



Forgiven but not Forgotten

Memoirs of a Teenage Girl Prisoner of the Japanese in China

JOYCE BRADBURY

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In this book she tells the amazing story of her family's long involvement in China, her life growing up in China, the disturbing experiences of the Japanese internment camp, liberation from the camp by the US military, post-war China, migration to Australia, and then employment with the Singaporean police.

She describes her later life in Australia, her return to China to visit the former Japanese camp and reflects on the approach of the Japanese to the barbarities its wartime regime visited on the many peoples it subjugated.

As her story ends, she pays a moving tribute to an extraordinary Australian who was the hero of her Japanese prison camp.

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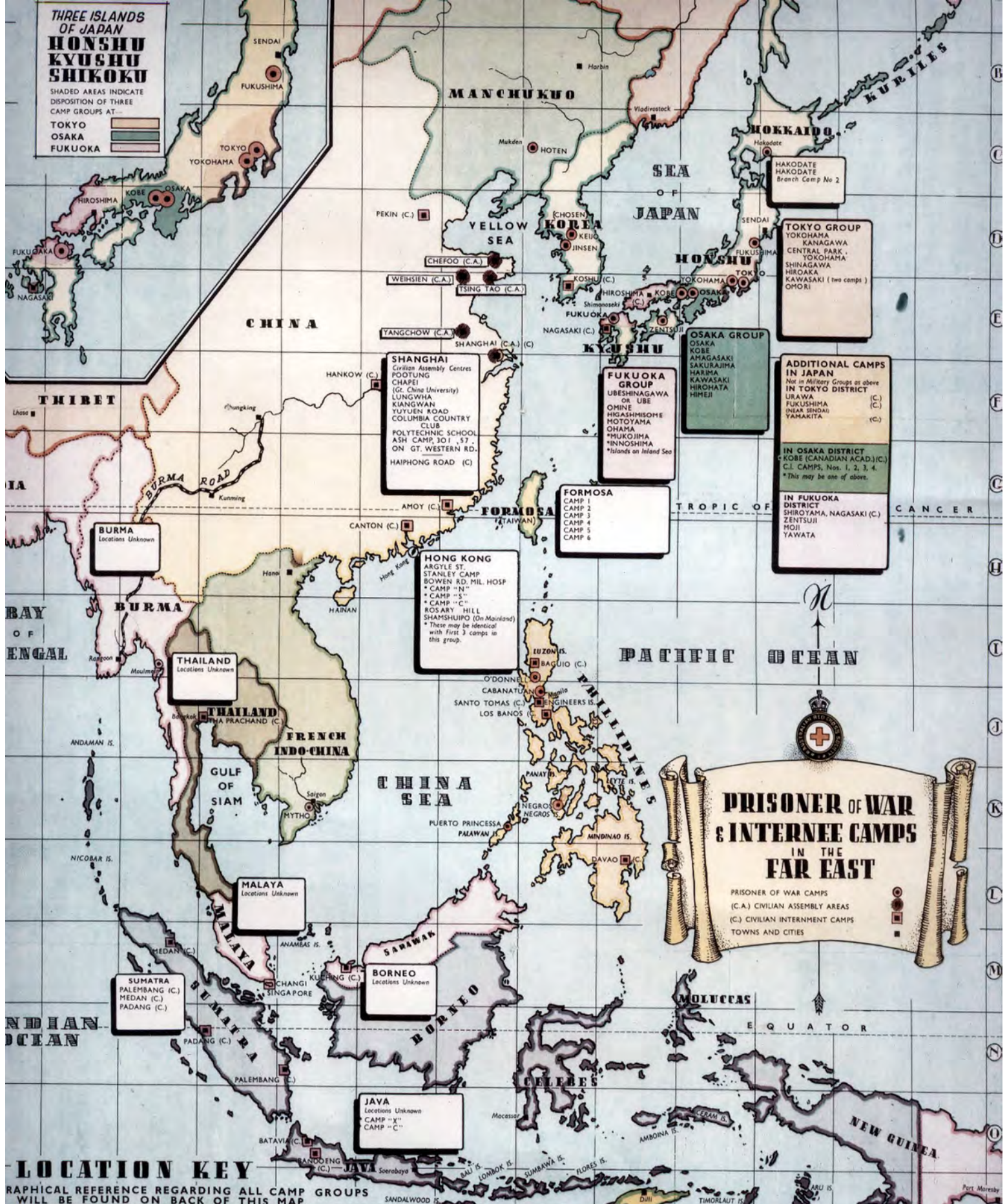
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THREE ISLANDS OF JAPAN HONSHU KYUSHU SHIKOKU

SHADED AREAS INDICATE
DISPOSITION OF THREE
CAMP GROUPS AT—
TOKYO
OSAKA
FUKUOKA



LOCATION KEY			
GRAPHICAL REFERENCE REGARDING ALL CAMP GROUPS WILL BE FOUND ON BACK OF THIS MAP.			
ADDITIONAL CAMPS ON ISLANDS OF JAPAN Urawa (C.) Fukushima (C.) near Sendai Yamakita (C.) Kobe, Canadian Acad. (C.) (C.I.) Camps, Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4 Shiroyama, Nagasaki (C.) Zentsuji Moji Yawata KOREA (Chosen) Keijo Jinzen Koahu (C.) FORMOSA (Taiwan) Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6 MANCHUKUO Hoten, Mukden	CHINA Shanghai P.O.W. Camp Canton (C.) Amoy (C.) Hankow (C.) Peking (C.) Haiphong Road (C.) Shanghai Civ. Assembly Pootung Chapei Lungwha Kiangwan Tsyuen Road Columbia Country Club Polytechnic School Great Western Road Yangchow Civ. Assembly Tsingtao Civ. Assembly Weihsien Civ. Assembly Chefoo Civ. Assembly	BURMA Mandalay MALAYA Changi, Singapore BORNEO Kuching, Sarawak (C.) JAVA Camp "X" Camp "C" Batavia (C.) Bandoeng (C.) SUMATRA Palembang (C.) Medan (C.) Padang (C.) TIMOR Ambon (Amboina Is.) PHILIPPINES Baguio (C.) Cabanatuan Santo Tomas (C.) Los Banos (C.) Manila, Santo Tomas (C.)	INDONESIA I 3 LM 4 LMN 5 & 7 M 5 O P S & 6 O 5 O 5 N 5 M 3 N 4 P 8 & 10 O 9 I 8 J 8 L 9 J 8 J 8

Contents

Foreword

Preface

Chapter 1 How I came to be in Australia

Chapter 2 The Cooke family and me

Chapter 3 Growing up in Tsingtao

Chapter 4 The Japanese change my life

Chapter 5 Teenage prisoner of the Japanese

Chapter 6 Liberation

Chapter 7 Home to Tsingtao

Chapter 8 First-time Sydneysider

Chapter 9 Return to Asia

Chapter 10 Second-time Sydneysider goes back to China

Chapter 11 Reflections on hard times

Chapter 12 Thanks Father

Chapter 13 The Happy Way

Chapter 14 Another view of Wei-Hsien

Further reading

Notes

Illustrations: Map of China Photographs

Preface

Writing a book for the first time is a tough but satisfying experience. It could not have been done without the help of other people and memories of the extraordinary people who have sustained me at different times in my life.

I have written this book because there have been events in my life that should be documented. These are sometimes sad, sometimes funny and often inspiring.

I wish to dedicate this book to my children, George, Tom and Bill, who have constantly given me joy. I especially would like to thank my husband Bob for his research work over many years.

Separately, I thank Barry Tucker who was the book's copy editor, Gianni Frinzi the book's graphic designer and picture editor, Georgie Perry for her cartography and photographs, Sister Marie Mansbridge for her photograph of her uncle, Michelle Bradbury for her recent family photograph, and my proofreaders, George Bradbury, Rosemary Lynch, Diane Burns and the late Brother Gregory Robinson FMS.

In compiling the book I was also helped by the Reverend Abbot David Tomlins of the Cistercian (Trappist) Tarrawarra Abbey at Yarra Glen, Victoria, members of Father Patrick Scanlan's Australian family in Warrnam-

Foreword

This book has been a labour of love for the author who first came to Australia in 1947 shortly after being released from internment in a Chinese prison camp by the Japanese during World War II. She was interned because she was a British citizen. At the time of her internment she was 13.

For almost 20 years, she and her husband, Bob, have spent time researching material for this book for her family, friends and people interested in her life and the intriguing lives of her antecedents. Joyce Bradbury (nee Cooke) also tells how she progressed from her wartime childhood adversity to a full life after World War II. Despite internment by the Japanese she is not embittered. Today, she plays an active role in her adopted Australia where she is well-respected for her community service work, has successfully raised three sons, is a grand-mother, and keeps in touch with survivors of the Japanese camp who are now scattered around the world.

From a reader's perspective, this is the story of an interesting woman, a fascinating family and a diverse group of persons who have peopled the author's life. The author also acknowledges many amazing people

bool, Victoria, and Sydney, New South Wales, and the Diocese of San Bernardino, California.

I thank survivors of the Japanese camp for their comradeship, their help, comments and recollections.

I hope readers will enjoy the book.

Finally, a note for readers.

Names of Chinese places in this book's text follow the names which were in common use by English speakers at the time of the events recorded. Where they first appear in the book they are followed by their present name, e.g. Peking (now known as Beijing). On the map of China the contemporary place name is given followed by the former name in brackets to assist users readers referring to modern atlases. The source for the Chinese place names used in the map and the text is Philip's World Atlas ninth edition, published Great Britain 1999. Names of other places, e.g. Pearl Harbor, also follow their official local spelling of the time.

Spellings in quoted documents follow that of the documents. Other spellings follow that of The Oxford Dictionary for Writers and Editors, published by Oxford University Press in the United States in 1989 in the first instance and then The Macquarie Dictionary, published by Macquarie Library Pty. Ltd. in Australia in 1981.

CHAPTER —1—

How I came to be in Australia

My name is Joyce Dorothy Bradbury. I was born Joyce Dorothy Cooke in Tsingtao (now called Qingdao), North China, on June 13, 1928. I lived there until November 1946 when my mother, brother and I left China for Sydney, Australia.

We travelled first by cargo ship to Hong Kong and then by the SS Nellore, a cargo-passenger ship, from



Hong Kong via Rabaul in Papua New Guinea and disembarked in Sydney. It was supposed to be a holiday trip but I was seasick the whole voyage except when we entered port. Even then, my stomach turned in Rabaul where I saw huge sharks in the harbour enjoying feeding frenzies when-ever garbage was thrown over the ship's side.

I have been asked by family and friends to set down details of my experiences in China, particularly as a prisoner of the Japanese during World War II. This, I have done. To make my story more complete I explain how my family came to be in China and why we were interned by the Japanese as British subjects. Had we been Chinese citizens we would not have been interned.

I also deal with our return to our home in China after the war and then having to leave that home to settle in Australia before the Communists took over government in mainland China.

Immediately after the US Pearl Harbor military base in Hawaii was bombed by the Japanese on December 7, 1941 — and the subsequent declaration of war on Japan by the World War II Allies — my family quickly went from a comfortable life of good food, servants and a wonderful social life to a Japanese-controlled nightmare. First, we faced restricted home confinement, then a Japanese regime of imprisonment in a hotel and finally imprisonment in a Japanese-run, vermin-infested internment compound where we were forced to undergo hardship, starvation, threats and intimidations for three-and-a-half years until liberated by US forces after the end of the war.

Mine is not the usual story of wholesale slaughter, cruelty on a large scale or other severe violations against humanity at the hands of the Japanese. My internment story is about their deliberate mistreatment of civilians. Although I was 13 at the time of our imprisonment and 17 at the time of liberation I have retained an excellent recollection of many events in the internment compound and will carry those recollections to

my grave. I relate them as they happened based on my observations and knowledge.

Upon our release after the war we were returned to our home in Tsingtao where we picked up the pieces and started again. Throughout 1946, Chinese Communist military forces began taking over control of the Chinese Government in the area where we lived. Anticipating their success and realising there was no future for us in China, my father in late 1946 sent my mother, brother and me to Australia 'for a holiday'. Shortly after our arrival in Sydney he sent us a telegram saying: "Remain in Australia, am joining you soon."

Dad's holiday trip plan was his way of getting us to leave China without the Chinese authorities becoming aware of our intentions and then frustrating my father's plans of getting his assets out of China. His covert asset transfer hopes came to little. He had to abandon real estate and a considerable amount of other property. I know he had shares in the Shanghai water works and also Shanghai's electricity department as well as \$US 10,000 dollars in a bank which he later told us he had to leave there.

Dad, or Pop as we called him in the family, was able to



bring enough money to buy a house in Sydney's West Ryde and to maintain us for a while but inevitably we all had to find a job to have a normal lifestyle. My younger brother Edmund (Eddie) [1] continued his schooling and gained his senior high school graduation certificate [the leaving certificate] from Marist Brothers' High School, Parramatta, in Sydney.

#

CHAPTER — 2 —

The Cooke family and me

It is true to say that the most dramatic events in my life occurred after World War II broke out between Japan and the Allied powers largely consisting of the British Empire and Commonwealth and the United States.

However, my family's history before and after those events is relevant to my story.

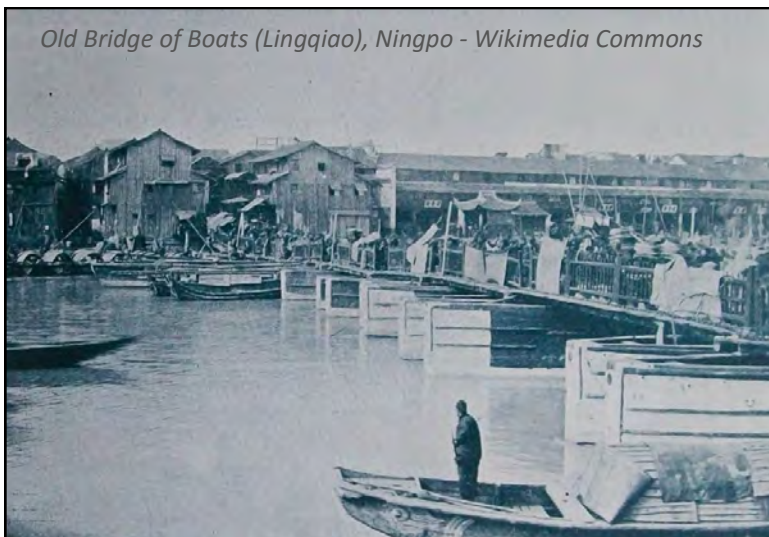
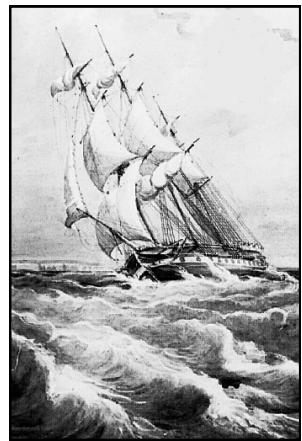
To explain why my family was in China, let me start my family's story with a summary of the published obituary of my paternal great-grandfather, James Edward Cooke – printed in the North China Herald [2] in 1881.



James Edward Cooke was born in Jamaica, the son of a planter. He was educated in Bristol, England, and he joined the British Royal Navy after school and served for an unknown period. He left the Royal Navy and at the age of 22 became master of a vessel owned by King & Co, an African Gold Coast exploration company.

Cooke arrived in Ningpo (now called Ningbo) – a foreign trading port near the mouth of the Yung River in eastern China's Chekiang province (now called Zhejiang province) – in 1861. He was mate of the British barque Alice.

Shortly after the Alice's arrival, the barque's captain was murdered ashore by some of his crew and Cooke became the temporary master. He took the vessel to Hong Kong and left her. At the time Cooke left the Alice civil conflicts were rag-

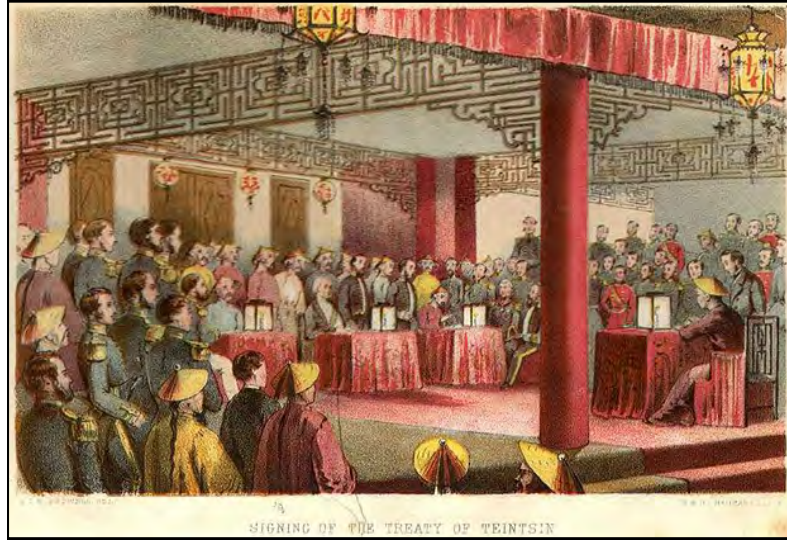


Old Bridge of Boats (Lingqiao), Ningpo - Wikimedia Commons

[1] Edmund John Clarence (Eddie) born June 9, 1932. Like me, he lives in Sydney, Australia. He is a proud parent and grandparent. During his working life he was a stockbroker.

2 North China Herald and Supreme Court and Consular Gazette published

Shanghai March 1, 1881. Death announcement is given as February 20, 1881 at Ningpo. Notification of death is at front page, obituary is at page 192. The obituary article is similar in style and content to a report carried in The N.-C. Daily News published March 2, 1881. The N.-C. Daily News of February 25, 1881 carried a report of Cooke's burial. Cooke's Death certificate obtained from the Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages (London) confirm date of death. Bradbury family collection.



Signing of the Treaty of Tientsin in 1859-06-06 after China lost the war

ing in China. Fighting on the governing Manchu dynasty side were Chinese, British and French-led forces.

The conflicts occurred in the aftermath of the ratification of the Treaty of Tientsin (1858) which formally ended the Opium Wars in China. The First Opium War between Britain and China started in 1839.



Mizuno Toshikata, "After the Fall of Weihaiwei, the Commander of the Chinese Beiyang Fleet, Admiral Ding Juchang, Surrenders" (November 1895) Sharf Collection, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston



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Find out how tea, the Bible and opium featured in the fascinating history between these two great World Empires and discuss the long-lasting effects these encounters have on us to this day.

It sharply intensified after opium from British India – which was brought to China to pay for Chinese fine porcelains, silks and tea – was publicly burned by the Chinese in 1840. The Chinese authorities burned the opium because they were deeply concerned by the havoc narcotic opium addiction was having on the people. The burning followed persistent British abstinence in not obeying a Chinese ban on opium imports to China made in 1800. A separate concern of the Chinese was that Chinese payments for banned opium imports were draining China's silver standard-based economy.

The British deliberately ran mainly Indian-grown opium cargoes into China so they could earn the Chinese silver to pay for Chinese goods which were subsequently exported by the British world wide.

The British succeeded in winning the First Opium War in 1842. As the prize for that victory Britain de-

manded that five Chinese ports be opened further for trade and the ceding of Hong Kong to British control – which only ended in the late 1990s.

Following further Chinese resistance to imports of opium and for other strategic reasons, a Second Opium War erupted in 1856 with Britain and France in alliance against China. Following China's defeat, the original Opium War treaty was ratified, giving the European powers more extra-territorial trading privileges in China. [It was not until

1911 that the British Parliament agreed to a ban on opium exports to China.]

Although the Second Opium War ended in 1860, the results of the Opium Wars contributed to a wave of civil conflicts in China. Fuelling the Chinese civil conflicts was widespread Chinese community unrest largely triggered by dissatisfaction with the decaying Manchu regime, concerns about the need for societal reforms, and Chinese nationalist worries about the role increasing numbers of European traders were playing in Chinese communal and economic affairs.

The most serious of these civil conflicts was the Taiping Rebellion which ran from 1850 to 1864. The Taiping (which means great peace in Chinese) rebels were led by Hung Hsiu-chuan who wanted to overthrow the Manchu dynasty and introduce rural reform. There also occurred during roughly the same period a

Q:

What were the results of the Taiping Rebellion?

A:

QUICK ANSWER

Results of the Taiping Rebellion in China included the Yangtze Valley becoming a desert for a century, a power vacuum in China, increased foreign influence, loss of Chinese territory to Japan and the end of Chinese isolationism. The Taiping Rebellion was a civil war that lasted from 1850 to 1864. [KNOW MORE](#)

KEEP LEARNING

[What were the effects of the Taiping Rebellion?](#)

[What caused the Taiping Rebellion?](#)

[What were some of the results of Manifest Destiny?](#)



FULL ANSWER

The Taiping Rebellion sought to overthrow the Qing dynasty. The war resulted in more than 20 million deaths, mostly among civilians. Rebel leader Hong Xiuquan founded the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, whose army controlled a large portion of southern China and ruled approximately 30 million people. The Battle of Shanghai in 1861 marked the beginning of the Heavenly Kingdom's decline, and its capital fell to imperial troops in 1864.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT MODERN HISTORY](#)

Sources: ibiblio.org en.wikipedia.org

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secret society Chinese revolt called the Nianfei from 1853 to 1868 and Muslim rebellions in four provinces during the period 1855-1878.

Because of the great support among many Chinese for the Taiping rebels, the commanding officer of the local Anglo-Imperial Chinese contingent involved in suppressing the Taiping rebels, General Ward [who was an American mercenary soldier], was looking for officers for his army.

General Ward offered great-grandfather Cooke a position as mate of the SS Paoushun. He accepted and later became the vessel's commander.

The obituaries for Cooke say General Ward was impressed by Cooke after forces under Cooke's command destroyed a Taiping artillery battery and successfully fought onshore. Ward persuaded Cooke to go ashore and take command of a company of men fighting the rebels. After many battles resulting in the capture of towns and cities, Cooke – who had been wounded in action – took overall command of General Ward's force after the general was killed in action.

Cooke later fought during the suppression of the Taiping Rebellion under then-Colonel Charles George Gordon (1833-1885) of the British Army who was colloquially called '[Chinese Gordon](#)'. Colonel Gordon later became known as 'Gordon of Khartoum'.

Following the suppression of the Taiping Rebellion, Cooke was appointed to take command of the Anglo-Chinese Military Contingent in Chekiang province [3] headquartered at Ningpo with the rank of Brigadier [4].

He held this position,



www.pinterest.com

Major General Charles George Gordon (1833 – 1885), also known as Chinese Gordon

3 For his services as an officer in the combined British and Imperial Chinese forces during the Taiping Rebellion, Cooke was offered and received a Certificate of Merit under an edict issued by the Imperial Chinese Emperor, T'ung chi. The certificate outlines his battle victories and the wounds he sustained as a member of the Chinese-styled "Ever Victorious Army". Cooke in 1868, through the Ningpo British Consul, had to separately receive the permission of Queen Victoria before he could accept the certificate because of his British citizenship. Certificate and consular letter are in the Cooke family collection.

4 The newspaper articles (see Footnote 2) referring to Cooke's death refer to him as a Colonel or a Brigadier. On the Marriage certificate obtained from Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages (London) for the November 15, 1884 marriage between Cooke's daughter Nellie and Arthur Vere Brown, Cooke's rank is given as Major-General.

which required him to superintend policing and military duties, for 16 years. He died at Ningpo from reported cerebral congestion on February 20, 1881. He was interred after a service conducted by the Church of England (Anglican) Bishop of Shanghai the Right Reverend Bishop G E Moule in Shanghai's new cemetery. Local military units accompanied the cortege and fired a military salute.

The key benefit of the Opium Wars and the Chinese rebellions to non-Chinese [mainly European] interests as a result of the military actions involving the European nations was the widened concessions granted to foreign nationals that enabled them to live and trade in many parts of China. Because mainly British, French, German, US, Italian, Austrian, Belgian and later Russian and Japanese traders took advantage of the concession trading arrangements, trade with China and the rest of the world quickly grew.

Japan benefited well from China in other ways. It defeated China in a separate war in 1895 and China was forced to yield Korea, Taiwan and the Pescadores (a small group of islands in the Taiwan Strait) to the Japanese.

Under treaty arrangements with China, the foreign citizens living in China were largely immune from Chinese laws but were subject to laws of their own countries. Their children retained the nationalities of their parents' countries even if born in China – provided their births were registered with the relevant diplomatic consul.

Cooke's wife, Mary Sage [6], was a daughter of William Vincent Sage, a ship-owner. She may have been part-Chinese but she also was a British subject. They had eight children. John Edward Cooke – one of their sons – was my father's father (my paternal grandfather). John Edward Cooke ran away to sea at the age of about 14 and did not return home for at least five years.

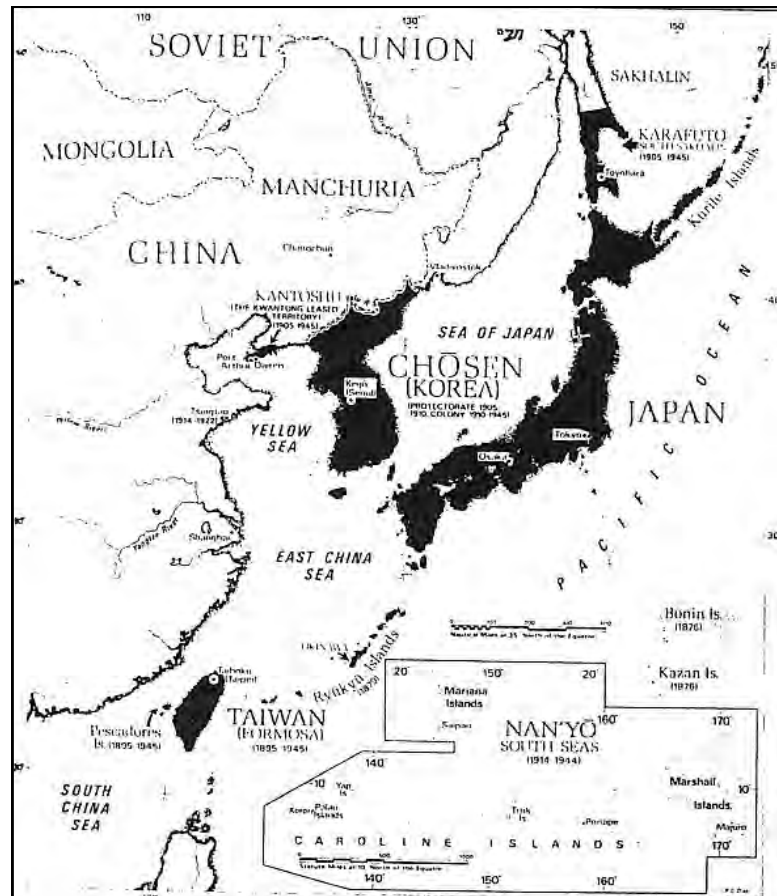
On February 12, 1898 after his return to China, John Edward Cooke married [7] Mary Steiglich [8] aged 18. She was born in England of Danish and possibly Chinese extraction. John Edward Cooke became an auctioneer and died in Shanghai on May 26, 1919 [9]. They had six children, one of whom was my father.

My father, Edmund James Clarence Cooke, was born in Shanghai on June 16, 1898 and after leaving school worked for Probst Hanbury, a Shanghai trading firm. Later, he became manager of Jardine Matheson, importers and exporters in Tsingtao which is in the Chinese province of Shantung (now called Shandong).

On a visit to Peking (now called Beijing) my father met my mother Vera, who was born in Harbin on July 28, 1908. Mother was then working for a Mr Jernigan,

an American business associate of my father. She was a daughter of Vladimir Booriakin, a Russian who had been the Harbin manager of the East Asiatic Bank. Her mother, my maternal grandmother, was Elfreda Boorikina (nee Auer), daughter of a German couple. The "a" is added to the surname or family name of Russian women.

My parents married on July 19, 1927 [10] in Harbin, northern China. I have a photograph of their bridesmaid, Ira Petena [11]. Ira married a Mr Bussy and she later became a Metropolitan Opera (New York) singer. #



China and Japan, 19th century

www.history.ucsb.edu

Map of Japanese Empire

5 The Shanghai Cemetery Register for the 1880s has Cooke listed at Number 999. Bradbury family collection.

6 Marriage certificate of February 14, 1881. Copy obtained from Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages (London). Certificate shows Cooke was 44 and Sage 30. Bradbury family collection.

7 Marriage certificate of February 12, 1898 obtained from Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages (London). Bradbury family collection.

8 Marriage Certificate spells her name Steiglich but her Death certificate spells the name as Steglich.

9 Death certificate of May 26, 1919 obtained from Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages (London). Bradbury family collection.

10 Family documents. Bradbury family collection.

11 Family documents. Bradbury family collection.

CHAPTER 3

Growing up in Tsingtao

When I was young, Tsingtao was a relatively small but strategically important seaport and industrial centre on the Yellow Sea in north-eastern China. Its strategic importance was heightened by the fact that it had good rail links, growing investment in secondary industry and the port was not prone to becoming ice-bound in winter as were more northern Chinese ports.

Tsingtao was also a popular destination for visiting warships from various countries — particularly those of Japan, Great Britain, France and the United States [12].

Tsingtao was a cosmopolitan city. Many countries had substantial commercial presences there. They included Britain, America, France and Japan. A wide range of non-Chinese nationalities lived and worked there. They included: Russian, German, Portuguese, Italian, Armenian and others such as Australians, New Zealanders and Canadians.

Most of the foreign residents mingled socially and for them there were lots of functions, balls, parties, weddings and other gatherings to attend. Each spring and summer there were many visitors to Tsingtao because it was also a popular holiday resort.

Our house at 14 Second Chan Shan Road, Iltis Huk, had a small bungalow in its grounds to accommodate friends and relatives on visits. Their visits were frequent — especially in summer. My parents were keen tennis players at the Tsingtao Tennis Club and also went horse riding, played indoor bowls, and went



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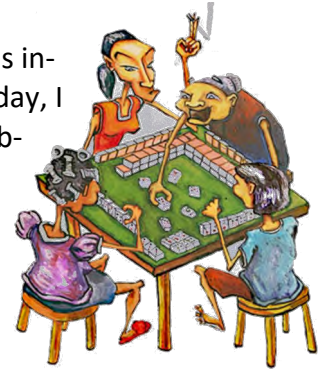


Qingdao's short history has seen quite a lot of international influence, most notably the German occupation of 1897 to 1914, which marks the beginnings of modern Qingdao, also known as Tsingtau (Tsingtao).

fishing and swimming. They attended civic functions, cocktail parties and other social gatherings. My mother, like most socially active people at the time, was a keen mah-jong player (a Chinese game played with small tiles) and she delighted in "skinning" her opponents — as she used to boast.

My parents frequently had house parties. During these, I was left in the care of one of our two amahs (Chinese female servant).

Because I was interested in the fashions of the day, I would make sure that I could observe how the ladies were dressed when they came to the parties. I often longed as a child to be able to wear some of their finery.



We were well-off at the time. My mother was always smothered with furs and diamonds. One of her furs was a catskin coat. I still have a pair of mosaic gold and pearl earrings that my mother said were presented to her father for his wife (my maternal grandmother) by the Czar of Russia. She used to wear them in China but she would not allow me to wear them, saying they were too valuable. I have not yet been able to authenticate their origin.

My father, who we lovingly called Pop, had a stamp collection consisting of a lot of rare and misprinted stamps left to him by his father, who accumulated them during his time as an auctioneer in China around the turn of the 20th century. Pop said later they

¹² In the late 1800s, Tsingtao, which is located on the south-east of the Shantung Peninsula, came under German control. The Germans laid out a modern city and attracted heavy engineering and chemical industries to the area. It was from 1899 a free port and the headquarters for regional German naval forces. In 1914, Japan as a consequence of World War I in which it sided with the Allied powers led by Britain and France against the German-led coalition, successfully blockaded Tsingtao port. Japan then occupied the city until 1922. It gave up control of Tsingtao as a result of the Washington Naval Powers conference. Throughout the inter-World War period (1918-1939) Tsingtao's industrial infrastructure grew strongly and the city's layout was noted for its parks and gardens.

were so valuable he kept them in a safety deposit box at a Sydney bank. Because I was interested in valuable stamps I asked him several times to get them out of the bank to show me but he refused to do so for fear of them being damaged or lost. A short time after his death in 1969 (at Sydney) I asked my mother about the stamp collection and she told me she had sold it to a dealer in Sydney. When I asked her for the dealer's name she refused, saying: "He told me that I could not use them because the printing on them was faulty. Only 50 of them were any good so he gave me one cent each for them." I was thunderstruck. I said: "What?" She said: "It's all right, they were all printed wrongly, the man said." I still feel sick in the stomach when I recall the price she received for those stamps. The 50 cents Australian was not enough then to buy a packet of doughnuts.

From the time we left China to come to Australia my mother was unhappy. I am sure her experiences in China during the war and the let-down from her lavish lifestyle before the war were strong factors that influenced her gradually building depression during her Australian years. I was a little unhappy too but I put it all behind me and got on with life by working and moving around the world.

Pop would try anything and was resourceful. He assumed the care of his five brothers and sisters following the death of his mother in childbirth which was followed shortly after by the death of his father. His uncle Willie, who was executor of grandfather's estate, apparently did not distribute the assets to Pop's brothers and sisters. This meant my father had to find for them. He was then in his teens.

When his younger sister Grace was about 10, Pop realised she had to be told the facts of life so he bought her a book to explain what it was necessary for her to know. Grace, who is still alive in England and is now aged over 92, told us recently about the book saying: "Your father was so sweet, he came and handed me a book on the birds and the bees, with all these little pictures of flowers and butterflies and birds and said 'I think you should read this'."

In 1935, when I was about 7 and Grace was holidaying with my parents in Tsingtao, she cut my long hair into a "bob" style which was becoming fashionable at the time. I thought I looked gorgeous but when my mother came home and saw me there was a big row and she did not speak to Grace for months afterwards. My long hair had been my mother's pride and joy and she used to curl it with rags. I can't blame her for being upset. One good thing was that as my hair began to regrow I was then able to have it in the style of Shirley Temple's [American child film actress of the 1930s and 1940s]. A Shirley Temple-style haircut then was even

more fashionable than the "bob".

As a child, I was principally cared for by our amahs who were responsible for my brother and myself. We became very attached to our amahs. I remember Niong Niong (Chinese for mother) and her successor Da Niong (big or older mother) both very well. Niong Niong was the wife of our cook, Chang. Da Niong never married. Niong Niong and Chang lived in the servants' quarters with their two daughters, Dan and Liang-Ju. I used to play with Dan and Liang-Ju and that is how I learned Chinese.



Niong Niong and her daughter with me.

Photograph restoration: Advance Photo.

Both amahs had maimed feet caused by binding — known as bound feet. They had difficulty walking. My mother persuaded Niong Niong not to bind her daughters' feet. After the war, Niong Niong's daughter Dan brought her new husband to meet us when we returned to Tsingtao. Emotionally, she hugged and thanked my mother for advising her mother not to bind her and her sister's feet.

The barbaric practice of binding the feet of female Chinese babies was an ancient custom. It was done because some men preferred dainty, small feet in women. The feet were bound shortly after birth with strips of cloth tightly wound around the child's feet. It prevented correct development of the feet. Rarely could the bound women walk without pain and difficulty. My brother and I, not really understanding the painful nature of their artificial disability, used to tease the amahs and run away knowing they could never catch us.

All conversations with the amahs and Niong

Niong's children were in the Mandarin-Shantung dialect because they knew little English.

We also had a male house servant whose job was to wait upon the family at table. He wore a long white Chinese gown and white gloves. He also helped about the house, cleaning silver and the like.

Chang was responsible only for the cooking. Each day, my mother told him the menu for the day and he would prepare it. Mum used to go to the markets and buy the meat and vegetables. The markets were in a large pavilion with all the produce on open display. Carcasses of beef and pork hung behind the butcher and mum would pick her desired cut of meat after prodding



it with her finger for tenderness and freshness. There was no mutton or lamb sold there. We carried the food home in shopping bags. Shopping, particularly for fresh meat, had to be done al-

most every day because there was no modern refrigeration. Ice was delivered several times a week by a coolie (a Chinese labourer) carrying it on the back of his bicycle. The ice was wrapped in a bag with sawdust to keep it from quickly melting. The ice kept the contents of our ice chest cool. We made our own ice cream in an ice cream churn, which was quite a tedious process. We used to help the amah and cook with turning the handle of the churn.

Sometimes, my father would drive us to the markets but mum had her own car and most times she drove. Sometimes she took an amah with her. We often had chickens which were brought live to the door, bought and then killed by the cook.

Our normal food at home was roast beef, chicken and pork in a wide range of dishes. These dishes included: chicken in breadcrumbs, chicken in white sauce, schnitzel, German-style sausages and other delicacies such as Russian food. We dined out at least once a week at Chinese restaurants and cooked Chinese-style at home quite often. Chang had been trained by a local German family. He was good with local and exotic dishes and spoke German well.

Often, when my parents were absent from home, I ate with the amah either in the kitchen or squatting on the ground outside. We sometimes ate periwinkles we had gathered at the beach. The cook would boil them in water and we would eat them by picking them from the shells with hairpins which the amah took from her hair and handed to us. I thought it was delicious. I



My parents with me as an infant.

joined them in eating boiled Chinese cabbage with rice water called congee and plain rice and salted Chinese turnip. We shared dried fish and rice.

We had a coolie who did the yard work, sweeping and cleaning. We had polished wooden floors with Chinese carpet squares which the coolie maintained. In those days, it was a common practice to throw used tea leaves onto the floor to attract dust to be swept up by the broom. The broom's brushes were made from sorghum stalks. He also mowed the lawn using a large scythe.

From time to time a man visited and attended to the garden. We did not grow vegetables, only flowers. He helped to scythe the grass and tended our apple and pomegranate trees. We had a grapevine growing over a trellis and we kept a goat from which we got milk. When needed, we bought cows' milk which had to be boiled – as did the drinking water.

We had a "sew sew" woman who regularly came to do the sewing and mending. She made dresses and other clothing for us. She knitted dressing gowns for my brother and me. A tailor came regularly to our

house and after measuring up would take orders for my parents' clothing — dresses and suits. They would either sketch what they wanted or pick it from a (usually American) magazine and he would follow the pattern. After one or two fittings, he would deliver the completed clothes.

Our light clothes washing was done in the bathtub by the amah. She first used a scrubbing board and then rinsed the laundry in the tub. I have not seen a scrubbing board for many years. They were good but a little hard on the fabric. Heavier washing was picked up by a laundry man on his bicycle and delivered cleaned and pressed a day or so later [13].



Brother Eddie with me at a Tsingtao beach.

As children, we did not have to do any chores around the house and I spent a lot of time with the amah and cook. I used to enjoy watching the cooking. We subscribed to Girls Own Annual and Reader's Digest which I read regularly. I do not remember the Chi-

13 My family had never seen a home laundry until we came to Australia. My mother and I were astonished to see our first one. We were amazed to discover that Australian homes had a separate room just for washing laundry. Our first had a copper [a large copper pot for boiling dirty clothing] and two tubs. We soon learned how to use it.

nese servants ever having annual holidays or days off. I know that occasionally they would get a day or so off by inventing a family crisis. Their children would tell me the truth but I kept that to myself.

I played games with the Chinese children from nearby villages. We played marbles and hopscotch and a game which required us to throw a little bag of sand or dirt into the air and then pick up another bag while catching the thrown bag before it hit the ground. This continued until we had picked up a certain number of bags. I have since learned this game is played in other countries using knuckles obtained from pigs or sheep.



I had a tricycle and later a bicycle. With my girlfriends I would cycle to the beach and to Cherry Blossom park about three miles (five kilometres) away from home. One day our cycling got us into trouble because a law which we did not know about had been introduced requiring all bicycles to be registered. Because our bicycles were not registered we were pulled up by the police. They threatened to confiscate our bicycles but I was able to persuade them not to — in Chinese. After that experience we kept fairly near home with our bicycles.

As children we used to dress up and play ladies with dresses and shoes given to me by Madam de Roche, a French lady who ran the Bel-Air hotel which was next door to our house.

On Sundays after church we went to the International Club where I usually had a hot dog roll and a glass of sarsaparilla. That was a real treat for me and I liked to sit and watch the hats worn by the ladies. The club attracted local European residents and was popular. There were facilities for games such as mah-jong, meals, a ladies lounge and men only section [14].

Sometimes, I used to go into town, which was several miles away, by rickshaw with grandmother. The



14 Employed at the club were George and Shura Kuzmenko, who migrated to Australia after World War II. The International Club after the war became the temporary headquarters of the American Red Cross where I worked for a while.

rickshaw coolie for a few Chinese cents would pull the two of us into town. It was hard work for the coolie who always had a little towel to wipe his sweat off as he went up hills. Rickshaw coolies did not grow old and we were told they died young from hardening of the arteries.

On other occasions, we travelled by a horse-drawn carriage which seated about six people. The carriages were multi-coloured with white frills around the seat cushions and white upholstery. Usually they had two white horses with the driver sitting on the top at the front. I used to enjoy these rides. The carriages were hired for a small amount of money.

Grandma, my maternal-grandmother (a German born in China), from whom I learned German, spent a lot of time with us. She used to live in a house at Tsingtao and later moved to Dairen (now known as Dalian). I sometimes stayed with her when my parents were away from Tsingtao. Grandma used to make Russian bortsch (beetroot with cabbage soup), pelleminis

(minced beef dumplings in soup), cabbage rolls, rissoles and sell them.

Russian and some German shop-keepers would visit with little containers and take away her cooked food for their own meals.

My maternal grandparents had been wealthy but

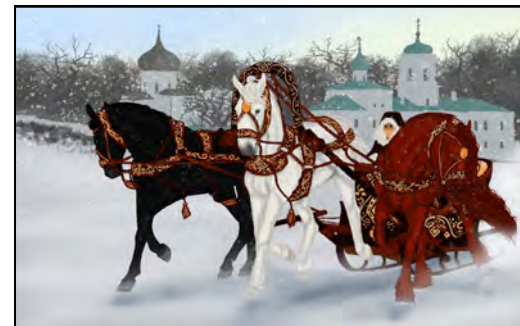
grandfather Vladimir Booriakin lost everything in a financial crash. While grandmother and her four children were holidaying in Italy he shot himself. Despite being forced into a difficult situation by the death of her husband, grandmother was a cheerful woman who worked hard to support her children. In Tsingtao, she lived with her sons Boris and Andre. Boris Booriakan now lives in Sydney. After World War II, André lived in China, Russia and the US where he died in the 1990s.

My mother was educated in Italy and France and went to finishing school in Switzerland. She spoke French, Italian, German, Russian, Chinese and English. She always told me that as a child she had a special Russian nanny named Alna Palna, a large woman. They also had other servants including a coachman with an ornate two-horse carriage with bells around the horses' necks. Mum said one of her most pleasant memories as a child was travelling in the carriage through the snow with all her furs and the bells ringing.

Mum must have been a dreamer as a child because she often used to tell me about the time as a very young child she saw a Douglas Fairbanks movie in which there was a flying carpet. She attempted to emulate the flying carpet scenes. She was found by a neighbour sitting on a mat on the roof of her house waiting to fly off.



My maternal grandmother as a child.



I know she was a romantic. Sadly, she always said to my father: "When you die, I will die." This, she did by progressively losing interest in life after his death in 1969. Nothing we could do would cheer her up and she wasted away and died five years later. She actually went to bed after Pop's funeral and said: "Pops is dead, I am going to die too." She stayed in bed for three days but when she found herself still alive she got out of bed and went on living. But she never got over Pop's death. They had been through so much together.

At school, I learned French which was compulsory. I spoke in French to some of my school friends. I was fluent in English, Russian, German and Chinese. There were many different schools in Tsingtao. There were English, American, Russian, German and French schools. My parents sent me to the Holy Ghost convent run by French, German and American nuns of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary order. I had a traditional Roman Catholic schooling. We observed Holy Days, said our prayers and went to confession and communion. Because our cook was not Catholic, I was often given sandwiches containing meat for my Friday school lunch. A nun checked the day scholars' lunches each Friday to ensure they complied with the tradition of not eating meat on Fridays. Whenever my brought lunch was found to contain meat, it was confiscated by the little French nun whose duty it was to examine the lunches. She would then say: "Mon Dieu, mon Dieu, Mademoiselle Cooke, vous allez à la salle à manger." [My God, my God, Miss Cooke, you go to the dining room.] And, she would escort me, much to my joy, to the dining room with the scholar boarders to have a seafood lunch. This suited me fine because I love seafood. In our home, we did not observe meatless Fridays – except for Good Friday, because my mother was Russian Orthodox and somewhat lax in observing the rituals of the Catholic faith that I was learning at school and from weekly attendance at mass.

Once, I was found to be chewing gum in class. My teacher made me stand in front of the blackboard for the rest of the lesson with the wad of chewing gum stuck to the end of my nose. I was so embarrassed. I did not chew gum at school again.



On another occasion I went to class with my hair curled. It was normally fairly straight but the previous night my mother had curled it with strips of rag because I was going to a party after school. Everybody at school noticed my curled hair including a nun. She took me to a tap, wet

my hair and combed out my curls. I received a lecture that I must not exhibit vanity by curling my hair because it was a sin.

My father usually drove me to school which was several miles from home. On most occasions I caught the school bus home but I would have to walk the last two miles (3.2 kilometres).

Quite often on the way home, I saw the swaddled dead bodies of baby girls who had been abandoned by their Chinese parents. The mothers would leave them on the ground in parks and vacant land. Sons are much preferred by the Chinese over daughters because they believe male children can support their parents when the parents grow old. Daughters were thought by poor Chinese parents to be a burden because a dowry had to be paid when they married and the bride then became the property of her husband's family.

On the way to school, I sometimes saw the bodies of old people — usually women — who had committed suicide overnight by hanging themselves from trees. Life was hard for many Chinese people. It was especially hard for those with nobody to care for them. Suicide was sometimes their unfortunate decision. When coming back from school on the same day, I would always see that the body had been partly lowered until the knees touched the ground. Before the body, little bowls of rice and fruit had been placed with a bowl of sand containing burnt incense sticks. Homage had been paid to the dead person by some person or persons I never saw. Next day the body was usually gone.

The Chinese people in our area seemed to consist of three classes. The very poor farmers who worked in the fields lived in the villages with their wives and families in mud huts with dirt floors. They kept pigs and chickens for their own use and grew vegetables in their little yards. The women and children used to go onto the rocks at the beach and collect seaweed to bring home and cook. They grew sweet potato which they used to slice up and dry on their roof tops and then store for winter meals. They had awnings above the front door and they did their cooking either there or out the back on wood burning stoves. Coolies, who did menial labour, usually came from these families.

The next class of people owned little shops such as bicycle repair shops, grocer shops, and shops selling woven cloth. These people usually lived in better houses built of brick or timber. It was from this class that municipal employees, office workers and other middle class workers were usually drawn.

Then, there were the very wealthy business people who lived in the affluent residential areas. Their homes were often big and beautiful. Many Europeans

socialised with this class. These Chinese usually owned the restaurants and often were well-educated. Chinese businessmen and government officials also lived well in large houses. Many of the Chinese homes had little shrines with burning joss sticks and offerings of fruit and other food.

Our home had flush toilets but the Chinese villagers' homes did not. They collected human waste and used it to fertilise their gardens. No doubt this practice contributed to many illnesses. To protect ourselves from diseases, we always washed all our fruit and vegetables in a Condy's crystal [potassium permanganate] solution unless the vegetables or fruit were boiled during cooking.

When I was about 12, I became ill with typhoid fever. I was ill for a long time. At about the same time, my brother became infected with tuberculosis, which we believed he got by smoking our cook's discarded cigarette butts. He was eventually cured. One of the suggested cures involved him having to drink warm lard (pig's fat) mixed with cocoa. Later in Australia we were told that the treatment would have given my brother a high energy diet at a time when his body was being attacked by the disease.

Europeans and other non-Chinese nationalities lived in various parts of Tsingtao. Only the Japanese congregated in a specific area.

A strong memory of the pre-war Japanese community is their wonderful toy shops crammed with celluloid dolls, tin cars, toy motorcycles, brightly coloured glass animals and marbles.

With my friends, I went to the movies in Tsingtao regularly. The movie house was named Fooloozoo and we used to sit in the dress circle upstairs. There was also the Star Cinema. I remember Deanna Durbin, Jane Withers, Shirley Temple and Clark Gable (cinema actors) for example. We always got free entry because my father was connected with the cinema.

I had many girlfriends of all nationalities in Tsingtao. They are now scattered all over the world but I still meet some of them and correspond with them. Some are now in Australia, America, the United Kingdom, Hong Kong and Canada. One of my best friends was an Italian girl named Licia Pezzini ^[15]. She and her parents looked after a lot of our possessions during the war. Despite the fact that many Italian nationals were interned by the Japanese after Italy capitulated to the Allies in World War II, Licia and her family were not imprisoned.

From time to time I would find stray dogs in the

street. Because I love animals I would bring them home with me. Unfortunately, we could never keep them because I was told all the strays were infected. Consequently, I had to be disinfected because I had hugged the strays. For disinfection, I had to use lysol and wash thoroughly.

One of the dangers from such dogs was rabies [sometimes called mad dog disease or hydrophobia]. I have seen rabid dogs. Once, when my father was doing the garden, a stray rabid dog ran into our yard. It was not a large dog. It was red and was frothing at the mouth. It attacked our two pet dogs – a West Highland terrier and an Alsatian. As Pop separated them the rabid dog bit into his long rubber boots. The police came and shot the rabid dog. Dad was told by the police to destroy our two dogs because they had been in contact with the rabid dog.

I cried when he took them up into the hills to shoot them. But he came back with the West Highland terrier saying that he didn't have the heart to shoot her. The West Highland terrier survived to die of old age. Her name was Aster. My parents got Aster during a visit to Shanghai. There, she was about to be destroyed because she had a large scab on the end of her nose about the size of a ping-pong ball which was thought to be incurable. My mother eventually got rid of the scab by applying linseed oil.



I was not aware of problems between the Chinese Government and the Japanese until one day we noticed members of the Chinese community passing our home heading for the hills out of town. My father said they were going into the hills to dig shelters because they knew there was going to be war.

That didn't worry me at the time. Life went on with plenty of friends. One was Belgian, Johnny de Zutter. Johnny and his family ^[16] was later interned by the Japanese in the same camp as my family.

About this time, Dad was driving me home and I had an amazing accident. I fell out of the car when the front seat door came open as he turned a corner. I rolled out and he didn't notice my absence until he got home. He got a tremendous shock and came back to look for me. He found me crying from a grazing.

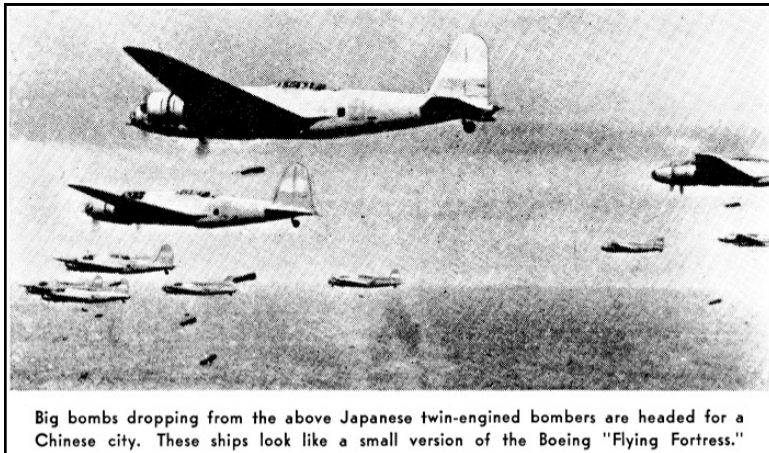
15 Licia (nee Pezzini) Childress. Now lives in California.

16 The de Zutter family settled in the US after the war.

CHAPTER 4

The Japanese change my life

I remember the morning in 1938 when my father and I heard a lot of aeroplanes in the distance. We looked towards the Chinese village which was a few miles from our house and I could see objects dropping from the planes. I realised they were bombs when I heard explosions.



Big bombs dropping from the above Japanese twin-engined bombers are headed for a Chinese city. These ships look like a small version of the Boeing "Flying Fortress."

I did not see the damage but within an hour we saw a flood of people from the villages rushing past our house with little bundles of whatever they could gather and heading for the hills to escape. The bombing only lasted a few minutes and did not affect us at all.

The next thing I remember was an influx of Japanese soldiers ^[17] armed with rifles. The officers wore swords. There were military vehicles, bicycles and motor cycles but I do not remember any tanks. I did not see any fighting. The Japanese did not interfere with the British or other Europeans in any way at that time as their war was only with China. The soldiers were followed eventually by many Japanese civilians from Ja-

17 The Japanese reasons for the invasion of China are complex. In the 1930s, militarist factions gained control of the Japanese Government. In 1931, Japan invaded Manchuria where there were extensive Japanese interests plus mineral and farming resources desired by Japan. Subsequently, a considerable number of Japanese were settled there. In 1937, Japan began its invasion of northern China on the grounds it was protecting its economic interests and the Japanese citizens who had settled there. Their invasion was helped by the weakness of the Chinese Nationalist Army which was no match for the Japanese forces. In 1938, the Japanese took Tsingtao because of its strategic significance to the Japanese. It provided a good port for Japanese shipping and access to well-developed rail infrastructure.



pan and other parts of China who set up homes and shops mainly in the Japanese trading concession area.

For the next few years our pleasant lives went on as before but now it was under Japanese military government. Then, one day I remember hearing the news-reader, Carroll Alcott, broadcasting from Shanghai Radio, which was repeated into the Tsingtao area by a local transmitter. He said: "Ladies and gentlemen, **Pearl Harbor** has just been bombed by the Japanese. He then said: "Stay calm and stay at home" or, "indoors." That's about it.



Within an hour of that broadcast, Japanese officers wearing swords and soldiers with rifles knocked on our front door. The soldiers hammered wooden boards on our front door bearing Japanese characters that said 'British enemy'. The Japanese said to us: "You are all under house arrest. How many people live here? How many males? How many females?" My mother said: "My husband, me, my daughter and son." A Japanese asked: "Where's the daughter?" and my mother said as she pointed to me: "This is my daughter."

Because I was recovering from typhoid fever my head had been shaven and I was in an emaciated state and wearing slacks to hide my skinny legs, the Japanese officer would not believe I was a girl. I do not know how she did it but eventually mother convinced the

Japanese I was a girl. The officer then gave us a hand-made armband each bearing the letter 'B' denoting British and some Japanese characters. He ordered us to wear them at all times.

Because they were so quick in producing the armbands, I think the armbands must have been prepared before Pearl Harbor was bombed. I still have mine [18]. The Japanese then placed us under house arrest and said we could be absent from our house only between 9 a.m. and midday each day to go shopping. In other words, we had to observe a curfew.



Japanese Navy?" Each time, he received the same reply. Father was taken away for interrogation several times by the Japanese. My mother kept a small bag of clothing and other articles for him to take with him in case he was kept for an extended period. He always came home at the end of each day.

I found out later from my friends that the Japanese put notices on the doors of all the

British, American, Dutch and Armenian homes identifying them by their nationality and as enemy. The notices were all placed within hours of the bombing of Pearl Harbor. The Japanese were obviously well-prepared for the coming conflict. We lived under the curfew which was rigidly enforced. We did not have to go to school and Pop could not go to work.

Some time before the Pearl Harbor attack a local dentist had made braces to straighten my teeth. My mother had given him some gold to use for the purpose. While we were in the curfew period of periodic detention, my mother took me back to the dentist to have the braces removed because we did not know whether we would have access to a dentist in the future. To our surprise the dentist was gone so we went to Dr Lustig, another dentist. When he removed the braces he found they were made of brass and not gold. Our original dentist had kept the gold and substituted a cheap metal. Mum went looking for him but we never saw him again. Lucky for him.

After a few weeks, some Japanese officers came to our home and said: "We're going to put you into a civil assembly centre." That was our first full-time camp. They imprisoned us in the hotel just behind our house named the **Iltis Hydro**. It was a large hotel and there were about 500 internees with us. We stayed there until shortly after Christmas 1941. My family was accommodated together in one room. The food was rea-

sonable and we were looked after by the regular hotel staff who were kept on by the Japanese.

At the Iltis Hydro hotel we were guarded by Japanese soldiers with rifles. They always carried rifles. To convince us to obey their rules, they grabbed a little Chinese beg-

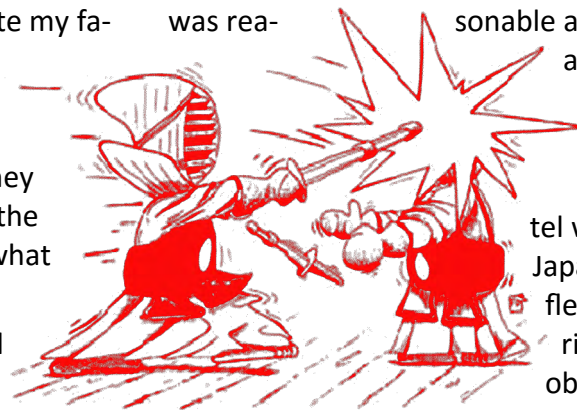
gar boy who had been scratching around for pieces of coke for his fire. The soldiers put a dog collar around his neck with a long chain, stuffed his mouth with orange peel and fastened the boy to a tree. They then



During the first time the Japanese came to our home, one of the Japanese officers who my father later told us was Korean, accused him of working for the British secret service. He asked my father: "What do you know about the Japanese Navy?" My father answered: "Nothing." The officer then changed the subject for a while pointing to our dog and then at some ornament in the room saying: "That's nice." He did this several times and then he again said: "What do you know about the Japanese Navy?" and received the same negative reply.

While the officer continued to interrogate my father, my mother and I went into the kitchen where, with Chang's help, we burned in the stove some photographs of Japanese ships in Tsingtao harbour that my father had taken. They were in a large envelope ready to be given to the British Consul. The Japanese did not find out what we did.

We often wondered why they suspected my father. For about a week, the same Korean regularly came to our house and questioned my father, asking: "What do you know about the



undertook a Japanese martial arts exercise called 'kendo'. The guards used long bamboo kendo swords and beat the boy. The Japanese said to us: "If you misbehave, you'll get the same treatment." I vividly remember the poor little boy's eyes streaming with tears. It was sad but we could do nothing about it.

Another unhappy incident occurred when the Japanese brought one of the Chinese servants into the dining room while we were having breakfast. They put a kettle of boiling water on a chair and made him lift the chair up and hold it above his head. We all knew that if the chair moved, or if he moved it the wrong way the boiling water would scald him. Again we were told: "If you misbehave, this will happen to you."

On another occasion in the hotel, the Japanese took away one of our Armenian friends named Armic Baliantz ^[19]. They thought he was a spy because he spoke a number of languages including fluent Japanese. He was in his 20s at the time. The soldiers took him for the whole day and they brought him back terribly injured. My mother said to me: "Don't look, don't look." Everybody who saw him was 'oohing' and 'aahing' because of the blood. I didn't look because my mother said: "Go inside, go inside." My mother later told me that the Japanese had beaten him with bamboo rods and he was in a terrible mess with blood and bruises all over him. Afterwards his wife, Tsolik, asked mum for cushions to put under Armic to ease his pain. Mum gave her the cushions and mum also helped Tsolik nurse Armic back to recovery from his bashing.

With my husband Bob, I had dinner with Armic's wife and Armic's daughter Jeannette in San Francisco

some years ago. They retold the story about Armic first being beaten for no reason.

He now lives in the US and still suffers badly from his injuries because over the period of his internment he suffered three savage beatings by the Japanese. Armic was a pleasant young man. Before the war he helped his parents in their Vienna cafe in Tsingtao which also was a bakery and confectionary shop. Armic's grand daughter is Melissa Etheridge, the world famous singer and songwriter. Melissa's mother, Jeannette Etheridge – who was a very young fellow wartime internee with me – owns the famous San Francisco Tosca Cafe, which is well-known for its show business patrons.

During the hotel internment, I was one of a group of children who put on a Christmas concert for internees. The girls dressed as angels.



7. Tsingtao Christmas concert 1942 given by child prisoners of the Japanese.

19 Under then and present international law, the Baliantz family should not have been interned because Armic, as an Armenian, was stateless. The Japanese interned him, his wife and his young daughter by claiming falsely that Armic was Iranian (Persian). They then refused him access to the Persian officials who would have proven that he was not Persian. Armic was born of an Armenian family in Manchuria. Despite his first Japanese bashing and the terrible consequences, Armic never gave up his subsequent fight with the Japanese. During his internment at Wei-Hsien he involved himself with Father De Jaegher who set up a small team to collect intelligence from the outside world. Armic managed to steal Japanese-language newspapers from the guards and translate them. He also got hold of a Japanese guard's radio which he had offered to repair. The radio was hidden in the camp's church altar and it was played quietly during Catholic services so that news services from the Allied side could be monitored in secret. Armic was beaten by the guards when they discovered the radio ploy. He was again savagely beaten when he told the Japanese guards he would name his child, if it was a boy – that was then being delivered in the camp hospital – Arthur, after US General Douglas MacArthur. This beating by the guards took place in the hospital delivery room in front of his wife, Armen. She was in labour at the time of this beating. [I knew Armen in camp and Tsingtao as Tsolik Baliantz.] Personal communication from Armen Baliantz. Bradbury family documents.

Early in 1942, Japanese officers told us: "You will be given one hour to go home and collect whatever you want to collect. We are going to put you into another civil assembly camp. You have got only one hour to get ready." They did not tell us where we were going or for how long. Fortunately for my family we only had to climb a fence and we were back home so that saved time, but the dilemma facing the family was: what to take? My mother solved the problem by telling us to place four bed sheets on the floor and to pile whatever came into our minds – clothing, bits and pieces. Looking back it's funny to know what strange things people pack when they have got only an hour to do so. Mum wanted all her jewellery and my father said: "It's no use taking your jewellery. It might get confiscated, so leave it behind."

Then, he had a bright idea. At home, we had built-in cupboards. Pop put the jewellery into little cloth

bags, placed the bags under the floorboards in the built-in cupboards and then nailed back the floorboards. We just left the jewellery there for the duration of the war.

We packed clothing and a few blankets. The Japanese said we could take our beds because where we were going we would need furniture. My parents took their double bed and two camp stretchers. We took toothbrushes, towels, linen and my father took as much money as he had. I don't know how much.

I had a large elaborate doll house and a number of beautiful dolls which my uncle André said he would look after for us. Uncle André (mother's brother) had Russian nationality and was not interned. It was a large collection of dolls which I had collected and carefully kept. Years afterwards, we found André sold them because he thought we would be shot and never come back. André also undertook to look after our cocker spaniel dog, Sally. Somehow, a German couple obtained her and re-named her Mutze. We got her back after the war but we didn't have the heart to change her name again so we left it as Mutze. She later died while having puppies.

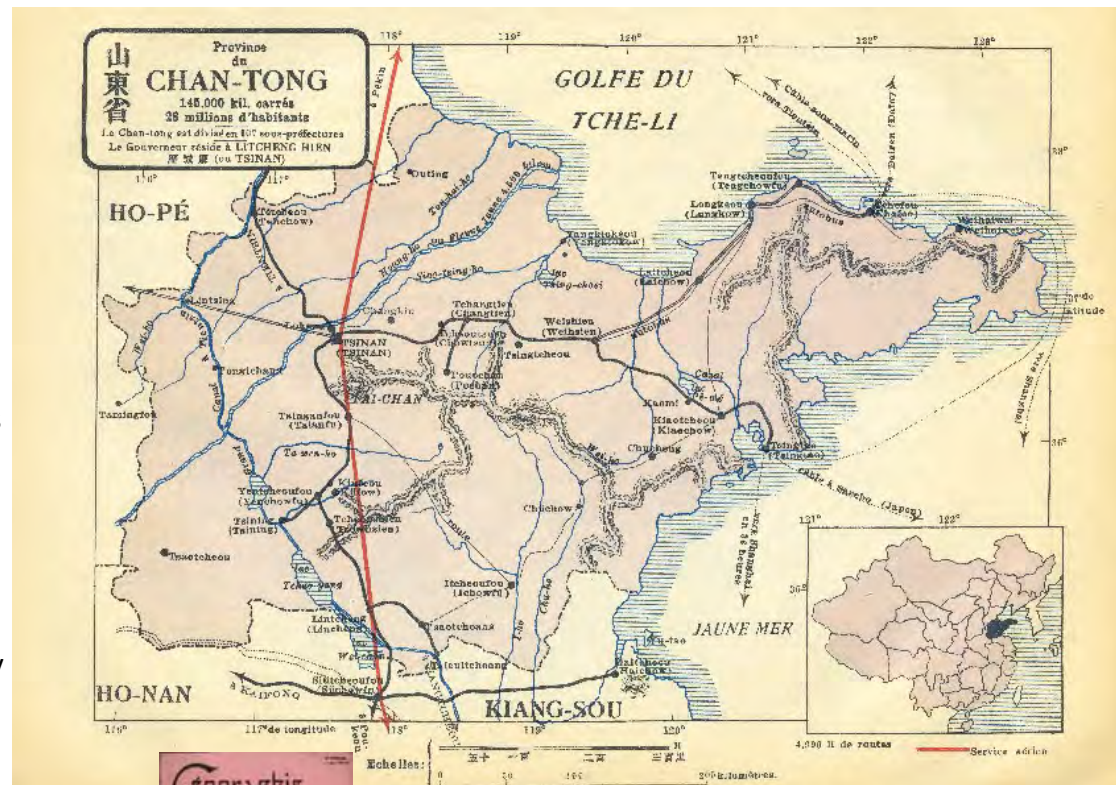
During our time as prisoners at the hotel, our home was not looted because our servants remained there. They probably thought we would be back because the Japanese had said we were only going to be sent away for a short time. We strongly felt the second time we left home that we were leaving home for a long time.

After we packed, a couple of trucks came and took us together with our furniture to the main Tsingtao railway station where we were placed on a train. On the train, we sat on tatami straw mats. The train took several hours to get to a place called Wei-Hsien (pronounced wee-siang). It is now known as Weifang and it is a major rail junction town in Shantung province. From the railway station we went to our new camp.

The new camp was formerly an American Presbyterian missionary training centre. Its buildings included a well-built church, a hospital, dormitories and two-storey houses surrounded by a brick wall on which there was barbed and, later, electrified wire. There

were machine-gun posts at intervals on the walls. On arrival we were allotted rooms. In our case we were given one room sized about 3 metres by 4 metres for my parents, young brother and myself. Upstairs were the de Zutter family from Tsingtao. Unaccompanied single persons were put into same-sex dormitories.

Wei-Hsien is a hot-and-cold place. It has snow in the winter and can be boiling hot in the summer. It is inland and about 120 kilometres west of Tsingtao. Outside the camp, there was farm land on which there were market gardens. Because for three-and-a-half years we did not leave the camp, I cannot describe what the farmers did and what the nearby town area was like.



When we arrived, the camp [20] was in very bad condition because it had not been used for some years. It had earlier been looted by Chinese bandits or Communist forces before the Japanese Army took control of it. The camp's toilets were all blocked or inoperable. There was rubble everywhere.

20 It was quickly claimed soon after our arrival that the US novelist Pearl Buck (*The Good Earth*, interalia) and US publisher Henry Luce (*Time, Life, Fortune*) were born in the Wei-Hsien training centre. Buck (nee Sydenstricker) was born 1892 in West Virginia USA and Luce was born 1892 in Tengchow, Shantung province. Both sets of parents were American missionaries who served in China. Buck's first husband, John Buck, who she divorced in 1934, was also a missionary in China. Consequently it is possible the parents of Buck, Luce, or Buck's first husband may have used the Wei-Hsien facility. The assertions that Buck (1892-1973) and Luce (1892-1967) were born there are not correct.

CHAPTER 5

Teenage prisoner of the Japanese

Our group was the first Japanese internment prisoner batch to arrive in the Wei-Hsien camp and thus we bore the brunt of the camp's initial cleaning up.

As the days went on some 500 Catholic priests, brothers and nuns arrived together with clergy from a diverse mix of other denominations. About 1500 more civilian internees were also brought to the camp. For the first few weeks we had a big clean-up and committees were formed to set up and staff schools, the hospital, a bakery, a shoe repair shop and kitchens.



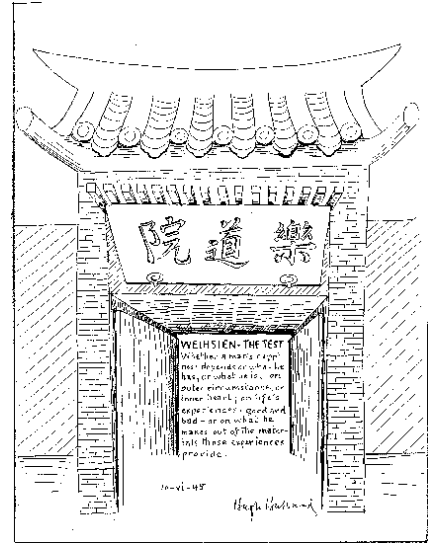
No clothing was issued by the Japanese during the next three-and-a-half years. As children grew out of clothing it was swapped at the exchange stall set up specially, which we called the White Elephant Exchange.

Internee arrivals trickled in from many parts of Japanese-occupied China. Many came from Tientsin (now called Tianjin), Peking, Chefoo and Tsingtao.

Among the adults were professors, teachers, scientists and doctors. There were tradesmen, including butchers, bakers and carpenters, and ordinary businessmen. There were single men and women and many married couples — with and with-out children.

Most of the prisoners were of British and American nationality. There were Eurasians and Asians from other countries. There were several Chinese prison-

ers including an American called Mr Chu. He was tall with an attractive part-Chinese wife. The criterion for internment was citizenship of countries with which Japan was at war but the Japanese interned some who were from neutral countries. Besides the British and Americans, the nationalities in the camp on June 30, 1944 [21] includ-



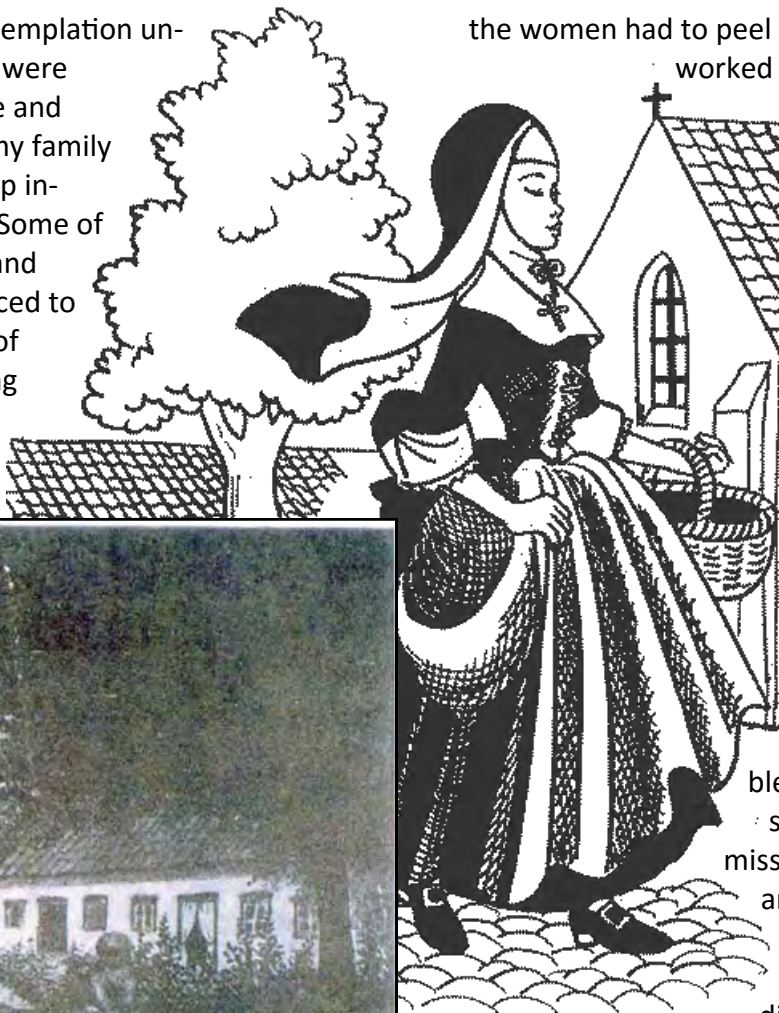
ed Australians [22], Cubans, Greeks, Belgians, Iranians, South Africans, Canadians, Poles, Portugese, Dutch, Norwegians, New Zealanders, Uruguayans, at least one German who apparently also had American nationality, Filipinos, Palestinians, Panamanians and some Russians. The age range of the internees was wide. The eldest internees in mid-1944 were a missionary couple both aged 86. The youngest internee was a one-month-old infant. Because so many school-children had been brought to the camp, there was a disproportionate number of children at the time the list was compiled.

Some of the imprisoned Catholic clergy belonged to strict religious orders which meant their lives were

21 List of internees dated June 30, 1944 giving names, marital status, nationality, age, sex and occupation. Bradbury family collection. Pamela Masters in her memoir The Mushroom Years, published 1998 by Henderson House Publishing, Placerville, California, writes of at least one French national acquaintance in the camp. However, the list of internees mentions no people of French nationality. See Further Reading.

22 The number of Australians and New Zealanders in the camp list of internees appears disproportionately high compared to the other major nationalities – British and US. Most of the Australian males were either missionaries or businessmen. Analysis of the countries where the Wei-Hsien internees settled after liberation suggest that Australia and New Zealand took a disproportionate number of them. This latter observation is based on address lists I have been given at international reunions of camp inmates. Bradbury family collection.

lived in monastic silent contemplation under sparse conditions. They were rounded up by the Japanese and brought into the camp. As my family members were already camp inmates we saw their arrival. Some of these monks had long hair and beards which they were forced to remove. I remember some of them being handsome young men when we saw them the next day, clean shaven,



the women had to peel vegetables and the men worked in the kitchens irrespective of their former callings.

The clergy also worked. They performed kitchen duties, stoked hot water boilers for the showers and pumped water which had to be done 24 hours a day. They also helped with heavy work such as lifting when required. One Catholic priest, Father Schneider [23], was formerly a shoemaker and he was put in charge of the shoe repair shop. Some of the nuns worked in the kitchen, cleaning vegetables, and also taught in the schools alongside Protestant missionaries. Some nuns nursed and some volunteered for the terrible job of clearing overflowing toilets, which they did with grace and dignity.

The nuns wore veils over a stiff cloth frame called a "coif" on their heads when they first arrived. After a while, they dispensed with the coifs and just wore a veil pinned to their hair. Many of the Protestant clergy had added tasks. They had to tend to the needs of their families, of which there were quite a few.

Everybody I knew worked hard for the benefit of the whole camp and I am not aware of any problems with persons not pulling their weight. There were four kitchens and dining rooms. Because of the food supply situation, it was a big job trying to satisfy the hunger of the inmates. Sadly, that was never really achieved. My father, a qualified accountant, was given cooking duties in a communal dining room where meals were cooked and served in relays. Mum also worked in the kitchen and made craft goods.

Our food was sparse and we were always hungry. It was usually boiled sorghum seeds for breakfast. Sorghum is usually grown in China for livestock feed. It is made up of little red seeds which are awful to eat but I

23 Father Schneider was a Franciscan friar. In my autograph book he wrote in rhyme of his cobbling under the heading 'We aim to Please'. It went: "For all the coining years in Wei-Hsien, 1944 -45-46-47-48-49-50-51-52-53,

When Life's foundation totters, Visit Wei-Hsien's one and only shoe shop." This is followed by his signature and the date: New Year's Day 1944. Bradbury family collection.



SVD QUARTERS

"Société du Verbe Divin" ! (???)

Which means: "Divine World Missionnaires"

The Society of the Divine Word (SVD) is an international religious community of Catholic missionary priests and brothers, founded in 1875 by Blessed Arnold Janssen. Members work primarily where the Gospel has not yet been preached at all or only insufficiently.

Internationality has characterized the SVD from its very beginning. The society's 5,800 members live and work in more than 60 countries around the world. The work which our missionaries do very much depends on the needs of the local church. We work in primary evangelisation, education, development work, scientific research, communications, biblical apostolate, and with youth, with refugees, with minority groups etc.

The Society's members work in Europe, North, Central and South Americas, in the Caribbean, in Asia, Oceania and in Africa.

The SVDs - about 450 of them - work in 11 countries in Africa. You will find them in Angola, Benin, Botswana, Dem. Rep. of Congo, Ghana,

hair trimmed, wearing donated shorts and shirts. Many of them gazed about in wonder during their first days in the camp but they soon became friendly with the young girls and boys in the camp, of which there were many.

As we began to settle down the various committees allocated duties to every-body over the age of 14. Doctors and nurses were assigned to hospital duties and caring for the health of people while tradesmen worked in the carpentry and other shops. In general,

have since been told they are a good source of protein, fibre and energy. They are difficult to swallow and I had to chew and chew them. My mother would say: "Keep chewing it until you can swallow it or you will go hungry." Lunch would usually consist of one scoop of a thin vegetable stew. We were issued with a little tin plate and a tin cup. We had potatoes, carrots, leeks and Chinese turnips. The camp cooks were ingenious but the food was insufficient.

Sometimes there was enough for second helpings but not often. On these occasions, the extras would be served at half a scoop. Families often put their whole ration into a larger container to take back to their rooms to eat. Somewhat surprisingly, there was never any rice for us. I presume it all went to the Japanese military.

It was very difficult for the younger children. They had to go hungry and they did not understand what was going on. The rest of us just had to put up with the shortages. We were given some flour, which the inmates made into bread. The bread always tasted stale to me, although it was freshly made. We had peanut butter because Wei-Hsien grew a lot of peanuts. The peanuts were ground by hand either in the bakery or the kitchen and that's what kept us going. I still like to eat peanut butter [24].

On one occasion a load of potatoes was delivered and dumped in a corner of the parade ground. The Japanese would not allow us to move the potatoes and they were left out in the weather until they started to rot. We were then told to eat them and when the inmates complained, the Japanese said: "You'll get nothing else until the potatoes are eaten." So, we ate them.

When a horse dropped dead behind the camp near the Japanese officers' quarters, the Japanese refused to let the inmates eat it until it was maggoty and putrefying rapidly. They said, once again: "Eat it — you'll get nothing else until you do so." The inmates promptly skinned the carcass and removed the rotten areas as much as possible and stewed the rest. We were rarely served meat.

Some inmates brought canned food with them

into the camp but my family did not. One of our family's good friends, a wealthy lady, brought a fairly large quantity of canned and preserved food into the camp and although she had been allocated work by the committee, she preferred to employ others to do her share on the payment of her food to them. Eventually, she ran out of supplies and then had to do her share of work. We kept in touch with her until she died several

years ago. In her latter years she showed us a thick coil of malleable gold which could be worn around her wrist saying: "If ever I have to go into camp again, I will take this gold with me and cut off little bits to use to buy food."

I do not remember any shop in the camp where we could buy necessities such as food or toiletries although I have since been told there was one for a short period of time. A cake of soap was issued now and again. We used that to do our laundry outdoors in large round tin wash tubs with two handles. We had to cart our laundry hot water in buckets from the shower block boiler.

Many people desperate for a smoke rolled used dry tea leaves into cigarettes and smoked them. My mother who was a heavy smoker did this, but after a lot of urging from my father she gave up smoking for the rest of the war.

While there was a shoe repair shop in operation, new shoes were

non-existent and when my brother Eddie wore his shoes out, mum made a pair out of canvas for him. It took her days to sew them but he wore them to pieces within a couple of hours. Many of the children went barefoot. My mother was more successful at making cloth toys for children which she used to trade with other inmates for canned and preserved food.



I attended school in the camp. It was conducted by nuns, priests and staff from the Peking American High School. Most of the teachers were university trained. My father used to say to us: "You are getting the best education because these people are some of the most highly trained teachers in the world." Text books were scarce and we had to share them. We had pencils and paper and some had fountain pens. We were given homework most nights.

While the Red Cross finds the food "good" and that the Belgian Government wondered whether to grant a "extra" to its nationals interned, here is the daily diet of an internment camp, described by an anonymous Belgian (probably from Kaiping mines):

Morning: kind of grey dust dissolved in water, Sunday, holiday, water with a little rice in it, no salt or sugar

Noon: "stew" a little fishy, a mixture of lemongrass, turnips, water dishes, peel potatoes and sometimes vague pieces of buffalo, still earth and sand - 1 or 2tablespoons rice

Evening: red beans or corn flour with water - a ladle. Bread that I never could digest

MENU OF LAST MONTH

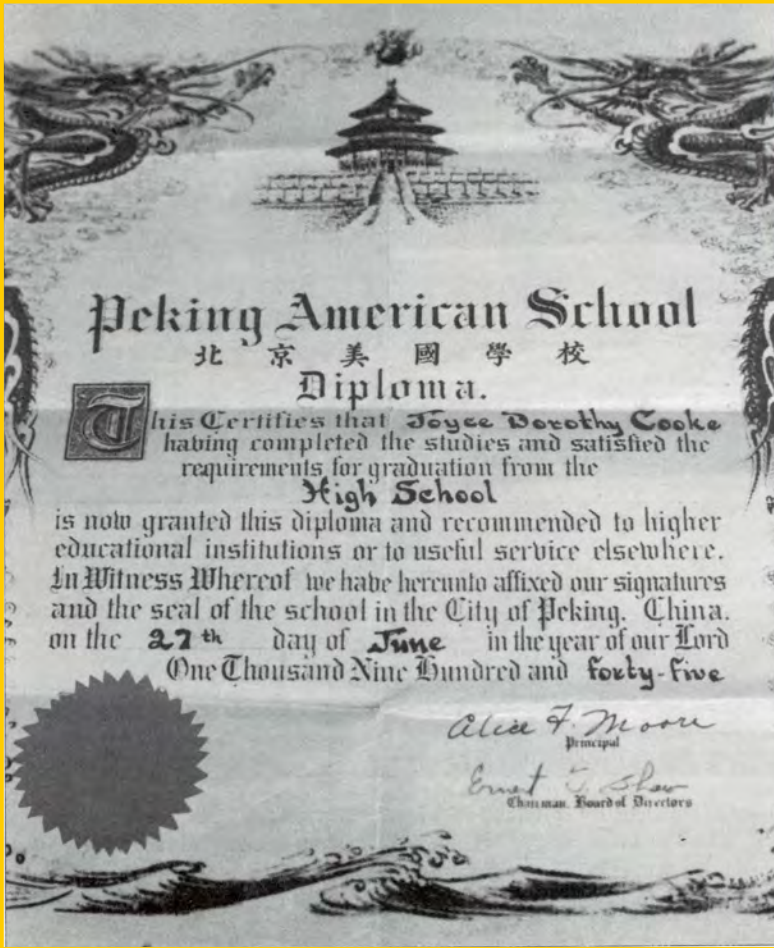
Morning: nothing

Lunch: a small piece of rotten tripe and green and a spoon of rice

Dinner: every other day, red beans as I gave in mine to my cow, the other day: nothing, all dirty, disgusting, full of wood and earth-worms. They had only boiled water from the river, where there was as much drinking as eating.

#

On completing school in the camp at the age of 17 I was presented with a graduation certificate signed by Alice Moore, my camp school's principal. Before her imprisonment, Miss Moore was principal of the Peking American High School. Amazingly, Miss Moore brought the blank graduation certificates with her and other necessities such as books for running a school in the camp. I still have the graduation certificate ^[25] which says I graduated from the Peking American High School. I separately studied shorthand while I was attending high school in the camp. I still have my certificate ^[26] of competency at a rate of 60 words per minute.



Other schools operated in the camp. This was done to help children who had been educated together before the war to remain together in school at the camp. The Chefoo School, which the Reverend Norman Cliff ^[27] and his siblings attended as students, operated in the camp. The school was well-organised with sporting teams and a Boy Scout group.

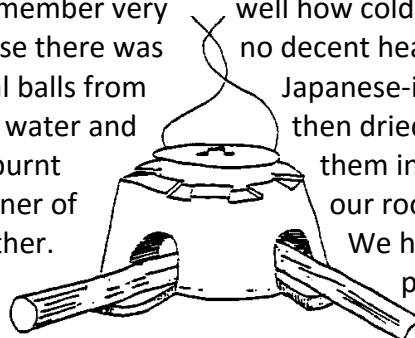
As soon as I turned 14 in mid-1942 I was given the regular job of cleaning toilets. I was given a bucket, a

brush, some cloth and disinfectant. Every day I had to clean the ladies' and gents' toilets near the communal showers. There were no sewer or flushing toilets.



Things settled into a routine. Everything was managed and well-conducted by the camp's committees.

I remember very well how cold it was in winter because there was no decent heating. We made coal balls from dust with water and Japanese-issued coal then dried them in the sun. We burnt them in a mud stove in the corner of our room during the cold weather. We had to guard our supply because pilfering did occur.



Japanese soldiers ^[28] patrolled through our sections of the camp all the time — carrying rifles. They always thrust their rifles towards us when giving an order or counting us during roll call. We rarely saw Japanese officers in the camp, only the soldiers with their little caps. Members of the camp's committees would regularly confer with the Japanese officers about problems faced by the inmates.

I lost weight but otherwise remained healthy except for tinea of my toes for which one of the doctors gave me Condy's crystals which helped heal them. My brother went to the camp hospital and received treatment for a cut lip.

During our imprisonment my brother was still recovering from tuberculosis. The doctors handled limited supplies of milk and eggs for babies and children under

25 Graduation certificate. Bradbury family collection.

26 Family document. Bradbury family collection. It says that I graduated from the Gregg Shorthand School, Tientsin. Grace Norman, the principal of the school who was in the camp with us has crossed out Tientsin and inserted Wei-Hsien and the date: April 28, 1945. Mrs Norman had brought the pre-printed certificates with her into the camp.

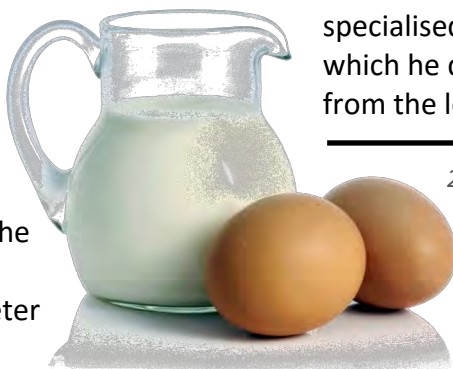
27 See Further Reading.

28 In his unpublished memoir *This is Leo's Life* by Lionel (Leo) Harold Twyford Thomas (1905-2000) a camp inmate, Leo writes of the camp soldiers: "We were very lucky that the ordinary guards at the camp were ex-consular staff, [In other words, they were poorly trained combat garrison troops sent to earlier protect Japanese commercial and consular interests in China] and not regular army officers, with only the head honcho an [well-trained combat] army man." Whatever they were, I found them frightening on most occasions.

10. Because Eddie turned 10 at Wei-Hsien, he did not qualify for the milk and eggs. This annoyed my father who thought he should receive milk and eggs to help him recover. Pop was working in the cookhouse one day wondering how he could get nourishing food for Eddie when a pigeon flew in through a window and fell into a vat of boiling soup. In no time it was plucked, cooked and fed to my brother. Pop always said the impromptu pigeon meal saved young Eddie's life.

There was a black market in the camp. Chinese used to pass food through holes in the camp's perimeter wall under cover of darkness and payment would be made in money or articles of jewellery. My wristlet watch went this way because my parents had no jewellery to barter. Sometimes, the food was donated by Chinese friends of inmates.

Our room was near the perimeter wall and Pop made a hole in it by removing a brick. Pop used to act as a black-market buying agent for others. Mr de Zutter used to be his lookout and if he saw a guard coming he would warn Pop by saying: "Good night, I'm going to



One of the internees, Father Patrick Scanlan ^[29] [also known by his adopted religious name of Father Aloysius after Saint Aloysius Gonzaga], was an Australian Cistercian (Trappist) monk who lived in a faraway monastery, well north of Peking, before imprisonment. Father Scanlan became our best black marketer. He specialised in obtaining food for the other inmates — which he did for no profit. Some of the food he bought from the local Chinese came into the camp in large

29 Father Scanlan's autobiography Stars in the Sky, published by Trappist Press, Hong Kong, 1984, extensively deals with his internment by the Japanese (pp 122-184). He relates some of the issues and incidents I mention in this book.

Father Scanlan was taken with most of the other Catholic religious (about 400 priests, nuns and brothers) from the camp on August 16, 1943 to Peking where they were interned in monasteries, seminaries and convents until the Japanese surrendered in Peking on August 19, 1945.

Father Scanlan suggests the Japanese agreed to the removal of most of the Catholic clergy because Vatican officials argued with Japanese officials that the Catholic clergy were — if a citizen of any earthly country — citizens of the neutral Vatican state and thus should not be interned. Separately he suggests, the Vatican officials argued the Japanese could need the Vatican as an intermediary for any future negotiations of a Japanese ceasefire with the Allies. At the time of the removal of these clergy from Wei-Hsien, Allied victories in Asia against the Japanese were starting to mount.

The departure of many of the Catholic clergy from Wei-Hsien was deeply moving. Many of them had been our teachers before camp and in camp. While in camp they became our friends, carers and co-workers. They were never shy of volunteering for hard work and they were great bearers of comfort to all. As they were taken away there were real fears among us watching their departure that they would be massacred. It was a terribly sad day, the day they left. Many cried, regardless of religious persuasion.

Some Catholic clergy stayed behind until liberation to minister to the camp population and engage in tasks for which they were specially equipped such as teaching and nursing.

After a short post-war period in China, Father Scanlan returned first to a Trappist community in Wales. [The correct term for Trappists are members of the Cistercian Order. The term, Trappist, comes from La Trappe in Normandy, France, where there is a Trappist abbey. Trappists practise a stringent rule of austerity and silence.] Father Scanlan subsequently returned to China for a short time before joining Trappist communities in Canada and the United States. In the early 1950s, Father Scanlan left the Trappists and became a diocesan priest in the United States where he served parish communities on the east and west coasts.

Two of the Trappist monks with Father Scanlan at Wei-Hsien and Peking — Fathers L'Heureux and Drost — after their eventual release from internment returned to their Trappist monastery north of Peking. They were later taken into custody by Chinese Communist forces with other priests, brothers and students of the Trappist community and treated brutally. As a result of the hardships and torture they suffered, they died. They are two of the 33 people from the Trappist community in China who have been put forward as worthy candidates for canonisation as saints by the Catholic Church. Their candidature is still pending (February 2000) because the present Chinese authorities are opposed to permitting hearings about the nature of their deaths in China.



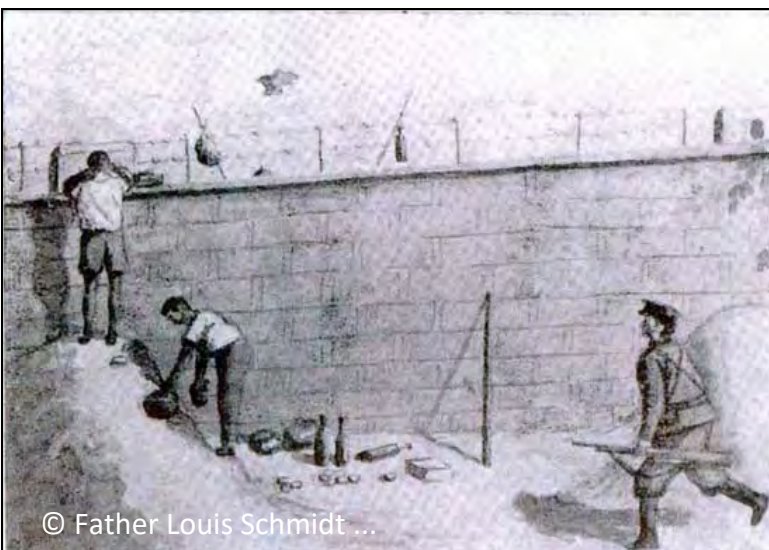
BLACK MARKET WALL (EAST)

The building in the picture would be the morgue, and was also the place where the trappist monk, Father Scanlan, was confined after he was caught buying eggs in a "black market" operation. At the time of his confinement there was a funeral for a priest who had died of cancer, and I was assigned the task of sneaking down from the burial ground (the vantage point of the artist) to the small building and passing a flask of water to Father Scanlan. The feat was successfully accomplished.

bed now," or starting to whistle. On one occasion my father was buying the Chinese sorghum-based wine called bygar when he was almost caught by the Japanese. He ran and jumped into his bed fully clothed, leaving the wine bottles on the table where my mother found them next morning.

quantities. Its arrival supplemented our sparse Japanese-supplied rations. Amazingly, he was able to get special food wanted for the hospital inmates.

Once Father Scanlan was kneeling at the hole in the wall doing his black-marketing business when a guard came up. Father Scanlan immediately took out his prayer book and told the guard he was reading his prayer book and praying. The guard didn't believe him



because he knew even Japanese couldn't read in the dark. Father Scanlan said he didn't need light to read because he knew all the pages by heart.

This did not convince the guard and Father Scanlan [30] was locked up behind the Japanese officers' quarters and sentenced to solitary detention for two weeks by the camp commandant. His solitary confinement would have come as a breeze for Father Scanlan because he had spent more than half his life living in a monastery. To upset his captors, Father Scanlan, in the first several days of his confinement, chanted his prayers in Latin at the top of his voice. He continued night and day telling the sleepless Japanese officers that it was his duty as a priest to daily recite his mandatory collection of prayers called the priest's office. Catholic priests daily say their office, generally silently or quietly. The Japanese were too superstitious to stop him. After several days, when the Japanese could stand our black marketing priest's sleep-disturbing prayer chanting no

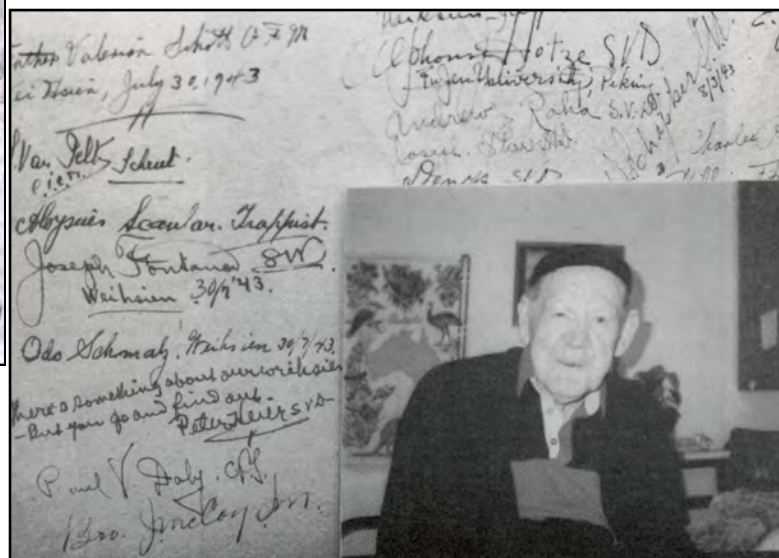
30 The imprisonment of Father Scanlan inspired a song which we all quickly learnt. It is sung to the tune of If I had the Wings of an Angel. Called The Prisoner's Song, it was penned by an anonymous inmate. Its words are:

Oh, they trapped me a Trappist last Wednesday,
Now, few are the eggs to be fried,
So, here in this dark cell I ponder,
If my clients are empty inside.
There's a great big basket on the outside,
Just brimming with honey and jam,
But how can it come onto our side,
If the bootleggers don't know where I am?

It is dated 1943. Family document, Bradbury family collection.

longer, they released Father Scanlan.

News of Father Scanlan's release triggered one of the most joyous days in the camp. Everybody came out and cheered him. The Salvation Army members in the camp co-led by Father Scanlan's fellow Australian, Salvation Army Major Henry Collishaw [31], assembled. They escorted Father Scanlan through the compound with their 20-piece band blaring away. It was a joyful occasion for us and for Father Scanlan. The Japanese guards were surprised by our reaction to Father Scanlan's release. However, they took no punitive action. Without delay, Father Scanlan immediately resumed his black marketing.



11. Father Scanlan on his 100th birthday in California. To the left is his signature in my prison camp autograph book. Photograph montage: Georgie Perry, photograph of Father Scanlan, Sister Marie Masbridge.

Father Scanlan was a genial man, always smiling. He had a beautiful singing voice. He was a gentleman who was thoroughly well-respected and loved by us. Behind Father Scanlan's outwardly quiet appearance dwelt a brain as sharp as a tack and he used it for the benefit of the inmates.

Father Scanlan had a narrow escape on another occasion when he had about five dozen black marketed eggs hidden in his upper clothing. He was confronted by a guard. He immediately squatted on the ground and said in Chinese: "dootzetung, dootze-tung" which means sore tummy or diarrhoea. Because this was a common ailment, the Japanese soldier believed him.

My good friend Stanley (Stan) Fairchild, who now lives in Hong Kong, was one of our most adept black marketers. He was often Father Scanlan's right-hand man even though he was only 12. Stan also had a couple of narrow escapes from being caught.

People like Pop, Stan, and Father Scanlan helped

31 There are 48 references to Henry Collishaw and his wife Florence in the official history of the Australian Salvation Army. After the war, he rose to the rank of Brigadier.

keep us alive during these years and we were all very grateful to them. Most of the black marketed goods brought into the camp consisted of eggs, vegetables and sugar.

Occasionally, the Chinese smuggling goods to the camp were caught and they were given a severe beating by the Japanese. There were suggestions in the camp that two Chinese were shot for smuggling.

Some of the camp's inmates would do almost anything for alcohol. One of the women had brought a lot of valuable perfume into the camp. Her alcoholic husband drank it. Two men and a woman, so we were told, allegedly made alcohol from wood shavings collected from the carpenters' shop and other materials. They died after drinking it. One of the doctors warned the inmates that drinking such brewed drinks was dangerous because of their potentially high wood alcohol [methanol] content. I did not hear of anybody else dying from drinking wood alcohol. However, considerable amounts of bygar wine were smuggled into the camp. What the teetotal missionaries who built the camp would have thought of this trade remains ponderable.

Some Red Cross parcels were received at the camp. The arrival of the first lot led to bad blood because some Americans claimed they should solely have them because they came from the American Red Cross. When a second lot of Red Cross parcels arrived, the question of their distribution was solved after discussions the camp management committee had with the Japanese camp commandant. The Japanese ordered the parcels to be fairly shared or they would be withdrawn. Incidentally, the Red Cross parcels received at the camp over the internment years came from the Australian Red Cross and the American Red Cross". The Australian Red Cross parcels were arranged by a Sydney relation of the interned Tipper family from Australia.

In the Red Cross parcels were chocolates, canned and packet food and knitting needles with wool. There was some clothing too. I will never forget the candy-coated Chiclets chewing gum that I received as my gift in the American Red Cross parcel sharing. After chewing it all day, I stuck it each night on the side of the cupboard near my bed and placed it in my mouth the next day. I did that until the chewing gum disintegrated. I

also received a frock which came in one of the parcels. It was a winter dress of woollen material and I still have a photograph" of myself wearing it after the war. Towards the latter stages of the war the Red Cross parcels stopped coming.

One of the perks of working in the food areas was taking home extra food. My father was able to bring home dripping once in a while which we ate on our bread. We were always hungry and fantasised about food. Some people thought about milk and sugar because we had to drink tea without milk or sugar. The tea was ladled out to us from large pots. My mother missed her coffee and we all missed bacon and eggs. I do not remember anyone putting on weight. Some inmates were caught by other inmates stealing vegetables, bread and other food. They appeared before a camp committee which decided whether they were guilty or not. I don't remember what punishments were inflicted except the names of the guilty were put on the notice board.

It is possible some of the priests, particularly the Trappist Father Scanlan and the Belgian Father Raymond De Jaegher ^[34], who was a seminary professor, actually ate better in the camp than they did before imprisonment because pre-camp they lived mainly on bread and water. Father Scanlan often said that. I was never quite sure whether he and the other priests were trying to bolster our spirits. I knew that Trappists were required to live under severe rules of austerity and silences and Father Scanlan writes in his book ^[36] that meals in the monasteries were always spartan.

I remember when a new commander of our camp, a Japanese officer named Koyanagi, arrived to take charge. He recognised my father as being a pre-war business associate of his. He seemed surprised to see us in there and showed signs of friendship by bringing us water melon and fresh eggs. After several visits my father thanked him but asked him not to show us any favours because it was unfair to other inmates and embarrassing to him. The gifts and visits ceased.

English and some Chinese were mainly spoken in



35 Because of the Trappist monks' imprisonment and the need for the monks to verbally communicate, the Catholic bishops who were also interned agreed after a synodal meeting that the Trappist monks could be released from their vow of silence during their internment in the camp. The monks quickly took full advantage of the bishops' ruling. They became loquacious. It was to our amazement. As children, we solemnly believed that the Trappists could only speak when saying prayers alone.

36 *Stars in the Sky* by Father Patrick Scanlan. Published by Trappist Press, Hong Kong, 1984.

the camp although there were many different nationalities there.

The toilets I had to clean were holes in the floor. They were not sewered. In addition, each compound area had toilet pan systems that were emptied by coolies who visited the camp and took the contents away for their gardens. The coolies were a splendid source of information from the outside world. Various methods were devised to receive notes. Sometimes bits of silk with messages on them were hidden in wall cavities for

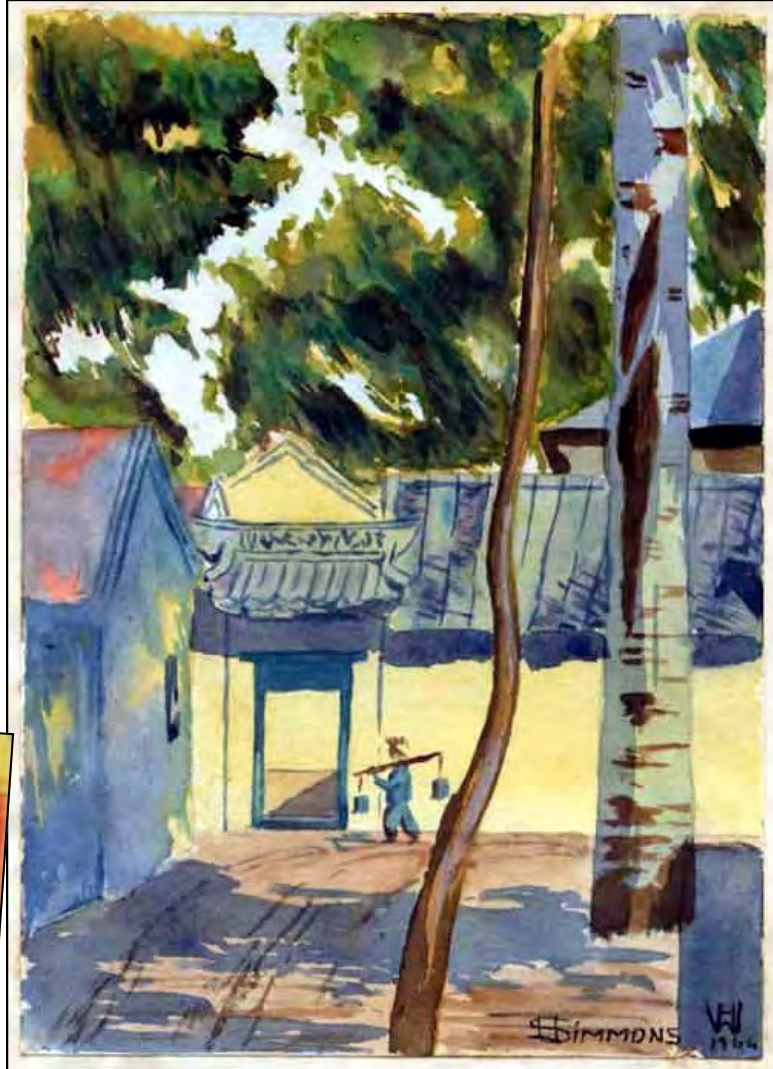
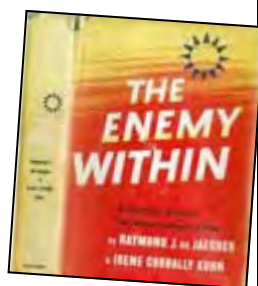
34 Father Raymond J De Jaegher wrote his memoirs of the camp in a book titled: **The Enemy Within**. It was published by the Society of St Paul, Bandra Bombay – 50, in 1969. A Sinologist, who was extremely fluent in Chinese, he set up a highly successful postal communications systems with the outside world from the camp using supportive Chinese. Consequently, he was a significant gatherer of intelligence information which was supplemented from time to time with secret monitoring of Allied news broadcasts using secret radios in the camp. These broadcasts detailed Allied successes in the war against Japan.

Father De Jaegher played a key role in organising the only escape from the camp, and was a significant adviser to the camp's management committee in general matters of dealing with the Japanese. As the Allies' war progressed against the Japanese, Father De Jaegher noted a decline in the guards' morale. He advised the committee on how to treat with Chinese Communist-led forces. These forces, towards the end of the war, began encircling the Wei-Hsien area. His advice to the committee possibly averted a massacre of the camp's inmates.

He recommended the camp leaders not to provoke a revolt by the camp's inmates as suggested by the Chinese Communists in a secret communication to the camp. He warned a camp revolt could lead to the gathering Communist forces – who were no friends of non-Chinese (contained in the camp) and the Japanese guards – massacring both the inmates and the Japanese. He counselled that the camp patiently wait for Allied liberation. His suggested strategy was accepted by the camp's leaders.

They were guided in that decision by Father De Jaegher and others analysing the information they were gathering from secret radio monitoring and incoming documentation being brought in secret messages by the Chinese toilet coolies [see text]. His advice was later proven to be well-founded. In the last days of the repatriation of liberated internees from the camp, Communist forces blew up the key Wei-Hsien railway infrastructure. This forced the Allied forces to fly out the last remaining Wei-Hsien internees.

Post-war, Father De Jaegher again largely worked in Asia. He became inter-nationally famous as an anti-Communist campaigner and prominent as an adviser to the largely Catholic-led, anti-Communist leadership of South Vietnam. This country was formed in the mid-1950s following the 1954 collapse of French-led forces to Vietnamese Communist forces. A partitioned Vietnam into south and north sectors then followed as a result of international talks. South Vietnam eventually fell in 1975 to Communist forces, despite protracted and considerable military and financial support from the US and other countries including: South Korea, the Philippines, Taiwan, Australia and New Zealand. This Viet Cong success led to the reunification of Vietnam from South and North Vietnams into present-day Vietnam, a Communist state. See also Further Reading.



The honey pot man, by Ursula Simmons, 1944

the coolies to collect and carry the notes in their mouths from the camp. The Japanese guards were vigilant and changes to the note exchanges had to be constantly made before they found out what was going on. Sealing the notes in tins and placing them in almost full toilet pans was discontinued because the guards began probing the pans with rods.

The most successful method of smuggling in notes from pre-war friends and contacts was developed by the coolies. They would push a note up into their nostrils before they entered the camp and then blow it out onto the ground at pre-agreed areas. The note would then be collected by a specially appointed camp inmate. The Japanese never detected this message exchange system.

The information contained in the messages was spread by word-of-mouth. I was not aware at the time but I have since been told there was also a radio receiver in the camp which was not found by the Japanese.

I cannot remember any specific war news of the time but I remember my mother used to say when we had unscheduled head counts: "Uh! They've lost another battle." Some of the information must have been encouraging because I felt for the most part that we would be freed eventually. But as the years went on our

spirits occasionally sagged. We did occasionally see aeroplanes high up in the sky. Sometimes we could hear them. But we didn't know whether they were Japanese or Allied.

There were rumours of some suicides in the camp but they were never confirmed to me. It was also claimed that some female inmates were put into a special section of the camp hospital for treatment of depression.

There was no piped water in the camp but there were wells. To cater for the whole camp of some 2000 people the well pumps had to be hand-operated 24 hours a day and a number of men were kept at this work. We were allowed one shower a month in a communal bathroom. The bathroom consisted of about 12 showers and three or four hole-in-the-floor toilets. We were rostered alphabetically for hot showers. My second cousin Bob (Bob Cooke whose father — my great-uncle Edward — was also in the camp) was one of the stokers of the boilers.

In our individual living areas there was no running water so we used to wash in a dish of carted hot water. It was like having a birdbath. One of our fellow prisoners was a Miss Ponds who my mother used to say was an old maid. Miss Ponds would never strip for a shower but would wash herself wearing a petticoat. As 13-14-year-olds we used to wonder what she had that we didn't. With my girlfriends we used to pretend to drop the soap and take a peep but we never did find out what

she had under that petticoat.

We had births, deaths and marriages in the camp. Some children were born out of wedlock, which was hardly the done thing in those days.

There were romances of course and I had boyfriends as all young girls did then and still do now. There were fights between young men vying for a particular girl but I don't remember anyone fighting over me. Everybody knew who was interested in whom because there was absolutely no privacy — even whole families slept in the same room.

The medical doctors and nurses ran the camp hospital with great efficiency. There were many patients with illnesses and injuries. On one occasion late in the war, some medical drugs came to the camp hidden in Red Cross parcels. We were told the Japanese removed the labels from the containers. The absence of the labels was very troublesome because our doctors had to try to analyse the contents to find out what they were. Some of these drugs were the then new and highly effective anti-bacterial sulpha [37] drugs. I have recently been told that the drugs were hidden in the Red Cross parcels by Chinese Nationalist forces who had received them at their nearby base from an Allied air drop. The drug labels were removed to prevent them being

detected by Japanese searchers when the Red Cross parcels were delivered to the camp. A short time after the drugs were delivered, Father De Jaegher obtained information on the delivered drugs from the Chinese Nationalists and their recommended methods of usage which he gave to the hospital doctors. The doctors and those who assisted them in the hospital did a splendid job for the inmates. They also treated the Japanese when they needed medical attention.

A fellow prisoner with me was Eric Liddell, a London Missionary Society worker and teacher who taught at the Tientsin Anglo-Chinese College. He was the 400 metres gold medal winner for Great Britain at the 1924 Olympic Games and a former Scottish rugby international. He was born in Tientsin (1902) and was educated in China and the United Kingdom. He died in the camp from a brain tumour on February 21, 1945.

37 Sulpha or sulfa drugs belong to a group of anti-bacterial drugs derived from the red dye, sulphanilamide. They were first discovered by a German chemist in 1935. According to the Concise Colour Medical Dictionary published by Oxford University Press, Oxford in 1994, the use of sulpha drugs has declined in recent decades because of "increasing bacterial resistance to sulphonamides and with the development of more effective less toxic antibiotics".



Old hand pump ... © Google/images ..



The Hospital and a Japanese watchtower, as seen from outside the camp.



Circumstances may appear to wreck our lives and God's plans, but God is not helpless among the ruins. God's love is still working. He comes in and takes the calamity and uses it victoriously, working out His wonderful plan of love.

— Eric Liddell —

AZ QUOTES

He was greatly loved and respected. I attended his funeral and he was buried in the camp's grounds. The film Chariots of Fire [38] deals with a portion of his life story but does not cover the details of his life as a prisoner at Wei-Hsien. Mr Liddell was director of a sports program in the camp as well as a teacher and speaker at church services. Few of the camp children knew of him being an Olympic gold medallist.

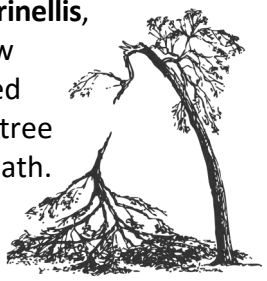
Once, a number of young men and boys decided to have a running race around the inside of the camp wall, which we used to call 'running around the block'. Mr Liddell, who was in his 40s, said: "I'll join you." Everybody laughed at him and said: "You're too old." He said: "I'll come along anyway." Off they went and he beat them all much to their amazement [39]. It was only then that some learnt of his prowess in running. From that time on he was even more respected by the young men.

Everybody liked Mr Liddell because he was such a gentle modest man. He was married and had three children. His wife, who was pregnant with their third child, escaped internment because Mr Liddell sent them to Canada before the attack on Pearl Harbor.

38 Chariots of Fire, a film, 1980. Directed by David Puttnam. Won the Oscar award given by American Academy of Motion Pictures for Best Picture, 1981.

39 Second in the race was Lionel (Leo) Twyford Thomas who subsequently settled in Australia. He died in January 2000. See also Further reading. According to my calculations, the race was run over a distance of about 800 metres. This distance estimate is based on a detailed map of the camp prepared by the honorary Swiss Consul-General's representative, Mr V E Egger, who lived in Tsingtao. During the war, Mr Egger also acted as the representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross. Mr Egger visited the camp on several occasions, bringing with him Red Cross supplies and money which was called comfort money. Inmates could apply for the money if they signed a promissory note undertaking to repay it after the war. Map copy is in Bradbury family collection. Mr Egger also issued in 1943 safekeeping receipts on Shanghai Swiss Consulate-General letterhead to my mother for personal jewellery she had brought to the camp and the title deeds to our Tsingtao home. The Swiss Government from late 1941 undertook to represent British interests in Japanese-occupied China. Receipts are in Cooke family collection.

Another man I knew, Alex Marinellis, sadly missed out on liberation. A few days before our liberation, he slipped and fell while sawing a branch off a tree for firewood. I saw him fall to his death. He was 21.



We had dances in a dining room on Saturday nights. A specially formed dance band supplied the music. Because the camp lights went out at 10 p.m., the dances finished too early for us. In the camp there were some African-American musicians who played in the dance band. Members of the Salvation Army also had a band which regularly played for

church services and recitals.

The Salvation Army members were good keeping up people's spirits. They constantly organised activities for younger children, visited the ill and encouraged people interested in learning to play a





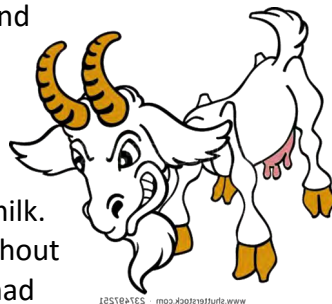
THE SALVATION ARMY BAND included many non-Salvationists. Every Sunday afternoon it played the well known hymns of the Christian Church at certain points of the camp.

musical instrument. Reverend Norman Cliff, then a schoolboy, learned how to play the trombone from them [40] and used to perform at their recitals.

There was also a Dutch married couple known as the 'holy rollers' because of their religious beliefs. They were members of a group of religious people who manifest their religious fervour by rolling on the floor while saying their prayers. They did their praying regularly because I used to see them from where we lived.

The Japanese sergeant who was responsible for our section of the camp was known to us as Sergeant Bushing-de because he always said no to any question and "**bushing-de**" in Chinese means "**no can do**". We used to refer to another guard as **slippery Sam** because he was sly and slippery in his actions towards us. There was also a big guard nicknamed **King Kong**.

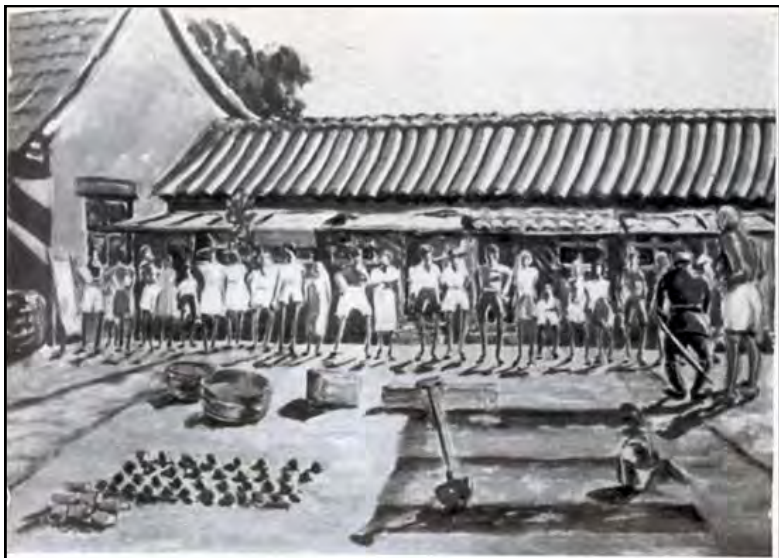
Captain **Yumaeda**, who was one of the camp's commandants, owned a nanny goat from which he used to obtain milk for himself and perhaps other officers. One day the goat wandered into the general camp compound and was immediately milked by the inmates until there was no more milk. My mother had a go at it but without success. Somehow or other we had some of the milk in our tea that day but I don't remember how we got it. It was lovely. The goat never escaped again. The scene of all these ladies chasing the goat to milk it was a sight I will always remember. Funny yes, but pathetic in retrospect.



At first there were no Italian inmates, but the surrender of Italy to the Allies before the collapse of Germany led to quite a number of Italians being brought into the camp late in the war. There were few Russians in the camp. My mother's Russian nationality brother, **Boris**, and his wife **Natalie** spent the war years in **Dairen**

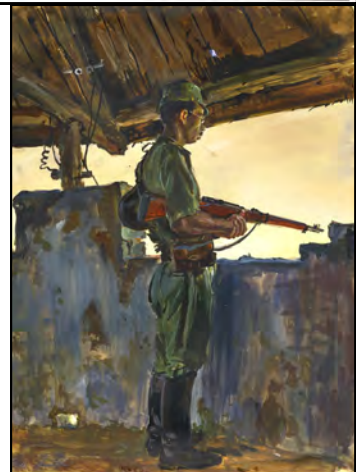
and Shanghai which were Japanese-occupied. There, he worked for Caltex.

The only pet animal in the camp was a little white fluffy dog brought in by a Dutch lady, Mrs Van Ditmars. I do not know how she arranged it but the dog stayed with her during the whole time we were in the camp. Mrs Van Ditmars was not accompanied by any members of her family and I can only assume the Japanese allowed her to have her dog for company. The dog did not want for attention from the camp's population. It was always in the best of health because one of the inmates was a veterinary surgeon.



ROLL-CALL IN THE CAMP

Every morning at 7 a.m. and every evening all the internees had to stand outside their rooms to be counted. Soldiers in their khaki uniforms counted us by pointing their rifles at us. It was frightening because we never knew if a rifle would go off. We accepted this as normal camp procedure but occasionally they banged on our doors and roused us from our beds at 1, 2 or 3 a.m. for an extra count. It did not matter whether it was raining, hailing or snowing. Out into the open we had to go; old people and babes-in-arms. There we stood until we were counted at rifle point. There were machine-guns and searchlights constantly trained on the compound from the sentry positions or guard boxes on the walls. These boxes are there to this day as are the insulators that used to carry the camp's perimeter electrified wires.





Block 23
Painted by Travers-Smith

Block 23 on the right. The bell on the tower was rung daily by the Japs ostensibly to give us the time, but we were deliberately misinformed. Then you will remember that on VE Day an internee rang it in the night as a "dare", and we were forced out for a rollcall, as the Japs thought it was the signal for an escape.

© Norman Cliff

The impromptu head counts in the middle of the night started I was told because one of the bachelors who slept in a male dormitory climbed the bell tower one night and rang the bell. He was said to have been dared to do this by fellow bachelors. I understand that some of them had agreed to ring the bell when the war was over. However, the bell rang out well before the war was over. This bell was there because of the camp's previous incarnation as a religious institution. It was normally only rung when hot water was available for the inmates. The bachelor's unscheduled tolling of the bell caused considerable consternation among the Japanese. As a result, the Japanese then punished us all by turning us out at odd times for a head count, which took forever to conduct.

Another matter that enraged the Japanese was that two of the inmates, Arthur Hummel Jr [later the US Ambassador to China in the 1980s ^[41] and Laurie Tipton, a British man ^[42], escaped from the camp in early June,

1944 and were never recaptured. They had been planning their escape with the full assistance of Father De Jaegher ^[43] for more than 12 months but there were several postponements because of Japanese patrols, a full moon, or poor escape conditions. One night everything went well and away they went. I did not know any details at the time of their escape but I remember them arriving back at the camp shortly after our liberation.



CAMP WALL FROM THE OUTSIDE, SHOWING SEARCH-LIGHT, WATCH-TOWERS AND THE ELECTRIFIED BARBED-WIRE FENCE OVER WHICH HUMMEL AND TIPTON ESCAPED

When Mr Hummel and Mr Tipton arrived back at the camp, they were given heroes' welcomes and carried shoulder-high by the inmates. I listened avidly to the tale of their escape from the time when they further darkened their heavily tanned faces and wore long Chinese gowns to look like Chinese. After escaping from the camp, they met some Chinese Nationalist guerrillas by arrangement who hurried them away and hid them. Their escape aim was to contact Chungking (now called Chongqing), which was then the seat of the Chinese Nationalist Government in unoccupied China, so that the

41 Article in *The Atlanta Journal and Constitution* dated August 9, 1981, page 22-A. A copy is Family document. Bradbury family collection. Hummel was born in China of American missionary parents. He was teaching in a Peking school at the time of Pearl Harbor. After his escape, Hummel and Tipton joined Chinese guerilla forces fighting the Japanese. Tipton was a tobacco company executive.

Father Raymond De Jaegher outlined the preparations for the escape in his book: *The Enemy Within*.

In March 2000, Mr Hummel confirmed the date of the escape and his subsequent activities with Tipton until the camp was liberated in a personal conversation.

42 See Further reading.

43 The original two escapees were to be Tipton and De Jaegher. A fellow priest told De Jaegher his role should be to remain in the camp because he was the camp's best intelligence gathering operator. De Jaegher's place in the escape was taken by Hummel, who volunteered for the job.

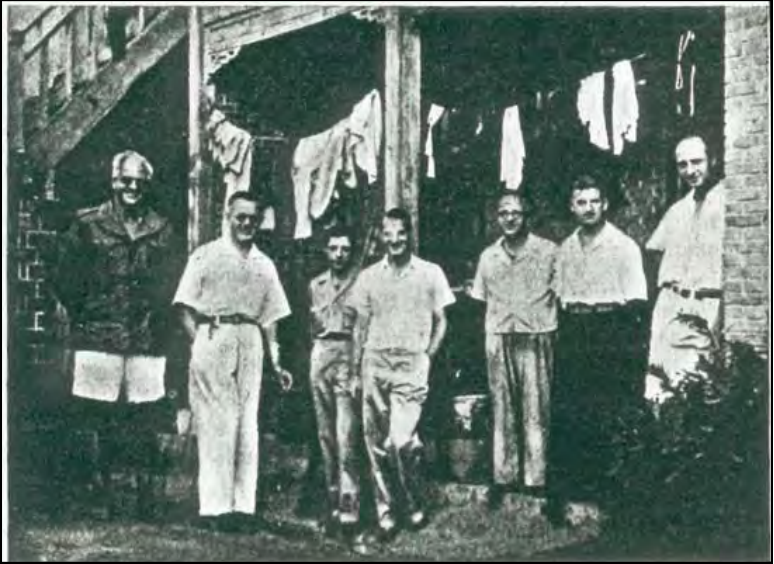
western Allied forces could be informed of deteriorating prison conditions because it was believed the Allied forces had no recent knowledge of our plight. Mr Hummel and Mr Tipton told us how they spoke by radio to Chinese Army authorities in Chungking, which was also the headquarters for the Allied forces seeking to liberate China from the Japanese. The United States authorities obviously became concerned about our conditions in the camp because we were rescued by American soldiers two days after the war ended. We were very glad to be so quickly rescued because the Japanese always told us we were going to be killed whether Japan lost or won the war.

It was always in the back of my mind that we may be shot. I am convinced that had the Japanese main islands or our part of China been invaded by the Allies, we would have been shot without hesitation. As it was, the sudden unexpected capitulation of Japan prevented this. I was always frightened of the machine-guns on the walls. They used to point at us and I never knew whether they would shoot us because the guards often said they would if the war ever went against them. I remember saying to my mother on one occasion: "I think they're going to kill us this time" and I thought to myself: "I'm only young, there's so many things I want to do before I die and now I won't be able to." Thankfully, they did not fire. I did not regard the guards' threats as idle talk at the time and I still don't. When you have a gun pointing at you, you tend to listen carefully to what is said.

Between June 1944 and our liberation on August 17, 1945, Mr Hummel and Mr Tipton served alongside Chinese Nationalist forces in Shantung Province and regularly communicated with Father De Jaegher in the camp using Father De Jaegher's messaging system. They sent news of the war and helped arrange for the urgently needed medical drugs smuggled into the camp hidden in Red Cross parcels.

Part of the story told to cover up Hummel's and Tipton's escape was that they were in the camp toilets during head counts but the camp management committee, to prevent reprisals, reported them missing the day after they escaped. Our food ration was withheld for a day or two after the escape.

From then, the Japanese were especially alert to prevent escapes and stopped any inmate out of his room after dark. For instance, my elderly uncle Edward was heading for the toilets one night when he was challenged by an irate Japanese guard who stuck his rifle into his stomach and demanded in Japanese to know where he was going. Edward expected nervously to be shot



Nos abbés au camp de concentration de Weihsien en Chine
De gauche à droite ; Abbés De Jaegher, Wenders, le Père Martin de l'Abbaye de Lophem, les abbés Hanquet, Keymolen, Unden et Palmers. Cette photo portait la mention ; « Septembre 1945. Bloc 56. Notre palais ».



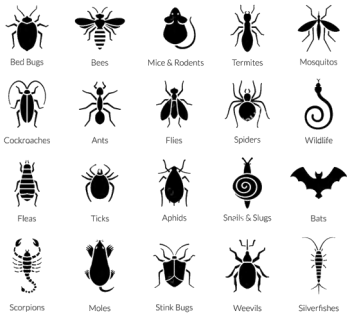
Weihsien, May '1945 Block-56, The Priest's Shack

because he couldn't remember the Japanese name for toilet. He knew that it was similar in sound to a stringed musical instrument and he went through: guitar, ukulele before he hit upon the correct one, banjo. Benjo is Japanese for toilet. Although the common language used by the inmates to the Japanese was Chinese, we were expected to know some Japanese terms.

The toilets could be dangerous for other reasons. **Father Keymolen** was a young priest with an unfortunately misshapen back. One night on the way to the toilets he fell into a cesspit and could not get himself out. He had to be rescued after calling for help. For the rest of the war the other inmates ribbed him about this.

The camp was infested with all sorts of vermin. There were rats, bedbugs, scorpions and mosquitoes. I don't remember flies but there must have been because I remember maggots in the horsemeat. We spent lots of time trying to eliminate the vermin by mak-

Pest Control Icon Set

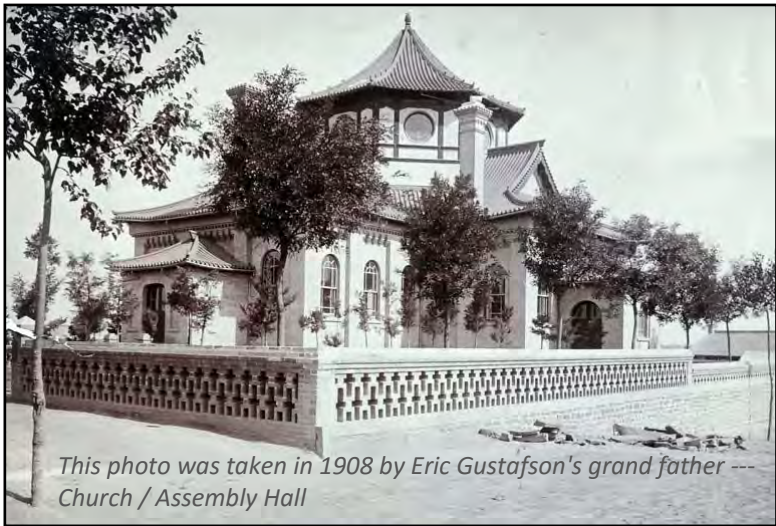


ing and setting traps. Competitions were run among the young men to win a prize for the one who caught the most rats. The prize was 12 smuggled hen eggs. Unfortunately when one winner went to cook one he found it to be rotten. So were the other 11.

There was a stone church building in the camp which the inmates used for talks, study and recreation. We had amateur concerts in there and some plays. I can remember singing a solo song in a concert. The song was called 'Daddy wouldn't buy me a bow wow.' Letitia Metcalfe and I also sang 'September in the rain.' This concert was written and produced by Letitia's step-father Gerald Thomas, a Tientsin businessman who concert-billed himself as 'Professor Thomas and his Stewdents.'



Church services of various denominations were held each Sunday in the church, including Catholic, Church of England and others. I was in the choir at the Catholic service and most of us went to the other church services as well. The different ministers of religion used to attend the services of other denominations. One of the Church of England ministers used to knit scarves during the Catholic services. He used to sit up the back of the church and I asked him once: "What are you doing here?" and he said: "Oh, I attend all the services."



This photo was taken in 1908 by Eric Gustafson's grand father --- Church / Assembly Hall

There was a rainbow of religious beliefs among the inmates — from Christianity to Judaism, from Judaism to Bhuddism, from Bhuddism to atheism. If the inmates of Wei-Hsien had set up a university theological campus during our imprisonment, it would possibly

have had the most distinguished group of teachers of theology assembled anywhere in the world at that time.

We all lived together and helped each other. Nobody thought it strange for different religions to mix together in church. After all, we mixed together in every-day life in the camp so it was natural to mix together at worship. The church and the dining room were used for school rooms during the day but we had to vacate the dining room for lunch to be served.

I had boyfriends for a while and then they either got sick of me or I got sick of them. There were plenty of young men there but I used to select those who were interesting and had personality. I don't remember how many boyfriends I had those days but I don't think I really loved any. I found it was good to be with someone who cared and was willing to sit and talk.

There were no drugs that I am aware of and alcohol was a no-no for teenage girls. Everybody warned us what happened to girls who drank alcohol. And, sex was just not a thing we thought about. That was our training and upbringing — especially for convent-educated girls.

Towards the second half of 1945, I began giving up my belief that we would leave the camp and escape its monotony. The Japanese guards never seemed to worry about the way the war was going for them and maintained their vigilance over us. Every day there was the roll call and occasionally roll calls in the middle of the night. I suppose we got into a routine and only dreamed about obtaining our freedom. The most important things I thought about in camp were getting a square meal and being free to do what I liked within the bounds of my upbringing [44].

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44 Readers now wanting another view of Wei-Hsien seen through the eyes of a woman who was there until August 1943 when she was repatriated back to the US, are invited to read Chapter 15 – Another view of Wei-Hsien – before reading the next chapter. The chapter includes extracts from a report given to the US State Department in December 1943.

Letter from a Belgian prisoner ...

Roll call: 7:30h curfew: 22:00hours

Meals at: 08:15h, 12:30h, 18:00h

Meals are served at the refectory.

The food:

You can only count on enough bread and some Chinese vegetables. Occasionally, eggs, fish and meat are obtainable. However, besides these and other supplies, an additional half a pound of fish or meat per day per person would be more than adequate, to complement a meal.

Work and working hours:

... varied. In general, one day off, every three days for the men, and every two days for the women.

Labour is normal for our community life, (cleaning, coal transport, peeling of vegetables, etc.). It is advisable for men to take overalls with them, aprons or pinafores for the women and also, clogs for everyone. To be mentioned: there are three distinct kitchens and the one for the Tientsin folks is the worst of all.

Electric current:

... 220 volts. It would be wise to take a few screw-on light bulbs. It is forbidden to take along electric irons, foot-warmers, electric stoves etc. but you can always try, for those are very useful items to have. A useful thing to take with you, is a small Chinese stove with no chimney, because the stoves we have here take a long time to get heated and are never ready before noon. There is coal, but it is more dust like and it would be very useful to bring along a rake to scrape it and also a little axe to cut the wood, as well as a saw.

The washing is done by ourselves, but there is a Japanese laundry on the outside which accepts washing three pieces per person per week. This is useful for bed sheets. Soap can be purchased there for personal laundry and washing.

Useful things to take with you:

... Benzene, spade, cigarette lighter, a lot of cigarettes, bucket, jug, basin, ...

At the local canteen, you can buy local fruits, thermos flasks, soap, moth balls, toilet paper, shoe laces, carafes, small towels, very bad quality notebooks, pencils, ... and all that for quite cheap.

All the food supplies in your possession upon arrival in camp can be kept, but you absolutely need very good quality trunks (2 or 3 maximum), for there is very little space in the rooms. The rest of the gear will have to be stocked in the baggage room where there are thousands (!?) of different trunks difficult to reach.

Essential food supplies to be taken:

... bacon, animal fat, powdered eggs, powdered milk, cocoa, coffee, butter, flour, cheese, sugar, honey, jam, meat, vegetables etc. You can't buy anything from the outside. The first to arrive in camp (as a group) haven't been searched though isolated persons were. Bear in mind that the railroad system is insecure and that you must have two excellent padlocks with different keys for each

trunk.

Take as much money as you can. Normally, you have to leave it all to the authorities upon arrival in the camp, but don't be stupid enough to do so. Out of that money, you have a monthly allowance of \$.50.-. Take with you as much medicines as you can because there is nothing at the camp hospital. You can keep all your personal reserves.

Meals can be prepared during the winter months with your personal provisions in your room, and on the common stove during the summer season.

There are no facilities for reading, writing or studying because we are too badly housed in our rooms. Bring as many games as possible and also reading novels.

Shoes are quickly worn out over here, so take good shoes with you, and also working shoes, and if you have to pass through the rainy season, take wooden soled shoes or rubber boots. It would be judicious to take a bit of leather or rubber to replace the shoe soles: there are people with the adequate tools over here to help you.

For the communal showers wooden sandals are best (there is danger in catching "Hong-Kong foot"). The ladies must not hesitate in buying local Chinese shoes made of solid canvas, green or red, with good leather soles. I insist on the "shoe" item because shoes are the first to wear out.

Therefore, the valid men, those who will of course have to work, should have a working outfit, an overall, etc. because, when you are a stoker, or a mechanic, or a rubbish collector, or a flour bag carrier, or a baker ..., good clothes are unwise. The women must bring along aprons or old dresses. Usual everyday clothes or objects you must of course bring along, but I must point out a few practical items one might forget to take. Thus, for the kitchen stuff, each person must have at least three containers: i.e. two soup plates and an enamel mug which resists better. Those who want to, can also take an earthenware cup to sip their coffee in their rooms. No drinking coffee in golden cups, you could burn hands and lips. (??!) This is probably a double meaning sentence!! Take a coffee pot, not too small, especially for the families. Two cooking pots and a bigger one like a jam pan. Families must have an extra plate or two. Also, take a good tool for opening tin cans.

Take a raincoat or a big Chinese umbrella. It is very useful to have a good hammer, pincers, a pair of pliers, a screw driver, a length of iron wire, nails, etc., a saw and an axe (we are given small tree trunks, these are too big to light up the stove). It is better to take a small saw, and a saw for iron, a gimlet, etc. for those who are concerned: ink to mark your clothes, a good provision of benzene for the cigarette lighters, also take some for our older folks, a spade, a rake. For those who like "fricassée de lard" (bacon fricassee), pancakes, and fried eggs: a good frying pan.

Food to take with you:

It is useless, for the first days, to bring along a week's provision of bread and cakes, it takes too much place and it gets all dry. However do take (mostly for the families) what is necessary to make porridge, flour, a lot of sugar, salt, mustard, etc. according to each one's tastes. As for tinned food, take: butter, fat, jam, pâté, sausages, bacon, tongue, vegetables, sauces, vinegar, powdered milk, powdered eggs, cocoa, oil, coffee and cheese. Everything can be used. All this can be used as an everyday food supplement, mostly (as it happens from time to time) when the food served at the kitchens is uneatable. Don't worry however, we are not starving out here.

The families must take two buckets, a big jug, and a few basins. Bachelors must take a big basin, a washing board.

Please take a saw and a hammer for Mr. Pander.

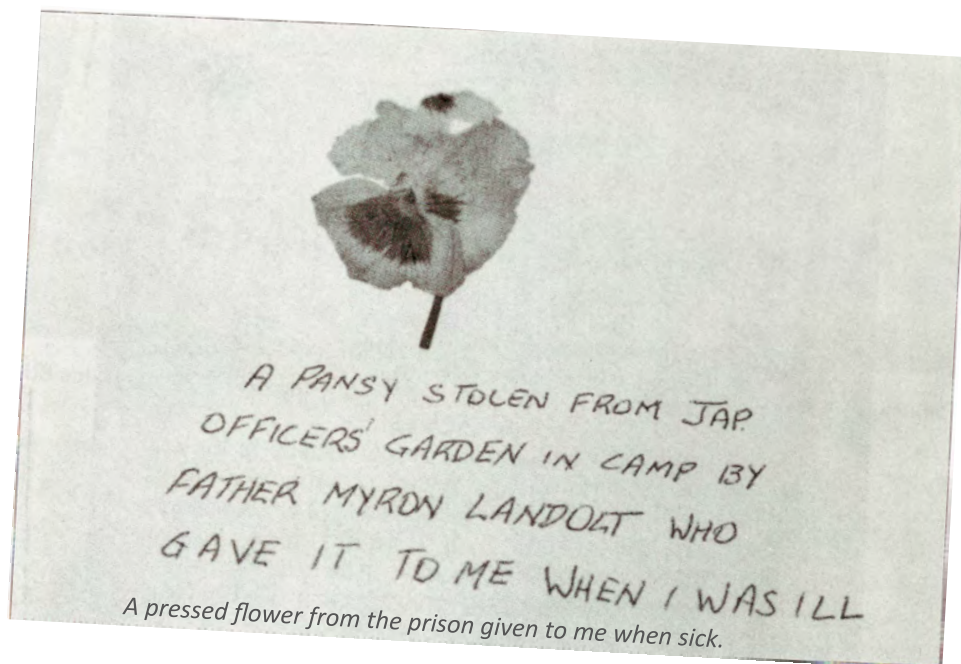
As books; take easy reading novels. The children must take their school books. The camp library is well provided with books in English, loaned monthly.

This should be a good opportunity to learn Russian, it is the language of the future, but there are no Russian books out here. For money, it's as I have already explained, but if it could be possible for the gentleman to whom Mr. Pander left an amount of money, take \$.500.- and give them to the owner. I think he will be pleased with it because he put all his money in the bank and what he can take out every month does not cover his expenses. As for the foreign money, may each do as he thinks best. I should however take a few "golds", and those who have a gold watch or small valuables easy to handle, why not take them also, it can occasionally be used as exchange money. Be cautious, when you send your trunks along: close them well, with padlocks and special keys, for there are many thieves on the way and they are well equipped with many keys. A deck-chair could be quite welcome. Also, the necessary material for the making of curtains for the windows and those who have old drapery should take them along to hang on the walls, it is cleaner. Also, carpets.

Do not take big beds, but good ones however. If you have matting to sandwich in between the mattress and the bed sheets, as well as for the pillowslips: take that too, for in the middle of the very hot

season, it comes in handy. Electric irons. The eventual electricians (and the audacious ones) should take whatever to tinker with, such as wall outlets, switches, etc. ... but don't let them catch you!.

Take woollen sweaters.



CHAPTER 6

Liberation

The one morning that will always remain in my memory was the morning I heard the sound of aeroplane engines and Pop calling out to my mother: "Vera, Vera, come quick. Look, look, they're dropping something."

We ran outside and saw an aeroplane flying overhead. It was lower than any aeroplane we had seen before. This was something completely new for us. Although we had seen tiny specks high in the sky several times before we had never seen an aircraft so close.

August 17, 1945 was a clear day at Wei-Hsien. From the low-flying aeroplane, I suddenly saw objects dropping and parachutes opening [45]. My father called out: "Oh look, they're dropping food or something for us." We watched with amazement. Then Pop said: "Oh, they're men. They're moving. Look at their legs. They're men."

We all realised that something big was happening and we ran past the church towards the camp's entrance. Many ran out the camp's gates but I didn't. To be honest, I was frightened of the Japanese guards there. The guards stood at their posts. They were looking at the parachutes too. They seemed stunned and taken completely by surprise. Many of our young men ran right past them and the guards did not try to stop them. Everybody was calling out: "What's happening? What's happening?"

The parachutists landed just outside the compound. I ran full pelt up to the gate to see what was happening. At the gate, I saw these armed and uniformed parachutists being carried shoulder-high by the inmates into the camp. As the parachutists were carried to the gate, I realised they were American. One of them was a Japanese-American named Tad Nagaki. He went up to a bewildered gate guard, slapped him on the back, and said: "Now, what do you think of your Nagasaki?"

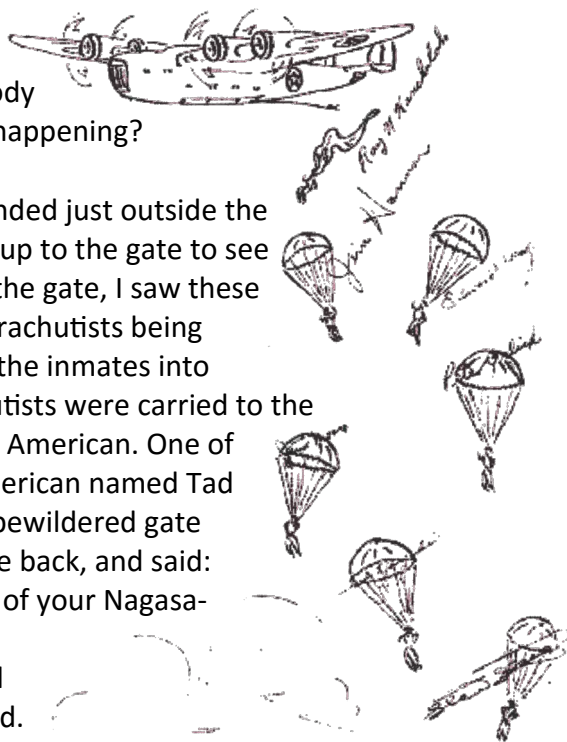
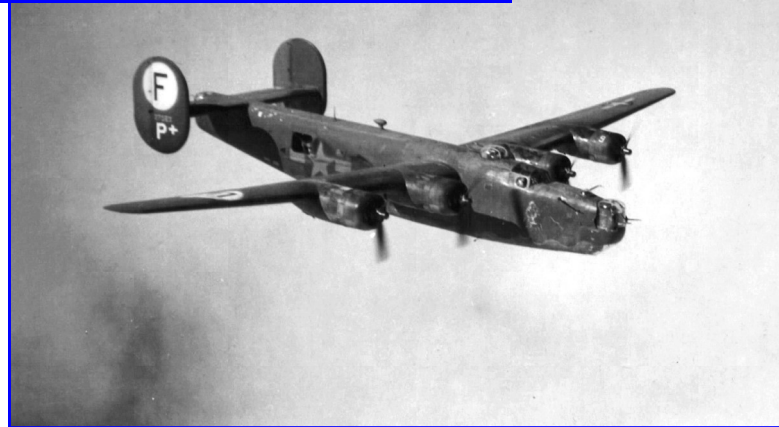
The Japanese guard stood there dumbfounded. Understandably, we did not know anything

about Nagasaki, one of two Japanese cities which were targeted with US atomic bombs' in August 1945. I wonder now whether the confronted Japanese guard knew anything of the atomic bomb attack on Nagasaki.

From the camp entrance, the American soldiers led by Major Stanley Staiger [47] then walked towards the Japanese officers' quarters. Some guards ran toward the quarters but they did not try to stop the Americans. The guards then abandoned their positions at the gate. There was a big commotion as the camp

inmates realised their imprisonment was ending. Everybody was unbelievably excited.

At the officers' quarters, Major Staiger walked

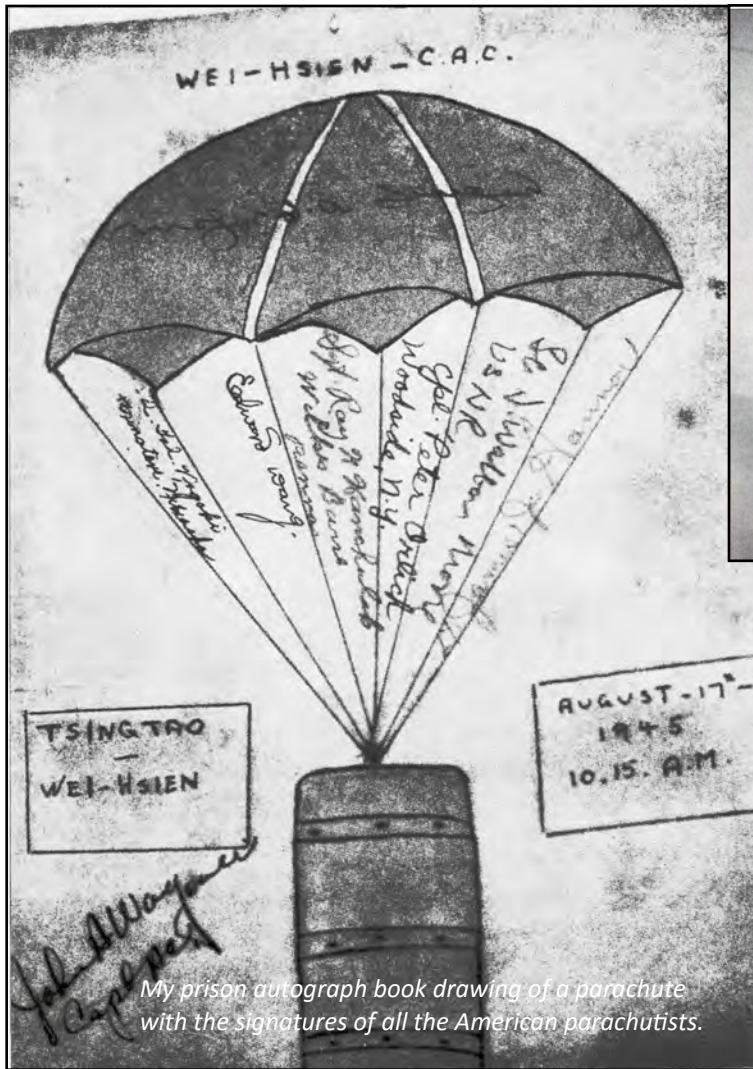


Prisoner artist's sketch of Duck Team parachutists autographed by the seven liberators. Nagaki was the second jumper.

with two Japanese guards to the commandant's quarters. The Japanese commander met Major Staiger and quickly surrendered his sword to him [48].

Overhead, the B24 US aeroplane from which the US soldiers parachuted kept flying around in circles. The aeroplane flew so low I could see its name, The Armored Angel, and a painting of a glamour girl in a two-piece costume on the fuselage. A short time after the Japanese commander's surrender, a canister was dropped from the aeroplane. The canister contained supplies for the parachutists. It wasn't long before other American aeroplanes came and dropped many canisters [49] together with leaflets warning us not to overeat.

With glee, we fell upon the canisters and found they contained wonderful things. Cardboard cartons of tinned food, clothing, medical supplies, toiletries and



US military aircraft dropping supplies to camp taken by fellow prisoner

now, I cannot recollect what, if anything, happened to any of the Japanese officers or guards. They just weren't there any more. I certainly did not worry about them or even give them a thought. Had anything untoward happened to them I would have been told about it.

On the first day of our liberation we ate our normal rations but from then on we dined well. The first lavish feast consisted of bread, butter, cheese, jam and everything else together despite the warnings from the American soldiers not to overeat. As it turned out we could not eat much. We had been starved for so long that our stomachs had consequently shrunk. It therefore took me two days to eat my first lavish meal but even then we didn't waste anything. We always saved the leftovers for the next meal. As the days passed, more US soldiers arrived in trucks. There were many of them. They helped with the running of the camp and everything went well. The soldiers must have been technicians because they got everything working in the

45 The first wave of parachutists landed at 10.15 a.m. on August 17, 1945. The time and date was recorded by one of the parachutists in my autograph book. All the first-wave parachutists signed my autograph book. Bradbury family collection.

46 In retrospect, there is no doubt that the war was lost for the Japanese well before its official ending. The use of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki suddenly and unexpectedly stopped a lot of killing and casualties which would have occurred if the Japanese had continued to resist surrender to the Allies. I believe in the dropping of the bombs because it saved many lives by quickly ending the war. Among those lives saved were the people in the camp with me.

47 Among the parachutists was US Army Lieutenant James Jess Hannon. Hannon, when serving with the US Parachute Infantry, was captured at Anzio, Italy, during the war. He was then held as a German prisoner of war at five camps. He escaped from the last one in Poland and made his way to Romania where he was rescued by the US Air Force. He was subsequently posted as an intelligence officer and assigned to US Special Forces in Kunming, China. The parachutists took off from Hsian airport, China. Hannon was injured in the landing and had to receive attention at the camp's hospital. In a letter about his experiences, he writes: "Wei-Hsien Prison Camp and the condition of the prisoners was not comparable to anything in my experience. They were indeed fortunate, apparently unaware that prisoners of German and Japanese forces throughout the areas they controlled experienced monumental and unparalleled horrors. Most of the [US parachute] team stayed at the camp several days." Letter from James Jess Hannon, Yucca Valley, California dated February 17, 1998. Family documents. Bradbury family collection. In February 2000, Hannon was quoted in an interview that he had written a film script about his war experiences and he was having talks with film producers about the possibility of the script being used in a film. Associated Press, February 21, 2000.

48 The quick surrender of the Japanese suggests they had been advised by their command of the Allied plans to liberate the camp. Some people who were in the camp have since claimed that the camp inmates' leadership knew of Japan's capitulation.

49 Dropped with the first wave of canisters were leaflets which were headed: "ALLIED PRISONERS". It reads: "The JAPANESE Government has surrendered. You will be evacuated by ALLIED NATIONS forces as soon as possible. "Until that time your present supplies will be augmented by air-drop of U.S. food, clothing and medicines. The first drop of these items will arrive within one (1) or two (2) hours.

"Clothing will be dropped in standard packs for units of 50 or 500 men."

The leaflet then outlines the clothing, medicines and food to be delivered. Subsequent drops came from aircraft flying from as far away as Okinawa, Saipan and Guam. Aircraft used for the drops included B29 Super Fortresses. Family documents. Bradbury family collection.



How the 'Sydney Morning Herald' reported the end of World War II to Australians. Inset: my 'B' for British prisoner armband.

camp including supplies of hot water in abundance.

Once, I welcomed some of the soldiers with a kiss and one of them said: "Wait there, wait there, put some lipstick on, I want my pals to see it." I said: "I don't have any." He said: "Here's some." He produced two tubes of lipstick which I applied and then kissed him on both cheeks leaving noticeable marks. He went off happily to show his friends. I gave the lipstick to my mother. I did not begin to wear lipstick until I was in my 20s.

We really knew we were liberated when we were woken one morning by loudspeakers all around the camp blaring the song: 'Oh, what a beautiful morning'. From then on it was the signal every day to remind us that we were free again. What a lovely feeling and a lovely song. I shall never forget it or any song from the stage musical Oklahoma. They were constantly played over the loud-speakers.

During this period, Tsolik Balianz and I got hold of some parachute material which was pure silk and extremely strong. She made me two blouses and a skirt from the material. One white blouse and one red skirt and blouse. She used one of the camp's portable sewing machines that my mother had used earlier to make me a pair of shorts and a top out of an old dress.

After liberation, every family was issued with cartons of tinned food from the canisters. There was no necessity to cook — everything was prepared. Cheese, butter, jam, corned beef, tongue, Spam (a brand of canned processed luncheon meat) and chipolata sausages. They were all packed in khaki-green coloured cans. There were also biscuits that the American soldiers called dog biscuits. The Americans didn't forget

anything in their food parcels. The parcels even had little can openers. Among the parcels came plenty of cigarettes. So mum, and I think my father, took up smoking again.

Shortly after the Americans' arrival, a news board was set up and every day there were news items, mainly for the American troops. They reported baseball game results and stories about movie stars. I copied some of these articles telling me about a world I didn't know. I still have news reports [50]. Radios arrived in the camp [51] and we often listened to the broadcast news. Pop was a member of the camp's news committee because he had been a Reuter's news agency contributor from Tsingtao before the war. He helped produce the news sheets posted on the news board.

The adults had to attend meetings chaired by American officers where they were told of the progress in returning us to our homes. They told us to be patient because it would take some time. For my family it took about two months. The American civilian internees were the first to go. I know some of them declined repatriation to the United States because their homes were in China and they wanted to stay there. As for my family, the only home we knew was Tsingtao and that's where we wanted to go. I don't remember being impatient to go home because I started to enjoy myself. No more being dragged out into the open for roll call. There were dances every Saturday night with the soldiers. The American soldiers were extremely polite and well-mannered. They appeared strong and healthy. Everybody liked them. We rightly regarded them as our saviours.

Inevitably, I got into trouble with my boyfriend, Brian Clark (1923-1988), for dancing with the Americans. He never spoke to me again. After the war Brian [52] worked in England, Sweden, India, Brazil, Argentina and Canada where, sadly, he died of cancer.

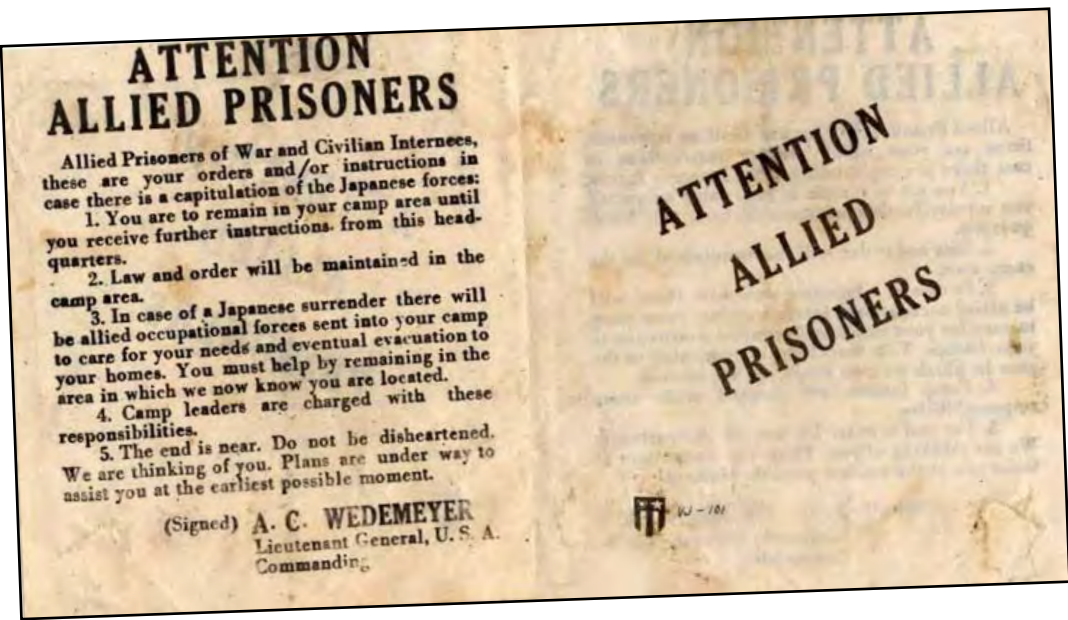
I did not leave the camp for short excursions into the local neighbourhood after the liberation. To my mind, there was nothing to see. Just miles and miles of open fields and farms devoted mainly to cropping. For the younger children, schooling continued. Because I

50 Family documents. Bradbury family collection.

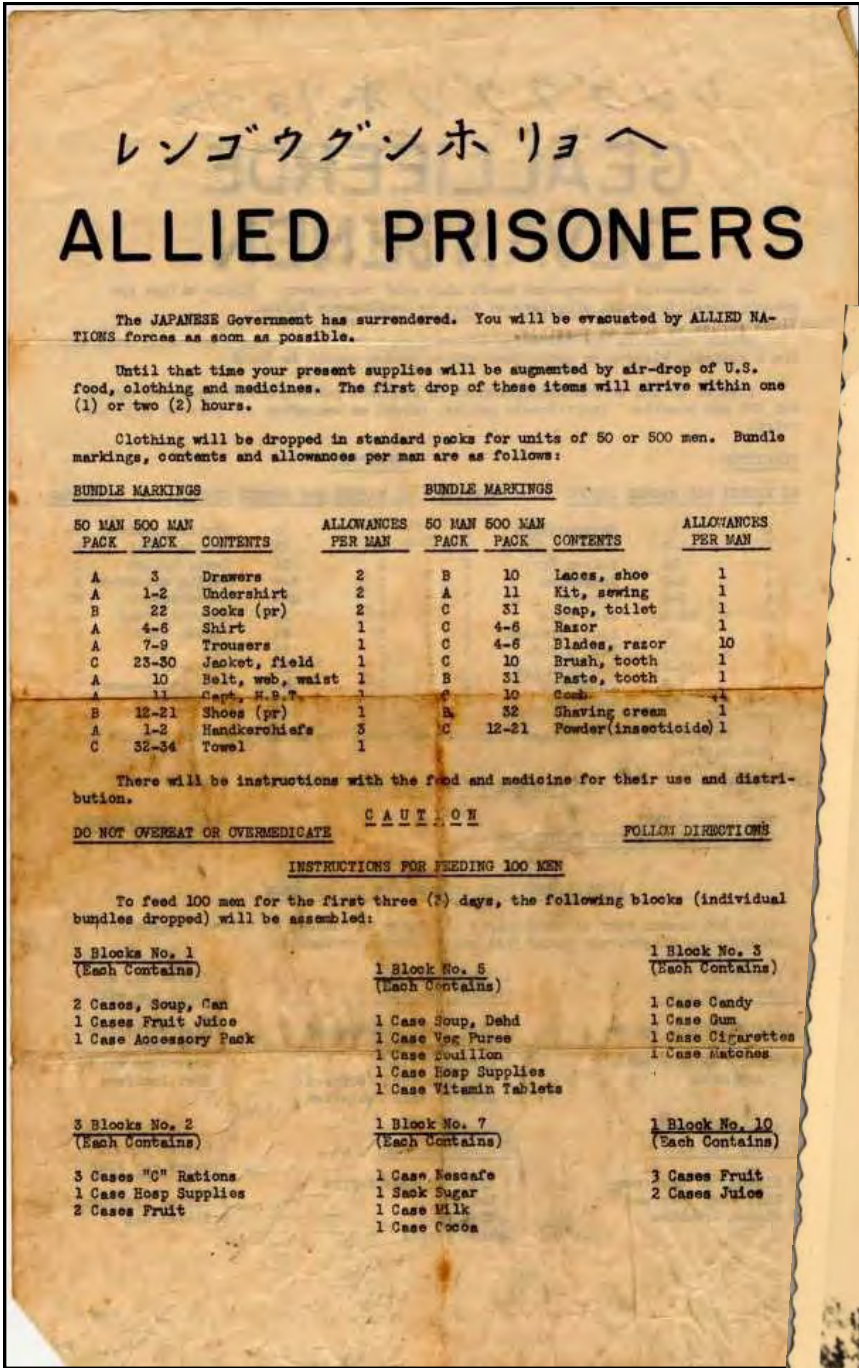
51 The radios were supplied by the Americans.

52 Obituary notice for Brian Harry Thomas Clark, born Shanghai, died North Vancouver, June 2, 1988. Bradbury family collection.

had finished high school I still had to do my camp committee-appointed chores. However, there was a big difference — a difference in morale among us. We had music all day and we could have hot showers whenever we wanted them. And, we could move around freely and visit friends at night. Above all, there was plenty of food. The American food parcels were brought in regularly. Fresh vegetables came in from the Chinese. For reasons I have never fathomed, we still didn't get any rice.



Because we had no suitcases for our belongings, we accumulated cartons from the food parcels to take our meagre belongings back to Tsingtao. We didn't have much at all. I just had my camp souvenirs. Prized among them is a large collection of signatures which include the signatures of the parachutists [53] and many of the camp inmates. #



CHAPTER 7

Home to Tsingtao

We left our decrepit bedding furniture at the camp when it became our turn to go home. I do not remember much about the trip, which was by train.

When we got back to Tsingtao we were taken to the Edgewater Mansions hotel by a US Army truck. There we were treated like royalty.



Edgewater Mansions. It is now called Dong Hai Hotel. - Eastern Sea Hotel --- © Norman Clif

We had a good lunch with white linen tablecloths, silverware cutlery and we were attended to by servants in long white gowns. Strangely, I don't remember the menu but it was a beautiful meal. White plates, serviettes and finger bowls. The lot. It was a great treat.

After this welcome we all had to go downstairs into the hall of the hotel where American officers were seated. They marked off our names and asked whether we required accommodation or not. Pop told them we would be staying with our friend Freddie Gensburger and his father who owned a big house opposite our family home in Ilitis Huk. Freddie, who was French, had not been interned even though France had been overrun by the Germans [54]. He was an optician by profession and a good pianist. He taught me how to play the piano.

My parents were anxious to see how our house

had fared during our absence and of course the first thing they did was to examine the built-in cupboard where they had hidden mum's jewellery. The jewellery was still there. I have some of it to this day. We found that Japanese officers had occupied the house and left it in an awful mess. All of the furniture was gone and the bath tub was in the yard filled with water and algae. It had been used to water horses. We could not live in our house until it was cleaned up and repainted. I don't know who did this work or who paid for it.

In the meantime we left the Gensburgers and went to live with my uncle André. There was some ill feeling between my parents and him. I remember my mother having a row with him in Russian because he had disposed of my doll house, dolls and our dog Sally. We recovered Sally who had been renamed Mutze. My mother never forgave her brother for his actions and for the rest of her life she reminded him about what he had done.

My uncle André had a wife named Olga. Aunt Olga was lovely. Their house had an outside light which needed replacing. Because clear globes were then difficult to get. Aunt Olga found a red globe which she used to replace the broken light. One day she was telling my father that all these US servicemen were knocking on her front door and she could not understand why. Pop saw the red light and said: "Wait a minute, you've had all these servicemen coming here and finding it was a wrong house." We did not know what a red light meant. Pop obviously did because he took it down and the visits ceased. I know now that a red light is often used to indicate a brothel.

We found the Japanese had taken all the good furniture from many homes as plunder for transport back to Japan. However, because of chronic shipping shortages from Tsingtao to Japan, the furniture had been stored in godowns (ware-houses) at Tsingtao docks waiting for transport. Local householders were invited to search for their furniture at the godowns and eventually my parents found our lounge suite and the front veranda cane suite which was brought home together with my green dressing table. A lot of the property in the godowns was unclaimed and because furniture was scarce Pop was later invited to select some. That's how he restocked our house with furniture.

In Tsingtao, we were given Red Cross supplies. We could go to their store and pick up good used clothing sent from America. I was also issued with a card authorising me to wear US Military-issue clothing [55]. After we moved back into our house and got our lives back together again, our two amahs Niong Niong and

54 The mid-1944 list of internees shows that citizens of other countries overrun by the Germans, such as Dutch, Belgians and Poles, were interned at Wei-Hsien.

55 Family documents. Bradbury family collection.

Da Niong came to visit us and mum employed them. We took on another cook because Niong Niong's husband (Chang) who had been our cook before the war had since died from tuberculosis. We also employed a man for house and garden work.

Life was almost as it was before the war, but it was different. There was more of a feeling of egalitarianism, especially with the servants. Mum changed long-held attitudes. For instance, she used to help in the kitchen.

We were present at the official surrender ceremony of the Japanese at Tsingtao after our return. It was held on October 25, 1945 at Tsingtao racecourse. We watched US General Leumel Shepherd accept the Japanese surrender. There were plenty of American soldiers and 6th Division US marines [56] at the ceremony. There were also many US Navy and Air Force personnel. There is a photograph [57] of my brother Eddie in an American tank at the ceremony. After the ceremony we never saw another Japanese soldier. I didn't miss them.

Jardine Matheson's Shanghai office told Pop to resume management of Jardine Matheson's office in Tsingtao and it gradually started to profit. As I was by then a young woman, I wanted to get a job. Although I could take dictation in shorthand at the rate of 60 words per minute, I was not a trained typist. My father told me there was a vacancy for an office girl at the International Club building which had been taken over by the American Red Cross.

I went there and applied. At this time it was a drop-in centre for US military personnel. I was offered a position as a receptionist in the information section which I was happy to accept. After a while I was offered a job in the music record room which contained a library of gramophone records. I found the job easy. All I had to do was hand out the records to servicemen who wanted to play them.

After a while I was asked if I would go into a show called Blind Date. It sounded fun so I volunteered. It consisted of Red Cross women workers standing on a stage screened from the participants. The participants selected a screened Red Cross worker to take out to dinner by asking questions. The questions were along the lines of what we liked to eat – which was the best part, I thought – our favourite actors and other general questions.

Once during one of the shows I became a little impatient with one of the servicemen's question. He was supposed to ask the usual questions about my favourite foods, film stars and the like but he kept probing me about personal details. In the end, I became frustrated and said: "Look, come to the point. What do



Author taking a break as US Red Cross worker in Tsingtao - 1946.

you want from me?" To my astonishment this brought the house down. There was wolf whistling and stamping of feet. I was at a loss to understand. I felt embarrassed. So I went to Corporal Bill Cooney, a married man in his 30s, after the show was over. Corporal Cooney was the driver for General Clements, a friend of my parents. I asked Corporal Cooney: "What did I do wrong?" He put his arms around me, hugged me and said: "You are just so sweet."

I received my share of dinner dates with marines, sailors and soldiers. I got the impression that Americans lived on steak because practically all my dates ordered steak. Possibly this was because steak was rarely on US military menus and steak was comparatively cheap in China. I preferred seafood and I invariably ordered that.

Nearly all the American servicemen were young and all were extremely homesick. None of them liked being in China. Most of them had photos of their girlfriends in their wallets which they showed me. I found they missed female company very much and just wanted to talk. They talked mostly about their families and what life would be like back in the States when they returned there. It was an interesting experience made more interesting because I liked the food and I liked the

company. I found most Americans were good articulate communicators.

The Red Cross also conducted beauty contests — which were fun — using photographs of the servicemen's girlfriends. The winner's photograph was displayed on the centre's notice board. Very proud was the soldier whose girlfriend took the winning position. My photograph never went up on the wall. On the day of each contest the judging would be done by visitors and members of the staff including me.

The centre was well run and the men were well behaved. Managing the centre were American Red Cross women who were regularly rotated back to the US. Many of these departing women gave me their civilian clothing as they left. The Red Cross women wore an attractive uniform while on duty in the club and consequently their civilian clothing was not often worn. Their uniforms consisted of a dark grey dress with Red Cross badges, epaulettes on their shoulders or stripes denoting their rank on their sleeves. They wore a tie or a little red ribbon instead of a tie.

I was happy working at the centre. I was well-paid and wore fashionable clothing. I could wear the American Red Cross workers' donated clothing because I was thin. Their clothing to my eyes was in the latest fashion. They also had nylons which the women occasionally gave me because they felt sorry for me because of what I had been through.

My mother looked after many servicemen. They were welcome at our place. There was always home-cooked food for them and someone to listen to them. One of the Marines, a nice man from New Orleans named Sergeant Nathan Greenberg, who was about 21 or 22, often visited us and he taught me how to touch type. He used Pop's Reuter's news agency typewriter. As a result, I became a passable typist and later became a stenographer thanks to him.

One day, I was with my mother in the main street of Tsingtao when a truck convoy of US Navy and Marine Corps personnel came by. I was wearing shorts that attracted their attention. They whistled at us. Some of them jumped out of their trucks and approached us loudly asking for dates. We were afraid and we both hurried to my friend Zartousha's place which was nearby. I borrowed a skirt from her and wore it home. Never again did I wear shorts in the main street of Tsingtao.

I only had one real fright with a US servicemen. I met a US Navy Ensign whom I eventually invited him to our house. He appeared to be a nice fellow and he invited me to the officers' dance held every Saturday night at the Edgewater Mansions hotel. A US military band provided the music. Ensign Riley picked me up in

a jeep and after the dance he invited me to his room for a drink. I naively went and had a soft drink. He began to make advances and when he wouldn't stop, I jumped out the window. I ran to my uncle André's home half a block away and uncle André drove me home.

After about six months of working for the American Red Cross many US military personnel were withdrawn and the Red Cross centre closed. It was a sad day for me because I was thoroughly enjoying my job there. A US serviceman who visited our home suggested I try for a job with US Navy Port Facilities as a typist.

I visited their office and applied. I was offered a job and was assigned to Lieutenant Gordon LeRoy Johnson as his secretary. He was classified as land crew because he got seasick aboard ships. Gordon's job was to make sure all the visiting ships were supplied with provisions, clothing, food and other items. Each vessel had a PX (post exchange — a shop) and Gordon had to ensure it was fully supplied. I had to type out lists of what was needed. Every time ships arrived they had to be re-supplied. They were always short of something. Gordon took me aboard US Navy ships moored in Tsingtao harbour to attend to the stores supply.



'Gordon after five' and author in Singapore - early 1950s.

Gordon became my boyfriend. He later became known as 'Gordon after five' in my family. This was because during working hours I had to call him Mr Johnson but could call him Gordon after 5 p.m. Although I was considered his girlfriend, he had a photo of his American girlfriend in his office. When I arrived at work, he would turn the photo to the wall. It was good fun being his girlfriend. It meant I had a steady date at dances, movies and dinners.

My mother liked Gordon but I always knew there

was nothing serious in our relationship even though he wrote me poetry. He once wrote about a young man's fancy turning to love in the spring but I did not understand. So I asked my father what it meant because I thought it was so romantic and I was happy. I know now Gordon's poetry was not even original. He was quoting Alfred Lord Tennyson's famous poetic line: 'In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love.'

When Gordon was transferred back to the States he sent me a parcel of nylons, hair ribbons, a pair of shoes and some bobby pins. Our correspondence ended shortly after I first arrived in Australia.

About five years later, I was in Singapore. To my amazement, I met Gordon in the street after I heard this loud yawn which sounded familiar to me. It reminded me immediately of Gordon and I turned and saw him before he saw me. He didn't recognise me. I said: "Remember me?" and he said: "Don't tell me, don't tell me, Bangkok?" He mentioned several other Asian cities but not Tsingtao. When I mentioned Tsingtao, he threw his head back and said: "Oh, I've still got the jumper you knitted me in Australia and sent me." Gordon said he was working for the US Government. I went back with him and his boss to his hotel and he showed me the V-neck pullover that I had knitted for him. He said it was nice and warm and he took it everywhere. He told me he was happily married with two children. He had not married his American sweetheart but a French woman. He took me out to dinner. I have not seen or heard of him since.

At least two Tsingtao Russian nationality girls married US servicemen in Tsingtao and went to the States with their husbands. One returned to Tsingtao a year or so later. I was told by a friend the Russian thought her husband, who was about 20 years older than her, was wealthy. But she found he was quite poor and his parents did not make her welcome. As a result she left him and returned to Tsingtao. Another Russian girl who was a good pianist married and went to America. She found her husband lived in the hills. I was told she called him a hill-billy and was very disappointed with his family's lifestyle. She was stuck in the hills and she could not wear her good clothes. So, she too left and came back to Tsingtao.

A number of Chinese girls in Tsingtao had babies to Americans and some were literally left at the altar when their betrothed servicemen's ships left on the day they were to be wed. Some were jilted after having their wedding dresses made. I know a number of Tsingtao girls received marriage proposals but declined them for various reasons.

I only received one proposal and that was

from an enlisted sailor who said he was madly in love with me and wanted me to go with him to America as his wife. He used to visit me at my home which was a couple of miles from the town centre. Because he could not obtain a motor vehicle, he used to hire a large white horse and come riding like a medieval knight but without the shining armour because he was wearing his sailor's uniform. He arrived one day with a large square-shaped solid silver ring with some Chinese characters which he said was my name.

I accepted the ring because I liked the look of it and wore it with pleasure. When I told my mother she absolutely forbade me to marry him saying: "You can't marry him, you're too young, you don't know what family he comes from. You are not even to think about it — you are only 17." I subsequently told the gallant sailor I was not going to marry him but I kept the ring because I liked it. I gave the ring to our amah's daughter when I left China.

In China throughout 1946, there were increasing signs of Chinese Communist forces everywhere taking over the Government of China. One day, my father said: "We will have to leave China because when the Chinese Communists take over China, British and American people will not be welcome. They will throw us out."

Earlier that year, we had a representative of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) staying at our home. He was there because he wanted to find out how European and other foreign national families were faring in China. He knew we had to leave and he suggested to my father that we ought to go to Australia, saying: "It is so far away. You will not get mixed up in another war there." Pop said to my mother: "You take the children there and have a holiday. Find out what Australia is like and maybe we will go there if it is all right." So, in November 1946 we left for Sydney. Because we were supposed to be on holiday we did not bring any possessions other than everyday clothes. In my bags, I packed my souvenirs from the internment camp. I must have suspected something.

#



CHAPTER 8

First-time Sydneysider

On arrival in Sydney, we received a telegram from Pop telling us to stay in Sydney because he was joining us. We had difficulty in obtaining accommodation in Sydney because there was a chronic shortage following the war. We found children were unpopular with landlords because it was legally difficult for them to evict troublesome tenants if they had children.

We managed to rent one room in Forest Lodge, a rundown area near the University of Sydney. When Pop arrived, we rented elsewhere and eventually rented a house at West Ryde. Unfortunately Pop did not bring the belongings from our Tsingtao home that mum would have chosen to bring. For instance, he brought only the knives from an 1835 cutlery set and left the rest of the set in China. He chose other articles that mum thought were inappropriate.

Pop had brought enough money from China to buy a house and soon found a large brick bungalow at 1165 Victoria Road, West Ryde, about 11 miles [18 kilometres] from Sydney's central business district. After paying for the house and becoming the legal owner he found that the former owner's tenant refused to leave. It took some three years of litigation before the tenant moved out. During that time we lived in cramped accommodation nearby and became very frustrated.

Pop had some difficulty in obtaining employment because he was close to 50 years of age. He tried importing goods but because he did not know the local markets and trading conditions well, he was not successful. He eventually obtained employment as a tally clerk on the Sydney waterfront and settled down. My mother was not happy in Sydney but she got a job working with a pottery. She missed her former life and found it difficult to make new friends. My young brother Eddie continued his schooling, made many friends and did well.

I had no difficulty in obtaining employment. I worked at the New South Wales Government's Department of Labour as a secretary. Once, when my turn came to make the morning tea, I made it

with water that was not boiling because I had never had to make it before and did not know it had to be boiling to brew properly. After a couple of months with the government, I got a job with an insurance company as a secretary. I then worked with a shipping company. Each time I changed jobs I received higher pay. Although I was happy in my work I did not like Sydney because I had difficulty meeting new friends.

I aimed to return to Asia, so I saved every bit of money I could. I met a number of young men and went out with them but I did not really enjoy their company. Unlike the Americans, I found the Australian men were often not good communicators or attentive. I was too intent on leaving Sydney to become interested in them. It took me four years to save enough money to buy a shipping ticket to Singapore.



HMS Formidable, Sydney Harbour 1946

CHAPTER 9

Return to Asia

After convincing my mother I was only going for a holiday to Singapore, I finally sailed on a Flotto Lauro liner in 1950. On arrival in Singapore the ship was visited by Customs officials and I had to pay 600 Singapore dollars as a bond to en-



© www.ssmaritime.com A rare postcard of SS Sydney

sure I obtained employment.

I was issued with a receipt and when I eventually left Singapore I received a full refund. I had to declare my monetary situation to ensure I could support myself if I was unable to find a job. At the guest house where I first stayed there was a number of British servicemen's families. A serviceman's wife suggested I try for a job with the Singapore Police Department because they paid good wages. I went to the Police Department and told them I wanted a job. After producing my references from my Sydney employers and demonstrating my knowledge of stenography and languages, including Mandarin, I was employed.

For the next seven years I worked in the Criminal Investigation Department's Special Branch where I did confidential work. The Singaporean police force was controlled by the British because Singapore was then a British colony.

I moved accommodation several times to better

flats. I eventually shared a flat with a stenographer named Jane Thompson. I found I liked Singapore's social life and I enjoyed it to the full. I joined the Singapore Swimming Club and the Tanglin Club.

I entered the Miss Singapore beauty competition and considered my chances of winning to be quite good. Because such events were increasingly being considered passé and demeaning for women, the com-



Unsuccessful Miss Singapore candidate - 1953.

petition was cancelled and so I never found out whether I could have won it. I took a small part in a Malayan movie named 'Anak Ku Sazali' where I was part of a nightclub group. I have never seen the finished movie.

I was never with anybody long enough to receive proposals of marriage although one young man whose name I now forget always said he would marry me one day. I only went out with him for dinner a few times and played bridge with him. I did fall in love once but that came to nothing.

I experienced race riots in Singapore which were



frightening. Because of the riots, I was taken to work in armoured police vehicles for my personal safety. I also often saw British Navy ratings fighting among themselves when ashore and then fighting the Australian Navy ratings whenever an Australian Navy vessel visited. When an American Navy ship arrived, the British and Australian ratings used to combine and take on the Americans.

In May 1954, I went with my friend Antoinette Harding to Japan on the SS Chusan from Singapore for a holiday. In Japan we went by train to Kyoto. Seated near us were a Japanese man and a Russian woman who were talking. At one stage I glanced out of the train window and saw what I thought was desert. I said: "Look, a desert. I did not know Japan had deserts." The Japanese man heard my comment, leant forward and said to me quietly: "Excuse me, that is not desert. That is the atomic bomb."

My mother and father continued living in Sydney. Mum desperately wanted me to return to live there. Although I did come home almost every Christmas for a week or two, I did not want to live there. I stayed in Singapore for Christmas 1956 because I wanted to attend some social functions. I then came to Sydney early in 1957. I brought all my belongings with me because I wanted to go to London. Among my plans was attending a London fashion show, to which I had been invited. Queen Elizabeth was expected at the fashion show. I thought I would stay with my parents a short while and then go to London and settle there for a few years.

On arrival in Sydney, I got a job with the New South Wales Police Department. I was assigned to a section of the Criminal Investigation Branch (CIB – made up of detectives). My plans for London were thrown awry early in March 1957 when a tall young detective to whom I was later introduced walked into my office.

Less than two years later, I married the tall detective and I set up home in Sydney. My husband Bob



ss Chusan © www.seadogs-reunited.com



File:Hiroshima aftermath.jpg - Wikimedia Commons

(Robson Lacey Bradbury 1930-) and I have three grown sons and four grandchildren now. I have no regrets about missing that London fashion show.

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CHAPTER 10

Second-time Sydney sider goes back to China



My wedding day in Sydney with husband Bob and my parents.

Back in Sydney as a wife and mother, I tried to put my imprisonment by the Japanese well behind me and get on with my life. Bob and I were too busy rearing our sons to travel much. When our sons were in their teens, we took them to Indonesia and later Hawaii and Hong Kong for holidays.

They seemed to like it and they all have now travelled extensively including backpacking through Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam. Two of them have been on round-the-world trips for extended periods.

In 1986, Bob and I went to China with Stanley (Stan) Fairchild and his wife Jane. I have already mentioned Stanley's prowess as a blackmarketer in camp and his work with Father Scanlan. Stan subsequently became a respected business-man and the father of two daughters. Stan's wife Jane (née Thompson) was the woman who shared my flat in Singapore. I introduced Jane to Stan.

We went by car from Tientsin to what was the Wei-Hsien internment compound and then we went to my old home at Tsingtao.

The compound still exists and from what we could gather it is now a hospital. Stan met one of the Chinese who used to blackmarket deal with him during the war. The insulator cups from the electrified wire fences are still on the compound walls and many of the

buildings are still in use. The hospital, church and Japanese officers' buildings still stand. We located the kitchen where my father worked. Memories flooded back for Stan and me.

We could not locate Eric Liddell's grave ^[58] but since our visit a memorial has been erected to his memory at the site. It was difficult to orient myself because of the passage of time and changes in the camp compound buildings.

In my memory the camp compound was fairly large but I found it was only about 380 square metres in area. It was hard to imagine that all those people — about 2000 — lived in such a small area for nearly four years.

New buildings have been erected since the war. Because these buildings are in the same style as the original buildings it was difficult for me to pick which was which. The fields outside the compound are now built upon and the main entrance to the centre has been moved.

We stopped to look at the Wei-Hsien town centre and speak to the local people who came up to us with big smiles and gestures of friendship. I had a little difficulty talking with them because the Shantung dialect has now been superseded by Putunghwa Mandarin. We got along quite well with the locals. Many had obviously never seen Europeans before. They were intrigued by the height of Bob who is almost two metres tall. While in Wei-Hsien, Bob went into one of the local restaurants to get a table for lunch. Believing he could communicate sufficiently well to buy a bottle of the famous Tsingtao beer he tried to order one. Being met with blank stares he indicated an empty beer bottle on another table and pointed animatedly at it while waving some money in the air. The staff seemed to understand and he was soon brought a bottle on a tray. The only trouble was that they gave him an empty bottle. Shortly afterwards, Stan, Jane and I arrived and pretty soon we were sampling Tsingtao beer. Bob has since

58 In March 1991, a two-metre granite stone from Scotland's Isle of Mull was taken by train to Wei-Hsien from Hong Kong and erected above Mr Liddell's grave in the former camp compound. Engraved on the stone in English and Chinese is the following quotation from Isaiah Chapter 40, Verse 31 in the Old Testament of the Bible:

*"They Shall Mount Up
With Wings As Eagles
They Shall Run
And Not Be Weary."*

This monument was put in place because the Chinese authorities refused per-mission to place a headstone on Liddell's gravesite. The monument was dedicated in June 1991. The stone was provided by the Eric Liddell Foundation which was established in 1990. Based in Hong Kong, the foundation's objectives include helping promising Chinese and British athletes. South China Morning Post, March 22, 1991. Bradbury family collection.

given up trying to speak Chinese.

We found Tsingtao had changed a lot. It has gone from being a relatively small city to a large, thriving city. It is still laid out as I knew it and the International Club and Edgewater Mansions still exist. We visited the International Club which seems to be a workmen's club and I was saddened to see the splendid parquet floors badly scratched. Spittoons were everywhere and the whole place badly needed restoration. Without difficulty, we found my old home which now appears to be a home for elderly Chinese. Unfortunately, we were not allowed to enter the house and the people there seemed somewhat suspicious of us. Consequently, we did not stay long.

We went to my old school (Tsingtao Holy Ghost convent) which now appears to be a college where technical and science subjects are taught. I was allowed to walk through but my husband was not. Like the International Club, the old convent building was in a poor state of disrepair. The former Catholic church nearby has physically suffered vandalism. All its ornaments and stained glass windows are missing. Plain glass has replaced the stained glass and each pane had a bullet hole. We were only allowed into the church after producing our business cards which the caretaker, who obviously could not read, insisted upon seeing.

The Tsingtao Lutheran Church is still being used as a church and we were given a friendly welcome by its German minister. I understand the German naval officers and men from the ill-fated cruiser Emden worshipped at this church before World War I (1914-1918). In the early days of that war, the Emden was engaged by the Royal Australian Navy cruiser Sydney in the Indian Ocean near Cocos Island and was destroyed by the Sydney.

At every opportunity in China, we sampled the local Chinese cuisine. The quality of the food had not changed and we thoroughly enjoyed the meals which were cheap and plentiful.

As we toured these past sites closely involved with the story of my life, I remembered that just before the American parachutists landed in our camp there was a camp rumour that all internees were to be taken to Shanghai. It was claimed we would be permitted to take only a small bag of toiletries. I have since heard alarming stories that the Japanese intended to execute us in Shanghai using specially constructed death chambers. I was even told the alleged location of these facilities. Because this story has not been confirmed by me I mention its existence as an unconfirmed allegation only.

There may be justification for believing such a

Japanese action possible when one remembers the murder of almost 2000 Australian prisoners of war at Sandakan by the Japanese after the war was over. At Wei-Hsien we were still under Japanese guard two days after the war ended. I did not know the war had ended until the American parachutists said so.

On our return to Tsingtao after our release from the camp, we were told by my uncle Andre that some of our former German neighbours had suggested to the Japanese that we be given striped clothing to wear and be forced to have our heads shaven.

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Bob and me with our sons - Tom, George and Bill. Photograph: Michelle (Oyston) Bradbury.



Bob and me outside my parents' former Tsingtao home - 1986. Photograph: Stan Fairchild.

CHAPTER 11

Reflections on hard times

After the misery of the camp I was so happy to be free. The happiness and our repatriation to Tsingtao allowed me and my friends to catch up on life.

The US friends I had were generally young and well behaved. They were under strict discipline to behave themselves or face the pain of being returned to the US in disgrace. With them as friends I thoroughly enjoyed myself. I went to dances, movies, restaurants, dressed in modern clothing and was able to pick my companions. In addition, I had a good job with good pay and had above all: privacy and a lot of freedom.

Having money in one's pocket enabled me to go places. It allowed me to go to Singapore from Australia and also to Japan. On reflection, losing the ability to make these choices as we all did when we were prisoners of the Japanese is one of the privileges most precious lost.

I know that a lot of people lost a lot of privileges during the war. Some more than others. Many lost their lives. Soldiers and civilians alike died and my sympathy goes to those who survive them. My family and I have a lot to be thankful for. For example, we were not brutally mistreated as were many other prisoners of the Japanese.

We were thankful we survived. I believe we should never, as civilians, have been imprisoned in a way which prejudiced our well-being. Like many others, I often ask: what did we ever do to deserve that? Especially what was done to my brother and me — both young children at the time who surely were completely blameless when it came to war.

I know we were lucky to have survived and I appreciate that. Although I lost a lot in the camp, I believe now that I really gained a lot. I learned that people must help each other and try to be happy with whatever happens and make the best of things — however difficult that may be.

My father came through the turmoil very well. He just got on with living and through hard work made a good life for himself and his wife in Australia. My parents have long since passed on. My brother and I are both happily married with children and grandchildren. We see daily the results of stresses and strains on peo-

ple in today's society and witness how many of them succumb to their misfortunes despite access to government assistance and counselling. We did not receive any counselling or government assistance of any kind. Nor did we receive any pensions or subsidies. The only compensation my brother and I received from the Chinese authorities for our family house left by our parents was less than \$A4000 (\$US2600). The payment, which we received almost 50 years after leaving Tsingtao, was based on 1945 valuation levels.

For some time I have been a member of the Association of British Civilian Internees: Far East Region, (ABCI FER) which has been fighting the Japanese Government for many years for compensation for its members but so far without success.

Civilian victims such as me and my brother are a long way down the list of possible recipients of compensation. Sadly, the unfortunate comfort women from Korea and other places who were forced into years of prostitution to Japanese servicemen before and during World War II have not been compensated.

Even the citizens of Nanking (now called Nanjing) have not had a proper acknowledgment, let alone apology or compensation from their former enemies for the destruction of their city, the systematic murders by the Japanese Army of the city's residents and the many humiliations visited on the city's survivors.

Our chances of getting some form of compensation from the Japanese — let alone, an apology — are slim. Be that as it may, I have been prepared for a long time now to put the past behind me and try to forgive, if not forget.

For many years in Sydney I have involved myself in voluntary community service work. In 1997, I received an award from the Ryde City Council for being the most outstanding individual volunteer of that year.

For the past nine years I have also been a helper at one of Sydney's leading museums of applied arts and sciences — the world-famous Powerhouse Museum.

Part of my job at the Powerhouse is to greet Japanese tourists and introduce them to the museum. I have always made them welcome and strived to make their visit enjoyable. I have never mentioned to any visitor to the museum my experiences under the Japanese during World War II. I have pushed that to the back of my mind as much as possible.

But an incident occurred recently which made me wonder whether the Japanese people of today are aware of the events of World War II and the responsibility of their governments in relation to many of the atrocities that occurred at the hands of their military forces. This incident occurred on Easter Saturday 1999 [April 3] at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra,

the Australian national capital. I was visiting the memorial's exhibit to civilian internees. With Bob and a fellow Wei-Hsien internee, we saw a group of Japanese tourists led by a young Japanese woman guide walk past the memorial to the almost 2000 Australian prisoners of war who were murdered at Sandakan after the war ended.

One of the Japanese tourists went to enter the Sandakan exhibit room followed by several others but they were promptly called away by the guide who directed them to the nearby atomic bomb exhibit. The Japanese guide started to point out to the group the burns inflicted upon Japanese civilians by the atomic bombs. My friend, the ex-internee could not help himself. He said to the tour guide: "Why didn't you take them in there?" indicating the prisoners of war memorial.

I was shocked to see the instant reaction of the young Japanese woman tour guide. For the first time since my imprisonment, I saw a Japanese in a rage. She was speechless with fury for a few seconds. She then spat out while shaking her finger at him: "That is my business, not yours." She spoke so loudly that all the other memorial visitors nearby stopped and stared. Her verbally violent reaction took me back to China during the war. The Japanese tourist guide's response left me wondering whether Japanese today are only fed information which tends to minimise or conceal the disgraceful role Japan played in that terrible war.

I have already written that I have forgiven but something within me will still not let me forget.

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CHAPTER 12

Thanks Father

In the writing of this book, I repeatedly remembered how much the inmates of the camp helped each other. This cooperation undoubtedly contributed much to our survival.

There are other books about the camp [59] and all that I have read pay tribute to the Australian Trappist, Father Patrick Scanlan. About him, I have already lovingly written. As I close this account of my life I want to say — almost 55 years after I was liberated from the Japanese camp — thanks Father, and tell you what became of him.

I do so because I and many others in that camp owe him a great debt of honour and I believe the Australian people who so admire heroism should know more of this remarkable man and his nobility [60]. While researching this book, I came across an American newspaper article [61] saying that Father Scanlan lived in Penis, California. Acting on a series of hunches, I went to search for him.

First to assist me was the Reverend Abbot David Tomlins of the Trappist Tarrawarra Abbey at Yana Glen, Victoria, who loaned me Father Scanlan's book [62]. He told me Father Scanlan had become a US diocesan priest in the 1950s [63] and he had celebrated his 100th birthday in 1997 [64]. From there, the search widened. As it did, the proofreaders of this book who had read some of the manuscript started asking: what became of Father Scanlan?

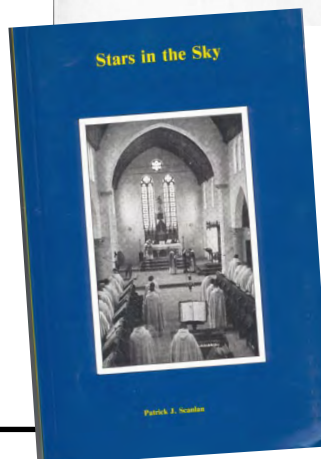
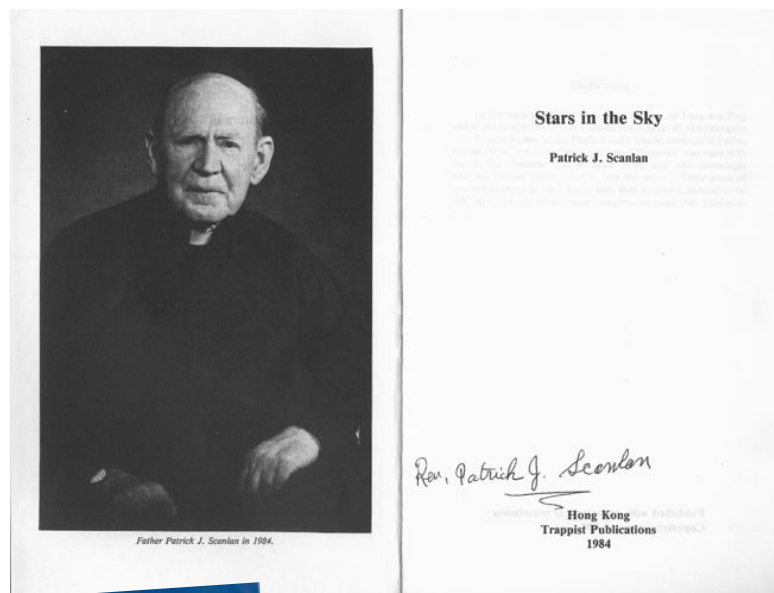
After an e-mail approach to the Diocese of San Bernardino, California, in which Penis is located, I

received the following e-mail" in January 2000 that answered the question.

"May I first introduce myself, my name is June McDonald and I minister mainly to the retired priests from our diocese here in San Bernardino. Jimmy Ramirez, who is in charge of our diocesan newsletter, forwarded your inquiry to me. I apologize for being late in responding, but the beginning of this year started out quite busy.

"Father Scanlan passed away on October 16, 1998. He had just celebrated his 70th anniversary of ordination to the priesthood and I had the honour of being there for this special celebration. He was 101 and I also had the good fortune of being with him at his birthday celebration.

"Father Patrick was a very special man and was



dearly loved by many here in the Diocese of San Bernardino. At the time of his death, Father Scanlan was residing at Nazareth House in San Diego which is a retirement home for senior citizens staffed by The Poor Sisters of Nazareth. There is a special unit set aside just for retired priests and he had lived there for a number of years.

"Father Scanlan's book 'Stars in the Sky' was quite an insight into his life as a Trappist monk in England and later in China. Although his life was filled with many heartaches, he never lost sight of the 'Stars in the Sky.'

"His final days were very peaceful and I often thank God for allowing me to know and love this very special man.

"God bless."

A short time later, Sister Marie Mansbridge of the Sisters of Mercy convent in Warrnambool, Victoria,

59 See Further Reading.

60 While I was living in Singapore, Father Scanlan, on a trip to Australia, visited my parents and brother at West Ryde, Sydney. My brother Eddie clearly recalls the visit and believes it was in 1951.

61 Family documents. Bradbury family collection.

62 Referred to in Chapter 4. Also see Further Reading.

63 Father Scanlan began studying for the Catholic priesthood under the tutelage of the Redemptorists at Ballarat, Australia. In 1919, he went to Europe where he was accepted into a Trappist community. He was ordained in Nottingham, England, in 1928. Before his capture and after his release, he was often a Trappist seminary professor.

64 Family documents. Bradbury family collection.

after receiving a message from Abbot David Tomlins about this book, wrote ^[66] saying she was Father Scanlan's niece. She added she had seen her uncle on his 100th birthday — 22 months before he died. Sister Marie's mother, Dorrie Mansbridge (nee Scanlan), is the youngest and only surviving sibling of Father Scanlan. His sister is now aged 92.

In her letter, Sister Marie says of her uncle: "He was a grand old man with a very special love for his homeland."

She enclosed with her letter a copy of the two-page letter ^[67] sent October 19, 1998 by the Most Reverend Gerald Barnes, Bishop of San Bernardino, to the Catholic clergy of his diocese advising them of Father Scanlan's death.

In that letter Bishop Barnes says: "Father Scanlan touched the lives of many people, young and old over the years and they truly benefited from his love, warmth, and compassion.

"... I am sure when God called Father Scanlan home His first words to him were: 'well done good and faithful servant'."

So, my quest was ended. I was saddened but immensely proud to have known Father Scanlan and deeply grateful for what he had done for me and others in that camp. With my brother Eddie, I have subsequently had great pleasure in meeting Sister Hugh Smith of the Good Samaritan convent in Manly, Sydney. Sister Hugh is a first cousin of Father Scanlan. Together, we discussed our joyful recollections of him.

In Australia, there is no memorial to Father Scanlan's wartime bravery other than the memories of the few living Australian-based survivors of that camp, their children and grandchildren. On regular occasions, camp survivors meet internationally and discuss their memories. Father Scanlan's extraordinary bravery always figures high in these conversations.

It saddens me that Father Scanlan is not commemorated in some way in his homeland so that present and future generations of Australians will hear of him and be inspired by him. Perhaps one day, the peo-



Eddie and me in 2000 in Sydney with Sister Hugh Smith - Father Scanlan's cousin. Photograph: Georgie Perry.

ple of Cobden and Warrnambool in the western district of Victoria where Father Scanlan grew up and received his early education, will rightly claim their civilian wartime hero and honour him appropriately. He was a good, gentle and brave man who, when a prisoner of the Japanese, fed the hungry, gave them hope and always brought good cheer.

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⁶⁶ Family documents. Bradbury family collection.

⁶⁷ Family documents. Bradbury family collection.

CHAPTER 13

The Happy Way

At the entrance to the Wei-Hsien camp when it was my prison, there was a Chinese inscription saying visitors were entering the 'Court of the Happy Way'. It was placed there when the camp was a missionary training centre.

In my time at Wei-Hsien, there were happy and unhappy moments. Our misfortunes were caused by having the wrong citizenship, in the wrong place, at the wrong time.

As I reflect now on our survival, I stress that there is one key group of people I must publicly thank for helping us. They must be greatly thanked because in helping us they daily took their lives into their hands. When our chips were down and we were hurting in the camp, many Chinese helped us. Sadly, I don't know who they were and all the ways in which they helped. But I thank them just as much as I thank those who helped us in the camp.

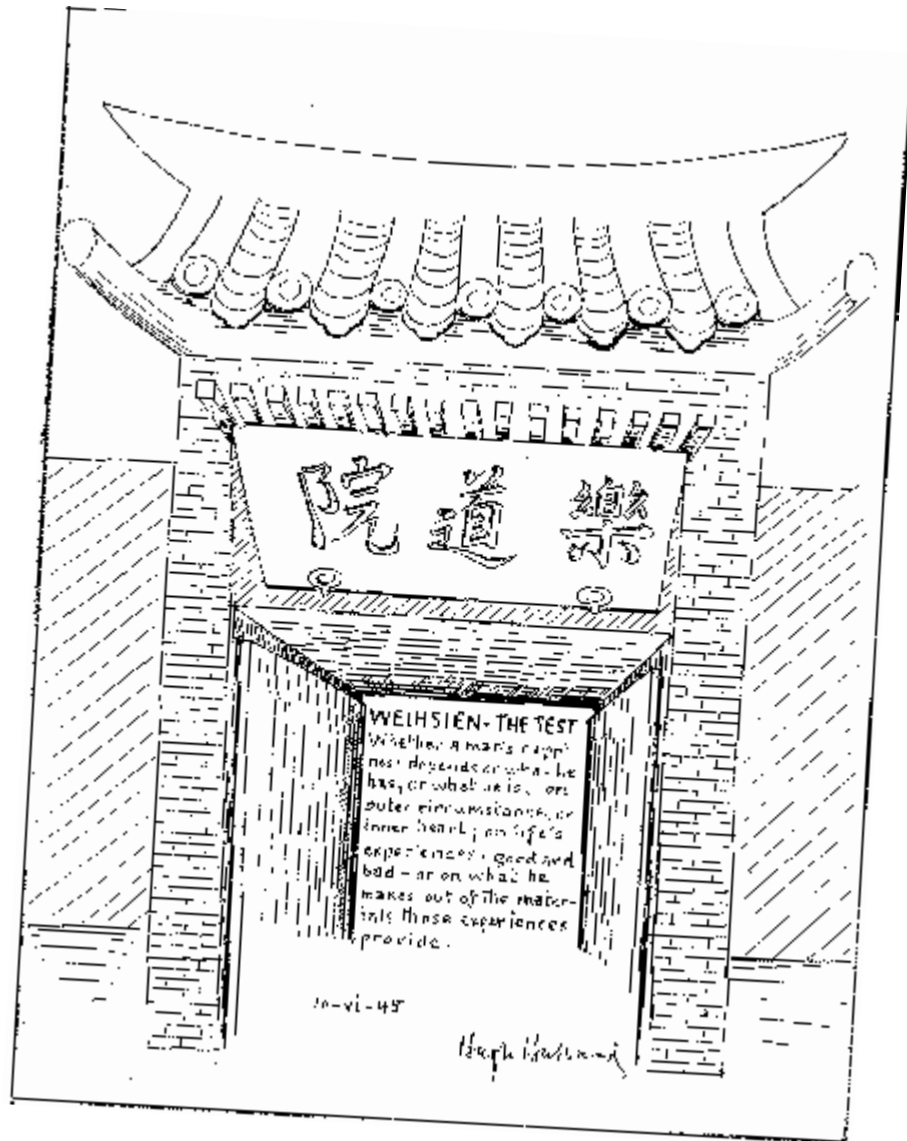
The supportive Chinese smuggled messages, often cared for our possessions when we were interned and sent food supplies. They were very brave. At best, if detected by the Japanese, they could expect a severe bashing. At worst, death.

The brave Chinese who helped us out of decency and out of compassion are also heroes in this story of mine.

I salute them and thank them.

from left to right ---

-?- , Arthur Hummel, -?- , Laurie Tipton, -?- , Father Raymond de-Jaegher, Zhang Xihong's father and --- Roy Tchoo.



CHAPTER 14

Another view of Wei-Hsien

In the writing of this book, I have attempted to check and double-check my recollections against those of others as well as refer to relevant documents. Because I was a child in Wei-Hsien, I was not privy to many of the details known to the camp's leadership.

For instance, I was not aware when I was interned that early in the Allied-Japanese conflict, some civilian internees were offered repatriation to their home-land or a neutral country. The former US Ambassador to China and ex-Wei-Hsien internee, Arthur Hummel, confirmed to me in March 2000 that a group within the Peking internees of which he was a member were offered and took repatriation before the remainder of the Peking internees were brought to Wei-Hsien. The terms of the repatriation involved the switching of Japanese internees in the US with Japanese-held internees. The internee transfers were carried out using a neutral intermediary. Most of the Japanese-held internees who were repatriated from Peking were US citizens. After that repatriation, many of the Peking internees including Mr Hummel were brought to Wei-Hsien, well after the Tsingtao internees first arrived.

In the worldwide web electronic archives of the Billy Graham Centre (<http://www.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/archh1.html>), ex-missionary Martha Henrietta Phillips, in an oral history transcript extract of her life, says that some Chefoo internees took advantage of a repatriation offer but it was only a handful because many of the people interned at Chefoo (prior to Wei-Hsien) were of British citizenship. She adds that the British group of countries would not meet the Japanese terms for repatriation which she says were five repatriated Japanese for one repatriated British citizen.

In 1943, there was a further repatriation offer made and "a considerable lot", to quote Mr Hummel, left the Wei-Hsien camp. Their departure was in the third quarter of the year.

Among this tranche of departing repatriated internees was Dr Augusta Wagner, a professor of economics at Peking's Yenching University.

Shortly after arriving in the US in early December 1943, Dr Wagner was asked to write a report on condi-

tions at Wei-Hsien and compare them to conditions at an American-run internment camp at Crystal City, Texas.

Her report to the US State Department has been released under the terms of US freedom of information legislation. The handling of the report within the department proves that in late 1943 senior US Government officials knew of the conditions under which we were being held at the time of Dr Wagner's departure.

In her report, Dr Wagner makes the point that the American-held enemy internees were well treated in Texas and that comparison of their conditions with those at Wei-Hsien were as different as chalk and cheese.

Some parts of her recollections of Wei-Hsien differ significantly from mine. The differences, I suggest, are largely due to the camp's Japanese regime becoming stricter and meaner to the inmates from late 1943 until our liberation.

Because of the significance of Dr Wagner's comments about how she saw Wei-Hsien, I have included them in this book. Her comments have not been published in a book about the camp. Where necessary, I have paraphrased Dr Wagner's report.

Dr Wagner wrote of Wei-Hsien: "Situated between Tsinan and Tsingtao in the interior of Shantung, about 150 miles south-east of Tsinan. The camp is located on the premises of the former Presbyterian Mission compound. The compound is situated about two miles from the town, Wei-Hsien. The compound was attractively landscaped with shrubbery and fine old shade trees, some 60 years old. The climate is pleasant in the spring and fall [autumn].

"The summer heat begins in May, reaching its climax in the month of August. The rainy season begins in August. Heavy rains lead to roads being flooded, walls collapsing and flood waters reaching the window sill level of many houses. Rooves leaked. Rain poured into dormitory rooms, kitchens and mess halls. Winters cold and fairly dry. Bitter cold in December, January and February, moderating somewhat in March, but still cold.

"Wei-Hsien is probably as hot as [the Texas Crystal City] desert camp in the summer, but the heat is humid. The trees at Wei-Hsien provide some relief and shade from the heat indoors, which is not true of the [Crystal City] camp visited. The winters in Wei-Hsien are undoubtedly much, much colder than the winters at the [Crystal City] camp."

Dr Wagner says when she left the Wei-Hsien camp there were 1800 internees.

"Internees were housed in basement and upper

storey classrooms of school buildings, in a wing of the hospital and in Chinese former student dormitory quarters [made up of] long rows of single rooms with separate entrances to each room. Classrooms were used as dormitories to house unattached men and women, certain buildings at one end of the grounds for women, [the] other end for men. Number of persons in dormitory classrooms ranged from 10 to 30 [with] no curtaining, no partitions provided. Each person supposed to have 45 square feet [4.2 square metres] of space.

"Dormitory rows of single rooms assigned to families. Rooms 9 feet by 12 feet [about 1.5 metres by 2 metres] containing two to four persons, depending on size of family." [Accommodating] Four persons barely possible in summer. If there is to be a stove in room in winter, [it is] impossible for four [people].

"Armies had previously occupied buildings. Buildings in disrepair, wind and dust swept through cracks and crevices. Difficult to keep warm in winter. The walls were white-washed and floors painted in preparation for internees. Many of the rooms infested with bed bugs and fleas. No beds, cots, tables, chairs provided. Internees were permitted to bring bed and bedding. Internees who were transferred from Chefoo to Wei-Hsien just before we left [for repatriation] were not permitted to bring their beds, [they] were sleeping on floor. No running water or toilet facilities. Space available per person 34 to 54 square feet [3.2 to 5 square metres.] Official allowance is 45 square feet.

"Stoves [March 1943] in only a few quarters — [for the] aged, small children, sick. Small stove in large dormitory rooms totally inadequate. No kindling wood or paper provided. Coal had to be picked by hand from coal heap, considerable distance away. No containers for carrying provided."

For washing, toilet and laundry facilities, Dr Wagner reports that the Wei-Hsien facilities contained: "Four blocks of 5 and 6 toilets each, Japanese squat type. Originally meant to flush, but never had tanks connected. Inconveniently located. So close to some buildings that the dormitories were never free of the toilet and cesspool stench, so far away from other buildings as to require a long walk in the outdoors to reach them. 23 toilets in all for 1800 people [resulting in] morning and evening long queues. In reality, [toilet availability] average was more nearly one to 100 people as some of the toilets were continually out of order. The water supply was so limited that very little fresh water was allowed for flushing toilets. Internees brought their own slop water and deposited it in two earthen-ware jars at the entrance to toilet block. Used empty tin cans to flush toilets.

"Drain pipes leading to cesspools small and fre-

quently clogged. [Because] cesspools had inadequate depth and diameter [they] usually overflowed, flooding surrounding areas with filth and stench. Chinese coolies finally allowed to come in regularly to empty Chinese latrines and to carry away some of the contents of the cesspools.

"All requests to be allowed to dig deep army-style open latrines turned down repeatedly. In August [1943] buildings containing flush toilets finally screened. No screens [on] Chinese-style toilets. Swarms of flies in toilets and around cesspools.

"No toilet paper supplied by authorities, except for a few months to hospital [and inmates had] great difficulty in getting disinfectant and cleaning materials."

Dr Wagner reports there were "four washrooms in toilet buildings. A number of faucets arranged over cement troughs. Only a trickle of water occasionally available. 90 per cent of internees used hand-basins in own quarters — carrying water from one of several wells."

Shower facilities consisted of "one shower room for men, one for women with about 14 to 16 shower heads in each. Average one shower for every 60 persons.

"Showers [were the] only place [where] running hot water available. Because of limited amount of water, women only permitted three showers a week, men daily showers. Long queues [for showers] and there was no running water in any living quarters.

Laundry facilities consisted of "five stationary tubs in hospital basement and two in another building. Internees did their laundry in hand-basins and galvanised tin pails (if they could borrow one). Later, [it became] possible to send sheets, towels, pillow-cases, heavy clothes to laundry outside. Expensive and badly done. Not many could afford this."

On medical facilities at the camp, Dr Wagner notes the "hospital at Wei-Hsien was originally a fine little hospital. When internees arrived, only the outer shell left. Everything moveable had been taken away. Great big gaps in wall where pipes had been torn away. Place littered with many months accumulated filth and debris.

"No cleaning materials or equipment provided by authorities. Nurses, doctors, internees went to clean up place, [they] were able to find enough beds for three 12-bed wards, five beds for children, an obstetrical room. Patients brought their own mattresses, bedding, linen, wash basins, etcetera.

"Internees accumulated enough equipment for four outpatient clinics [which were] rather sketchily furnished.

[Internee] "doctors gave Japanese authorities list of drugs needed, nothing resulted except a few minor drugs. Copy of list was smuggled out to Swiss representatives who in July [1943] got the drugs, along with some cereal and tinned milk to the hospital. Each person in camp was assessed by internees' committee \$60 [Chinese] to pay for his share of cost.

"Japanese eventually furnished a rather cheap operating table, a gasoline burner without gasoline, surgical equipment enough to open a boil, some mattress ticking, some sheets, some gauze.

"Hospital facilities and equipment dangerously inadequate together with lack of drugs when those on hand used up [because] Wei-Hsien is in isolated community of no hospitals. Permission was given for patients to be taken to Peking — a long, dirty, difficult, expensive journey.

"Medical situation serious — save for good doctors and nurses among internees. None supplied by Japanese.

On Wei-Hsien's cooking facilities, Dr Wagner says: "There were three mess halls with attached kitchens and a small hospital diet mess hall [for patients]. The Peking mess [indicating where the internees were first assembled before Wei-Hsien] served 400 to 440 people, Tientsin mess 600, Tsingtao mess 800.

"A small storeroom and butchery was assigned to each kitchen. In the case of the Peking kitchen [it was] a distance away. A family-size electric refrigerator and an ice-box were eventually installed in the butchery."

Dr Wagner writes: "A result of the lack of refrigeration [meant] much food had to be discarded because of spoilage. The camp suffered from epidemics of diarrhoea and [what] appeared to be dysentery.

"There were no equipped, stocked, refrigerated warehouses. A former residence was used as a central storage house. Vegetables, meat and fish rotted and spoiled because of poor storage.

"At the end of [the 1943] summer, permission was granted [by the Japanese] to internees to build an ice-box for general storeroom for meat" which was "poor, makeshift. [The] Japanese storekeeper [was] inadequate for job. Finally persuaded [Japanese] ... to allow internees' supply committee to divide food among mess halls.

"Meat came from army slaughterhouse 30 miles away. [It was] sent by train, unrefrigerated, often uncovered. Rooms for preparation of meat swarmed with flies, meat covered with larvae in brief period of time necessary for preparation. "Kitchens painfully small. Kitchen where food for Peking internees was prepared was no larger than a kitchen in a modern American

small apartment. But there was nothing modern about the kitchen. [It] contained a Chinese stove, no oven, two large cauldrons with fire boxes underneath, a ledge about 1.5 feet [0.5 metre] wide on which to place things, a sink without running water. The only equipment consisted of two large frying pans, two family sized copper pots, some galvanised tin pails [of] poor quality, a dozen paring knives, 4 bread knives, a couple of crocks and bowls. Everything else in kitchen equipment — knives, forks, ladles, plates, bowls, pans, beaters, grinders and containers — provided by internees."

There was running water in two of the kitchens. In others, all water used in cooking, cleaning and drinking had to be pumped, carried and boiled in two cauldrons at the far end of mess hall — well away from the kitchen areas.

"Dining room tables and benches [were] badly made of poor wood, difficult to keep from falling apart and difficult to keep clean. Seating space inadequate", resulting in "long queues" and "two and three sittings", for each meal.

"Occasionally, a mop or broom for cleaning was issued by authorities but never without a struggle. Internees furnished cleaning cloths, soap, powder, etcetera where they had it to spare.

"Authorities were given lists of equipment needed in kitchen and for preparation and serving of food. Nothing ever came of this.

"Below is the quantity of food in ounces supplied per day [1 ounce or 1 oz equals 28.3 grams]. Often it was necessary to discard considerable amounts of meat and vegetables [because it was] unfit for human consumption.

"Meat 5 oz, potatoes 10.2 oz, vegetables 13.6 oz, bread 16.6 oz, sugar 0.6 oz, margarine 0.2 oz, fish 0.8 oz, tea 0.1 oz, coffee substitute 0.1 oz, jam 0.03 oz, flour 0.2 oz, oil 0.4 oz," and less than one-eighth of an egg per person a day.

"Actual caloric intake 1905 [one calorie equals 4.855 joules] [68], of which 1175 was from flour in some form.

68 In the Joy of Cooking, published by J.M. Dent and Sons, London, England 1946, the book discusses current views of caloric intake. It says: "In general and depending also on age, sex, body type and amount of physical activity, adults can use 1700 to 3000 calories a day. Adolescent boys and very active men under 55 can utilize close to 3000 calories a day. At the other extreme, women over 55 need only about 1700 calories. Women 18-35 need about 2000 calories daily. During pregnancy, they can add 200 calories and, during lactation, an extra 1000 calories. Children 1-6 need from 1000-1600 [calories]."

"Calcium [intakes] inadequate. Egg shells salvaged and ground to supply calcium. No milk except as issued by hospital. At highest point, 35 gallons sour milk for 1800 people. Usually 25 gallons per day." [1 US gallon equals 3.785 litres.]

As Dr Wagner shows and I have written in Chapter 5, Wei-Hsien in 1943 was no holiday camp. In my recollection, inmates' conditions worsened in 1944 and 1945.

Finally, to one other matter that has intrigued many about the Wei-Hsien camp. Since the late 1940s, it has been claimed that the US aviatrix, Amelia Earhart, was interned in the camp. Earhart disappeared pre-World War II while on a Pacific journey. It was suggested she was seized by Japanese officials because she had allegedly used her flights to spy on Japanese military preparations on small Pacific islands. The claims say she was later interned with us, hid in the camp hospital and either died there, or was spirited away by the Japanese before the end of World War II and executed.

As I have shown, we lived cheek by jowl in the camp. Never once in the camp or since have I heard from fellow inmates of a top-secret prisoner in the camp or Amelia Earhart ^[69] being in the camp. None of those I have questioned heard of the story in camp and none has been able to give any credence to the suggestions that we had Amelia Earhart among us. If she was among us, we would have quickly identified her because she, before her disappearance, was one of the world's most photographed women.

69. The claims are largely based on a telegram received in late-August 1945 by Earhart's husband in the US. The telegram, sent more than a week after the camp's liberation, is reportedly sourced Wei-Hsien and retransmitted via the US Embassy in Chungking to the US. It says: "Camp liberated; all well. Volumes to tell. Love to mother."

FURTHER READING

Since the Wei-Hsien Civil Assembly Centre, as the Japanese called the prison camp, was liberated, there have been several books published about the camp and the lives of the inmates. As well, there have been personal recollection documents compiled for circulation among ex-inmates who still keep in touch with each other.

Among the books published are:

Stars in the Sky by Father Patrick Scanlan. Published by Trappist Press, Hong Kong 1984. No ISBN number. Gives a fascinating account of his life before, during and after camp. Left camp with many other Catholic clergy for monastic internment in Peking, mid-August 1943. Peking was liberated on August 19, 1945.

Courtyard of the happy way by [Reverend] Norman Cliff. ISBN 0-85305-191-7. Published Arthur James Limited, England 1977. Outlines how he was taken prisoner as a boarding school boy and his experiences as an internee in Chefoo. Came to the camp with siblings and no parents in late 1943. The author, at times, shared camp work duty rosters with members of the Cooke family. In camp at liberation.

Shantung Compound by Langdon Gilkey. Two ISBN numbers are given in book. The first is on the furniture page after the title page. It is ISBN 0-06-063113-9. The other, ISBN 0-06-0631120, is on the back cover. Published by Harper & Row. New York 1966. Discusses his experiences and examines the social and moral problems that emerged from time to time in the camp. A critical weakness of the book is that the author has changed the names of the people he writes about. For instance: Father Scanlan appears as Father Darby. Came to the camp in mid-1943. In camp at liberation.

The Mushroom Years by Pamela Masters. ISBN 0-966489-2-8. Published by Henderson House Publishing, Placerville, California. Reports on the experiences of three British sisters and their parents during their internment after a period of house arrest in Tientsin. Uses, at some times, incorrect names. For instance: Father Scanlan becomes an American Trappist brother called O'Hanlon. Author came to the camp in early 1943. In camp at liberation.

The Enemy Within by Raymond J De Jaegher and Irene Corbally Kuhn. Published by the Society of St Paul, Bandra Bombay — 50, in 1969. No ISBN number. Father De Jaegher reports on his intelligence gathering activities and the role played by key figures in the camp. Because of his contacts, the camp leadership knew about the progress of the war. Played a key role in the escape of Hummel and Tipton. Came to the camp in early 1942. In camp at liberation.

Chinese Escapades by Laurence Tipton. Published by Macmillan and Co in England 1949. Outlines his detention by the Japanese, his planning and involvement in the only successful escape from the camp (with Arthur Hummel) and his subsequent war adventures. To the delight of the camp's inmates, he returned with Hummel to the camp shortly after it was liberated.

Indomitably Yours by Hilda Hale, ISBN 0-9683139-0-6. Reports on Australian mother's life in Peking before Japanese interned her. Discusses camp life, her concerns about her children's upbringing in camp. Came to the camp with Peking contingent. Was in camp at liberation.

Hungry Ghosts by Mary Taylor Previte, Published by Zondervan, Grand Rapids in the US 1994. ISBN 0-310-59420-0. Previte was a child prisoner in the camp and came to the camp without her parents from the Chefoo schools.

A Boy's War by David Michell. Published by Overseas Missionary Fellowship Books in Toronto, Canada in 1988. ISBN 9971-972-71-9. Michell was a child prisoner in the camp.

Little Foreign Devil by Desmond Power. Published by Pangli Imprint, West Vancouver, Canada. ISBN 0-9694122-1-5.

A Cross in China – The Story of My Mission by Sister Servatia O.S.F. Published by Cuchullain Publications, Fort Wayne in the US in 1989. ISBN 0-9614659-4-8. Sister Servatia was a nun imprisoned in the camp.

The Left Handshake by Hilary St George Saunders. Published in 1948, Chapter 5 recounts the activities of the Boy Scout troops set up in the prison camp. The author's brother was a member and still has his troop records, his 'good deeds' book as well as the exam papers he had to sit to earn merit badges.

Not published as a book is **This is Leo's lift'** by Lionel (Leo) Twyford Thomas. Outlines his early life in China, England, Canada and then return to China. Discusses the internment experiences of his family. Also covers his subsequent post-war experiences in China and why, with his family, he moved some years after liberation from the camp to Sydney, Australia. Discusses his life in Australia, where he died in January 2000. With his family, he was in camp at liberation.

In the archives of the Yale University Divinity School there are many references to the compound both as a missionary teaching college and later as a Japanese prison. The records are contained in personal memoirs

lodged with the school.

On the worldwide web at: http://search.npr.org/cf/cmn/cmnpd01_fm.cfm?PrgDate=05%2F11%2F2000&PrgID=3 , there is a downloadable audio file of a radio program broadcast by National Public Radio in the US on May 11, 2000 in which survivors of the US military team that liberated the prison camp recalled the liberation. With them on the program is Mary Taylor Previte (see earlier) a child prisoner in the camp. She tracked down the team survivors of which there were four in 2000.

A description of life in Tsingtao in the early months after the post-World War II arrival in Tsingtao of the US Marine Corps is provided in **Charlie Two Shoes** and **the Marines of Love Company** by Michael Peterson and David Perlmutter. Published by Naval Institute Press in Annapolis, Maryland, 1998. ISBN 1-55750-672-8. The book outlines the surrender of the Japanese in Tsingtao, gives details of subsequent Marines' military activities in Tsingtao and the Tsingtao hinterland.

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