

REPORT ON AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR INTERNED BY THE JAPANESE IN THE PHILIPPINES
Prepared by OFFICE OF THE PROVOST MARSHAL GENERAL 19 November 1945

CABANATUAN, MAY 27th, 1942

LT-COL S. MORI, COMMANDER OF CABANATUAN PRISONERS OF WAR, CONCENTRATION CAMP
REGULATIONS CONCERNING CONCENTRATION CAMP

CHAPTER 1. General Rules

- Art. 1 The following regulations will govern the Cabanatuan Prisoners of War Concentration Camp.
- Art. 2 *omitted*
- Art. 3 The Cabanatuan Prisoners of War Concentration Camps will be established in two places – Vis: No. 1 Camp and No. 2 Camp.
- Art. 4 Prisoners of War will be divided into 2 categories, i.e. Army personnel and Navy personnel
- Art. 5 On admission – all prisoners will be classified as to special occupations or capabilities.
- Art. 6 In assigning men to duties or to working details – only strong health prisoners shall be used. No sick will be detailed for these projects.
- Art. 7 Hospitals for the care of the sick and sanitary facilities will be established in No. 1 Camps
- Art. 8 Regarding the control of prisoners – it is essential that each prisoner make himself responsible for his own proper conduct.

Chapter II. Organization

- Art. 9 Each camp will be organized as follows:
- | | | | |
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| Prisoners Headquarters
(Same Surgeons to be
attached) | Group I
Company I - (Each Company
Company II divided into
Company III 4 sections)
Company IV | Group II
Company V
Company VI
Company VII
Company VIII | Group III
Company IX
Company X
Company XI
Company XII |
|---|--|--|---|
- Remarks(1) The above may be enlarged somewhat according to the category and number of prisoners.
(2) Instructions regarding the establishment of hygienic facilities and hospitals will be issued separately.
- Art. 10 Prisoner Headquarters will be organized as follows:
2 Adjutants (1 Army and 1 Navy)
1 Transmitter of Orders
1 Officer in charge of work details
1 Supply officer
Doctors (as available or assigned)
- Art. 11 The Commander of Prisoner Headquarters should – as a rule – be a senior Colonel.
- Art. 12 Each group will establish an office to be staffed by the following personnel:
1 Adjutant
1 Transmitter of Orders
1 Officer in charge of work details
1 Supply officer
1 or 2 Doctors
- Art. 13 The Commander of each group should be a field officer.

Art. 14 The Company Commanders should – as a rule – be a Captain.

Art. 15 The Section Leaders should – as a rule – be a 1st or 2nd Lieutenant, who will be quartered in the Sections Barracks as the barracks leader. Each barracks will have a subleader (a Senior N.C.O.).

Chapter III. Transmission of Orders

Art. 16 Instructions regarding prisoners will be issued daily at 1600, at the office of the Nipponese Camp Commander.

Art. 17 A Prisoner Headquarters Adjutant or the Transmitter of Orders will be present himself at the Nipponese Headquarters at the above time.

Art. 18 Emergency instructions concerning important items will be issued at other times whenever necessary.

Chapter IV. Special Information concerning the barracks

Art. 19 Each barracks leader will detail a reliable man who will be responsible of the upkeep and cleanliness of barracks and adjacent grounds.

Art. 20 The Commander of Prisoner Headquarters will issue the necessary instructions for the proper arrangement of clothing – bedding – and other personnel belongings to insure neatness and cleanliness.

Art. 21 At the entrance of each barracks a sign will be posted indicating the following items:

Classification of prisoners (Army or Navy)

The names of Officers and the assistant section leader of the barracks

The number of non-commissioned officers

The number of privates

Chapter V. Instructions concerning allotment to Duty

Art. 22 Each group will appoint an officer of the Day.

Art. 23 The Officers of the Day will be responsible to the Commander Prisoners Headquarters for such items, in his own group – as the preservation of discipline – adherence to regulations – precautions against fire – and proper sanitation in his own group area.

Art. 24 Each company will appoint two non-commissioned officers of the day. The non-commissioned officers of the day, under the general supervision of the officer of the day, will see that the provisions of Art. 23 are complied with and be responsible for the distribution of meals in so far as their own companies are concerned.

Art. 25 All prisoners who are on duty as Officer of the Day, Non-commissioned Officer of the Day, or as a patrol, will patrol inside of the fence of the concentration camp at frequent intervals. Instructions regarding these patrols will be promulgated by the Commander of Prisoner Headquarters.

Art. 26 Each group will detail a mess sergeant and the necessary cooks to prepare the group meals. Mess details will be provided for by the group commanders and each group should provide an equal number of men. In so far as possible mess details should be changed weekly.

Art. 27 All reliefs from duty will be effected after supper.

Chapter VI. Fire Precaution

Art. 28 Each barracks will appoint a reliable man who will be responsible for the enforcement of fire regulations and the fighting of fire should it occur.

Art. 29 Smoking will not be allowed in barracks buildings at any time and in other buildings only when ashtrays are provided. Smoking will be permitted outside of buildings only at prescribed places – which will be designated.

Art. 30 A fire brigade will be provided by each group.

Art. 31 The building of fires – other than those in kitchens and as indicated below – is strictly prohibited. Burnable waste and refuse will be burned at a designated place under the supervision of a reliable man.

Art. 32 Before any barracks is completely vacated, an inspection will be made for the purpose of ascertaining that no fire hazard exists.

Chapter VII, Services

Art. 33 Orderly and kitchen details will be detailed as follows:

- a) Personnel necessary for preparing food, washing messing facilities and cleaning the kitchen area will be apportioned and detailed from each group. *
- b) One orderly will be allowed for each two officers.
- c) Each company will detail one runner for duty at the group office each day.
- d) Each group will detail two runners for duty at the Prisoner Headquarters each day.
- e) Two runners will be sent by Prisoner Headquarters for duty at the Nipponese Headquarters each day.
- f) Other orderlies – when required by the Nipponese Army – will be furnished upon receipt of instructions to that effect.

*The Commander Prisoner Headquarters will control the number of such personnel required and submit a report to the Nipponese Camp Headquarters for approval.

Chapter VIII, Daily Routine and Conduct of Prisoners

Art. 34 The daily program is as shown in Appendix 3.

Art. 35 No one will leave the immediate vicinity of his own barracks unless duty - working detail – or going to and from the toilet, without permission from the barracks leader.

Art. 36 Lying down or sleeping in barracks during working hours is prohibited, except for those who are ill or for some sufficient reason.

Art. 37 The morning and evening roll calls will be held by each barracks leader at the designated place. After roll call each barracks leader will report the result of the roll call to his Company Commander. The Commander will report this information to his group commander who will transmit the report to the Commanding Officer, Prisoner Headquarters. The Commander Prisoner Headquarters, after receiving the reports of roll calls furnished by the Group Commanders, will make a report to the Officer-in-Charge of roll call at the Nipponese Camp Headquarters. During rainy weather roll call may be held indoors.

Art. 38 The Commander of Prisoner Headquarters, Group Commanders, Company Commander and Officers of the Day should attend the roll call for each barracks at intervals in order that they may become fully acquainted with the state and condition of all prisoners.

Chapter IX, Sanitation

Art. 39 Special Attention must be paid to person hygiene and camp cleanliness to prevent the outbreak and spread of contagious diseases.

Art. 40 Bedding and other effects will be aired in the sunlight at least once a week and oftener if conditions permit, in places to be designated later.

Art. 41 In case it becomes necessary to isolate or remove a patient to the hospital, the Surgeon of the Prisoner Headquarters will report the facts to the Surgeon of the Nipponese Camp Headquarters and submit other instructions.

Art. 42 Bathing of prisoners and washing clothes will be as prescribed by the Nipponese Army.

Art. 43 Sections leaders will be held responsible for the cleanliness and orderly (sic.) of bedding and personal effects in each barracks, Group Commanders will instruct the Officer of the Day to make inspections to insure barracks are in a clean and orderly condition.

- Art. 44 The Officer of the Day of each group will be held responsible for the cleanliness and sanitary conditions of kitchens and latrines in each group.
- Art. 45 Prisoners who are in need of medical treatment will be reported to the Group Surgeon, who will report patients to the Prisoners Headquarters Surgeon. The Prisoners Headquarters Surgeon will consult and report to the Surgeon of Nipponese Camp Headquarters each day.

Chapter X, Maintenance

- Art. 46 Provisions for prisoners will be supplied by the Quartermaster Officer of the Nipponese Army to the Quartermaster Prisoner Headquarters.
- Art. 47 The Quartermaster Prisoner Headquarters will distribute provisions to each group in accordance with its numerical strength.
- Art. 48 Each group will establish a group kitchen. Each section will provide the necessary containers and each company unit will draw food for the company at the group kitchens under the supervision of the non-commissioned Officer of the Day.
- Art. 49 The Mess Officer will issue food to each company in accordance with its numerical strength.
- Art. 50 Water in the Prisoner of War concentration camp will be used only for cooking, drinking and rinsing of the mouth; usage for any other purpose is strictly prohibited. Bathing and washing will be carried out in place prescribed by the Nipponese Army.

Chapter XI, Miscellaneous Rules

- Art. 51 Prisoners will keep at least two meters away from the fence surrounding the concentration area.
- Art. 52 Prisoners will – so far as possible – answer calls of nature between sunrise and sunset. After sunset no one will be allowed to leave his barracks without permission of the section leader.
- Art. 53 Prisoner Officers of the Day and runners will wear specified arm bands on left arm.
- Art. 54 Prisoners will, on all occasions, salute the Nipponese soldiers and corps.
- Art. 55 All work details will be assembled by 8:00 a.m. every day. Whenever necessary, special instructions in connection with work details will be issued at time.
- Art. 56 Penalties to be inflicted on prisoners will be decided by the Commander of the Concentration Camp. Penalties will be of the following five classes:
 1) Shooting, 2) Confinement in the Guard House, 3) Food reduction, 4) additional work, 5) reprimand
- Art. 57 *omitted*
- Art. 58 The penalty for attempting riot, attempted or actual escapes will be death by shooting.
- Art. 59 Penalty for opposing the orders of Nipponese Soldiers or insulting the Nipponese corps and soldiers will be death by shooting.
- Art. 60 Each barracks will organize squads of about ten men and in case a member escapes the squad to which he belongs will be jointly responsible, and the squad leader and all members of the squad will be shot.
- Art. 61 Violations of any of the various regulations may result in death by shooting or by confinement to the guardhouse.
- Art. 62 In addition, according to the nature of the offense, punishments will be inflicted as sanctioned by the Commander of the Concentration Camp. These regulations remained in force during the life of Camp 3.

These regulations were added to from time to time, as circumstances required by Camp General Orders. These additions were approved by the Nipponese, and were for the most part, instigated by them. These additions were:

1) IMPORTATION OF PROHIBITED ARTICLES INTO CAMP

- 1) Any prisoner who commits an act which may jeopardize the comfort, well being, or safety of the prisoners of this Camp as a whole will be recommended for severe and summary punishment.
- 2) Among such acts are the importation into Camp of intoxicating liquor, wine, beer, narcotics and others articles specifically indicated by the Nipponese Authorities.
- 2) 1) Card playing will be permitted at any time when men are not working on details. Gambling will, under no circumstances, be tolerated.
- 3) The Nipponese Authorities have ordered that anyone who is found guilty of gambling will be summarily and severely punished.
- 3) 1) At present, the Nipponese Authorities will not permit communication with anyone outside this camp, except through official channels.
- 2) No one in this camp will send or attempt to send notes, letters, or any other written communications for anyone outside of this camp. This prohibition applies with equal force to Camp.
- 3) Except when specifically authorized by proper authority – or when engaged in official business – no one in the camp will hold any conversation with or attempt any time, either inside or outside of the camp.

By 1943 the camp administration had succeeded fairly well in convincing the Japanese of the necessity for greater cooperation on their part in the matter of improving conditions in the camp, if the remaining prisoners were to survive. During that year, therefore, the Japanese administrative officers permitted certain definite steps to be taken which brought the camp into a semblance, at least, of working order.

Among the new measures instituted was the organization of an interior guard company, whose responsibility it was to guard the inside camp area day and night. The guards in this detail were under the supervision of a Provost Marshal appointed by the administrative staff. Another detail was appointed to repair buildings. Still another was assigned the task of installing sanitary latrines. (More will be said about this particular assignment under the topic "Sanitation.")

The task of improving conditions in the hospital area the Japanese turned over to the physicians and their staffs, with the result that this year saw great advances, not only as regards sanitation in the hospital, but also in general therapeutic and rehabilitation measures instituted for the benefit of the patients. Patients were encouraged to help themselves as much as possible. A physio-therapy program was launched, which included improvement of the grounds, paths and walks around the hospital area, the repair of all buildings, clothing and equipment were made by American officers.

One innovation of this year was the adoption of the system of naming streets and paths within the camp after certain well-known streets in America. (The main street, for instance was called "Broadway.") The psychological value of such devices as this, childish as they may seem to the casual observer, can not be too highly estimated. Many a man found himself clinging to sanity and hope by means of his association, in this far-off land, with such intrinsically trivial, but extrinsically important reminders of the normal life of his past, which to most of the men seemed very long past, indeed.

In 1944 the Japanese moved their headquarters to a separate building in their own area, across the road from that occupied by the American prisoners of war. "Runners" were used to carry messages across the road from one headquarters to the other. There was one American interpreter attached to the Japanese headquarters, to act as liaison officer between the Japanese and the Americans.

The Japanese permitted the Americans to set up a rather elaborate administrative system, allowed a certain percentage of the personnel to be counted as overhead for administrative work, and loaned the American staff several typewriters to aid them in performing their administrative duties.

Administration of the camp by the Americans reached a high state of efficiency this year—indeed the Japanese even went so far as to commend the staff for its accomplishments. The smooth running of the camp was due, in part, to the fact that, with the increase in camp population, the Japanese insisted on an ever stricter discipline; but also partly to the improvement in the organization of camp facilities.

The guard detail, under the camp Provost Marshal, was now made a separate unit, responsible only to the camp commander. All camp personnel were required to assemble at the main camp assembly area for roll call each morning & evening, rain or shine. Prior to the institution of this regulation, the Japanese had been in the habit of coming into the camp every morning & evening to count the men as they stood outside their own individual barracks. Work details were

now placed under the supervision and control of permanently appointed officers, an administrative policy that proved very convenient, to the Americans, at any rate, because it enabled each supervisor to know which men were in his detail each day, and gave him a chance to "cover up" for those who were really sick.

HOUSING: The prisoners lived in barracks 50' x 15' in size, built of bamboo and swali, with roofs of cogon grass, and set up on poles about 4' from the ground. Entrance to the buildings was provided by an opening at either end, without a door. The interior of each building was divided into 10 bays, each of which contained an upper and lower tier made of strips of bamboo. A board running from one wall to the other of each tier formed the bed on which the occupants of the tier lay. According to the original plan, each bay was intended to house 2 persons, but with the influx of approximately 10,000 American prisoners in the first few months after the camp was opened it eventually became necessary to crowd as many as 12 men into each bay, with the result that each building, which had been originally planned to accommodate only 40 people, finally housed more than 100.

The overcrowded conditions, with the resultant wear and tear on the quarters of this excess population, soon brought the building into a sad state of disrepair. In many of them the bamboo strips were broken, roofs were damaged, and the sides of the buildings caved in.

Nothing was done to remedy this situation for some time. But eventually, as the men began to realize that their stay here was to be far longer than they had anticipated, they set about devising ways and means of putting their living quarters into a more habitable condition. In 1943 a work detail was organized, whose duty it was to keep the buildings repaired. Thus, although nothing could be done to relieve the insufferable congestion of the barracks, at least those they had were maintained in fairly decent shape.

DRAINAGE: The ground on which the camp was situated sloped from south to north, with the result that during the rainy season the buildings in the northern half of the camp were frequently flooded to above floor level. Trenches were dug around the buildings and along the pathways through the camp in an effort to drain off some of the water, but these were only makeshift methods, and produced no very satisfactory or long-lasting results. During the first few months of the camp's existence the Japanese, who were apparently concerned only with getting as much work as possible out of the men, ignored the entire matter, and gave the prisoners no cooperation whatsoever in finding a solution for this difficult and important problem.

No real progress was made in the situation until 1943. By that time the health of most of the prisoners had improved, and the Japanese began to increase the number of men on detail each day. The American administrative staff accordingly requested permission to assign a certain number of prisoners to the task of improving the drainage system. Permission having been granted, one detail was assigned to the barracks area, and a smaller one to the hospital area. Equipped with only a few tools, these men first cut paths everywhere throughout the camp, and then alongside the paths dug ditches which led, in turn, to larger ditches around the lower preliminary camp. They also dug ditches around each building, to drain off the water that accumulated in these areas, and devised a system for draining garbage and other waste matter. Whenever during the rainy season it was reported that a particular area was flooded or that the ditches had become clogged by the heavy rain, the drainage detail immediately repaired the damage. The system of ditches and culverts constructed by the drainage detail made a vast improvement in the drainage situation in the camp, in comparison to that of the previous year. In 1942 it had been impossible to walk any distance without being half submerged in mud and water. Now in practically any part of the camp one could walk on fairly solid ground.

In 1944 an area near the main gate was leveled off and filled with many cartloads of dirt and gravel, to prevent water from collecting in the depressions. This task was made easier by reason of tools and trucks provided by the Japs, who were interested in having this area made usable as an assembly place. The drainage detail also saw to it that the ditches and culverts that ran alongside the camp paths and around the perimeter of the camp itself were kept cleaned out, and made improvements in the paths, evening off the higher places, and filling in low parts, until all the paths in the camp area were at a fairly good level.

SANITATION: The most serious problem confronting the American prisoners of war at Camp 3 during the first six months of their internment was that of sanitation. Repeated requests made by them to their Japanese captors for lumber and tools with which to build an improved type of latrine was consistently refused, or, more often, simply ignored. Hence they were forced to build open latrines in every compound. These places proved to be excellent breeding spots for flies. Literally squadrons of these pests swarmed constantly around the open latrines, and from thence into the prisoners' living and mess quarters. It was impossible to keep the flies off the food. Undoubtedly much of the dysentery and many of the other intestinal diseases from which the prisoners suffered during 1942 could be ascribed to these carriers.

The increasingly cooperative attitude of the Japanese in the matter of helping the Americans to improve the administrative situation in the camp was reflected in their greater willingness to see that sanitary conditions were bettered. As more military supplies became available, they gave the prisoners the tools and equipment they had demanded so often during the first few months they were there, a supply of lumber was obtained and one of the work details that had been organized was set to the task of installing a system of septic tanks and sanitary latrines. They built several closed latrines to replace the old, unsanitary open ones, and installed a septic tank adjoining each latrine. Thereafter this detail worked 7 days a week to keep the latrines and the drainage system in good, sanitary working order.

Now that there was some hope of reducing the number of places where flies and other noxious, disease-carrying insects might breed, a strenuous campaign was instituted to eradicate those already there. One American Physician had a number of signs painted, on each of which a catchy slogan was printed, of the same type as those found on the "Burma Shave" ads that dot the fences along the highways and country roads in the United States. Prizes were offered for the number of flies killed, and rats caught, each day. Sanitary dumps were dug, and provided with wooden covers, to prevent their serving as breeding places for flies and other insects. The Japanese loaned the prisoners large quantities of squad type mosquito bar to be used in the barracks as a protection against mosquitoes. Three delousing centers were built in the camp, and the men were urged to set aside one day each week to have their clothing deloused, and to clean up their barracks. The mess gear was inspected frequently, to insure its being kept clean.

Throughout 1944 the members of the sanitary detail kept up their remarkable work, in spite of their very limited facilities. They persuaded the Japanese to issue lime to be used around sumps and in the latrines. The contests in fly and mosquito eradication that had been initiated the previous year were continued. One man was assigned the job of operating the delousing units and keeping a supply of boiling water for the steam drums. This method of delousing, primitive though it was, aided immeasurably in keeping the men's bedding and clothing at least partially free from lice.

WATER SUPPLY: When the camp was first opened in June 1942 there was almost no provision for supplying water to the inmates. True, there was a large water tower within the campgrounds, but the machinery with which to operate the nearby wells, and to store a reserve water supply in this tower, had either been destroyed or removed from the area. For the first several months, therefore, a water rationing system had to be enforced, whereby each prisoner was allowed a maximum of only one canteen of water per day. For more than 45 days after their arrival at the camp the men were unable to take a bath, or even to keep themselves approximately clean. With the coming of the rainy season, which lasted from August to the end of the year, the prisoners caught the water that fell into the drain pipes leading off from the roofs of the camp buildings, using their canteens, cups, as well as canvas and metal cans, and any other available type of container for this purpose. With the water obtained thus they were enabled to take a bath, or wash themselves, at least once a day. Toward October the Japanese with the aid of mechanics and technicians from among the prisoner group, installed two gasoline power pumps by means of which water could be drawn from the nearby wells and a reserve supply stored in the tower in the camp area. This improvement assured the camp a reasonable amount of water for both bathing & drinking purposes for the remainder of the time it was in operation.

During 1943 some notable improvements were made in the water supply. The Japanese supplied hydrants and water fixtures, and details selected from among the prisoners laid pipe throughout the camp and mounted spigots at six convenient locations in the prisoner of war area, besides installing an outdoor shower in the dysentery area.

There were very few times during the remainder of that year that the water supply was threatened. Occasionally, when there was a shortage of fuel with which to operate the pumps, the water supply had to be rationed again; but this emergency seldom lasted for longer than 24 hours at a time. Now the mess halls had hot water with which to cleanse the cooking and eating utensils, and the men were able to bathe more frequently, and to keep their clothes cleaner. The boost in morale which these improved conditions gave to the prisoners can scarcely be imagined by anyone who has never been in a similar situation.

The favorable situation as regards the water supply continued throughout 1944. And there were even some improvements. The Japanese gave the sanitary detail permission to dig up pipe in the old hospital area, and to install additional pipelines and additional taps in the occupied area. They also authorized the installation of another shower, this one for the personal use of field grade officers. Several times during this year the water pumps could not be operated because of shortage of fuel oil, and water again had to be rationed for periods of from 24 to 48 hours. But in general the water supply continued to be satisfactory throughout the rest of the time of the camp's existence.

FOOD: Each of the several groups in the camp was assigned to a mess hall. This was a frame building open on all sides, and only partly covered by a roof of cogon grass. In every kitchen there were 2 or 3 iron caldrons in which the daily issue of rice was cooked.

Rice was issued to the camp as a whole, on the basis of so many grams per man, and this quantity was further divided to set amounts for each group. After the rice had been cooked it was issued in 5-gallon oilcans to each barracks, where it was distributed equally among the prisoners, under the supervision of the barracks leader. During most of 1942 the daily ration per man was two and sometimes three mess kits of steamed rice. Occasionally the Japanese would also permit a small amount of "whistle weed," a tough fibrous swamp green, to be issued to the prisoners. This green was altogether indigestible, but when boiled it produced a watery, greenish-colored soup which, though not particularly palatable, was welcomed by the men as a variant of their steady diet of rice.

A few prisoners who had been fortunate enough to come through the initial transfer from Bataan & Corregidor to Cabanatuan with their personal possessions, such as money, watches and jewelry intact, controlled a so-called "black market" in American food supplies. To put it plainly, some of them managed, because of the laxity of the Japanese guards, to slip out of the prison camp area every night, returning several hours later with sacks of canned foods, obtained by many a devious method, which they sold to other American prisoners at a tremendous profit. This practice continued at a lively rate for the first few months of their imprisonment, until finally a group of 6 of the chief "operators" were caught by the Japanese and executed. Despite its illegality, however, the black market did prove of inestimable value to some of the prisoners who would not otherwise have been able to win their fight for survival during this starvation period.

In the fall of 1942 some Red Cross supplies arrived at the camp, just in the nick of time, it is firmly believed, to save the lives of many of the American prisoners of war. At about this same time, too, the Japanese began to issue small quantities of mongo beans and a little carabao meat every 2 or 3 days.

The food situation improved considerably during 1943. The Japanese increased the issue of rice—it is estimated that about 90% of the rations consisted of that staple – and also permitted the prisoners to have a little meat and some beans. True, the rice was of inferior quality – actually the sweepings of warehouse floors, with so much dirt, sand and gravel mixed in with it that only after repeated washings was it fit to cook and serve; and even then some of the foreign material remained in it—so much, in fact, that many of the prisoners complained of having their teeth cracked by the stones and gravel it contained. But even so, the mere fact of having a greater quantity of food, even though it was limited to rice, was of some help.

For some months the Japanese also issued a small quantity of carabao meat, 2 or 3 pieces, each about the size of a hickory nut, to each man, every few days. Occasionally they gave the prisoners some dried fish which, when cooked, amounted to about a teaspoonful for each man every 3 days. They also issued small quantities of gingerroot, which was used to make tea.

The camp farm was started about Jan of this year, with all the work being done by the prisoners. This farm began to produce by about the middle of the year, but most of the food grown there went to the Japanese, the only benefit the prisoners derived from it being a daily issue of camote tops and occasionally a few onion tops, some squash and fresh camotes. The increased labor necessitated by this farm made it imperative that the men who worked on it should receive more food than they had hitherto been allowed. The Japanese eventually granted them a slight increase in rations, for the most part an extra ear of corn per day for each man, or a tomato, or a few grams of greens. The members of the work details were also allowed to pick "pig weed", which, although it was rather tough, did add bulk to the diet.

The American Red Cross supplies that had been received in the fall of 1942 were issued during the Christmas holidays. Each man received three individual packages from these supplies, and this scant amount of food sustained them until the latter part of Feb 1943. During this time some bulk food was also received at the camp, which was issued through the mess halls.

This year, too, the Americans were allowed to maintain a commissary, thus enabling them to supplement the monotonous rice diet with fresh vegetables, such as bananas, peanuts, and a few limes and coconuts, which they purchased from the Filipinos. Through the commissary, too, they could occasionally obtain small quantities of tobacco.

Thus, what with the Red Cross packages, the few products from the camp farm, the increase, small though it was, of the rations issued by the Japanese, as well as because officers and men alike were receiving some pay, and could thus buy some additional food from the commissary, the year 1943—the first half, at least—proved to be the best, so far as food was concerned, of all the three years at Cabanatuan. The improvement in conditions was evidenced by a notable decline in the death rate among the prisoners, as well as by the fact that many of the men who had been hospitalized all during the last months of 1942 now began to recover their health sufficiently to permit them to be assigned to work details.

Toward the latter part of the year, however, the situation again worsened. The rice issue was cut approximately 1/3. Food supplies were still further curtailed by the fact that, because of the scarcity of commodities and the resulting price inflation, a commissary ceased to function in the latter months of the year. As an example of the extent to which prices of food had increased we may cite the fact that a canteen cup of peanuts which could be purchased at the commissary in the early months of 1943 for 50 centavos, toward the end of the year brought approximately 5 pesos. The number of men suffering from disease of various sorts, as well as from malnutrition again rose, and, despite all the protests lodged with them by the American officials, the Japanese did nothing to alleviate the situation. The Filipino Red Cross and other charitable organizations in Manila made several attempts to obtain permission from Japanese headquarters to supply the camps with the food and medical supplies they so badly needed, but this permission was never granted.

In the urgency of the situation the men had recourse to all kinds of tricks and deceptive devices in their efforts to get additional food. They set traps to catch birds, stole seeds from the Japanese, and planted little gardens all over the area. An "underground" system was devised by the Americans and Filipinos, to facilitate the smuggling of small amounts of food and medicines into the camps. By dint of exercising considerable ingenuity the Americans and Filipinos were able to continue this "underground" quite successfully until the summer of 1944, when approximately 16 Americans and an unknown number of Filipinos were caught carrying on these operations. The Americans were several beaten and sentenced to confinement for a long period of time for this infraction of Japanese regulations. The fate of the Filipinos is not known, but it is presumed that they were killed.

Some few of the men were able to secure extra food while they were on outside work details. For example, the guards set over the men assigned to the wood-chopping detail occasionally permitted their charges to trap and cook iguanas and wild carabao. Others, so great was their need for food, occasionally stole a few vegetables from the farm, even though they ran the risk of being severely beaten or even shot, for so doing. Some of the prisoners who drove trucks for the Japanese were able to smuggle small amounts of food into the camp, and thus managed to weather this difficult period more successfully than did others who were not so fortunate.

Once again the Red Cross packages, though fewer in number than those received in 1942, arrived just in time to save many lives. Approximately three of these individual Red Cross boxes were issued to each man in the first days of 1944. During this year the food situation became increasingly more critical. The rice issue was cut down several times in the course of the year, almost none of the vegetables grown on the farm were allotted to the prisoners, and the commissary was now closed, and thus cutting the men off from one more avenue for securing food.

Now they were driven to catching or trapping birds, cats, dogs and iguanas in order to have food for their starving bodies. The number of thefts of products from the farm increased every day. Toward October, when the last of the details were being evacuated to Japan, the men stole and pilfered from the camp farm and gardens all the food they could possibly eat, regardless of consequences.

Some extracts from a diary kept by one of the American prisoners of war give a vivid picture of the terrible food conditions that prevailed at Cabanatuan during the latter half of this year:

20 May 1944: We had dog meat day before yesterday. Sure tasted good. Any meat tastes good these days.

20 June 1944: One of the Japanese Dr's visited the hospital this week and promised Red Cross chow. He also asked our Dr's if they could use cats and dogs for meat

4 Aug 1944: We are eating anything we can get our hands on. Some bean leaves and ochre leaves I ate didn't go so well, however. Some people eat corn stalks and the flowers, papaya trees, fried grub worms, dogs, cats, lizards, rats, frogs and roots of various kinds - anything goes that can be chewed.

29 Sept 44: The commissary is just about closed. I doubt very much if anything else comes in. The last corn that came in cost 1,000 pesos a bushel.

By comparison, the Japanese ate very well during 1944. They raised over 1,000 ducks, several hundred chickens, and a few hundred pigs. Rice was still their main article of diet, but they had meat, vegetables and fruit in ample abundance to stave off starvation or any vitamin deficiencies among their own troops.

CLOTHING: No clothing of any sort was issued to the prisoners of war in 1942. The garments they were wearing at the time they were captured soon began to wear out, particularly since for some time they were not able to keep it properly washed. The only possibility of getting new ones lay in stripping the clothing from the bodies of those who perished in the

camp. Soon, therefore, the men found it necessary to patch and repair and otherwise take all possible measures to keep what clothes they had in wearable condition, if they were not to be entirely naked.

The situation as regards clothing showed very little improvement in the next year. Clothing was issued only to those men who were picked for shipment to Japan, and their old clothes were collected and turned over to the camp supply officer, who had them deloused and distributed to the more needy among the prisoners who remained in the camp. One "G-string" was issued to each man every 3 months. Aside from these items the only clothing that came into camp for distribution to the prisoners this year consisted of a few articles such as socks and handkerchiefs, which some charitable organizations smuggled in without the knowledge of the Japanese authorities. The prisoners were deprived of shoes early in 1943 by order of the Japanese general who inspected the camp, who decreed that from that time henceforward all Americans assigned to the farm and other work details would be compelled to go barefoot. This harsh decree was mitigated in only one instance by the Japanese camp commander, to permit members of the wood-chopping detail to wear shoes. No raincoats were ever issued to the men who had to work on the farm and in the fields all through the rainy season without any protection at all against the wind and rain.

The Japanese did issue several hundred pairs of shoes to the prisoners during 1944, but inasmuch as these were given only to the men who were being sent to Japan, it left the remaining prisoners at Cabanatuan no better shod than they had been before. The evacuees to Japan also received one suit of dungarees when they left. The only other item of clothing issued by the Japanese this year were a few "G-strings."

MEDICAL SUPPLIES: No medical supplies of any sort were issued to the prisoners during the first 6 months of their imprisonment, repeated requests of the American medical personnel for medicaments and other medical supplies being either consistently ignored or flatly refused by the Japanese. Some relief was obtained from small quantities of quinine, aspirin and sulfathiazole which a few of the prisoners carried with them on their march to the camp, but this supply was hopelessly inadequate to treat the malaria, dysentery, and other infectious diseases which decimated the numbers of the camp inmates. It was impossible to care for infected wounds properly, with no bandages, antiseptic ointments, or anything of the sort.

Bandages were used over and over again until they practically rotted away. In view of these terrible conditions it is not surprising to learn that there were often as many as 40 deaths in the camp in one day during 1942 and that the average mortality was 30 per day. By 31 Dec of that year about 2,500 Americans had perished at Cabanatuan from malaria, dysentery and other diseases, as well as from starvation.

Among the supplies received from the American Red Cross in 1942 was a fairly large quantity of emetine, carbazone and yatren for the patients with dysentery, as well as some anti-malarial remedies, sulfa drugs and a quantity of ointments of various kinds, dressings, bandages, etc. By practicing the most rigid economy the American physicians managed to make these supplies, limited as they were, last for 3 months. And even this small amount worked wonders, particularly in the treatment of the less serious cases. After the Red Cross supplies were exhausted, the Japanese for the remainder of the year issued sufficient quinine for the patients with malaria, although they gave the Americans little else in the way of medical supplies.

All things considered the situation as regards medical supplies and the care of the sick was somewhat better in 1943 than it had been in 1942. Throughout 1943 the prisoners were given periodic shots of cholera, dysentery and typhoid serum. For, although the serum available was old, and was not regarded as having much prophylactic value, the American physicians in charge felt that it might possibly be better than no serum at all.

Again the supplies sent by the American Red Cross, which were received in the latter part of 43, contained a fair amount of medicines and other medical supplies. The Japanese, however, did not turn all these supplies over to the Americans, in spite of the repeated protests made the American Administrative Staff against this practice. Nevertheless, even with the limited stores of drugs and supplies at their disposal, the American medical staff managed, by means of careful and judicious use of the drugs they had available, to keep diseases among the prisoners down to a surprisingly low minimum during 1944. The Japanese issued an ample amount of quinine for the malaria patients; and there were enough vitamin pills on hand to permit each man to have 1 pill every day for several months.

Dental supplies were woefully inadequate, and the methods of treatment used were makeshift. Fillings for cavities were made from silver pesos that had been brought into the camp unbeknownst to the Japanese. Few local anesthetics were available for extractions, and the equipment for grinding, as for extraction, was sketchy in the extreme, to say nothing of its painfulness. (One prisoner told of having several teeth drilled by means of a drill run by foot power, something on the order of a sewing machine.)

WORK DETAILS: Soon after the camp was occupied in June 42, work details were organized by the administrative staff, and all prisoners except officers were assigned to one or another of them. It was the policy of the Japanese, at least in the beginning, not to force American officers to work, and they were so informed by the Japanese commandant. Later, however, in view of the fact that the quota of men available for work details had been so reduced by reason of the large number of deaths as well as because of the increase in sickness--approximately 70% of the prisoners were suffering from the strain of the long, arduous campaign just ended, as well as from exposure, general mistreatment, and the complete change of diet - the officers were told that it would be necessary for them to volunteer for service in the various details, if the camp was to operate at all. This they did very willingly.

The work details were employed, for the most part, in performing such tasks as were necessary for the smooth running of the camp, and in improving the living conditions of the prisoners, as far as possible. They were usually in charge of an American officer and a Japanese non-com, with one armed Japanese guard for approximately every ten men in the detail.

The main work detail in 42 was the wood-chopping detail, made up of 100 of the strongest and healthiest men in the camp, who went out every morning to the foothills of the Sierra Madras mountains to fell trees and cut the logs into cordwood, which was then loaded into trucks and taken back to the camp to be used as firewood in the mess halls. These men were the only ones among the prisoners who were allowed outside the camp boundaries during the first few months. Another detail, also chosen from among the healthier men in the group, consisted of approximately 200 officers and men whose job it was to carry rations and supplies from the Japanese area and distribution points to the American mess halls. Still another of the main details was the burial detail, which varied in size from day to day, depending on the number of men to be buried.

A large number of the prisoners was assigned to details whose chief task it was to render service of one kind or another to the Japanese. A small group was assigned to act as orderlies to the Japanese officers and non-coms. A few others were detailed to take care of the power plants that supplied electricity for the Japanese quarters. (There were no electric light facilities in the area occupied by the American prisoners of war.) Some of the prisoners the Japanese used to haul supplies by truck from the nearby town of Cabanatuan, and to keep the trucks that had been assigned to the camp in good repair. Each day, too, they called for other groups of prisoners to perform various menial tasks in the Japanese area, such as washing the rice that was to be cooked for the Japanese, cleaning their barracks, feeding their chickens, washing their bath houses, and cleaning out the latrines.

In 1943 a more stringent policy was adopted by the Japanese with respect to work details. Because of the number of attempted escapes during 1942, a system of self-guard, so-called, was set up, whereby every ten men were placed in a shooting squad. If one of these men escaped, the other nine were shot. All prisoners were confined to their barracks at 9 p.m. and a guard posted at both ends of every building.

The farm was constantly increased in size, until by 1945 there were over 500 acres under cultivation. In order that enough men might be available for the farm and other work details, the Japanese ordered that the population of the hospital should be reduced to approximately 500 men. All the others were forced to work, no matter what their physical condition. As a result, many men who should have been in the hospital were forced to do heavy labor far beyond their strength.

The work detail for the farm alone was sometimes numbered as high as 2,000 men. They were divided into gangs of 100 and assigned to various jobs, such as hoeing, digging, carrying water, planting, harvesting and tool-making. All officers were required to work, and chaplains and doctors were particularly singled out for the dirtier tasks.

During the months from Jan to Aug work on the farm was exceptionally heavy, and most of the men in the camp, sick or well, were assigned there. A daily detail of men carried water and took care of a herd of Brahma steers. Frequent beatings were administered to the men. They labored on the farm from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m., without shoes and with little or no clothing to protect them from the weather, and then either stood guard there during the night or, if allowed to go back to camp, had to carry 5-gallon buckets of water long distances for irrigation purposes. Only the coming of the rainy season eliminated the necessity for these evening water-carrying details.

The latter part of the year the Japanese started to construct a new barbed wire fence. This made it necessary for the wood chopping detail to work longer and harder hours, cutting fence posts of a certain size and circumference. A fence detail was picked to erect a double fence 10' high, with a distance of approximately 20 feet between each fence. (The Japanese moved their guard and guardhouses in between the two fences.) Each fence consisted of ten strands of wire about 1' apart. An improved electric light system for the camp was installed during this period.

A large number of details left the Camp this year, and the Japs concentrated those who remained in the area on the east side of the camp, and closed up the old hospital area. The shift involved moving many men, and all of it was carried out by American prisoners. This type of work was always done at noon or during the rest period of the regular detail.

In Jan 44 the Japs commenced rebuilding an air field about 2 miles from the camp. Each day 500 to 1000 Americans, composed of both officers and men, would march barefoot through mud to this airfield. They worked all day with picks and shovels leveling off the field. Apparently this detail was less unruly than the farm detail, because the Jap guards did not molest the men during working hours. The work they did was very hard, hot and heavy. In consideration of this fact they were given an extra ear of corn or a camote at noon, in addition to the regular rations assigned to all work details. The detail lasted until 1Sep, at which time the Japanese suddenly decided that enough work had been done there by the Americans, and allowed the finishing touches to be performed by Filipino labor.

The farm detail proved to be heavy during this year, and there are frequent reports of beatings and mistreatment of prisoners. The new camp commander who had come from Davao decided that a picked detail of American carpenters and mechanics should be selected to construct a house for him. The men, mostly officers, spent several months in the construction of this dwelling, but it was still unfinished when the Americans returned to liberate the Philippines.

PAY: No pay was given to either officers or men until Nov 1942, at which time the Japanese announced that a pay schedule had now been drawn up, and that henceforth the American officers would receive the pay of the corresponding rank of the Japanese officers. They would, however, be charged for quarters and subsistence, and a large portion of the balance of their pay remaining would be put in their account in the Japanese Postal Savings. The announcement also stated that the enlisted men and non-coms would receive ten centavos each day that they worked.

The rise of prices for foodstuffs and commodities in Manila and nearby markets in 1943 operated to make the pay rate for officers and enlisted men less valuable than it had been before. Only after many requests from the American authorities did the Japanese finally grant a slight increase in the pay rate. But even this increase had little effect on purchasing power, for by that time prices of goods had gone completely beyond control.

There was little or no change in the pay schedule in 1944. But the prisoners began to experience difficulty in getting their pay. There were a few months when the Japanese "forgot" to pay them. Always before, when details left Camp Cabanatuan they were given their pay card to carry with them. This was not done in the case of those details that left after Sep 1944. Nor did the prisoners who remained in the camp receive any pay after that date.

BURIALS: Burial parties were composed of the healthier Americans, who reported to the hospital area each morning, accompanied by a Japanese armed guard. Four men were assigned to each body. After all the bodies to be buried that day had been placed on bamboo frames, the burial detail, regardless of weather conditions, would move to a distance of about 1 ½ miles from the compound to an area designated by the Japanese as the burial grounds. Here the bodies were dumped into shallow graves, about 4' deep, and half-full of water. Usually 14 or 15 bodies were placed in a single grave. For the first few months the Japanese would not allow an American chaplain to accompany these details. Toward the end of 1942, however, they rescinded this order and granted permission for one chaplain to accompany each burial detail.

During 1943 the number of deaths fell to only a few persons each month. The situation, insofar as burials were concerned, was also greatly improved. A detail assigned to improve the cemetery grounds worked with such vigor that by Memorial Day, 1943, a fence had been erected around the cemetery, the graves marked, and a large cross placed at the entrance. This year the Japs permitted the Americans to hold Memorial Day services for the first time since their internment. They also furnished wreaths for the occasion, which were placed on a small concrete memorial monument. At this time there were some 2,500 Americans buried in the cemetery. Throughout the remainder of the year a chaplain was permitted to accompany each burial party and to conduct a brief burial service.

There were very few deaths during 1944. Those who were buried were placed in separate graves, each with a marker. The burial detail continued to function, and the cemetery took on a new aspect in consequence of their devoted labor. Wooden crosses were placed over all the graves, and the huge cross erected at the entrance of the cemetery was marked with the inscription "American Prisoner of War Cemetery." Memorial Day exercises were again allowed at the cemetery, but because of the heavy work details only a few were able to attend and these men went only under a heavy guard.

BRUTALITIES & ATROCITIES: The thread of the story of Japanese brutality toward their American prisoners runs all through every account heard of life in the prison camp. This brutality manifested itself in an almost sadistic refusal to permit the prisoners to lead even a semblance of a decent existence, so far as food, clothing, living quarters, and indeed

almost every other phase of everyday life. But it also showed itself in specific acts of physical cruelty, inflicted sometimes in punishment of minor infractions of rules, but almost more frequently apparently for the sheer pleasure of wreaking a pitiful and cruel vengeance on the Americans, whom they hated with the awful hatred of a people driven by perhaps unconscious feelings of inferiority, and who, having managed somehow to gain a momentary advantage over the object of their hatred, can find no treatment sufficiently degrading to show their feelings of hatred, superiority – yes, and of fear.

The guards kicked and beat the prisoners on the slightest excuse – or indeed, frequently on no excuse at all. Several of the prisoners who attempted to escape were executed. After a few such more or less abortive attempts the Japanese administrators instituted the so-called "shooting squad" order, according to which all the men in the camp were divided into squads of ten men each. If any one of the ten succeeded in escaping, the other nine were to be summarily executed in reprisal. Actually, there is only one instance known at Cabanatuan of a "shooting squad" having been shot for the escape of one of its members. In spite of the rule, the usual punishment meted out to members of a "shooting squad" for the attempted escape of one of the group was solitary confinement and short rations. Nevertheless, the rule naturally operated to curb the number of attempted escapes, even though it did not entirely prevent some of the prisoners from continuing their efforts in that direction.

Several prisoners who attempted to barter with the Filipinos for food and medicine were also executed, after having first been tied to a fence post inside the camp area for two days.

A telegram sent by Secretary of State Cordell Hull, protesting the treatment of American nationals in the Philippine prison camps, cites evidence presented by escaped American prisoners of war as to the treatment accorded them in these camps:

At Cabanatuan during the summer of 1942, [telegram stated] the following incidents occurred: A Japanese sentry beat a private so brutally with a shovel across the back and thigh that it was necessary to send him to the hospital. Another American was crippled for months after his ankle was struck by a stone thrown by a Japanese. One Japanese sentry used the shaft of a golf club to beat American prisoners, and two Americans, caught while obtaining food from Filipinos, were beaten unmercifully on the face and body. An officer was struck behind the ear with a riding crop by a Japanese interpreter.

The discipline exercised over the prisoners by the Japanese reached almost inhuman levels during 1943. One supervisor and ten guards were assigned to every prisoner's work detail of 100 men. The members of the camp farm detail suffered particularly from brutal treatment at the hands of their guards. Every supervisor carried a short club or golf stick, which they did not hesitate to use indiscriminately on the prisoners whenever the fancy struck them. In many instances a wholesale campaign of beatings and torture was visited on the farm detail for no cause whatsoever. Every day from 75 to 100 men in this detail had to be treated on the spot, or were carried back to the camp unconscious from overwork or beatings.

Some of the most common methods of torture visited daily on practically every detail were slapping contests, in which the Americans were forced to slap each other for indeterminate periods of time: "endurance tests," in which they were forced to stand in the hot sun for ½ hour or longer holding a 50 pound stone over their heads, or to kneel down for the same length of time with a 2 x 4 board under their knees. The only detail that seemed to escape these fiendish tortures was the wood-chopping detail. The reason for this exemption was probably that it was an outside detail that worked several miles from the camp, and also that its work was vitally necessary for the upkeep of the camp, and for the welfare and comfort of the Japanese as well as the Americans.

Several prisoners who tried to escape this year were executed, and a few times the Japanese imposed mass punishment on the prisoners for individual infractions of regulations. The mass punishment most frequently invoked were a decrease in the amount of rice issued, or a temporary suspension of commissary privileges.

As the course of the war turned against the Japanese Army, the camp authorities seemed to grow increasingly more brutal in their treatment of the Americans. In 1944 beatings were of almost constant occurrence, particularly in the farm detail. Every day new instances were reported of the Japanese guards administering severe beatings to the American prisoners working on the farm. There were also several executions during this period.

RECREATION: What with the exhausting labor demanded of them by their captors, the necessity for taking care of their own personal needs such as repairing and laundering their clothes, keeping their barracks in some semblance of order and habitability, etc., the American prisoners, most of whom were in a constant state of fatigue and exhaustion anyway, as a result of too little food and an excess of anxiety and strain, had little time for recreation. Nor was there much opportunity to indulge in it. And, to tell the truth, many of them, in their weakened and despairing state, had little desire to amuse

themselves. Fortunately, however, there were those among them whose knowledge of human psychology made them realize how important it was for the men to have something outside of the common routine of their daily existence to divert their minds from the unpleasantness and unhappiness of their existence. It was largely due to the efforts of these few wise ones that the prisoners at Cabanatuan made definite and concerted efforts to promote every form of recreation available to them, and to manufacture others, in an attempt to lift their morale, and to keep them from sinking into the lethargy of complete despair. How well they succeeded is witnessed by the variety of amusements which they managed to contrive in spite of their limited resources, and even more by the amazingly high morale of the majority of the men throughout the three years of their imprisonment. True, there were some who made no contribution toward this effort—who, in fact, sank into a state of complete indifference, even to the point of torpor. But it must not be forgotten that the men at this camp were not a selected group. They were a true cross-section of American life. Among them were people of all degrees of wealth, education and culture, from the highest to the lowest. Every occupation and profession were represented here, every type of personality, every shade of opinion, political, social and religious. Can it be wondered at, then, that the personal reactions to the situation in which they now found themselves were so various, or that there was not always a unanimous response to the efforts of the more active among them to increase and enlarge their opportunities for recreation, and to keep alive in them, buried as they were here, far away from the lives to which they were accustomed, at least a little of their normal response to leisure-time activities, and a little of their taste for amusement and entertainment? In spite of this variation, however, most of the men did co-operate well with the efforts of those in charge to help them fill their leisure hours with congenial as well as instructive tasks.

A few of the first prisoners to come to Cabanatuan had been fortunate enough to be able to bring with them some reading matter, mostly a few works of fiction, some technical books, and a few scattered magazines. The authorities set aside one small building in the prisoners' area to be used as an exchange center for these books and periodicals. Here a man who had a novel could bring it in and exchange it for a magazine, or a serious technical treatise, or a magazine belonging to some one else in the camp. When he had read it, he took it back to the center and exchanged it for another book belonging to some one else. In this way, all the available reading matter in the camp, short though it was, was circulated among all the prisoners. The scheme worked out so successfully that the building was made into a library the following year. True, the choice was limited. But the books that were there were read and reread, until pages became worn and soiled and dog-eared from constant handling. Indeed, many of them saw such strenuous use that they fell apart and could be read no longer.

Some of the men had brought decks of playing cards with them, with which they whiled away many a heavy hour. Several ingenious devotees of cribbage contrived boards on which to play their favorite game. There was almost no athletic equipment in the camp, but on a few rare occasions the Japanese provided baseball equipment and permitted the prisoners to indulge in a baseball game.

Some of the chaplains, particularly in the hospital area, organized study groups. The men in these groups studied an astonishing variety of subjects, under the direction of any one in the camp who had special knowledge of that subject. Technical information seemed to be most in demand, and the classes in those subjects were taught by technical specialists among the officers' group. Brief lectures were also given from time to time by those of the prisoners who had specialized technical and professional knowledge. These lectures, however, had to be given without the knowledge of the Japanese guards, and popular as both they and the study groups turned out to be, they could not be continued for long, because the Japanese frowned upon group gatherings of any kind, apparently fearing, probably, rightly enough, that such gatherings would afford too much opportunity for the men to engage in "subversive" conversation, or even to plot rebellion or escape.

Those among the prisoners who could play a musical instrument were soon organized into a small orchestra, which furnished entertainment from time to time. And during the Christmas holidays a choral group entertained the patients in the hospital areas with Christmas carols.

In the early part of 1943 the Filipino charity organizations in Manila, with the permission of the Japanese, sent the prisoners a small organ, which was used for religious services, as well as for the programs put on by the entertainment unit. Throughout the rest of this year this unit produced amateur shows once a week. They also exhibited some old American films and a few Japanese propaganda pictures to the prisoners.

The supplies from the American Red Cross in Dec 1942 included some games, and a number of new books, all of which were gladly welcomed by the internees. The books found their way, along with those already on hand, into the library that was established this year from the nucleus of the book exchange center set up the previous year.

Reading classes were held this year for those whose eyesight had deteriorated as a result of malnutrition.

The games that had come into the camp from the Red Cross were of inestimable value in keeping up the morale of the prisoners. But the men also devised many other ingenious methods of maintaining their spirits. And, in spite of the fact that they had little leisure time, they accomplished a great deal in this direction. They launched contests aimed at beautifying the grounds around the barracks. Other contests were held every month in woodcarving, metal work and other handicrafts, and an amazing amount of interesting and really superior work was turned out by the participants. All in all, they found a surprising number of ways to occupy their leisure time, scant though it was.

The entertainment unit continued to function throughout 1944, although some of the projects it had initiated, notably the camp band, suffered considerably from the loss of personnel by death, as well as by shipment to Japan. It did, however, accomplish its purpose of keeping the prisoners' morale at a reasonably high level during these difficult days.

Very few Japanese movies were shown in 1944, mainly because they could no longer be obtained from the Filipinos who controlled the film in Manila. More books came to the camp this year, and the men devoted an increasing amount of their leisure time to reading. After a few months, however, the Japanese withdrew these books from the library, to be censored, so they said, re-issuing them to the prisoners in small lots some time later.

The men continued their handicraft work, and several contests in craftsmanship were held. It was interesting to observe the ingenuity they displayed in fashioning the most surprising objects out of scrap, the only material at their disposal for this purpose. One officer contrived a loom from tin cans and Red Cross packages. Some one else made a violin from a tabletop, with only a GI knife to do the carving. Still others made pipes, wood carbines and plaques. More decks of playing cards had come with the last shipment from the Red Cross, and card playing became almost the principal form of recreation.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES: In the early days of the main camp at Cabanatuan the Japanese refused to permit the American chaplains to hold either burial or religious services for the men. Toward the latter part of 1942, however, they withdrew their refusal, and thereafter the chaplains could conduct services at stated times during the week, provided they submitted their sermons to the Japanese for censorship before they were delivered.

In 1943 two buildings at either end of the prisoners' compound were designated as chapels for religious services. Here the Catholic chaplains held mass every morning, and the Protestants conducted Sunday services. Services were also held in the Hebrew faith. An organ sent to the camp by some charitable organizations in Manila was placed in the chapel. It added much to the men's enjoyment of the religious ceremonies. Different religious societies in Manila also sent religious books and articles to the prisoners. Certain chaplains were assigned to duty in the hospital area, where they were permitted to conduct services and minister to the sick and dying.

The greater freedom accorded to the chaplains in 1943 continued throughout the following year, and in spite of the critical shortage of religious supplies they were able to conduct services comparatively unmolested. A chaplain was even permitted to conduct Memorial Day services at the camp cemetery. Through the efforts of individual chaplains the chapel grounds were improved and beautified. A marked interest in religion on the part of the prisoners is noted in the records kept by the chaplains at the camp.

Col. Alfred O. Oliver Jr., an American army chaplain who was captured at Bataan and imprisoned at Camp O'Donnell, and later at Cabanatuan – he was in the latter camp from 2 June 42 until 30 Jan 45, when he was rescued by the American Rangers - has written a graphic account, effective and moving beyond words, by its very simplicity, of the work the chaplains did and the suffering they endured in their efforts to bring the comfort and solace of spiritual aid to the men at this latter camp. In a report entitled, "The Japanese and Our Chaplains" he says:

The policy of the Commanding Officer...was far stricter than that at Camp O'Donnell especially in the first three months. During this period he would not permit the Chaplains to hold any religious church services; he would not permit them to even bury the dead.

...The Chaplains daily went from man to man giving what spiritual help they could. When death occurred these poor emaciated bodies were stacked in a small morgue, where each morning, at the risk of their lives, the Chaplains held appropriate religious services. The Chaplains were not permitted to go out with the bodies to hold burial services, but had to stand sadly by and watch a detail of American prisoners load these naked skeletons on bamboo litters.

Along in the fall of 1942 there was a change in Japanese policy. Chaplains were permitted to bury the dead, but in order

to hold a religious service the Chaplain was required to present to the Japanese a copy of the sermon to be delivered not later than Thursday of each week. Often the Japanese censor would cut out great portions of the sermon and there would be no time to rewrite. What was approved had to be delivered exactly as written. At that time all services were held out in the open from a stage erected for camp entertainment; by spring the Chaplains were permitted to use 2/3 of the camp library building for religious services. A schedule was established so that denominational services did not conflict. In spite of an apparently more relaxed attitude of watchfulness the Japanese censorship persisted. Time after time an interpreter would walk down to the front of the building where services were being held and sit there with a copy of the approved script in his hand. Only a minister can realize how hard it is to deliver a sermon under such conditions. The hymns to be used also had to be approved. On a Sunday nearest to July 4, 1943 the Protestant Chaplains took a chance and had the congregation sing "God Bless America." The next morning the Japanese camp commander called the American camp commander to account for this breach in orders, warning him that a repetition of this incident would bring severe punishment on the Chaplains. The song had been used as the closing hymn of the service. How the Japs learned about it will ever remain a mystery.

Early in 1943 an accurate religious census of the entire camp was made. This showed that 26% of the men were Roman Catholics and the remaining 74% divided among the Hebrew and Protestant faiths. By this time the Catholic Chaplains were holding an average of six masses each morning and three Rosary services each evening. The Protestant Chaplains were holding eight regular preaching services on Sundays and four prayer meetings on weekdays. At the meeting of the Protestant Chaplains it was determined to organize a Protestant church representing all the denominations in camp. This church was patterned after the one instituted at Army Medical Center, Washington, D.C., and grew rapidly until it had a membership of around 1500. It was the first church of this scope and character in the history of the world. Hundreds of men who never before had taken a stand for Christ acknowledged him and were baptized by a Chaplain of their own faith, then publicly received into the Church membership. The good this unique organization accomplished is beyond human estimate.

The Japanese would not permit the Chaplains to leave camp either on local details or under permanent transfer until the middle of 1944. Constantly groups of men, as high as 800 at a time, were sent out to work on local air fields and before June 44 thousands were sent to Japan or Manchuria. Every time a group left, the Chaplains appealed to the Japanese mission to go along and care for the spiritual needs of these men. In each instance the appeal was denied. The Protestant camp church met the challenge by training laymen for spiritual leadership through Bible study. One man in each out-going group was appointed spiritual leader. He was furnished with as many copies of the New Testament as could be spared, a supply having been sent from Manila by the American Bible Society. These were insufficient and had to be used sparingly. Each leader was also furnished copies of the baptismal and burial services. It was learned later from sick and injured men who returned from these details that these services held by laymen were a source of great consolation and strength.

On Memorial Day, May 30, 43, the Japs permitted camp services at the cemetery. Every man in camp wanted to attend this special ceremony but only 1500 were allowed to go. All but a small group of Chaplains were lined up outside the cemetery fence. A chorus sang "Rock of Ages" ...

(We are very sorry but the next page was not received from the Archives so we will pick up on the following page.)

The ban against prisoners receiving mail or packages still persisted through 1943, but this year each man was allowed to send a message of 25 words to his family every two months. The restrictions laid down by the Japanese as to what they might mention on these cards, as well as the necessity for confining their messages to 25 words, naturally made it impossible for them to send very satisfactory news of themselves. But it was a comfort to the men to be able to send even that limited amount of direct news, and just as heartening to their families to receive it. As a matter of fact, however, many of these messages never reached those at home. Some of it was probably lost in the mazes of censorship, while some went down with the Japanese ships that were sunk by the Americans, and a great deal was no doubt simply never sent by the Japanese.

In Jan 44 the prisoners at Cabanatuan received a telegram from the American Red Cross wishing them a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and in March of that same year a number of packages of mail arrived for them. Although this mail had already been censored at 2 or 3 other places, the Japanese camp authorities decided that they should censor it again. Since they had only one officer to do the censoring, the task necessarily proceeded at a very slow pace, with the result that the mail trickled out to the prisoners at first at the rate of only 50 to 75 letters a day. By Sep 44, from 300 to 400 letters were being issued every day, and by Oct all of the letters that had been received up to that time had been censored and delivered to the prisoners. Unfortunately, several shiploads of prisoners had been sent from the camp to Japan during the intervening months, and many of the men therefore did not receive their mail.

In Mar 44 the prisoners received packages from home. In most instances only one package was delivered to each prisoner. These packages had been allowed to lie around in the warehouse in Manila so long that only about 10% of them were in good condition, or their contents fit for use, when they were delivered.

Restrictions were lightened this year to permit the prisoners to send out one card every month, instead of every two months, as in the previous year. Limitations as to the number of words and the type of message that could be sent still persisted, however.

Several shipments were removed from Cabanatuan in 1942, one detail of approximately 400 technicians having been sent out almost immediately after their arrival in June 42, presumably to Japan. In Oct 42 about 1,000 men were sent to Japan, and the same number to Davao Prison Camp, in the southern part of the Islands, where they formed the nucleus of the Davao Prison Camp. Smaller details were also sent to Bataan, and to the airfields in and around Manila.

Several more large shipments of prisoners left the camp in 1943. Their destination was unknown, but from later reports it is believed that the larger details, after having been cleared through Bilibid Prison, were sent to the Japanese home islands, while the men in the smaller details were used on local projects, such as bridge building, road repairing, and salvage work. It is known that these smaller details were later sent to Bilibid, and from thence to Japan. As a result of these mass movements of prisoners from Cabanatuan, the population of the camp dropped by the end of 1943 to approximately 4,000.

Early in 1944 several large groups of prisoners, mostly skilled mechanics, technicians, and common laborers, were shipped out of the camp, where, is not known, although it is presumed that they too went to Japan. The men were selected by lot by the American administration, and examined by both American and Japanese doctors. In the event that any man was rejected by either of the two examining physicians he was replaced by a prisoner from a group of alternates also chosen by the American administrative staff. Part of each detail – about 10%, in fact – was also made up of prisoners who volunteered for the job.

By Sep 1944 the population of the camp had been reduced to approximately 3200, including the hospital patients. Then the first American planes appeared over Luzon, whereupon the Japanese camp authorities began to make hurried preparations to evacuate the camp. That same month a detail of almost 1,000 prisoners was sent to Manila, and from there to Japan. (Further details about this group will be related in the report on the Bilibid Prison Camp.) In October the entire camp was evacuated, except for 511 permanently disabled men, who remained at Cabanatuan until they were liberated by the United States Rangers in January 1945. The 1700 men removed from the camp were taken by truck to Bilibid Prison Camp, and later sent to Japan.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. Starvation, "nutritional and actual" was present among American Prisoners of War in the Philippines in 1942 and was the direct cause of the great majority of the excessively large number of deaths which occurred.

2. On changing from a balanced diet, at the beginning of the war, to a nutritionally deficient one, Beriberi was the first nutritional disease observed, occurring after 3 months departure from a balanced diet; Pellagra was observed after 9 months; Ariboflavinosis after 9 months and Scurvy was still questionable after 9 months and began to definitely appear in ten months. Xerophthalmia and nystalopia although difficult to diagnose microscopically was definitely present in ten months and very severe thereafter, increasing in intensity to complete blindness in many cases, cleared up by massive doses of Vitamin A and thiamin.

Severe and sharp "shooting" pains in the feet and legs developed during the winter months of 1942-43 and resulted in gangrene of the toes and many deaths. It was definitely cleared up by great doses of thiamin in test cases, administered intra-spinally and intra-muscularly.

4. The efficiency and fighting capacity of the Filipino-American troops in Bataan was markedly lowered by a very poor diet, affecting military capabilities, their morale, and fighting capacity.