



Jesse Paul Gilleland was born June 19, 1916 in Grayson, Georgia, to a modest farm family that would consist of 7 children. Like many rural young men of that era and location Paul entered the military by joining the U. S. Navy in 1938.

He served on the Cruisers USS Boise and, later, on the USS Houston, which, on March 1, 1942, was sunk by a Japanese ship in the South China Sea. Being one of the survivors of the Houston (two out of three of those sailors perished) Paul swam for over nine hours before being picked up by a Japanese Tanker. Shortly afterwards, the Tanker was torpedoed by an Allied submarine and Paul was in the water again, soon to be picked up by a Japanese destroyer.

Paul then spent 3 ½ years in six different prison camps, the major one being at Hokkaido in the mountains of Japan.

The following is a transcription of an account recorded by Paula Brooks of Paul's experiences in the war before returning to his home in Snellville, Georgia, and pursuing his love of farming, occasionally working as a school bus driver and school custodian. Paul married and had three children with his first wife before she died. He remarried and died on Oct, 23, 2001. A portion of U. S. Highway 78, between Stone Mountain and Loganville, was named after him before he died.

(Transcription was done by Larry Gilleland. Some of the names of the locations are the best guess at the correct spelling based on hearing the original recording.)

Jesse Paul Gilleland War Memoirs

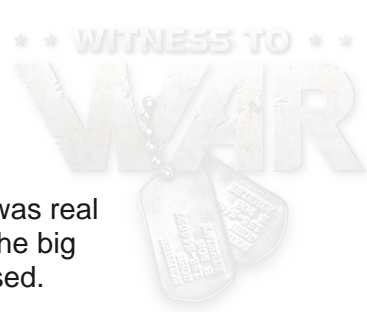
I would like to record some of the things that happened to me when I went in the US Navy on February 15, 1938.

I entered at Norfolk, Virginia, on that date. We got into Norfolk by train, from Richmond, Virginia, kind of early in the morning. The first meal there was a little unusual to what I'd been used to, baked beans in red lead, you know, for breakfast, which some of them didn't eat very well but I did alright with them.

There's one old boy was from Kentucky that came down with us and I think he went through the line three times to eat beans, he was so hungry.

We had our regular 3-months training there in Norfolk. Then I waited about a month after the training period was over, in the shipping out section down there, waiting for a ship. We were assigned to the USS Boise to go on a shakedown cruise to Cape Town, South Africa.

We left out sometime in August and the first port we made was Monrovia, Liberia, which was on the west coast of Africa. At this port we couldn't get within about two miles of the little town, and we had to anchor out, and go by boat, small boat, into the town. And while we were there waiting, there was a lot of little Blacks that looked like maybe 8-10 years old who would swim out to the ship and would form parties there.



A lot of the men would throw them money out into the clear water. The water was real clear. They would dive...the little ones would dive first and if they didn't get it the big ones would dive on down and get anything thrown] out there. They never missed.

But what struck me was that I didn't realize people were so hungry until I saw the little children gather, and when leftover food was thrown out the slop chute (as we called it on the ship) into the water, this gang of little kids would get in the water and fight over the bread. If some meat came out of the chute they would shake it off and eat it right there in the water. They would be two miles out, naked swimming in the water.

We went into the port one time to see the little town. It was a town on a hill above the sea, solid with little shacks, mud buildings with grass roofs on them, bladed grass roofs. The only masonry building in the town was on top of the hill and it was the Commodore's building. It was the only masonry or wood building there. The rest of them were mud shacks.

They told us, when we left the ship, not to go out of the town because there were headhunters outside of the town. There were about three different tribes there and one of them was a headhunter tribe. As you know, telling a sailor to not go, you know, that's what he's going to do. There were about four of us boys decided we'd venture outside the town and see what was there. We got just outside where the little shacks were, walking along a little trail through open scrub bush and out jumped a Black with a spear in his hand, wearing war paint, and feathers on his head and a ring in his nose, painted stripes all over his face. And talk about four sailors getting back into town, we got back.

Well, we didn't stay but two days in this port and left for Cape Town. By the way, when we passed over the equator we went out of the way just a little bit to pass by the 000 longitude and latitude. Young recruits were called Pollywogs, ones that hadn't been across the equator. They had a real program to put you through to break you in, and after you got through with the program and passed the equator you were a Shellback. So we had quite a time with that, putting you through a pretty good process.

We went on into Cape Town. It surprised me that I really liked Cape Town. It was a nice town. The people would come out to the port and get us and take us into their homes and take us around and show us the town. So they were real nice to us there. I enjoyed my stay in Cape Town where we stayed for eleven days.

Then we headed back right up the middle of the Atlantic. It was a little over 7,000 miles from there to Norfolk, Virginia. Right up in the middle of the Atlantic.

On the way, one thing that happened, the Captain decided to try out the ship's firing power, so he trained all of the Boise's fifteen 6" guns on one side of the ship, on the starboard side I believe, and fired them at the same time to see how the ship would take the shock. It made the ship really roll from firing all the guns at one time, but it steadied.

Then another thing I remember was we passed by the island on which Napoleon Bonaparte was exiled. It was the only real land that we could see. We also we passed by a big rock sticking up in the ocean that was called Blowing Rock, because it sounded like air blowing through it all the time. It was making a big fuss with water spraying through it. It was the only time we saw land or rock until we got to Norfolk, Virginia.



We stayed back in Norfolk a few days and then headed down to Cuba, and sailed around in the Caribbean for about, I believe, a few weeks and came back to Norfolk and then went on a run they called the Rockman run, trying out the ship.

Went up to Boston, left from Boston to Rockman, Maine and try out the speed of the ship running wide open in rough seas. When we got to Boston the town was iced over, so nobody rated liberty, nobody went ashore there, so we made the run and came back into Norfolk, Virginia.

It was close to Christmas time and the war was getting underway in Europe at that time so they gave three groups leave in Norfolk. The first one had already left and was supposed to meet the ship back in New York, our next destination. But they changed our orders on account of the war. We got under way, headed to the Panama Canal, and through the Canal around to the west coast. I was on the second leave party, which we never made, and that first leave party had to meet the ship in Long Beach, California, so they had a long trip by land to meet our ship.

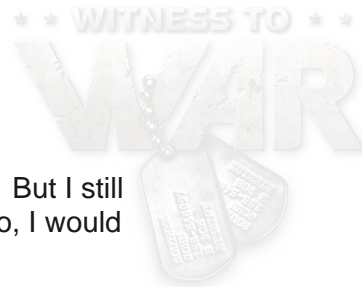
The Boise stayed about a year, I guess a little over a year, around the west coast and we went to Hawaii, stayed out there a while. While we were in Hawaii I went aboard the USS Houston. I decided I wanted to go to the Asiatic Station, to which it was going.

I remember one thing that would happen on the way out there. I was the Boise "oil king" and had the duty of changing the pumps. I was pumping oil into the service tanks and it had two discharge valves, one going into the fire room and one to the service tanks. The one that was going to the fire room went directly to the boilers, and I saw that the discharge valve was open to the pumps and I closed it. At that time the turbines in the engine room shut down, then the generator shut down and so we lost power from me closing that one valve. Well all the officers came running down into the fire room and wanted to know what was wrong. Nobody seemed to know. The machinist mate on duty said that they didn't have any steam coming from the fire room.

So I got to thinking, I didn't know just what happened and the chief engineer came over and asked me and I didn't answer him. So I went up the hatch and down to the fire room to find out what had happened. Down to the fire room I found that the suction from where I was pumping was wide open and I was pumping oil straight into the boilers. And this, when I had closed this one valve, had cut off the oil going directly to the boilers and they lost all suction from all the pumps and the fire in the boilers fire went out.

I called the chief engineer down and showed him what had happened and told him this was not in the manual, the ship's manual. I told him what would happen when the pumps got a little air in the lines and caused them to lose suction. He thought a little bit and said, "You're right. If you hadn't told me that, we would never have known what had caused the fires to go out". So instead of being busted, he recognized me for finding out what had really happened. I didn't get blamed for the incident because the valves were supposed to have been closed, but somebody had left the valves open.

Anyway, when I got into Hawaii my orders had gone through to go to the USS Houston and he called me up to the log room and asked me, "Why did you put in for this ship" and said "it's going to the Asiatic Station?" I said, "Yes, I know". He said, "Why did you want to go?" I told him that it was only the adventure. I liked the Boise and I wanted to see some of the world. He tried to talk me out of it, told me, "Boy, you don't want to go



out there, you just think you do. I've done been there. You just think you do". But I still went ahead...told me he would turn it down if I would stay there. I told him, "No, I would like to go ahead." So he approved it and I went aboard the Houston.

From there we went back to San Francisco and had some cables installed on the ship before we went to relieve the USS Augusta on the Atlantic Station. So, along about sometime in October we came into Guam and hit a typhoon. It was pretty rough in there and on into the Philippines. In the latter part of October of 1940, we arrived in the Philippine Islands. Manila was our home base.

We had been out there about 14 months in the different islands of the Philippines when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. On that morning we were down in Hilo Bay about and about 3:00 in the morning it came over the intercom that the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor. We had been looking for that to happen because they had sent us out of the Cavite Navy Yard down to that area to repair our own boilers. We put the repair bricks on the ship and took them down there and repaired the boilers ourselves where, in the Navy Yard, the Philippine workmen had been doing that work. We had six boilers back in operation in time for General Quarters.

We struck out that day, rounded up all the ships that could get under way or weren't needed there...the slow going ships, supply ships, tankers and different ships of the fleet. We got under way heading to Australia by way of Borneo. I remember one evening, along right about sunset, we sighted some Japanese cruisers on the horizon and we did not want to encounter them with all the slow going ships we had, so they sent the USS Ford, a four stacker destroyer, around as a decoy and let the Japanese cruisers spot him, in another direction from where we were. But they took off, and they could make 42 knots, so they let them sight them and they ran them all night. The next morning they came bobbing back in over the horizon. So they made it back without getting sunk. We thought, when they left that evening, that we would never see the USS Ford again.

From there we went on down the Makassar Strait and escorted a fleet of ships, carrying Australians, between Java and Bali on into Fort Darwin, Australia.

We left some ships at Darwin, and the rest of the fighting ships went back around Java, and back to Australia a few times where we escorted some troop carriers that were coming in. I remember the USS Pensacola brought a ship in and we made it to Thursday Island and went from there on into Darwin.

We made several troop ships that were conveyed on in. They were backing them up there in Fort Darwin. We went ashore there a few times. They were backing them up in pup tents, as they called it, back in the desert.

On one occasion we had been notified to fortify the Island of Timor that, I believe, was controlled by the Swedes but hadn't been fortified. So we started with three troop ships, loaded with soldiers that were going to take over the island. But when we got in close we found the Japanese had already taken it over, had landed and had their air base set up and they met us with planes. They bombed us continuously for about two hours but none of our ships were hit. We had good anti-aircraft guns on the Houston so we held them off pretty well. They held their planes back high and we didn't get any hits but had



to turn around and take our ships back into Port Darwin. Forget the invasion of Timor at that time.

Then we left Port Darwin and headed back into Batavia, Java and from there to Surabaya and made several trips back and forth between these two towns. Then one night the Boise had stayed out there and they had come out and met us in Manila when they had first bombed Pearl Harbor, the Boise was out in Manila, and so Admiral Hart had asked them to stay with us so they were out there, too. So we had them, along with several destroyers and submarines, out there. We jointed in with some English and Dutch ships, and the Australian ship, the HMAS Perth, was along with us. These four nationalities combined to form the Allied Asiatic Fleet.

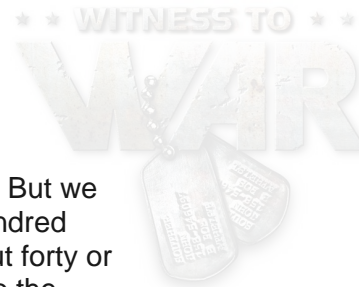
We had gotten orders that the Japanese were heading down the Makassar Strait, so we got a force together and we went to, what would be called, the battle of Makassar Strait, but our ship never actually went in close. Four destroyers went in and did most of the damage. They sunk several Japanese ships in this battle. But it was nighttime and they left the damaged ships for the next day for planes to bomb. The USS Boise was on standby.

From there we went on and, several days later, entered into a battle in the Java Sea where the Japanese who had landed a big force on Java. We encountered them one night and the Java Sea battle lasted about three days, on and off at different times. We had one battle that started about four o'clock in the afternoon and we had continuously fired at the Japanese ships for about four hours and 15 minutes. W sank a lot of their ships at that time.

Then we encountered them again along about eleven o'clock that night. We were still chasing the Japanese but they had pulled a submarine fleet in and sunk some of the first ones that went through. A lot of them got sunk and others got hit...an English ship got hit really badly. Several of the Dutch ships were also hit and sunk. We lost most of our fleet that night. But the HMAS Perth and the USS Houston escaped that part of the battle.

The USS Marblehead was with us in one of the battles and they got hit. The rudder was frozen and one man had to go down in a diver's suit and cut the rudder free so they could use the shaft to steer the ship. They had to head back to the United States because they had no place out there for repairs. So we lost another ship of our fleet. The USS Houston and the HMAS Perth were the only two ships left in the Asiatic Fleet. The HMAS Perth was a light cruiser and the USS Houston was a heavy Cruiser. We had five inch English anti-aircraft guns.

We went back into Batavia that night. We were about out of fuel and ammunition but had trouble the next morning getting fuel from the Dutch. We spent most of the day trying to get the fuel, and finally manned the pumps ourselves and took on some fuel. We then left out from Batavia and went through the Sunda Strait, which was, they said, about 20 miles wide. And we were heading back to Perth, and from there we were supposed to head back to the States for repairs because our aft turret got hit in one of the battles and killed 46 men and sent 22 to the hospital there on Java.



We had only our forward turret so we had orders to go back and have repairs. But we didn't. We had word from the Dutch that the Japanese were not within five hundred miles of Batavia, but that night we ran into about 11 of the Japanese fleet about forty or fifty miles from where we started. They were putting a pretty big fleet force into the Sunda Strait with a landing party on Java.

The Japanese were in a horseshoe circle and we ran right into it that night. The HMAS Perth was ahead of us and they commenced to firing first and then we started firing at the Japanese ships. The battle lasted about an hour.

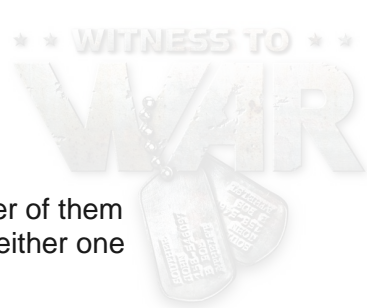
The Perth got hit first and then we got hit with torpedoes. Our engine got knocked out, and we got several more torpedo hits. And so, at that time, the odds were against us. We figured they had about forty man-of-wars and there were two of us. So we got orders, around twelve o'clock, to abandon ship. Right before this happened, we had gotten a hit up on one of the oil tanks and it was afire and our blower was pulling.

I was water tender down in number one fire room. The blower was pulling in smoke pretty strong. It looked like it was the end at that time. It looked like the whole ship was on fire. In a few minutes we had to leave it and go up the hatch. We had planned a secondary way to get out of there, which come in very handy at the moment. There was only one hatch to go out with sixteen dogs to secure it. A man on the top was supposed to loosen the dogs by the handles and let us out. On the under side the dog had only a little knuckle, like on the end of your thumb.

We had kept a ball-peen hammer up there in the hatch so we could hit those dog knuckles from the bottom and the hatch would release. We had sixteen dogs to knock with the hammer and they all flew open, and that's how we got out. There was fire all over above us, in the passageway where we were. We went from that across through the fire to another door, which was our blower room compartment. We came through more fire, down to the fire room that led up along about two and a half decks to one of the main decks that had a big hood over it with a screen where the air came through to the fire room. The fitters had built us a latter out of pipe and we climbed this ladder all the way up to a little door we had cut in this screen and that's how we got out to the quarterdeck where we came out to the ship.

And, by the way, when we got up on deck we found that the man that was supposed to let us out on the top side of that hatch, was E. V. May, a warrant Officer. We found out that when the ship had caught fire up there he had jumped overboard with his pistol strapped on him and his life jacket and had left us all in the fire room to get out the best way we could.

Anyway, after I got up there I went over toward the port side of the ship. The Japanese were firing shells through the ship. They had already torpedoed it and it was on fire but they were still firing shells through there. One of the shells hit one of our pom-pom guns pretty close to me where I was right out in the open, but I was next to the port side lifeline. I was facing aft on the ship when the shell hit the gun and exploded. It threw me into the air and I did a side ways tumble and turned over into the dark. When I landed back on my feet I was on the outside of that lifeline swinging against the side of the ship with my right foot caught in the lifeline with my right hand. And two Water Tenders standing beside the lifeline reached out and grabbed me by the hand and pulled me



back in and said, "Come in here boy, where are you going". By the way, neither of them made it. It was Yo Oxford and a Fowler, the name of the Water Tender, and neither one of them made it.

And then, we began to try to find a life jacket and I ran up toward the bow of the ship, I and a Seaman, were there by ourselves...he was the only one left that I saw. We ran up there to the life jacket locker and he picked up two life jackets and I said, "Take one of them and give me the other". So, that was all that was left in there. We were the only two, at that time, left up on that part of the ship, but they had been passing word with the Boson's whistle, for everybody to go aft of the ship, which was on the back end of the ship and we were on the front end of it.

But I noticed that when everybody went through there we would hear them scream because you could see the shells that were fired, see the glare of the shells as they came through the port side and went all the way through the starboard side of the ship, way out into the water and then explode out in the water. The Japanese were just shooting holes in the ship and I could hear them scream as they went through there.

I didn't want to go right in the line of fire, so I went over on the starboard side of the ship and just walked off...it was already leaning port ward and you just had to walk, didn't have to jump off, just walked off into the water. I walked off into the water but I didn't realize, at that time, that the ship was still moving pretty swiftly. When it went out of commission the ship didn't have any power and they had no way of stopping it and it was still going. I didn't realize until then that it was still floating right on, going right on through the water, busting through the water. As I got out into the water it commenced passing by me and, as the ship passed by me, hot steam hit me in the belly and it felt like my belly was going to bust, steam hitting into the water, along side of the ship. But it passed on by me in a few seconds and I was left swimming away from the ship. I was swimming to the aft side of the ship, and the ship was going on beyond me.

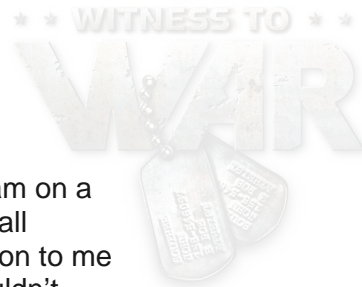
I'll tell some of the things that I remember that happened in the water that night. There was a lot that happened, I know I can't remember all of it. It was enough for a lifetime, the things that happened that night.

Right after I left the ship I swam up to a Chinaman. He was a mess attendant aboard the ship. He was standing on something half-sunk in the water. I still don't know, to this day, what it was unless it was a pontoon or something sunk in the water.

He was standing on something solid and I swam up next to him and stood up by him there and said, "What are you standing on?" and he said, "Me don't know." But it was solid. I stood there a minute, but I noticed them shells were still coming pretty close. They were still firing at the ship. And he said, "You stay with me, me can't swim." And I said, "Well, them shells are too close for me. I'm going to head away from them, try to get away from them." And I left him standing on that.

But, by the way, when we got captured, he made it. He made it that night, swimming, got to shore and got in a prisoner of war camp.

After I left him I swam not too far and you could see a little of the land, like a quarter moon shining. You could see a little of a mountaintop sticking out in the distance which was, they said, about 8-10 miles out from land where we were sunk. And that



mountaintop was what we had to swim toward. After I left this Chinaman I swam on a little way and I ran into a little fellow, a Seaman. Actually he was pretty big, a tall Seaman, and he grabbed me around the neck from the back and kept holding on to me and I told him to hold to my leg. He said he didn't have a life jacket and he couldn't swim. And I said, "You hold to my leg and I will swim." And he said, "No." He was going to hold onto me and wasn't going to turn me loose.

And a little later a buddy of his swam by. He hollered at him and then left me and went and took hold of him. But he was about to drown me holding me by the back of my neck, and I couldn't swim for him holding me. But, they never made it, him or the other little boy. They never did show up. I couldn't help him the way it was because he wouldn't hold to me and let me swim.

But then I left him and was on my own for a while. I swam on and I ran up on another fellow named Rogers. He was a Second Class Store Keeper. I swam up to him and he said, "Let's stay together tonight." And I said, "Alright, let's stay together. We'll try to."

We swam for a little bit and, all of a sudden, he said, "Duck. Swim underwater, dogpaddle and swim underwater. They're shooting." I hadn't noticed it, but I heard the guns firing. He said, "It's little boats up there, little torpedo boats going in the water." And I saw a searchlight coming around, and he said, "Duck that searchlight and swim underwater. They're shooting them in the water." So I did, and swam underwater as long as I could by sticking my head up a little, and after a while I came up and the light had passed on around. And I could never find him. I called his name several times and tried to find him. I didn't hear water splashing. I don't know what happened to him. I tried a good bit to try to find him, but he never did answer. So I don't know if they hit him while I was underwater and he sank, or what. He told me, "Let's stay together and stay out, and one of our sub-marines, I think, may be out here tomorrow and pick us up." I told him already that I didn't know whether I could stay out like that, or not. I didn't know if I was a good swimmer, or not.

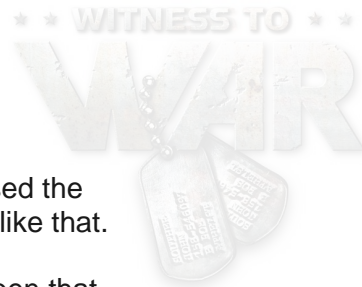
But he was a mighty good swimmer. He could swim at ease...a lot better than I could. But he never did appear. I lost him.

I don't know the times that I'd suck in salt water. I'd swim on my back for a while and then turn over the other way to try to rest myself.

I'd take on water in my lungs, spit it out and it'd make me sick, I'd vomit it up and keep going. And I never thought I couldn't make it. I always thought that I could make it to that piece of land over there.

Another thing I remember. After that, I noticed under me, commenced this light bubbling like phosphorus in the water all under me, really light. Something big passed under me. I'm wondered if it wasn't a sub-marine, maybe, stirring up water under there. But I'll never know.

Then, a little later, I got in a pool. I noticed the water had gotten calm when I was swimming, real calm. Then I commenced looking around me and I saw that I was in a circle, it was in a pool and I was getting' down right in the middle of it. So, I'd start swimming to one side of it, and swim as far as I could, and then I'd have to turn back and swim to the other side. Then I finally made it out, got out of the pool. I guess it was



where one of the Jap ships had sunk in there. But there's something that caused the pool to circle around, when the water gets calm when it goes round and round like that.

But I made it out of that and swam on. I don't know, all the things that did happen that night. I never did see a raft and never did see anybody else until the next morning, swimming by myself, when it got light and I saw some ships pass me coming in. And I noticed then, as it got light, the Japs were all on the beach. You could hear them screaming and hollering. They were landing on the beach unloading material. I was right in close but I decided I didn't want to swim into that because I was heading right into Japanese. And I decided to myself that I would turn around and go back the other way that I had already come. On the other side of the strait was Sumatra, which was about 20 miles across where I was headed.

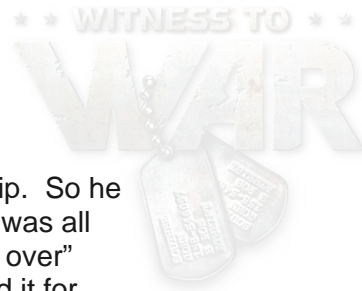
One of the Jap ships that had passed me was a tanker and they had seen me in the water and they had sent out a little paddleboat, about 8 men paddling the boat, and they had already picked up some more fellows. One of them was Kalanowski that was picked up and he was already on the boat when they commenced to try to pick me up. I saw what they were but had never been instructed on what to do in a situation like that, but I kept swimming away from them and they kept hollering at me. I didn't know a word of Japanese at that time. They commenced to chattering and motioning for me to get in the boat and I kept swimming away. After a while it come up close and raised the oar up like he was going to hit me over the head. I saw what was going to happen so I thought I'd better swing on, so I swung on the boat and they pulled me in, out of the water.

As quick as they got me in the boat the first thing they wanted me to do, I could see by their motions, was to pull my breeches and clothes off...strip off. But I was so stiff, when I got in there, that I couldn't lift my legs up, so they laid me down across one of the places where they sit down and pulled my pants off, and my shirt, and left me in my underwear...stripped me off. That's one of the things I found they did when they captured you, stripped you.

From there they took me on up to the ship, which was a Japanese Tanker. There were 12 of us Americans they had on the boat. Kalanowski is one that I remember. There were several more on the ship, but I don't remember all their names. We were just give out, we were so tired, could hardly move. We didn't realize it when we were in the water. We felt like we could swim all the way across that other side...20 miles. But when they pulled us out of the water we were stiff.

They took us up on the tanker and they brought an officer back there. They were Merchant Seamen Merchant Marines on this ship, not sailors and soldiers. He had come back and given us a talk and found our names and took down everything, what ship we was on and everything, and asked us all about what we thought about the war. He told us that he had come to school in America. One thing he asked me, said, "Do you know any reason why we should be fighting one another. And I said, "No, I don't. I really don't know why it really should happen."

He continued to interrogate me for a while and asked me several things about our ships. He asked me how many sub-marines we had out there in that area and I told him that I did not know. But I told him that I thought we had a good many out there.



He had taken my pocketbook, when he first came out, and took it inside the ship. So he went and got it and brought it back to me. The money I had in my pocketbook was all there. I had \$643 and 7 guilder (Dutch money). I had just been paid "shipping over" money and had drawn it out. Then, I took this money out on the deck and dried it for about an hour. The sun was shining very hot. Then I put it back in the pocketbook.

We were really tired and sleepy so I fell down on the deck and went to sleep. We had been asleep, I guess, two or three hours and a big jolt and noise woke us up. And we looked up and the ship mast was shaking, just a big shaking and all the chains were rattling on the ship, shaking all over and everything was coming apart.

And the Japs commenced to running all over the ship hollering and screaming and firing their guns. We didn't know what was happening until we looked out over the side and saw a Submarine submerging. It had come in and had fired a torpedo into the Tanker that we were on and we didn't know, until a little later, that they had also fired one into another Tanker that was along side of us.

And Kalanowski said, "Let's get our clothes." And we got our clothes back on and were going to try to swim to the beach and get away. But we looked, and oil just looked like head-deep, just spreading all over the top of the water on both sides of the ship as far as you could see, oil was coming out of both of these tankers. It started sinking. The bow was going down first and the back was rising up out of the water. And they brought a Japanese Destroyer along to the back and took all the crew and us off.

Then things commenced getting bad. They commenced to hollering at us saying, "Submarines, Submarines." (Chuckle). From then on we were turned over to the Navy and they took us and we stayed on this Destroyer all night. And that's when our treatment began to get really bad.

They roped us off in an area on the back part of the ship and had guards all around us. And all night they continued going round and round jabbing us with bayonets through the ropes that we was supposed to stay in. The deck was so hot we couldn't lay down on nor stand on it. We'd take off what clothes we had and put them under our feet to keep the feet from burning. So we didn't sleep any all that night.

The next day they took us off and took us over on a Transport. Put us down in a hole on the Transport where we stayed. We still hadn't had anything to eat or any water. So we stayed all that day and that night without any food or any water. The next day they brought us some water, lowered down in a bucket. There was a bunch of Australians on this ship and they grabbed the bucket and were just like something wild, animal, grabbing the water and dipping it out with their hands and spilling it all over... they spilt more than they drank...all over the deck. So I didn't get any...they had two buckets that came down, and I didn't get any of it. And that night they sent down another bucket of water. One of the Australian officers got them together and told them that we'd have to line up to get our water, so I finally got a little cup, of water. That night was the first water we'd had. There was some left and I hadn't had but one cup and some of the others had had two or three. I got up and got me another cup of water when one of the Australian officers jumped on me about getting it. I told him that I hadn't had any from the first two, so he didn't say any more.



Then the next day they sent down a wooden bucket of rice and a large can of sardines. Some of the cans would have 19, 20 and 21 sardines, but they give us one can of sardines and this little bucket of rice that had to feed 20 men per group. That was our first meal.

Then we stayed the rest of that day and that night and they fed us one more time. Then the next day they took us off the ship and went onto the beach and they started marching us. We didn't know where we were going. They marched us from there, all day and through the night and into the next day.

We came into a place called Serang on Java. This was an old theater building. They had moved all the equipment out of the building. It had a cement floor. They marched us in there, over 300 of us. Some Australians and some Indians and some Americans. And we stayed there six weeks in this building. We had to sit down on the cement floor from 8 o'clock in the morning until 10 o'clock at night. We set up at attention on that cement floor. And at 10 o'clock you could lay your head down on the fellow next to you. It was so close in there you had to lie on somebody else. You didn't have anything between you, but what clothes you had on, and that cement floor. It was miserable.

There was no water in there. We were getting a little cup of water, maybe once or twice a day. And the food was sometimes once a day, sometimes twice a day...it was a little rice in a bowl made out of wood or carton and it had a leaf on the bottom of it...only it was gummy rice. They'd spit on it and give it to you, but you'd eat it right on.

There was no water for us to take a bath or even wash our hands. I didn't wash my hands for a whole 6 weeks. You weren't allowed to wash your hands.

They had a hole dug 30 feet outside the door into the ground. It was our toilet facility. It was just a plain hole, an open hole and a couple of timbers lying across it. It was real nasty...flies were swarming. At the end of our stay there the hole was filled all the way to the top and had run into the building by the time we were getting ready to leave. It had already run way under the side of the building...dumpage, human dumpage.

They also had guards walking through the building all day. Where the movie picture had been shown there was a mounted machine gun set up and about 3 guards stayed on that all day long and all night.

In one incident a Malayan in there was so sick when they brought him in. He said they tried to get him to ride one of their tanks and he refused. And they cut his arm off right up next to his shoulder. He bled until he almost bled to death. He just got so weak, he just drug himself around in this mess that ran all over the ground. He was just at the point of death when they finally took him out of there. They gave him no treatment whatsoever.

There was a Dutch pilot that had been shot down, that lay with his head right at my feet. He was delirious and out of his head most of the time. Sometimes he would wake up...he could talk English...and he'd holler and scream at the guards and tell them to take him out and shoot him. He was in misery. A machine gun bullet had gone in the back of his head, all the way through to the other side and had come out just above his right ear on the left side of his head. And I saw him lying there with these maggots working in his head, and corruption running out of it, and it was terrible, the stink from



that. But that man lived and I saw him later in Batavia, in the camp, and I recognized him by the scar that was on his head. It was sunk in, a purple looking scar on both sides of his head. But he was talking and doing all right.

But anyway, after we'd been there 6 weeks, before we left, they took us down to a little river and we were allowed to take all of our clothes off, naked, and get in the river, the whole bunch in the river and wash, take a bath. And it sure felt good after 6 weeks of not even washing your hands or any part of your body. And we washed our clothes and put our clothes back on.

Then we marched, I think, all day and into the next night and came into Batavia, which is what they called the bicycle camp there. It was an old Dutch army camp...a large camp and they had a lot of prisoners there. They had a lot of Dutch, had some Indians, some English and Australians in this camp. And they had about 500 American soldiers that had come from Texas. They were National Guards that had been inducted into the Army. They were sent to the Philippines, but on the way to the Philippines war was declared, because of Pearl Harbor, and they had to bypass the Philippines and were brought into Java to help the Dutch. But they were captured immediately after they got there. There were a couple of Georgia boys with them, but most of the rest of them were from Texas.

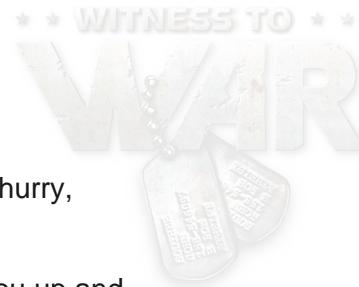
We found conditions in this camp a little better than what we'd had before. We were allowed more room and we had running water in there and were allowed to wash ourselves. It was bunk-type beds in there but there bed bugs crawling everywhere. The plastered walls had big old cracks in them and out of these cracks, even in the daytime, you would see big old juicy bed bugs crawling out to eat on you all night. And there were roaches all over the place. We had to put up with that but we did have a place to sleep with a grass mat on the bunk.

We would try to go out on working parties because, out on working parties, you could sometimes find some food to eat. We didn't have enough food in the camp but we learned to pick up food the best way you could.

You would always find something that you needed if you were working outside on a working party. If it weren't food you would find other things you could bring into the camp and we would try to build different things in there for our convenience.

I remember one day I had found a bunch of nails. I needed some nails in the camp and I had found a mess tin that I had traded out of a Dutchman. It had a false bottom in it with about three compartments in there and a one big round one for food. It was made out of aluminum. One compartment down in the bottom was kind of narrow and I had put the nails into this.

Sometimes when you would come to the gate they would search and sometimes they wouldn't, and today they were searching everybody. I had a fork and a spoon that I had traded off an Australian. And I got to my turn to come up to the guard where they searched you. He took the mess tin and shook it and it rattled. The nails were rattling like everything. The guard asked, "What is it?" I told him that it was my eating tools. He opened it up and saw the knife, fork and spoon and said, "OK, go ahead." I was really scared because it was the nails that were rattling and he thought it was the knife,



fork and spoon. So, as soon as they turned me loose I got out from there in a hurry, afraid he was going to call me back.

But anyway, we got several beatings along about that time. They would line you up and beat you for nothing. So you would always take a chance on bringing something in because you may be beaten and may not. It didn't matter.

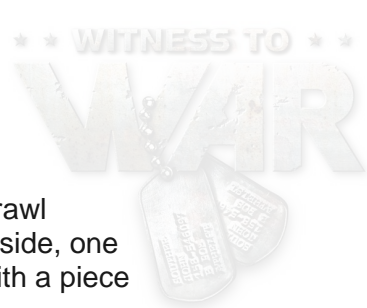
I remember one day we were working down along side the docks where the ships come in. We found wire and strings tied down in the water and we started pulling some of them up, and I found one with a wire basket and in the basket found 7 bottles (fifths) of whiskey. When the Japs had come in, the Dutch in those buildings had tied their whiskey, hiding it down in the water. So, I got two fellows to help me and we brought that into the camp, hidden in our clothes. They didn't search that day and I got into camp with all seven of them.

And it was very valuable to get that inside. I gave the two fellows that helped me one bottle apiece, kept one for myself and I took the other 4 and sold them to the Dutch officers. The officer's compound was in a separate place down there with a wire fence between us, but you could reach between the fence. You could get 20 guilders apiece for them, which were like 20 dollars, and that meant a lot have their currency, which was what you needed to trade over the fence. So it came in handy to buy food with.

There were a couple of Georgia boys in there...one of them was called Georgia Brown. He said, "Gillie, I just can't eat this rice." He just wouldn't eat rice...wouldn't try to. I kept him supplied with something I'd buy over the fence pretty regularly. We would go down to the fence at night and trade with the natives that would come up to the fence. You could buy a lot of canned goods that they would bring in there. I bought American peaches, condensed cream, sweetened cream, different things in there. It was good stuff and real cheap. You could trade for just a little bit of money and buy it. We kept a lot of stuff like that to eat on. And I kept this Georgia Brown going all the time he was in there with something like that...just gave it to him...helped him. I told him he better learn to eat the rice because we may have to leave here and you may have to eat it when we can't get this stuff. He said he just couldn't eat it, but when he left he did go on off to Burma with a bunch that went up there when they did leave. He died, they said, a few months after they got up there.

Anyway, we stayed on this camp. Another thing I remember that was really bad was on the Fourth of July. We could remember it well on that date of 1942. They had a paper that they brought around and wanted us to sign this paper that we would work any kind of work they told us to...do anything, even if it was carrying ammunition, or whatsoever...that we would work willingly. We didn't want to sign the paper. We tried to tell them that they should abide by the Geneva Convention of 1939. They said, "Yes, we signed that, but the day after the war started, we broke our agreement." So, they didn't go through with their agreement. They kept lining us up and beating us. They put some of them down in front of the guardhouse and tied their hands and feet, and poured syrup over their heads. It was hot there and the flies would eat on them as long as they could stand it. They were in misery with the flies eating on them and they couldn't do anything about it.

There were different types of punishment they were doing. I was in a group of six of us sitting down out in the shade of a building. A guard came up and took us down to the



fence. One officer had a little automatic pistol on him. And he made all of us crawl through a slack place in the wire to the outside and then to crawl back to the inside, one at a time, while he beat us over the head and shoulders as hard as he could with a piece of bamboo a bit longer than a baseball bat.

When he got to me everything turned black, then I saw stars. I passed out and stayed out for a while. I don't know how long but I woke up inside. Each one of us had to do that while the guards stood back and watched this little man beat us. It was cold. It was his way of letting us know we had to sign that paper and also, not to climb through the fence. It was his way of getting it over to us. It was pretty rough.

Anyway, our officers, who were with us in there, told us to go ahead and sign the paper. And that if anything comes of it when we get back home we'll tell them we were forced to sign the paper...we were forced to, even though it was against our will. So we went ahead and signed it. It didn't make any difference because you had to do what they told us anyway.

When we would be out on these working parties we would see these white Dutch women and when they would try to give us something to eat, the guards would beat them right in front of us...beat them unmercifully, and we couldn't do anything about it. It sure did hurt us to see them beat the women like that.

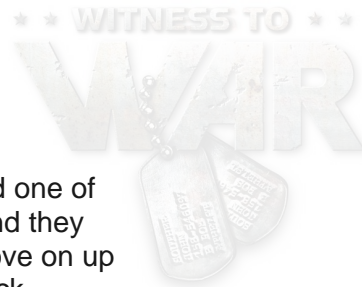
And as we passed through areas we could see that the Japanese were stripping their homes, taking the furniture and cars down to the shipyards and loading them onto ships. They were stealing everything that the Dutch could get.

The Dutch men had been put into concentration camps and the women and children had been left to live the best way they could. It was really bad for them. These ships were being loaded up and taken back to Japan...stripping the island of all of the Dutch possessions.

We stayed on until August. They found out that we were going to be moved so they commenced loading us onto ships. I was on one of the first ships that were sent out, and they started us from there. We didn't know where we were going but this Australian bunch in there had six radio sets that they had kept with them...had never turned them into to the Japanese, but had kept them hidden.

They had taken the radios apart, piece by piece, and given pieces to each man hide them in the bags of clothes, or whatever they had, hoping that they would stay together enough to put a radio back together. So, the bunch that I was with did have enough pieces, and went to the same place, and put it back together and had a radio and operated it until the war was over.

Anyway, when we left there we went to Singapore and went into, what they called, a British camp of Shanghi (*spelling?*) Village on the island of Singapore. They took us off and took in dump trucks and had a Japanese guard driving. We got up to the gate, on a narrow place on the Island, there was a gate, and we noticed a lot of Indians that had been with the British, carrying Japanese rifles and they had turned over with the Japanese as guards.



We went through the gate and the Japanese guard got out of the truck and told one of us to drive the truck. I wasn't the one who drove it, but another fellow drove and they told us to go on up a certain distance, up the road and stop. We did. They drove on up and got into the area they told us. Everyone commenced getting out of the truck, wondered what was going on. We didn't see any Jap guards...no Japanese anywhere.

All the greens were pretty, the hills were pretty. There was a golf course there. We didn't really know what we were supposed to do. We got out, then we saw some British come a running over the hill, hollering, "Hey, you bloody blokes, come on up." (Chuckle) And we wandered on up to the buildings there. They were nice, shining buildings that hadn't seen any signs of war.

And we came to find out that there were 70,000 in this camp and they had surrendered to the Japanese without ever having fired a gun. They had their uniforms all shined up, their buttons shined. They had sticks over their backs and were marching up the street in formation. And the guards were putting them off at different places with a stick instead of a gun...carrying right on with their war games in a prison war camp.

And we came to find out that they had made an agreement with the Japanese that they would surrender and stay in there but the Japs weren't allowed to come any further than the gate and bring them food. That was the agreement they had. I sickened us to see what was happening with them.

We had several occasions where their officers had asked our officers to salute their officers and some of our officers told them, "You yellow so-an-so, you don't rate a salute with the way you've done." So, several fights between the Americans and the British erupted in there.

We stayed there three weeks and that was the first time I had seen any Red Cross food. I understand that the British had been getting it ever since they had been captured, a parcel each week for each man, and they had enough on hand to let us have four parcels for five men, to divide up in the group. And we found out that this was extra and they had been selling it, like in a canteen, above the parcel for each man. It looked mighty bad, after what we had been through, to see what was going on with them.

I went down and saw this big 15.9 gun mounted on a track and this gun had never been fired at the Japanese when they crossed. They said it was trained to the seaward side and they couldn't train it to the river side, which was the way the Japanese had come in across the river...in boats. And they let them come in without firing at them.

I think that that gun could have very easily been turned by taking up the track and turning the gun toward the river side, but they just surrendered without fighting. We didn't agree with them.

After staying there for three weeks we left out on a ship without knowing where we were going, but the party I was with found out we were going to Japan after we left. The ship I was on got into a typhoon on the way to Saigon. At times the ship was not moving and at times it was making as much as, they said, three knots. For several days we were caught in that typhoon, and during that time one of the boilers busted loose and couldn't be used. When we finally got into Saigon they pulled into the river and repaired the boiler. We found out it was one of the ships that the Americans had given to the



Japanese in 1923, I believe, after a bad earthquake over there. This was an old American ship we had given them.

We stayed in there three days until they repaired the boiler, and then we started out on another journey to Japan, hugging the coast of China. Our next stop was in Formosa that is on the island of Taiwan, and we came in there and stayed one day then got underway hugging the coast of China.

Our next port was Moji, Japan. We got off there. We got off the ship there and went over by ferry to the island of Honshu. And from there we were on a train for a couple of days to the other end of the island. It was slow going. Sometimes they would have to bring in another engine to help over the mountains.

And when the train would stop for coal, they would put cold rice balls on for us to eat. Just one cold rice ball and nothing else with it. We were beginning to get very hungry since the food we got in Japan was worse than where we were before.

We first came into Kumaishi, which was on the coast of Japan, on the upper end, and from there we had to backtrack up into the mountains a few miles to the little town of Ohasi (*spelling?*) where they had our camp.

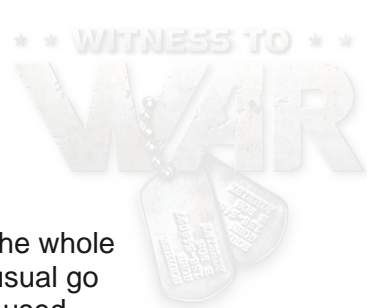
This camp was the one that we were supposed to stay in but it wasn't finished, so we stayed in an old school building up there to start with. It was around October 20, 1942, and there was already about 2 inches of snow on the ground. They took us out onto the school ground and made us line up facing one another, pull our shirts off and take big hands full of snow and rub it on the person in front of you. Each person took his turn.

They said that it was to toughen us up to the area since we had just come out of the tropics where our blood was really thin. This was really bad on us. We nearly froze with this snow rubbed all over us, but they said this would thicken our blood up fast and toughen us up for that area.

The next night some of us began to get sick from it, with fever, and two of the men died that night. I sat up with both of them. One of them was Sidell but I've forgotten the other American's name that died in just a little while. I remember sitting up with Sidell. He was really delirious with a high fever. He said, "Paul, I saw my daddy and mother last night and talked with them." I saw then that he was really sick...sicker than I thought. Within about an hour's time he died. The Japanese didn't furnish any medical attention whatsoever. If you made it, you made it. If you didn't, you died. And that's what happened to them. Nobody came in until he died and then the guards came in and took him out.

The next day we had to take both of them down to a little area close by where they put them into an incinerator where they were cremated. This was a really bad task for us to have to do to, take somebody we knew, who had died, and put them on a tray and put them in there to burn. But that was the way it was over there. The ashes came out in a little box about four inches square and it didn't take much room to carry them around.

Some of the Englishmen carried the little box of ashes of their men around with them. I don't know what they did with Sidell's, and the other man's, ashes. I assume that they were buried them there in the ground.



When we went down to take a bath we had to bathe in a big wooden box that the whole little town used to take a bath...women, children, men, everyone. It wasn't unusual go down while people were watching you take a bath in the box that they had just used.

It was a few weeks before they got the other camp built so we were sent out on odd jobs around in the countryside. It was the only work we did until they got the new camp finished pretty close to the temporary camp.

I remember them taking us out on one work party and we sat down in the back yard of the little houses. I was sitting in one group and a woman came out of the back door of her house, came up near us, lifter the back of her dress, bent over at about a 35 degree angle and urinated. We found that it wasn't unusual to see something like that happen in Japan.

We could also find little wild onions growing out on the banks of the roads that we would pick and mix with the rice. I don't care to eat them now, but then they tasted mighty good. As hungry as we were then, all we could think about was to look for something we could eat when we were out of the camp. It wasn't as easy to find food in the countryside in Japan as it was when we had been in Java. They just didn't have anything. The trees were just little scrub trees all up in the mountains. The trees had been cut down and cleared for little garden areas and little rice patties. It was different there.

We went down to this new camp they had built for us. This camp was built on a style like the chicken houses we have here. The buildings had two levels that we stayed in and we had to climb a letter to get to the upper deck.

It was sometime in April when we moved down there. After we got there this Jerry Bunch got these parts together for a radio, assembled them and commenced to operate the radio. He had to run a hidden electrical cable up to the building's electrical wiring because the battery wouldn't last long. I wasn't in that camp all the time but I was told that someone operated that radio in there until the war was over.

Jerry was on the upstairs floor where he operated the radio and I slept 3 mats from him. We had these little thin grass mats to sleep on the floor. He had this electrical wire concealed behind an old box he had fastened to the wall, and he had ear phones he used to listen to the news. He could get news from Tokyo and Vladavostok and sometimes get San Francisco.

He would write down, on a piece of paper, the news that he thought was important and would pass it around so that we could keep up with what was happening and how the war was going at that time.

About that time the guards seem to have gotten worse with more beatings. We didn't know why but there would be blackout at night. We figured that, at that time, the war wasn't going against them some. We had heard some things that made us think that was the reason for that treatment.

Then we started working in the mine. We worked a while outside the mine on maintenance of it, then they put us on a night shift, about 10 hours each night, inside the



mine. The mine was up hill from their camp about 3½ miles. It was hard to climb up to where the mine was.

There was a little train track that began at the foot of the mountain and gradually climbed about ¾ of a mile to the same level as we entered the mine. The shafts from there spread out in different sections and the tracks would run to each section.

We were working in a section with a bunch of Koreans. The guard would take us up to the section we were working in and we would pass through an air lock by opening one door and close it before opening the other door. The jack hammers were working on compressed air and even the air we breather was compressed.

I remember one day when we were working we suddenly heard air spewing through the doors and I jokingly told the Koreans that the mine had caved in and we can't get out. They listened for a moment and ran and opened the door. Sure enough, there had been a cave in. There was a big pile of rubble in the passageway. It was very dark because there were just very small lights in there. The rubble was piled up at an area where we shoveled the mined material down a chute and it looked like we couldn't get out.

One of the Koreans started climbing the pile of rubble and the rest of us followed and there was enough clearance for us to climb out. When we got out on the other side people were running around all excited. They couldn't find the guard, so one of the Japanese workers marched us back down to the camp without us knowing what happened to the guard. It was about two o'clock in the morning.

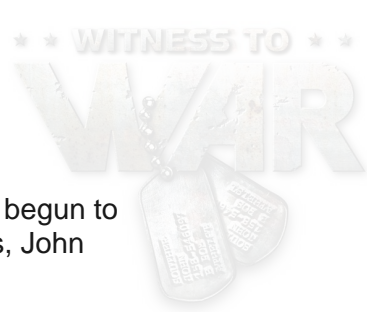
When we got to the camp the guards commenced to beat us, working us over and wanting volunteers to go back to the mine. They didn't tell us what had happened, but no one would volunteer. They did put together a party to go back there but I wasn't in it. When they got back up there the guard had already been dug out of the rubble, but he was dead.

We didn't know what had caused it nor did we have anything to do with it, but the Japanese thought we did. So they kept the whole camp out of work for three days investigating. They talked with each of us, asking questions. After three days they told the nine of us Americans working in that shaft that we were going to be transferred to the Hopedatti (*spelling?*) Camp on the next island.

Some of us had heard that it was a British camp and that the prisoners had a pretty bad case of the itch. So an American doctor in our camp gave me a little bottle of condensed Lysol and told me to use it sparingly when washing and said that it was the only thing he could give me to try to keep from getting the itch. So I took it and used it.

We left out across on a ferry over to the town of Hopedatti and entered the camp. There were only British and Dutch prisoners in the camp and the nine of us were the first Americans there at that time, but several other Americans were sent up later.

We found that what they said was true about the itch, and it was really bad. Many prisoners had scratched big raw areas all over their bodies and become infected. They looked pretty bad.



They had put us in a little stall-like right in middle of the other prisoners. It had begun to get pretty warm then and the stink was pretty bad. There were two Americans, John Ewing was one of them, that got this itch but the rest of us never did get it.

They had a commandant in there that we called 'the cat' because he looked just like a cat when he looked at you. You could just imagine that he had whiskers sticking out just like a mean cat's face. He was very rough and ordered a lot of beatings. They would bring guards in from outside the camp that would give beatings. I remember one day they got after one of us named Dailey, a big tall man that may have been Korean. The guard kept running after him beating him with a big bamboo stick, especially between the legs, with the man screaming. After that he was ruptured and in pretty bad shape but he lived to get out of it.

We found the working conditions there were really hard and the food was light. There were several different working parties we went on. One of them we called the Ice House where we would load and unload fish and it was very cold in there. But we would manage to steal frozen fish from the boxes and eat them. You couldn't tell that you were eating anything but we could fill up on fish while working in there. And so many of us tried to get on that working party.

We learned from the Dutch that we could tie a frozen fish on a string and then tie it to our body and let it dangle down between our legs and take it into the camp and cook it. I don't know of anyone getting caught smuggling the fish into the camp because the guards wouldn't pat you down but not in the crotch area.

One working party was to unload salt from the ships down at the docks. The salt would be loose in the ship and Japanese workers would shovel the salt into eighty-pound bags. We would have to form lines and walk one plank into the ship to get the bags and another plank from the ship and take the bags of salt in the warehouse all day long. This was very tiresome, especially when the days were hot.

Many times a prisoner would be able to wander away from the line, out of sight of the guards, and look for food in other parts of the warehouses. Most of the time they would find only cases of sardines or salmon. Many of these boxes were stolen and hidden in the bushes or around the warehouse. At lunchtime the guards would allow us to sit around on our own in an area away from them and the location of the stolen food would get around. Hidden from the guards, the boxes would be broken open and the cans passed around. We would then open the tins and pour the fish into our mess tins under the rice. We would then eat from the bottom of the tin while the guards sat and watched us without knowing what we were doing.

After the meal we would crush the cans into a ball, break up the wooden crate and dispose of pieces in the "binjo"...a big hole where we would get rid of it.

Another area I worked in was the iron foundry where there was a big high, open building where there was a big smelting pot where they heated the iron ore and poured in out in castings for different parts of machinery for the ships. When these parts came out of the molds we had to take a little rock hammer and chip away the rough parts and clean them. I've busted many of the parts wide open by hitting them in a certain place. We had a problem with the workers and guards coming around and accusing us of



damaging the parts and we would tell them that they were that way when they came out of the molds. We figured that we were helping our cause by doing this.

One day we noticed the Japanese commenced running around and outside and I noticed this big old pot hanging high in the air had begun to shake from side to side and the whole building was shaking. It was a tin building. Everyone jumped up and ran after them but we didn't know what was happening. After we got outside the building we asked the Japanese what was wrong and they said, "Earthquake. Earthquake." We stayed out there a few minutes and it settled down a little bit. It was the first time I had encountered an earthquake.

Sometimes, then, we had to go outside and pick up scrap iron. One day one of the workers had taken me outside picking up scrap iron. We had, what we called, a yoyo pole that you put over your shoulder with a big bag hanging from the pole by straps. We would pick up as much scrap as you could get in the bag and took it back into the iron foundry to redo the scrap.

I had beriberi pretty bad that day and my legs, knees and ankles and feet were swelled and sore...very touchy. I stumbled while carrying the bag and a Japanese grabbed the pole and commenced beating me across my head and shoulders. I was very angry at that time and I grabbed the pole from him, threw him down on the ground, took my left hand and held him by his collar and, with my right hand commenced beating him. I could have killed him, I was so mad. I beat him pretty bad with my fist and finally turned him loose when I realized what would happen to me if I did.

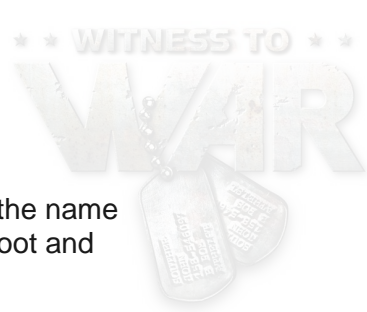
I let him up and he grabbed the pole and commenced beating me again across my head and shoulders and then he hit the calf of my left leg, which immediately commenced swelling and turning dark. And I couldn't walk it hurt so bad. I couldn't put any pressure on my leg.

Then the guard came back in and got into an argument with the civilian. The guard told him that he was going to get into trouble because he wasn't there. He was kind of chewing him out for getting into a fight with me. I could understand a little of their Japanese. They agreed to take me back to the camp and tell them that I had gotten hurt on the job. They called in some of our workers and got a stretcher and took me back into the camp. I was never brought before the Commandant and nothing was said about it.

I stayed in this camp and couldn't walk for nineteen days...couldn't put any pressure on my leg. It was swelled up big and black but it finally went down. They put me on camp work for a while.

Along at this same time I had gotten dysentery pretty bad. I had seen many men die from it shortly after getting it. A doctor had told me one time that the only thing he knew we could do for dysentery is take soot out of the inside of the stove pipe and put on the rice to eat. I tried this and I guess it helped because it never did get real bad.

I stayed in camp and worked but I remember one day they had put me on a working party after I had been up all night and hadn't slept any...was in bad shape. They had a little Japanese, they called the medic that you went before if you weren't able to work. They sent me down to him and he asked what was wrong. I told him that I had been up



all night and couldn't go to work. We called this little medic "the snake", that's the name we gave him, because while you were telling him something he would pat his foot and look at you real hard and mean-like.

And there were two things he would say "work" or "camp". So when he stood and patted his foot and told me "work", I spoke back and told him that I couldn't go out because I was too sick. He slapped me over and kept slapping me down. I messed all in my britches when he did this.

There was an English officer in the area there that followed me back into the camp and told me to stay in and he would put another to work in my place that day. There had to be the right number of people when they counted off or there would be trouble. I still stayed in camp for a few days before going back to work.

When you were at work you were always trying to find something to steal to eat because you were always hungry. Many times I had gone through the garbage cans...at times I would find fish that was rotten with maggots crawling inside them.

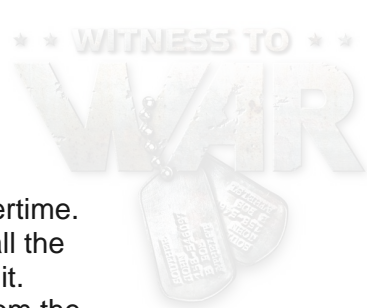
We always kept a little coke fire going when we were working, so I would take the fish, when the guards weren't watching, rake the maggots from the fish and put them on a little tin over the fire to bake and eat.

We didn't have salt or other seasoning in the camp so when we were working close to the sea I would dip a can of water from the sea and keep it on the fire all day so that, at the end of the day, there would be a small handful of salt in the can to whap in a piece of paper and take back to the camp. One time I got caught and got a beating from it, but you would always keep trying.

One day some of the workers had found a keg of peanut oil, and since we would always have a canteen with us a bunch of them would fill up their canteens with the peanut oil and bring back to the camp to be traded. Then one day when we got back to camp we found that all of our things, clothes and little things we had accumulated, were lying out in piles on the floor all over the camp.

One day before that, I had gotten in line at the docks and had made a little stabbing knife, and I had a pair of Army Kline wire cutters that I had traded from one of the Army Lost Battalion bunches that was with us down in Java. They were missing from the piles of our things and I was told to come down to the Commandant's office. So I went down there and the Japanese guard was standing with the knife and pliers marked with my number. I was scared to death because I had made the knife but he commenced asking me about the pliers first. But I commenced to argue with him that they were Army pliers that I had when captured and I had never been asked to turn them in. He would tell me, "No, no", they were not Army pliers but were Japanese pliers. I told him, "No, they weren't".

He finally took the pliers into the Commandant's office, and when he left the room I took my little knife and threw it into the barrel where, I had noticed, they kept things that were taken from prisoners who came in before me. When he came in from the Commandant's office he told me that, yes, they were American pliers and that I could go. So, I was very much relieved.



Another thing I remember, I think this was in the latter part of 1943, in the wintertime. There was a big snow on the ground there then. Snow stayed on the ground all the winter up until June. There was deep snow with deep trails as you go through it. Anyway, this day the *binjo* carts were in the dockyards. They would load up from the toilets everything they had on certain days in big carts. They had a two-wheel cart with great big iron wheels and had one horse to pull it.

Anyway, I was out working, picking up scrap, one thing and another, and there was a wagonload of corn crossing the train track there. When the wagon wheels hit the train track they slid to the side, down the track, because there was snow on the rails. And when it hit one of the rail bolts it stopped the wagon real quick and it threw his corn off the cart down into the snow and they scattered to right where I was standing. Two ears of the corn fell right next to me so I took my foot and mashed them right down into the snow. When he got off the cart to get his corn he didn't get those two, so after he left I dug them out of the snow.

That evening when I went into camp I hid the corn on me and got them into camp. It was yellow corn, big yellow ears of corn. In the early part of the night I had parched some of the corn in a little pan on the heater. As I was eating it a guard came through, and I hadn't seen him. He asked me what I was doing. I didn't tell him anything, just stood up at attention. He said, "Me Christian. You tell me and there won't be anymore to it." So I finally told him that I had found this corn at the dockyard and had brought it in and was parching it.

He grabbed me hold of me and said, "To the guard house." I stayed in the guard house three nights and two days without anything to eat. It was real cold...I just had a shirt on in there...no coat. I didn't sleep any during the three nights and two days and didn't any food nor water. I shadowboxed at night to try to keep warm because there were big cracks in the walls and the cold was whipping in. It was real cold. When I got out of there I was so weak I could barely walk. I did go and take a bath, the first thing, and when I got out of there I almost fainted. I could hardly walk. They took me down where the cooks had saved me some food, and they gave it to me. I finally got to where I could get around but I almost passed out from weakness.

I remember one other day. The boy that stayed with me all of the time that I was in the camp, we stayed together, was Rose, a guy Mack Rose. He was a Machinist Second Class and I was a Water Tender Second Class. Anyway, they had brought a dead horse into the camp dragging it in behind a cart. It looked like it had just died. And we took everything we could get off the horse to eat for a few days. Anyway they had taken the head and boiled it and got part of the meat off it. Some of the skin and the eyes were still on it and the ears sticking up. Me and Rose took this old head that they had thrown away, and took it up on the hill and sat down and ate everything we could get off this horse head. We laughed about what people would think, back in the States, if they could see us like that.

We took the jawbones, after we ate all we could get off it, removed the teeth from them and cracked the bones and raked all the marrow out of the bones and put it in a little tin which we put on the stove and boiled it with water. When it cooled we took the stuff that floated to the top and we had a big cake of butter...horse butter...we used to put on our rice. It was yellow and tasted pretty good on rice.



After that we had a different Commandant that came into the camp and took over. What he was doing was trying to run a brain washing period with all of the personnel in there. We would have to go in before him and he would give us a long talk. He would talk about how good the Japanese history had been and things that had happened to the Japanese in the past. Then he would tell the bad parts, the bad things the Americans had done. He would tell about the Spanish-American war and about different things the Americans had done. It was a long program that lasted about two hours and he would ask if we were single or married. If we were single he would tell us that, if we had a girlfriend, she would leave us...wouldn't have anything to do with us when we got back. And asked if we wanted to stay there after the war and have a Japanese woman, and go through a long program. If we were married your wife would have done left you and gone with somebody else. There were different things he would bring around about it.

When one would go out we would ask him, then, about what was going on so that we would know what was going on. It was the same thing. Even if you were married it was one way and if you were single it may be a little different in another way.

We went through this program. And our food was better for a while. They treated us better and the beatings weren't so bad. Then it changed back to the beatings...from one extreme to the other...back to the bad beatings and knocking you around. I don't know of anybody that turned with him during this program. But later on he came back into the camp and told us that that is why he was sent in there. That was his job was to brainwash us.

One more thing that I remember...it was in the spring of 1944, I guess. We went down to the dockyard and saw a picture of President Roosevelt on a big poster board down there, real high...a great big picture of him. And it looked like blood smeared all over his picture. We asked some of the workers down there what it was and they told us that President Roosevelt had died and said that we didn't have a chance now to win the war. After he died the Japanese would win the war.

A little guard, when he came out of the Commandant's office, I told the fellows there that were working with me, I said, "Boys, the war is over." I just had a feeling. I felt like I had been told by the Holy Spirit that it was over. And they asked me, "What do you mean that the war is over?" And I said, "Well, it's got to happen sometime." And they just kind of made light of it.

Then the little old guard came out to where we were working and he asked me, "How much of this ground could we grade off by lunchtime." This was about 10:00 in the morning. This was on August 15, over there. And I told him about half of what I thought we could do, is where I drew off on the ground. And he came back about half of where I told him and said, "Do that much and quit and come on in to lunch." And he walked off. But I noticed when he came out there that he had tears in his eyes, and I had never seen one have tears in his eyes before.

Then these fellows that were working turned around to me and asked what was going on here. I told them that, I still say, the war is over. Well, they said they couldn't believe it. I said that it's got to happen sometime. I told them that if that's the way it is, throw your tools down and let's go in the house. They all threw their tools down followed me and we went into the camp, which wasn't very far. And that was the last lick of work that we ever did. We never did go back to work.



We got into the camp and these fellows that were working went down and told some of the English officers what I had told them about the war being over. The officers came up to me and asked how I felt and I told them that it was just how I felt. They said that they didn't have any word of anything and didn't know. I told them about them going into the Commandant's office, and I said that I believed that the war is over now.

And it wasn't but a little while that that the Japanese Commandant called and told those working in the cookhouse to go down and cook a hot meal. We usually already had a meal prepared of rice balls for those who went out on a working party, so they didn't cook anything at lunchtime. We went down and started preparing a meal and, about that time, the workers all came marching in from the camp...that was before lunchtime...maybe 11:00 or so. Then our officers commenced to think that there was something to what I said. So, from there on, all during the day they tried out everything, you know, and it seemed that it was leading toward that.

We all had a hot meal and everybody was really excited about what was happening. From there on into the afternoon some of the guards began leaving the camp and by dark there were just a few guards left in there.

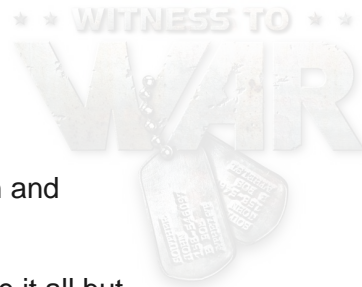
It was really hot and I decided to take my little grass mat on the outside between the buildings and sleep that night because the mosquitoes were bad inside and it was hot in there. So, I took it out and was laying outside asleep and a little guard came by and woke me up and commenced to motion for me to go back into the camp and told me that I couldn't sleep out there. I had done felt pretty brave about it by then and told him to go ahead and leave me alone and get on out from here. He said, "No, no." I said, "Yes, I'm going to sleep here." He finally left me and let me sleep out there.

Some of them had decided, though all the excitement, stayed up and took a sheet and what paint they could get hold of and made an American flag. By the morning they had taken down the Japanese flag and hung this American flag up over the camp. That flag stayed there from then on. It never was taken down. That was on August 16.

So, from that time on, little things like that led us to believe that it was over, but they never had told us then, but just about all of the guards had gone and left the camp. The next day we took the Commandant and put him in the brig, the guard house and took over.

There was one guard that stayed in there. He had never given us any trouble before when we were out on working parties. He had told us that he was a Christian and had brought out a little New Testament and showed it to us. He could speak some English...the Testament was in English. And we believed him. Every time any of the beatings went on he would stand back and wouldn't participate in them. Also, he would try to help us to get food when he could, but he had never taken part in any of the beatings. His job was to keep count of the numbers when they went out and check them when they came back in.

He had stayed in and the Commandant was one of the few left in there. From then on we commenced leaving the camp. I was one of the three that day that decided that we would go outside the camp. You could get out of it easily. So we got out and wandered around the little town looking for food, which was very small. We noticed that when we



would go out to the houses, they would leave their houses and run, the women and children, or whoever was there.

We would go in and take whatever we could get of their food. We wouldn't take it all but just a part of it. We would take a sack along and fill it up with whatever we could find...a few chickens, a few vegetables of different kinds, and eggs. We would gather up what we could get and bring back into the camp. The next few days other parties started wandering out. Sometimes we would go four or five miles, go off all day looking for food. We'd come back in and be surprised how much food we had when we got it all together. Some of them brought in goats and live chickens and they would be all over the camp.

We had three shoats, hogs, in the camp and one Holstein cow, a pretty cow. There were four of us and they knew that I was a country boy and knew how to butcher a cow or hog. We got together and killed this cow one day, and all three of the hogs, and dressed them. We had that to go into the pot and we started cooking that and mixed the meat and vegetables together and made a pretty nice stew. And we ate pretty well for the next two weeks from the stuff we had brought in. Also, the Japs had started sending us in more food...anything they could get...into the camp. Our times, at this time were much better on our eating.

Then one day, this officer that had been in the camp before, that I mentioned had come in to brainwash us, he came back into the camp. He was glad to see us, he said and he wanted to make an announcement. So we got a place for him to stand up on a bench. He got up and made a talk and told us, "The Americans and Japanese have peace terms." We commenced booing him down and said, "Peace terms, hell. Unconditional surrender." He'd try to talk and we'd just holler him down. He finally said, "Yes, that is it. The Japanese had surrendered to the Americans." And he made a pretty good little talk. He had pretty good English and told us, "I had never been to America but I had been taught to brainwash you...that was my job...that's what I was sent in to do. If you'll notice the things I told you was all of the bad about America. I never did bring the good points. America has good points but I wasn't to tell you of the good points, but of the bad things that had happened. That was the job I had to do and I did the best I could at it.

It wasn't but a day or so after that that five Americans came into the camp. They were supposed to be war correspondents but said that they were in the Regular Army. One of them was an American-Japanese interpreter. They came in a jeep and had Tommy guns and all kinds of equipment strapped on them. We had a telephone in the camp and they told us that we would be told, from Tokyo, what to do and we were told to take our orders from Tokyo. We were living pretty well at that time.

Later on, in two more weeks, before we got orders from Tokyo to come and get on a train at the little town. Our forces hadn't yet occupied the island, but they said that they had a little temporary air base set up a few miles away and the train would take us to that area. So we carried out our orders and that's how we left the camp.

But before these last two weeks the first B-29s flew over the camp, found us and dropped a little field radio and told us to stand by, make a mark out on the field where they could drop some food. So we had some lime in the camp that we took and made a cross out in the area where they were coming over. They said they couldn't see it so I



took a little flag-like, got out there myself and started waving it with my arms where it was and they started dropping steel drums with parachutes on them that they dropped as close as they could to that area. There were all kinds of canned foods, cigarettes, candy and different things...they just swamped us with food.

I remember that there was one Englishman in the camp that said he wasn't going to get out but would just lay in his bed. One of these drums that they dropped came through the roof and hit him, breaking both of his legs.

From then on we lived well during those last two weeks. A few days later a Navy plane flew over and dropped another field radio and told us that they had three aircraft carriers sitting off near Commichi (*spelling?*) and they were going to bring us food in. The others started bringing food in the same area. They said they would commence about 8:00 in the morning. They brought food in, I believe with B-29 dive-bombers, and lay the food down in that area. Some of them looked like they would be about 10-12 feet from the ground.

They would bring in a lot of hot food. They brought in hot bread that looked like it had come right out of the oven. They would open the little doors on the side of the plane and they would holler at us when they came by. Some of them would throw out little notes with their names and addresses on them.

After we left the camp we pulled up, where I had told you before, and went on down on this little train to this temporary air base they had set up. They had planes there waiting for us. From there, I believe it was a C-46 that I rode on to Tokyo. They had trucks there that they put us on and we rode through the town of Tokyo. You could see that the buildings were torn up and there were big holes in the streets and we had to drive around twisting between the streets and buildings.

There was a center there in Tokyo that we went through. We had to go before a doctor for each branch of Service and the one I was to see was in Yokahama, back to where the ships were, twisting through these streets to get down there.

We got down to the docks, Rose and me were together, the only two in that bunch that went back to the Navy. They sent us down to a ship. When we got down there we could see the Third Fleet of ours was laying off at sea. It was mighty pretty to us because it was more ships than we had seen before in the Navy.

They sent us out to one of those ships they use for landing heavy equipment. We went aboard and the office on deck told us to go down below, find you a bunk somewhere and we will give you orders later for what to do. This was on Saturday afternoon. So we went down made ourselves at home, found ourselves a bunk and started eating regular Navy chow, which was might good from what we had been used to for a long time.

We stayed over through Sunday and Monday morning Rose told me, "Let's go find out what we're supposed to do." We hadn't heard anything. I went up to the Office of the Day, a different one that was on the ship we came on. I asked him, "We would like to find out, sir, what we're supposed to do." He looked over on the log and said, "You're the two prisoners of war come aboard here?"



He said, "You see that ship out there underway?" I said, "Yes sir." He said, "You're supposed to be on it." So he got on the telephone or radio, whichever he was using, and called the ship and called for a motor launch and sent us out to that ship. They stopped the ship and put us aboard it.

From there we went to Guam on this ship. There were a lot of prisoners of war on the ship. A lot of Canadians on there that had been on some other camp...ones that had been with me before and I never knew what had happened to them.

I remember one that was on there, one that had been on the Houston before. He had been in the Philippines for a while and they had sent him on into Japan. I hadn't seen him since the ship had been sunk. His name was Pat Wheat.

We landed off the ship in Guam and I was sent from there up to a hospital. I just thought that I had been through Guam on the way out and it was just a little area...not much to it, but they had built big wide, paved roads like in the States. It didn't even look like the same place we had gone through before. We stayed in the hospital there for a day or so, I don't know just how long.

From there I rode a plane all the way back to the States. We left Guam and had come to the Gilbert Islands. I noticed when we got in there they had Red Cross personnel there and anything that we wanted, they were really nice to us. We hadn't been used to all that nice treatment and it kind of shocked us, in a way, being so nice. Anything we wanted, any drinks, anything they had in there, they gave us...any information, and they tried to help us. They were really good, the personnel of the Red Cross. We stopped off there for just a few hours.

From there we went over to Johnson Island, which is between the Gilberts and Hawaii. I remember, when we landed, you could see both ends of the island at the same time. There was just a little airstrip there on it. That was all there was. I remember there was a sign, a picture of a bird saying, "What, no tree to land on?" We just stayed a little time there and then on into Hawaii.

When we got into Hawaii we went to the hospital there and they sent us down to the Marine barracks to pick up some clothes. It was the first clothes I had received on the way back. They said we could get anything we wanted there, so we got some kaki pants and shirts...things to wear...back in Marine uniform instead of the Navy, Anyway we went on out to the place where the ships had sunk with people still down in them. It was very sad for us, what had happened there.

We stayed the rest of that day and sometime, I believe it was late that afternoon, they put us back on a plane and took us on into the States. This time we got on a Navy PBYX. The one we rode before, coming in, was a C54. When we got on the plane there was a Naval Commander there and he called me and told me that he wanted me to sit with him when he found I had been a prisoner of war.

I remember, he wanted to talk about some of the things that happened to me. So I told him some of the stuff that had happened and how rough it was. He said, "Well, I would like to tell you, I know you had it rough and you heard that we treated the Japanese mighty good and their stay was mighty good, but it wasn't always that way."



I remember one instance, he told several, but one he said that he was in charge, himself, of Japanese prisoners of war, you know. He said, "They sent me out in a Jeep to pick up a Japanese who surrendered." He said, "When he started to get into the Jeep, he was so proud that he could surrender to the Americans...so proud to be here."

He said, "I got him into the jeep and drove out to the camp. I stopped on the way out and told him to get out, and asked him if he would like an American cigarette." He said, "Yes sir, I would like an American cigarette." So he gave him and American cigarette and when he lit it up he slapped it out of his mouth and slapped him over and said, "You are now a prisoner of war and you will be treated as a prisoner of war and not as a celebrity coming into this country." I guess he told me that to make me feel a little better...the things that had happened to me.

I think that our speed of this was 280 miles per hour...a 4-motor plane with pontoons on the bottom. It was a Navy plane. It seemed to me like a big old buzzard up in the air. It was loaded with about 40 passengers and the rest of it was cargo. It rode so much easier than the C-54 or C-56 that we had been riding. There weren't the air pockets that we would hit and drop down. The ride was much better.

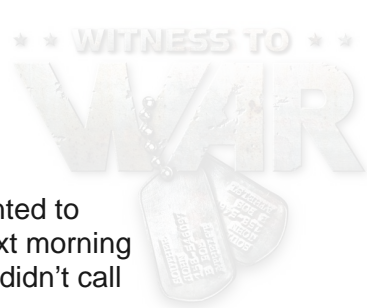
When we left out it was before sundown, I guess, and he asked me, "Have you ever seen the sunset out through the plane?" And I said, "No, I haven't?" So he said, "Come on, let's go in the cockpit." And he took me up in the cockpit and you could see the blue ocean way down below us and the sun was setting. It was a real pretty sight to see in that position.

It took us right about 14 hours to get into Oakland, California, is where we landed. We landed in the bay and, I remember, we came under the Golden Gate Bridge. I said then, "Well, I've be under it, across it and I've been over it." So I had been all three ways across it.

After we landed, we got off the plane, I remember, I was so proud to be back on American soil that I got off and kissed the ground. They sent us on out to the Naval hospital in Oakland. I had been there before when I left to go overseas and Oakland was a small town. It seemed to me to be about the size of Lawrenceville, Georgia, but then it was so big that I couldn't recognize any of the places I had been before.

We got into the hospital the first night, the boy that was with me, I don't remember his name, had a sister that lived in Vallejo, California, and he wanted me to see if we could go up there and see her.

So we went up and asked a Navy lady Lieutenant on watch there at the hospital. She was the Officer of the Day. So we told her what we wanted to do and she said, "Well, I can't issue a liberty card, a pass to go, because you aren't in the right uniform, and all. I can't say you can go, but I'll tell you what, right across the street on the corner, there's a bus stop. That bus goes to Vallejo, and I'll be on until 12:00 and if you decide to go be sure you're back in by 12:00". We took the hint and walked out of the hospital and caught that bus and went on up there to see his sister...stayed a while and got back in a little while before 12:00 and nothing was ever said about it. We didn't have any pass or identification on us whatsoever, but we made it and got back in without any trouble.



We were allowed to make one free telephone call home, or to whoever we wanted to call. We didn't have telephones down here (*in Snellville*) when I left so, the next morning we went up and I called my brother, Boyd, in Richmond and talked with him. I didn't call home because I didn't know we had a phone down there.

I remember, Jerry Bunch wanted me to go over there with him to call his wife. He called his wife and he didn't talk but just a very few minutes to her. And I noticed that he had an awfully sad look on his face when he turned around. He told me, "Paul, my wife asked me for a divorce over the telephone." He was really hurt, because all the time I had been with him in Ohasi camp all he could talk about was to get home to his wife. He was a very quite, good fellow, but that really hurt him. It looked like it had taken all the life out of him when she had told him that.

Late that afternoon, a nurse in the ward where we were staying, passed the word that, if anyone would like to go home, or head toward the East Coast, there were two seats available on a plane. I was the first one to hold up my hand and told her I'd like to catch it because they were having trouble with transportation from out there. The busses were on strike and it was a long way by train. So I said I would take it and I grabbed what little things together and was told that I had just one hour to get to where we had to catch the plane. There was somebody to take us down there so I got on another C-56, I believe it was. They said it might stop off in Texas, from there to Kansas City, from there to Washington, DC on to Pensacola, Florida, would be the route of the plane.

We got on that afternoon and headed out. It wasn't too long after we go on that we got into a storm, a bad storm...to me, it seemed, anyway. I noticed when we got on the plane there was a sign right over the seat that said it was an experimental plane. It didn't sound too good to me. We hit this storm and it got pretty rough. You could look out through these little peepholes and see the lightening flashing and see light streaks in the clouds and when you hit the sides of them you could hear the motors grinding and growling and twisting around. The co-pilot came back and told us to fasten our seatbelts because we were going to have to make a forced landing and that we would be going pretty straight down and it would hurt our ears.

So we made a landing at Bakersfield and when we got down we found that it was Bakersfield, California. It was kind of a short runway that we had come in on and after we got down they told us that a C-54 or C-56, whichever this was, had never landed there before. We stayed down until right before dark and the pilot decided to get back up. And we flew all night, and I didn't know if we were going to stop off in Texas or not, and early the next morning they landed in Independence, Missouri.

First of all, when we started out the gate, I had decided that I was going to go up town and catch me a train to go in. I was very nervous and tired of riding on a plane that far. So I started out the gate and a sailor at the gate told me, "Come and check your name out over here." I said, "No. There's no use for me to check out because I'm not coming back." He said, "Well, check out anyway." So I checked out but I didn't even tell them I was leaving.

So I went down town and checked when I could get a train and they said it would be late that afternoon when I could get a train to Atlanta, Georgia. So I got on a fast train there to go straight through and I went to sleep and rode from there on into Atlanta.



I didn't see any parts of the States because I was tired and sleepy and slept all the way in. The first thing I heard was coming in to Georgia...the conductor hollering "Kennesaw, Georgia".

When I got to the train station I got off and got a taxi and went out to the bus station. I was kind of turned around, I hadn't been there so long I didn't know just how to go, so I got a taxi and went out there.

Everybody was pushing, trying to get on a bus, so I missed two busses. I finally got on a bus coming to Snellville. About 2:00, or a little later, I got into Snellville...a little bitty town with two little stores...not like it is now.

I hadn't heard too much from home. I didn't know how everything was then, but I did know, Vera, my oldest sister did live there. It was real dark when I got off so I went down to where her house was and tried to get somebody up but couldn't get anybody out of bed. I went to several more houses where I knew people had lived there and couldn't get anybody up. So I went back up to where Horace's garage used to be...an old garage sitting there where Mel Malone had later.

There was a school bus sitting there so got up in the school bus and thought I might go to sleep, but it was October and kind of cool then and I couldn't go to sleep. So I decided I would go back down to the house and try again to get somebody up at Vera's. So I went back and hollered really loud and told her I would like some information. And I heard her holler in there asking, "Who is it?" and I said, "Gilleland." She said, "What Gilleland?" and I said, "Paul Gilleland."

So then she came and opened the door and her face was really white because they weren't expecting me to come home. She just sat back on the settee and fainted. About that time Norman and Charlotte and Jean got up out of the house and came in and were working with her...trying to talk with me some, too, at the same time. She finally revived back up.

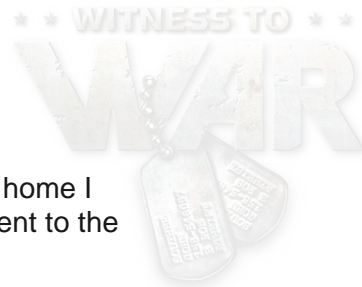
It was quite a gathering because they weren't expecting me home. They hadn't heard from me. They had been listing ex-prisoners of war coming home but they hadn't listed me in the paper. When I was in Tokyo I had sent telegrams from there but neither one had arrived. But after I got home I went to the mailbox and got one out myself.

Anyway, this was way along in the morning before daylight and Norman ran out to Mr. Britt's, Mr. W. C. Britt's house, and got him out of bed and he took me down to where my daddy and mother lived in their home awhile before daylight that morning.

It was a glad reunion of coming home. My mother and father both were really proud to see me. They said they had never given up hope that I would get back.

In a little while, up in the morning, word had spread around and several people came over. I remember Mr. Bud Shell came over and Mr. Taylor Moon came over. Several people came over that morning because they had heard about me coming home.

I stayed here at home two days because they had given me orders, from out there at the hospital to leave. They had put on there to report to Dublin Naval Hospital. They had put on there the date I left, but not the date I was supposed to arrive down there. So I



just took off enough time before reporting down there. It was two days here at home I stayed before going and reporting in. It was the second day, I believe, that I went to the mailbox and found the telegram. I had beat it home.