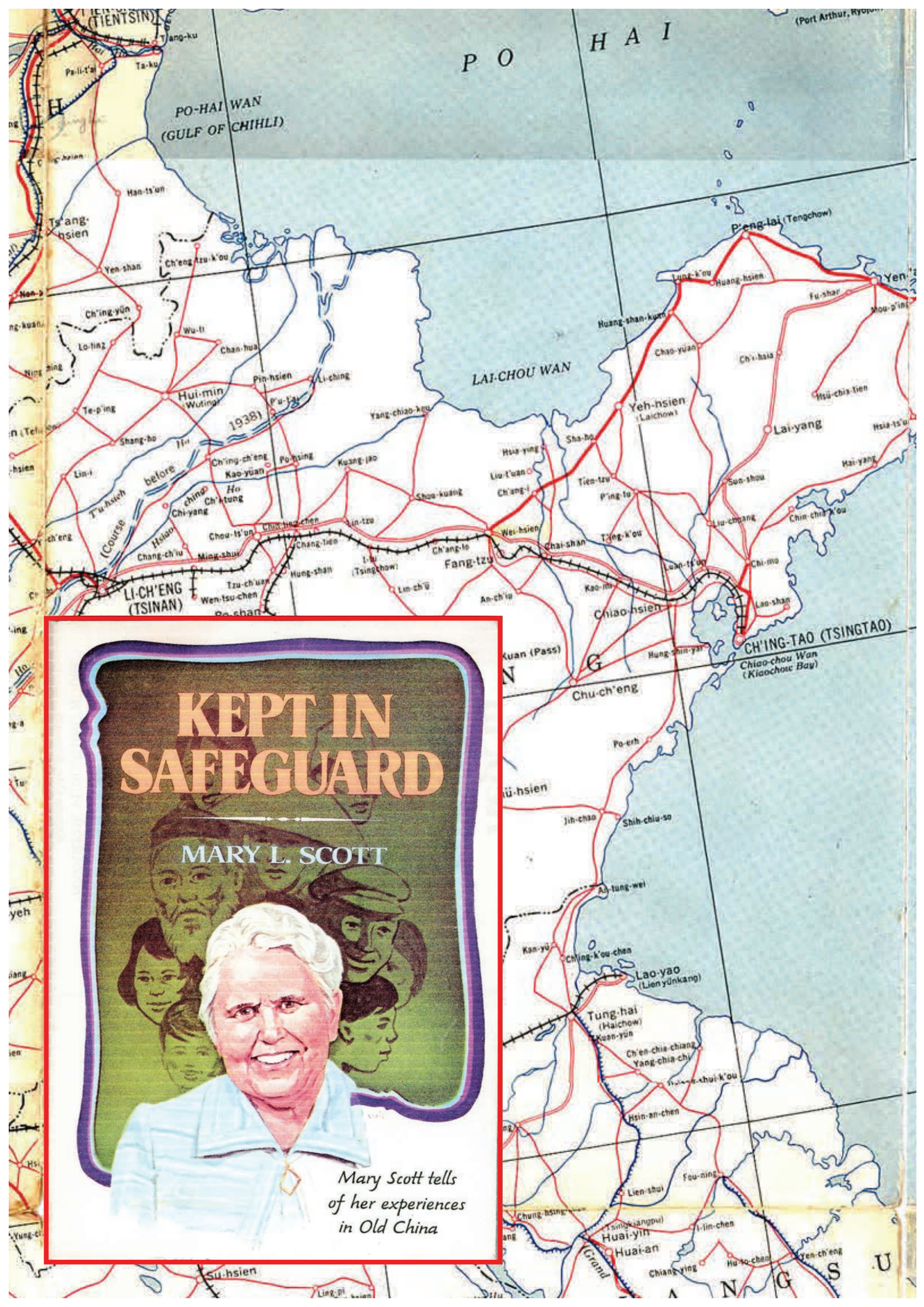


KEPT IN SAFEGUARD

MARY L. SCOTT



*Mary Scott tells
of her experiences
in Old China*



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experiences in Old China

by
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... excerpts ...

... **E**arly in November we received word that there would be a Japanese class at the language school. Annie and I enrolled, paid our "tuition" of three dollars, and bought our books. We were just getting a really good start when we were informed early in January that the class would be discontinued. Though, as far as I know, the reason was never expressed, we assumed that the Japanese officials had decided that perhaps it was not best for too many enemy nationals to understand Japanese.

Two days before Thanksgiving (1942), Japanese authorities came while we were eating lunch and requested our radio. There was nothing we could do but give it to them, for they would have taken it anyway. Others had lost theirs too. The general consensus was that the news was becoming too unfavorable to the Japanese in the East and to the Axis powers in the West. We would miss the newscasts from the U.S. and would have to read between the lines in the Peking Chronicle to know what was going on in the world.

Mail from "outside" was scarce. Some of the 25-word Red Cross letters we received had been on the way for eight or nine months as they had to clear through Switzerland. But late news was better than no news. During the three years and five months of my internment, I received three letters (75 words) from family and friends. We were permitted to send one 25-word letter (censored, of course) a month. I usually wrote to my brother, Ed, who could contact the rest

of the family, and to Dr. Jones in the Department of Foreign Missions.

Christmas Day in Peking (my third in China) was a great day. We got up early to go to the Helsbys to see Sandra Kay's Christmas. She had just passed her second birthday. She was speechless. It was a cold, crisp morning. About 7:15 the Salvation Army Band serenaded us with Christmas carols. Family prayers followed, then breakfast, after which we opened our gifts. The Christmas tree was loaded down. We adults had drawn names. Dr. Hayes, the president of the language school, was a jolly good Santa Claus. Annie and I went to the Christmas service at Union Church. We ate a light soup lunch as we were to have our Christmas dinner at five. And what a dinner it was! We ended our family activities by singing Christmas carols.

After going to my room, I read *How They Kept the Faith* until almost two o'clock.

Our family of 17 kept remarkably well except for a few colds and a sprained ankle or two. However, there were a few particularly anxious hours when Meredith Helsby and Sandra Kay were involved in a bicycle accident. Sandra Kay escaped with scratches, but Meredith seemed to be in a daze at first. But by the time he returned from having the stitches taken, his mind had cleared. We were indeed thankful that there was no concussion.

We had heard rumors from time to time that enemy nationals were to be moved out of Peking, but it was not until March 12 (1943) that we heard authentically, though not officially, that we would be going to Weih sien, Shantung. My heart went out to Emily Woods. For us grown-ups the adjustment would come easier. But Emily and Harry had four children to think about. The only other child involved in our group was Sandra Kay, who was just past two years old.

When the orders came, we were told that the Americans would go first and the British would follow five days later. We began packing with all haste. Ten days after we first heard the rumor that we were moving, our trunks and beds were picked up—on Sunday morning at that!

The final few days were busy ones doing last-minute shopping, packing our hand baggage, and making candy and fruit-cakes which we were quite sure we would not have in our new situation. On Wednesday, after a good lunch, our last at home, we went by rickshaw to the empty American embassy compound. Here our baggage was inspected and we were given a number. The American Committee provided sandwiches and coffee. Then, carrying our lightest baggage (trunks were furnished for the heavier pieces), we were marched to the Chien Men railroad station. Here we boarded the train for Tientsin, where, about 10:30 that night, we were transferred to a more crowded train. Three of us shared a narrow, hard, wooden bench, so there wasn't much sleep that night.

At Tsinan we changed trains again. Then we were really crowded, as there were only two cars for all of us. But we made the best of it, and out of it we at least got acquainted with some new people. When we arrived at the Weih sien railroad station about four o'clock on the afternoon of March 25, 1943, buses were waiting to take us to the Civilian Assembly Center. We were "herded" to the ball field where

the camp rules were read, and we were assigned temporary quarters for the night. Covers were scarce, but we made it through the night.

Although we did not realize it at the time, we had arrived at the place which some of us would call home for the next two and a half years.

CHAPTER 4

Behind an Eight-Foot Wall

By April 1, there were 1,751 enemy nationals, principally from Peking, Tientsin, Tsingtao, and Mongolia, who had been gathered in the Weih sien Civilian Assembly Center "for their safety and comfort." The promise of "every culture of Western civilization" did not seem likely, especially as we viewed the watchtowers at each corner or bend of our eight-foot wall, each with machine gun slots and some with actual machine guns pointing toward us.

But we were here and we would make the most of it by God's help. What kind of life lay ahead we did not know, but had not God promised that He would make all things, including internment camp, work for our good and His glory? We would have a glorious opportunity to prove His promise.

We slept on the floor for three nights as our beds and the one trunk allowed had not yet arrived. Camp duties began almost immediately, which for me meant kitchen chores, preparing vegetables, scrubbing tables and drawers, and trying to get kitchen number three, which had been assigned to the 369 Peking internees, in shape. I also was on

56 the committee to help get the Peking Britishers settled when they arrived five days after we came.

Our camp was actually what had once been a beautiful Presbyterian mission compound. It was a little over six acres in size and had housed a well-equipped high school with classrooms and administration buildings, a church, hospital, bakery ovens, three kitchens, and row after row of 9 x 12-foot rooms used to house the resident students. The buildings seemed to be undamaged, but the contents were a

shambles. Refuse was piled outside the buildings or strewn along the driveways by the garrisons of Japanese and Chinese soldiers who had been billeted there.

Our immediate task was to clean up the place. It was a mammoth undertaking but the people had a mind to work. Besides, there were valuable broken desks and chairs that could be used if repaired. Scrounging, looking anywhere, even in rubbish heaps to find something usable, became an everyday operation.

It soon became apparent that one of the greatest needs for the internees was for a working hospital. There were sure to be illnesses in our community of nearly 2,000, particularly with the unsanitary conditions under which we

lived. Rumor had it (and I can't verify it) that the Japanese had used part of the original hospital building as a stable.

Nothing daunted, the doctors and nurses in camp and many volunteers, including Mr. Moses who had been business manager of our Nazarene hospital in Taming, began the herculean task of cleaning up and salvaging what equipment they could from piles of debris scattered about everywhere. Within eight days, the hospital was functioning sufficiently to feed and care for patients, and in two more days the operating room and laboratory were ready for use.

Another very serious problem was that of sanitary facilities. At first there were

only six cubicles, equipped with oriental flush toilets that didn't flush, available for about 800 women. Excrement overflowed the bowls until it required a strong stomach to use them at all. Missionaries, both Catholic and Protestant, tackled the task of cleanup until our "camp engineers" came up with a solution. Large water barrels were placed at one end of the latrine, into which used wash water was poured. Each user of the latrine was required to "flush" the toilet with a half bucket of water. Ladies were stationed at the latrine to inspect each toilet after use to see that it had been properly flushed. All went well as long as there was water in the barrels, but sometimes the water ran out!

Later the latrine which we called the "cowshed" was assigned to the ladies. Each of the six "stalls" consisted of two narrow cement platforms on the sides on which to stand, a cemented hole for solids and a slanted front which carried the urine to a trough. In the morning a Chinese "night soil" coolie came in to scoop out the solids (it was valuable to him as fertilizer). The assigned latrine cleaners of the camp went in to finish the cleanup. Sometimes the odors were so pungent that our noses literally burned when we came near, especially in the summer.

But there were very profitable lessons to be learned, even as a latrine cleaner. My godly, sanctified railroader father, brought up a Canadian Presbyterian, had taught us around the family altar that a Christian can do anything that is right to glorify God. I shall never forget one Wednesday morning when this teaching became a reality. I was on "latrine duty" and in the midst of that very unpleasant task, I looked up



and said, "Now, Lord, help me to clean these latrines in a manner that will glorify You."

And I felt that the Lord himself came down that Wednesday morning. He took hold of the bails of those two big, five-gallon gasoline cans that had been made into water pails. He helped me carry them to the latrine. He took hold of that little, stubby brush, and together we dug into the corners and the crevices trying to get every place as clean as we could. He got down on His knees when I got down on my knees; and with a little old cloth, no disinfectant or soap, just plain cold water, we got every place as sanitary as we could.

When I finished, I looked back and said, "Now, Lord, does it please You?" I couldn't see a place where I could have done a better job. I wasn't cleaning latrines because I'd been assigned it, or because that particular week I'd volunteered to do it. I was cleaning latrines for my Lord. That was one of the sweetest and one of the most real experiences I've had with the Lord in all my Christian life.

But even this task was not without its physical and material rewards. As one of the "dirty workers," latrine cleaners were allowed to take a shower every day even during those times when others were limited to one shower a week!

The housing of so many people was no small task. The rows of 9 x 12 rooms which had housed resident students, three to a room, became homes for our families. If there were more than three in a family, the quarters committee

tried to place the family in two adjacent rooms. It was surprising to see what some ingenious ladies did to make a two-room apartment of a single cubicle. If curtaining or an extra sheet was available, the bedroom was set up in the back of the room. Often the bed was put up on

blocks of wood or bricks to make more storage space under the beds. A "map" showing the location of each article under the bed was usually drawn.

In the front "living room," which would be considered more like closet size, were trunks (which doubled for seating), chairs, a table, and perhaps a crude stove made from scrounged bricks. I celebrated many special occasions, like birthdays, and enjoyed evenings of fellowship and fun in the Helsbys' living room in Row 14. How thankful we were that our families were allowed to remain together. It made for a more normal community life.

People without family connections in camp (we called ourselves "the unattached") were placed in dormitories. The largest dormitory for men housed 51, many of whose wives and families had been evacuated earlier.

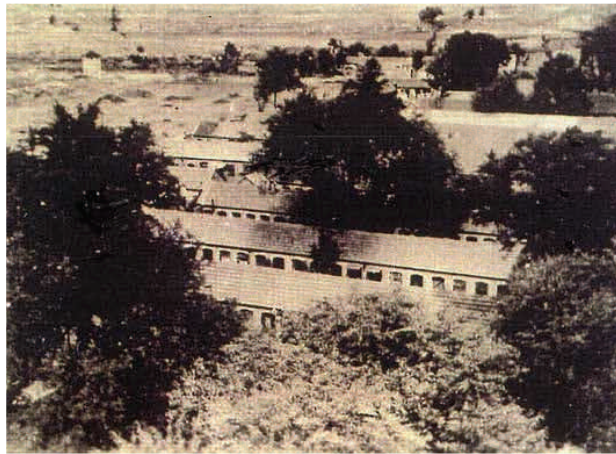
At various times in camp, I was in ladies' open dormitories ranging in size from 21 to 4 persons. There really was more privacy in the large dormitory than in the smaller ones because your activities did not affect too greatly others in the other end of the big room. I discovered that it "takes a heap of livin' " for this many "unattached" ladies from all walks of life and backgrounds to get along. But

God's grace was sufficient.

In our dormitories no one had a dresser. Three of us shared shelf space that would equal the shelf space in one small medicine cabinet. We had an ingenious ironing arrangement. We put a quilt on the bed springs, laid our clothes on this, and put the mattress on top of that. When we took the clothes out, they were well creased, but somewhat flattened at least. We had drip-dry clothes long before they were invented in America. We washed our clothes and hung them out to drip dry, hoping the wind would take out some of the wrinkles.

Each person did his own washing, including bed linens. It was quite a process. We had to go down a block or two to get heated water, then carry it back and up three flights of stairs. By then it was no longer hot. We washed double-bed sheets, towels, and clothes in a washbasin and scrubbed them on a very narrow washboard. Then we carried all the water back down the three flights of stairs and out to the cesspool. In spite of this the girls in our corner of the dorm had some of the whitest sheets in camp.

One of our biggest problems in the dorms was the control of bedbugs. Debugging was very time-consuming. Regularly we took our beds apart, and with an improvised "candle" made from a shoe polish bottle filled with peanut oil and Chinese thread for a wick, we went over every section of the



springs to incinerate the bugs and eggs. We sunned the bed for the rest of the day. When we put the bed together at night, we wondered how long it would take before the next batch appeared. We never had to wonder long.

After about 10 days in camp, the Japanese authorities informed a group of tentative volunteer leaders that they had worked out the plan of government for our "village." They requested that within 48 hours chairmen and assistants for nine camp committees be selected: General Affairs, Discipline, Labor, Education, Supplies, Quarters, Medicine, Engineering, and Finance. A Japanese official would be in charge of each of these departments and work with the internee chairman and his assistants.

It was unrealistic on such short notice to have a camp election. We knew very little yet about the capabilities of those in camp, for we were still comparative strangers. So it was decided that for this first six-month term, the chairmen would be appointed. There were four major groups in camp: those from Tientsin, Peking, Tsingtao, and the Catholics (about 400 priests, monks, and nuns). Each group submitted the name of a nominee for each of the nine committees. The four nominees were then to select from their number a chairman and one or two assistants.

The General Affairs Committee turned out to be a comparatively insignificant committee in charge of "miscellaneous" affairs such as sports, the sewing room, the barber shop, the library, and the canteen. It certainly wasn't the top committee its name implied. The Discipline Committee would be our "police force," though, as it turned out, it had little authority to enforce its "sentences." The Labor Committee, though at times very unpopular, was one of the most significant groups in the camp. To organize the labor force was not an easy nor particularly popular assignment. Bank clerks, executives, missionaries, salesmen, and importers became cooks, stokers, masons, carpenters, bakers, or hospital orderlies.

Most of the women in camp had been accustomed to having Chinese servants in their homes. To be plunged so suddenly into a world of hard, manual labor was good for them if it wasn't pleasant. Labor was the great leveler, and men and women alike were soon known not by their "outside" occupation but by the quality of their work, their spirit of willingness, and their measure of enthusiasm. A "lazy" worker was not much respected, as all the work we did was for our own maintenance and the welfare of all in our community, not for our Japanese captors. We judged people not by what they had, but for what they were.

The Education Committee faced a herculean task. There were 400 children in camp under 18 years of age. There were no rooms that could be used solely for classrooms, no equipment, and just a few textbooks. But in spite of these difficulties a semblance of a school system was organized. Five young people received diplomas from the Weih sien Internment Camp High School.

When the Cheefoo school group arrived, their trunks were their desks by day and their beds by night. Most of the Cheefoo school group were China Inland Mission (C.I.M.) missionaries' children separated from their parents by thousands of miles. Teachers became parents and counselors to children

all the way from the lower grades to those ready for college entrance.

Adult education was also organized. Lectures on almost any subject were available with classes in art, languages, bookkeeping, first aid, theology, marketing, woodwork, and sailing.

The Supplies Committee was one that demanded men of integrity and utmost honesty, since they were responsible for the equitable distribution of food to the three kitchens and the hospital with as little "loss" as possible.

The Medical Committee had the jurisdiction of the hospital and general health services of the camp. Tests of the water from all the wells revealed that it was necessary to boil all drinking water. It was an enormous task for the kitchen crews to provide drinking water as well as boiling water for tea at least twice a day between meals. The Medical Committee discovered that the water from one well in camp was not safe to drink even after boiling for 30 minutes. It was used only for washing.

The Engineering Committee had charge of our public works: water system and sanitation. Running water was available only in the kitchens, bakery, and shower rooms. Water was pumped by hand into storage tanks. I never minded the pumping job. I could do all kinds of things in my mind as I pumped. It was with a sense of accomplishment that I watched the gauge inch toward the full mark or saw a trickle of water start over the edge of the tank.

The Engineering Committee deserved much commendation for their work on the primitive sanitation system which at the beginning of camp was neither sanitary nor systematized. Through their efforts and the skill of the carpenters, more and better sanitary facilities were made available. There were no serious epidemics, though there were a few cases of typhoid fever, one fatal.

The Finance Committee was particularly involved with the necessary paperwork and distribution of the "comfort money" received through the Swiss consul. Comfort money drawn by the internees was divided into two categories: Comfort A, used to buy medical supplies, sports equipment, etc.; and Comfort B, for the internee's own personal use to buy such items as came into the canteen from time to time. Other than food items, soap and Chinese cigarettes were the most popular items.

Among my souvenirs are the fingerprinted forms showing that the General Board paid the U.S. government \$99.07 for comfort money I received in 1943.

The responsibilities of the Quarters Committee, on which I served for almost two years, were many, not the least of which was to keep the camp census up-to-date. This involved keeping a list of the names of all internees and a record of births and deaths. It was also our responsibility to assign quarters, settle disputes about space, if possible, and take charge of the assignment of stoves. December 8, the anniversary of Pearl Harbor, was set as a suitable time for this latter important event. Small rooms (9 x 12) received a small stove, as did small dormitories. Larger dormitories were issued two medium-sized stoves or one large one, depending on the space available and the desires of those in the dormitory. This "white collar" job resulted in my receiv-

ing a painful back injury which required four days in the hospital and the "works" from a doctor well trained in getting athletes ready for contests.

Coal dust was issued according to the size of the stove: one bucket for a small stove, two buckets for a medium-sized one, and three buckets for a large stove. No lump coal was issued. The dust had to be mixed with clay and water to form coal balls or bricks. (The men exchanged coal-ball "recipes": three of dust to one of clay, or four to one.) I made as many as 500 to 800 coal balls in one day and set them aside to dry. Though not exactly the most convenient way to get heat, we were grateful for coal dust we were given, especially since many times we had to break the ice in the water bucket to wash our faces and hands in the morning.

In November, 1943, the members of these nine committees were elected by popular vote. After that, elections were held every six months. I was the only woman elected to a committee post, but that was only because the Quarters Committee needed a woman representative.

Life in the camp soon began to normalize. Amenities enjoyed formerly on the "outside" were soon forgotten, and adjustment to life in the here and now behind an eight-foot wall was made. A few failed to adjust, and made themselves and everyone around them miserable by constantly talking about wanting to get out. Most of us, however, adopted a homespun internment camp philosophy which went like this:

What's the use of fussin' and stewin'?

*If there's nothing you can do about it,
Quit your stewin'.*

*If there's something you CAN do about it,
Quit your stewin' And go to doin'!*

That's good philosophy anywhere.

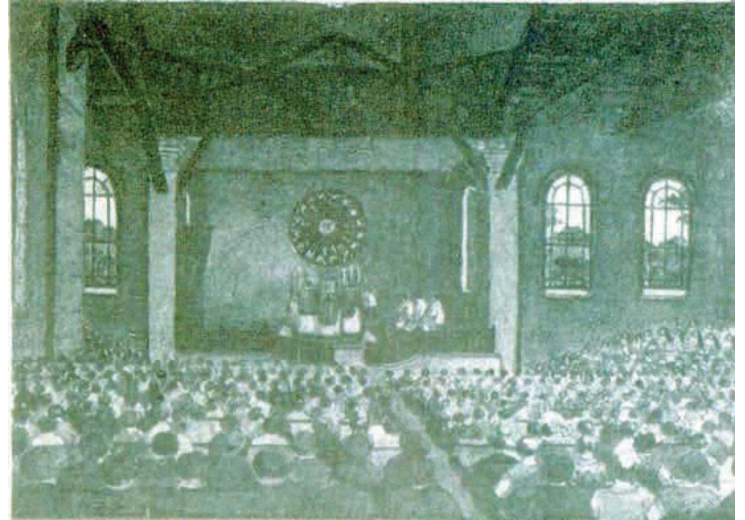
The summers were extremely hot, making it very difficult to sleep at night. Electric fans, had we had them, would not have benefited us since the supply of electricity, uncertain at best, was turned off at 10 o'clock. Some of us in our dormitory devised a simple substitute. We brought a bucket of cold water from the well, dipped our gowns (and sometimes our sheets) in the cold water, wrung them out, put them on, and quickly jumped into bed, hoping that the evaporation would cool us off enough to get to sleep. It usually worked.

Late that first summer, rumors began to fly concerning a second repatriation ship. Rumors became fact when on September 15, about 200 Americans and 80 Canadians left camp for Shanghai on their way to freedom. We were glad for them, though I was left sitting on top of the wall, waving good-bye to Mr. Moses and many of my close friends and associates. Twelve of our original Peking "O.M.S." family of 17 were on their way home, leaving Meredith and Christine Helsby and little Sandra Kay (now almost three), Marcy Ditmanson, and me.

The segregation of the Catholic priests and nuns who were moved to Peking soon after, took another large group out of our camp. But the coming of the Cheefoo school group of over 100 brought our camp total back to almost 1,500. About 1,000 were British, 200 Americans, and the rest of varied Allied nationalities. Of the total number, about 400

were Protestant missionaries or missionaries' children, representing many denominations and varied theologies from fundamental and holiness groups to the more liberal and modernistic.

We were granted full religious liberty as long as the Japanese authorities were informed when and where services were being held. On Sundays the church was in use all day. The Catholics gathered for early morning mass, and the Anglicans had a service at 11 a.m. Our smaller holiness group



met in a room in the hospital building. At four o'clock in the afternoon a union service was held. The messages delivered were evangelistic, conservative, or liberal, depending on who was in charge.

The Evangelistic Band, formed early in camp, sponsored a Sunday evening singspiration. Old and young, Protestant and Catholic, attended. A short but pointed gospel message followed the singing. Ten people were definitely converted through these efforts. And we prayed earnestly for the Japanese guards who slipped in occasionally. Though they might not understand the spoken language, we prayed that they would understand the language of the spirit of love which held no malice or resentment.

After the many initial adjustments we led quite a normal life on the 6.2 acres assigned to us behind the eight-foot wall. Work, recreation, and social and religious activities filled our days and evenings.

My work assignments in camp were varied. Besides being a member of the "sanitary police," I was asked to work in the kitchen at various tasks. The same week I supervised the serving team, I was also latrine cleaner. It kept me hurrying all morning to complete the latrine cleanup, take a shower and clean my fingernails, and get to the kitchen in time to help serve lunch. I liked the bread-slicing job (by hand). We tried to please everyone by cutting some loaves in thin slices, some medium, and some thick.

Being kitchen laundress was not without its problems and rewards. The cooks soon discovered that the people ate the soup or stew better if they found no clue as to where the flavor came from. So they put all the "stuff" in flour sacks, boiled out the flavor, then discarded the "stuff" before serving the food. It was our job to wash these dirty, greasy, smelly meat sacks as well as kitchen aprons and towels. At least we had hot water to do it with, though at times soap was scarce. Because I had to go to the quarters office later in

the morning, I usually did the kitchen laundry between 4:30 and 6:00 in the morning.

It was not very easy in a dormitory with so many others, to find a quiet corner for private devotions. But I discovered that my Lord didn't mind if I talked to Him while bent over a wooden washtub and a wooden washboard trying to get kitchen "linens" clean. His ear was open to the cry of His child as I looked up into the clear China sky and asked my Father to supply needed grace and strength for the day and to bring glory to himself through my life that day. What sweet communion and fellowship we enjoyed together in those early morning hours!

Recreation :

Recreation in camp could be grouped in two major categories: cultural and athletic. After the first few months in camp, regular Friday and Saturday night programs were given. Sometimes it was a drama, sometimes a variety show, or a concert by the camp orchestra or a pianist (of which we had several). We were fortunate that the Japanese had allowed us to bring instruments into camp. I had the first chair in the clarinet section of the orchestra. The only reason I occupied the first chair was that I happened to be the only one with a clarinet—not because I was that good!

Some of the musicians had had foresight enough to bring the musical scores of many religious classics into camp, including Mendelssohn's Elijah, Stainer's Crucifixion, and Handel's Messiah. These became regular musical presentations in season. I remember so vividly one Easter morning, Mrs. Buist, a Salvation Army missionary from Wales, standing on a cement slab and singing in her clear, bell-like soprano, "I Know that My Redeemer Liveth." We were lifted to the seventh heaven as our love and faith reached up to our living,

resurrected Saviour. What difference did it make if we were in an internment camp? He, our risen Lord, "stood in our midst" on that Easter morning.

A circulating library was a rich source of good reading. I am sure I read books I would have had neither the time nor opportunity to read had I been carrying on normal missionary activities.

The major athletic activity in camp was soft- I ball. There were three men's teams: the Tientsin Tigers, the Peking Panthers, and the Priests'

70 Padres. The Padres had an almost unbeatable pitcher, but competition was keen as two or three afternoons a week the men pitted their skills against each other, and the spectators yelled until they were hoarse.

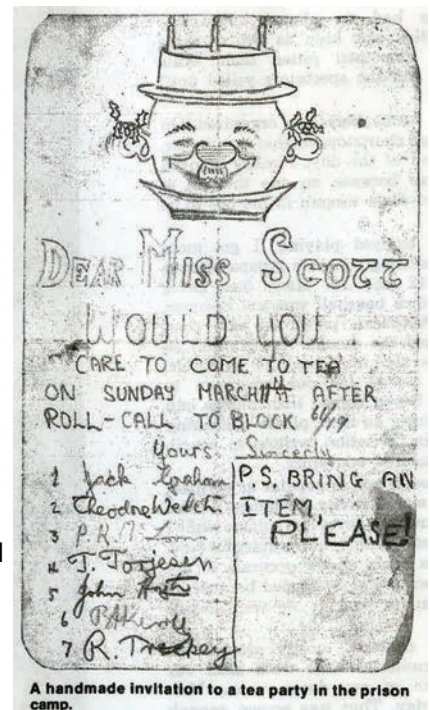
Ladies' softball teams were also organized. On one of the



teams I was shortstop, catcher, or pitcher, according to the need of the day. I really enjoyed playing ball in camp because no one thought it strange or undignified for a woman in her 30s to be playing ball.

As much as I enjoyed playing, I got more satisfaction out of coaching separate groups of boys and girls between 12 and 16. Many had never played ball before, since baseball was not common in British circles. American personnel was comparatively scarce after the second repatriation, so the athletic committee used any personnel available. My "boys" invited me to tea one afternoon to celebrate a birthday. Seven signed their names and then added a P.S.: "Bring an item, please" (meaning food). I still have this invitation, written in pencil, among my most treasured souvenirs.

Field hockey, though not as popular as softball, provided another physical activity for ladies. I have made my boast that our team never lost a game



while I was playing goalie. But a reading of my diary for Nov. 27, 1943, casts serious doubt on the accuracy of my memory. I wrote: "Hockey game stopped because of the rain—rather fortunate because we were losing four to zero."

Social activities centered mostly around the families and the dormitories. One week after our arrival in camp, one of our dorm mates, Mrs. Stillwell, had a birthday. That was reason enough to celebrate with a special tea. When Miss Regier and Miss Goertz, Mennonite missionaries from Kaichow, arrived in June, we had a welcoming "picnic" at the Browns'. The Helsbys' 9 x 12 became a welcome haven for Marcy Ditmanson and me to escape periodically from dorm life. We might celebrate a birthday—or just have an evening of games. Battleship was very popular, and if we were not careful, the lights blinked at 9:45 before all the battleships, cruisers, or submarines had been sunk on a sea of 300 positions. We were supposed to be in our rooms by 10, when the electricity was turned off. We were grateful for the candles we had brought from Peking, or even the flickering, sputtering tallow candles purchased locally.

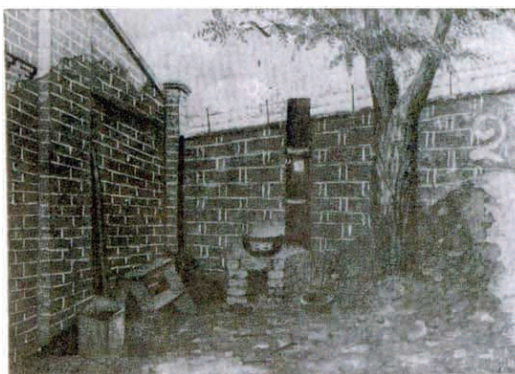
Food—Japanese Issue

Food was a major subject of discussion even if the conversation had begun on an entirely different topic. Many hours were consumed telling each other what we would order if we could have anything we wanted. The long list included steak, ham, southern fried chicken, ice cream, hamburger, chocolate milk shakes, and even the lowly hot dog. While food was never in abundance, there never was a day when we didn't have something edible to eat. I say "edible" because many in civilian concentration and prisoner of war camps had to eat things we do not consider edible. We were very fortunate in our camp because we were not in a war area, and supplies could be purchased from the Chinese farmers and merchants. Toward the end of the war even these supplies dwindled drastically. Yet, I am told we had more to eat than the people in Japan, and even more than their military.

There were four main sources of our food. Major and basic was the Japanese issue of food which was delivered to our supplies committee and distributed to each of the three kitchens (only two after the Italians came) and the hospital diet kitchen. By common agreement the diet kitchen had first claim to the supplies needed by the patients in the hospital or those on special diet by doctor's orders. Storekeepers in each kitchen kept close watch over the supplies, especially the oil and sugar.

For nine months those of us from Peking enjoyed the family like intimacy of Kitchen III. Since there were only about 300 served from our kitchen, it was possible to make good use of the supplies, making special dishes (even fried hamburger) not possible in the larger kitchens. These special advantages disappeared when in January, 1944, our beloved Kitchen III was turned over to about 100 Italians who were

brought into camp and segregated in the area next to the main guardhouse. We became a part of Kitchen I and collected our food along with 800 others.



Breakfast usually consisted of *lu dou* (a type of bean) or *kao hang* (grain) cereal and, in the later days, bread porridge made from old bread with very little seasoning. There

was no milk or sugar for the cereal unless you had your own private supply. And there was bread. Many ate at the bare tables in the dining room, but others, especially the families, preferred to collect their food in tiered containers and eat in



the privacy of their own rooms. In our dormitory we often collected our food too, especially if we had some peanut oil in which to produce "fried bread" on our makeshift stove. It was better than dry bread. Butter or margarine was not a part of our regular issue. When it did come, it was sometimes full of straw and mold, fit only for kitchen use.

Lunch was the main meal of the day—usually stew unless the cooking team was willing to go to a lot of extra work to produce a "dry" meal with braised meat, fried potatoes, and gravy on the side. We were fortunate to have men and women on our Kitchen I cooking teams who were willing to put forth this extra effort.

Supper was usually soup and bread.

During the first year, supplies of meat and vegetables were fairly adequate. Extra issues of flour, besides what was necessary for the 400 loaves of bread a day, made it possible to make extra food like noodles, or even shepherd's pies (meat pies) and a meat dumpling made by the Russian ladies in our kitchen. The patrons of our kitchen voted to leave our small ration of sugar (a tablespoon a week perhaps) in the kitchen so the cooks could make desserts. These extras called for volunteer help, but always willing hands were found to turn out delicious shortbread, cakes, date tarts, and even ginger-

bread. Those were really high days when a special dessert was served. I thoroughly enjoyed being on these special teams to produce such delicacies.

The first Christmas in camp was not without its very special food. When our committee explained to the commandant that Christmas was the major holiday of the Western world, comparable to the Japanese New Year, he went all out to bring in extra supplies for a real Christmas feast: pork roast, ham, oranges, and extra supplies of sugar to make dessert. We deeply appreciated these special concessions.

The cooking teams usually worked every third day. We soon knew what to expect when certain cooking teams were "on." Besides the cooks, many supporting teams were needed. There were the vegetable crews, made up mostly of women and older men who washed and prepared vegetables in large tubs. There were the butchers who prepared the meat (when we had it), according to the chief cook's specifications. The stokers were men who had the responsibility of keeping the fires going under the big food cauldrons as well as the boiling water for tea and drinking. The stokers made their own coal balls or bricks.

The serving teams portioned out the food as the internees came along in a cafeteria like line. The dishwashing teams washed the tin plates, bowls, and "cutlery" of those who ate in the dining room. There were usually three on a team, each manning a pan: the initial rinse, the soap-and-water wash, and the final rinse. If your dishes were dried, you did it yourself.

The bakery teams were indispensable. Their job was demanding, but the bread was unusually good as long as the good yeast lasted. There were those, too, who worked "overtime" to bake the shepherd's pies and desserts.

One great need was milk for the children. When confronted with this request, our commandant arranged to get cow's milk brought in, which was properly sterilized in our hospital kitchen and distributed to families with children three years old and under. Sometimes there was just a small amount in the bottom of a cup, but at least an effort was made to supply the need for fresh milk for the children.

The Canteen

The canteen was another important source of food.



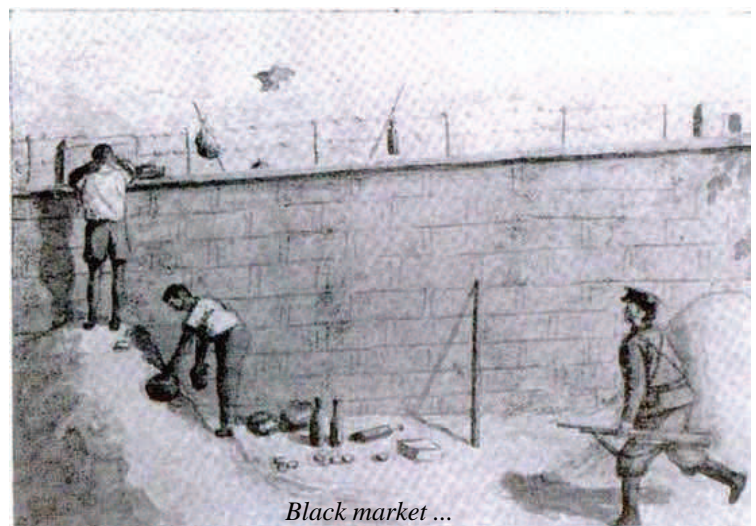
Pomelos (a type of grapefruit) were very popular, especially for making marmalade if we could find the sugar. Apples and pears came in season. Nothing was wasted. The peelings and cores, if we didn't eat them, found their way into a large crock in our room to make vinegar. There was the inevitable maggoty stage, but the end product was well worth the process. Peanuts became peanut butter if a meat grinder was available.

On one occasion oranges came in. There were not enough to go around, so quotas were established. Our dormitory of 14 women received three oranges. We drew straws to determine the lucky ones to get the oranges. The winners were happy but very generous. They divided the oranges among the rest of us so we all had a taste.

The Black Market

Another source of our food was the black market which operated over the wall in broad daylight or in the middle of the night, depending on where the Japanese guards happened to be. Hundreds of pounds of sugar, peanuts, jam, and soybean paste came over the wall as well as eggs and sometimes chickens. Until discovered, the black market, carried on mostly by the Catholic priests and monks, was most productive.

The time of evening prayers was an especially good time for black marketeers who knelt along the wall near the hospital, saying their prayers. The story went the rounds about one Trappist monk who devised an ingenious scheme to get



eggs. He removed a few bricks in the lower part of the wall and, "kneeling in prayer," received dozens of eggs and hid them under his robe. One day a Japanese guard became brave enough to lift up the monk's robe. He found 150 eggs!

Everyone in camp was greatly concerned about what the punishment would be. Would he be tortured? Would he be shot? It was with great relief and shouts of delight that the internees greeted the announcement of the sentence—one and a half months in solitary confinement. For a Trappist monk who had spent 25 years in the same monastery and had not spoken more than four or five words to a living soul during that time, this was a light sentence indeed! I am sure the Japanese were baffled by the hilarious reaction of the crowd and the joyous singing of the monk as he was led off

to his cell in the "out of bounds" section of the camp.

Another missionary (Protestant) who had been successful in getting things over the wall, was taken to the guardhouse for questioning. Being a Christian, he admitted that he had engaged in the black market, even though he was not caught in the act. Word spread quickly that he was being questioned. Friends went to his "house" (his 9 x 12 room) and whisked away all visible evidence of the black market and hid it in their own rooms. With nothing specific to go on, the Japanese gave him a lighter sentence of only two weeks in solitary. Besides, his wife was permitted to take his meals to him twice a day.

The kitchen prepared special food, and those of us who had obtained black market supplies from him, made cookies to send to him. The result was that he weighed 10 pounds heavier when he came out than when he went in! He told us that one of the guards had whispered to him that he was a Christian and discreetly left to give him and his wife a few minutes alone. Another guard later came by his room and delivered sugar and eggs "for his little girl" (three years old). Our Japanese guards missed their own children whom they loved dearly, and expressed that love to the children in camp.

The black market was financed through a companion black market in money carried on by just a few men in camp. The Chinese merchants and farmers seemed perfectly happy to take promissory notes for British sterling or U.S. gold, to be paid after the war.

Unfortunately two Chinese farmers were caught in black marketing. To the horror of the internees, the farmers faced a firing squad within hearing distance of the camp.

It was reliably reported that in time a new chief of guards succeeded in gaining control of the lucrative black market; so the black market in goods and money continued, but in Japanese hands.

Red Cross Parcels

Two shipments of American Red Cross parcels arrived in our camp. The first was in July, 1944, when 200 parcels arrived for Americans only. Each parcel weighed 50 pounds and was divided into four sections, each containing one pound of powdered milk, four small cans of butter, three cans of Spam or Prem, one pound of cheese, sugar, raisins or prunes, Ration-D chocolate, four packs of American cigarettes, and assorted cans of jam, salmon, liver paste, and powdered coffee. We were wealthy! But in a situation like ours, wealth is to be shared. Our British friends said that there was hardly a person in camp who had not received something from those parcels, thanks to American generosity.

In January, 1945, when the Japanese issue of food was at its lowest point, an even larger shipment arrived: 14 cartloads, each cart carrying over 100 parcels. Tears, unashamed, streamed down the internees' faces as they looked on in utter amazement. Each person in camp received one of these parcels: British, American, Belgian, etc. What a day! How rich we all were to have 50 pounds of

good American foodstuffs—and not even rationed, unless we disciplined ourselves to ration our own supply.

To us grown-ups who hadn't tasted milk for months and months, the powdered milk was a heavenly treat. The Spam was a welcome change from what little mountain goat and horse meat (at least we suspected it was) we had been given recently. I couldn't remember tasting anything so good as those Ration-D chocolates and the powdered coffee! I had never been a tea drinker, so I pounced on the coffee. The cans were only small, one-ounce size, and some of the contents had solidified, but we chipped out pieces for our much-anticipated cup. Before too many days had passed, I had to decide on my coffee strategy. If I drank it as strong as I liked it, the coffee would last only so long; if I made it weak, it would, of course, last longer. I decided that I would much rather have it the way I liked it for a shorter period of time than to have it weak for a longer period of time and not really enjoy it any of the time.

Most of us set aside a "rainy day" parcel against the time when food might be even more scarce than it was now, since we had no idea how much longer we would be detained.

Besides food, clothing, toothbrushes, and toothpaste came in. What a luxury to brush my teeth with a good brush once more. And shoe polish! Not too many in camp still had shoes, but I was one of the fortunate ones. What a luxury to be able to polish my shoes!

While the intrinsic value of all these things was considerable, particularly in that situation, their value as a morale builder was beyond calculation. We had been told that our country was on the verge of collapse, but these parcels were ample evidence that this was far from true. The spirit of the camp rose perceptibly after those parcels arrived. I know every internee would join me in saying thanks to all who had any share in sending them to us, and thanks to the Japanese officials who had allowed them to be brought in.

I received one other parcel in May, 1945, from a person whom I had never met—a Mrs. Bataille from Tongshan. It contained one and a half pounds of bacon and one and a half pounds of crackers. The note on the card attached to the parcel expressed the hope that the parcel would arrive in good condition and extended best wishes. Thank you, Mrs. Bataille. May God reward you for this "cup of cold water" given in His name.

Medicines

While the hospital doctors and nurses often worked around the clock, since there were no others who could spell them off, there was no way they could produce non-existent medicines. They suggested substitutes like ground eggshells to put in the children's cereal to provide calcium. The Peking medical personnel had also given adults a quantity of bone meal to bring into camp. But other than the few medicines that were made available through comfort money and the Swiss consul, little could be obtained.

Our need was at least partially met through the escape of two young internees who went over the wall one dark, June

night in 1944. Tipton was a Britisher and Hummel was an American. For days before their escape, they sunned themselves for hours to get rid of the telltale white of their skin. Successful, with the help of others, in getting over the wall, they joined a group of guerillas in the nearby hills. The escape caused quite an upheaval. From then on there was roll call in specified areas twice a day instead of the usual room check. Roommates of the two escapees were held in the assembly hall incommunicado for several days as Japanese officials tried to pry information and confessions from them concerning their knowledge of the escape. They were moved from their pleasant rooms on the upper floor of the hospital near the wall to less desirable quarters in the center of the camp.

Tipton and Hummel were able to report to Chungking by way of radio that we were in very urgent need of medicines. In response, the American air force made a drop of four large crates of the latest sulfa drugs to the nationalist guerillas nearby.

The next night a guerilla, disguised as a Chinese coolie, called at the Swiss consulate in Tsingtao and informed the consul of the drop and told him that they would deliver the four crates to him the next night at 2 a.m. True to their word, four men, each carrying one large crate, appeared at 2 a.m., then slipped away into the night.

Now the question was, how could these supplies be delivered? The Swiss consul, as the official representative of enemy nationals in Shantung, was the only outsider (except the night soil coolies) allowed into our camp. Taking in the usual comfort money and a few available medicines once a month was a simple procedure. But to take in four crates of medicines, much of which the Japanese knew was not available in Tsingtao, would be a very complicated affair.

Finally he devised a plan. He had his secretary type a list of medicines available in Tsingtao, leaving four spaces between each item. The Japanese authorities, though puzzled by the spaces, put their official seal on the papers. Then back at the consulate, he had his secretary, using the same typewriter, fill in the blank spaces with the names of the other medicines in the crates. The next day he arrived at the gates of the Weihsien Camp with the crates. While the Japanese wondered where all these medicines had come from, they finally gave their O.K. since there was no doubt about the consular seal and signature at the bottom of the list. The carts rolled into camp and proceeded to the hospital to deliver their precious cargo.

I succeeded in getting outside the wall twice. I persuaded a row captain to let me help carry trash out of the camp. I assured him that I was well able to carry one end of the large trash boxes equipped with two long handles on each end. I had eagerly anticipated the wonderful feeling that seeing the green countryside unhampered by a wall would bring. But I was wholly unprepared for the danger that awaited us. My carrying partner warned me that we would have to dump our load quickly and get out of the way, or we would be knocked down by Chinese in their rush to sift through the contents of the trash. My most vivid imagination had not prepared me for the eager, pushing crowd that appeared from nowhere. We couldn't stop to watch the search, but we knew some of the results. Before very long, for example,

peanut-oil lamps made from cans we had thrown away began to filter into camp—for sale.

The vital statistics of our little village were kept by the quarters committee. There were around 30 deaths, all due to natural causes. When the Presbyterian cemetery located out of bounds was filled, the Japanese authorities provided a fenced-in plot outside the wall. All who died were given proper burial according to their wishes, if possible in wooden coffins purchased locally.

There were about 30 births in our camp. The babies were healthy and robust since the mothers had the best of care by camp doctors and nurses.

To complete the vital statistics, there were 10 marriages. When the camp was eventually closed, American officials validated the American marriages, since the ceremony had been performed by a certified minister. The British couples, however, had to go through the ceremony again before a British consul, even though they had been married by an Anglican bishop in camp.

With such a cross section of humanity from all walks of life, from the highest executive of a large mining or tobacco company, missionaries, professors, artists, and importers, to junkies and women of the street, it was inevitable that there would be some conflict—in thought at least. In normal city missionary life, the business community and the missionaries moved in different circles and saw very little of each other. But in camp, they cooked together, baked together, made coal balls together, cleaned latrines together, and played together. Toward the close of camp, one businessman told a missionary that he had always thought of missionaries as a "queer lot." But he said, "I have observed you missionaries and have to confess I have changed my mind. You can take it better than the rest of us, and in a better spirit." Another internee expressed it this way—that the missionaries seemed to respond to a need naturally and without pretense. Though unnoticed by many, this spirit was a great morale builder that made it possible for the camp to survive as well as it did with a degree of normal living. Thank God for His grace which enabled His children to leave a witness like this to His glory.

CHAPTER 5

Deliverance from the Skies

We lived in an almost newsless world. The Japanese authorities, however, did tell us officially that President Roosevelt had died, and gave us permission to have a memorial service. On Sunday afternoon, April 15, a saddened crowd of all nationalities gathered to pay tribute to a great Allied leader who had fallen before he had witnessed the peace he



had hoped for and struggled for. The playing of taps closed the impressive service.

Word of V-E Day came early in May in the midst of the presentation of a play in the assembly hall (church). The drama stopped and for a half hour all joined in singing "God Bless America," "There'll Always Be an England," and "Happy Days are Here Again." There was much cheering and many a silent tear. Later that night some of the fellows succeeded in getting up in the tower and ringing the bell with the result that everyone—babies and the aged included—were called out for roll call at one o'clock in the morning.

One source of our news was the Peking Chronicle which the Japanese permitted to be published in English and sent to former subscribers. The "news" was strictly controlled, of course, but we read between the lines of their terribly distorted reports. We followed the American navy and marines in their progress up the Pacific from Guadalcanal, to Guam, the Philippines and finally Okinawa. When reports of "thousands U.S. bombers" being shot down over the cities of Japan came, we knew the end of the war could not be far away.

Another source of news was a White Russian radio technician who repaired radios for the Japanese in his room. While "testing" them, he listened to news reports and relayed the information to others in the camp.

But perhaps the most lowly and unsuspected source of our news was the night soil coolies who periodically brought in news by way of crumpled notes in Chinese carried in their mouths. At the prearranged place, they spat into the garbage container at the end of a block where the wet notes were "found" by the internee garbage carriers. They, in turn, usually took them to a trusted, discreet missionary for translation, who turned over the message to the committee of nine for evaluation. The committee decided whether the news should be spread through the camp in general.

It was through this channel that the first word of peace negotiations reached us on Monday of that very eventful week.

By Wednesday the rumors persisted, and in the evening, as if by magic, the adult population of the camp gathered outside the commandant's office, hoping for an official announcement. But none came. However, a committee spokesman assured us that the report that the war was over was true. Someone said that this latest word had come in a letter over the wall from the escapees, Tipton and Hummel, who were nearby.

Celebrations began. We dug into our "rainy day" parcels and opened up cans with reckless abandon. If the war was over, more food would be coming in. There also sprang up spontaneous prayer meetings of thanksgiving that the war was over and that no more of our boys (or boys from enemy countries, for that matter) would be sacrificed on that horrible altar of war.

Then, naturally, thoughts of liberation and freedom flooded our minds. But also there were serious questions. Would the Japanese, in the desperation of defeat, go berserk and wreak vengeance on us? Did our Allied forces know where we were? How soon could they reach us, and how? The countryside was in the hands of Communist guerillas,

and the small contingent of the Nationalist army in the area was greatly outnumbered. Would the Chinese farmers and merchants, in a fury of vengeance, attack the Japanese, kill the guards, and leave us to the mercy of the roving bands of Communist guerillas?

Thursday we carried on as usual, only with an air of tense expectancy. Would there be any further news today? But Thursday passed uneventfully. Friday began very much like Thursday with the internees going about their usual duties. But at midmorning the calmness of that clear, warm, August 17 was interrupted when a boy came running through the camp, screaming, "An American plane, and headed straight for us!"

It was the "headed for us" that excited everyone. At long intervals during previous weeks we had seen the vapor trails of jets high in the sky, which we suspected might be Allied planes, but this one was lower and indeed was "headed for us." The internees left whatever they were doing and rushed out into the open spaces, particularly the ball field, to see this spectacle. As almost 1,500 people watched with pent-up emotion, the "big bird" came nearer. Suddenly all restraints were swept aside in the excitement of the moment. Some began to wave blankets, sheets, and "telltale grey" kitchen towels. Some waved American flags (mine had been confiscated). Others began running around in circles, shouting at the top of their voices, waving their hands in the air. Everyone seemed utterly unconscious of what others were doing. Some were laughing hysterically, others were crying like babies.

The plane buzzed the camp three times, coming lower each time; and as it did, it dawned on our consciousness that this plane was sent for us. Here was the assurance that we were not forgotten and would not be left to the vagaries of postwar vengeance.

The plane banked around after its third pass and started west, the direction from which it had come. I thought, Well, at least they know we are here, for surely the occupants of the plane could not mistake the wild demonstration they saw beneath them this morning.

But as the plane got about a half mile from camp over kao hang field (cornlike grain that grows tall), a sudden quiet settled over the demonstrators. Hardly a sound could be heard except the audible gasp that came from almost everyone. For, in quick succession, several small black specks dropped from the plane. Were they bombs? But why would an American plane be dropping bombs? Was it supplies? Probably so, for streaming parachutes began to "blossom" out.

But then in the next instant legs could be seen kicking



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

against the sky beneath the large parachutes. Men! Our own boys! They were not coming some day, they were here today to rescue us!

With the coming of this realization, an explosion of emotion and activity occurred. With almost one mind, the men started toward the big auto gate and, like a rushing torrent, burst it open and streamed past the bewildered Japanese guards. One man reported that as he rushed by, one guard brought his automatic rifle into shooting position but slowly lowered it again. Other internees clambered over the wall and got across the electric wire, which fortunately that morning was not charged. All had one purpose: to get to the paratroopers and welcome them—and at the same time to feel the thrill of charging over the forbidden fields free!

Langdon Gilkey, in his masterful book *Shantung Compound*, described what happened on the outside (I was not there):

My first sight of an American soldier in World War II was that of a handsome major of about twenty-seven years, standing on a grave mound in the center of that cornfield. Looking farther, I saw internees dancing wildly about what appeared to be six more godlike figures: how immense, how strong, how striking, how alive these American paratroopers looked in comparison to our shrunken shanks and drawn faces.

Some of the more rational internees were trying to fold up the parachutes. Most of us, however, [just] stood there adoring, or ran about shouting and dancing (pp. 209-10).

The plan of the rescue party was to safely hide in the cornfield and storm the prison camp at the opportune moment. But this was thwarted by the mob of internees. After asking several questions regarding the situation, the rescue party asked to be guided to the camp so they could "take over."

The word "take over" caused another explosion. The internees, wild with ecstasy, lifted the seven rescuers up on their shoulders and proceeded to wind their way to the camp. But the American soldiers were grim and watchful, their guns at the ready, and alert for any hostile move on the part of the Japanese guards.

Then one of the guards saluted instead of firing, the tension broke and the triumphal procession went through the main gate amidst the cheers of the crowd of internees gathered inside.

Up to this time most of the internees were totally unaware of the military aspects of the events taking place. But when the young major leaped to the ground and asked, "Where is the chief military officer of the camp?" those who heard his question realized that there was yet serious business to be transacted.

Having checked both his service pistols, the major started for the Japanese administrative offices nearby.

(The major's interpreter, a Nisei Japanese, told later of this dramatic event.) The major entered the room with both guns leveled to find the Japanese officer sitting at his desk, hands spread out on top. The major, through his interpreter, demanded that the Japanese officer hand over his gun and

recognize that the American army was now in full charge.

After a full minute of consideration, the Japanese Commandant slowly reached into his desk drawer, brought out his samurai sword and gun, and solemnly handed them over to the major. Relieved and somewhat astounded, as well as touched, the major handed back the precious symbols of authority and told the commandant that they would work together. And they both American GI's and Japanese soldiers alike took orders from the American officers. We were all grateful that the transfer of authority had been so smooth and peaceful.

Meanwhile, the celebration continued outside. When the internees let the boys down off their shoulders, one woman threw her arms around a lieutenant's neck and hung on until in desperation he sought the help of one of his buddies to free him. I am not sure what I would have done if I could



have gotten close enough. It would have been perfectly normal and natural for me to throw my arms around each of those boys to say, "Thank you for coming." They represented the multiplied thousands who had been fighting for us and our freedom. They represented thousands who never "came back." Why wouldn't we be overjoyed to see them and express our gratitude?

We learned later that these seven boys were all volunteers. They didn't have to come; they had chosen to come even in the face of danger, Major Staiger told us,

"Maybe you were thrilled to see us, but you will never know how thrilled we were to see you, because we descended in to the cornfield with our automatic guns ready to shoot it out if necessary."

With the coming of the paratroopers, everything changed. The flag of the "Rising Sun" was taken down, and "Old Glory" was raised on the top of building number 23. What a thrill it was to see the Stars and Stripes blowing in the wind over our heads.

Chinese merchants from Weih sien sent in carts of meat, vegetables, and grain. Big B-29s, most of them from Saipan or Guam, came at regular intervals to drop tons and tons of food, medicine, and clothing into the fields nearby. Many a woman in camp wore GI shorts during those last weeks in camp. All rationing of food ceased and internees literally made themselves sick eating Spam, canned peaches (Del Monte, no less!), K-rations, and chocolates in spite of the leaflets dropped warning us, "DO NOT OVEREAT OR OVER-MEDICATE." But it tasted good going down at least!

A big victory dinner was held on the ball field with tables piled high with food. I thought of that verse in the 23rd psalm: "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies." The Japanese guards looked on as we celebrated. Whether they were given a share in this abundance I

do not know. I hope so, for they had suffered short rations as well as we.

When I speak of enemies, I mean only enemies of our nation. We had been treated well. We had not suffered the privation or horrors of some other civilian camps to the south of us or the atrocities perpetrated at Belsen or Buchenwald. It was our good fortune, under the providence of God, to have as our commandant a Japanese gentleman. Though not a professing Christian, he had received his precollege education in mission schools in Tokyo and had



taken his college work in the United States. In fact, he had been living in the States when the war broke out, was interned in California, but repatriated in the first exchange of prisoners in the summer of 1942. No doubt all these experiences were factors in the mild rule which we experienced.

One of the greatest luxuries enjoyed after the arrival of the paratroopers were the walks in the countryside or the trips to the nearby walled city of Weihsien, usually for a Chinese meal.

We enjoyed the magazines the boys brought in, though there were many terms and abbreviations which had come into use during the war with which we were totally unfamiliar. One day a Britisher said to me, "Mary, what's a pin-up girl?" I performed some mental gymnastics trying to figure it out, but finally had to confess that I didn't know. Finally we went to our rescuers with a list of terms and abbreviations we did not know (LCVP, LST, etc.) and asked

them to make up a glossary so we could post it on the bulletin board. We were as hungry for news and understanding as we had been for food.

Each internee in camp was permitted to send two



miles away. Here they were put up in the "Edgewater Beach" hotel which had been commandeered by the American army. They wrote back telling of the plush carpets, spacious rooms, dining tables with sparkling white tablecloths and cutlery "a mile long," to say nothing of the variety of delicious food, including steaks. All these luxuries they enjoyed until the ships arrived that would take them to England, Australia, New Zealand, United States, or Canada.

The next large group of about 600, made up largely of older people and mothers with children who were returning to points in China, was all ready to leave by train. In fact, some were already waiting at the train station when word came that the Communist guerrillas had blown up the railroad bridge. Six hundred extremely disappointed and frustrated people had to return to camp,

The army officers in charge decided that it would be necessary to organize an airlift because they had no assurance that, if they repaired the bridge, it would not be blown up again.

On October 14, the huge operation began, using mostly C-47s with bucket seats along the sides. I was in the next to the last load to leave the Weih sien Civilian Assembly Center and enjoyed my first airplane ride. I must confess that I was glad when we landed at the Peking airport.



Edgewater Mansions ...

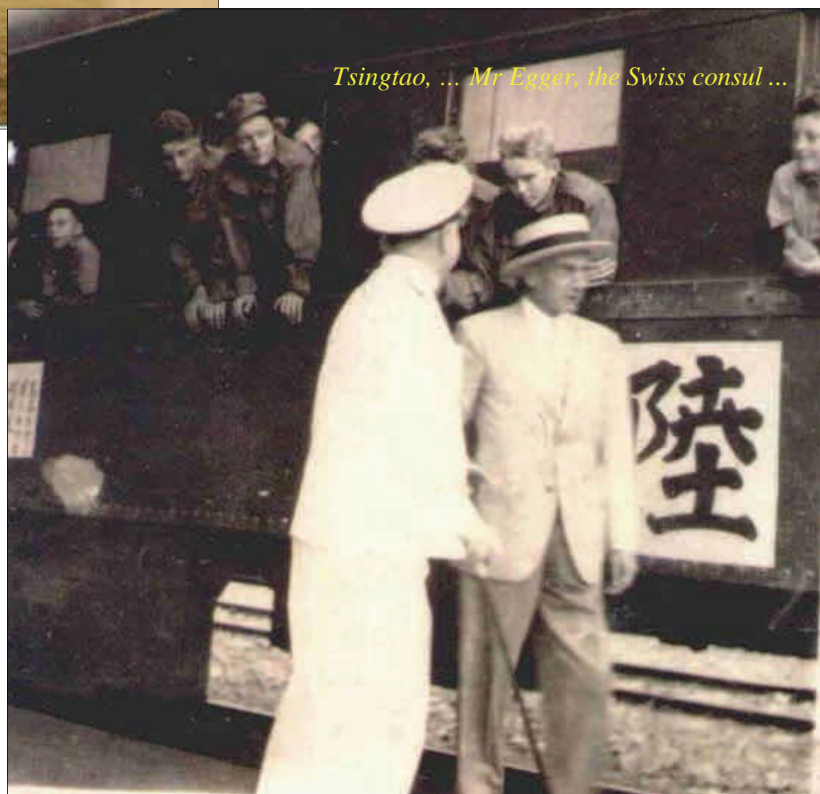
The internment camp chapter of my life in China was closed, but it left rich rewards and memories. By the grace of God, what in itself could not be called good had brought new insights and experiences which God worked in and through to enrich my fellowship with Him and strengthen my faith that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." I wouldn't take \$1 million for the experience—or give a nickel for another one unless it came in the path of duty and in His will.

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radiograms anywhere in the World via the Army radio. Though the messages were short, (I don't remember how many words we were allowed), I sent a message to Dr. Jones in Kansas City and one to my brother, Ed, in Hammond, Ind.

While in the beginning it was out of the question to airlift all of us out of camp, the rescuers, very soon after their arrival, requested the quarters committee to prepare a list of those seriously ill or in need of immediate medical attention. A list of the children whose parents were in West China was also provided. Internees in these two categories were flown out as soon as transportation could be arranged in Kunming.

On September 25, the first large contingent of about 600 internees bound for home, wherever that might be, left camp for Tsingtao, the seaport about 100



Tsingtao, ... Mr Egger, the Swiss consul ...