 13 The boil on my leg is much better. A Jap named Bamba is supposed to have told Harper Ball that in about 6 weeks, a "portion" of our camp will be moved to a Bukit Timah site, prior to repatriation!

- April 14 Poor Kitching (Surveys) has died. For some time he had been suffering from cancer of the throat and had been fed through a hole in his chest because he could not swallow. Many are speculating as to which "portion" of the camp is likely to be repatriated.
- April 15 22 rations of Bully Beef and Marmite have been sent from this camp to Miyako Hospital to give extra sustenance to the internees who have returned there from the Kempitai at Singapore.
- April 16 I now weigh 200 lbs which is a very good weight. There is talk of a "political union" between the U.S.A. and Britain. Our men's representative, Dr. Evans, has been told by Tanaka, that there was no food in Singapore for the Kempitai's victims. Ogilvie, the other throat cancer patient has also died. 3 weeks ago, when I saw him in hospital, he did not appear to be so bad though he had to be constantly spitting phlegm into a tin. News also reached us yesterday, in a letter, that Mrs. Kitching, wife of the cancer patient, who died 2 days ago, had been killed on the "Kuala" in 1942 on to which she had been carried wounded on a stretcher in Singapore.¹⁶⁹ We hear, too, that Elphick (William Jacks & Co.) has died in South Africa. There is now evidence that our first postcards reached home in August 1943 and that the second postcards reached South Africa (at least) in September 1943.
- April 17 I have another boil coming! Reading Michael Sadler's *Fanny by Gaslight*.
- April 18 I have received a second letter from my mother, dated August 10, 1942. The food situation is grim again as there is only enough maize or sago to provide the evening meal for 2 more days. The Committee have sent in a request asking either for more food or for repatriation.
- April 19 A roll call at 10 am. is to be held on Friday (2 days hence) so that a Jap General can inspect us. We are all to wear our identity discs and we wonder what the General will have to tell us. Lady Shenton Thomas has received a letter from the Governor in which he says he is "so glad that she may be home in England this Summer."
- April 20 Identity discs have now been issued. Mine is No. 1249, on a piece of tin to be worn on our shorts at all times. John has received two letters addressed by his wife, Gwynedd, to her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Samuel, the former last heard of at Padang in Sumatra in 1942.
- April 21 The General's visit was postponed because of rain. We are very short of food again; we had only a cupful of rice for lunch and none for the evening meal. Tomorrow, our rations are to be cut a further 17% and all extra rice for those doing fatigues is stopped. The death of Dr. Stanley is now officially admitted, though many think that he died at the hands of the Kempitai as long ago as last November or

169 More details of the tragic story of the many nurses, women and children lost on the 40 or so small ships which sailed from Singapore in the last 2 or 3 days, before capitulation, can be read in Sir John Smyth's book, *The Will to Live* (Cassell) the story of a nurse Dame Margot Turner, who left Singapore on Friday evening, February 13th and survived the double ordeal of the sinking of two ships, the *Kuala* and the *Tanjong Pinang*.

- December.¹⁷⁰ There are more rumours of Allied landings in Europe.
- April 22 An internee on B4 has received a Postcard from his son in the S.S. Volunteer Forces from Hakodate in Japan. This Volunteer came to our camp on March 8, 1943 and he was in the Red Cross Unit as was my brother G.E.D. Lewis. The General arrived today and made a speech to all the Blocks. He apologised for the scarcity of food which was due to the War, and which affected not only Malaya but even Japan. Neomoto, says that "very good" news ("banyak, banyak baik") will come to us in another month or two! This has caused great excitement throughout the camp. Hunter has opened a tin of jam which he bought 2 years ago, so as to celebrate! There are more rumours of an impending invasion of Europe by the Allies! A Mrs. Gray has died in the Women's Block.
- April 23 There are more stories of imminent REPATRIATION and of shoes being supplied to internees. Bamba is said to be working on "schedules", whatever they may be! The Camp Committee have been given the names of 6 Singapore Internees who are due to return here from Miyako shortly. Reading Shakespeare's *King Lear*.
- April 24 Some think the Camp Committee are withholding information about repatriation for fear we get out of hand from excitement! At any rate, it is rumoured that the General had definitely promised that exchange ships would be here within a month, this in conversation with the Camp Committee! Meanwhile food rations are very low – under 11 ozs. a day (305 grammes) per person.
- April 25 My third boil is much better. All afternoon fatigues and games have now been stopped because of the poor food we are getting. All pumps and piping being used in the outside gardens are to be brought in and Neomoto has called up all fatigue party leaders and sworn them to secrecy over something! Today's food rations are down to 289 grammes (or 10 ozs.) per person. We are told that there are 30,000 letters waiting for us in the front office.
- April 26 The general opinion in the camp is that a move somewhere is now certain. Today Major Tanaka has released enough maize to enable us to have an evening meal again tonight. The women have asked to be allowed to go for a 4 mile walk but where or why is not known. Reading Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and *Cymbeline*.
- April 27 Luetchford, General Manager of the B.A.T. Co., cut his throat and wrists last night in the Big Yard and walked about in the dark spilling blood until he died. The reason may have been that he was worried about an impending operation for piles. He had also been

¹⁷⁰ He had actually died on December 2nd, not at Miyako but at Kandang Kerbau Hospital, having been very brutally treated by a series of interrogators. The Kempitai made quite an effort to hide his death at their hands. They did not give the undertaker his name and instructed him to hammer down the coffin lid with nails instead of using screws as was normal. For some reason, the Kempitai were wrongly convinced that Dr. Stanley held the key to the whole of their investigation.

- studying Chinese very hard. It seems certain now that, in a few days, we shall be moved to a P.O.W. Camp off Sime and Adam Roads, which are near the Bukit Timah Road. There are about 180 *atap* huts in what was once an R.A.F. camp. The present inmates there are to come here when we leave.
- April 28 Raymond Wilson, late United Engineers, has died here of heart disease and so has Woodhouse from an ulcer haemorrhage (the latter's wife had died here earlier on). There are some optimists who believe that the move to another camp is still preparatory to repatriation.
- April 29 There is still no news of our move, though P.O.W. troops are said to have taken over "Golders Green" outside. A fourth boil is now worrying me. Reading Ould's *John Galsworthy* and Clifford's *In a Corner of Asia*. It is reported that Lord Louis Mountbatten has moved his Headquarters from India to Kandy in Ceylon.¹⁷¹
- April 30 We have been informed that the inmates of 'D' Block, BIII, BIV and Piccadilly, numbering 1,350 in all, are to move to the New Camp tomorrow between 9 am. and 12 Noon. There is bound to be a further shortage of food because of this move.
- May 1 450 of us left Changi by lorry at 9 am. this morning, the rest of us were supposed to follow at 10 am. and 11 am. Fortunately we were still here at 12.15 pm. so we were allowed to have our lunch here. Then, the Jap changed their minds and only 'D' Block, 'B' Workshop I and the Dining Room actually left Changi. We are now due to leave here tomorrow morning. My weight is now 195 lbs. Reading Shakespeare's *Othello*.
- May 2 We arrived at Sime Road Camp at 11 am. and moved into a dilapidated *atap* hut which has leaks in several places.¹⁷² The

171 A new Allied Command in Southeast Asia, commonly known later as S.E.A.C. had been set up in August 1943 as a result of the Quebec Conference and Lord Louis Mountbatten had been appointed Supreme Commander with headquarters at New Delhi.

Lord Mountbatten at once decided against a repetition of the previously unsuccessful attempts to drive southwards through Burma by land. His main strategy would be amphibious - a combined striking force numbering 50,000 men would strike at the Jap flank across the Bay of Bengal. It was in preparation for this move that Lord Mountbatten moved his headquarters to Kandy in Ceylon.

Mountbatten's plans had already been endorsed at the Cairo Conference in November 1943, but when the Tehran Conference, a month later, fixed June 1944 for the invasion of Europe, the cancellation of Mountbatten's amphibian plans became inevitable. There was just not enough shipping and landing craft available for both amphibian landings and even those craft already in Indian waters had to be sent back to Europe for the Normandy landings.

172 Sime Road Camp was situated almost in the middle of the Island adjoining the Singapore Golf Club. It was 5 miles North West of the city and one mile east of the Bukit Timah Road. It had previously been a hutted R.A.F. camp of some 70 acres, built on what had been a rubber estate. The huts which could at a pinch accommodate 100 internees each had *atap* roofs, concrete floors and 6 foot high rough plank walls, but all these were now in a poor state of repair. The huts had been built on several levels as the site was undulating, if not hilly, in places, but concrete paths and steps connected some of the huts. The whole camp was surrounded, not by walls, but by coils of barbed wire, except that along the public road side, wooden fences had been used instead.

allotted space per person is 16" for sleeping purposes. Only 50 yards away from our hut I have discovered a small cemetery containing the grave of T.L. White of our department who had died on January 20, 1944. Somebody had put a golf ball in a bottle and placed it on his grave with his name — he had been a very good golfer. His wife is in the Women's section of this camp and no doubt knows nothing about this. 9 or 10 others buried alongside him had died at about the same time, possibly from some epidemic.

- May 3 We are still huddled together like sardines, but the air is good and fresh and we have a view of the Golf Course and Club. Mosquitoes are mercifully few for not many of us have mosquito nets. But if it rains we shall suffer great discomfort as the *atap* roof is full of holes. The meals, so far, have been quite good considering the recent changes.¹⁷³ Reading Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*.
- May 4 A slight shower of rain last night caused the roof to leak in a number of places and a few drops came down on me as there is a small hole above. This did not prevent us having a shortage of water to cook the rice. Our guards are Sikhs inside and Indian Independence Army units outside the barbed wire. I had a plaster put on the fourth boil.
- May 5 A long list of those who have died in Siam from cholera, dysentery, starvation, etc. has been found written up on a wall in our new camp. At least 250 Volunteers' names appear on the list of whom a large proportion had been in the Johore Volunteers. They say that 9,000 P.O.W. troops have taken over our accommodation in Changi Jail.¹⁷⁴
- May 6 It rained heavily last night and many were unable to sleep. The Number of Volunteers who have died in Siam is now estimated at 292 and this includes 50% of the Johore Volunteer Force. The Women and Children from Changi 'A' Block were transferred here today. We are told that P.O.W.s in Siam were fed only on rice and hot water. Thousands of Tamil Coolies from rubber estates have died there too.¹⁷⁵

173 The move from Changi posed quite a problem for our cooks, as there was now no ready-made central kitchen with up-to-date installations. Instead of having one kitchen, we now built six regional kitchens strategically dispersed over the camp in huts with *atap* roofs. Each kitchen was equipped with its own set of *kuasis* which were built into brick or clay fire-places. Strangely enough, the food was now better cooked and the menu more varied than it had been at Changi, though the materials used were much the same as before. Some of the so-called "expert" cooks of Changi were dispensed with, different kitchens introduced an element of rivalry and the result was a real improvement in the quality of the cooking.

174 According to Russel Braddon, the actual number was 7,000 men, many of whom were the survivors of 'F' and 'H' forces which had been sent up to Siam to build a railway in April and May 1943. Yet on arrival at Changi every fit man was immediately put to work building Changi Airfield which was eventually to measure over 4,000 metres in length.

175 A number of books have described the horrifying details of the treatment of our P.O.W.s in Siam and of the Coolies imported from Malayan Rubber Estates to work on the Siam — Burma Railway. Two can be mentioned here; Russel Braddon's *The Naked Island (Pan)* and Kinvig's *Death Railway (Pan)*. For further details, — see Appendix 'D'.

- May 7 We had more rain last night. Mrs. White has been informed of her husband's death, through Dr. Linehan, our Director of Education, whom I had told. Rumours of 3 ships on their way to repatriate us are again current. Kobiashi and the sentries have told the women this! The latest estimates of deaths in Siam are 17,000 out of 45,000 troops and 5,000 out of 10,000 troops. I have 3 more boils on the bottom.
- May 8 We moved into Hut 131 and are quite happy with our new accommodation. We have a good water supply near at hand. I am very sorry to hear that two friends, Jimmy Egan, a Sungei Siput planter, and Dicky Evans (A.P.C.) have died in Siam. There are further rumours of landings in North Sumatra.
- May 9 I attended hospital with 4 boils, 3 on my bottom and one on the leg. I saw the official list of Siam deaths. My brother's name is not on it, thank goodness, though I do not know for certain that he is up there. A man named Nathan has died in our new camp.
- May 10 I hear that E.S. Tiddeman of our department is safe but there is no news of H.L. Hodge. The boils are getting better but my weight is now 13 stone 9 lbs.
- May 11 Two internees, Smith (P.W.D.) and Horley (BAT) were taken away from our camp last October when a radio was discovered. We hear now that Smith has lost an eye. It rained heavily last night but I am relieved to say tht the roof did not leak at all. Reading a Malay classic *Pelbagai Chetera Melayu*.
- May 12 The food situation is bad again. Today we have had just vegetables and water and rice and water. I have borrowed a Malay dictionary for my Malay studies. Reading Kipling's *Debts and Credits*. The Bed Space in our new hut has been improved to 3 feet 2 inches for each man.
- May 13 I was able to exchange my tobacco "issue" for 2 issues of sugar. The boils are getting better.
- May 14 A Jap General is reported to have promised a hospital patient repatriation with 2 months. Numerous other rumours are - The Russians have taken Warsaw, we have taken, or landed in Tavoy and Borneo, the Japs have evacuated Flores, Timor and the Celebes.
- May 15 A Jap General has given us 5 chests of tea and promised us 5 cows! The women again say they are to be repatriated shortly.
- May 16 Doctors Winchester, Diamond and Lowther have been interrogated by the Kempitai. My eighth boil has appeared on my bottom!
- May 17 A roll call was held on the Golf Course outside the camp today. We have had a bread roll for the first time in this camp.
- May 18 Emerson, a Sumatran rubber planter, died of dysentery today. The Jews have cornered the Tobacco Market by acting as brokers for the Japs. One cheroot now costs \$1.50 each; a packet of cigarettes \$15, a tin of sardines \$40. Today a Sikh sentry chased away an internee from 'C' Block named Bowen when he went too near the wire fence. Our hut, which is near the fence, has been accused of making

insulting gestures, shouting "Black Bastard" at the Sikh during the chase and even displaying our penises! (We all have to assemble before the Japs tomorrow though most of us never saw the incident at all). Two internees have died, Beddington (P.W.D. Penang) of tuberculosis, and Manasseh, reputed to be a millionaire, who weighed only 46 lbs at death. Both had been ill for a long time.

- May 19 We paraded at 10 am. outside the Japs' office, where we stood to attention for 1½ hours in the rain as nobody would own up to something they had not done. Eventually after threatening to beat us all up and keep us all there all day, they let us all go. Before doing so, they beat up Bowen (Singapore Cold Storage) with bamboo poles, though it was noticed that the Sikh sentry hit Bowen much harder than the Japs did. Some Dutch Railway engineers returned to our camp today. All this time they had been in Pudu Jail, Kuala Lumpur where 2 died of beri-beri. One, in fact, had died on Kuala Lumpur Railway Station last night. The Dutchmen say that there are about 900 Communists and Indian Non-Cooperators in Pudu Jail and that daily hangings take place.
- May 20 There are already 40 cases of malaria in the camp and I am lucky that Graham (P & T), my next door neighbour has kindly let me sleep inside his mosquito net, and half underneath his camp bed. John has received two letters from his wife Gwynedd. 1,400 letters in all have been received in the camp from Singapore, where they are now censored. Reading *Malaysia Mosaic*.
- May 21 Our hopes are raised by further unconfirmed rumours of action in Tavoy in Siam. 6 have been taken to the Guard Room for waving to the women over the fence.
- May 22 The Jap General has been informed that, in the Committee's opinion, there are 600 potential cases of beri-beri in the camp unless the diet is improved and soya beans provided. There are rumours of an Allied landing in Europe and the rumours about Tavoy and Burma appear to be true. Reading Victor Hugo's 93.
- May 23 3,800 more letters were given out today – none for me. Three more internees have died: Davies, a Taiping Warder (from anaemia and dysentery), Kerr (who has been insane since 1938) and Southern (tuberculosis). The number of Malaria cases is now 80. A letter, recently received, states that K.P. Blackwell (M.C.S.) had been sentenced in the U.K. for "trading with the enemy". This is difficult to understand.
- May 24 The Japs have asked for the names of those who would like to go and live outside. I have received my third letter from home. It is dated June 12, 1943. It confirmed that my mother had received my radio message and an official notification that John and I were alive. A rumour now claims that we may soon move again to "Woodlands Repatriation Camp", up by the Johore Causeway; also that we have made a landing in Norway.
- May 25 We have received the great news that 1,000,000 men have landed in

- the Bordeaux area of France, and also near Cherbourg and that our paratroops have appeared over the Warsaw sector and the Brenner Pass.¹⁷⁶ The Japs are said to expect 1,000 internees to wish to move out of our camp. Today, we again had soya bean flour in our morning meal, presumably because of our protests about our diet. Reading Winston Churchill's *The World Crisis*, Vol. I.
- May 26 Bishop Wilson and Yoxall have been returned to our camp by the Kempitai and so has Mrs. Nixon to the Women's Block. The two men appear to be in reasonable shape but not Mrs. Nixon. We are troubled a bit by rats who will eat anything which is not securely covered up. There is news of further fighting in the Kra Isthmus of Siam and that the Chinese are now forging the flimsy and poorly printed Japanese Currency Notes. Major Tanaka is now talking of putting us on Jap Army Rations. Jennings, our Hut representative, has been succeeded by Human. Two Czechs from Cameron Highlands and a Eurasian from Labis in Johore have just come in. Reading Arthur Bryant's *The National Character*.
- May 27 There is more talk of a landing in the Kra Isthmus, and of a British fleet action in the Gulf of Siam. Kobiashi has taken away 40 of our geese, but on the other hand, the Jap General has promised us extra food. 4,000 more letters are said to have arrived.
- May 28 O'Dell and Menzies are suspected of having Tropical typhus or Japanese River Fever.¹⁷⁷ It is reported that 50,000 Japs are encamped on the Singapore Race Course. The Jews are now selling *gula Melaka* at \$12 a lb. We have just had our Block elections ('B' Block is now known as "Kita" area).¹⁷⁸ The votes were Lennard 440, Harper Ball 181, Thurstan 67 votes. Reading Martin's *Parables of the Gospels*. (S.C.M.P.).

176 This garbled advance news of the landing in France can only have been somebody's intelligent anticipation.

177 Tropical typhus (or Japanese River Fever) did not break out until we moved to Sime Road Camp where we were in more direct contact with the long grass which almost covered the camp when we first moved in. According to the doctors the disease was spread abroad by rats which carried fleas about in their ears and shed them in the *lallang*. Altogether about 20 internees succumbed to this disease and several more survived the early feverish crisis and recovered.

Our *lallang* fatigue squad now became an important factor in maintaining the health of the camp and after a while we were all provided free with long khaki trousers and long sleeved shirts to wear when we were working. Before and after each fatigue we had to soak our naked bodies in a barrel of Izal for added protection. In spite of these precautions, two of our squad contracted the disease and one died.

A good example of conscientious hard work in the interests of the whole camp was set by our worthy squad leader, Jack Draper, who displayed his independent spirit by living throughout his internment in his own private tent!

Even the Japs appreciated our good work and on one occasion when we had accidentally set the wooden fence in the Women's Camp on fire and were expecting a hiding from our guard, we were let off after being read a lengthy lecture on the dangers of fire.

It was ironic that at that particular time the B.B.C. news was telling us of the immense devastation by fire being caused in Tokio by the incendiary bombs dropped from American bombers.

178 We kept to the same blocks as at Changi. 'B' Block became 'Kita' (or Northern) Area; 'C' Block 'Minami' (or Southern) Area and 'D' Block 'Chuo' (or Central) Area.

- May 29 Oswald, M.C.S., has received a letter stating that Government Servants will be generously compensated, according to Churchill. There are now 6 cases of Tropical Typhus (Jap River Fever). The Japs have decided to pay us only part of the monthly allowances at present payable for the work we do. This works out at \$13,000 and not the \$19,000 usually paid each month.
- May 30 The Kempitai have just taken away Hockenhull (Police) and are now looking for missing telephone receivers.
- May 31 A mythical Jap doctor now states that we are leaving for home on June 16. We hear that the Japs are planning a great Photographic Propaganda project which will feature the following scenes – 5 clergy conducting a service with a congregation of 50; the Men's Representative accepting mail from Tominara; married men consorting with their wives and children; internees eating double rations of rice; 3 doctors with Hospital patients; 12 musicians playing their instruments, and 50 gardeners wearing shirts and wielding changkols! Reading Drinkwater's *Abraham Lincoln*.
- June 1 Two women have died here – a Mrs. Redfern, aged 46, from Tuberculosis (making the fourth death in her family since February 1942), and a Mrs. Jackson. A Taiping Warder named Hill has also died of a gastric ulcer, following an operation. After promising us 1,700 kilos of rice a day, Kobiashi has now cut this figure by 100 kilos a day and he has also withheld some of our maize and sago flour. We have had another case of Tropical Typhus in our area ("Kita" area).
- June 2 Some people want to know whether the bamboo shoots we are now eating have been properly prepared and cleaned to avoid ulceration of the stomach. There is much traffic on the roads and railways in Singapore and in the vicinity of the Hume Pipe Works. Reading Addison's *Spectator*.
- June 3 It is reported that Tominara and Kobiashi beat up Bamba for telling the women that they were leaving on June 16! There is news of an American fleet entering Manila Bay and destroying shipping there. There is still much rail traffic to be heard – maybe troops are being conveyed north. Jap planes were also out flying late last night which was a Full Moon. Another 4,000 letters have come in.
- June 4 Major Tanaka personally superintended the weighing out of the rice ration yesterday. Perhaps this was done to stop Kobiashi giving us short measure and making us sign for the full amount. I had a big boil on my bottom lanced by Dr. J.A.P. Cameron. Received a letter dated May 30, 1943 from "Vi" at Salisbury. I visited the Bishop in hospital. He had plenty of marks to testify to his ill-treatment.¹⁷⁹ According to the Japs he had played the role of "Lawrence of Malaya", a figment of their imaginations, of course.

179 The Bishop had brought into camp a large sum of money which the Kempitai affected to believe was to be used for subversive activities within and without the camp. When Bishop refused to admit that this was so, he was on one occasion subjected to 200 lashes with ropes by a relay of seven of the Kempitai, until he lost consciousness.

- June 5 According to a letter received, Ashley-Cooper (Customs) has been reported killed. The Japs are now demanding that we supply 1,100 gardeners to work in the gardens and that they complete daily not less than 3 hours' work to earn their rations and wages. Because the food is so poor in quality several people have already lost 10 lbs since they left Changi a month ago.
- June 6 Death of a Mrs. Doudal in the Women's Camp. Our area has voted for all palm-oil to go to the kitchen and a barbed wire fence is already being erected around the kitchen to protect its contents! Mrs. Grubel, who is Russian, has been informed by some Jap that the British are all leaving soon. 9,000 more letters have come in.
- June 7 We hear that Little (of our department) is now in India, and Bayliss and Bretherton are in Nigeria. Horace Hunter is 40 today and has eaten the last of his sardines and milk. My boils are getting better. The Jap rations issued to "Kita" area for 800 inmates over 2 days have been — Dry Rice 772 and 552 lbs, vegetable leaf 840 lbs, Maize flour 100 and 99 lbs, Pork 96 lbs, Salt 31 ozs! The Russians are said to have taken Konigsberg in East Prussia and the British are advancing on Bangkok!
- June 8 The General has warned the Camp "not to play with Radio", whatever that may mean! Reading Stevenson's *Catriona*.
- June 9 My weight is now 12 stone 11 lbs, a drop of 37 lbs from my former pre-war weight. I notice too, a certain puffiness in the ankles which may or may not be, beri-beri. The Russians are now said to be approaching Vienna.
- June 10 Oscar Wilson, aged 72, a Handwriting Expert, has died here. The Russians, it is reported, are now 130 miles from Berlin, and 80 miles from Vienna. A lorry load of rat-traps has come in to deal with the rat menace. I have opened a tin of Marmite to stem the incipient beri-beri.
- June 11 The Japs are again insisting that all fatigues must last 3 hours a day if the so-called "extra food" is to be earned. But in fact, everybody is finding the lack of proteins in the present rice and vegetable diet so weakening that it is difficult to keep working for the hours required even if paid 50 cents a day (which will buy very little nowadays). Everybody is therefore losing weight rapidly. It is now reported that the Japs are proposing to extend the camp area under cultivation by 286 acres (!), the area possibly to include the Golf Club house which would be used as a hospital, or alternatively another area off the Dunearn Road. The Jews, working the black market, are taking full advantage of the great shortage of tobacco. 360 rat-traps have arrived to catch the rats spreading the typhus bug, which is carried in the rats' ears and then shed on the *lallang*.¹⁸⁰

180 At this stage, large tracts of the Camp were still covered by tall *lallang* which took time to clear and this helped to spread and hasten the epidemic.

- June 12 The General today informed our Men's Representative that 1,500 men would be required to go out to the Golf Course, opposite our camp, to open up more land for cultivation. There was a grave shortage of food, he said, and even the Japanese Army was feeling the pinch, he confessed. At 3 pm, however, this order was cancelled and now only 100 men will be required to root out tree stumps. Reading Raven's *The Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ*.
- June 13 Heavy Fighting is reported from Victoria Point in Burma. Today 200 men were sent out to dig a new vegetable patch near the Chinese High School, where they were surprised to see Chinese boys and girls working as well. One wonders whether this patch is for our use or not, though the General did say "Sendiri bikin, sendiri makan" or else starve! Reading Reid's *Facing Life with Christ*.
- June 14 The shortage of tobacco is now so great that many heavy smokers are quite willing to go out to dig the new patch at Dunearn Road because of the chance of getting extra tobacco there. Cheroots now cost \$1.80 for 10. Boil No. 12 is now coming! It is reported that the Railway Line south of Haadyai in Siam has been cut by somebody. Reading Bertrand Russell's *The Conquest of Happiness*.
- June 15 It has been decreed that Heavy Workers doing 3 hours a day will draw increased rations (i.e. 550 grammes) as from June 18. I shall be working on a *Lallang* fatigue where I can cut the *lallang* with a sickle in my right hand. (Owing to the incipient thrombosis I shall not be able to use my left hand which I would normally do.) Several rats of different sizes have now been caught in the traps and sent to Singapore for examination.
- June 16 More reports of fighting at or near Haadyai Railway junction. There is a great controversy raging in the kitchen over the dismissal of Richards and Pether of that staff. Another member of the supervising staff, Gee, has threatened to resign his job there unless he has control of the keys. Reading Aldous Huxley's *Antic Hay* and *Miscellaneous Malay Papers*.
- June 17 I started work with Jack Draper's *lallang* fatigue and spent the morning weeding *lallang* with my right hand. The Japs have asked their doctors to examine people working in the *lallang* for traces of the fleas which fall from the rats' ears and cause typhus.
- June 18 Today was the first day when heavy duty workers received the increased rice ration for working 3 hours a day. I sent off another Radio Message of 25 words. A former warder named Parry, aged 70 years, has died here.
- June 19 The workers are benefiting by the extra rations but the "non-workers" are groaning. Some, of course, are too old or not fit to work. The Japs have ordered A.R.P. Exercises all through the Camp and sirens will be sounded at 7 pm. and 8 am. This has led to a new feeling of optimism. I have spent the morning weeding in the Hut Garden.
- June 20 The Japs have plans to cut off the top of a hill near the piggery and

- use the soil elsewhere. Reading Charles Morgan's *The Brothers*.
- June 21 We went over to cut *lallang* in the Women's Camp. They are looking well considering. There is some vague news of happenings in Stettin in Germany and Davao in the Philippines.
- June 22 Some internees have been put on to digging Air Raid Shelters for the Japs! We spent the whole afternoon cutting *lallang* in the rain over in the Women's Camp. There are more vague reports of fighting on the Perlis - Siamese frontier and the 3 of us in Cell No. 39 shared a tin of Chicken Curry to celebrate this uncertain good news. Reading Harrison's *Introducing Shakespeare*.
- June 23 We were over again in the Women's Camp cutting *lallang* where I saw Margaret Edge. There is a report that H.R. Carey of our department is either a prisoner or has been killed in Sumatra. I now have Boil No. 13 coming on my back. Reading Gould and Bampfylde's *History of Sarawak under its Two White Rajahs*. More news of fighting at Phuket in Siam.
- June 24 Several internees are suffering from incipient beri-beri and pellagra (when the lips peel) but it is good news that 10 days' supply of rice polishings have just come in. More news of Haadyai and landings in North Sumatra. More people have been mobilised to work on clearing the hill top and outside at Dunearn Road. Goodman Ambler (of our department) has died in Australia.
- June 25 We were again cutting *lallang* over in the Women's Camp. On the way, I saw Fred Bailey who presented me with a welcome portion of rice and red palm-oil in exchange for cheroots. The average age of the camp is now estimated at 48 years (against my 40 years).
- June 26 Cutting *lallang* over in the Women's Camp again. Air Raid Shelter notices have now been posted outside our huts.
- June 27 Cutting *lallang* again. 21 out of 24 hundred male internees are now classified as "heavy workers" for the purpose of receiving the extra rice rations. The Camp Committee have been informed by the Japs that they may expect air raids over Singapore in the future. There is very good news that the Americans have made a landing in the Bonin and Marianna Islands using 10 Battleships, 20 Aircraft carriers and 50 cruisers.
- June 28 We spent the morning sweeping the road in the Women's Camp and Mrs. Warren very kindly gave me some rice. Great preparations are being made for the visit of Lieut. General Dohiwara. Four (thin) internees from each hut are to be sent to represent the rest of us when he arrives. The Japs have agreed to pay \$32,000 a month in wages for male workers but they have reduced the wages to be paid to women. Rice polishings sufficient for 10 days have just come in.
- June 29 Two internees have died today; Clark and Hewitt, late Superintendent of the Sungei Buloh Leper Settlement, aged 54. General Dohiwara visited us at 9.30 am. He was a man between 65 and 70 years of age, and took no notice of our specially selected sample of internees. There was a complete cessation of fatigues because of

- his visit. He is, of course, a well-known figure in Jap history.
- June 30 My numerous boils are getting better again. There is some obscure news of widely separated places — Ymuiden in Holland, Emden and Breslau in Germany and Yap in the Pacific, but details are not known. Reading Price's *Ancestry of the Bible*.
- July 1 Reading Hugh Walpole's *The Fortress*. Reported bombing of Butterworth and Alor Star in Northern Malaya.
- July 2 Hockenhuil (Police) has returned from Singapore after 5 weeks in Kempitai hands. We have been told to dig slit trenches because of possible air raids which may affect not only Singapore but also us.
- July 3 Again rumours that Alor Star, Kulim and Penang have been bombed in North Malaya. Two more internees have died: C. Malet and Peters, aged 53, a Yala miner. Peters is the same man as escaped in the Yala Massacre in Siam and he is also the first mortality from typhus in this camp.
- July 4 People have seen dead Chinese bodies lying in the cemetery. Three months' supply of rice has just been brought in.
- July 5 There is a report of an Allied landing at Yen and at Tumpah Tuan, north of Sungei Patani in Kedah. I have now decided to join Jack Draper's fatigue permanently as a *lallang* slasher. The Germans are reported to have invented a new type of dynamite rocket.
- July 6 There is a photograph in the local Jap paper of the funeral of "a British airman" shot down over Butterworth.
- July 7 A Sikh sentry is reported to have said that there is heavy fighting going on in North Malaya. The whole of our *lallang* gang has to be disinfected with izar before and after work. We squat naked in a tub or cask full of izar. This is intended to kill the typhus carrying fleas.
- July 8 The Japs are said to have mined the Naval Base and the wild rumour is that the Allies have captured Alor Star after 40 hours' fighting. The Japs have been holding night exercises on the adjoining Golf Course. 6 Sikh sentries are said to have run away. Peanuts are now used to replace the rice polishings put in the *kanji*.
- July 9 Again reports of heavy fighting in North Malaya or Kedah. Thanks to extra helpings given by others, had quite a good meal today. Reading Churchill's *World Crisis*, Vol. III.
- July 10 I accidentally found the grave of Private Fiddeman, Cambridgeshire Regiment, in the *lallang* beyond the hospital.
- July 11 My weight is now 12 stone 13¼ lbs which is 2¾ lbs up on a month ago. Reading a Penguin book: *Science in War*.
- July 12 We have been digging A.R. slit trenches round our huts. More uncertain rumours of fighting near Butterworth and of the British fleet being in Penang! This is reputed to have led to the evacuation of Penang itself. A Sikh sentry is reported to have commented that the news is "banyak bagus sekarang." Seven of our Kempitai victims have been allowed to return here from Singapore or Miyako Hospital. They are: Burns, Blakstedt, Goodall, Travis, Hebditch, Day

- and Dr. Jelani. Reading Worth's *The Last Days of Paris*.
- July 13 There was an air raid alert at about 9.50 pm. and again at 11.50 pm. last night and Jap sentries are said to have challenged cars passing on the road outside. The camp is uncertain as to whether this was the real thing or just another practice. We are told by the Japs not to discuss the war but it is reputed that 1,500 sacks of rice are to be brought in and 400 of us will be sent out to Dunearn Road to stump trees, i.e. remove tree stumps from the land to be cultivated.
- July 14 The latest bombshell is that the Japs want us to work 5 hours a day, i.e. from 9.30 am. to 12 pm. and 2.30 pm. to 5 pm. with ½ hour's break for tea, otherwise our present rations will be cut. The local papers are said to have reported 2 unidentified planes over Singapore last night.
- July 15 I discovered the grave of one H.H. Sturt in the *lallang*; but Sturt is said to be in Palembang, and one theory is that the grave may be that of a soldier who put on Sturt's clothes and then got shot because he was in civilian clothes. Blaksted (Customs) and recently returned from the Kempitai, is said to weigh only 6 stone 8 lbs! 8,500 more letters, dated December 1943 have arrived. Reading *Tales from Chaucer*.
- July 16 The Japs are said to have lost 75% of their fleet in an attempt to retake the Bonin Islands.
- July 17 Today is the first day of the increased working hours. The body of Coulson, late Municipal Water Engineer, has been brought back to our camp by the Military Police. The Doctors have been asked to assess the causes of death before he is buried after a funeral service in camp. What is appalling to all of us is the fact that a man normally over 6 ft. in height was returned in a coffin only 4'6" in length.
- July 18 Wilmott, aged 44, and a former member of Jack Draper's fatigue, has died of typhus and malaria. It is reported that Devonshire (Police) was drowned on a ship on its way from India to South Africa. My present weight is 12 st. 13 lbs, down ¼ lb. on the last weighing.
- July 19 Jap papers report the enemy to be only 500 miles from Singapore but they don't tell us where! All *lallang* is again to be burnt, presumably to lessen the chance of typhus infection.
- July 20 Lieut. Suzuki and Tominara are said to have gone away to Kuala Lumpur for a "holiday". As a result of Dr. Williams's warning not to touch *lallang* at any cost, "Patchy" Green and Hunter, who had recently joined our *lallang* fatigue, have both resigned. This warning runs contrary to the advice of Dr. Faris, the Camp Health Officer, who has stressed the effectiveness of izal disinfection. Another of our *lallang* fatigue, Tony Mason, has, however, contracted typhus, notwithstanding. The General has let us in to some of his private thoughts – he has not been home for 7 years, he has had no letter from home for 3 months (presumably because of our submarines), there has been a total eclipse of the sun in Burma and things in

- general were very difficult outside!
- July 21 Another typhus death — that of Perrin, a Kulim planter aged 53, who had worked in the garden, as had Peters. Draper's gang is now to work in the mornings only, and is to be protected by the squad wearing shirts and long trousers¹⁸¹ which are being provided by the camp. The General has asked all internees to share out their clothes among those who have none.
- July 22 We have just been given the long trousers to be worn when we are out *lallang* slashing. We do no afternoon work. Germany is said to be on the verge of collapse.
- July 23 A boy named Hodges, aged 12, has died of a weak heart, and Moore, aged 65, an inmate of the Old Men's Hut, has died from typhus too. There are rumours of a recent attempt on Hitler's life and of the Jap Premier, Tojo's resignation.
- July 24 Poor Hughie Fraser and Alan Ker have been returned by the Kempitai in a half dead condition. Fraser has only a "weak chance" of recovery, has ulcers 4 to 6 inches square on his head and rump and is suffering from beri-beri, dysentery and semi-starvation. A rat was found in a box belonging to the old man, Moore, who died recently of typhus.
- July 25 Hughie Fraser is said to be a little better, but he is still unconscious. A crisis in Japan has led to the formation of a new ministry, we are told.
- July 26 My 40th birthday. Poor Hughie Fraser died at 7.45 pm. last night.¹⁸² He had only recovered consciousness for a short while before he died. I attended his burial service at 9 am. along with about 1,500 others. A sour note was introduced when a Sikh sentry (ordered by a Jap) interrupted the last 5 minutes of the service by marching into the chapel and ordering out the women present. Our "area" suggests that a strong protest be made to the General about the illtreatment of the Singapore detained internees. Reading Hugh Walpole's *The Fortress* and Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.
- July 27 I saw 5 rats as I was cutting *lallang* in 'C' area today. Reading Bertrand Russell's *On Education*.
- July 28 The latest story is that we are to be moved to a new camp at Tanjong Rambutan in Perak, which may be more in accordance with the Geneva Convention regulations.
- July 29 The General visited the camp and was "interested" in the condition and scars of Blakstedt, the recently returned Kempitai victim.
- July 30 Letters dated March 1944 are in the camp but Tominara has refused

181 The average working internee wore nothing but a loin cloth or triangular slip which of course gave no protection whatsoever against the typhus bug.

182 Hughie Fraser had had a distinguished career in the Malayan Civil Service. At the outbreak of war, he had held the senior post of Federal Secretary, F.M.S. at Kuala Lumpur, until evacuated to Singapore where he succeeded Stanley Jones as Colonial Secretary, Straits Settlements, in mid-January 1942. In this capacity he accompanied Brigadier Newbiggin on the morning of the capitulation on February 15th, to make the first contact with the enemy to arrange for the meeting of General Yamashita and General Percival which took place later that day.

- to censor them so we can't have them yet. Reading Churchill's *World Crisis*, Vol. II (1915); also Buchan's *The Runagates Club*.
- July 31 Martial Law appears to have been declared in Berlin in a clash between the Nazis and the Army. We are to be allowed to send off a fourth postcard of 25 words on August 10.
- Aug. 1 There is a new type of sentry at the Women's Gate: a Malay boy only about 16 years old. There has been trouble out on the Dunearn Road fatigue because vegetables have been stolen from a Chinese garden by somebody.
- Aug. 2 It is reported that the Spratley Islands have been captured. A Mrs. Attias, mother of Attias of Raffles Hotel, has died in the women's camp.
- Aug. 3 Lyons, ex-proprietor of the London Hotel, Penang, has died here. They say that Trier in Rhineland Germany, has been captured.
- Aug. 4 A fresh assortment of rumours has arrived, true or not true, is not known. The new Jap cabinet has been talking of World peace; Hitler is dead; Germany is collapsing; British troops have taken Dusseldorf.
- Aug. 5 There was a false alarm of 20 Kempitai men arriving in the camp late last night. Reading Jerrold's *Georgian Adventure*.
- Aug. 6 The women have been ordered to prepare 5 graves for "A.R.P. purposes". Reading Walpole's *Jeremy at Crale* and also Hutchinson's *Adventurers in Siam in the 17th Century*.
- Aug. 7 Reports state that Germany has sent envoys to Sweden and Portugal to sue for peace.
- Aug. 8 Several Mental and T.B. Cases have been sent back to our camp from Miyako Hospital. One mental case is named Edlin. There are more reports of Germany suing for peace.
- Aug. 9 Reports state that Admiral Cunningham has taken the port of Belawan-Deli in Sumatra. Reading George Eliot's *Scenes from Clerical Life* and Hugh Walpole's *Blind Man's House*.
- Aug. 10 More rumours state that fighting in Western Europe ceased on August 1 and in Eastern Europe on August 6.
- Aug. 11 Moncur (of our department) has died here of cancer of the lungs. I was one of about 150 who attended the funeral service. A Jap sentry on a sludge fatigue is reputed to have said "Tokio ta'mau lawan lagi."
- Aug. 12 The death of "Lord Haw-Haw" is reported.¹⁸³ We had another A.R.P. Warning signal last night and are beginning to doubt all these rumours of impending peace. Reading Reade's *The Martyrdom of Man*.
- Aug. 13 We had another scare of another Kempitai visit, but one Jap sentry

183 This is was not true. Lord Haw-Haw's real name was William Joyce, an Irishman born in New York and the son of a Naturalised American citizen. He never required British Nationality, nevertheless, this did not prevent his arrest and execution as a traitor after the war on a charge of high treason. The British Government's case was that Joyce had in fact obtained a British passport and had broadcast for the Germans during the period of the passport's validity.

- did get drunk and go on a face slapping expedition.
- Aug. 14 The Japs have introduced new rates of pay: technicians will get 40–45 cents, heavy workers 35 cents, light workers 25 cents, a day.
- Aug. 15 We have now completed 2½ years' internment. An old man, late of Borneo and named Anderson, has died here. I have received another postcard dated November 14, 1943 from Salisbury. The American fleet is now rumoured to be in the Tsushima Straits but this is hardly likely yet. After 17 boils to date, they appear to be disappearing at last.
- Aug. 16 The Japs have now ordered a new road to be built into the Camp through the South Garden and on to the pig farm. We had a rainy night.
- Aug. 17 Our rations have slumped again and we have been very hungry over the last 3 days, our allowance in pints being: Breakfast 1¼ pints of food, Lunch 1, ¾, ½ pints, and Tea 1, ¾, ¾ pints only. Reading Vera Brittain *Testament of Friendship*.
- Aug. 18 Reports state that Palembang in Sumatra has been bombed and that raids on Singapore are imminent. We are told to beware of spies!
- Aug. 19 I received a letter from my mother dated August 12, 1943, and so did John dated the same. Mrs. Savage-Bailey, mother of Dulcie (Gray), is reported killed or dead.
- Aug. 20 My left arm is again paining me because the slashing of *lallang* has irritated the thrombosis, though I always use only my right arm to hold the sickle.
- Aug. 21 A diabetic Eurasian, named Fyffe has had his leg amputated. I was spoken to by a Dr. Jones who until recently had been a mental patient in Miyako. He comes from Kulim and remembers travelling down in the mail train to Kuala Lumpur with me 4 years ago. His wife and 2 children are safe in India, but he had apparently developed homicidal tendencies since their departure. He comes from Cardiff.
- Aug. 22 The Jap banks in Singapore are said to have closed down. A.R. Shelters for lorries are being dug in the camp.
- Aug. 23 The Japs admit the bombing of Palembang and say that the planes came from Colombo. Reading Conrad's *Victory*.
- Aug. 24 The Sirens went again at 10.45 am. and the warning may have been genuine. The Japs were practising machine gun fire on the Golf Course all last night and orders have been given to dig wells all over the camp. Meanwhile in Singapore A.R.P. exercises are going on all over the city, bunds, trenches and sand-bags being very evident, so we are told.
- Aug. 25 Reading Lord Lytton's *Anthony* (i.e. Lord Knebworth, his son). There are reports of landings at Bencoolen in Sumatra and of more night operations in Singapore.
- Aug. 26 The General has refused to do anything to alleviate the conditions of the internees still kept in Singapore and these include Mrs. Nixon. \$54,000 worth of food (and clogs!) have come in from the Vatican

- Red Cross, but owing to the fantastic prices of each article, the number of articles is very small in quantity. The Japs are rumoured to have evacuated Medan in North Sumatra. A Marine Engineer named Dangerfield, aged 62, has died here.
- Aug. 27 The latest racket concerns the black market kings who go out on funeral parties to bury corpses in Singapore. The so called "mourners" bring in as much as \$2,000 worth of goods on each trip, the "swag" being concealed inside the same empty coffin which is now used for every burial. There is understandably a roster for the persons who are willing to take out the coffin. The diminutive Jap who accompanies them is popularly known as the "Jockey of Death".
- Aug. 28 The diabetic Eurasian, aged 40, who had the leg amputation has died. Apart from being diabetic, a rusty nail had poisoned his foot. Reading Walpole's *Rogue Herries* and Barton's *Jesus of Nazareth* (an American book).
- Aug. 29 There will be a roll-call tomorrow to be held in our huts. There will be no work, thank goodness, as the food at present is very poor.
- Aug. 30 The Germans are said to be fighting in the streets of Paris. The roll call passed off without incident.
- Aug. 31 "Patchy" Green was out on the Dunearn Road fatigue and kindly brought in a ½ lb of *gula melaka* and 50 cheroots for me and Phear kindly presented me with a blanket. The *gula melaka* was consumed the same evening!
- Sept. 1 The Fall of Paris to the Allies is reported. Two postcards received from England prophesy that the over 40s will be repatriated this month! We received 2 fritters each today.
- Sept. 2 An old lady, Mrs. Baker, aged 67, has died in the Women's Camp. 4 pigs have been killed for our consumption at our Pig Farm. The A.R. Sirens are being heard again. We have had an issue of 1 oz of honey each. Two of our hut inmates named Paley (an "Asia" Boy) and Crook are organising some tea racket out on the Dunearn Fatigue. Rumania and Bulgaria are said to be in revolt against their Axis partners. Reading Saki's *Selected Stories*. Two shots have been fired at General De Gaulle, the Free French leader, by unnamed people.
- Sept. 3 This is the fifth anniversary of the outbreak of War. We have had an issue of Marmalade (1 lb 8 oz) between 12! We had the first part of a typhoid inoculation, so I am taking the day off from fatigues tomorrow. I have boil No. 19 on my bottom.
- Sept. 4 One of our Rice Fatigues met 1,500 P.O.W.s at the Docks. They are survivors of those who have been working on the Siamese border and are suffering from dysentery. They and a further 500 Jap wounded are said to be leaving for Japan in 2 ships. The P.O.W.s are from the Argyles and Gordons. Four of our internees have been caught stealing *gula melaka* from a poor squatter.
- Sept. 5 Fatigue parties to Dunearn Road are to be limited to 100 in the

morning and 100 in the afternoon and Paley and Crook are to be banned from either party. Gow, one of the 6 drivers of Corpse collecting lorries, and originally sentenced to 2 years' confinement, has come into our camp. Of the other 5 drivers, 3 have died and one is missing. Reading Walpole's *The Bright Pavilions*.

- Sept. 6 An ex-Warder named Harris was beaten up by "Puss in Boots" today for interfering with him when he was "punishing" some Eurasian girls (including Mrs. Begg). "Puss in Boots" was making them remain in a kneeling position and one of the girls was Harris's daughter.
- Sept. 7 We have had a lot of rain today and this has made everything very damp. A British officer contacted in town by a fatigue says that there is very little happening in either Burma or Siam (in spite of all the rumours we have been hearing), but Mountbatten is keeping the Burma Road open. A few Red Cross cables, dated August 1944, have been received and some of these indicate we may still be home for Christmas. We are now being given "cargo rice", whatever that may be. One rumour is that General Percival has been brought back to Singapore from Formosa.
- Sept. 8 An old sea captain named Milne, aged 75, died suddenly at tea time. Holmes, an ex-Water Engineer from Penang, had his thigh broken at Duncarn Road when a big tree fell down on him. He is 55. They say that the Germans have been cleared out of France.
- Sept. 9 Some people are now eating rubber nuts for their high protein value. The doctor says that one can eat up to 8 a day without ill effects. I had a tooth stopped. Reading Walpole's *Judith Paris*.
- Sept. 10 The great news, if true, is that the Germans have now been cleared from the whole of France and Belgium. We had our second inoculation.
- Sept. 11 Both Mrs. Shelton-Palmer and Mrs. Graham-White (wife of the Archdeacon) are very ill in the Women's camp. The Allies have now reached the German frontier, we are told.
- Sept. 12 We have had our first 2 typhus suspects for 6 weeks, one is a Mr. Hannay from Ipoh. Tominara was asking Morris, a lorry driver, to point out the European battle situation on a map. Morris wisely denied any special knowledge of the real positions. Aherne, off the S.S. *Hauraki* and aged 41 years, has died from dysentery. He had been one of the camp stage comedians but from all reports did not make much of a fight for his life.
- Sept. 13 Tominara's questioning of Morris is a result, it seems, of a discussion held on the previous night between Kobiashi (who was drunk) and Morris about the war position. The Allies have now reached Coblenz on the Rhine, it is said. Reading Walpole's *Harmer John*. There is yet more talk of repatriation at the end of this year.
- Sept. 14 The Japs have abandoned the plan to level the hill near the pig farm and talk of building a bund 1½ metres high. Rumours now say that the Russians have reached Frankfurt-on-Oder. Mrs. Shelton-Palmer, ill a long time with T.B., has died in the Women's Camp.

- Sept. 15 The Japs now insist that all heavy fatigues work from 9 am. to 12 Noon, and 2 pm. to 5 pm. i.e. 6 hours. Very fortunately for us, our *lallang* fatigue will continue to work only in the mornings from 9 am. to 12.30 pm. There is a minor scandal at the hospital over the alleged disappearance of 60 lbs. of sugar. There is also dissension between Dr. Glyn Evans and the Committee over Worley's Report on the Hospital.
- Sept. 16 There is more talk of the imminent collapse of Germany and of our repatriation by the end of the year. We hear that one man in our camp eats raw snails and chops up Keringa ants for food! I made contact with Fred and exchanged some cheroots for food. Reading Massingham's edition of *The Great Victorians*. There are more wild rumours, e.g. Berlin has been declared an Open City; the German government has moved to Weimar and the British fleet is in the Baltic.
- Sept. 17 A new Men's Representative has been elected, by name Collinge, who beat Dr. Glyn Evans by 90 votes. All Johore Villages are now surrounded by high barricades, we are told. Reading Stapledon's *Philosophy and Living*, Vol. I.
- Sept. 18 A Jap is reported to have stated "Germany is finished."
- Sept. 19 The Japs are said to be camouflaging parts of Singapore. Reading Walpole's *Mr. Perrin* and *Mr. Trail*.
- Sept. 20 The Allies are now reported to have invaded the Ruhr and North Rhineland areas. Another siren was sounded at 12.30 pm. yesterday. More talk of repatriation in 3 Jap ships.
- Sept. 21 Perry (of Boustead & Co.) has been sent back, unconscious on a stretcher, and covered only by a blanket. I have just heard that Perry had died. I knew him very well as a rugger player and much regret his tragic death. He was about 40 years old and had been 11 months in Kempitai hands and died of the usual ailments, dysentery, beri-beri, etc. I attended the funeral service at which, surprisingly, Tominara was also present. According to rumour, Goering has stayed behind in Berlin and not gone to Weimar, so that he may treat with the Allies. Four of us "Patchy" Green, Horace Hunter, Garcia and myself have decided to start our own private garden outside our hut.
- Sept. 22 The latest reports state that fighting is now going on at Aachen in the West and Warsaw in the East of Europe. Reading Bolitho's *Twelve against the Gods*.
- Sept. 23 Very heavy rain, which prevented my seeing Fred and making a swap for cheroots. Work on Sunday fatigues will start at 9.30 am. not 9 am.
- Sept. 24 We have had Hut representative elections and Human got 69 votes and Lewis (Sime, Darby & Co.) 39 votes. Reading Winifred Holtby's *South Riding*.
- Sept. 25 Death of Alan Ker, who had returned from the Kempitai with Hugh Fraser, 2 months ago. He had some T.B. infection and died suddenly while he was having lunch. The Germans are said to have retired to

- the line of the River Weser on the Eastern Front.
- Sept. 26 There are more rumours of a German capitulation and many here are ready to believe them.
- Sept. 27 Death of Tovey, aged 21, who had been an orderly at the hospital. He died of dysentery and may well have caught it from one of the patients who died of this recently. Sanderson No. 2 in the Raub Gold Co., has now been taken away by the Kempitai. Part of the British Mediterranean fleet is believed to be moving out to the Far East area.
- Sept. 28 There is a dysentery scare in the camp as a result of the recent deaths. Sanderson has been returned by the Kempitai. Doubts are now been cast on the truth of the recent rumours about the situation in Europe.
- Sept. 29 A Sikh sentry has told some of the Gardeners that the war in Europe is over! We have been vaccinated.
- Sept. 30 The whole camp is to be weighed monthly, so the Japs order. Hockenull (Police) has been locked up in the Guard room because of his dealings with a blonde in the Women's Camp. My present weight is 12 stone 11 lbs., which is 2 lbs. down. My height is 6' 1½" a shrinkage of ½". 14 Radio Messages have been received in the camp and some are only a week old.
- Oct. 1 Reading Garratt's *Mussolini's Roman Empire*, Mathews's *The World in which Jesus Lived* and Morton's *Middle East*. A Eurasian named Glendinning, aged 74, has died here.
- Oct. 2 Jack Draper's *lallang* fatigue is to be allowed to cut *lallang* in the Women's Camp again. T.P. Coe, late head of the Posts and Telegraphs, had a fit outside our hut. More rumours claim 2 landings in Java and also on Formosa, Amoy and Swatow.
- Oct. 3 It is suggested that extra food should be given to those changkollers who work mornings and afternoons (i.e. 6 hours) out on the Dunearn Road allotment.
- Oct. 4 It is said that a Peace Party now exists in Japan. There is a great water shortage again, our supply having been cut by two-thirds.
- Oct. 5 We are to be allowed to send off another Post Card of 25 words on October 15. We are cutting *lallang* in the Women's camp tomorrow.
- Oct. 6 Long, one of our drivers, has been returned by the Kempitai on a stretcher. His condition is not considered so bad as Perry's was though he is suffering badly from oedema (i.e. body swellings), but it is thought that his comparative youth may pull him through. Reading Symons's *The Quest for Corvo*.
- Oct. 7 Those still detained in Singapore are said to be in a bad way, though only Coulson has been given a sentence and he died a few hours later. The food given to Cherry, Middlebrook and Earle is mainly tapioca in Outram Road Jail where they now are. The Kempitai's favourite tortures were making the prisoner kneel on barbed wire and tying his legs to a ladder while his head was dipped in a bucket of water.

- Oct. 8 At a cost of \$7 I managed to obtain 4 oz of *gula melaka* and 1/5 of a kati of coffee from a Dunearn Road worker. The coffee I gave to my brother John.
- Oct. 9 Reading Oxtoby's *Israel's Religious Development* and Plato's *Republic* (in the Everyman Edition).
- Oct. 10 Today is the anniversary of the "Double Tenth." Home Guard and A.R.P. services in the United Kingdom are reported to be disbanded. A gang, which stole 35 lbs. of potatoes and 5 lbs. of chillis in the garden, have been caught.
- Oct. 11 Our postcards dated October 15 have been handed in for onward posting to our relatives. Tominara smacked the face of one of our hut, named Spragg, for whistling *Madame Butterfly*. An old man named Kennedy, aged 74, has died. His Jap mistress used to keep the Yorkshire Hotel at Ipoh.
- Oct. 12 Reading 2 of Conrad's books: *The End of the Tether* and *Heart of Darkness*. Dr. "D", who is accused of stealing sugar at the hospital, is to be tried by a camp court, the Judge being a real one (Moore), while Phear (Customs) is one of the 2 assessors. Both defence and prosecution officials will be legally qualified.
- Oct. 13 All huts adjoining the Women's Camp are to be put out of bounds. Reading McCallum Scott's *Beaten Tracks*, a Travel book.
- Oct. 14 The Southern Gardens will be put out of bounds from 8 pm. to 8 am., so it will be difficult for me to make contact with Fred at this time so as to exchange my cheroots.
- Oct. 15 Peters, late F.M.S. Railways, aged 50, has died here of dropsy and dysentery. There is again a shortage of water and nobody can have more than one bath a day.
- Oct. 16 There are 4 cases of typhus and several cases of dysentery in the hospital today.
- Oct. 17 The Japs have been conducting more A.R.P. exercises and sounding sirens. A Jew named Solomon Jonah has died of dysentery. There is news of Formosa, but what news is not known.
- Oct. 18 My latest weight is 12 stone 8 lbs, the lowest yet. Middlebrook, a Chinese cadet, in the M.C.S., has been returned by the Kempitai. He weighs only 57 lbs. (for a man over 6 foot) and was brought back on a stretcher. He is said to have little hope of recovery. Reading Astor and Rowntree's *British Agriculture*.
- Oct. 19 Middlebrook has died in his sleep; before he died he had had 10 minutes' talk with Fleming, M.C.S., before he fell asleep. Another internee named Parker has died. He has never recovered from the kicks and week's starvation over the rice store incident! Took the day off as I was feeling very tired. I received a 25 word postcard from my mother in which she said that my Uncle Stephen had died at Christmas 1943. I am re-reading Morton's *In the Steps of the Master*.
- Oct. 20 Garcia's 38th birthday, so we opened a small tin of Cheese Butter, 3½ ozs for 3! Reading Brett-Young's *Dr. Bradley Remembers*.

- Oct. 21 Several sirens were heard last night and this morning and lorry loads of Japs were seen moving about.
- Oct. 22 I did a further swap with Fred. Further rumours of landings in Sumatra and Formosa.
- Oct. 23 The Japs have now ordered a plank fence or palisade to be built between our camp and the road and we are threatened with the death penalty if we make any contacts with the outside world. Reading Adrian Bell's *Corduroy*.
- Oct. 24 There are further reports that Java and Formosa are both in our hands and 80,000 of our men have landed in Sumatra. We have had some very heavy rain and there have been floods in the garden. A thunderbolt made a hole in the ground outside our hut, No. 131. Four more victims of the Kempitai have been returned to us in an open lorry. They are Dr. Bowyer, Earle, Cherry and Penseler. The last 3 named appear to be the worse off. Osborne, aged 52, has died from a tumour and hardened arteries.
- Oct. 25 It is estimated that 8 men and 1 woman are still in the hands of the Kempitai. The Japs now want a wooden fence built right round the whole of the camp. An exercise book in Singapore now costs \$8, as \$1 is worth only 1 cent.
- Oct. 26 The bones and boots of 3 British soldiers have been dug up in the Southern garden. Poor Rendle, M.C.S., was brought back dead in a small coffin from the Kempitai. I can personally vouch that his normal height was well over 6 feet. He weighed only 56 lbs and was about 46 years old.
- Oct. 27 I attended the funeral service for Rendle, which was taken by the Bishop at 10 am. There is news of an attack by us on the Nicobar Islands in the Indian Ocean.
- Oct. 28 I took the day off as I was not feeling well. The Kempitai again appeared, and removed Cherry, who is very ill on a stretcher, from the hospital to "the Green House" (their office). The doctors prevailed on them not to take him back to Singapore by saying that if he was moved he would die. We have received 2,000 postcards from home and I received 2 from Salisbury, one dated March 1, 1944.
- Oct. 29 "Puss in Boots" promises early repatriation. An ex-warder named Mitchell, convicted of trading in the Black Market with the Sikhs, has threatened to report our "secrets" to the Japs if he is made to do solitary confinement. Dr. Bowyer, has had a turn for the worse since the visit of the Kempitai to Cherry. Reading Draper's *Conflict between Religion and Science 1873*.
- Oct. 30 "Puss in Boots" found 2 banned local newspapers in the fatigue lorry. Two Kempitai prisoners have returned, they are Birse (M.C.S.) and McIntyre.
- Oct. 31 Mitchell has now agreed to accept his punishment. Many Jap transport planes appear to be arriving in Singapore.
- Nov. 1 Dr. Bowyer is again seriously ill, beri-beri interfering with the

- operation of his kidneys. I now hear that he died this morning. Spragg did me a real good turn today by giving me 6 ozs. of palm oil free.
- Nov. 2 The Japs have now ordered the whole of a hill known as "the Old Men's Hill" to be cleared of *belukar* within a week but the reason for this is not clear. Another Kempitai victim has died. Penseler, whom we had all hoped was getting better, died suddenly this afternoon. Those still in Singapore are thought to include Scott, Calderwood (Dr.) and Curtis. The General is said to have saluted Penseler's coffin, but I do not agree with T.P. Coe's fatuous remark that "it was a fine gesture."
- Nov. 3 The Japs decreed a half-holiday for some reason. Reading Lewis Browne's *This Believing World* (Benn), about the various religions of the World.
- Nov. 4 All American Nationals in our camp were summoned to the Green House today and questioned by the local press.
- Nov. 5 All fatigue parties were given a holiday this morning to "check tools". The exception was our *lallang* fatigue which was kept busy cutting the *lallang* on the Old Men's Hill. At least we had a good view of what appeared to be a 48 bomber plane raid on the Naval Base. Between 10 am. and 10.30 am., big 4 engined planes did appear from the N.W. and W. directions and were fired at by Jap A.A. guns. The Japs at the Green House seemed to be very excited so, in all probability, it was the real thing after a wait of several years!¹⁸⁴
- Nov. 6 "D" a Eurasian, has been sentenced for blackmail and sodomy involving another Eurasian youth named "B" Rumours state that all schools and shops are shut as a result of yesterday's raid and there have been 300 casualties at the Naval Base. One Jap plane was shot down, it is claimed.
- Nov. 7 The Kempitai took Earle away again to Raffles College for a further half hour's questioning, though he had been due for a diet of soup and rice for the first time today. Six European nursing sisters from the Women's Camp have been allowed over in the Men's Camp for the first time to help with the nursing of those requiring special care. Our *lallang* fatigue has now completed the cutting of the *lallang* on the Old Men's Hill and have been awarded 2 days' holiday. Mrs. Nixon and Dunlop were returned to our camp by the Kempitai today. Mrs. Nixon was able to walk unaided, but Dunlop was on a stretcher. Both were in somewhat better condition than some others recently returned but that is not saying much. Reading Glover's *Jesus of History*.

184 It was only in November 1944 that a squadron of Mark VI Liberator bombers were made available for the Malayan front from a base at Jessore, near Calcutta. When the South-West monsoons made operations difficult from here after May 1945, all Liberators were moved to bases in Ceylon, where the lengths of the round trips varied between 2,500 and 3,500 miles depending on the weather. In August 1945 sorties were also made over Malaya from the Cocos Keeling Islands.

- Nov. 8 There was another air raid today, but only one plane was seen and only 4 A.A. shots were heard. Sirens were sounded and one bomb may have been dropped on Kallang Airport. A padre who accompanied a funeral into Singapore says that sirens were sounded there and that he heard the swish of a bomb but no explosion. An old man named Maxwell, aged 74, has died here.
- Nov. 9 It is said that Earle's return to Singapore was connected with some "trial" of Dr. Calderwood that is in progress. My weight is now 12 stone 11 lbs. Our fatigue have enjoyed its holiday, yesterday and today. There is a rumour that we are to revert to ordinary rations and to a 3 hour work day as before. People in Johore are said to be elated by the news of the Allied air raids on Singapore.
- Nov. 10 There has been another case of typhus, again in the hospital area, the victim being Neilson. Today is, I believe, the 1,000th day of our captivity.
- Nov. 11 Three mental patients, hitherto at Miyako, have been returned to our camp. Gardiner, an employee of United Engineers, and a naval draughtsman by profession, has been taken away, bag and baggage by the Japs. General Saito has guaranteed that he will be well treated. Reading Robert Graves's *Goodbye to All That*.
- Nov. 12 The Japs are now building a new road through the camp. Reading Walpole's *Vanessa*.
- Nov. 13 One of the three mental patients, a Miss Hacobian, who was recently returned from Miyako, died at 9 pm. on the day of her return. Gorsuch, a Kempitai victim, who had been at Miyako, has also returned to our camp. Draper's *lallang* fatigue, nearly got into serious trouble today. We had been cutting *lallang* in the women's camp and had made a bonfire of the cuttings in the middle of an area about an acre in size. We left at 12 noon but in the afternoon the fire spread along the ground to a wooden fence about 40 yards away and set it on fire. We were all recalled to the scene of the fire at 4.30 pm. and fully expected some severe physical punishment. Luckily the sentry recognised that it was an accident and that we were a hard working bunch, let us off with a reprimand and a long lecture on the dangers of fire.
- Nov. 14 The Japs are now calling for 200 volunteers to construct the new road through the camp. As our present rice ration does not allow for an evening meal of rice, our *lallang* fatigue has decided to join the road constructing gang for the extra 100 grammes of rice offered. Gorsuch is said not to be in too bad a state, but Mrs. Nixon is very weak. Our cell shared a tin of Tinned Chicken Curry.
- Nov. 15 A Miss Jackson, a missionary, has died. Reading Bott's *Eastern Flights* (in Penguin edition).
- Nov. 16 Today I started work with a changkoling gang making the road on the Old Men's Hill and earned the first extra 100 grammes of rice. It is rumoured that Manila has fallen to the Allies.
- Nov. 17 Unfortunately my arm is troubling me again. 10,500 letters have

- been distributed, some dated May 1944. I was very glad to receive a letter from my mother dated December 1943. We are to be allowed to send another 25 word Radio Message.
- Nov. 18 The Japs have gone hay-wire! They have declared a "Gardens Holiday", ordered 4 pigs to be killed for the Camp's consumption, brought in 4 extra sacks of rice for the benefit of Gardeners, Changkollers and Woodcutters and ordered extra tea for the Gardeners. But at 1 pm, the Japs decided the "holiday" was a mistake and ordered us all back to work this afternoon and tomorrow afternoon from 2 to 4 pm. to make up for any time lost! An old chap named Kitchen, aged 80, has died. He used to live at the Runnymede Hotel, Penang.
- Nov. 19 Reading Margaret Irwin's *The Bride*. I bought a sweet jar full of palm-oil for \$10.
- Nov. 20 Two internees have died (i) Manning, aged 50, from typhus and pleurisy, he used to work in the garden with Horace Hunter, my cell-mate; (ii) Rennie, aged 69. At 7 pm. a number of our planes flew over here and were fired at by the Jap A.A. guns. We saw the planes as they passed over us, flying slowly, serenely and apparently quite safely.
- Nov. 21 All remaining letters from us have now been sent on to Singapore for censoring and posting.
- Nov. 22 We have heard a few more A.A. bursts and we understand many more have been heard over Johore. Hundreds of "funk holes" have been dug along the Bukit Timah and Dunearn Roads and all Jap owned cars now carry camouflage nets over the roofs of the cars.
- Nov. 23 Darby (Customs) has received a Postcard dated January 1944 which mentions that the treatment of P.O.W.s by the Japanese has been raised in the House of Commons.
- Nov. 24 More A.A. Fire was heard over Johore at 6.30 pm. this evening. I have received another letter from home dated October 8, 1943. Two of the Corpse Collecting Lorry drivers have come into our camp after completion of a 2 years' prison sentence. They are Smith, who was in charge of their unit, and O'Neil. 3 others of the same unit, Davis, Logan and Bantur died during their sentence. Still another named Gow returned to our camp 2 months ago. Their "crime" had been "talking War News"!
- Nov. 25 Another internee, D. Fraser, aged 52, and a planter from Rasa, has died of typhus. Long, one of the returned lorry drivers, has been taken away by the Kempitai again. He was still weak and could only sit up, so he went on a stretcher. A Jap sentry gave his fatigues 84 cigarettes and 1 kati of *gula melaka* valued at \$30.
- Nov. 26 Long is still away. There are rumours of Allied bombings of Sentul and Sungei Besi, outside Kuala Lumpur.
- Nov. 27 The sirens went again between 12 pm. and 4 pm. Two more planters have died, "Tiger" Hughes, aged 47, from Kedah and Perak, from jaundice and pneumonia, and Lally Lee, aged 50, from Negri

- Sembilan, from asthma and debility.
- Nov. 28 There will be a full moon in 2 days and optimists are expecting more aerial activity. Another internee, Bobby Crawford of Derrick & Co., Singapore, was found dead in bed this morning and the cause of death was given as cerebral haemorrhage. Somebody had seen him vomiting in the lavatory at 1 am. last night outside his hut. Reading Walpole's *The Inquisitor*.
- Nov. 29 The Kempitai came back this morning to collect Long's "prison clothes". I am afraid he may have gone permanently. The rumour is that Scott has been given a 7 year prison sentence, presumably in Outram Road Jail, and Curtis and Dr. Calderwood 4 years each.
- Nov. 30 Today is, I believe, Churchill's 70th birthday. We have started cutting the *lallang* outside the Northern Area fences.
- Dec. 1 Rumour has it that there has been another air raid over Johore. Moss, a mental patient, a Eurasian, aged 43, had died here.
- Dec. 2 My weight is now 182 lbs. (i.e. 13 stone). Dr. Lawson, aged 47, who had been ill for most of the last 3 years, has died of a duodenal ulcer and pleurisy. Reading Dilys Powell's *Remember Greece*.
- Dec. 3 We had a roll call and a welcome rest from fatigues. Reading Walpole's *Joyful Delaneys*.
- Dec. 4 We are all hoping that something spectacular will happen on December 8 to mark the outbreak of the war. Fred has lost a month's "privileges" for accepting a cigarette lighter from a Malay lorry driver - this constitutes "private trading" it seems.
- Dec. 5 A Miss Jacobs has contracted typhus in the Women's Camp. This is apparently their first case of this illness.
- Dec. 6 About \$4,000 worth of Jewellery has been stolen in the Camp, but from whom I don't know. The Japs have ordered special A.R.P. Exercises and all of us have been ordered into our slit trenches at 6 pm. and 9 pm. Reading Adrian Bell's *By Road*.
- Dec. 7 I visited Dunearn Road for the first time to cut *lallang* there. There was an A.R.P. alarm at 7.20 am.
- Dec. 8 Several hundred Japs are encamped on the Golf Course nearby. Our great hopes of something happening ended in nothing happening. Reading Walpole's *A Prayer for My Son*. It is said that one of our original prisoners, has cancer of the throat. He has been hoarse for some weeks.
- Dec. 9 A Mrs. Lindsay, wife of a Prison Warder, has died of T.B. I have been lent \$50 by "Patchy" Green.
- Dec. 10 Turrell, ex-Chief Electrical Engineer at Johore Bahru, was taken away to Johore today.
- Dec. 11 Turrell returned to camp. 2,500 more letters have been received in the camp and there were 2 for my brother John. The Camp Ambulance has crashed in Lavender Street, Singapore, with a lorry killing 2 Japs inside, it is rumoured.
- Dec. 12 A Miner named Rainer, aged 56, has died after an operation for a prostate and kidney complaint. The Jews are carrying on a brisk

- black market business in the sale of *gula melaka*, coffee and palm-oil, a lorry load of these having come in unofficially. Prices are: coffee \$22 per kati, *gula melaka* \$18 per kati and palm oil \$8 per sweet jar full. Frampton got beaten up in a Jap kitchen this morning. For some time, he had apparently been feeding there unofficially or at least without their knowledge or permission.
- Dec. 13 Another 4,000 letters have come in, making, it is estimated, a total of 64,000 letters delivered to this camp alone. There has been no aerial activity for some days now. Reading Brett Young's *Portrait of a Village*.
- Dec. 14 We hear that there are 300 European and 1,000 Indian P.O.W.s in the River Valley Road camp in Singapore. The officers are paid from \$30 to \$70 per month and other ranks 35 cents a day. They get meat once a week and fish twice a week. Reading Brett Young's *The Black Diamond*.
- Dec. 15 J.S. Long, the ambulance driver who was taken away by the Kempitai on November 25 for the second time, was executed on November 27 we are told. The offence was "spying" in the course of his duties in bringing in food to the camp. Another death in this camp, this time it is R. Birnie, aged 52, of a stroke. His brother in the Customs & Excise is also in this camp.
- Dec. 16 We are making "preparations" for another Christmas in this camp. A drunken Jap beat up Geddes and Wiseman today.
- Dec. 17 It is reported that the Japs are exhuming the remains of their dead. From tomorrow, the Japs are ordering a twice daily roll call at 8 am. and 7.30 pm.
- Dec. 18 The first of the new Roll-Calls lasted from 7.45 to 8.20 am, and it said that there is to be a curfew outside from 7.30 pm. Reading H.G. Wells's *The Undying Fire*.
- Dec. 19 Not feeling too well with looseness of the bowels and a sick headache, so took the day off. I have bought an extra large supply of palm oil. 7,500 more letters have been received, some dated as late as July 1944. Tominara wishes to borrow a copy of *The Epic of Dunkirk*. Reading Brett Young's *The Crescent Moon*.
- Dec. 20 Many of the recently received postcards refer to the invasion of France in June 1944 and to houses having been bombed in the North Harrow and Muswell Hill London Areas.
- Dec. 21 The heavy rain gave us a welcome holiday from work. Reading Aldous Huxley's *Crome Yellow*.
- Dec. 22 F.L. Shaw (of our department) has been informed of the death of his son in the war. More rain has again stopped work. Reading Walpole's *John Cornelius*.
- Dec. 23 Bagot (Police) has been informed that he has lost both his son and his son-in-law in the war. Hope-Faulkner (Police) is also reported killed. 2,380 lbs of fish has just come in.
- Dec. 24 Mordecai, the Jewish Black Market "King" has just sent his girl friend in the Women's Camp a cake costing \$500 to make (it

- contains 40 eggs at \$5 each!). Harland has been taken to hospital with typhus.
- Dec. 25 Mordecai has invested \$65,000 of his gains in the Camp Fund. We had a good Christmas meal and plenty to eat for once. The Bishop appeared to be slightly intoxicated!
- Dec. 26 Bangkok is in the bag, so the rumours say! A half-holiday was given today for some reason; roll calls are becoming very slack as if the Japs were not very interested any longer.
- Dec. 27 J.R. Young, aged 46, has died following an operation for a liver and bile complaint. Reading Linklater's *Poet's Pub*.
- Dec. 28 A.E. Mitchell, aged 39, died suddenly in Hut 125 nearby, from heart failure and asthma.
- Dec. 29 A full moon but no visit from Fred for 2 nights for some reason. Reading *Books Reviewed* by J.C. Squire.
- Dec. 30 The "Battle for Malaya" has unbelievably started, according to a rumour that I don't believe! The Japs have been making records for propaganda purposes of New Year Messages spoken by our Men's Representative, Lady (Shenton) Thomas and Dr. Amstutz, the local head of the Anglo-Chinese Mission for Churches.
- Dec. 31 We started replanting our Tapioca patch. We look forward to a Happier New Year!
- 1945**
- Jan. 1 Being New Year's Day, we were given a full day's holiday. It is reported that the Japs are praying for Peace at their shrine. The Japs claim that the Siamese have "surrendered" Bangkok to them. New Year 1945 Prices of various commodities in Singapore are instructive: Bully Beef \$80 per tin; Eggs \$5 each (Duck's \$7.50); Chicken Curry \$50 a tin; Lifebuoy soap \$10 per tablet; Syces are paid \$700 per month; Motor Tyres are \$20,000 each; Cheroots are 25 to 50 cents each; (or 50 cents to \$1 each); Sardines are \$100 a tin; Buffaloes are worth \$15,000 each; a Rickshaw ride of one mile \$20; a small plate of Mah Mee \$20; Changkols \$180 each; shirts \$40 each; Long Trousers \$100; shorts \$40 each.
- Jan. 2 We had another half holiday and I exchanged food for cheroots with Fred. Reading Brett Young's *The City of Gold*.
- Jan. 3 Food is again in short supply and 300 men are required to clear another 6 acres of new land for cultivation.
- Jan. 4 Eggs are now selling at \$5 each which is equal to half a month's wages. The Japs are rumoured to have evacuated Bangkok by sea. The new area of 6 acres to be cultivated turns out to be half a mile outside the camp and on the way to the Bukit Timah Road.
- Jan. 5 "Patchy" Green went out to town on a sludge fatigue. He reports that people are growing tapioca on the tennis courts.
- Jan. 6 I partook in a good scrounge, buying 46 cheroots for 44 cents each and selling them for \$1 each, a profit of \$25. There is a rumour of an impending raid by the Japs on the camp to catch the Jewish Black Market Men.

- Jan. 7 An internee named Jepson has died here and 7 new Dutch Nationals have been brought in. Reading Clennell Wilkinson's *Prince Rupert the Cavalier*.
- Jan. 8 The 7 Dutchmen came from near Palembang in Sumatra which they left on January 2. Another lone bomber appeared over Singapore at 1.30 pm, but it is not certain whether it dropped any bombs, or was fired at.
- Jan. 9 A Jap Sergeant Major slapped the face of an "Asia Boy" at roll call, but the reason is not known. My weight is now 13 stone 4 lbs. (186 lbs). This is up 4 lbs. We were cutting *lallang* in the Women's Camp all day. Reading Somerset Maugham's *The Trembling of a Leaf*.
- Jan. 10 Another Allied plane passed over at 12 noon. Eight more internees have come in. Most of them have been working for the Japs in some capacity and include Messrs. Foster, Auten, Corner, Holtum, Birtwistle and Snodgrass. Another internee named Edmett, aged 68, has died here.
- Jan. 11 We had a good view of a big raid on Singapore between 10 and 10.30 am. There may have been 50 or more planes taking part, but I saw at least 12 myself, including one which seemed to be coming down over Seletar Aerodrome. The raids were directed against Kallang and Seletar aerodromes and bombs may also have been dropped on the United Engineers Building and Tank Road. The Jap General claims that 7 out of 70 planes were shot down.
- Jan. 12 There was another Air Raid alert including sirens and whistles, but no plane was seen or heard. I bought 2 issues of Red Palm-oil.
- Jan. 13 It is rumoured that Thorneycroft's ship yard at Tanjong Rhu near Katong was bombed recently. Reading Somerset Maugham's *The Round Dozen*.
- Jan. 14 Two more bombers came over at 12 noon and may have dropped bombs on the Naval Base. Scott, a Singapore Building Inspector, has died here. Reading Morton's *Through the Lands of the Bible*.
- Jan. 15 The seven Dutch internees kept in the Guard Room have left again taking 7 days' rations with them. Where may they be going?
- Jan. 16 The Camp have bought 2 goats and 2 kids to provide milk for the sick. They have cost \$3,000!
- Jan. 17 A doctor has examined my arm for thrombosis and is to make a report. The Camp Committee has decided that when an internee dies, his effects are to be sold by auction and the proceeds credited to his estate. There is a story that the remains of an Allied bomber shot down are on view on the Esplanade in Singapore.
- Jan. 18 Reading Brett Young's *Young Physician*. I have had 2 S.C. History Papers to mark as part of an unofficial Camp S.C. Examination. We were cutting *lallang* in a New Area outside the North Gate of the Camp today.
- Jan. 19 The Bishop is putting forward his name for election as our Hut Representative. Farrer, a Miyako Hospital attendant, has died after

- having 3 operations.
- Jan. 20 The Japs are giving us a half holiday – to celebrate the taking over of the Camp by the Military Command!
- Jan. 21 Poor frail Mrs. Graham White, wife of the Archdeacon, has died of T.B. General Saito has taken away 12 of our ducks from the duck farm.
- Jan. 22 The Capitol Flats in the centre of Singapore have collapsed because of a fire, we are told. Reading Forster's *Passage to India*.
- Jan. 23 I went out on a fatigue to Changi and saw C.U. Stafford, a Taiping Planter. There is a rumour that the Americans have captured Saigon.
- Jan. 24 In the Hut elections, the Anti-Clericals won, Human getting 59 and the Bishop 44 votes. I have just had my 25th boil. Only 2,200 out of 5,000 P.O.W.s who went to Siam in one group have returned, we are told. The sirens went at 12 midnight, but nothing further happened. The troops who have just returned from Siam say that they lived on the job of building a railway. There was no cover from the elements or from mosquitoes, no bandages or medicines, but the dying and the sick were segregated from the others. The Siamese population were friendly but food was just rice and nothing else.
- Jan. 25 My latest boil is causing the glands to swell so I had to take a holiday all day. Re-reading Maugham's *Ah King*.
- Jan. 26 There was an air raid at 3.15 am. this morning, the sound of a heavy crump followed by sirens. The Japs have ordered A.R.P. Exercises from 2 pm. today to Noon tomorrow, so we shall be in and out of our slit trenches. Reading Somerset Maugham's *The Summing Up* and Rose Macaulay's *Going Aboard*.
- Jan. 27 A third day's holiday, but the boil is better. There is a rumour of a big task force landing in North Sumatra, possibly at Medan.
- Jan. 28 Reading Somerset Maugham's *Of Human Bondage*. More talk of landings at Medan and also Saigon.
- Jan. 29 I returned to work today. The Jap Guard Commander was hit on the nose with a bottle and had to have 9 stitches as the result of a drunken brawl with another Jap and the wounded Jap is now in hospital.
- Jan. 30 Two more planes were reported overhead during an alert at 12 noon. 178 Allied planes are reported to have bombed Palembang.
- Jan. 31 The Japs are calling for particulars of all men over 65 years of age, invalids, and those with families here.
- Feb. 1 There was a spectacular raid today from 11 to 12 noon. About 90 bombers came over in close formation and in groups of 3 to 18 at a time. The target was obviously the Naval Base from which a huge pall of smoke and dust arose after the bombing. Jap ships are said to be anchored there. Jap fighters and A.A. fire appeared to make little difference to the planes' majestic fly over.
- Feb. 2 A "reccy" plane came over us at 12 noon. There is a rumour that Kluang in Johore was also bombed yesterday. I bought a *kati* of coffee for \$30 in the Black Market.

- Feb. 3 Another "reccy" plane came over at 11 am. Reading Somerset Maugham's *The Mixture as Before*.
- Feb. 4 A Tamil was beaten up at the Guard Room for speaking to us over the fence. The Camp have been ordered to erect ten more huts on concrete sites by the end of this month. The huts are said to be for 800 to 1,000 more Eurasians and Jews. But there is also a rumour that we may be moved to Tioman Island off the East Coast of Johore!
- Feb. 5 Another "reccy" plane flew over us at 1 pm. Reading Brett Young's *They Seek a Country* and also Andre Maurois's *Dickens*. My weight is now 182 lbs (13 stone), down 4 lbs on my December weight.
- Feb. 6 A 20% cut is to take place in our rice ration on February 10. Paley, the "Asia Boy" and "Puss in Boots" have organised a new Black Market ramp, selling khaki cloth. Shirts will cost \$40, shorts \$40, long trousers \$100. Reading Brett Young's *This Little World*.
- Feb. 7 A Jap paper reports that a relief ship is on the way from Japan for Hongkong, Saigon and Singapore. A Eurasian named Darbyshire, aged 24, has been accidentally killed through being buried under earth while digging at the Green House (the Jap Office).
- Feb. 8 I have a headache and sore throat, so took the afternoon off. Tanaka, a Jap sentry, searched the Red Cross lorry when it came in today.
- Feb. 9 Paley, the "Asia" Boy black market king, has taken delivery of 20 tons of Red Palm oil at \$520 a tin and will make a profit of about \$1,000 by resale to us. I bought 7 jam jarfuls for \$7 a time. There is news that the Russians have crossed the River Oder and are approaching Berlin. It is also reported that Goebels has made a speech against Communism and there has been an Allied landing at Belawan-Deli in Sumatra.
- Feb. 10 Another "reccy" plane was over at 12 Noon and some machine gun fire was heard. Tomorrow, there is to be a special Roll Call by Nationality. A new daily rations schedule has been decided upon — Non-workers 250 grammes, Medium workers 300 grammes, Heavy fatigue workers 500 grammes. There is to be an extra 150 grammes for Changkollers and *Lallang* cutters.
- Feb. 11 Another "reccy" plane came over at 11 am. during roll call. Haslar of our hut has died of T.B. at the age of 55 years.
- Feb. 12 The Japs again warn us of a grave rice shortage which may mean further reduced rations in the next few months, indeed, the supply may cease altogether. However, 10 tons of maize have come in recently. Reading Andre Maurois's *Ariel* — a life of Shelley. All internees who have over \$100 have been ordered by the Japs to pay it into a Jap Bank in Singapore.
- Feb. 13 Another "reccy" plane flew over at 11 am. Today is the first day of the issue of the extra 150 grammes of rice for heavy fatigue workers.
- Feb. 14 There is a rumour that Manila has fallen to the Allies and a Jap known as "the Jockey of Death" tells us that his countrymen have

- evacuated Penang! There was another Air alert at 2 pm. but no plane was seen. Reading Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*.
- Feb. 15 Third Anniversary of the Fall of Singapore. I sold a tin of Bully beef to Paley for \$75. Six "reccy" planes came over at 1 pm. but there was no Jap A.A. Fire. Apparently our hut is \$400 short of the sum payable by those who have over \$100 in their possession, to the Jap Bank. So a levy of \$3 to \$4 is to be made from every internee in Hut 131.
- Feb. 16 The *lallang* fatigue worked with the changkollers on the Golf Course. A large area is to be cultivated and tapioca produced from it. The bribe for quick completion of the job is 10 tins of red palm oil! The petrol ration for the Camp lorry is to be cut to 40 gallons from 800 gallons! So how will we receive the Jap rations of vegetables, etc, from Singapore? The answer is that no further supplies of vegetables, at least, will be sent in.
- Feb. 17 We are now told that there is no truth in the Penang rumour of February 14. 3 more "reccy" planes came over at 12 Noon.
- Feb. 18 A Police Inspector named Smith is in trouble because he "pretended" to cut a Jap's throat. Reading Maugham's *The Narrow Corner*.
- Feb. 19 The Sirens went again but no plane was spotted. Mrs. Mulvaney is reported to have become slightly deranged over the news of impending "peace".
- Feb. 20 A few mysterious crumps were heard but no planes were seen. Reading Fosdick's *Guide to the Understanding of the Bible* and Maugham's *Don Fernando*.
- Feb. 21 General Montgomery is said to have broken through the German lines and is driving towards Westphalia and Munster.
- Feb. 22 It rained all morning, so no work was done. The Penang rumour of an Allied landing is again in the news.
- Feb. 23 Dr. Evans, the Men's Representative, was called in to a Jap binge and informed that the British and Japanese were now good friends again!
- Feb. 24 The latest rumour is that Jap forces have retired from Penang to Bukit Mertajam. This is most unlikely. There was another big Air Raid by 120 Allied Bombers between 10 am. and 12 Noon on various parts of Singapore. The parts bombed were Kallang Aerodrome, the docks, the area between the Customs House and Pasir Panjang and oil installations. As a result, the sky was filled with thick black clouds of smoke. No Jap fighters were seen and no Jap A.A. fire was heard at all.
- Feb. 25 One "reccy" plane came over at 11 am. The fires started in Singapore are still giving out smoke.
- Feb. 26 Two more "reccy" planes came over at 11 am. Fires are still said to be burning in the Tanjong Pagar area of the docks. Reading Middleton Murry's *Between Two Worlds*, and Brett Young's *Christmas Box*.
- Feb. 27 It is said that 900 Dutch Nationals on Pulau Damar Laut are constructing a Dry Dock at Jurong on the West Coast of Singapore

- Island. Several Jap Warships are said to be at the base and there was a lot of A.A. fire heard when a "reccy" plane came over at 11 am.
- Feb. 28 The sirens went at 1 am. last night and one explosion was heard. Scott, who has been a long time with the Kempitai, has been temporarily returned to our camp suffering from beri-beri.¹⁸⁵ He is said to have been given a sentence of 5 years' imprisonment and Dr. Calderwood, another of their victims, has been given 7 years. There is no news of a third man, Curtis. The Japs are now insisting that we work on Wednesday afternoons which up to now have been half holidays.
- March 1 St. David's Day. Two "reccy" planes came over at 11 am. but there was no A.A. response. I bought a further 5 lots of Red Palm oil from Paley - total cost came to \$40.
- March 2 General Montgomery's forces are said to have passed Hanover and are on their way to Berlin. 52 Allied bombers came over at 11 am. and there was much A.A. fire heard over the Naval Base, but we did not hear many bombs exploding.
- March 3 We heard a series of mysterious explosions and firing at 2 am. last night. 100 men are being conscripted for wood haulage because of the presumed petrol shortage.
- March 4 My weight is 181 lbs. (12 stone 13 lbs), down 1 lb. An internee aged 74 and named Wallace has died here. I received a portion of red palm oil from a Dunearn Road "scrounge". I am told that Tominara has asked for a copy of my book *A Guide to Careers for Schools*. Luckily, my name does not appear on the cover. The Japs have bought \$36,000 worth of changkols, at \$180 per changkol! The funds came from "borrowed" Camp Fund sources. Turkey and Egypt are said to have declared war on the Axis powers. The Japs have called for a return of all gold, silver and diamonds held in the camp.
- March 5 Two friends Noel Rees (Education) and Sam Hall (Customs) have entered our Area kitchen as workers. They replace Jennings, Oswald, and Dr. Beatty who were sacked after only 2 days' trial for unsatisfactory work. I saw in Kobiashi's garden the remains of a Red Cross

185 Robert Scott and the staff of the Government Information Services had left Singapore on the "Giang Bee" on February 11th. (See footnote on page 118-119). In view of his past trend of anti-Japanese propaganda in various parts of the Far East, the Japs naturally treated him, when captured, as a diagrams enemy, returned him to Singapore in handcuffs, and kept him in solitary confinement for 8½ months before interning him in Changi Jail. On October 10th 1943 "the Double Tenth" he had the dubious honour of being the first to be arrested". Once again, he spent long months in close confinement and suffered terrible sufferings at the hands of the Kempitai, as well as contracting dysentery, oedema and scabies. As a consequence, his weight fell from 14 stone 6lbs to 7 stone 10lbs. When he appeared to be on the verge of death, the Kempitai returned him to Sime Road Camp on February 28th 1945. Nevertheless, by the capitulation, he was again able to walk thanks to the extra nourishment he was able to buy in the camp black market. In March 1946, he gave evidence at the trial of the Singapore Kempitai and actually attended the hanging of their chief, Lieutenant Colonel Sumika. Later Robert Scott enjoyed a distinguished Career in the Foreign Service, from which he retired with a Knighthood-He died in 1983.

Packing Case which had once contained 'Victory' Brand Cigarettes. Bibles are now being sold at \$60 each for their cigarette paper value. The parsons say they have no objection provided we have read the bibles first.

Certain gardens in the Adam Road area and occupied by Japs are to be cultivated the produce being presumably for Jap consumption only.

- March 6 We started changkolling in the North Gate area. Reading Shanks's *Rudyard Kipling*.
- March 7 There is more talk of repatriation and of the influx of still more internees. We had a half holiday, for which I was very thankful.
- March 8 MacIntosh (Posts and Telegraphs) has received a Post Card from his wife from a camp in Sumatra in which she says that she and Mrs. Gilmour (Customs) are well, but a Mrs. McClennan and a Mrs. Gurr are both dead. Reading Kipling's *Limits and Renewals*.
- March 9 The Jap Rice Rations have again been revised and reduced. They are now: Heavy workers 300 grammes (down 200 from 500 grammes), Medium Workers 250 grammes, Non-workers and Women 200 grammes. Tominara says that 24 extra acres of tapioca must be under cultivation by August. But how is this work to be done under the latest scale of rations? An internee named Lind has died here.
- March 10 A Mrs. Curwen had her face slapped by a Jap. Reason not known. Three cows have been "donated" to us by the Tokio Red Cross. Each has cost \$15,000 and the cost has been "lent" by our Camp Funds. The Japs say that all rice stocks will have been finished by August and from that time on we shall have to depend entirely on the tapioca that we are planting now. Reading Sampson's *Concise Cambridge History of English Literature*.
- March 11 Gilfillan, the father of a half-Jap family from Ipoh, has died. The new semi-starvation rations began today. It rained all day, so thank goodness, there were no fatigues. We hear that Mrs. Warren (Customs) was hauled out of bed by a drunken Jap.
- March 12 There was another raid by 25 planes on the dock area and possibly the Naval Base too, and there were a few fires caused by incendiaries, perhaps. A postcard has been received by someone and is dated September 1944. It says, "All over here, well." We had a very thin maize *kanji* for breakfast.
- March 13 A Greek shopkeeper, named Bravura had died here. We have been cutting *lallang* on the side of the hill near to the road leading to the North Gate.
- March 14 Our menu is now the worst ever: Breakfast consists of a thin maize *kanji* and tea which we have at 8 am. (really 6 am!); Lunch is a Vegetable soup and dried rice at 1 pm. (really 11 am); Tea consists of a spoonful of Spinach, a bun and tea which we have at 6 pm. (really 4 pm.). We get nothing after that, except a sip of coffee made and paid for by ourselves. Some islands between Japan and Formosa are said to have been captured.

- March 15 The Russians are said to have entered Berlin. The Japs now promise to return the money confiscated at "the Double Tenth." It will be used to purchase the 3 cows that the Tokio Red Cross now say they will not be paying for. Apparently their previous offer to pay for them has been withdrawn.
- March 16 "Patchy" Green and I have started our own private garden. It is rumoured that Jap troops are moving northwards from Johore Bahru.
- March 17 The *kanji* was very weak again today and the cooks received plenty of complaints. Rangoon is now said to have fallen to us.
- March 18 Extra rations are promised for the heavy fatigue workers. Measures are also being taken to catch the thieves who have been stealing potatoes, tapioca and shallots from the camp gardens. The women have been ordered to make Military Caps for Jap troops and they have protested. A great battle is going on at Kustrin in East Prussia between the Russians and the Germans.
- March 19 The Gardens have been put out of bounds after 5 pm. Mrs. Curwen has been released from confinement at the Green House, the Jap H.Q. in this camp.
- March 20 I visited the dentist and had a stopping. There are more rumours of a German capitulation. We also hear that we may expect a fresh influx of internees, but whether they are Jews or Eurasians or from Bangkok or Sumatra, nobody knows.
- March 21 Some new huts have to be completed by tomorrow and 5 other huts adjacent to the Women's Camp have also been evacuated. We wonder who is coming in.
- March 22 There is a rumour of more Red Cross parcels arriving within a month. One "reccy" plane came over at 10 am. The Huts are now ready for the internees, if any.
- March 23 There is a rumour of an American landing in Tokio Bay and at Sandakan in Borneo, but this is most unlikely.
- March 24 Red Cross parcels, food, medicine and clothing are reported to have arrived already! We hear also of a 4 point landing in British North Borneo and of a German collapse in Europe on March 16.
- March 25 About 500 men and 200 women, mainly Jews (but there are some Eurasians) came in today. They were called out of bed at 4 am. this morning and bring in several items of news and rumours. Germany, they say, has capitulated and Japan is fighting alone, and there has been an American Commando attack off the S.E. Coast of Kyushu Island in Japan, so the local paper of March 24 admits. They also say that the British bombing of Singapore has been very accurate, and that Noone, the Aborigines' Warden is still alive and active in Perak.¹⁸⁶ Pork costs \$40 a kati in Singapore Market, "Semangat" cigarettes are \$20 for 20, and Coconuts are \$3.50 each.
- March 26 The Jews, presumably the new arrivals, are defecating and spitting in

186 "Pat Noone did not survive the war. It is now supposed that he was murdered by a Sakai who coveted his Sakai wife."

the wrong places already and will need educating! Tominara tells us that he will be returning to China soon. It is said that each old internee will receive a whole Red Cross parcel each (only the second ever, if this is indeed true!) and the remainder will share one parcel between five.

- March 27 A sentry caught me reading an Indian Independence (English) version of the paper, but there were no repercussions. I visited the dentist and had a second stopping. The Jews are offering \$1,000 ("banana" or Jap) for one Red Cross parcel and I sold M.P. Selfe, who was at school with me, a \$3 copy of Shakespeare's Works (in India Paper) for \$55. He wants it for cigarette paper!
- March 28 Coney (Customs), who was out at St. Andrew's School to fetch parcels today, told me he had heard that my brother Gerwyn was safe and well in Changi again. 83 more Jews came in today, including the widow of Raja Musa, the latter having died. Clarke (Taiping), Lesslar (Taiping) and Parry of Ipoh¹⁸⁷ are also reported to be dead. My loyal syce, Nair,¹⁸⁸ has been sentenced to 7 years' imprisonment in Taiping jail for some offence not known. Miss La Brooy has married the Jap Perak Propaganda Chief whose name is Banno. Clifford School, Kuala Kangsar, my old school, is now a Jap Officers' Barracks.
- March 29 I sold my spare shirt for \$40 to Clarke. More internees are expected soon but have not arrived yet. The Eurasians who came in recently say that conditions in their jungle internment camp at Bahau in Negri Sembilan were terrible and that many died of malaria. We are very free of that illness here.
- March 30 Good Friday — we had a full day's holiday. Sirens were heard at 2 am. last night followed by explosions, flares and fires. These fires were visible all night in at least two places. Coney tells me that the railway fare from Singapore to Ipoh, Perak, is now \$650 and that he is told that his small typewriter has been sold at Parit Buntar for \$2,500! 91 more internees have come in from Penang and they include only 26 men. They were put into a closed railway van where they spent 4 days with only 7 loaves to eat.
- March 31 The latest sensation is the fencing off of 3 huts (Nos. 123–125) near the top kitchen of North area. As Germany is said to have capitulated on March 22 they could be for Germans. Among the new arrivals are the two Ritchie brothers from Penang. The fires caused by the raid of March 30 are still burning. I sold another shirt for \$60. After promising us another holiday for tomorrow the Japs have now cancelled the promise.

187 The news of Parry's death, at least, was incorrect and in 1954 I had pleasure in appointing my former pupil, Headmaster of the newly opened Government English School on Pulau Bukom, the Singapore Oil Terminal.

188 Nair survived the war and both he and his wife worked for me for some years after I returned to Malaya. On his return to Kuala Kangsar during the war, Nair was denounced and sentenced for working for me. When he was freed from jail in 1945, he sought out and killed the informer.

- April 1 Easter Sunday. Over 1,000 new internees have now arrived here in the last few days. We are still waiting for the Red Cross parcels to be distributed.
- April 2 Those at present occupying the 3 huts, Nos. 123, 124, 125, have to be out of their huts by tomorrow evening. Will the new occupants be Germans or P.O.W.s brought in to cultivate the land? Gordon Graham, a Perak Planter, aged 74, has died here.
- April 3 The 350 internees from the 3 huts have now been re-distributed elsewhere, 13 of whom are in our hut. We still await our parcels; the delay suggests that they may be kept back as our "iron" rations. Clark gave me \$700 to keep for him.
- April 4 We had a half holiday and I used it to complete the planting up of our private garden. The 3 huts are now vacant but no new arrivals have come as yet. The half holiday today has been given to us by Tominara for some reason unknown.
- April 5 A Jap Guard of 50 men has occupied the vacant huts. We are to be allowed to send a Radio Message of 10 words!
- April 6 According to the local press, the Japs are expecting an invasion of the Japan Mainland soon. It was a very hot day and we spent a very hard time cutting *belukar* out on the Bukit Timah Road. A sentry called "Pilfering Pete" kept us out there until 4.50 pm. Lieut. Suzuki has offered us one Red Cross parcel between 40, then he changed it to one between 12. Our Men's Representative has turned down both these "offers" and suggested one parcel between 4, and a further whole parcel per man within 4 months. Lieut. Suzuki refused this and told the Men's Representative that he may not approach the General direct. Meanwhile the Camp Committee has instructed the M.R. to demand *all* the parcels and nothing less.
- April 7 It was another very hot day. I bought 4 more units of Red Palm Oil for \$32. Our M.R. has had a "friendly" interview with Lieut. Suzuki and is now to be allowed to address a letter to the General about the Red Cross parcels. The General will be here tomorrow for "Rescript Day". We hear that Korean guards in No. 123 hut beat up a Sikh sentry for hitting a Jew internee and referring to the Koreans as "Orang China" (i.e. Chinese)! Coffee now costs \$50 a kati.
- April 8 There is to be another cut of 6% in the Rice Rations. My weight is now 172 lbs. (12 stone 4 lbs.), a drop of 9 lbs., and my lowest weight ever. "Tiny Smith" in our hut, who used to weigh 17 stone, is down from 12 st. 9 lbs. to 12 st. 0 lbs. The General had a long interview with our M.R. in the orchard (outside the Jap Office). There are more reports of activity off Kyushu, Japan.
- April 9 I was out at Bukit Timah again with "Pilfering Pete" cutting grass. Lieut. Suzuki has at last agreed "in principle" to give us one parcel each. We have won our fight, but it is said that the "Jap foreign office" had decided otherwise only 2 days ago. They have now apparently changed their minds.
- April 10 I was elected to a Hut Committee of 3 to decide what rations were

to be awarded to the Sick and Incapacitated – they do not figure in the Jap ration scheme. Anything above their basic low ration would have to come from the rations of “workers” and the Committee planned to deny the extra rations to any “sick” person who did not try to get well soon by lying up in his hut. This led to a clash between myself and the Bishop, over the Rev. Hayter, who was officially “sick”, but was seen half a mile away from the hut. When we threatened to withdraw his extra rations because he did not lie up in his hut, he was back on the “fit” list next day and started fatigues immediately. The Americans are said to have reached Cassel and Erfurt (in Hesse?).

- April 11 It was another very hot day. The German army is said to be breaking up. Korean troops have given us some surplus rice and soup, a good omen.
- April 12 As a result of our confrontation with the Bishop, the Area Committee has now ended the compassionate ration system, which is a pity for the genuine “sick”. A Malay sentry exchanged 10 hen eggs for a shirt. Hen eggs now cost \$8 each and duck’s eggs \$10. Another “reccy” plane came over. We were out cutting *lallang* at Bukit Timah.
- April 13 Chapman, from our hut, was caught near the wire last night, by a night patrol, trading with the Malay sentries. Chapman was made to kneel all night but was set free at 12 Noon today. The Malay sentry was beaten up and tied to a tree all day. Tominara said he was “loathe” to report the incident to the Kempitai.
- April 14 The latest news is that the Red Cross parcels are to be distributed tomorrow. It is rumoured that Franklin Roosevelt has died.
- April 15 The latest Parcel News is – 50 men and 30 women are to parade in the Orchard and be photographed receiving their Red Cross parcels, but the parcels are then to be returned to the Store! We saw some Indian troops passing the camp yesterday. The General also came here but there are still no parcels. A Singapore Warder, named Bolton, has died here.
- April 16 Poor Trevor Hughes, aged 43, died last night. He had diabetes and also T.B. I attended his funeral. A supply of insulin might have saved his life.
- April 17 Poor Trevor Hughes had become mentally unbalanced a fortnight ago. Mrs. Mulvaney and Mrs. Fowler are said to be in a similar state. British forces, according to rumour, landed near Soerabaya in Java on about April 10.
- April 18 The Americans are said to have landed 1,300,000 men on Kyushu in Japan. I was given a new pair of khaki long trousers for *lallang* cutting.
- April 19 8 of the new Jewish internees were forced to take an Izal bath today – one had not bathed for 47 years as he “did not wish to catch cold”, so he said. Many of these men have crabs, lice, scabies and sores.

- April 20 The Japs have called for the names of all Motor Engineers by 9 am. I took Mrs. Edge some soap in the Women's Camp.
- April 21 The Jap "banana money" is rapidly losing its purchasing value. The notes are so called as they have a picture of a banana tree on each note. *Gula melaka* is now \$80 per kati, sugar \$20 a kati, coffee \$60 per kati. The Japs have now promised to issue the Red Cross parcels tomorrow. There is a rumour of a peace conference to be held at Cairo to be attended by Jap representatives.
- April 22 Having made all arrangements to distribute the parcels today, the Japs have now postponed all to tomorrow! The Japs are said to be annoyed that a ship carrying Jap human remains back to Japan has been sunk.
- April 23 St. George's Day. Relatives met each other in the Women's Camp from 9-12 and 2-4 pm. At last we received one Red Cross (Canadian) parcel each; though some received British parcels dated May 1942! The raisins and prunes were mildewed but cheerfully eaten! The General said that the Jap ship which brought the parcels was sunk on its return journey. A tin of milk (Klim) now costs \$850 each! Butter is \$600 a tin and one whole Red Cross parcel was sold here for \$225! We had a whole day's holiday.
- April 24 Hut elections resulted in a Capt. Thomas getting 68 votes and Human 40 votes. I really rejoyed eating a 5 oz slab of Canadian Chocolate in 15 minutes and mildewed raisins in our vegetable soup.
- April 25 The Japs removed 58 of our parcels to the Green House. This was followed by a request from Suzuki to our M.R. that he offered the General a parcel too! The M.R. had no sooner agreed to this "suggestion", than he was asked to allow the 57 local Jap staff to receive one each too! The Kempitai came and took away Cherry and Earle to the Green House, but there is no further news. American Old Gold Cigarettes are selling at \$100 for 20.
- April 26 The Japs were exercising 6 Jap tanks along the road outside today. Our sentry named Tokunaga caught a *musang* as we were burning *lallang* on a hill beyond the blockhouse. Cherry and Earle have been taken away to stand trial in Singapore and to be given a sentence. They are also after McIntyre.
- April 27 Neomani, another Jap sentry, is reported to have refused to accept his Red Cross parcel "as it belongs to the P.O.W.s". The Japs have announced drastic cuts in the wood to be supplied to the kitchens from tomorrow and some take this as a sign that the end of the war is in sight. Harper Ball has sold his ring to a Visiting Korean for \$900, and finds himself in trouble with the Camp Police!
- April 28 The shortage of firewood prevented the poor hungry internee making coffee last night as there was no hot water available. The wood consumption has, in fact, been cut by 60% and what there is, is brought in from Scudai in Johore, we are told. Petrol now costs \$130 a gallon in Singapore. We hear that some Jap Colonel has protested at seeing semi-naked bare-footed internees hauling

- engineless lorries bringing in wood to our camp. Meanwhile using electric lights in our hut has been banned.
- April 29 Tenno Heika, the Jap Emperor's birthday, but there was no holiday for us. In the "Kita" area elections, Dr. Cameron got 251 votes, Belgrave 214 and Harper Ball 58 votes. The Cossacks are said to have entered Berlin. I drew only one razor blade in a Red Cross distribution but shared $\frac{1}{2}$ a tin of salmon with my cell mates.
- April 30 In the revised area elections, Belgrave got 290 votes and Dr. Cameron 214 votes. The Russians are said to have entered Berlin on April 22. I have put my name down for consideration when more kitchen staff are required.
- May 1 Kobiashi is reported (and I don't believe it!) as saying that $\frac{1}{4}$ million American troops are on Kyushu Island, Japan. I have resigned from Jack Draper's fatigue and joined a "Sanitary Squad", which I hope will be a little less strenuous for my arm.
- May 2 I started work on the sanitary squad. Draper's fatigue is now down to 6 men only as Curtis, one of the squad, has collapsed. Steps are, however, being taken to raise its number to 24. Rowswell (Posts and Telegraphs) has died of cancer of the throat. He had just time to read his mail before he died.
- May 3 The wood fatigue parties have now been merged with a gang of 300 changkollers who are planting tapioca on various hills outside the camp. They are under the control of one Tokunaga.
- May 4 7,000 letters have arrived and are dated October 1944. In the Camp elections for Men's Representative, Collinge got 1,700 votes and Dr. Evans 700 votes. Tokunaga has "presented" his fatigue party with 3 pigs and 80 lbs. of vegetables out of the Camp Garden.
- May 5 Somebody has given the Japs 21 days to get out of somewhere! Cheroots are now selling at \$2.50 each! Suzuki is said to have told the hospital staff that we would all be out of here by May 21 and that we will each receive a Red Cross parcel as our "iron rations". An internee named Caucher, aged 71, and late of the Boustead Institute, has died.
- May 6 We hear that Tominara has told the Dutch Nazi, Osterhaus, that the War is over, that Molotov is in London, Mussolini has been captured by rebels on Lake Como, a Conference is going on at San Francisco and the whole of Germany is over run. There is also a rumour that our rice rations are to be increased by 50%. Some cows have arrived in the camp but we are to pay their train fare of \$5,000!
- May 7 There is great optimism in the camp regarding possible peace feelers by the Japs, and there is a story that personnel to run the essential services may be sent out from this Camp very soon. Shared half a tin of ham with Horace Hunter to celebrate.
- May 8 John's birthday - he went out by lorry to Scudai in Johore to collect firewood. My weight is now 167 lbs. (11 stone 13 lbs.), that is, down 51 lbs. or a stone in 2 months! So I consumed a small tin of sardines, opened a 1 lb. tin of butter and ate $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of *gula melaka*.

- May 9 Death of poor frail Archdeacon Graham White, aged 61, after an operation for duodenal ulcer. He was a good man. The new doctors in "Kita" area are Dr. Scrimgeour, Dr. Duff and Dr. Mookdil (an Indian Visiting Doctor). Letters dated September 1944 from Australia have been released to us. There is now a story that we leave for India on May 21 or 24!
- May 10 "Ginger" Gore, a Kedah planter, aged 53, has died from bladder trouble. I received another postcard from Salisbury dated September 1944. There is a report that at a Conference of 37 Nations at San Francisco an ultimatum has been sent to Japan: "Give in, or take the consequences!"
- May 11 Death of an old planter named Loveridge. A great revolution has taken place in the kitchen. Belgrave, our Area Representative, has sacked the kitchen chef named Gee and his deputy Harris for cooking for their own consumption $\frac{1}{2}$ pint of white rice when they were ill (and presumably not working). Capt. Clements is now in temporary charge of the kitchen. Mrs. Trevor Hughes, Mrs. Osterhaus and others have been told, so the story goes, that we all leave for India on May 21.
- May 12 A Mrs. Siddons, a Eurasian in close touch with the Japs says that 4 ships are coming to take us to India. We have not seen any Allied planes for a month and aerial activity has practically ceased. We wonder why. On the other hand, there is great news of a German Capitulation at Rheims at 2.45 pm. on May 7. We hear, too, that Hitler is dead and the Allies have made landings at Tarakan, in Borneo and in North Sumatra. We are to be allowed to send another 25 word Radio Message to Australia. Jack Draper has been fined \$10 for sending sweet potatoes and sword beans to his wife in the Women's Camp. It is not clear whether the vegetables were from his own garden or from the Camp Garden, probably the former.
- The Jap daily Rations, as on May 8, 1945, were as follows:—
Rice 3.1 oz; Maize 2.0 oz; Green Veg 7.0 oz; Salt .50 oz; Ground Rice 4.2 oz; Tapioca .75 oz; Papaya 2.0 oz; Total 19.55 ozs. (Palm oil $\frac{1}{3}$ oz; Coconut oil $\frac{2}{3}$ oz.).
- May 13 I am trying to exchange one Klim tin of milk for a tin of palm oil and have managed to sell a $\frac{2}{3}$ share for two tins of bully beef.
- May 14 The Camp Rice rations have been increased by 40 kilos to 1,240 kilos. The Jews are selling home made curry puffs in their hut for \$80 each.
- May 15 There is a rumour that Sir Harry Trusted has died in Formosa but there is no confirmation of this.¹⁸⁹ John has received 2 postcards from his wife in Australia. Two Eurasians ran away from the camp last night, but their absence was not reported until this afternoon after the roll call at 5.30 pm. They were, however, back in camp

¹⁸⁹ As Mark Twain might have said, the rumour of Sir Harry's death was "greatly exaggerated". In fact, as far as is known, Sir Harry is still alive and well.

by 10.30 pm., having been as far as Newton Circus in Singapore. Rumour has it that France has taken over the government of Libya and Turkey of Syria and Tripoli. I bought my first egg for 18 months and it cost \$9!

- May 16 "Patchy" Green's birthday. Tominara promises that we shall have plenty of food soon.
- May 17 21 lbs. of Rice and also dough have been stolen on four occasions from the kitchen. Thefts have also been made of potatoes and onions. Certain Jews are suspected as they have their own kitchens where they can cook things. A postcard has been received which suggests that 5 years will be added on to Government Servants' pension service to make up for the war period lost.
- May 18 The San Francisco Conference is said to have already replanned the Map of Europe and the occupation of Germany.
- May 19 I bought another egg for \$8.25 and ate it raw to gain the maximum benefit.¹⁹⁰ There is talk of an Allied landing on Shikoku Island, Japan.
- May 20 Japan is said to have signed "on the dotted line". Poor old Roeper, an elderly inmate of our hut, is very ill and has had to be fed through the nose, they say, for the past week.
- May 21 The Heavy Changkollers have again started work on the Golf Course area. A Jap (possibly a Korean) is supposed to have shouted to them from a lorry, "Everything is all right."
- May 22 The Japs are said to be listening in to Tokio Radio at 10 am. to a speech by Eden setting out the terms of surrender. Poor old Roeper has died here at the age of 69. The Russians are said to be conscripting 5,000,000 Germans for reconstruction work in Russia and Poland.
- May 23 There is still no aerial activity in these parts, but there is a rumour of Allied landings in Tokio Bay again. Sir George Maxwell has raised at home the question of compensation for war losses.
- May 24 Suzuki says again that all internees will be leaving this camp shortly. I have been suffering from looseness of the bowels for 4 days, possibly through eating too much raw spinach. I had to give evidence today against two "Asia Boys", one nicknamed "Donald Duck" and the other named Ellison. They were found guilty of roasting stolen potatoes (dug up at 1.30 am.!) in the ashes at the incinerator where I burn old tins and other refuse. I had to make clear to all concerned that I knew nothing of what had been going on!
- May 25 I bought another egg for \$9.25. "Puss in Boots" is said to have remarked that the Japs can only last another 2 months! More talk of 2 ships in port ready to take us away.
- May 26 The Japs admit the evacuation of Burma. "Donald Duck" reminded the Camp Magistrate today that Judas had lied to Christ, but the connection is obscure!

¹⁹⁰ Some went further, pounding the egg shell into a powder and eating that for its protein value.

- May 27 My hopes of ever getting a job in the kitchen faded today when I was admitted to hospital with amoebic dysentery. The pigs at the pig farm are to be killed as there is no food to feed them, or is this another exchange pointer?
- May 28 A plane is said to have flown over here 3 days ago and possibly dropped pamphlets. The Siamese Premier is reported to have escaped to Chungking. An old man named Gray has died here.
- May 29 This is my third day on a "dysentery diet" and I am very hungry. Tomorrow I change to an "ulcer diet" which may be better!
- May 30 There is talk of a new Cabinet being formed at home. I am now constipated, thanks to a drug called "Emitite". The Air Raid sirens went at 10 am. and may have been just a Jap rehearsal.
- May 31 I am feeling much better now I am on an ulcer diet. A medium bomber was reported over Seletar at 10 am. this morning and there was some A.A. fire.
- June 1 I am to be discharged from hospital tomorrow and am to be on full rations without work for a week. There is again a rumour that Bangkok has been captured by British troops unopposed on May 28 and after a 100 mile advance. The Men's Representative is still pressing the Japs to improve the rations to avoid a serious breakdown in our health. I have mobilised my resources by selling for cigarette paper - Shakespeare's Works \$59; Lockhart's *Scott* \$50, *Wild Wales* \$37; part of *Gone with the Wind* \$27, *The Three Musketeers* \$47; *Chambers' Dictionary* \$106.
- June 2 I was discharged from hospital and, feeling very hungry, opened a tin of corned beef and ate 4/5 straight away. My bowels are firm again, thanks possibly to my drinking every 2 hours a mixture of water and chalk scraped with a spoon from a neighbouring cliff!
- June 3 Reading Dean Inge's *Lay Thoughts of a Dean* and Holbrook Jackson's *The 1890s*.
- June 4 There are now rumours of our moving to the Carimon or Bintan Islands. Two planes passed over at 6 pm. last night. We are beginning to doubt the truth of the Bangkok rumours and of landings in North Malaya, i.e. at Perlis and Kota Bahru.
- June 5 The Japs are now planning to build a new road in the camp and some mysterious A.R.P. dugouts in the Southern Area of the Camp which must be completed in 6 weeks. We hear again that we have re-occupied Moulmein, Mergui, Tavoy and Phuket in Burma and Siam.
- June 6 There are reports of bombings in North Malaya and new barriers being erected on the road to Johore. General Saito admits there is a serious rice shortage but blames it all on our disruption of communications and the sinkings of ships.
- June 7 The Japs report the arrival of Allied planes over Eastern Johore coming from the direction of the Anamba Islands. I now weigh a new low record of 163 lbs. (11 st. 9 lbs.) down 4 lbs. Old T.P. Coe is now 9 lbs. and now weighs only 97 lbs! An attack on Malaya is now declared to be "imminent".

- June 8 Reading David Garnett's *Lady into Fox* and *Man in the Zoo*, also Jepson's *Selections of Modern Essayists*.
- June 9 I planted another 14 Ceylon Spinach, hoping to fill my belly with them someday.
- June 10 Reading Voltaire's *Candide*. An internee named Allen, aged 53, has died. I obtained a ½ share in a British Red Cross parcel dated June 1942! Ate ½ tin of tomatoes and promptly had a return of bowel looseness.
- June 11 Consumed ½ tin of Meat Galantine. More internees have come in. Reading Burke's *English Inns*.
- June 12 The new arrivals say that Labuan and possibly Borneo are now in Allied hands. I saw Dr. Shelley (Volunteers) out on the road today. My stool is declared to be "negative" but I continue to consume kaolin (China Clay). dug from the cliff. A queer rumour states that Lieut. Suzuki and Kobiashi have been taken away by the Kempitai. King George VI is supposed to have broadcast a message to the Jap Emperor.
- June 13 I saw Dr. Shelley again and ate a further supply of kaolin (as well as ½ tin of Cheese). The gang constructing the earth "tunnels" for the Japs are being given oatmeal and Horlicks to encourage them. The purpose of these tunnels is mystifying.
- June 14 Though my tummy was still upset, I enjoyed consuming half a tin of bacon. Another false rumour of a landing in Japan.
- June 15 Consumed ½ tin of Creamed Rice. Cheroots are now selling at \$3 each. A Mrs. Barnes has died. We had an Air Raid alert.
- June 16 H - - - - (Customs) was convicted of stealing food from the Women's kitchen. Reading Pater's *The Renaissance*. Sold my copy of *Lockhart's Scott* for \$50 and *Wild Wales* for \$37.
- June 17 The British forces are now said to have reached Phuket Island. Tewfik, an Iraqi aged 17, was caught today trying to steal Gridley's and Godwin's trousers. After being tied up to a tree and beaten with wet towels, he confessed to several other robberies, including \$1,000 from Attias of Raffles Hotel.
- June 18 Eggs are now costing \$25 each! I consumed ½ tin of Marmalade Pudding. Reading Priestley's *Figures in Modern Literature* and *Selected Essays*.
- June 19 The Woodcutters have now to go all the way to Johore to cut firewood for the Camp. Two more internees have died, Bailey, aged 57, and Frater (from T.B.). I consumed ½ tin of Brand's Fish paste. The Tunnellers are being given oatmeal, jam and Horlick's milk.
- June 20 I bought 2 small hens' eggs for \$11 each. I had ½ tin of Steak and Vegetable and 1/6 tin of Condensed Milk.
- June 21 There is "definite" news of an Allied landing in Brunei Bay on June 10. A Margaret Rose has died in the Women's Camp of a mastoid.
- June 22 P.O.W.s now in Changi are to be dispersed in groups of 400 to 500 throughout the Peninsula. I exchanged a tin of Marmalade for a tin of bacon.

- June 23 Our troops are said to have occupied Kuching in Sarawak. I opened a ½ tin of Margarine.
- June 24 We sampled the kitchen's 20 oz. "Cottage Pie" for the first time. It was quite good eating but hardly worth the week's saving that had gone into it.
- June 25 I took over my old job of working the refuse incinerator. There is news of a landing in Acheh, North Sumatra.
- June 26 All outside fatigues (except the Woodcutters) are to have their extra rations cut to 50 grammes daily from July 1. 150 men are to remain on maintenance work outside the camp and 150 in the inside gardens, mainly weeding. The Japs are now preparing Air Raid shelters and lookouts round their Green House H.Q. Evans, the son of the Camp Dairy Farmer, has typhus.
- June 27 Reading Denis Mackail's *Life of J.M. Barrie* and re-reading Buchan's *Memory Hold the Door*.
- June 28 Cheroots bought by the Bishop cost \$7 each! A bottle of Coconut Oil is now \$125 and I personally bought 4 ozs. of salt for \$18.
- June 29 Don, a member of our hut, has been informed that he has T.B. and one of his lungs has already gone. Several Eurasians and others, including Martine, have been taken up to the Green House, having been caught trading over the barbed wire with outside Sikhs. Garcia has been sacked from his lucrative fatigue.
- June 30 From tomorrow, all fatigue members doing 6 hours a day will get only 50 grammes of rice extra per day, except woodcutters who will get 100 grammes. Some curious isolated explosions have been heard.
- July 1 Loose bowels again but this is probably due to benzine contaminated red palm oil. The capture of Balek Papan in Dutch Borneo is reported.
- July 2 The following are now getting only 50 grammes extra rice a day: 150 outside weeders, 150 inside gardeners, 60 wood handlers, and 30 construction workers. I still appear to be losing weight as my bones stick out more! The old men seem to be suffering most. Parsons, late of Butterworth, has gone mental and Col. Cecil Rae is very ill with oedema and mal-nutrition.
- July 3 Miri in Borneo seems to have been in Allied hands since June 18 and the Jap Premier has admitted the loss of Borneo with no help promised for "Malai", as they call Malaya.
- July 4 There is a rumour that, after next Friday's medical inspection and Age group roll call, we shall be allowed to keep only 1 bedroll, 1 bag, and 1 stool. This seems to be a precautionary measure in case there is a sudden move from here. I have decided to sell my suitcase for \$75 and take over Richard Graham's spare suitcase. He is my next door neighbour whose mosquito-net I share. The prices of Red Cross goods are now as follows: 1 tin Bully Beef \$300; 1 tin Klim Milk \$600; Condensed Milk \$280; Margarine \$200; Bacon \$250; Marmalade \$220; Butter \$450. Duck eggs now cost \$17 each!
- July 5 Tomorrow's Medical Inspection is for all between 15 and 55 years

and all will wear shirts at the 2 pm. parade. A Penang Eurasian named Bates disappeared from the Camp last night and left a letter indicating that he did not intend to return. I have been trying to make a homemade Chutney using the following ingredients – peas, spinach, potato, curry powder, sugar, onion and kanji! I have been reading a Penguin, Lord Samuel's *Belief for Action*.

- July 6 The Medical "inspection" between 2 and 5 pm. consisted simply of filing past a Jap doctor who gave us a look up and down without comment!¹⁹¹ The Japs have apparently given an order that all civilians are to be evacuated from Singapore Island between now and September either to Johore or to North Malaya (or to the Dutch Islands, in the case of Javanese).
- July 7 My weight is again down 5 lbs. to 158 lbs. (11 st. 4 lbs.), but some kitchen staff have increased their weight by 8 or 9 lbs. each. Reported fall of Tsing Tao in Northern China. We are expecting attacks on this area from North, East and West, but when?
- July 8 A Jew named Ellison has escaped from the camp and the Japs have called a roll call in our "Kita" area at 11 am. The Japs have now put the inmates of Huts 67 and 68 on half rations from tomorrow as a punishment for the two recent escapes from those huts.
- July 9 Reading Churchill's *Great Contemporaries* and Somerville and Ross's *Some Experiences of an Irish Resident Magistrate*.
- July 10 Mines have been dropped in Malayan waters, so it is reported. All Jews and Eurasians are to be moved from our "Kita" area. In future there is to be a curfew from 10.30 pm. to 7 am. and roll calls are to be held tonight at 8 pm. and again tomorrow at 8 am.
- July 11 The 2 huts 67 and 68 are still on half rations by order of General Saito and new internees have moved into the 4 huts vacated by the Jews and Eurasians in this area. We heard a series of mysterious explosions all day. Col. Rae has died of oedema, dysentery and sprue and Pease of diabetes, the third to die of this illness because of the lack of insulin.
- July 12 The Women's Camp have been deprived of all vegetables until further notice because of pilfering in their gardens, and will receive just plain rice. The Japs have called for details of internees' past service in the Regular Services (but not fortunately in the Local Volunteer forces). I had a hard day at the Incinerator disposing of old tins and rubbish left behind by the Jews in this area. After the tins have been burnt, they have all to be pounded flat and put in sacks for removal as scrap to Japan.

191 This farcical "inspection" of over 3,000 internees in 3 hours was typical of the Japanese complete lack of interest in our health. The Jap M.O. was a mere figure-head for the medical welfare of the camp was left entirely to our own doctors who treated not only the internees but occasionally even the Jap sentries, for venereal diseases, it was said. The shortage of drugs and dressings was so great that many makeshift remedies were resorted to, such as ointments based on palmoil, bandages soaked in rubber latex to provide an elastoplast substitute and tooth powder manufactured from wood ash. No attempt was ever made to supply desperately needed drugs such as insulin, M. and B. tablets, etc.

- July 13 Twenty crates of Red Cross parcels have arrived in the Camp. At 12 Noon today, some smaller twin fuselage planes passed over.
- July 14 An internee named Deeks, who had come from the Andamans, has died, and so has another, named Zehender, from appendicitis. There is a story of Sikh sentries capturing a "madman" trying to "escape" from the Camp. In any case, the Japs have threatened to put the whole Camp on half rations if there are any more escapes. Letters dated June 1944 from the Apostolic See have arrived.
- July 15 The recent rations have been very bad, but the Japs are now calling for volunteers for fatigues which will get an extra 200 grammes a day of rice - 30 to bury a Water Tank, 170 to work on the "Tunnels"¹⁹² 60 Woodcutters, and 200 Gardeners (but they will get only 50 grammes extra). The present lack of food is causing many internees to have a mania for writing out innumerable cooking recipes and for unending discussions about rice menus and meals! *Belachan* is being offered for sale at \$300 per *kati* (fatigue workers charge \$13 per oz.). This racket is being organised by an ex-Warder Black Market King, named Mitchell. I opened my last tin, a ½ share in a tin of Condensed Milk (worth \$280 per tin!).
- July 16 Reading Baldwin's *On England* and Arnold Bennett's "*The Card.*" They have started digging the hole for the Water Tank. The Jap press admit Allied attacks on Pontianak in Borneo.
- July 17 Reading Buchan's *Cromwell*. Another "reccy" plane came over both yesterday and today. Prince Konoye of Japan is said to have gone to the U.S.A. for peace talks.
- July 18 Hens' eggs are now selling at \$17 each. T.P. Coe of our hut has a new job; catching flies in the kitchen from 4 pm. to 5 pm. There are rumours of the heavy bombing of Japan, particularly of Tokio and Osaka.
- July 19 Miss Evans, a Eurasian aged 64, had died. Sergeant Tanaka has threatened to cut the rations of fatigues unless they work right up to 5 pm. daily.
- July 20 For the first time, they have put tapioca leaves in the soup. Money is becoming very scarce and 150 "banana" dollars are now equivalent to \$100 Straits dollars.¹⁹³ Robson of the *Malay Mail*, aged 75, has died

192 We soon got suspicious of the real purpose of these tunnels. Ostensibly they were intended for the storage of food in case of heavy air raids but many of us suspected that we ourselves were to be driven into them when things got desperate and then disposed of by sealing up the entry points. Somehow, we had heard that something of this kind had happened at Manila just as the American forces were approaching that city. Some post-war investigations have stated that it had been the intention of the Japanese High Command to liquidate all P.O.W.s and Internees in the event of an Allied attack on Singapore.

193 In Changi, little distinction was made between a Japanese banana dollar and a Straits dollar, but in Sime Road Camp, the Jap dollar gradually depreciated until it was worth almost nothing at the time of the Japanese surrender. Compare Dr Chan Ah Kow's statement on page 268-269. Confirmation of the worthless value of the Jap currency was given by tales brought with camp from outside. For instance, gamblers in the gambling houses never trouble to count their money but measured the height of their file of holes with a ruler. A Jap employer trying his labour face travelled around with his own note printing press.

- after ailing for the last 3 years.
- July 21 It was a very dark morning for our roll call at 8 am. (actually 6 am.) but the Japs would not allow any lights. The elderly partner, Phillips, of Brown, Phillips and Stuart, Penang, has died. A number of Dutch Whites and Eurasians have come in from Palembang and Sembawa.
- July 22 My brother John has joined the "Tunnellers" gang. I sold my Bible for cigarette paper to "Panjang" Evans, Straits Trading, who was at school with me, for \$106. *Gula melaka* is now \$57 per *kati*.
- July 23 John very kindly gave me his "seconds" of fatigue rice. There are more rumours of peace talks as the Allied fleets appear to be circumnavigating Japan.
- July 24 The Jap Military are inviting us to sell our Wrist Watches for salt butter, cheese, etc. The optimists take this as another peace pointer.
- July 25 I have joined the Wood fatigue to get the extra 100 grammes of food. One (or more) planes came over at 1 pm. Reading Jarvis's *Desert and Delta*.
- July 26 My 41st birthday. My first day on the Wood hauling fatigue. My arm is not really well and my footwear is not really suitable for pulling. Another plane came over at 1 pm. I opened my very last tin of Klim. 1,700 letters dated up to February 1945 have just arrived.
- July 27 Lady Shenton Thomas has had a postcard to say that General Percival, Brigadier Moir, Sir Shenton Thomas, General Heath and Young are all in a P.O.W. camp in Manchukuo (Manchuria). The Wood hauling fatigue consists of 2 trips in the morning between 9 and 12 pm. and one in the afternoon between 2 and 4 pm. Engineless lorries are loaded up with wood and then pulled uphill by up to 40 hauliers. Our fatigue was each able to buy 12 ozs. of *Belachan* and cheroots for \$30. The Japs appear to be building strong points round the Golf Course and also shelters and have 8 field guns in position.
- July 28 The Heavy fatigues got an issue of 1½ pints of red palm oil and 10 ozs. of *Gula melaka*. A Police Inspector named Hagger, aged 35, has died from a duodenal ulcer.¹⁹⁴
- July 29 There was great activity on the road outside today as various lorries passed carrying labour gangs. We had a welcome full day's holiday. Reading George Douglas's *The House with the Green Shutters*.
- July 30 Poor Owen, a lecturer in Chemistry at Raffles College, died today, aged 37. He was the last of the four diabetic patients and had put up a brave fight. The Heavy Changkollers and the Inside Gardeners are to have their extra rice rations raised to 150 grammes.
- July 31 More "tunnels" are now planned and the Japs are calling for more changkollers at 150 grammes extra (but the Wood hauliers will continue to get only 100 grammes extra).
- Aug. 1 The Japs appear to be conscripting Town labour for defence works

194 Hagger had been a victim of the Kempitai and had been returned to our camp on April 8th, 1944. See also pages 213 and 286.

- and we were ordered back to Camp when Jap troops began to carry out manoeuvres on the Golf Course. For the last 2 days, the wood hauliers have had an easy time but we are still hoping to qualify for the extra 150 grammes of rice. Reading Powys's *Mr. Weston's Good Wine*.
- Aug. 2 There are rumours of a Labour Victory in the U.K. Elections and of a Commando Raid on Kuala Pahang. The proposed peace terms for Japan are said to be based on no occupation of the Japan Mainland but only of her Empire Overseas. Teddy, a Miner with a Tamil wife, has died.
- Aug. 3 My dysentery has come back and I have been given more Kaolin and Stovarsol. There is a rumour of a landing at Phuket in Siam. There are plenty of cheroots for sale now, but no more money to buy them.
- Aug. 4 My weight is now 159 lbs. (11 st. 5 lbs.), up one lb. 6 single-engined planes flew over at 1 pm.
- Aug. 5 We are now told that yesterday's low flying planes were bombers that bombed Kallang Airport. We had a whole day's holiday. 50 more heavy changkollers, chiefly under 35, have been conscripted to dig the "tunnels". They include the Rev. Hayter, Macnamara (Police) and Molesworth. There has been a heavy importation of Red Palm oil and cheroots, but owing to the glut, the latter are being sold at cost price which is \$1.30 each.
- Aug. 6 A lone plane came over today. My dysentery is better, thank goodness. Reading Conan Doyle's *Thro' the Magic Door*.
- Aug. 7 We are told that all postcards received have now been distributed. In one case the Japs had added to one internee's outgoing Radio Message the words "receiving parcels regularly!" All the pigs have now been killed providing 86 lbs. of pork for 800 men in this area. The pork was used to make a very tasty pork pie. A Mrs. Hogan has died in the Women's Camp. Reading Hudson's *Green Mansions*.
- Aug. 8 Reading Rodgers's *Old Public Schools of England* (up to 1800). The General visited us today, "Rescript Day", better named "Postscript Day", we hope soon.
- Aug. 9 It is estimated that 204 internees have died in this camp since the beginning of internment. Tominara has ruled against the wood hauliers drawing 150 grammes extra, because (1) they are not doing "military work", (2) they do not form part of the pool for such labour (as do inside gardeners and the heavy changkollers).
- Aug. 10 A few more deaths have occurred – Wemyss, aged 60, and a Jew named Menahem. Olive-Gay, aged 74, has had his leg amputated because it had gangrene.¹⁹⁵ A Jap is supposed to have told Clunies Ross that the war is over – he is working on the "tunnels". Reading

¹⁹⁵ He was not the only one to have an amputation. For instance, there was a Bank Manager, named Sam Fortune who had to have his foot amputated. The smallest cut became septic in our low state of health and developed into an ulcer which it was very difficult to cure because of our lack of drugs. Nevertheless Sam bore his bad luck with great fortitude.

R.L. Stevenson's *Ebbtide*. A Colonel Meredith is said to have gone mental.

Aug. 11

G. Waddle, Singapore Luggage Carrier Co. (and husband of Mrs. Waddle of the Education Dept.), has died here. Out on a fatigue on the Dunearn Road today, a Eurasian youth on a bicycle shouted out "Japan Surrendered" as he flashed past.¹⁹⁶ This I heard personally as we marched along the road, pulling a cart taking some goods to a Jap Officer's house. It appears, too, that the Japs are cutting down the Wireless Masts on Flagstaff Hill (which is plainly visible from this camp). They are also collecting the wooden crosses from the cemetery in this camp to use for firewood, saying that one big cross will be sufficient. Two more have died, Col. Meredith who had cancer of the throat (he had been at Dunkirk) and an old Jew named David Joseph.

Aug. 12

Another Jew has absconded from the Camp, but there have been no reprisals (as promised) and only 2 Sikhs took the roll call this morning, which is unusual and may be a further pointer to peace. Olive-Gay, aged 74, who had his leg amputated, has now died, and so has Gildea, aged 56, from oedema. There are now many rumours about the end of the War; for instance peace has been signed, Kobiashi says Russia has come into the war and has invaded Manchuria.¹⁹⁷ The Bishop was told the same stories while on a fatigue into Singapore, Clunies-Ross has been told the same by another Jap, and there is also a tale of a drunken Jap on a lorry in Johore throwing away his equipment in disgust and saying the British will be here in 3 days!

Aug. 13

There were no fatigues today as no Sikh sentries were available. Again no Japs turned up for the morning roll call, so we are all awaiting signs of peace and of the end of the war. The sirens went again and several planes are said to have bombed Kallang Airport and also oil installations on Pulau Sambu and Bukum. I sold \$30 worth of my Chambers' Dictionary for cigarette paper.¹⁹⁸ Reading Maupassant's *Tales* and Brett Young's *White Ladies*.

Aug. 14

Three internees have been taken off to hospital suffering from blackouts. Among these was Dickinson, ex-C.P.O. Singapore whom I had noticed lying on a stretcher as I came in with the wood lorry. We noticed great Jap activity at the Golf course and House as we passed. All outside funeral parties have been cancelled and the

196 The youth took a risk in communicating with us as our guards were marching alongside and might have arrested him. However, the incident was enough to convince me that the rumoured peace talks were at last genuine.

197 Curiously there is no mention in this diary of the dropping of the two Atomic bombs on August 6 and August 9, probably because we were not at liberty to listen to the Radio until August 29th and so did not know the details of these events. My only personal recollection is my disgust at hearing that the then Bishop of Chichester had protested publicly at some unspecified bombing of Jap towns. His protest was given wide coverage in the Jap sponsored newspapers.

198 My dictionary was normally much in demand for consultation in the hut but by the end of the war, only half remained.

- relatives of the Jew who absconded recently have been put on half rations for a week. 4,000 planes are said to have raided Japan.
- Aug. 15 Another cut in the kitchen firewood has been ordered. It was a very cold wet day.
- Aug. 16 The latest rumour is that our troops will be here on August 21 and that S.W. Jones will take over the Civil Administration.¹⁹⁹ A stray Argyle soldier we met told us that the Japs were evacuating Singapore and all "tunnelling" work was being abandoned.
- Aug. 17 Various Asiatics, Malays, Tamils, Chinese have shouted over the fence that the War is over, but we still await any official news of the truth! However, Toginaga has removed his tunnel plans and maps and given his workers a holiday. The King is said to have broadcast a speech to all P.O.W.s and internees. Osterhaus, our Dutch Nazi, says we shall be told the truth within 72 hours.
- Aug. 18 Again there were no Japs at roll call today, though Bamba wore his uniform and sword for the first time at last night's roll call. More rumours state:- The camp gardens are to be cleaned up during the next 5 days, the tunnellers are to hand in all tools by 12 noon, all remaining parcels are to be distributed at the rate of one between 12 of us and all remaining pigs are to be killed. The Japs are now all carrying revolvers in the town and are not allowed out during the curfew, and the roofs of Kallang Aerodrome hangars have been removed. A wave of depression set in when Jap A.A. fire was directed at one of our planes but our spirits were revived by the sight of Toginaga weeping at news he had read in a Jap paper! We are told, however, that peace negotiations are definitely in progress and signatures are expected soon. Later (at 8 pm.) Tominara announced that our rice rations were to be raised to 500 grammes from Monday and we could have as much tapioca as we liked. We hear that Admiral Coombs and a British naval force are already in Penang. I obtained a 1/3 share of a tin of Canadian Butter as my share of a whole Red Cross parcel. Two women internees have died, a Mrs. Martin and a Mrs. Bradley. Reading Lyons's *Assignment in Utopia* and J.C. Powys's *Autobiography*.
- Aug. 19 The Camp is awash with rumours! 6,000 more Red Cross parcels may be expected; a General Paton is said to have rung up his nephew in this Camp from Penang! Part of our fleet may be expected at Singapore tomorrow. No work was done today and everybody was given 500 grammes of rice equally. Eggs are now being sold over the fence at 5 Straits cents! I sewed some buttons on my only pair of shorts and did some washing. I still have 200 Jap dollars left but they are now nearly worthless. Three high ranking British Officers are expected to arrive in Singapore tomorrow, but there is still no official statement from the Japs. There is hope of a meeting between P.O.W.s and ourselves tomorrow. We have talked to a number of

¹⁹⁹ Presumably, this would have been the Stanley Jones mentioned in the footnote 162 on page 202. In fact, he did not come to Singapore.

Dutch P.O.W.s next door to us and they have been told unofficially by the Japs that the war is over. Four victims of the Kempítai have arrived back in our camp. They are Curtis, Earle, Cherry and Dr. Calderwood. Cherry, Curtis and Earle were able to walk with assistance but Dr. Calderwood had beri-beri very badly and weighed only 5 stone. He came back on a stretcher and could hardly speak, but managed to hail me with the words, "Hullo, Tiny." I was greatly affected; his fair hair has gone white. Various men who had been working for the Japs throughout our internment, Birtwhistle, Holtum, and Corner have also come in but they are understandably not very popular. Our Deputy Director has called for Volunteers to stay behind in Malaya for a few months after peace comes, but I doubt if I shall be asked as I have not had leave for 7 years.

- Aug. 20 A Union Jack is said to be flying on the Cathay Building. At last the General has admitted that we may return to our homes shortly. We are educated people, he said, and must realise the effect of events on ignorant and possibly drunken soldiers; every form of demonstration must be banned to avoid any incident likely to inflame them. The Japs appear to be uncertain and afraid as to the likely conduct of their own troops when told the truth.
- Aug. 21 There was the sound of heavy traffic on the Bukit Timah Road last night. There was rioting reported in Singapore and Jap and Indian Independence army sentries may have been killed by the Chinese. Kobiashi says that our troops will arrive here at 4 pm. tomorrow. Chinese well wishers turned up with 2 lorry loads of meat, fish and eggs at the Camp Gates but both were turned away. There is a story that 19 of our Air Force men had been shot in Singapore and a further 5 have only been saved by the surrender.
- Aug. 22 An old man has had a fit or stroke, his name being Yates from Liverpool. Weisburg, M.C.S. has been summoned to the Green House. Two more elderly Jews have died. Too much food, i.e. rice and oil, is causing some nausea and indigestion. We are still waiting for news of the arrival of our troops, now due, they say, on Friday August 25.
- Aug. 23 Cheeseman tells me that I shall be allowed to go on leave immediately.
- Aug. 24 600 Red Cross parcels have been sent in. General Saito now informs us that British planes may be expected overhead at 5 am. tomorrow morning but there must be no demonstrations for reasons already given. We had a chicken curry in our hash today, 900 tins being eaten by the whole camp.
- Aug. 25 I had ½ tin of beef, carrots and dumplings. There is still no news of the arrival of our troops. Marks have been prepared on the ground to indicate dropping sites for supplies from the air. The Japs have refused to provide a Wireless set or give news of P.O.W.s and internees in Sumatra or allow any communication outside. Reading Walpole's *Portrait of a Man with Red Hair*.

- Aug. 26 The Japs are said to have asked for details of how many wish to travel home by air, by ship, or wish to stay. They have sent in 7 ozs. per person of Singapore Cold Storage butter; presumably this has remained in cold storage for the last 3½ years! We had two lean cows and some goats for the lunch meal — 180 lbs. of meat for 800 men. There are rumours that 10 tons of cheese are also on the way for us. It appears that the Jap C in C, S.E. Asia, General Terauchi, only agreed to end hostilities after a visit from Baron Togagawa on August 18²⁰⁰ General McArthur is due to enter Tokio on August 28, after being delayed 48 hours by a typhoon.
- Aug. 27 We have been given 1 1/3 tins of 12 oz. Kraft Cheese. A new Jap Guard has taken over at the Green House. I have written a postcard to be sent off as soon as our troops arrive. My weight is now 160 lbs. (11 st. 6 lbs.), up only 1 lb. after a week's good eating. We are now to be allowed a Radio set and the balance of any Red Cross Parcels. We hear, too, that the Sea View Hotel, Raffles Hotel and various flats in Grange Road are to be cleared for our reception.²⁰¹ We hear that Chandra Bose, the leader of the Indian Nationalist Army, has been killed in an air crash. A Jew named Solomon David has died here from tropical typhus.
- Aug. 28 Our British troops are now expected to arrive in 6 to 10 days. An Allied plane came over the camp dropping leaflets in an Indian language, English, Malay and Japanese (for Japanese soldiers). I ate a whole 12 oz. tin of Kraft Cheese. A news bulletin (from the Japanese Domei Agency) was read out in all huts. The leaflets dropped contained advice to ourselves and orders for the Japanese. Parcels have come in from Singapore for the Bishop, the Rev. Amstutz and Rider Stevens. We are told that 9 Catalina Flying Boats are on their way from Australia with tons more food.
- Aug. 29 We were all given one whole tin of pineapple each for lunch. There is no further news of the Catalinas, but Schweitzer, our Red Cross Representative, has at long last been recognised and allowed to enter our Camp for the first time in 3½ years! It is expected that 600 of us will enter hospital when our troops arrive. At last we are allowed to listen openly to the B.B.C. news and hear that Jap Civilian casualties in Japan are estimated at 260,000 dead and 420,000 wounded. The British fleet is said to be at Penang.
- Aug. 30 Two Army doctors, 2 N.C.O.s and 2 others were dropped by a B29 at Changi today to investigate our conditions, one of whom visited our Camp. A Commission to investigate the immediate resuscitation of the Rubber Industry is already on the way out.²⁰² Two British

200 "I have read since that it was Prince Chichibu, the Emperor's brother, and a contemporary of mine at Oxford, who persuaded Terachi to play his part in the surrender.

201 Needless to say, none of these fantasies became a reality.

202 This body formed part of the B.M.A. (or British Military Administration) which took over the Government of Malaya from about September 5. Ex-Malayans appointed to various administrative posts were dubbed "Banana Colonels" as distinct from the genuine article.

soldiers are said to have come here and kicked out the Sikh and Malay Guard. My broher Gerwyn is now reported to be in Siam still, but all of them are to be flown out to Rangoon soon. British troops are now expected in 4 to 5 days.

- Aug. 31 Medical supplies have been dropped over Changi for our P.O.W.s and one paratrooper is said to have broken Neomani's sword, and sent him off from here to Changi in the charge of 2 Warders! He had been insolent.
- Sept. 1 The Rev. Summers has died here from ulcers and beri-beri. He was the American Methodist who preached a farewell sermon, thinking he was about to be repatriated a year or two ago. Jap Civilians on Singapore Island have been concentrated at a camp at Jurong on the West Coast of the Island; Jap troops have crossed over the Causeway to Johore Bahru. Reading Somerset Maugham's *Ashenden* and *Up at the Villa*. Sir Shenton Thomas is said to have been flown to Rangoon from Manchuria.
- Sept. 2 Chinese well-wishers and internees are coming into and leaving the Camp without hindrance now. I listened on the Radio to the official signing of the Jap Capitulation at Tokio at 10.30 am. I bought 6 eggs for \$150 and presented one each to "Patchy" Green, Davis (Kelly & Walsh) and Hunter. 5½ tons of Australian Butter have come in and we are each being given 2½ lbs. each! A Senior British Officer has forbidden us to go out of camp as conditions in Singapore are pretty rough, the Chinese chasing up and dealing with members of the Jap sponsored *Heiho* Corps. A young "Asia Boy" called Butler, was presented with \$1,000 by a Chinese Towkay, when he was out in Singapore.
- Sept. 3 The Chinese are said to be executing "traitors" in the town and a Colonel Stuart has appealed to our Camp to stay inside the wire.²⁰³ The local Chinese have already subscribed \$400,000 to bring us food. I gave L.V. Taylor (a Volunteer at Changi) a letter to K.D. Luke (of our department) asking him to enquire for further details of Gerwyn. I exchanged a packet of cigarettes for 2 eggs from a Chinese hawker. We were given a further ½ tin of Libby's Milk. Among the new arrivals is a young policeman named Wylie who had been dropped into Johore 4 months ago, after previous service in Borneo and New Guinea.²⁰⁴ Another Volunteer named Tokeley told me that he had last seen Gerwyn in Nikki Camp in Siam in November 1943. This was one of the best organised camps and dealt with Coolie sick patients.
- Sept. 4 We are told that the Cruiser *Cleopatra*, the destroyer *Bengal* and various mine sweepers have arrived in the Naval Base. The Cruiser *Sussex* is also on its way with the occupying forces. A number of

203 It was rumoured at the time that the Chinese community had petitioned the British Authorities to allow them 48 hours' grace, before the B.M.A. took over, to enable them to liquidate certain pro-Japanese traitors.

204 Lieut. Colonel Wylie had been in charge of Force 136 operations in South Johore and at the end of the war, had reported to General Roberts on board *H.M.S. Sussex*.

- volunteers have visited the camp, e.g. Walker-Taylor, W.G. Scott and C.U. Stafford. My fellow guide, Andrew Robb, wounded at Kuala Selangor, is back in the army somewhere here.
- Sept. 5 Our troops landed at Singapore today but so far I have not seen any.²⁰⁵ They include the Black Watch and several Indian Units. The troops came in fully armed and expecting trouble. There is a curfew from 6 pm. to 6 am. (local Malayan time again) and Military Courts and Military Law will be in operation. 100 Newspaper reporters have taken over the Cathay Building. The *Straits Times* will start up again in 2 days' time. I met a few more Volunteers from Kranji and Adam Park camps, e.g. Todd and Eglington. Reading Maugham's *Cosmopolitans*.
- Sept. 6 We are told that Inspector Blake (who left before the fall) is back in charge of the Central Police Court; Dumaresque is back in charge of the Singapore Radio Station, and Parker (Customs) is in charge of Food Control in Singapore. Lloyd is C.P.O. Perak and Fenner is C.P.O. Negri Sembilan. We have each been given a copy of "S.E.A.C." Services magazine, detailing for our information, the main events of the war. The editor, to my surprise and pleasure, is Liet.-Colonel Frank Owen who years ago played rugger for the London Welsh XV with me.
- I spoke to an A.I.F. private named Tate in the Orchard of this camp. Dr. Chan Ah Kow, a former pupil of mine at King Edward VII School, Taiping, and now a successful doctor called and gave me a gift of 15 eggs – which was a very kind thought. Two more internees have died here, one old man called Baker, and the other young, named Winton. We hear more horror stories of conditions on the Burma-Siam Railway among our troops.
- Sept. 7 I visited Singapore for the first time and had lunch and some drinks at the expense of a Chinese dealer. We then visited the docks and went on board *H.M.S. Sussex* where in Mess 22 we were allowed to eat as much bread and butter as we liked! We then visited a transport, the *Derbyshire*, and were given tea and met General Mansergh. We also met a number of Volunteers including Fyffe (Forests), Cornish (P & T) and Wright (a Vet). Wherever we went we were given a wonderful reception by the Chinese, but we noticed several Javanese Coolies dying in the streets, presumably from starvation, as nobody would help those who had been working for the Japs. The Jap troops have been ordered back over the Causeway leaving behind all the loot they had taken. The Japs are now in a camp at Senai in Johore.
- Sept. 8 Today John and I visited Dr. Chan Ah Kow at his house in Katong

205 The main landings by Allied Troops had been made on the beaches of Port Dickson and Morib in Negri Sembilan. By "Operation Zipper", Over 180,000 men were landed without fighting. Only one battalion of Jap troops had been in the vicinity as the Japs had been led by our intelligence to expect the attack to come on the Kedah coast. These landings actually took place September 9th a date which had been fixed, many months earlier', when the war was still on.

where he gave us a wonderful high tea and paid our taxi-fare of \$5,000! When I protested at his paying this bill, he opened a small bag which contained \$250,000, he claimed. It would be valueless in a day or two, he explained. We then re-visited the *Sussex* and had another lovely meal of bread and butter and soup. We arrived back at camp at 11 pm., having failed to find transport out to Changi Jail. Today's Camp menu was very disappointing, lunch being Dry Rice and Spinach, and Tea, just tea! So we were lucky to find food elsewhere.

- Sept. 9 Today I was able to visit Changi with Garcia, who had a B.A.T. Co. car provided and recovered the first part of my diary which I had buried in the garden in a sealed biscuit tin in October 1943, nearly 2 years ago. All was in good order as well as Coney's (Customs) Compass which I had also put in the tin. At Changi I met Capt. David Lloyd, A.I.F., whom I took back with us to Singapore to search for Andrew Robb reported to be there. We failed to find him and we returned to Camp at 6 pm. The first contingent of our sick and wounded have already left by hospital ship or plane.
- Sept. 10 We again visited the *Sussex* and saw a Cinema show. We were given army rations for the first time today.
- Sept. 11 It is rumoured that 11,000 will leave for home on Friday i.e. in 3 days' time. The Warships *Nelson* and *Richelieu* have arrived in the roads. Many of the Kempitai have been locked up in Outram Road Jail, including General Saito, and suspected Quislings such as Carl Lawson and Osterhaus. Jap working parties are cleaning up the Padang, the Cathedral grounds and the Railway Godowns.
- Sept. 12 Today John and I witnessed from the Singapore Cricket Club the signing by the Japs of their Capitulation at the Municipal Buildings before Lord Mountbatten.²⁰⁶ We met Andrew Robb²⁰⁷ and he drove us back to Camp. Tokinaga and another of our sentries named "Cherry Blossom" have been seen sweeping the streets in Bencoolen Street. A pleasant surprise! Hopkins, a Cambridge Blue and London Welsh scrum half with whom I had played at home, called in a "Jeep" and took John and me out to dinner at 51 Grove Road, Kallang - he is in the R.A.F. and has asked me to ring up his wife at Wolverhampton as soon as I reach home. We are told that Tominara has been captured at Changi and taken to Outram Road Jail.
- Sept. 13 Lord Mountbatten visited the camp and made an inspiring speech giving us some details of the Burma Campaign in which he claimed the Japs suffered losses at the rate of 60 casualties to our one. I have been given a chit to get some kit for wearing on the ship.
- Sept. 14 We have been told to be ready by 6 am. tomorrow to sail on a

206 An estimated 680, 879 Jap soldiers in South East Asia, obeyed their Emperor's order "to initiate on era of pence for future generations by tolerating the intolerable and enduring the unendurable".

207 Andrew Robb remained working in Malaya until 1954 when he retired to Christchurch, New Zealand, where he died in December 1975.

Sept. 15

15,000 ton Dutch transport called the *Tegelberg*.²⁰⁸ We have been issued with clothes and other equipment for the voyage. At the last moment, I received a letter from my mother dated August 24. As it was already night, there was no time to reply or post anything. We²⁰⁹ boarded the *Tegelberg* early next morning and I remember struggling with two heavy kit bags up the gangway. They contained much junk which I could well have left behind, but much of the weight was due to some old and battered library books. They carried the Jap chop of approval and I still have them.

Accommodation on board was fairly primitive but we did not complain as the only alternative would have meant a delay of perhaps another month or two until more civilised accommodation could have become available. Once on board most of the 2,000 passengers immediately descended by temporary wooden spiral staircases to the unlighted hold. Here we bedded down in our everyday clothes wherever there was space on the floor, using our life belts as pillows. Our food was cooked for us by early release army volunteers, many of whom had just arrived at Singapore after the end of the Burma Campaign. For them it was one way of getting home to the U.K. early.

When we arrived at Colombo, 3 or 4 days later, we were enthusiastically welcomed by the hooters of all the other ships in the harbour. Some of us wondered what we had done to deserve such a welcome. As we stepped ashore we were met by a bevy of beautiful WREN officers looking very smart in their blue and white uniforms and three-cornered hats. One of these, named Pauline, kindly invited our group of five to her Officers' Mess, but being still rather shy of female company, we invited her instead to be our guest at the Galle Face Hotel. After all, we had each been given £5 pocket money to spend on the homeward journey. Seating ourselves at a large circular table in the hotel dining room we were able to attract an immediate and attentive service by distributing our surplus Japanese "banana" money — so called because of the banana tree design on each note. The Ceylonese waiters, each wearing a comb stuck in the hair at the back of their heads, crowded round our table for this unexpected largesse though we had already explained to them that the notes were worthless.

The only other port of call before reaching home was at the southern end of the Suez Canal, a few miles south of Suez and on the Egyptian coast at a place named Adabier, or something like it. To us

208 An organisation known as "R.A.W.P.I.", standing for Repatriation of Allied Prisoners of War and Internees, had been in charge of our repatriation. A few disgruntled internees annoyed at the delay in our departure had said that "R.A.W.P.I." stood for Retention of All Prisoners of War Indefinitely.

209 My brother John (Customs) did not accompany me, as he was proceeding to Sydney, Australia, to join his wife & daughter there.

it sounded like the two Malay words "Ada bier?" i.e. "Is there any beer?" Adabier did not amount to much. There was a landing stage and a small box-shaped hut on it surmounted by a flagpole displaying, to my surprise, the Welsh Dragon flag. On the shore itself were several large army tents but beyond that nothing but desert as far as the eye could see.

Being a Welshman, I was intrigued by the flag and hailed the occupant of the hut in the Welsh equivalent of "Does anybody speak Welsh here?" Lieut. Davies said he did and I discovered he came from the same small town of Llandilo in Carmarthenshire near which I had also lived in my youth. That evening we all attended our first E.N.S.A. concert. It was held inside a large landing barge anchored nearby and I was fortunate to spend the evening with another Welsh speaking Welshman, a Corporal Mason, from Aberystwyth.

Next morning we were taken on a tour of the various tents, most of which were crammed with army issues of "demob" suits, underclothes, socks, boots, etc. Here those of us who were of standard size were fitted out with all that they required, but as I was taller and broader than the average, I was unable to obtain anything useful except underwear. No suit would fit me and all overcoats were too short. Size 12 in boots was also unobtainable and I had to be content with a pair of boots size 10 which I took home and presented to one of my country cousins. There was, however, a refreshment room where I devoured five creamed horns in quick succession. As they were free, they may well have been provided by the Red Cross and not by the army.

It must have been about October 15 when we sighted our first land at Amlwch on the North Wales coast early in the morning and docked at Liverpool that same morning. About 20,000 people had turned up to welcome us as we were one of the first Far Eastern ships to arrive there since the Japanese surrender. The weather had now turned cold and I was none too warm in my semi-tropical clothes and a dilapidated pair of suede shoes which had a piece of cardboard to cover a big hole in their soles. Among the sea of faces in the crowd which awaited us on the landing stage I noticed that of a Mrs. W.N. Scott, wife of an Agricultural Officer who was on board. She had not spied her husband when I hailed her and when I did produce him she had difficulty in identifying his "shrunken shank" as belonging to her husband.

There was the usual strike on the Railways but someone must have volunteered to drive our train south to Euston. It was a great thrill for us, especially those like myself who had been away for 7 years, to see again, even in October, the green fields and hedges of England. We noted with surprise and pleasure few signs of the bombing and war damage that we had read about but never suffered.

We arrived at Euston Station at about 4 pm. where we were told our relations and friends would be waiting to meet us. In my case

these were my mother and aunt who had lived at Ealing right through the war. While I was still looking out for them, I was addressed by a glamorous young lady whom I did not recognise though she seemed to know my mother and aunt very well. She said she had come to meet her young brother who had also been on the train. It was only sometime later and when she had gone that I realised that she was the Malayan born actress who had already made a name for herself on the London stage. Her name was Dulcie Gray.²¹⁰ My mother and aunt now arrived and must have been puzzled by the motley ill-fitting Red Cross garb in which I was decked out for want of something more conventional. My mother²¹¹ had luckily contacted the Ealing Red Cross and a private car soon whisked us away to Ealing. On the same evening I rang up Mrs. Hopkins at Wolverhampton and assured her that I had met her husband in Singapore a month previously and that he was fit and well.

210 Her mother, Mrs Savage-Bailey, had lost her life when the *Kuala* was sunk in February, 1942, see page 229.

211 My mother gave me the good news that my younger brother, Gerwyn, was safe and well, had been flown out from Bangkok to Rangoon and would be home in a few days time. Thus all three brothers had survived the war.

Principal Persons Mentioned In This Book

A. Federated Malay States Volunteers in Perak

(Mainly members of A/S Vickers Machine Gun Co, 1st Perak battalion, at Taiping)

Col. Staley, planter, commanding the battalion.

Major A.C. Smith, planter, second in command.

Capt. Perceval, planter, commanding 'B' Company.

Lieut. "Whiskey" Bruce, planter, A/S Co.

Lieut. Frank C. Vanrennan, planter A/S Co. (Executed by Japs in October 1942 at Kuala Lumpur).

Lieut. Graham, planter. (Executed by Japs in October 1942 at Kuala Lumpur).

Sergeant Major "Starky" Cameron, planter, A/S Co.

Sergeant Williams, (Tekka Taiping Tin Co).

Corporal Bill Harvey, planter, Gapis Estate, Kuala Kangsar, A/S Co. (Executed by Japs in October 1942 at Kuala Lumpur).

Corporal "Dusty" Miller, planter, A/S Co.

Corporal Andrew Robb (Malayan Surveys), a New Zealander, and the handyman of A/S Co. Wounded at Kuala Selangor and evacuated to Australia.

Private "Andy" Stewart, planter, later joined 2/26 Batt. A.I.F.

Private T.P.M. Lewis, (Headmaster, Clifford School, Kuala Kangsar), later joined 2/30 Batt. A.I.F.

Indicates the six selected to join "Roseforce" on Christmas Eve, 1941.

B. "Rose-force" Personalities

Major Angus Rose, Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders, (Military Adviser to "Roseforce", but with no powers of command).

Captain David Lloyd ("Gaga")

Lieut. Hodge ("Uncle") - Supply Officer

Lieut. Max Perring

Lieut. "Sandy" Sanderson

Sergeant Allen

Sergeant Donaldson

Corporal Wilding

Private "Bill" Flowers – batman to Capt. Lloyd and at 18 years of age the baby of the family.

A.B. Griffin (F.M.S. Volunteers and Malayan Surveys), acted as a Guide on both North Johore patrols.

R.H. Williams (F.M.S. Volunteers and Malayan Surveys), acted as a Guide on the Gementah – Asahan patrol in North Johore.

Note

Unless otherwise stated, all the above were Volunteers drawn from A.I.F. battalions.

C. Others met at this stage

Major-General Murray-Lyon – briefly at the Station Hotel, Kuala Lumpur.

Capt. Pasque, Adjutant, 2nd Loyals.

Mr. Ariacutty, Transportation Dept., Malayan Railway, Kuala Lumpur (who gave us much assistance on the Gementah – Tangkah Road in North Johore).
Che Abdul Aziz, Head Teacher, Gementah Malay School.

Major Black, in charge of an Australian Transport Unit, whose drivers were nearly all World War I veterans.

Mr. Ansell, Chief Engineer, Dunlop Estates, Batu Enam, near Segamat. His planter son joined the 2nd Loyals and disappeared during the fighting round Parit Sulong. His wife and daughter left on the "Empress of Japan" and he escaped on a Singapore Harbour Board Tug.

Mrs. Jean Spence, wife of a Perak planter and Volunteer, who also left on the "Empress of Japan" on January 31, 1942.

Brigadier (Dr) Maxwell, commanding 2/26 and 2/30 Battalions, A.I.F.

D. My brothers

(i) John S.A. Lewis (Customs Dept.) – he was evacuated from Penang on December 16, 1941 and then became a Food Controller at a Depot in Bras Basah Road, Singapore, his wife and daughter having been evacuated to Australia.

(ii) Gerwyn E.D. Lewis (Education Dept.). Before the outbreak of war he had been seconded to the War Tax Department at Singapore, but soon after war broke out, he joined a Volunteer Red Cross Unit in Singapore under a well known private doctor, Dr. S.S. Pavillard.

Nair – My loyal and courageous Malabari "syce" who drove my car over 400 miles from Kuala Kangsar to Singapore.

E. Those met on the Causeway between February 3 and February 10, 1942

Col. "Black Jack" Galleghan, commanding 2/30 Batt. A.I.F.
Major Anderson 'A' Co)
2/30 Batt.

Lieut. Boss 'A' Co)
Sergeant Major Clayton, lost during a night patrol out on the Straits waters
opposite Johore Bahru.

Major Ramsay - 2nd in Command, 2/30 Batt. Took over when Col. Galleghan
went down with malaria.

Capt. Hawes - in charge of Mortar Fire on the night of February 9.

Captain Taylor - Medical Officer, 2/30 Batt.

F. Some of those met at the Customs House, Maxwell Road, Singapore

Mr. & Mrs. Phear - Mr. Phear was Deputy Comptroller of Customs and kindly
gave me shelter in his office when the capitulation came. Mrs. Phear too was a
tower of strength at the time.

Among Customs Department friends already known to me were -

D.G. "Sam" Hall, A.H. Gridley (now Lord Gridley).

J.H. Johnston, D.B. Coney and L.D. Darby. "Panjang" Evans, late of the Straits
Trading Company was there because he had a temporary job as a Food
Controller. He was an old school friend. Others included Wilbraham and Salter
who were Opium Packing Plant maintenance engineers. The Japs forced them to
continue this work throughout the war.

G. Others mentioned at this stage

Sir Shenton Thomas - the Governor, who at 63 years of age led the march of
the Internees from Katong to Changi Prison. He was later moved to Formosa and
Manchuria but Lady Thomas remained at Changi.

Lady Heath - wife of General Sir Lewis Heath and who was also interned at
Changi. Her husband was moved to Formosa and Manchuria from a P.O.W.
Camp in Singapore.

Bishop J. Wilson - the Anglican Bishop of Singapore. He did not come in to
Changi Jail until March 1943. He was later tortured by the Kempitai.

Rev. John Hayter - the Bishop's Assistant came in with him.

Dr. H.B. Amstutz - Head of the American Methodist Mission in Malaya.

Mr. Schweitzer - the Swiss Consul who was appointed our Red Cross represen-
tative by the international R.C. body. He was never allowed to visit the camp
personally until the war was over.

H. Some Persons met in Changi Jail

It would be invidious to attempt to make a list of the hundreds of persons whom
I met and who, each in some particular way, remain in my memory. Generally
speaking, a concentration of experts in many subjects guaranteed that the camp
was very well managed by the internees. Each category of worker, whether
woodcutters or gardeners, "lallang" slashers or charcoal producers, doctors or

administrators, tinsmiths or carpenters, gave of their best. Some worked on their own and still made a vital contribution, for instance, the elderly internee who made all the round wooden rice tubs and the other who manufactured perfectly acceptable spectacle frames out of old tooth brushes.

A special word of praise is due to those who provided entertainment for us in such discouraging times, in particular Mr. Van Hien, a Singapore Accountant, who trained and conducted the Camp Choir and organised many concerts which greatly boosted our morale. The Camp Comedians, "Barrel" Roberts, Goodrick and Peter Gurney and pianists such as Eisenger were also very popular.

Those who courageously accepted posts as Men's or Block representatives never knew from day to day when they would be exposed to Jap brutality. Adrian Clarke and Penseler (one of the Block representatives) probably lost their lives mainly because of the offices they held and others such as Dr. Johns and Worley were badly knocked about for the same reason.

M.C. ff. Sheppard M.C.S. too suffered severely at the hands of the Kempitai for running an unofficial postal service between the Civilian and the military P.O.W. Camp. On the other hand, "Barrel" Roberts was let off lightly for his escapade in climbing over the prison walls and then knocking on the door of the jail to be let in again! But he was a camp comedian and luckily appealed to the Japs at that early stage in our incarceration when their side was still winning.

The horrific sufferings of many internees after the "Double Tenth" incident – are detailed in Appendix C (pages 282–284).

APPENDIX A

Note on the Japanese attacks on Colombo and Trincomalee (April 5 & 9, 1942)

Admiral Sir Geoffrey Layton had taken over as Commander in Chief, Ceylon, on March 26, 1942 when Admiral James Somerville had assumed command of the Eastern Fleet based on Trincomalee. This Eastern fleet appeared fairly formidable on paper, consisting of 5 battleships, 3 aircraft carriers, 7 cruisers and 14 destroyers, but many of these ships were old. Of the battleships all were old, slow, 1st World War models, the only modernised one being "Warspite", the Admiral's flagship. Of the aircraft carriers two were modern but the third, "Hermes", was both too old and too small. Of the 7 cruisers 4 were old 1st World War ships. Sir Geoffrey had divided his fleet into two, - Force A consisting of the fast ships and Force B consisting of the slow ships. To protect his ships from an overwhelming Jap attack by sea and air, Sir Geoffrey had established a secret base at Addu Atoll, 500 miles south west of Colombo in the Maldive Islands. His plan was to lie off Ceylon with his fleet and use his landbased bombers and carrier borne torpedo bombers to repel the initial attacks of the Jap forces. Even to do this he had only 42 Hawker Hurricanes and Fairey Fulmars, 2 squadrons of Blenheim bombers and a few Catalina flying boats.

Sir Geoffrey had been expecting the Jap attack to come on April 1 but the Japanese used the Sunda Strait and not the Straits of Malacca to make their approach and did not arrive until April 5, (Easter Sunday), thus repeating their usual habit of attacking on a Sunday or on a national feast day when they were least expected. Fortunately, a Catalina flying boat had just time to send out a warning of the Jap Armada's approach before it was shot down into the sea. Admiral Layton immediately ordered all ships capable of sailing to leave harbour at once to avoid being sunk at anchor by some of the 91 bombers and 36 fighters which were launched at the British bases by Admiral Nagamo. The superior speed of the Jap "Zeros" enabled them to shoot down 19 of our planes for the loss of 7, but our losses of ships were comparatively moderate, only one destroyer, and one armed merchant cruiser being sunk in the harbour. At sea, however, two of our heavy cruisers, the *Dorsetshire* and the *Cornwall* were lost in air attacks. The rest of Admiral Somerville's fleet escaped loss or damage as the Jap Naval Command failed to discover the Addu Atoll Base to which these ships had retired.

On their way back from Colombo, Admiral Nagamo's fleet attacked our naval base at Trincomalee on April 9. Once again a warning gave time for the base to be cleared of ships and only one destroyer was sunk in harbour, though out at sea the old fashioned aircraft carrier *Hermes* was sunk by the strike of 90 Jap aircraft. Our air force lost 9 fighters and 5 Blenheim bombers in defence of the harbour.

Admiral Nagamo's fleet had been a powerful one, consisting of 5 aircraft carriers each carrying 60 planes, (the same carriers as had wreaked such havoc at Pearl Harbour 4 months previously), 4 battleships, 3 cruisers and 11

destroyers. And this had not been the only Jap fleet in the Indian Ocean. In the Bay of Bengal, a simultaneous attack on our shipping had been made by another task force commanded by Admiral Ozawa. This fleet had consisted of one light carrier, 7 cruisers and 11 destroyers and in 3 days it sank 23 ships totalling 112,000 tons.

On reference to my diary, it will be noted that the number of enemy warships that I counted at anchor in the Singapore Roads on April 12, 1942 tallied almost exactly with the combined strength of these two fleets mentioned above. My diary entries for April 5 and 9 must also refer to the same events although, as I said at the time, details were lacking. The entry for April 18 must refer to Dolittle's Air Raid on Tokio of that date.

The details of this note are taken from Ian Trenowden's book *Operations Most Secret S.O.E. The Malayan Theatre* (Kimber, 1978).

APPENDIX B

A Note on the Raid on Japanese Shipping in Singapore Harbour on the night of September 27, 1943.

This commando raid, one of the most daring exploits of the 2nd World War, was organised and led by a Major Ivan Lyon, a connection of the Queen Mother's family of Bowes-Lyon. He had originally come out to Singapore in early 1937 as a subaltern in the Gordon Highlanders and as a keen sailor had come to know the many islands of the Riau Archipelago surrounding Singapore very well. Just before the fall of Singapore, he had joined the embryo Force 136, which had just been formed to spearhead later local resistance groups in Jap-occupied territory.

For a time he helped to organise the escape route of thousands of refugees from Singapore across the seas to Sumatra, up the Indragiri River, and so to Padang on the West Coast. The worst incident was, of course, the bombing and sinking off Pompong Island of the 3 small China River boats, the *Kuala*, the *Kuang Wu* and the *Tun Kuang*, which resulted in 700 survivors being marooned on a virtually uninhabited island. Lyon's organisation saved the vast majority of these and much help was also given by a decrepit 70 foot long coaster with an ancient diesel engine which an elderly Australian named Reynolds had sailed from Singapore. This ship was the *Kofuku Maru*, originally the property of a Japanese fishing concern. Though its maximum speed was only 7 knots Reynolds not only sailed it northwards along the Sumatran Coast and up the Malacca Straits, but actually reached India in it.

Meanwhile Lyon and other Force 136 members acquired a 60 foot long Sumatran fishing boat at Padang and eventually reached the coast of Ceylon after 34 days' sailing. Here they luckily met a friendly cargo boat which, after sinking their boat, with gun fire, carried them on to Bombay.

Here in India, Lyon hatched his plan for a "back door" attack on enemy shipping in Singapore from the south, i.e. up through the Lombok Straits, to the east of Java, from a base in Australia. The *Kofuku Maru*, now renamed the *Krait*, was brought down to Australia on the decks of a tramp and steps were taken to recruit and train for it a suitable crew of 14. Ten of these turned out to be Australians and 4 British.

To attack enemy ships in harbour it was planned to use 3 pairs of canoeists carried in 3 collapsible boats, which would be constructed of rubberised canvas stretched over bamboo frames. Each of the 3 boats would be 17 feet long and capable of carrying up to 800 lbs. weight of stores, and 2 men. Their offensive weapons would be limpet mines, about the size of a dinner plate, which would stick tight to the side of a ship. If 3 mines could be stuck to the sides of a merchant ship near the holds, they would each blow a hole about 5 feet across and inevitably sink her. The mines were, however, not so effectual against oil tankers as the thick fuel would limit the hole blown to only a foot across and the tanker might well remain afloat. However, if it did become necessary to attack a tanker, it was preferable to put the mines up against the propeller shaft and the engine room so as to cripple the tanker's engines

The base chosen for the *Krait's* departure was Exmouth Gulf, half way up the West Coast of Australia. Though her maximum speed was to remain only 7 knots she was now fitted with new 105 hp diesel engines which increased her range to 8,000 miles – it was 2,000 miles from her Australian base to Singapore by the route through the Lombok Straits. Her fire power was also considerable: 2 Lewis Guns, 2 Brens, and a dozen Owen sub-machine guns.

The *Krait* eventually sailed from Exmouth Gulf on September 2, 1943, passed through the dangerous and narrow Lombok Straits on September 9 and deposited their 6 canoeists and 3 canoes on the small island of Panjang, only 40 miles from Singapore on September 20. During the next few days, the canoeists approached ever nearer under cover of night to their target, until they had on September 26 reached Pulau Subar, their final base which was only about 7 miles from Singapore Harbour itself.

On the night of September 27, the 3 canoes set out to attack their respective targets – (i) Canoe No. 1 to attack ships in the Singapore Roads to the East of Keppel Harbour, (ii) Canoe No. 2 to attack ships anchored off Pulau Bukum, the oil terminal, and (iii) Canoe No. 3 (with Lyon) to attack the Examination Anchorage to the N.E. of Pulau Bukum. Areas (ii) and (iii) were both west of Keppel Harbour.

Canoe No. 1 mined 3 substantial cargo vessels of at least 6,000 tons each and set the charges to go off at 5 am. Canoe No. 2 mined a *Tone Maru* class cargo boat, then the *Nasusan Maru*, and – thirdly an unnamed 6,000 ton cargo boat. Canoe No. 3 had a much more difficult task as the lights of Singapore were hidden by a spit of land which made it difficult for the canoeists to distinguish their targets in the darkness. Eventually Major Lyon and his partner had to fix their mines to the propeller shaft and near the engine room of a 10,000 ton oil tanker which was partially lit up. Even while they were engaged in this operation, a man on board the tanker watched them at work from his port hole, only 10 feet away, and for some unaccountable reason did not raise the alarm!

All the canoeists got away safely from their target areas and made contact with the *Krait* on the night of October 1 at the agreed rendezvous at Pompong Island. After narrowly escaping discovery by a Japanese destroyer at the Lombok Straits the *Krait* reached Exmouth Gulf safely on October 19.

The Japs were, as we now know, completely baffled by the raid and savagely meted out vengeance on the helpless internees of Changi Jail, whom they wrongly suspected of complicity.

After the war, the Allies discovered in Tokio a confidential report which read, in part, as follows: "Singapore shipping espionage has been carried out by natives under European instructions. An enemy espionage developed early in the morning of September 27, 1943 at Singapore. It was commanded by Europeans hiding in the neighbourhood of Palai (Pulai?) in Johore." All 7 ships mined, blew up and were sunk, a total loss to the enemy of nearly 38,000 tons.

It is a pity that the story cannot end on this triumphant note, but it was not to be. Exactly a year later in September 1944, Lyon attempted to repeat his exploit by a similar attack. But in spite of the cooperation of 2 Royal Navy Submarines, the plan ended in disaster. No enemy ships were attacked and all the canoeists involved were either captured or killed owing to the chance inter-

ception of their junk by native Indonesian police only twelve miles from Singapore. Lyon was, with others, killed in the course of fighting on one of the islands but ten were captured and brought to trial in Singapore. All were sentenced to death and executed with swords near the Reformatory Road on July 7, 1945, only a month before the dropping of the Atomic Bombs.

A memorial plaque to the memory of Major Ivan Lyon, D.S.O. can be seen on the outside wall of St. George's Garrison Church, Tanglin, Singapore.

N.B. The facts, on which the above note is based, have been taken from Brian Connell's *Return of the Tiger* (Evans Bros, 1965).

APPENDIX C

A Note on the "Double Tenth" Incident (October 10, 1943)

This was so called because it began on the 10th day of the 10th month of 1943, an important date in the Chinese Calendar, as it is also the Anniversary of the Foundation of the Republic of China in 1912.

In 1942 the Japanese had speedily established control over Singapore after the capitulation, executing up to 10,000 Chinese in the early days on the grounds that they were Communists or at least Anti-Japanese.

But by the spring of 1943, the civilian European Internees in Changi Jail, thanks to their many contacts with the local Singapore population, were:

- (i) disseminating War News throughout the town.
- (ii) possessed wireless sets in the camp for listening to the B.B.C. News.
- (iii) were able to obtain news of friends and relatives incarcerated in other Jap camps in Malaya and even in the Dutch East Indies (i.e. Padang and Palembang).
- (iv) were conducting a healthy Black Market with Singapore well-wishers, thanks to the contacts built up by our lorry drivers and by Long, the driver of the Camp Ambulance. (Many of the Jap Staff at Changi were well aware of this traffic as they too benefited from the proceeds).

Many of the above activities had been regarded as relatively harmless by the internees themselves but to the suspicious Japanese in command, it was otherwise. The Japanese armies were no longer winning victories and had retired from Guadalcanar, food was short and the local population had become more and more hostile and restive. At a loss to explain the failure of their propaganda, the Japs wrongly came to the conclusion that the strength of the Anti-Jap feeling must emanate from the civilian Europeans imprisoned at Changi. Suspicion centred in particular on R.H. Scott, a member of the Foreign Office, who had unfortunately been caught in Sumatra and brought back to Singapore. The Japs knew that Scott had already played a prominent part in anti-Japanese work in Manchuria in 1931, in Shanghai in 1932 and 1937, that he had served in Chungking in 1938 and at Tokyo in 1939 and had indeed conducted British Propaganda in Tokyo as late as 1941.

The Japanese, therefore, decided in May 1943 to enlist from Japan a special Kempitai Officer, a Major Sumida, to wipe out these anti-Japanese elements in Singapore, a task to which they gave the name "No. 1 Work". It was also decided to carry out a large scale raid on Changi Jail at around Christmas 1943, but in September 1943, an event occurred which forced Major Sumida to accelerate his "No. 1 Work" plans. As related in Appendix B in this book, 7 Japanese ships were sunk in Singapore Harbour by limpet mines placed by a Commando Unit led by a Major Lyon which had come from Australia. This fact the Japs never discovered and they wrongly connected the loss of their ships with the Civilian Internees at Changi in general and R.H. Scott in particular, after a fruitless search for saboteurs supposedly based on Johore.

Of these events, the vast majority, if not all the inmates of Changi Jail, knew

nothing and it was therefore a complete surprise when the Kempitai descended in strength upon our camp at dawn on October 10, 1943, before 'B' Block, at any rate, had had their 8 am. breakfast. 27 hours without food would elapse before we did eat, as our last meal had been at 6 pm. on the day before. I must have had some indication that something was in the offing as I had already put all my diary written to date into a Jacob's biscuit tin and had it soldered up ready for burial in case of an emergency. But in the event I was already too late, a Jap searcher found the tin and it was only by a stroke of luck that it was not taken away for the inspection of its contents.

Altogether, 57 internees were taken away by the Kempitai for questioning of whom 15 subsequently died either from the brutality of their torture, the conditions of their close confinement for weeks or months, and the diseases that they contracted through poor food and the tainted water that they drank, the only supply being the lavatory pan. Only 8 internees were ever tried, and sentenced for alleged "crimes" and all these convictions were based solely on evidence produced by the most savage torturing of the unfortunate internees. One, John Long, the ambulance driver, was executed, the rest were given years of hard labour or solitary confinement.

The Japs, as a nation suffer from an inability to admit any error or defeat on their part and so in this case they would have lost too much face to admit that they had been wrong to connect anti-Japanese feeling in Singapore and the sinking of their 7 ships with the internees of Changi Jail.

Secondly, the Japanese Law, so Major Sumida explained to Scott, required a confession to be made by the accused before he could be brought to trial and it was lawful under Japanese law to extract a confession by torture if necessary and the torturers could not be held responsible as they were merely acting under the orders of others!

A combination of the above factors was to lead, almost inevitably, to the deaths of 15 internees and to the brutal torture of several more.

Four women were among those taken away for questioning. Three were European women from Changi, namely:—

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| (i) Miss (Dr) Cicely Williams | (from 23.10.43 to 25. 3.44) |
| (ii) Mrs Bloom | (from 22.10.43 to 25. 3.44) |
| (iii) Mrs. D. Nixon | (from 2. 4.44 to 7.11.44) |

None of the above was tortured and none was charged with any crime, but they still suffered the full rigours of the terrible conditions, the lack of privacy for their sex, the appalling over-crowding (estimated by R.H. Scott at only 18" square per prisoner) and the very poor food both in quality and quantity, whether they were housed in the cells at the Y.M.C.A., in Smith Street or at the Central Police Station.

But a fourth lady, a Chinese Mrs. Elizabeth Choy, not from Changi, did suffer brutal torture, some of it in front of her own husband. Choy Koon Heng, Elizabeth Choy's husband and a book keeper employed by the Borneo Co., had been running a canteen at the Miyako Hospital and there he had met John Long, our Ambulance driver, when he came there with patients from Changi Jail. It was not long before Long and the Choys had organised an elaborate news service by which our camp was kept fully informed of every scrap of news or

rumour emanating from Singapore. For this all concerned were to pay dearly. John Long suffered execution and Choy Koon Heng was sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment in May 1944, when his wife was set free after 7 months in prison under interrogation.

Another who suffered brutally at the hands of the Kempitai was J.L. Wilson, the Bishop of Singapore. He had not been immediately interned after the fall of Singapore, but had remained out on parole until March 1943. When he did eventually come into Changi, he brought with him a large sum of money, some say \$750,000, that had been collected and presented to him for the benefit of the internees in Changi. The presence of such a large sum in the camp immediately aroused the suspicions of the Kempitai on October 10, 1943 and the Bishop was taken away on October 17 and questioned until set free on May 26, 1944. In spite of receiving over 200 strokes from 6 guards working in relays, the Kempitai failed to make the Bishop admit that the money had ever been intended for any subversive activity. Some nevertheless dubbed him the "Lawrence of Malaya". This connection is not obvious unless it had been prompted by the finding in the Bishop's Cell of a copy of Lowell Thomas's *Life of Lawrence of Arabia* which I had lent the Bishop only a day or two before the Double Tenth. His cell was next to mine.

**A LIST OF INTERNESS WHO SUBSEQUENTLY DIED AS A RESULT
OF THE "DOUBLE TENTH" INVESTIGATION**

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Name	Date Taken	Date Returned	Date Death	Place and Cause of Death
A. Buchanan	10.10.43	—	3. 4.44	Miyako Hospital. Dysentery
Dr. C.A. Stanley	10.10.43	—	2.12.44	Buried in unknown grave. Considered key witness, brutally tortured. Attempted suicide after signing false confession, again tortured after breaking his pelvis through jumping out of a window.
W.L. Stevenson	10.10.43	—	6. 1.44	Miyako Hospital. Ran Radio in 'B' Block, brutally tortured, dysentery.
D.V.P. Perry	15.10.43	21. 9.44	21. 9.44	Camp Hospital, tortured, bad beri-beri.
J.S. Long	(16.10.43 (25.11.44)	7.10.44	27.11.44	Executed; alleged "espionage" relating to oil, he had been employed by the Asiatic Petroleum Co. (Shell Co.).
J. Adrian Clarke	18.10.43	—	21. 3.44	Miyako Hospital; torture and dysentery.
N. Coulson	27.10.43	—	17. 7.44	Returned dead to Camp, bad torture and dysentery.
S.A. Hagger	27.10.43	8. 4.44	July 1945	Camp Hospital; torture followed by chronic stomach trouble.
H.E.W. Bryning	4.11.43	—	1. 2.44	Miyako Hospital; torture and dysentery.
S.M. Middlebrook	2.12.43	18.10.44	19.10.44	Camp Hospital: bad torture, dysentery & beri-beri; his "crime" was having been the Chairman of the Singapore Re-Establishing Committee.
Dr. J.H. Bowyer	16. 1.44	24.10.44	1.11.44	Camp Hospital; beri-beri & dysentery.
H. Fraser	19. 2.44	24. 7.44	25. 7.44	Camp Hospital; very bad dysentery.
H.C.R. Rendle	1. 4.44	28.10.44	26.10.44	Returned dead to Camp; bad dysentery and beri-beri.
M. Penseler	1. 4.44	24.10.44	2.11.44	Camp Hospital; beri-beri followed by pleurisy & pneumonia caught in open lorry.
A.W.W. Ker	1. 4.44	27. 7.44	25. 9.44	Camp Hospital; ulcers, heart failure.

Note: Another tragic victim of the "Double Tenth", though not an internee of Changi, was a Eurasian named Cornelius who had formerly been employed by the Johore Electrical Company at Johore Bahru. He was arrested by the Kempitai on October 20, 1943 and charged with the alleged offence of sending \$200 to a European Internee. As a result of a savage beating which continued from 2 pm. to 10 pm. on October 21, he was found to be dead at dawn on October 22. *

Owing to the lack of evidence and because of the serious illness and deaths of many of the chief suspects, only 8 internees were ever brought to trial and sentenced (and 3 of these belonged to a Body Disposal Squad which had no connection with the "Double Tenth"). The following are details of those tried and sentenced—

Name	Date Taken	Date Returned	Sentence	Alleged Crime
R.H. Scott	10.10.43	28. 2.45 (sick)	6 years' hard labour	Receiving B.B.C. News and distributing it in camp.
L.R.F. Earl	26. 4.45 (2nd occasion)	19. 8.45	6 years' hard labour	Receiving B.B.C. News and distributing it in camp.
J.S. Long	25.11.44 (2nd occasion)	27.11.44 Executed	Death	Organised News service, Espionage relating to Oil alleged.
W.T. Cherry	26. 4.55 (2nd occasion)	19. 8.45	4 years' hard labour	Bringing into Camp Wireless sets and parts.
Dr. R. Calderwood	29. 1.44	19. 8.45	4 years' hard labour	(not stated)
R.W. Smith	27. 3.42	24.11.44	(2-years' solitary confinement each	All were drivers of Body Disposal Squad Lorries and were sentenced for "Anti-Japanese talk".
H.P. O'Neil	27. 3.42	24.11.44		3 other drivers died while in prison.
F.I.V. Gow	27. 3.42	24.11.44		

This Note is based on facts contained in *The "Double Tenth" Trial* by Sleeman & Silkin (Hodge, Edinburgh, 1951)** and also *The Double Tenth Trial* edited by Bashir A. Mallal (*Malayan Law Journal Office*, Singapore, 1947).

- This brave man, then employed by the Atlas Ice Works, Singapore, had agreed to supply his former employer, Mr. Herdman, an internee with radio parts for a third radio set. These parts were smuggled into Changi Jail by an Indian named Francis, who was also the Jap Commandant's chauffeur. As this car was serviced by the Camp Workshop, run by the internees, it was easy to arrange for the car to develop engine trouble whenever radio parts were being delivered, so that it could be driven direct to the workshop for repair. Otherwise the car was never inspected. All the persons involved paid dearly for this. Francis, the chauffeur, was executed, Herdman was tortured and Cornelius was beaten to death. His wife and brother were also arrested, but Cornelius' death was not revealed to them until a year later when the widow received her husband's ashes.

- The War Crimes Court which tried the Kempitai accused of the barbarities connected with the "Double Tenth" Incident was held within the Supreme Court Building, Singapore, between March 18 and April 15 1946. 21 accused were produced in court, of whom 8, including Lieutenant Colonel Sumida, Commander of the Singapore Branch of the Kempitai, were condemned to death. 4 more accused were sentenced to life imprisonment, one to 15 years' and two to 8 years' imprisonment. The rest were found not guilty for lack of evidence. No wonder, Mr. Hori, the Jap defending counsel "expressed his gratitude for the very considerate trial". Not a scrap of evidence had been produced to substantiate the Kempitai's allegation that Changi Jail had harboured a spy ring that this ring had used a transmitting set to send information to the mythical outside force in Johore held responsible for the blowing up of the Japanese ships in Singapore Harbour on September 27, 1943. Prosecuting Counsel had had to labour under two handicaps. Firstly, there had been the difficulty of producing witnesses able to recall accurately the details of events which had happened 2 years before. Secondly there had been the absence of 15 potentially key witnesses for the prosecution who were not available simply because they had died from their ill-treatment.

APPENDIX D

The Building of the Siam-Burma Railway. (June 1942—October 1943)

It was in June 1942 that Imperial Headquarters at Tokio ordered their Southern Army Command to build a strategic railway linking up the railway systems of Siam and Burma. This required the construction of a line 260 miles long between BAN PONG, a station on the Siam Railway, 50 miles west of Bangkok, and THANBYUZAYAT, a station on the Burma Railway, about 35 miles south of the port of MOULMEIN.

In mid 1942, the Jap lines of communication with their army of occupation in Burma (stretched out along the CHINDWIN River in the North-West corner of the country) were very long. All army supplies amounting to about 35,000 tons weight per week, had to be carried by sea round the southern tip of the Malay peninsula. The rail link via Bangkok, now projected, would not only cut the length of this journey by 1,200 miles, but more important still, would avoid much of the allied submarine menace. Allied submarine attacks had already made serious inroads on Japan's maritime fleet, for of the 6 million tons of shipping she had started the war with, Japan had by June 1942 already lost 91 ships totalling 400,000 tons.

Faced with this problem, Jap railway engineers set to work, guided by an old British survey trace. Using BAN PONG and THANBYUZAYAT as their first base camps, they planned to start building the line from both ends, the track to follow the left or east bank of the KHWAE NO1 River, from BAN PONG right up to its source. At TAMARKAN, where the KHWAE NO1 is joined on its left side by a large tributary, the MAE KHIONG River, two large bridges would be built, a timber one to carry the railway line and a concrete one to carry the asphalt road from BAN PONG. The waters of the KHWAE NO1 would also be utilised to bring up construction materials in barges.

Preliminary estimates had revealed that the railway link might ordinarily take 5 or 6 years to complete. But the Jap engineers concluded that with the help of unlimited P.O.W. labour, the work could be done in very much less time.

About 50,000 P.O.W.s were immediately made available, and the advanced guard of this body, 3,000 Australians, Known as 'A' Force, left Singapore by train in April and May 1942. 36 men were crammed into each of the small steel box type railway trucks used, and their 1,000 mile journey took 5 days and nights. Other P.O.W.s destined to start work from the THANBYUZAYAT end of the railway, were conveyed northwards by sea, in even greater discomfort. Crowded with the holds of small Jap folighters, they were lucky if they escaped the attacks of allied submarine or Liberator bombers on the way, before they

were dumped ashore at the port of Moulmein.

'A' Force was followed by further P.O.W. drafts labelled 'B', 'C', 'D', Forces, sent mainly from Changi Barracks at Singapore and Pudu Jail at Kuala Lumpur, though some also came from Batavia in Java. By the end of November 1942, about 10,000 British and Dutch P.O.W.s had started work on the Burma sector and 30,000 more on the Siam sector. The three Pagodas Pass on the border marked the division between the sectors.

The railway was constructed entirely of local material and no specialised mechanical aids or equipment were provided. Only locally made tools, local stone and local wood were used. Even the steel railway lines had been filched either from the Burma, or the Malayan Railways. For instance the entire branch line between Kuala Krai in Kelantan and Mentakab in Pahang, 200 miles in length, was uprooted and sent north as was the 18 mile track of the branch line between Tapah and Telok Anson in Perak. Similarly, wood-burning locomotives, often old and insufficient, were commandeered from the same areas.

By the end of 1942, the forces of Japan had suffered serious reverses. Japan's maritime losses now amounted to 240 merchant ships totalling 1,000,000 tons and it was becoming urgently necessary to abandon the dangerous sea route to Rangoon and replace it with the safer overland rail route from Bangkok.

Steps were therefore taken to speed up the completion of the railway. Orders were given to increase the white P.O.W. Labour force to 61,000 men, and to supplement it by employing free native labour, who would be coaxed into offering their services by promises of good pay, decent accommodation and extra food. More than 250,000 Asian Labourers from Burma, Siam and Malaya answered this call. In the case of Malaya, most of the 60,000 labourers who joined the scheme were unemployed Tamil labourers from the rubber plantations.

In the case of the white P.O.W.s, two extra groups labelled 'F' & 'H' Forces were sent north from Changi in April and May 1943. These unfortunate men, many of whom had already been classified as too old or too sick for labouring jobs, were despatched to the most, remote, difficult and unhealthy parts of the track. 'H' Force took over a 13 mile section between TONCHAN and HINTOK, and 'F' Force a section between KON KUTA and the Three Pagodas Pass on the border. The increased tempo of work, known as "Speedo" by the Japs, the appalling 5 months long monsoon conditions and the outbreak of Cholera in May 1943 caused 'F' Force to lose by death 44% of its strength and 'H' Force 27%, during their 6 months "Speedo" work.

Nevertheless the railway was completed and opened on October 25 1943. The cost in lives of this stupendous task, the construction of a railway line longer than that between Singapore and Kuala Lumpur or that between Kuala Lumpur and Penang, within 18 months, was horrifying. Out of a total of 61,000 white P.O.W.s who worked on this line, 12,339 died. Out of over 250,000 Asians who also worked there, only 30,000 were ever traced and returned to their countries. Many may have returned unrecorded and by their own efforts but the total deaths among the labourers cannot have been less than 90,000. Put in another way, 393 men of whom 47 were P.O.W.s and the remainder Asian labourers, died for every mile for every mile of the railway built.

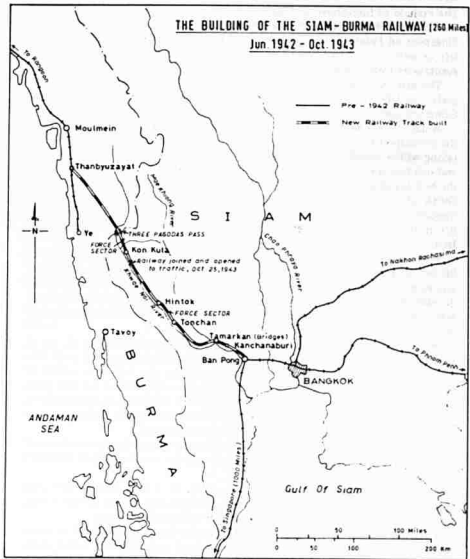
A large part of the line has now been sold or dismantled and only small

sections at each and continue to carry traffic. In 1957, the author of this note, as an "ex-member of the Colonial forces" received a cheque from the Secretary of State for £ 28, being his share of "the sales of Japanese Assets". Included in this sum was £ 3, being his share of the proceeds from the sale of the Siam - Burma Railway.

The details of this note have been taken from Clifford KINVIG's "Death Railway" (Pan) 1973.

THE BUILDING OF THE SIAM-BURMA RAILWAY (260 Miles)

Jun 1942 - Oct 1943



APPENDIX E

A note on the Writing of the Prelude to Internment at Changi and the Diary

The Prelude to Internment at Changi is based on notes which I jotted down in the Customs House, Maxwell Road, Singapore, within a month of the fall of Singapore on February 15, 1942 and before we went to Changi Jail. As the Japs left us well alone, I had plenty of opportunity to collect my thoughts while events were fresh in my mind.

The diary was also begun at this time, on March 13, 1942, and I continued to make my daily entry after we had moved to Changi Jail and then to Sime Road Camp and right up to the Jap surrender.

A day or two before the "Double Tenth" of October 10, 1943, I had taken the precaution to have the part of the diary already written put in a biscuit tin (along with a valuable compass belonging to Coney of the Customs Department) and had had the tin soldered up in the tinsmith's hut. I had temporarily hidden the box inside a broom cupboard outside my cell and behind some water pipes. On October 10, a Jap searcher must have opened the cupboard, flashed his torch upwards and spotted the box because of its shiny reflection. He had then taken it out and left it on a concrete ledge outside the cell, meaning to take it away later.

Fortunately for me, Fred Bailey from the cell next door, was called up to his cell by another searcher to open a locked suitcase. Fred spotted my box and, knowing its contents, placed his own suitcase on top of it before going downstairs again. The Jap thus forgot to pick up my box and Fred's action may well have saved my life, judging from the rough treatment and fate of many other internees taken away for so-called questioning.

With hindsight, it was a dangerous thing to do to keep a diary at all, but at that time when the diary was first begun the danger had not appeared great. The day after the search I took good care to bury the box in a corner of the vegetable garden²¹² inside the prison and there it remained for two years until I was able to dig it up safe and in excellent condition on September 9, 1945, that is after the Jap surrender. Meanwhile, I continued to keep a diary but avoiding, so far as I could judge, any dangerous entries.

The reader may wonder how I came to hear and record the various items of news, the reports (often quite unconfirmed) and the rumours (often fantastic) that figure in my diary.

Most of this material came from the group of 7 or 8 friends who met regularly every night between the hours of 8.30 pm. and 10 pm. (Tokio Time), first of all in 'B' Block yard at Changi and later at Sime Road Camp.

I should explain that nearly every internee in the camp belonged to some such discussion group, whose members would meet each night out in the yards, sit round in circles on their home made wooden stools, and discuss the day's happenings.

Real news might often be very scarce but nearly always there were interesting

²¹² For the exact spot, see D on the rough plan of Changi, on page 97.

rumours to discuss such as the latest development in our repatriation hopes, or it might be news of better rations being promised by the Jap High Command. On other nights the topic of conversation might be the latest eccentricity or brutality of a Jap sentry or the latest orders emanating from Tominara, the Jap Sergeant in Changi, who was to remain a thorn in our flesh to the very end.

If one of us or any other internee had been out on a Singapore fatigue, there was much to be gleaned or deduced from what he was alleged to have seen or heard during his visit.

Our own particular group consisted of 5 Customs Officers whom I had known for many years and whom I had met again at the Customs House. They were Sam Hall, Arnold Gridley, Coney, Johnny Johnston and my brother John. Then there were also two doctors, one Dr. Bain in private practice in Singapore and the other Dr. Braine, a Government doctor. Finally there were two Government Education Officers, Noel (or "Tinggi") Rees and myself.

Not all the above came from 'B' Block in Changi Jail. Dr. Braine, for instance, came from 'D' Block and he was occasionally able to contribute an item of news from 'D' Block which had not yet reached 'B' Block. Arnold Gridley was often the source of some good quality news since he was involved in the Block administration. Some of his news was indeed genuine B.B.C. news but we were careful not to discuss its source or authenticity for security reasons.

Noel Rees, a well known wit, even before Changi times, would regale us nightly with topical limericks, usually Rabelaisian, to fit the news of the day. "There was an Old Lady from Bug-bug", (or Bardia or Tobruk) were samples of the first lines of such compositions at the time of the North African Campaign.

All this helped to keep us happy and to bolster our morale even in the darkest times. I, and I think all of us, looked forward to our evening chats very much indeed.

Glossary

Adohi	-	Alas! Oh!
A.P.C.	-	Asiatic Petroleum Co. (Shell)
Atap	-	Thatch of palm leaves
Ayam	-	Fowl, chicken
Bagan	-	A landing place
Baru	-	New
Baju	-	Coat, jacket
Barang	-	Luggage, belongings
B.A.T.	-	British American Tobacco Co.
Batu	-	Stone, milestone
Bayam	-	Spinach
"Banyak bagus sekarang"	-	very good (news) now
Belachan	-	Prawn and fish paste
Belukar	-	Secondary jungle
Beras	-	Uncooked rice
Beri Beri	-	A deficiency disease causing swellings of legs, etc.
Besar	-	Large
Bukit	-	Hill
Changkul	-	A hoe used for hoeing earth
Chetty or Chettiar	-	(Tamil) - Money lender
Chilli	-	Red pepper
Chop (China)	-	Permit, seal
Dhall	-	(Hind) - pulses
"Dog"	-	(The) - Selangor Club, Kuala Lumpur
F.M.S.	-	Federated Malay States
Gantang	-	Measurement of capacity (gallon)
Ghee	-	(Hind) - clarified butter
Godown	-	Warehouse
Gula Melaka	-	Coconut sugar
Gunong	-	Mountain
Haji	-	A Mohamedan who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca and wears a white cap.
Hitam	-	Black
Jalan	-	Road, way
Kampong	-	Village
Kanji	-	(Hind) - rice gruel
Kati	-	A "catty", 1 1/3 lbs. weight
Kechil	-	Small

Kempitai	— (Jap) Secret Police or Gestapo
Kolek	— A Malay Canoe
Kongsi	— (China) a society, association
Kota	— Fort
Kuala	— Mouth of main river or where tributary joins main stream
Kuala Lumpur	
Kuali	— Cooking pot, frying pan
Lallang	— Long grass (coarse)
M.C.S.	— Malayan Civil Service
Mah Mee	— Chinese dish
Musang	— A Civet Cat
Nasi	— Boiled rice
Nasi Goreng	— Fried rice
Nippon-Go	— The Jap language
Oedema	— Disease causing swellings, e.g. of ankles
Padang	— 1. plain, open space, 2. name of town on West Coast of Sumatra
Padi	— Rice in the husk
Pagar	— Fence, palisade of stakes
Panjang	— Tall, long
Papaya	— paw paw fruit
Parang	— Chopper, slasher
Parit	— Ditch, drainage canal
Pasir	— Sand
Pellagra	— A deficiency disease causing skin to crack
Perahu	— A Malay ship or boat
Pikul	— 133 1/3 lbs. weight
P & T	— Posts and Telegraphs
P.W.D.	— Public Works Dept.
Pulau	— Island
Rambutan	— A fruit with a hairy exterior
Rengas	— A tree with a poisonous sap
Rintis	— A narrow path or track cut through forests as a fire break
Rimau	— Tiger
R.R.I.	— Rubber Research Institute
Sais	— (Hind) — syce, groom, car driver
Sampan	— Rowing boat
Samsu	— Chinese alcoholic drink
Samurai	— (Jap) feudal warrior
Santan	— Coconut milk
Sarong	— A Malay skirt or covering
"Sendiri bikin, sendiri makan"	— "You plant it, you eat it" (said of garden vegetables)
Simpang Kiri	— Left hand crossing (river) — tributary of Batu Pahat River
Simpang Kanan	— Right hand crossing of river — one of two arms of Batu Pahat River

S.S.	- Straits Settlements
Sungei	- River
Syonan	- (Jap) - Singapore
Syonan Sinbun	- Singapore Times (paper)
Takut	- Afraid, fearful
Tamils	- Natives of S. India or Ceylon employed as rubber tappers in Malaya
Tanjong	- Cape, headland
Ta' Tentu Maru	- "Not Certain" MARU
Ta' Guna Maru	- "No use" MARU
Tengku Makhota	- Crown Prince of Johore
Telok (or Teluk)	- A bay
Tinggi	- High, lofty, tall
"Tokio Ta' Mau Lawan Lagi"	- Tokio does not wish to fight any more
Tojo-Ko	- (Jap) Penang
Topi	- (Hind) a pith sun helmet
Towkay	- Chinese business man or merchant
Tuan	- Master (applied to European men)
Ubi	- Potato
Ubi Kayu	- Tapioca
Ulu	- Upper reaches of a river, so up-country

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