

File: 999-2-14

Title: Diary

AGRR 88

SCREENED (NO PA.P)

BOX 136, ENTRY 1067, PHILIPPINE ARCHIVE COLLECTION, RECORD GROUP 407, NATIONAL ARCHIVES, COLLEGE PARK, MD

Origin: 1st Lt Mary Bernice Menzie

Dates: ---- Classification: None

Authenticity: Certified copy of original.

Source: Unknown

Extracted by BEE Date 23 Jul 45 Microfilmed R#88 Date \_\_\_\_\_

AG-KI Form 91 (20 July 1945)

DECLASSIFIED  
Authority: ND 883078

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TITLE DIARY \_\_\_\_\_

ORIGIN 1st LT MARY BERNICE MENZIE \_\_\_\_\_

DATES ----- \_\_\_\_\_

AUTHENTICITY CERTIFIED COPY OF ORIGINAL \_\_\_\_\_

SOURCE UNKNOWN \_\_\_\_\_

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EXTRACT FROM DIARY OF 1st LT. MARY  
BERNICE MENZIE

Late one afternoon, about 6:30 pm, a group of our soldiers, under heavy Jap guard, came up from the concentration camp at Bottomside, into the tunnel, bearing stretchers filled with our troopers who had 'fallen out' from exhaustion, starvation, sunstroke and diseases such as diarrhea & dysentery - These poor, emaciated, men looked so helpless with their white drawn, cadaverous faces & dark-ringed, feverously roving eyes, that it brought tears of pity to my own eyes as I look at them - After carefully lowering them to the floor of the hospital corridor, to await admittance by the doctor on duty, the soldiers who had carried them in, some squatting down on their heels, others standing, all leaning heavily against the wall for support, looked almost as weak, exhausted and completely 'all in' as the men under whose weight they had staggered under bringing in - Some of the men laying on the stretchers, were wholly or partially unconscious & were moaning, muttering or raving in their delirium. These men were admitted, one by one by the admitting Doctor, and the stretcher bearers stood by, waiting to be herded back to bottomside - one of our young medicos, Capt. Thompson had, a few days previous, been put to work in the Hosp't. Kitchen and mess hall, working of course with that dirty obnoxious looking and evil-smelling Jap who also worked there - Passing along the corridor, this young Capt. noticed those poor exhausted & starved-looking stretcher-bearers & stopped & spoke a few words to them asking them, how they felt - "We're so starved & dog tired, I don't believe we'll even make it back down to bottomside," they told him, and he was so filled with sorrow and sympathy for them that he said, impetuously, "I'll try to 'swipe' something from the kitchen for you to eat, just take it easy 'till I return," and going into the kitchen, he took a half-dozen or so cans of tomatoes, quickly opened them, put the contents into cup & brought them & gave them to those half starved men, who of course, ate them with the keenest pleasure & satisfaction, thinking the young Capt. with sincerity & from the depths of their souls. But one man, an Amer. Sgt. who had been chosen as an interpreter by the Japs, on their arrival because of his ability to read, write & speak the Jap. language, had seen the capt. take the food - This Sgt. Provost, was in the kitchen at the time, fixing up a dainty, tasty tray for the Jap Officers, for whom he was "Dog-Robbing" and had protested to the kind hearted officer for what he termed "wasting" the tomatoes on the stretcher-bearers, whereupon capt T. had promptly told him to "go to hell" & went ahead with his preparations - This Sgt. undoubtedly ran as fast as he could to the Jap officers & poured the story into their ears, for within 30 min - Jap guards came to the kitchen, seized the capt. forcefully piloted him outside the tunnel - We were all grieved beyond words to see this and felt sure that he would be severely punished - Nor were we wrong for a few days later, we heard, from several sources, what had happened to this poor tender-hearted officer - The Japs had first taken him out & tied his hands behind his back, tied his ankles tightly together & then tied him, in a standing position to a tree, facing the sun - and for three days he had remained this; bare-headed, the relentlessly blazing & burning sun pouring down into his eyes & all over him with a morsel of food or a drop of H2O - while at regular intervals he was

Sgt Provost

Extract From Diary of 1st Lt. Mary Bernice Menzie (c'd):

beaten across the back, head, legs, arms & shoulders with a heavy bamboo stick until his body was cut to ribbons & he was rendered completely unconscious - And after three days he was taken down to bottomside, put into a small boat & tied in - The boat was shoved off from shore and began drifting out the bay. When the little craft was a few hundred yds. out in the bay one of the Japs has raised his rifle & shot the poor, unfortunate officer in the back. Whether he died instantly or wounded & bleeding, lived on until he finally died, we never knew. But this cruel, heartless & brutal treatment filled us all with deep grief & sorrow. Not only had this young officer been loved for his gay happy disposition, but he was known by all for his tender heart - once, at the beginning of hostilities, the hospital mascot, a large persian cat, had been hid by a bomb fragment, injuring him internally & blinding him - This young Capt. had tenderly picked up the poor bleeding creature, & bourn him in his arms to the hosp. surgery where he, quickly anesthetized him so deeply that he "went out" peacefully, easily & with no pain - and just for those same God-given tender hearted impulses he had been brutally murdered by those Savages. who now swarmed over the little Island like so many ants. Provost, the trecherous soldier whom we all believed had turned the Capt. over to the Japs, paid richly for his cowardly comtable act, for later, just before we were moved from Corregidor, I saw him & spoke a few words to him & he had become mentally unbalanced or deranged - laughing & crying at the most inopportune moments, and generally acting like a near-idiot - During this period, several Filipino officers, I was told, had, after being horribly tortured by the Japs, committed suicide, and several of our own Amer. Corpsmen had attempted to do the same - The Old Engineers lateral it seemed, had been chosen & was being used as a torture chamber by our captors and many times, deep into the night, high, piercing screams, could be heard coming from that area. Sometimes the voices were definitely amer. while at other times it was easy to distinguish the high pitched feminine-like voices of the Filipinos, both from their strong accent and their lapses back into Tagalog or their own particular dialect of their native province - These awful soul-searing screams would be followed by weird monotonous moans that were repeated over & over a hundred times - "Oh! God, have mercy on me, I can't stand it any longer." would be heard in the most agonizing & pleading voices - Then long equally heart-breaking words would be prayed or chanted in Tagalog - finally dissolving themselves into desperate screams & crys that gradually merged into a single long-drawn-out horrible shriek - then suddenly an ominous silence - As I listened, I clinched my fists & prayed with trembling lips to our Father in Heaven, to have mercy on them & quickly free those poor tortured souls. As I lay, hour after hour listening to these awful sounds, panic began creeping through me - What was to become of us - How long were we to be cooped up in this dark underground cavern? Would we finally be killed by our captors? These and a hundred other questions tormented me, for now I knew the Japs to be in both a theoretical and practical position where they could logically upon any order they might conceive in their strange, savage brains, being carried out to the fullest extent, and we would dare not protest, for fear of not only bring quick & drastic punishment upon ourselves, but also upon our poor, brave half-starved soldiers who had fought so gallantly for us & who now were sweltering in that awful hell-hole at bottomside.

CERTIFIED TRUE EXTRACT:

RUTH H. ESSARY  
 Captain WAC

ESP  
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