

P.O.W/C.I. - A.L. Palmer

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Title: Diary of S/Sgt Alonzo L. Palmer

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ARCHIVES FILE NUMBER 999-2-125 ---

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ORIGIN S/Set Alonzo L. Palmer -----

DATES -----

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SOURCE Unknown -----

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PERSONAL DIARIES  
OF  
S/SGT ALONZO L. PALMER  
P.O. BOX 784  
KLAMATH FALLS, OREGON,  
USA

999-2-125

First - A War - Remember ?  
Second- Bataan and Surrender  
Third - Heroes of a Nation-  
Fourth- Dying of Starvation-  
Fifth- Red Cross & Cabanatuan  
Sixth - Days of -Rice and Quan-  
Seventh - Busy on the Farm  
Eighth - Passing by Bataan-  
Ninth - Destination; Japan  
Tenth - Arrival at Niigata  
Eleventh - N  
God-Damned

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- P R I S O N E R S -

Prisoners, just a number, not a name.  
Prisoners, and we are really not to blame.  
Prisoners of a power-drunk nation  
Prisoners for the war's duration.

Shifted around from Pilar to post  
Beaten and handled by our Oriental host,  
No good to our country, No good to them,  
Just an Army of tired fighting men.

Tired of living, tired of Death,  
Tired of the East-Exiled from the West  
Tired of writing-tired of thought;  
Tired of Remembering things foreget;

So God-Damned Tired.

DIARY

Left Cabanatuan Prison Camp- Sept, 18. Manila Bay- 18th, 19th, 20th.  
Sailed 21st of Sept.  
Taiwan, Formosa) Arrived 25th Sept.  
Moji- Japan arrived 4:30 6th Sept midnight 6th October.  
Osaka. 5:30 7th October. 78th On train arrived Niigata.

JAPAN

Not realizing the humanity and considerations with which we went being treated at Cabanatuan Prison Camp we left the frying pan for the fire on the morning of the 18th day of Sept. It was with anxious and fearful anticipation that I look forward to leaving .-----  
Regret, yes, because of the friends I was leaving and the contacts I had made and yet that anticipation of perhaps this will be better to go at least it will be somewhat new and different . We were awakened at 4:30 A.M. gathered our few meager personal articles and received a breakfast of Sugar, immediately after breakfast we drew our nation for non(our last meal) agnuch day rice as desired, 2 fritters and 2 or 3 fish cakes or rice. As fortified we set off for our own journey destination unknown. It was part of the small detail 300 & men which made up part of a 8 man detail supposedly for Japan. Rumor had it Kolu, French, Indo China, Manchuria and any and many for flung and varied Ports & the East.

We were transported by train from Cabanatuan to Manila and it was then I had my first glimpse of Manila-since Dec. 25th 1941, 20 months previous- When we made our hurried frantic evacuation to Batan. We marches through Manila, abreast, dressed in blue. Prisoner dungarees, and were loaded like so much cargo- in the Hold of a slate grey freighter, 300 of us in the hold I was in 300 of us jammed-packed into a space where normally 50 men would have been crowded. For 3 days we lay tied up to the docks. Hot sweltering 3 days with no washing or bathing facilities. 300 motley, beared, stinking, human bodies in the aft hold with 500 more men in the forward hold-same circumstances. Finally we sailed- early one morning, the 21st day 41 months to the day since my arrival in 1940. It was with more than one regret that I watched Corregidor and Cavite pass & slide by. Rumors and some seemed well founded from eye witnesses from Corregidor had it of the Yank submarine activities around the Islands- and news reports were full of sinking of Japanese shippings in the very waters we were to travel. Most of the men expect action anytime and none of us doubted the efficiency of Torpedoes or Bombs. We were all closed into the hold as we passed Corregidor and Mariveles.

The remaining few days until we docked at Taiwan we were spent in sweltering, sweating, stifelling, hot, breathless, promoting of rocking, mausing sweating bodies. No lights at night, no one allowed above. The damn blowers would'nt work.. Men were crowded too many close to sleep. The men were beginning to look like a crew from Sabatino. On Guant, shining sweating bodies, beared faces, red rimmed eyes with a light of fearfull anticipation, always lurking in the back ground of over conversation was

was the thought "will we get a torpedo tonight or a Bomb amidship tomorrow?" One thing our hosts did do they fed us-- fed us more and better than they had ever done in the past. All the rice one could reasonably expect to eat and fish soup alternated with beef (carabeo) and pork (wonder of wonders Pork) Almost the 1st pork we had tasted for two years and incidentally the last up to the time of writing this) (Does it seem that I'm laying too much stress on Food? Maybe, but until the time you have been denied these things and have been on starvation rations for a couple of years food was always rather a common-price. Non-descript taken for granted item. But now it is a subject of much interest and seems so ever predominant and uppermost in mind. And when I say two years of starvation Ration, I mean starvation- Fallagra, scurvy, Beri-beri and every other vitaminosis. in the Deficiencies list.)

To get back to the trip. We were fed but that is all that we can be said for the trip. Our Japanese guards slept in the hold with us but under much better conditions of course. The B- were seasick almost from the beginning - too damn bad they didn't all die. I made a very close friend on that trip. Lt. Hankins A U.C man from Beverley, Calif. a lot a fine chap. Hope to see more of him someday soon- left him at Oaki-from where he went to Tokio, working in the Prisoners Post Office- Hope he sends some mail) The trip was uneventful except for a couple of submarine scares, when the Japanese crews were put on alert and we were chased down into the smoky dim, sweltering recess of the hold to await. What? The men were, as soldiers are Jovial, no not Jovial but in different outwardly. Spent their time smoking sweating out "chow, playing, poker- shooting the bull, and telling jokes- what a bunch of swell, rotten grand, no good of bastards. 2 years of death, 2 years of Hell, 2 years of war and yet still optimistic still a sense of humor-if not honor. Transgressing again; I am afraid that this bunch will be productive of some of our nations biggest criminals-10years hence. Very few of them ever intend to work for a living again. And most of them have lost all sense of self-pride, honor and respect, either for themselves or any one else or property. What warped perspectives some have. Prisons hold no terror for these men now. A prison any self respecting stat-side prison would afford a delightful "Yosemite" (rest) for them after these last two years. Oh, yes, Mr. Diary- the trips. We landed at Formosa in the 4th day and were given the "wreak of being allowed to keep the hatch open while in dock. Never get to see much of the port. We were driven below deck as we entered the port. Just at dusk one evening) The port was damn well fortified and seemed to be, very busy.-- Surprisingly so to me.

After a day a night we sailed next morning-- Rough vilionet seas. Every one is sick. One day out or so we were visited by the ill fated luck of appendicitis one Joseph Quatero was attacked suddenly with appendix pains an operation was imperative to save life. The doctor, one Major Kieger an able cynical, vampier witted brilliant surgeon was the hero of our stark pitiful drama on battle with death for Joes life. Using life rafts and a soiled sheet as an operation table in the center of the ill lit foul air-contaminated hold, which off necessity had to do. and which also because of the crowded conditions forced the concession from our hosts to allow men to ascend to the deck where they lay prone around the hatch and peered with gould like fascination down on the operation below.



Red-nosed eyes peering out of pale un healthy parted bearded faces. The doctor, with Chief Dickson and Dyer, Medical Orderlies, in attendance sit too the grim task of performing an operation under the nose drips of unsanitary conditions, using what anaesthetics and medical equipments the doctor had brought with him. Using G.I. spoons as clamps to hold the incision apart they performed the miracle and took out his appendix just as they were ready to burst. Despite the laws of average Joe lived and grew well. After a few uneventful, hot sweltering days we landed at Miyi City ste, an often 6 or 7 hours of standing in columns of , we were headed a 100 men in the can and headed for our destination unknowing we were treated good on the trains given box lunches 3 times a day we changed trains 2 or 3 times. Osaka will parted company with our officers and Medics. After leaving the fertile green valleys of southern Japan, an the endless miles of rice paddies we came to the rice terraces on the low foothills, and then began our ascent into the rugged, barren mountains range s that divide the island of Honshoo and from the black coastal cliffs of the northern part of the islands on the Japan sea side. Fessed through countless tunnels and grey unpeinted bleak looking towers. Buildings hedded to greeted in an undefidently barren spot in a frenitl efforts of protection from the Silreixian winds and snows that hannaes the mountains.

Our tracks out along the edge of the cliff hundreds of feet above the churning growling sea were the rugged stone at the base were as teeth in the mouth of the angry sea. which each time the waves tossed back, left have with the snarl of the foamy lip wa ves of the sea, the track was covered for mile with snow sheds which also staved off the always impending danger of shale slides.

After 2 days of train traveling we arrived at our destination Matosso which was a suburb of Niigata. A wind swept sand-beaten port in northern Japan. We unloaded numb shivering creatures fresh out of the tropics to the frigid zone of northern Japan.

They loaded us on trucks forlinding us the vicinity of speech and took us to our new home our own little private hell. About 2 miles north east of N atagii behind a wooden wall of shame where avilition ceased to exist. They hindered us in a large frame Japanese style house barren in its mat unished nakedness.

Our welcoming party was a few skeleton like white men who identified themselves as Canadians arriving a month previous. One remark only was passed as we shuffled through the hallway of our dily lit new quarters at apt 10 m. One lad quant emancipated devolic of Humanity voughsed "Godly Christ" love white men for this hell. And so began our life Japan.

The next day we were able to learn something of our new Canadian companions. Captured in Hongkong Dec 25, 1941 arrived in Japan sick, weak and as usual undernourished drafted from prison Camp hospitals to fill the quota. They had arrived not quite a month in advance of our group in company with a few a hand ful of Dutches who scuttled their submarines and were taken off 2 inches. IndoChina. and eventually sent to Hongkong thence to Japan.

A mere handful of men who thought they unvility to speak English of necessity clung to gather for mutual protection and so effectively they had soon become the powers of the Camp.

The mess sergeant was an Engineer named Donders, the Sanitary Sgt, named Lips an eventually the most powerful a mixed blood named Ortmen an engénious , cruel , self seeking brilliant man of part Japanese blood, who by dint of himself with the Japanese interpreter and later by paying the officers and he Japanese against each other he ran the organization with the subtle like rule as he saw fit. Rather by playing chess with the officers own factions made any organized resistance imposibile So hereon lies a sketchy journal of successing days of dying hope and dying men.

A few days later.

Speech by Colonel Suesuikée change of POW and inspection of prisoners. We saw our first glimpse of our Canadian compenions on the day stopping down the fellow on my side after glancing back at the canadian in the near ranks, utter the exclamation "Christ, look at those poor devils". I hazarded a glance backwards. There in diabolic nakedness stood the shining bodies encanicipation , bony skeletons covered by thin pavhement like skin wincked across enflamed buttocks and stretched down like over protud, malntrious t stomachaches, which in compansion whith their honebylging legs look quotesquely like the diabolic deviled of a seenealist empressions of mans people.

Thanksgiving Day - Nov. 25th 1943.

Here we are, another thanksgiving away from all things that we once considered essential and mandatory for our thanks. But nevertheless we are thankful for the very fact that we are alive. Here I write this in truth I know that I must be thankful.- But am I. I know that I should be. But should I be thankful for this existence, this miserable, living-hell that is life for us Now, God (if there is a God- thou Can we doubt that & yet after these last two years how can we believe that there is) what great injustice or wrong have we done to reap a harvest such as this.

A cold, barren, bleak, grey, wind harassed port of Northern Japan: Niigata Rain swept and snow washed sands giving away to colder, bleaker, greyer to mes & twisted, gnarled pines poised like the grotesque dances of the Oriental land. Tall chammies, bleak and unfoundly and cold and sustain in the referting rigidity. Slate-grey, roofs blending into the damp dismal blanket of fog that covers all like a shroud of death, clinging with a thousand clam fingers, resisting the cold green yellow, rays of the bleak winter suns. And here shrouded like the funereal crept that is shrouded by the fog shielded from none of the elements in a half finished barn of a building devoid of my heat huddled together, in doses proximately than we would humanly house our own livestock, are gathered an ever diminishing contingent of cosmopolitan war prisoners. Existing on nerve hope and faith- faith in God, Country and the foolish, dazed, believe that it isn't true. God No, It can't be real it can't be real, Christ o this is the 20th Century- Isn't it. People don't do this to me another. They are human are they not? Do they expect any of us to live thru this. Can they dare let us all die? By all that is right, By all that we have been taught as being right God God, is there no justice?

Thanksgiving- look forward to a dinner of rice, not all you want just enough to keep you going. 2 spoonfull of seaweed and 2 spoonful of beancu rry, Good? Yes, an a definitaion improvement over our bulk of favor for the last few months on at least since our arrival in Japan.

Can they dare let us live?

Quartered here in cold damp quarters improperly clothed, improperly fed, improperly hell, that is not the word- it is worse than that men lying on straw wracked with fever nancipated bodies lying in parchment skims, wracked with blood producing coughs, under nourished, bony skeletons struggling to mount and wooden bed-pan. Cold a damnable penetrating, clinging damp cold that it is impossible to escape from. Dying-Hell yes in 3 months since the first contingent arrive 21 have gone, lucky? or unlucky?

The men are called out to work yes work, that is what we are here for work, work, work, 3 firms are employing the boys now we are split into 3 groups- one from the coal yards "Rin Ko" one for the foundary "Shintetsu" One for the docks "Marutsu" the men are payed 10 sen a day for privates 15 sen for non -Coms. Actually we are making 1.000 Yen per day. the congenial hosts are watching out for our welfare by depositions 90 & 85 per cent respectively Security? Rot- Robbery.

Diary (continued )

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Dec. 1, 1943

Mr. Diary, - I flatter you, you few sheets of cheap Japanese tissue with these spasmodic entries, incoherents, hysterical, spontaneous, trite. I know damn well those entries are dangerously foolish. Some peoples may not like. But as Renee would say "bugger All".

Sometime after 10 now, just finished ration figures must take them down to galley and turn in shortly. Sitting in overcoats, yes, inside no damn heat any where a hell of a storm blowing out- yes and in. Hailed a few minutes ago- broke a number of these tissue thin windows that wall the building- some of the boys will get a little wetter - Repair the old broken ones, great hosts- Christ, with this exposure it is no wonder the boys are Dying off so fast one yesterday and one day before same old story; "Double Pneumonia" Malnutrition, lack of resistance. The "Peoples Friend" Just Stuck his spine, infantile head in starting on his tours of terror favorite sport of his step into the room about 10-11-12 or 1 O'clock wake every one up by turning on the lights and Jabbering J apanese pick a couple unfortunate souls in each room and slapping hell out of them while they stand dumb, and shivering not knowing. why- complain? who too? There is no court of Appeals here.

Rumors are Damn Good. Inclined to believe them; "Germany fell 23rd Nov. "Russia has Declared War on Japan." "Bombing of Tokio & other Major cities. Goodnight & wish I were home, Don't you know it, Mr. Diary?

Dec. 2, 1943 -

Time 0735 - Early morning, "HAPPY BIRTHDAY" & "Uido hope this is a Happy Birthday Miss Wicmith- You are a little closer- this year, dear, although you may not know it. not only closer by miles but by time. It has been almost two years since the beginning of this "lash-up" & over two years since I last heard from you. Two years ago today, Dear you were 21 and in love with me. Today, dear young lady you are 23 and I hope still in love with me. I have 'nt forgotten the ankle bracelets- Hope to be able to make up there Birthdays and Christmas that may never be recaptured. Wonder if you have ever received any of the messages I have tried to sen? Some from Manila and some from Bataan, and many from the time I have been a guest of this Emperor.

Two more men died this mornigg- and the end so damn near. it seems so damn pityfull the end almost here these men living thru 2 years of hell to lose the game now. I can't and wcn't lose my place in this "lash up" now. We have so many things to do, so damn many hours to make up. I can't help but wonder if you are still of the same mind, I can't help but believe that you will be, but can understand if you are not it is redily to much to xpect almost 4 years of your young life, my dear, staked on the very brief 4 months, brief meetie, happy 4 months. But not a very true insient to my character. And now I have chooved. 2 years of this hell, Dear, and one can't help but change, for the better- I hope. This business of living is so darn serious, young lady. I on lesieged by doubts and misgiving about the future what ever to stay in the Air Corps or not. We have a small nest-egg to begin on. Oh, hell, we'll talk this over some of these days- this damn war can't go on for ever. Ot can it? Anyway I hope you are Happy-today. I also hope that you and the floks have become better acquainted and that you have been a consolation to mother- as I know you have. Still have your snapshot- Have it in front of me now.- Damn it is the only picture I have left of you now. The first Bomb the first day of the War took all the lovely-girl photos I had of you- except these two small snaps & the mental picture I always carry of you;

Diary (continued)

Blue Pajamas, Blue Dressing Gown, Cocky little hat, Streaming hair, Running hand in hand with me- catching the Bus the last time; Remember.? Kinda of like looking through a kaleid escape of time- Pleasant memories. My ideas of a good time have changed somewhat, my love, I would enjoy the utopia of sitting by the fire eating Fudge-toasting marshmallows and etc. Sounds somewhat different than the All you used to know. does it not. Find most of our thoughts tendings toward food after starving for two years, You know, dear, it has been 2 years since I have set down to a good meal and almost two years on almost total rice diet. That is one item that I wouldn't mind if you can't cook. This is a letter that you may never read, dear, and again you may, someday if ever thing work out that way- we'll be sitting around the fireplace- I insist on a fire place and I'll break this out and we'll heat it. OK? OK? Good day for a short while, my love. X 10:00 PM. Hello again, My loved one, Hope this has been a happy day for you. Ginger, My thoughts have been much with you all day, my little one, You are my shining star. Today, your day, the day that God sent you here in this world for me today, my love, Red Cross food and Supplies were brought into Camp, expect distribution sometime around Christmas, This, Dear, means, in all, probably the same thing as last time lives saved and it will save lives, food is what these men need. Food and more food and medicine. God, My Dear, why must I talk of food, Death and etc, to you.

Sweetheart, I should be talking to you of Moonlight and Stars. Soft music and tribings. But these, I believe are needless, you know how much I miss you, How much I think of you and Dream of our future. Is this foolish or not? Me writing a letter that has not ghost of a chance of being believed unless I deliver it personally writing 8000 miles away across a war torn world. Held Prisoners of an enemy nation - no chance of communications - Damn lucky to live if they ready some of these entries in here.

Well, dear, Goodnight and Goodbys for a couple of more days- All my love and best wishes.

PS. One of the boys brought 5 boxes of tooth powder to use on his Rice. Hungry? I guess.

Dec 5, 1943

On being 29, Put off writing yesterday because today is the 4th at home and I know the folks are thinking of me today and wishing I were home celebrating my Birthday anniversary- Oh, but no more than I. Spent the day as orderly Sgt. Doing the menial, thankless Jobs. Around camp 3 men died - 2 today and one last night- Some of the Red Cross Med. Supplies were released- apt soon enough for the two boys who died of Pneumonia last night.

Looking over the past twenty three years things "she don't lok so good". I have not made much of a success of life so far from the material and social scale it has been a damnable failure. Realize I should have knuckled down to some serious studying. But not to late, I have gained a wealth of experiences mostly unpleasant ones. Have lived or rather existed under the most adverse conditions that any American's have ever lived under believe that I have seen human nature at its worse. I have seen men and been a part of them they that have faced death and some of them being outstared, Seen men lying in a crimson rug of blood with co agulated pillows of their lipes fluid cushioning their bomb and bullet torn bodies. Seen men stupified, dazed, hypnotized by their first sight at violent death/ And 6 months later the same men. Dumping their buddies naked into a rain-filled, shallow grave. 4 months of war and then surrender had wrought other changes in these men- Drastic changes. Quant, weak, human skeletons many

Diary (continued)

yellow vouniced skinned wrocks, struggling with a burden of a starved corpse  
an american soldier resembling nothing a mishappend parchment covered bag of  
bones white- blue in color. Burial Details at Camp O'Donnell at 80 to a hundred  
men dying a day- Dying so damn fast shallow trenches could not be dug fast  
enough to bury them no like supply of graves could not be met. Because there were  
not enough well men to dig them. Actually it was not uncommon to have one of  
themen on a burial or grave digging details die while struggling to bury one of  
his fellow soldiers. Row after row of naked, blue white bodies lying exposed to  
the tropical sun and rain lying in rigid formation awaiting what to be thrown  
or rather stuffed with 10 20 or 50 other bodies into a shallow, mudd, grave, and  
unmarked sticking, unkept, unfered for hole. Like so much waste.

Prisoners whose onle crime was fighting for their country and losing e  
their own little battle; Entean. Iema this tangents- this wild, morose, wondering  
thoughts why mast I give vent to these horrors here, why can't I sit down and  
write some simple little thoughts of the day or rather deal in daily happenings  
and not thoughts are so damn trescherous, I seem to always have mine freshly  
dipped into a vat of melancholy and they usually come out blue.

On Bieng 29 damn it. I am no more mature than I was at 19 or am I?  
Almost midnight mist quit and got to bed- Goodnight- wish I were home. Mother  
Love.

December 6th 1943

Another day and another death think of bell just rang <sup>Oh</sup> for a life  
wherit shall no longer be necessary to karry or to Bango. When I sit and  
enjoy an evening with out being bothered by these dull harwing pains of hung-  
er Or these constant headaches my eyes are failing hard to read anything,  
hard to concentrate. Doctors say it is strictly a vitamine Deficiency if  
I get back to a normal diet the "peepers" should come back to normal, I Hope".  
Some more of my fouled up poetry coming out I can feel it.

Days of hunger, cold and fears  
Hours of worry, hope and tears  
Days and hours of dreary duration  
Approaching death by slow starvation,  
Plagued by thoughts of things to eat  
Cakes and puddings, eggs and meat.  
Marking time by mental masturbation  
Enjoying the hieghts of gluttonish  
And in truth many hours have been  
Sent in dreaming of just such things  
Candy bars, frozen confections and all the  
Delightfully good things one has eaten in the past.

What a wonderful place in my country, the United States, what a wealth of  
freedom and riches do we enjoy even the poorest famly enjoys so very much  
more than do the peoples of this God igncring Raped Islands of Japan.

His town of Nigata is such a forlorn, dirty, deeply of a medical. Pretty  
foggy, lack of sleep almost 1100 sleepy yawn yawn, must give up soon, So  
silent prayers and goodnight.

Jan. 9th 1944.-

Have been ignoring you r. Diary, and so damn many things have happened.  
Moved here to this new camp on the 24th of Decmber. Rather a surprised move  
and disappointing to most of the men inspection after inspection finally  
terminated with inspection by a Japanese Major. The day before Christmas a

Diary (continued)

miserably cold, rainy day and moving to and unfinished corral and barn arrangement. The fence around the camp seemed to be of the utmost concern to them altho all of the buildings seemed to be only partially finished. Cold and no place to get warm.

Jan 10th 1944-

Men are dropping 10 to 20 a day one passing out from hunger and weakness. The weather is terrible, snow, sleet and wind. Chilling one to the bone and absolutely no reprieve from the cold, not even a warmth anywhere. Even the nights are miserable with only five thin blankets. Woke up the other morning with a couple inches of snow at the head of my blankets.

On January 1st. picture this a particularly bad night, wind blowing, hail, and sleet, battering in fierce intensity against the long veniling flimsy headchees. Barber a very close friend and Funkie, and sleet up in the C.M. office talking and hoping that the new Year would be better and would see the end of the war soon. Removing cover home and pst and happier New Years, I grew sleepy and went for bed about 1:00 A.M. Drowsed off and woke up when Barber came to hid at approximately 1:30. We lay there battling the breeze for about ten minutes when a ear sending vresh, crackling and popping noise set us up wide awake in bed. My first thought was fire but no it was one of the barracks caved in. Men were trapped the building was flat the heavy tiled roof was sitting in the ground. Everything was choose men were puring out of the other, lests in millings around desorganised and trying to help. The men who were trapped quited down and were silently awaiting relieved. We went to work, impossible to saw them out. We tore the roof off and by sheer number is lifted sections of roof and because. I packed 3 dead men to the hospital, crushed jelly like masses of human flesh and got 3 other injured men out. I feel it was a job well done, Berl, and Kl were both thanked by the officers for our work. Only wished to God it had been a job we had never had to do. The final score was 8 men dead and about 8 serously fractured. The wrahed resulted in a number of investigations by the Japanese military such has prompted an other impending move. We are supposedly scheduled to move back over to the old camp pending the rebuilding of this camp.

Jan 12, 1944.

Excitement yesterday Tokscon, One of the boys, a petty thief who was caught stealing for the second time day, before yesterday a beater by the boys in his barracks decided the hell with it death would be easier and quickay by being killed out night instead of starving to death soon. While tied up in front of the guard house he freed himself and took off. They noticed he was shortly after and took off on this trail which was clearly marked through the nights of snow. He was found about 7 miles from here hidden in a barn. They voughed him up some and brought him in. "He has not been fed since, unhr has it he is scheduled to go to Tokio for trial and the guards intimate; evnuation. What the hell no sympathy a thief and life is cheap too cheap good men dying to be bothered with a thief. Hard, possibly I am, possibly not, I wonder.. "My darling Mother and Clarence if in me you would recognize the same boy who left you 4 years ago? I sincerely hope I haven't changed for the worse. May God give me strength and courage to returned home a better man than I other wise would have been/ Damn this expression/ Mati, Mati chesi kaha. Japanese expression coined by my god frined Rance. In a little while and little box. A receiptal for your

Diary (continued)

charredashes after cremation. Oh, yes, My dears I have forgotten to mention one of the most imprtant events of this tour. I received 11 letters, my most cherished possessions. Can't but say I am most sincerely thankful, Mother and Jim are well apparently happy and Clarence, My Darling, is waiting and still to love me o Harvey. Oh, but the perplexing questions I am comforted with mostly how to make a comfortable living for her and of happy one's. because first and foremost happiness covers a multitude of problems.

Jan 12th 1944.-

Approximately 11:30 Lt. Boone and Osmier and I sitting in the office, charcoal out. For off to bed, read one two letters first.

Jan 22, 1944.-

Missed some more days- Same more imprtant days. We moved again the 18th we returned to this original temporary camp. Quite a lot better, this time, a much nicer building still no hear in the the rooms. Received Red Cross parcels on the 11th of the month the crowd went literly wild - soooooooo very damn happy excited children- ot less- Have you never seen a hungry man. By hungry I mean over a p period of 2 years? These men were hunger and suddenly given food. Scounded like action all night, they were trading chev.

God, to be here, A pleasant evening last night. The Red Cross has sent us a few Records and an a tinny sounding phonograph. But some beautiful new pieces at least they are new to me. One, my favorite "every night about this time".

an 25, 1944.-

My darling, wonder if you miss me tonight as much as I miss you? Rather silly this writing to someone who will probably never read it. But I like to write or better yet talk to someone I love; you, Wonder, my Dear, just what the future holds for us. If I make it home, which is by no means a certainty, a fact it some times appears to be very doubtful. But I hope to make it Dear, and then what? will you still want me? Remember I have changed, How much? You will have to be the Judge of that. What? Marriage? Home? Children, Oh, od, How I hope to be the kind of husband you want. A better man than I otherwise would have been. I'll try. And I think there shall be a definite improvement I think that I have learned to appreciate the fact of life. The art of living is to often lost in the haste of dying. One must pause in this loosing race with death, pause and appreciate the shining sun, the budding rose, Stop and live, stop and breath- the perfume of growing things, the odor of a day in the woods, the bubbling, quelling, shimmering creek, Stop, Watashi, and say you are free. Free to pick up a stove and idly toss it away. Free to roll in the grass, run damn it! Just to be free from the stench of dying men, free from confining walls. Free from all this dirty clothes, sick men, coal just, Hunger, Cold, Orders, silly damn petty orders that must be obeyed. Free from the Japanese and all the stupid damn things connected with them.

What a Dash up, Dear, Everything safu, Rather imagine these spontaneous, writings to be more or less inchoerent. Big inspection due soon.

"If, How I miss you, every night about this time,"  
Christ, the mental agony one willfully subjects himself to when listening to that piece, but I love it. Like to imagine you think of me when you heart it. Do you.?

So this is War-



Diary (continued)

## So This Is War-

So this is war, So men must die, What for, We know not why, Blood and shit, sand and grit. Rice and Stew, Pneumonia too.

Jan. 31st.

Sitting in the dispensary tonight watching friend Dickson CPO pharmacist, Navy, and Drower, nice bhap Japan ne Fgroundland, administer to the needs of the men the best they can on the dirth of equipment and medicine that needs here. Its pitiful watching the men come in thin, amanicpatic bodies come staggering, and limping in looking for help and no help to be given. A box of aspirin a bottle of Japanese Beri-beri medicine, Good medicine for starvation, blood poison, mal-nutrition, Frost bite, frozen feet, and diarrhea and dysentery. Oh, yes, greet. How much longer?

Feb. 10, 1944

Just carried our 3rd time loser fitman, a petty thief, in from the Acoo, he died on the way in poor devil, days of exposure and maltreatment, killed him. The 7th death since the camp started. At this rate Meti, Mabel, Chesl Hoko for all men with in the next 2 years.

Rather home sick tonight 1000 Just a little after supper pcked Titman to the guard house until he will be taken to the Crematory and shine. Another, and another, another's so on- on- and pa. Gray is Elegy, "Paths of Glory lead.

February 11, 1944

A boy, too young for this Mason, his name is "cracking-up" Slowly but surely, loosing this prospective, believe he is worrying about home too much apparently an unhappy home life, of poor family. He does such things as bumping his head against Opal cans too make the time pass on the job. "Time will not pass" he says, "Things keeps building up, up and up, and his freit belly tenses and quivers expectantly and war faster as he speaks as his voice raises on ever syllable. Suddenly he slumps covers his thin, tired, face with his hands and give way to spasmodic, shuddering and unteshed tears. Soon he raises his tear brined eyes. Oh, Christ, those eyes so young, so old, so all seeing and so fling eyes that stare wildly like a young, trapped wolf. Full of pains and insane fear, fear, of what? Palmer you are not making a fool of me, are you? "Why are you talking to me, why are you waisting

time with me? I am no good, "I'm not afraid of work, I work hard, but no, no. not the cool yard, you are there all alone around and around, the track and all along alone, yes all alone", this voice died out, then as if forcing himself back to verlity he tried to continue, tears rolling unheeled down his gaunt, youthful cheeks after a few false starts; I'm getting old. 20 years old last week my birthday was last month. yes, yes, January. "id'nt think I'd live to be 20, huh, Guess, I'd be better off, if I didn't. After a few more minutes of these wild rambel he quited down. I talked to him of othe comma place things offered him a job inside to keep him busy and gradually, he came back to normal? Tomorrow, he starts to work for Lipse I hope he will snap out of it when he gets his mind on othe things hope so. will report later,

March 10, 1944-

Long this neglects diary; one month. Same old grind- got another attacked of Malaria fermenting in Influenza was confined to hospital, for a few days lost a about 20 lbs gaining it back now. feel fair except for these continual headaches. Red Cross supplies came in yesterday- parcel food and clothing have had a change of Camp Commandents, things have definitely improve had a Major General inspection

DIARY (Continued)

about 3 days ago and since we have had a definite increase in Rations if only this may continue I am sure that our death rate shall be cut down and I know that all ready the morale has improved a 100 %.

The guards have definitely changed their attitude, almost all of them are friendly and now my Japanese has progressed to where I can converse with them to a certain extent. 3 days ago one of them more or less as a joke threw Barber at I in the guard house for smoking. He has long with the others shown he is sorry for it. It really did us good in a way I was becoming a little too black and too trusting it thought home the fact that I am still a prisoner. Thinking of Home, Mother, and all the things that home means too much lately, it must definitely be spring for I find Clancy on my mind constantly. Therewith has turned warmer and what a blessing it is like a shot in the arm to some of these men God's how some of them have deteriorated. The dead row number 84 and everyday or 3 another. Please, please let this damn War end soon and let us return home.

I sometimes wonder how great a change if any has been wrought over me since this lash up began. I also wonder how long a man can maintain his poise in a lash up like this. I sometimes feel in fact I know I have slipped quite a few days mentally lazy.

Well, guess I'll end this book, begin tomorrow on another hope it begins a new act to this gruesome tale. And hope it may close shortly with the trip. Home.

Diary (continued)

March 16, 1944-

Everything much the same, Rumor has it we shall move soon. All awaiting anxiously for Red Cross to be released. Feel rugged the last two days, terrible headaches, Malaria I guess. Am reading a damn fine book must have it as my own someday; "The Art of thinking" By Earnest Dimmet. Been practicing drawing Portraits "last few days. "Just mention the only thing I am able to do here, besides read and draw that I enjoy; that is the conversations that I share with George Francis. A poet of no small talent a young marine; 25, who aspires to a literary, career, and whom I personally believed would succeed. Admirable intelligence and a wonderful store of knowledge, very well read.

He is the only one that shares the same ideas as myself. The part of the day that I look forward to the most is the evenings after thinking that is practically the only time I may call my own. It is then that George and I retreat to that little chesi Mayo usually with a book and a notebook and Pencil read while and talk awhile, draw awhile. It is through these conversations that I am again mentally walking on a higher Plain a Wonderful escape from the continually dare commonness that one must contend with day after day. The one danger is that I so much rather loose my self in that rel that I am prone to neglect the material details that for my own protection and welfare I must necessarily cope with and meet intelligently on their level.

Have firmly madeup my mind that henceforth I shall endeavour to learn a superior life. Spiritually, mentally and physically. I will henceforth not inter into dirty story telling of personal experiences, not hurt others by careless, or intentional conversation. Keep my own council and not tend to advise. I want to overcome this mental and physical inertness that has stalemated me all winter. I hope to think before I speak. By so doing I think I shall only about 10% of my now normal days conversation. Must pursue what worth while books that are here and attempt a mental reawakening. Shall be indifferent to the small petty grievences and prejudices that charge the Life here.

I realize how infinitesimal I am. What a really small part I play in the scheme of things. An yet my own ego calls out for recognition. But how can I best achieve recognition and in what I must first prepare myself. Qualifications almost Nil Knowledge, both Asthetic and Practicability very limited. Talented Little talent for drawing, even less for writing and a very little dramatic ability. Poor Concentration facilities and a "Gobie" memory, both of the latter may be corrected by training and from this day on the training starts.

I do not necessarily wish to be famous or to be looked at queerly as a crank, but I do wish to live a morally clean life. To do so I must first never recall any of my last 6 years dressings from the chalk line. I believe the first step to pure living is pure thought those who are visited by phantasms of past evil deeds or former misconducts cannot possibly act in the presents without the shadow of the past being mirrored in their ever action. unless they are able to profit by these images an govern themselves accordingly. But how many of us are able to profit by these errors. How easy it is for me to say "When This is over I'll Live a different Life, A Good Life." It is easy, because here in this prison camp all the temptations that have drawn are from the straight line, The right way. Are not there to contend with mainly women and Liguor. But the first step toward thwarting and changing faults is the recognitions of the faults. I realize my own wapt ness only to will, and here by resolve to correct them by continually building up the thought of discontinuance and abstainence. an by continually fortification of these thoughts I hope and know that I shall have armed myself, with enough will power and purpose of mind to deny these weaknesses expressions I have definitely made up my mind that the only way of life is to live the

Diary (continued)

righteous way. Not to proffer myself as a preacher, missionary of a saint but to be met by conscience and know that I have done what in my own mind know is right not swayed by opinions others, or not offering arguments to myself trying to compromise my conscience by apologies of action. But to live, fairly and clean, not ever pushing another sould down. Doing this I know that undoubtedly I shall incur many enemies and reap a lot of criticism. But if I may at the end of each day be able to transmit to the supreme intelligence, honestly, unbiased by self-reproach the thought that I honestly put forth my efforts to follow these policies I shall honestly believe that my day had been well lived. Enough for tonight's thought book.

March 26, 1944-

Sunday very disappointed tonight, home, sick and lonely time, 11:00 on later I believe not feeling well, received Red Cross parcels this week - Thank God so much. Mother and home so much in mind all day, Oh, for some day soon to be home and all. The dream of someday is the only incentive to keep up the pretense and to keep on trying to survive Good Night- to you. Oh, too.

April 18, 1944

Here in the New old camp, have accomplished and everything running fairly smooth some days as usually crowded with activity other days not. Thinking of you, Clarice, very, very, much. Most of my days are spent recalling the good times we had 4 years ago this month. Darling, it doesn't seem possible that 4 years have passed since the happy days with you. Four years of apprehension I of those a fight for survival, 2 years of Living hell, and do mean all, 2 years fraught with all the chill of death and the brutality of the ancients. But unless I awake from this horrible nightmare I guess it is true too damn, true.

But Oh, my darling, I must live I must live to try and repay you for these years of unselfish love that you have (foolishly?) expended on me and the memory of me. I must live to undo some of the things that were done in and for short months of Heaven. I must live to acquaint you with the other letter side of my nature the pure and as I like to think of as the real side of my nature. I want you. Dear to know me as I can you know the bones, sexual faults, that large the material and physical faults but you do not know me spiritual makeup. There is a "Aphorism score going on 3 cases 1 yesterday and 2 today. Keep our fingers crossed Darling. There are foolish letters. Don't you think? But, my dear, if I don't return I want you too know that most of my days were spent in thoughts of you and home. Less many days of writing not because there is nothing to write because I either lack the opportunity or Cl was at nine - they just went out. Revielle at 6:00 weather, unlike Poly at this time is still cold, most of the time, snow storm for 2 or 3 days duration ended yesterday evening. old sharp wind contesting the sun's warmth today.

Had church services for yhr days for the first time since our arrival in Japan a Catholic (Japanese) priest present, soles, candles, flowers, and all the trimming quite nice and fully appreciated by all the religious ones especially the Catholics clam sure. Dad, at understand it myself but am grateful for the sake of those that did.

Has been an immense improvement in our treatment in the last 4 months. The War must be entering its last 1/2 year stage I believed. Oh, God my Lear, how much I would give to hear your voice to feel the soft gentle touch of your hands to again feel the pulsating throb of your heart as you allowed me to cleap you close in a gentle embrace. They say "In the Spring a young man fancy lightly trains.

DIARY (continued)

to what the women have been thinking of all winter". But my little One, I find myself in complete accordance with the women because I have been thinking of my love for you winter, spring, summer and fall, even since our separation, if possible, move so since the war. "Oh how I miss you Every Day, All The Time". Good night, Love- your Al.

Sunday 23rd.

Rather- Tired and old. Going to bed soon, just finished fingering pointing most fingertip everyone in camp. Feel rather blue miss you so damn much, little One. 4 years and your still my "Ingratiant Obsession", Love you Dear hope you feel the same as your letters off a year ago said you felt Eve y Sunday I find my self making a companions of a Sunday at home on with you as with a Sunday here --- Oh God, I wish I were with you. Only about a week away but it looks like I'll be another 2 years getting there and 6 years is a long time to wait. The best years of your life, Darling, But I'll do my best and sincere to make it up to you in the future.

Got to go to bed, Ginger, Hope I dress of you.

Love Al.

Monday 24th 1944.

A few lines in drowsiness a splitting head ache feel live hell. Three things I want to do in life. When I return Harry C. No. 2 / Build a home Go to College. As they say here "Wakadamasing". (Now?) I do not know)

All 3 are full time Jobs and will take more money then I have earning now. /But together Dear we should be able to work out a happy full life? What say? OK?

May 4, Received 3 letters from Mother last night Just 11 months and a year old. Sooooooo very glad today. Wonder why I havent heard from some of my friends and Claryce this time.

May 14, Sunday and Mothers Day- Every day here is given to a few thoughts of Home and Mother Oh, how very much I pray that everything is happened contentment at home.

June 4th- Another month closer Been a long month in some respects and all too short in others. Luckily received 15 letters Oh, Joy: 6 from Claryce 6 from Mother and one (and this) was a surprise) one from V Lma Osgood Smith's Sister an almost mor or less attached to the Smith family, Sooo damn glad to hear that they are all well and all/ that Elton is managing to stay out of the draft. Cl sincerely hope that he may stay free of this lash up" and that the war ends befor he may be called.

Very happy that my family has accepted the -girl friend as their own and glad that she likes them. Evenings here are spent in pleasant reminiscence of happier days of the past and the future. Unimportant phase while this life continued on in its present scope on rather the worsted kaildescape.

Received Red Cross packages 2 to five man. Quite the best and most beneficial of all things, we received also- Thank God, Medical Supplies, The death rate is minimal now a month since the last death. Things are much better now. But still a weary, barren executive. Rice and stewaed being the char entire on the Bill of fare.

July 6th- July the 4th has again come and gone, as yet here we are sitting. How many more independence plays are to be spent here without independence or without faces?

Continued-

on without freedom only kind. There have only been two deaths since the last time I wrote, which is some difference than last winter. We had a good meal the evening of the 4th; to eat. Rice, white, brown meat, gavy fried, carrots, sweetened beans and fried cabbage and meat. The fare of the best dinner we ever had in Japan. Strictly garbage at home but we're not at home.

Spent the 4th doing errands of work, then waiting in the little black hook. Personal packages about a 140 total came in on the 3rd sorry to say they are all American Mon, Canadian. Haven't been release yet don't know whether I have one or not. Only wishersey men could receive one, so many will be disappointed.

Been feeling bad the last couple of days unable to eat, vomiting, Head aches etc; Damn this life. Now to put in writing in direct contact to some of my other needs I don't mean for this to hurt you. Clarence, because that is one thing I am most want to do; hurt you. This only goes to prove the indecision and inconsistencies of thought that plagued me.

"I am afraid of marriage. I don't want to get married and yet I do. I want to go on and educate and improve my self to equip myself to be better able to line at a higher level an incoming bracket. I'm afraid of acceptance the responsibility of another's life. To feed, clothe and administrate to her ever need. I am not equiped to earn enough money to properly do so. I want to shoot high for a star I don't want any responsibilities, I want to be able to travel to go where I want to go and travel where and who and how I wish. Am also afraid that perhaps we don't know each other well enough. That perhaps after the novelty of having one another has worn away the monotony of our car lifes will result in incompatibility. There also is the danger of conception in the first phases of passionate love that forms an relentless chain of responsibilities that must be met. And God, only knows what changes have been wrought in my makeup; possible now no one could live with me.

Nothing to do but wait and see.

July 8, 1944 - Happy day received parcels from home in a delayed, depleted state of ruin. Received 6 handkerchief, 2 packs of razor blades, 1 loose 1 shirt, polo-1pk. of prunes  $\frac{1}{2}$  pack of coffee 1pk. of life savers 1 pk. of Lima beans soup 2 pencils.

1 toothbrush 1 pk. of toothpowder, 1 wash rag, 2 bars of soap and that is it. No vitamins pills, I wonder how many struffed the packages before I got it? I was wrapped up in a paper with the slapping ticket torn.

Clarence, August 13, 1944 Sunday. I find it much easier to write these things down when I address them to you who are the one of love and understanding and I do so want you to understand me. Know my mental makeup as well as my physical.

Have things inside in a pentup pattern of Topsy turvy ideas. I must cleanse this outlet and release all these turbulent thought-out for release before they completely dominate my even waking action and thought. I find my vocabulary lying dormant so long, is now pushed so far into the back ground that I may no longer call it forth to ~~speak~~ serve my life.

Consequently many things so gret in their embroic stage of thought are now nothing more or less than tonight when I try to get them down in this almost illegible scrawl. And yet while these thoughts are tossing around like a fear in a glass box concerning from side to side almost within grasp yet strangely elusive, they seem wealth while putting down but worth while or not I must. They seem profound and clear white I am thinking that I am thinking of them. but do I think or do I just think that I think I rather believe most of my past life has been spent in a fools-paradise of thinking I think while I have been stumbling along in a perpetual state of bewilderment. My life frightens me yet the future attracted me as the hidden my stories of an unexplored cave. And in truth ones future may well be likened to a yawning black unknown cavern. We and being forced to enter this yawning mouth either voucentarrially

DIARY (Continued)

nucleatingly and reluctantly. Armed only with our personal allotment of courage, hope and other personal traits. Fortified with the light of intelligence as our only illumination against the secret veil of darkness which ablates the uncertain path to the grave. As we march, stagger or stumble on through this lateral of life our torch such, necessarily must, become stronger being changed with knowledge and gleaned from past experiences of our own and others.

I stare into this void and even as I stare I am slowly but surely moving forward as I am pushed ahead it is no longer darkness that it seems to be but it is the glaring reality of the present as each unknown tomorrow unfolds itself into this day then fades into the past we are richer by the experience and our light of knowledge becomes brighter, enabling us to set our feet a little firmer on the path of the future. The lateral of the care are many and varied but all lead eventually to the same goal, death on this rock strewn path I have slipped, stumbled and quite often plunged from the straight march to the grave and wandered off into a blind lateral only to have to return. And twice I have fallen down the pit that ends in the grave only to climb out of the break chasm of death just in time. But why, Darling, do I shrink from death we have been told of the Utopian Paradise beyond this life yet I have seen men who have lived lives empty of a saint who still fear death, why? The world as I see it today is and shall always be at a crisis. Like a cauldron of boiling water. Alive the slung gling, surging waters of life a breaks forth and swells and swells till it finally breaks and is consumed into the twisting struggling currents of life. Finally as the fire of life burns higher the mass bubble forth into the end in parody to the bubble of the leaders. That the fire must be put out on cold water added as the pot removed. So is life; Am I going to be content or not I must. I may make my initial bubble but, eventually it shall burst. How can I best be happy lead our life behind the false shudders of ignorance on the even more translucent veil of ignoring it. Can I be happy in the current stream of my class; people, poor, handworking, blindly suffering injustices, of the money class? No, Would I be happy casting lots with the ended event money class and having indifferent to the rest of the world? No! Would I be happy instrumental in grasping the whip servitude? No. How then shall I live? What shall I do? Champion the cause of the underling break above the masses with my little bubble and then what? No, not that. Then what? I don't know? We play the middle man from the beginning of our lives. Locomoting the spirit of life to the grave.

Sept. 1944-

the last words of consolation, - the last written on spoken word of endearing names written by the commander of my very heart beat his open here before me tonight as it of does in every atmosphere of barying moods that this independent melancholy brain of mine is want to conjure. Tonight dead tired, rebellious and a touch flisc for anger I seek the consolation of a fine pure atmosphere of your letters, Darling, Wife, to be So tired must go to be. Write my love, May the Gods Guard and keep you in your pure loveliness for this unworthy devout lover.

Diary (continued)

30th Day of September-

Did you ever reach the point of exhaustion when ever detail of your surroundings is photographic clear. Have you gone to bed, with a clear conscience in a long and deserted barracks- deserted not of life but of movement. Where the slightest sound is magnified to thunderous intensity. The moon is full and coldly clear in its ghastly greenish light, each translucent cloud of floating vapor seems to linger on the face of the moon as if seeking warmth from the cold and friendless darkness of infinite. You lie in the warmth of your uncomfortable plate and try to succumb to the waiting arms of Morphine but for some unexplainable reasons you cannot shrug the ward excitement. Your cannot suppress the feeling of exp etancy that boils in turbulent turmoil in your rigid form as you assume the horizontal position associated with sleep. Why? your common sense tell you that this night is no different from any other night. And yet you know that is .- So such was the atmosphere my surroundings last night I lay there brotling with the excitement of the unknown trying to strong the expectancy of the unusual for 3 hours such was the case, then the light went out a fast not singular in its self. 3 Not once or 2 but 3 times they came on and off. Then I saw it and by the Gods of this heathen peoples. That made this head there I saw them; Two eyes, two eyes filled with all the pent up hate of a thousand unchristian devils. Two eyes staring and searing in their hate filled intensity. Two eyes that baffled the awakened consciousness that they had startled me into. Two eyes that had penetrated the veil between sleep and wakefulness. Two horribly, eerie colored orbs of raving lunacy that through the force of hate alone had bridge the gap of imagination to actuality. Yes, they were there, every where that I looked. I was filled with the horror of the impossible vision. I laughed at my own overactive imagination lent the light stifled and rang hollowly in the long and damp barracks as the eyes continued their unbenlding stare. Two red-rimmed orbs of phoponic green that seemed to move unattached to any face lacking in anything human except the shape. I lay there in paralyzed horror knowing full well that they could not exist except in the twisted imagining of a subconscious mind. And yet they did exist. There were no escaping from them. I sat upright thinking to make my sleeping bed and yet my sober self was reluctant to do so because of the impossibility of this eerie and horrible situation. I lay back-down curring my self for sever kinds of an insane fool and yet I looked again fascinated by the horror of the cold hate staring out of those two mirrors of a twisted warped soul.

What were they. Were they the mirrors of my own twisted soul or were they the eyes of a long-dead worsh upon of those Heathen Gods that I have foolishly laughed at. Do you know? Am going crazy I DON'T KNOW.

October 5, 1944 9:30 P.M.

Niigata POW, Camp Japan.

Visited town again today.- pulling a rear cart, coolie style on the hunt for vegetables. Have been able to go to town quite often in the past few months and that coupled with the walking parties investigated by Lt. Tachihashi, former Camp Commandent, have been a God send for blowing out dust and other mental cobwebs that gathered from the monotony of every day inside these walls.

Observation today convinced me of the rumors of these people being hungry. Coolie women squatting beside a pile of dycon and stealthily stealing a bite or two. This peoples one slowly starving to death do not see how they can possibility keep on fighting for another year.



Diary (continued)

Have strong rumours current now of Germanies shaw being over and of the tightening net here. Eternally optimistic as every soldier want to be if hope it will be over soon. Goodnight, Darling- now for my most enjoyable part of the day. a quite cup// of tea and a short chat and so to bed to dream of you I hop. Dreamed of you the other night twice last month. Oh, <sup>H</sup>ceavely interlude in a living hell.

Nov. 23rd, 1944-

A few lines to a neglected diary- Here Nov. 23, a date supposedly a prophetic date.

Dec. 1, 1944-

Quit writing on 23rd . But it was a prophetic date Red Cross <sup>23</sup> on a little over half boxes per man were received in camp- still waiting release. Today move starting news, we chostened our day a half hour and <sup>1</sup> into now only works.  $\frac{1}{2}$  a day some differnces over last year. Weather is holding out for fair. Really a lovely and God-sent break. Stoves are in all offices and huts.- have one here in office and shoe and Tailor shops some differences over last year and am duly appreciative of same. Chow is holding up much better than I expected. Expect a cut any day especially since working have been cut. I fully expect to go really hungry before this things ends. Don't see how Germany is holding out as she is supposedly doing. She must fall by Feb. I believe. Am a little doubtful about the selfish welfare of ourselves here. If Germany holds out much longer on these people decided to fight until the last then as I see it we have one of 3 possible fates; Starvation the longest an most obvious. Siege by civilians a result of air raids locally which if the weather holds out I expect very soon at least in the next few months on the only pleasant but hardest to imagine; good treatment and releesed beginning of negotiations.

Well, Dears, Mother and Claryce I shall close with as always and unlike these entries daily thoughts of your and loving kindness . Al.

Dec. 2, 1944

Another year, My Darling, another year away on that most improtat day. That day when the angels set a bit of heavenly perfection here on earth an maded it you. Your birthday, Darling. he day 24 years ago that destiny started weaving the golden thread of my existence by sitting the perfect soul in such a beautiful sitting and wearing that thread in a pattern that despite the knotty threads of the fate mean my shole existence. I must live through this to see a pattern of perfect design finished. Live to return the unselfish and beautiful love that you have faithful kept. Why I know not you were not bound by promise or obligated by Ring. But because you have treasured an fostered that love which you have so twistingly given I must an will endeavor to return to show you that I too am not without appreciate ion. An that I too share and return that love.

ay this day be exceeded in happiness only by days of the same date that God willing we may share together "Happy Birthday my love".

Now to bed time. 15 min. to 11 Weather sleet snow and rain. Place Nigate Frison Camp. year And Date- December 2, 1944. Question How many more? "Oh My Dearest How I miss You o o o o o o o o o o o ."

Dec. 3rd 1944-

Your day at Home, all my love Dear. Snow & sleet battering outside in terrific storm worked hard- lights have been out must go to bed to dream of you I hope dear - Goodnight. Al.

Diary (continued)

Dec. 4, 1944- Today by date I join you in our 2 4th year tomorrow actually. - will write more than. Very tired lots of work; one man, Johnson in Guard House today for stealing chow. Give him two months <sup>Hope</sup> I am wrong. All my love. Darling- Al.

Dec. 8, 1944- Today 2 years of war- how did we the mighty nation that I know we are come to this, <sup>Oh</sup> how could we be brought to our knees by this country- I can only account for it something like this not in the mood for drawing. <sup>Or</sup> writing will finish. Showing now. Soft gentle nestling flakes drifting eastward in silent patterns of lovely white. Everything looks Christmasy. <sup>Oh</sup> is that night.

Do so wish I were home on could be home for this Christmas Stood up last night at attention while the Camp beat a tattoo with his fist on my face-self control no. necessity either take it or death. See how close the margin is; death a constant persistent companion. Goodnight Al.

Dec. 9, 1944- Just returned from town again of necessity now. I make at least 3 trips a week. Know the town fairly well now. Air Raids have been blowing v everynight Since the 1st where? We don't know guess Tokio &c. Wish the war was over tired of thinking on writing.

Dec. 16, 1944- Many boys loosing part of Red Cross cheer supposedly- 4 more men putting Guard house for 3 days for resting on job. Claiming illness & in truth I do believe they were I know one or two were hurt on job that day. A miserable day on night tonight snow and a cold driving wind. As I sit here by the fire waiting I can not help but think of how wonderfully different it was plight this year as camp end to last. This year fine. - How wonderful a fine can be, what a wealth of comfort, peace and contentment is green in the flames of a fire. To watch the swatthing, swirling dancing flames casting flickering patterns of imagined phantasies, pictures in the nicieu to be completed as the fancy so will. To read the things in flames that you desire of the future as watched the mirrored reflections of the past, pleasant memories dancing in wild confusion of leaping flames- It stops my imagination to try and think of how lovely it would be to watch the flames of a friendly fire in our own home. Oh, Darling, you have been so much with me lately Wonder if you have been frequented as often with thoughts of me. <sup>Oh</sup> much I do love you. How very much I miss you. <sup>Oh</sup> much I wish I were with you. So Hontodesu, Anata tainin orachee keere desu, Goodnight my pretty one, I love you in all languages- Oh.

January 9, 1944- Today, My Dearest Mother, its young day, All day plagued by the haunting memory of the most pleasant and loveliest provoking pictures of you, My Dear, and hence I do hope Mother, Darling that next year I may spent at home with you. The Mother of all, Mothers, My own my dear darling neglected Mothers Oh, How could I be so selfish to leave you alone, Dear I tell myself that it was inevitable that someday every mothers son must leave to take his place among men. But now, Mother, I realize that I was a child and had childish motives and prompted by selfish and wilful. Desires, prove to sulk when hurt or disappointed, and more easily hurt than the average child.

I realize now, now that it may be too late that I could have made your life a much happier one, my Dear, that what I did. I cannot blame you for the all most too loving attitude that you clocked me in, because now and even even then I believed that the material instict was predominated in your emotional make up. But because of that attitude it was necessary for me to be double careful in my actions. and that My Dear Mother, is where I failed consequently bringing much needless unhappiness to the one person I

Diary (continued)

love the most. Each son should worship his mother and I do; But as conscious as I am of that halo of motherhood and loving kindness that kindles and reflects the light of your perfect soul, so to am I conscious of the fact that you are human and may be hurt by the carelessness of another, Oh, Mother I can only hope that I may be able to make your last years happy and full years. May I be able to stand by your side, Shorty and watch your eyes light up in delightful surprise at some loving present that I may be able to give you. May you have a happy Birthday today Mother. Love from your only Son, Al.

January 10, 1945

Tell me, My Dear  
You love me yet  
Thou you may not hear  
Do not forget

Altho we are now apart  
World rapped as sunder  
I send you my heart  
While nations blunder

Worldly cares concern us not  
But destiny played her hand  
And this- this my woful lot  
A prisoner- prisoners of Japan.

I do not ask of God above  
For commesseous or worldly one  
But only for you my love  
To have and share my name.

Palmer

DIARY (continued)

January 13, 1945-

Well, another evening as present another day in the past, to bed for tomorrow the future - how many more must we meet, face, and terminate, Oh, how tired I am of everything how terribly long the time is. Everyday we ask, ourselves "How many more" (Rumor pretty definite this time) has it that Tokio is taking a daily bombing - Air Raids sounding here very night since the part of December, expect bombings here in Spring, sincerely hope not - it would really be Hell if they were to bomb here in the Winter about 3 feet or more of snow have drifted above windows in places. Cold winds, blowing almost daily. One or two nice days this last month. Bug failed severe weather all in. Had a raisin  $\pi$  pie tonight - Red Cross quan-Smoky Eddy Middleton my buddy, from Los Angeles or rather orth Hollywood. Oh, hell, nothing to write. Feel the same, think the same, do the same, see the same, everyday we na gee. Everyday wish more and more that I could be Free, how long can a man subjected to this life remain stable or ~~the~~ ~~the~~ ~~the~~ ~~the~~ same? I don't know. Honey, I need you, want you, love you miss you, <sup>If</sup> only I could look ahead 10 years? or perhaps it is better I can't. Have your picture in front of me. Now to bed. Oh, how I miss you.

February 4, 1945

ached and believe Germany was finished last night, Oh how I hope so. Hope this is not wishful thinking on my part, but I do believe it so. Tommy different sources say so. <sup>I</sup> not finished damn close.

February 26th 1945-

Spring is just around the corner despite the fact snow is piled up 5 or 6 feet high. Sun. shining and warm. Received a Red Cross box the 11th Smoky and I are teamed up together we opened our end one today to make a chocolate pie. They are grand deals. Much to my regret as I am honest with myself in saying regret I received  $1\frac{1}{2}$  for my work. Here in camp. Enough of material velas less devel into the more varied worlds of thought.

Oh, yes, Mr. Diary, I received 2 letters from home this past week. They were posted previous to the former batch of letters. I received. But ever so grateful and thankful to received news from home. Mother and the girl friend are outstanding examples of two possessions of undying love and courage they still persist in writing althou they haven't heard from me. or almost two years they still refuse to believe that I may have died. An Oh how much those letters are appreciated, how much hope and encouragement is called forth when evidences of former love and environment are sent in those all too infrequent messages.

March 10, 1945-

Another death, another stigma of shame. Another milestone of degradation Johnsons his name, a weak-minded, pitiful wreck of a human being, too weak to take care of himself as this no place for anyone else to offer protection. He was easy prey for any dealers as there are many human parasites the same as in civilian life - except under these circumstances the stakes are higher life or death.

Another pitiful thing - wood had to be furnished to burn the body - the crematory has no fuel.

Diary (continued)

March 28, 1945-

Received a word from Heaven night before last. 4 letters from home. Two from Clarice two from Mother- Oh, what an uplift what a glorious morale builder- What a wonderful feeling is derived from it the, of necessity brief messages of Love & Devotion. I feel that the perspective has widened out again- a closeness with civilization- Cement sidewalks, revolving doors, elevators, blaring horns all the noises of our western civilization are passing in wild confusion across the mirror of my brain. In other words it makes Life, as we have known it much, much closer. It makes me feel as if I were again in the 20th Century- that somewhere in this chaotic and mad confusion called the world there are Lives continuing in sane normal channels- where loving kindness and thoughtfulness still feed the stream of life- It makes this existence of Dog eat Dog seem like a wild nightmare, a fantastic dream of unreality.

April- 22nd 1945-

Overwhelmed- the so long awaited the eagerly and fearful anticipated event, has happened the thrilled of thrills the closest I have been to a free bit of status Unites. A B-29 flew over the camp today at approximately 7:40 evidently photographing and reconnaissance of the coast line- my first glimpse of the amazing new 4 engines Job- I estimate her between 38,000 & 42,000 ft. a vision of almost unimagivable beauty 4 vapor streaks preceded by a ghostly white phantasm of the plane.

Lovely and yet terrible in its inaduable flight- it may mean death for us But if so be So it must. There are so damn many possibilities unwritten seldom spoken and yet ever present that sometimes the weight of these unwanted thought burdens, become almost unberrable. But what the hell- its just the suspense of w writing 3 years I wish something would break someone would pass sentence either we live to get home or we die & But quickly damn this seosahie mati". Expect the oys back with company very soon an on business. Sometime before the 15th next month.

May- 4th 1945-

Rec'd Mail 28th Oh, but lucky. Still no more visits from our winged buddieshope for o r sake not but if necessary welcome. Rumor again has it the other side of the pond is finished & Hitler supposedly been executed. Could be. Half-believe it and that they expect to wind this one up this year. I hope so damn this state of atrivide animation. I want a chance to live again.- An opportunity to study, learn & do. A chance to accomplish something.

May 25th 1945-

Air raid last night Uncle S me. flew over again, and we were deployed to the Hills, and nevisited by one this morning. Beautiful in their ghost like flight. One B-29 same pattern of flight as last month. Again expect them on business soon. A.

June 20, 1945-

Expectations realized- our first bombing by our own countries, planes- 12:39 last night until 2:30 This morning they were overhead Some ak-acek I 've and a few bombs dumped in Rinko area. How and where will this end? A tho s and unasked, unanswer bele questions.

Diary (continued)

July 25, 1945

An eventful month lately so, Air-raids almost every night visits from B-29's and B-24's in mine laying flights. As A. Fining at planes flying directly overhead in the pencil ramp of search light batteries, The 22nd one B-29's was hit directly broke into flames a fell about 4 miles or so from camp. Braving or rather chancing the falling shrapnel are watched for the 4 or 5th times the play of searchlights and continual A. A. fire a steady barrage in the same course that has been patterned by the planes each time in this mine laying flights. It is difficult to put in words the conflict of emotions, the fearful enjoyment the dreadful anticipation the joy of knowing that our country men are so close and free. The dreadful anticipation of a hit. This one plane hit broke into flames and flew around the sky like a radio controlled meteor until it broke in two pieces and fell.

Heard 7 men were taken alive.  
August 16, 1945-

Over finished, or they say, Oh, I believe it.  
Turned over all supplies camp was turn over to Major.

P.O.W./C.I. - A.L. Palmer

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