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just moping. Writing up this diary alone is an occupation as it affords me an interest and keeps my mind occupied for a few minutes every now and again. I am also learning in a very unorthodox manner to type.

Tuesday, 19th May, 1942.

We have not lost the ability to laugh in spite of our incarceration. About once a week we stage a camp concert and some of the talent is really quite good. At the moment I should say that the prison choir of about 50 voices ranks a good first, then we have a professional ventriloquist who is good, the leader of the orchestra in the "Dog" at Kuala Lumpur who is very versatile and plays - not all at once - the squeeze-box, the clarionette and the saxophone. There is a lot of other talent in the shape of songsters, both serious and comic; reciters, good, bad and indifferent; magicians who bore me to distraction; and last but by no means least, skit producers. In the last group my old friend Osborne of Sime Darbys ranks high, and one Peter Gurney, a school master, is also very good.

Osborne has put on one or two operatic skits with a fellow internee who does the female part disguised as a woman. They did a farcical scene from "Traviata" last Saturday which was a wow and I laughed until the tears rolled down my cheeks. La Traviata herself was put together with some swaddling mosquito netting, two half coconut shells painted white and strung across "her" bosom like a brassiere, and some unwound rope fashioned into a wig. Osborne had on khaki shorts, socks and sock suspenders, an evening dress dickie - no shirt - and a Tyrolese hat complete with feather.

These concerts are held in the open yard and no seating accommodation is provided. If you come early and bring an old sack or something to sit on, you can place yourself in the front row of the stalls; if late, then you just stand at the back. The stage is made of two long tables borrowed from the laundry, and as the ground is on a slight slope rising from the stage, it lends itself quite well as an auditorium. I invariably take up my stand well at the back so that I can break away and walk up and down the yard if the turn bores me.

We were examined for bugs, at least our cells were, not so long ago. Our cell got a clean bill of health but the one next door did not; it is the one in which G.G. Thomson and two Chartered Bank fellows live. Stringfellow promptly put Keatings Powder across our door in case, in driving the little fellows out of his own cell, G.G. would send them running into ours!

Mondays we on this floor wash out our cells with water, and the scene is one of considerable bustle. Stringfellow and I pile everything on to the concrete bed in the cell; our bedding and baggage, the stool and a soap box which Stringfellow uses as a stool, plates, basins and shoes all pile on top of one and other. Then we swill the concrete floor with buckets of water and, when we have been fortunate enough to borrow a broom, brush it out. Thirty-five other cells are being treated similarly so the state of the passage can well be imagined. We all get down to this work in the best of spirits and no harsh words are exchanged. In fact, one thing about this camp which has impressed me has been the harmony in which we all live. I have heard of no crime, nor have I run across any bickering, much less any display of animal passion! Language is often choice but never carries with it any venom.



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Saturday, 23rd May, 1942.

I very often wander round to the Punishment Cells and join Leslie Shields in the evening after our last meal, and there sit out in the open with one or two other fellows chatting until bed time. The conversation here is generally interesting. The other evening there were one or two doctors present and we got on to the subject of Singapore just before the end. Shields and two other doctors (Lawrie and Shelley) were working in Kandong Kerbau Hospital at this time under the greatest difficulties, as the British had placed a battery of guns in the hospital grounds and these were blazing away good and hearty at the Japs who by this time could not have been more than a few miles away. This naturally brought retaliation and the hospital itself came under very heavy shell fire. I saw the hospital once during the few days when I acted on the Prisoners of War Committee and was astounded at the amount of damage done to the building and grounds. It struck me then that it was a bit of vandalism to shell a hospital, but I did not know that we ourselves had our guns in the hospital grounds.

Shelley described how, one night, when he was administering gas to a British tommy whose leg was being amputated by Lawrie, the Japs started up a heavy barrage on the hospital and the building was taking a lot of punishment. Every shell which whined towards them and every crash which shook the building made him want to drop the bag he was holding over the soldier's mouth and run for cover, but he knew that if he did the man would rapidly come round in the middle of the operation and Lawrie would be unable to carry on. One shell burst close outside the operating room and splinters came tearing through the boarded window, and Shelley felt a red hot sear across the wrist which held the gas mask. He said that his head was turned away at the time and he was afraid to look at his wrist in case it wasn't there! When eventually he did look he was intensely relieved to find that he had received nothing worse than a slight flesh wound. He kept repeating to himself "Please God let Lawrie finish this job quick. Please God let Lawrie finish this job quick", until the operation was over.

This small incident impressed me, and it was only one of many described that evening. Leslie Shields said that he was operating unceasingly for 24 hours a day for two or three days at the end, and still couldn't keep pace with the dreadful casualties as they were brought in. He said he was so exhausted that he was literally numbed with fatigue and was only kept awake by excitement or by fear or by some abnormal force. This recalled my own fatigue in the March retreat of 1918 when we fought back for four days without sleep and with no food to speak of; excitement and the love of life, also the dread of being captured, kept one going. I know I slept well for nigh 24 hours on end when wounded later and conditions permitted.

The seats here are darned hard and we are all suffering from what one internee describes as "weaver's bottom", an aching behind. One either sits on an old box, on concrete or on the grass when it's dry. At the moment I am seated on a piece of canvas spread on the concrete floor, my back supported by my rolled mattress and my typewriter between my legs perched on its lid. The bones of my bottom get so sore that I have to get up and walk around now and again to afford myself some measure of relief.

My mattress is becoming very "weak in the knees", in other words the stuffing has been forced outwards and left the part which takes my hips very thin. I shall have to bribe someone who knows something about mattresses to help me



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recondition it. I haven't the least idea how to go about it myself, but I think I can buy labour with ten cigarettes when the next ration comes round. Cigarettes are always good currency and it's no hardship to me to give them up as I don't smoke.

Thursday, 28th May, 1942.

"Four walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage."

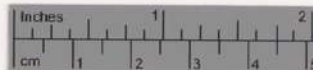
The man who wrote those lines could surely never have had the experience which would have qualified him to write on the subject. I myself find that four walls very definitely do a prison make and the loss of my freedom weighs heavily. Hope springs eternal in the human breast, and that is what keeps us all going in here; the hope of an early release. We are shipwrecked here and we pray that relief may not be too long postponed.

Conditions in here are such that our health must suffer to some extent, the extent depending on the duration of our confinement. The very limited scope for mental exercise or outlook must also have an effect. Most of us are completely divorced from our usual vocations and have to pretend to do something to keep the mind occupied, learn a language, work as a carpenter, a tinsmith, or the like. The routine of fatigue work is always there but that is not exactly mental stimulation. I myself make a pretence of brushing up my French three hours a week, but my heart is not in this as I never was a language fiend.

The usual fatigues are the following: carrying the food from the kitchen to the floors where it is served; cleaning the pots and pans in which the food comes from the kitchen; carrying felled trees, which have been felled by a permanent woodcutting fatigue, from outside the camp to one of the yards inside; carrying dry chopped up wood from the yard to the kitchen, cleaning down the public corridors with water; cleaning out the main yard and Japanese guard room with hose pipe and water; digging deep holes in the large exercise yard for the dumping of swill and rubbish; flattening out empty tins after they have been through the incinerator and packing them into sacks for the Japs to ship to Japan; cleaning a certain open drain, about which more later, which is used as a latrine, and other jobs which are always cropping up.

The whole system of fatigue work is well organised and duties come round to different blocks in rotation. For example, Mondays and Thursdays B Block furnishes all camp (as distinct from block) fatiguemen, Tuesdays and Fridays C Block and Wednesdays and Saturdays D Block. On Sundays there are no fatigues. The fly menace, which threatened the spread of dysentery, has been tackled and to a very great extent kept under control. There are still a good many dysentery cases, but the disease is on the wane.

Some excellent latrines have now been dug under the supervision of Government Health Officers; these are 18' deep and are covered in at ground level by wooden platforms with lidded holes. The only open latrine which remains in use is the drain to which I refer above. This is constructed of concrete and is about 5' deep running alongside a high wall at the end of the large exercise yard some distance from any of the prison buildings. Down this drain runs all the water from the kitchen and laundry, on through some holes in the wall which give passage to the outer world, and what happens from there on I do not know. I presume all that the waste water carries with it finds its way in due course to the sea.



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Performing one's natural functions at this wall is quite an acrobatic feat and one which not everyone can accomplish. One has to squat native fashion on the edge of the drain, but to save one from toppling over backwards (always a possibility with any extra strain or effort) the prison wall behind, which is within convenient reach, can be used as a support by stretching out an arm behind one until the hand reaches the wall. This reduces the danger from falling into the latrine itself.

The drain is popular as there has been quite an epidemic of skin diseases in camp and a great many people will not use the lavatory seats in consequence, so the 100 yards of its length is generally in great demand during the rush hours, say from 9 to 11.30 a.m. One of our pseudo poets inspired by this matutinal sight wrote a topical song about it which went down very well at its first hearing. I only remember one line which went, "what a sight, what a sight, bottoms to the left and bottoms to the right"!

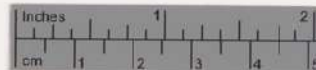
The Governor was released from solitary confinement yesterday. I met him in the course of the day and told him how pleased I was to see him about amongst us once more. I asked him how he had fared and he said he was all right and was treated in a normal way but being alone with no one to talk to was very depressing, particularly as he, like ourselves, had to conform to the 8.30 p.m. black-out regulations. This black-out has been in force for some days now. I do not think I have referred to it before. The reason for it no one knows, but we do know it is very depressing as we have to wander about in the yard in complete darkness until bed time.

I passed a letter forward to our camp commandant yesterday addressed to Mutoh, manager of the Yokohama Specie Bank, asking if he would let me have copies of the Hongkong Bank's latest take out of current account balances etc. This will go forward to Lieut. Okasaki, the Japanese camp commandant, and he will decide whether it goes to Mutoh or not. I am not very hopeful of it passing Okasaki and if it does I doubt very much if Mutoh will be able to grant my request, but I do know that if I don't ask I certainly won't get anything. The information contained in such a record of balances would be of the greatest value to my London office in the event of our being repatriated to British territory.

Today I saw two of the pillars of the Judiciary, Mr. Justice Aitken and Mr. Justice Murray-Ainslie, carrying a large rubbish bin chock full of wet swill to the hole in the big exercise yard for dumping. These are two of the gentlemen who normally uphold the law in Malaya by dispensing justice from the bench, dressed up in all the pomp and dignity that goes with their office - scarlet gown and wig. This place has certainly brought us all down to a common level of existence but not, I hope, to a common level of mentality.

Tuesday, 2nd June, 1942.

Fatigue parties are frequently called upon to go outside the camp on some job or other, and they are always escorted by a Jap sentry. On some of these occasions it has been known for internees to bring back tins of jam, milk and the like which they purchase from the local inhabitants (sometimes at fantastic prices, but beggars can't be choosers). Whether this is contrary to regulations or not has never been clearly stated although there have been half-hearted attempts in the past to suppress this trading as it encourages the native to profiteer and the Japanese are dead set against this. On one occasion a poor tamil was brought into camp and thrashed by the Japs at the entrance gate for this offence.



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Yesterday a small sack of tinned stuff which some enterprising bloke attempted to bring into camp from one of these fatigues was confiscated by the second in command of the camp, Lieut. Takuda. Next day Takuda appeared before the members of a fatigue which was proceeding outside the gates, threw the sack and its contents on the ground before them, and, walking up and down in front of the party smacking his field boots violently with his cane, informed them that if anyone else brought stuff in in this way the whole camp would be punished by the High Command. I am told he was very irate and strutted up and down in true Prussian fashion addressing the internees through an interpreter.

I am beginning to think that maybe interpretations are in some cases incorrect or imperfect and that we suffer in consequence. No one seems to know clearly what can and what cannot be done, and people go on taking chances in the hope that some instruction will not be enforced, until something like this happens.

Why Takuda should dislike us so much I do not know unless he is an Anglophobe or resents the manner in which we have all settled down to make the best of our captivity. Maybe it annoys him to hear that we are playing cricket with a real cricket bat which some "stout fellow" brought into camp with him, and a ball made out of rope by one of the crew of the "Empress of Asia", bombed and sunk in Singapore just prior to its surrender. He may also resent the hearty laughter which most of our concerts draw forth, and is determined that we shall not be happy. He probably says to himself "I'll make those bastards suffer", or the equivalent in Japanese.

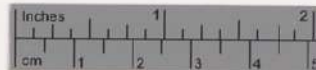
Yesterday H.E. came and joined me as I was sitting in the yard reading. We chatted for nearly an hour about nothing in particular but just things in general, but one thing he confessed to was that the solitary confinement to which he was recently subjected was getting him down, and that the uncertainty of its duration was one of its worst features. He himself has no idea why he was picked out for this particular treatment; the Japanese dropped no hint. The order came from the High Command and that is all he has been told.

I like H.E. a lot and admire his spirit; he never displays the least despondency, in fact rather the reverse. From our chat I gather he had a very difficult time at and near the end, although he did not enlarge on the subject. There was apparently a lot of suspicion, jealousy and dissent between the Civil and the Military Authorities, all of which must have been a serious handicap in the predicament in which Malaya found itself in December, January and February.

The 8.30 p.m. blackout has been lifted and we are back to 10 p.m. lights out, which is a great blessing. With it depression has also lifted to a great extent.

I have managed to get some hard boiled eggs sent in on two occasions. They come in by the ambulance from Miyako Hospital, but I'm afraid they have been of doubtful quality. As Stringfellow put it "they are like the curate's egg - good in parts", and that is just about what they are, but this does not stop us from eating them. An egg would have to be very very bad before we'd discard it! Once we get past the strong and somewhat unpleasant odour which some of them exude, they are quite alright!

Today for the first time since I have been a prisoner I have not been feeling at all well. I woke up with fever



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on me (there is no mistaking that) and some diarrhoea and have remained in my cell most of the day. Well or ill one has to go outside to the latrines unless one is in hospital; I had to go out several times during last night and there is not much improvement today. My friend Dr. Day has been along to see me, has taken my temperature and found it just over 100, and has given me some pills to take. I have been very depressed all day until now, 8.30 p.m., when my gloom has lifted to some extent. I either have a mild case of influenza or I have a chill on my stomach. The typing of this diary is occupying my mind and helping me to overcome my depression.

I wish Helen were here to look after me; I'm pretty useless without her when I don't feel so well, she is so comforting. When I am writing my diary I somehow feel close to her in spirit, probably because the diary is being written for her. It takes the place of the letters which I should write to her were I in a position to do so.

Sunday, 7th June, 1942.

What I have suffered from was a mild case of bacillary dysentery. I was put into the camp hospital on Friday morning and remained there until today, and for the first 36 hours I didn't feel so good. However, I threw off the dysentery quickly but have now got a devil of a cold in my head which does not worry me much.

The camp hospital is a depressing place. There are two wards, one on ground level and the other above it, each of which was intended to accommodate 12 patients in normal times but which now take 23, that is 46 on the two floors. The place is not kept particularly clean and the lavatories are most unsavoury spots. The nursing, if one can describe it as such, is poor and is done by male internees, most of whom are members of the Salvation Army; none, certainly very few, of the nurses have had any previous training and the service is slipshod. With dysentery, for example, one has to look after oneself as far as going to and from the lavatory is concerned. I was a mild case so didn't suffer much in this respect, but the poor fellow in the next bed to me was so bad that he spent about ten minutes of every twenty on the lavatory seat until removed to Miyako Hospital after about a day and a half of this. There are about 70 doctors in camp and I really cannot see why they should not be co-opted into doing nursing work; there aren't enough doctoring jobs to keep them all employed and I think the unemployed ones should be put to some use.

We are back again to 8.30 black out! What is going on outside I cannot imagine, all I know is that we do not like it.

Thursday, 11th June, 1942.

Two days ago a bloke turned up in my cell and handed me a note. It read: "Hallo! Am glad to see that you have been discharged from hospital. Was worried for Helen's sake. You are probably still a bit wonky and it might be some help if you knew that I'll gladly do any mending or sewing for you. My name will probably mean nothing to you as I was married a week before the capitulation - was Freddy Retz, the tall blonde newspaperwoman from Chatsworth Road. Take care of yourself and don't trouble to answer this unless there is something I can do. Sincerely, Freddy Bloom."

The passage of letters from one camp to another is forbidden but this one found its way to me allright and I was able to get a short reply back. I thanked her for her kind



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offer to do my sewing and told her that as I was by now quite an expert seamster I should not bother her.

I remember her quite well in Singapore. She's American I think.

On the 28th May I recorded having attempted to get a letter to Mutoh of the Yokohama Specie Bank. Yesterday I was sent for by the Japanese and had a private interview with Lieut. Okasaki. The latter opened the conversation by informing me that he had received my letter to Mutoh and had delivered it in person. He then told me that Mutoh was very interested to have news of me and wanted to know how I was getting on. Okasaki was also told by Mutoh that I was not only a business friend of his but that I also was a personal friend and I began to be hopeful that I was going to be asked if there was any small service that Mutoh could do for me and I was all prepared to ask for some tins of condensed milk!!! But the conversation stopped short of this and all that happened was that I was handed Mutoh's reply to my letter. This alone was a great surprise to me as I had had little hope of my letter ever leaving the camp, and I was extremely pleased because the contents of Mutoh's letter, although not conceding to my request for copies of balances, went a long way towards reassuring me that our records would be cared for and in all probability would be available on our return to Malaya. It read as follows:- "Dear Mr. Duncan-Wallace, I am in receipt of your letter of the 27th ultimo and in reply regret to inform you that under the present conditions I am not able to supply you with copies of the current account balances as required; but you have my assurance that all such records will be carefully preserved under my supervision until peace is restored, when I shall be glad to give you all information and assistance you may require of me, Yours sincerely, S. Mutoh".

The Japanese Banks on their return to Singapore found their records intact and I have no doubt that we shall find ours in a similar state on our return. The underlying idea of the Japanese seems to be that we shall receive treatment similar to the treatment meted out to them by us. I must say I have not found them at all vindictive though there have been isolated incidents where individual Japs have been somewhat unreasonable.

Okasaki was extremely agreeable at this meeting and I felt like shaking him warmly by the hand on leaving instead of bowing from the waist as we all have to do to officers and sentries on duty.

I am still not feeling too good and think I have influenza. My friend Dr. Day is keeping an eye on me and I hope to be O.K. again soon. This is no place to be unwell.

Friday, 12th June, 1942.

This, my personal diary, is going to be neglected for a day or two as I am busy compiling a draft report for my Head Office which will no doubt be wanted when we are released. It will contain quite a lot of the stuff in the early parts of this diary as well as a lot of dry banking matter which does not show here. My typing is slow and laborious so the job will be a bit tedious. However, all this keeps my mind occupied which is a very important factor in my present life.

Sunday, 14th June, 1942.

I am not feeling at all well today and am stopping in my cell in order to combat a head and chest cold which has hit me very severely. I saw the doctor this morning and he ran



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over my chest which he says is quite alright - I hope he is not mistaken.

Yesterday I was on a strange fatigue, cleaning out the big exercise yard. As I wasn't feeling too good I went around with a basket and a long stick with a nail on the end, picking up scrap paper, cigarette cartons and the like, all the same as the men who keep the public gardens of big cities tidy. Later in the morning I joined up with the main squad and helped to clean the "wailing wall", as the deep drain latrine at the far end of the yard is commonly described. It was not a very pleasant job but one which some people have to do when on fatigue duty.

We have a black market in camp. Certain individuals appear to be able to smuggle articles into the camp, either when out on fatigue or by purchasing from the sentries, and have set up quite a profitable business by selling to fellow internees at fantastic prices. For example \$1 for ten cigarettes is usual and as much as \$5 has been paid for a tin of condensed milk or jam. To bring stuff in and sell at the price you paid for it is considered quite alright (this is described as the white market), but to make financial gain out of this traffic is looked upon with much disfavour. To squeeze fellow internees out of their very inadequate cash holdings is mean; inveterate pipe and cigarette smokers will almost sell their souls for tobacco. The Japanese official ration of cigarettes is supposed to be 40 per man per month but it seldom works out so generously.

The following conversation passed between my cell mate and myself last night after dark and when we were in bed:

Me: It's a nightmare to recall our first two or three nights in here before our mattresses turned up. I remember trying to sleep on a small face towel with my shoes and a small cushion for a pillow. There was no question of getting out of one's clothes those days.

Stringfellow: Yes, I lay on my blanket with no covering and had to like it. We're pampered nowadays.

Me: And the strange thing is that we seemed to be fitter then than now. Can it be that we are getting soft with good living?

Wednesday, 17th June, 1942.

The other day I was washing my clothes in the laundry when another fellow came and started his washing next to me on the same table. I felt a little irritated when some of his soapy water drifted along the table my way, and I was on the point of suggesting to him that he keep his dirty water under better control when he turned to me and asked if I were Duncan-Wallace. The man turned out to be Prentice, a prominent rubber broker of Singapore whom Helen and I met at Cameron Highlands back in 1937 soon after our first arrival in Malaya. He and his wife were spending a short holiday up there and the four of us played quite a lot of bridge together. We liked them a lot. I had completely failed to recognise him on this occasion as he was very thin and had a drawn and anxious look about him.

We chatted about camp life and the prospects of the future course of the war, then I asked if his wife had got away from Singapore or was she a prisoner in here. He told me that she had got away alright but he did not elaborate on the subject so I, in my usual tactless manner, asked him where she was and he replied that he did not know as she had



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left on Friday the 13th February on some ship or other. I have told about the fate of three of the ships which left on that day, from information obtained from Ivor Salmon, and Prentice must know just as much as I do about them and his anxiety about his wife must be considerable. I felt so dreadfully sorry for the poor fellow and cursed myself for having stumbled on to the subject as I knew that he must be suffering the tortures of the damned. There is a chance that his wife may be allright but the possibility that she may have died a most horrible death must be with him all the time.

Mrs. Prentice was a pillar of strength to the patriotic British war workers of Singapore, running canteens and the like with the object of raising funds for the war effort. She was no doubt imbued with a strong sense of duty and hung on to the end thinking that her presence was necessary, like so many other poor misguided women. How tragic it was that all women and children were not compulsorily evacuated from Singapore in good time, even if this turned out later to have been an unnecessary precaution. What a mess the whole show was!

The Japanese have sent in a large bundle of old American newspapers. Something for us to read I suppose! Anyway, they have given me great pleasure as I have amused myself these last few days by reading the Los Angeles Evening Herald and Express of August 1941! These papers are of great interest to me, in fact they must be of interest to many other Limeys as they are very much in demand - maybe it's the funny sheet or the pictures of snappy girls which fill a gap in our lives. I come across references to places my wife and I both visited on our last leave - La Jolla, where we spent five months in 1938, San Diego, Los Angeles itself, Santa Barbara and many other spots.

Friday, 19th June, 1942.

Great news today! The Japanese are going to allow us to send one postcard per man to a relative or friend. These have to be handed in by Sunday. The amount which we are to be allowed to write must be strictly limited and no reference may be made to our place of internment or to political matters.

Things are moving. Now I feel that I am at long last going to contact my wife. I only hope this brief note will reach her in reasonable time and bring her some relief. She, poor darling, is probably waiting and waiting for news of me and wondering what it is to be when it does arrive. But she has a lot of courage and strong faith and these two will see her through a lot.

It is paradoxical to think that this war goes on and on, creating more and more destruction and building up more and more difficult problems of reconstruction to be gone into when it is all over, when if only the conflicting nations could come to their senses this could all be brought to an end. No doubt we shall emerge from the conflict victorious and when we have crushed the Axis powers into complete submission and bankruptcy we shall have to set about putting them on their feet again so as to re-establish world prosperity. If we destroy the purchasing power of Germany, Italy and Japan, not to mention their satellites, we shall lose some of our best markets, so it would almost seem that the reconstruction of these countries will be an essential attribute to recovery. Reparations are, to my mind, as dead as the Dodo - you cannot get blood out of a stone and if you endeavour to do so you will sow the seeds of revolution and further wars. Destroy the Hitlers and the Mussolinis and then let us try once again to live in harmony. Do not build up barriers which will drive us all further apart.



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The weather has been bad of late and prevents the washing of one's dirty clothes. My blanket is beginning to smell a bit, but so long as it does not offend my cell mate I do not worry! As a matter of fact Stringfellow and I are both very clean in our habits; we are both prison trained by now and we wash our clothing, if anything, too often. We are always at it, it seems to me.

I still get the odd parcel sent in from outside which is a great boon. Last night a pork chop came in amongst other things, cooked of course. As I wasn't hungry when it arrived and feared it might not keep I gave it to Brown and Guy who divided it between them and later reported that it was "grand". I have an order for milk from the kitchen, issued by the doctor of our block, and this stands me in good stead each day. I get a full thermos which is very nearly a quart.

Friday, 26th June, 1942.

As I did not seem to be able to throw off my indisposition and as I had a slight cough which hung around I told the doctor straight out that I was quite convinced within myself that all was not well with my chest in spite of what his superficial examination revealed. He was inclined to poo-poo my statement and suggested that I was perhaps a bit nervous about myself, having been down with tuberculosis before. However they said that, just to ease my mind, they would arrange to have my sputum tested for the next six days. On the third day the verdict was positive.

So here I am in Miyako Hospital, comfortably settled in a real bed on the verandah and feeding like a fighting cock compared with the camp. Here, for example, I have for breakfast: boiled sago which is served as a sort of cereal, to which I add lashings of condensed milk or tinned cream, then we get some kind of fish, either fresh or tinned - when tinned we each get a small tin to ourselves which is more than ample and tea or quite good coffee, both with plenty of milk and sugar added. On top of this I can have eggs whenever I wish as we are allowed to supplement our rations by outside purchases. For our midday meal we have meat of some description in plenty and dry cooked rice. I add sauces, which I buy, to make the rice more palatable. After the meat we have custard pudding to which I add some sort of tinned fruit on my own account, and cream. Evening meal at 6 p.m. more meat, generally cold, and rice. I supplement this with purchased luxuries, tinned fruit or cheese or biscuits and jam. At breakfast and in the evening they issue us with a generous helping of Cold Storage fresh butter.

We are allowed to buy from certain licensed hawkers so can have our fill of bread, eggs, all kinds of tinned goods, fresh fruit, sweets and a hundred and one other things so long as our money lasts. In fact life is so very pleasant in here that I said to the man in the next bed, "there must be a catch about this", which seemed to tickle him.

We are attended by European doctors who are permitted by the Japanese to remain here under restricted liberty. They care for the sick internees. These are Doctors Landor, Williamson and Chettle: there may be others but I think not. The nursing is done by Chinese and Eurasian girls who are quite good but who would be better if they were working under European supervision. These girls have all, or nearly all, come from the General Hospital where they worked under British sisters.

Two wards of this very large rambling hospital (it used to be the mental hospital before the war) have been set



aside for male internees, one for surgical cases and ordinary sick and the other for dysentery cases, and another ward is used by women internees. In the ordinary sick ward native paying patients are also admitted, so that we always have with us a sprinkling of Tamil and Indian patients of the labouring class. Any day my old Tamil gardener may turn up, perhaps suffering from delirium tremens as he was drunk quite a large part of the time he worked for me!

We internees are pushed back to camp as soon as is reasonably possible, in fact some are sent back sooner than seems reasonable because the Japanese are dead against anyone staying longer than is absolutely necessary, I suppose because they know that conditions in here are so very much better than in camp. As a result the British doctors, in fear of losing their good jobs and being replaced by some of the 70 or so others in the camp, never allow a man to remain in hospital for a day longer than possible. They, I must say in their defence, are working under a Eurasian doctor, one Dr. Balhatchet, who is in charge of the whole hospital, and he in turn is terrified of losing his present excellent employment under the Japanese if he shows any signs of favouring internees. If he lost this job he would most probably find it impossible to find employment elsewhere as he, being a Eurasian, would not be interned.

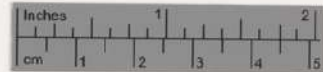
So I feel that my stay here will be short lived, but this does not unduly concern me as I have lost very little weight and run a very slight temperature in the evenings. I feel that my present trouble is the result of the dysentery or the influenza or whatever I had, and that my resistance, with so much open air life, is good.

Yesterday I went to Kandond Kerbau Hospital in town to be X-rayed. On the trip into town we had occasion to drive past Matheran, our old home in pre-war Singapore, to drop a discharged civilian patient. My feelings were somewhat mixed as we approached the old homestead, I was interested to get a glimpse of the place after so many eventful months and I had a lump in my throat at the thought of once again seeing the house and grounds where Helen and I had been so happy. Much to my surprise and relief I found myself quite unconcerned as I glanced up at the house from Tanglin and Jervoise Roads; we made the complete semi-circle, entering Jervoise Road from Tanglin Road and so on to the Sri Menanti compound where the nine other bank houses are situated.

Matheran looked unchanged from the outside though no doubt the inside has been stripped of its charming contents, but the garden looked sadly neglected with the grass long and the hedges uncut. I said in my mind to the old house, "Rest in patience, old pal, as we too have to do, and all will be well in time. When this is all over someone will bring back peace and joy to you and your surroundings".

Singapore altogether is a miserable hole nowadays with nothing but Japanese military traffic on the roads. The shops are open but their stocks are nearly all the old pre-war ones which cannot be replaced, even by Japanese goods, as there will be no shipping available for trade for many a long day I should say. There can be no trade or prosperity as we understood it under the British rule, and how the majority of the local inhabitants are going to exist I cannot think. There certainly cannot be work for all; perhaps our local bank staff realize how well off they were in our time.

The Bishop of Singapore (Episcopal) visited the internee patients the other day and I asked him to go to the bank and ask Mutch if I could have my old X-ray photos which



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are in a cupboard in my room there. They will be useful to compare with the present ones if I can lay my hands on them. I also asked him to sound Mutch on the possibilities of my raising a personal loan!! I want \$1,000. He said he would do what he could for me. He, with two of his curates, are on parole in Singapore to care for the spiritual welfare of their flock. A large number of the European members of the Salvation Army are also still out and doing good work in town.

Maybe I've got a nerve in putting forward such a request but I feel there is no harm in asking. I need money not only for myself but also to help out my bank colleagues when I get back to camp. Most of them, like myself, are pretty short of funds. We are able occasionally to make purchases inside the camp and to do this we must have cash.

I am able to buy the local English language paper every day now, the Sayonan Times as it is called, and this makes amusing reading. Anti-Allied propaganda is laid on thick and this, no doubt, has a certain influence on the native mind. To me it is extremely unconvincing; for example it is continually referring to the great Japanese naval victories in the Bay of Bengal, at Colombo, in the Coral Seas and at Midway Island. As I see it, if these engagements had been the great victories they suggest they would have been followed up by an invasion of Colombo, or an invasion of Australia, or the occupation of Midway Island. So far I have seen no reference to any of these! No, it certainly doesn't ring true but the uneducated native won't possibly see that and he will be fed with further subversive propaganda by his own disloyal and disgruntled compatriots.

The Japs are also trying to convince themselves (and the natives) that we cannot open up a second front. I don't see why not; anyway it looks as if we should have to do something soon instead of continually fighting losing battles. It's the last battle which counts, and Britain has a reputation for always winning that.

We have just read of the fall of Tobruk and the threat to Egypt which seems to indicate that the Germans have a lot of fight left in them yet and also that we have once again been caught with our pants down. It is all very distressing and to the layman very puzzling. We have lots of amateur strategists in here who are always glad to open out on their strategy and tell you just exactly what's what. These hot air merchants give me a pain in the neck, and if they are at all defeatist I lose my temper with them.

Monday 29th June, 1942.

I feel like a million! I've been here only a week and have put on 5 pounds in weight so I fear my stay here will not be a very extended one. I am making the most of my "holiday" and eating like a pig. My sputum has been consistently negative since I came in here and I really am beginning to suspect that the doctors think I am malingering and have "worked" my way into hospital to have an opportunity of filling my belly!

There were seven T.B. cases along the verandah when I came in, but one bloke died last night. Judging from his appearance he should have been dead for some days, he was so very emaciated. Of the remaining six, one is bad but the others look pretty fit. Pop Wiseman is a patient. He was operated on for piles two days ago and isn't feeling too good yet. His description of the circumstances leading up to the operation is rather funny. In the camp there is an inspection once a month of what are popularly known as the human guinea-pigs, a small group of men of different ages who are



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inspected by one of our own doctors to see how camp life and diet is affecting them. Wiseman is one of the guinea pigs and at his last inspection the doctor remarked that he seemed to be getting a bit anaemic, so Pop said to the doctor, "So would you be if you bled like a stuck pig every time you went to the wailing wall". The next thing that happened, according to him, was that he was on the operating table and "Before you could say knife, they had shoved a damned machine-gun or something up my backside!"

Our ward, as I say, is a mixed one; we have several Tamil, Indian and Eurasian patients who pay \$1 a day. There are five private rooms (Paying patients pay \$8 a day for the total use of same), 40 beds in the ward and six beds outside. More beds are sometimes put up in the ward or outside when necessary. One of the \$1 a day patients is a man Silberman who used to do odd contracting jobs for the bank. He is of Roumanian extraction, although I understand in possession of a British passport, and in the old days was always very servile and respectful. Now he is calling all the European patients in the ward by their surnames and is on familiar terms with them all - except with me; I am still Mr. Duncan-Wallace. The white man and the Asiatic and Eurasian are social equals these days!

The doctor has just been along with my new X-ray photos and says there is little showing and that there will be no need for pneumothorax and that I shall probably be in hospital for four or five weeks more. A few weeks on good food and on a bed is just the stuff and will bring the end of captivity so many weeks nearer.

Sunday 5th July, 1942.

I never abandon hope of an early release, either by exchange, such as is now taking place with Americans in Japanese territory, or by a complete change in the military situation. The news in the local paper is depressing to say the least, but we don't overlook the fact that it is a propaganda paper and we hope that the news it contains is largely what we think it is - the effort of an imaginative mind. Sebastopol has fallen and Rommel is within 60 miles of Alexandria. What has come over us? Can't we fight any more? Influenced by the poor show put up by the Empire troops in Malaya I am beginning to wonder if we are soft, as the Germans say we are.

I have had one or two visitors in here. Weisberg, late Financial Secretary of the S.S., looked in for a few moments the other day. He is not yet interned, why he does not know, and is living with the Roman Catholic Bishop in Singapore. Weisberg is a Jew. He remained out after the surrender to be available for questioning on Financial matters and he is now working as librarian in Raffles Library at \$50 a month.

There are still several other Europeans "out" (not interned), such as Municipal engineers and workers on essential services whose work is still required by the Japanese for the running of these services, but not for war work, and these, I am told, are paid about .50 to .80 cents a day with free board and lodging, board being on a par with internment camp board.

I have also been visited by one or two of the old bank staff. I gather from them that the Eurasian population are being discriminated against and are finding life hard in spite of the local papers reiteration that normal conditions have now returned to Malaya. Practically all our Eurasian staff have been unemployed since the capitulation and some of them would starve if it weren't for the Portuguese Mission who



issue them rice. I hear that de Silva of the Book Office who drew something over \$300 a month with us is now cutting long grass as an antimalarial measure at a daily wage of .50 cents. I said to one of my visitors "Maybe you fellows will be satisfied with the pay we gave you when we come back, instead of continually grouching as so many of you did before the war". Perhaps they now realize how fortunate they were under British rule.

Two patients died last night. One of them, a cancer case, interested me very much, as from my position on the verandah I have watched the doctors and nurses fight to keep him alive. He was operated on just before I came in here for cancer of the stomach and was very very weak for the days of life remaining to him after the operation, and while I sat at my bench on the verandah to eat my meals I had him directly in my line of vision across the ward - his bed was just opposite me. He was always propped up in his bed and would gaze in a vacant sort of way directly at me, to all outward appearances dead, his colour was so bad, and I was fascinated or hypnotised so that I could not look away. I would watch to see if his covering moved to indicate that he still breathed and would be intensely relieved to see that it did. He waxed and waned, some days he would look around as if he were taking an intelligent interest in his surroundings, and others he would be lethargic and I would know that he was failing. He had to be spoon fed and moved by the nurses and on two occasions he was given blood transfusions. As I say, I was fascinated and would struggle mentally to keep him alive. He received the best of attention and in his bad moments was never left alone; there was either a doctor or a nurse at his bedside. Perhaps his death was a blessing and saved him from further suffering.

We have a T.B. case on the verandah, two beds along from me, who looks as if he too were for the high jump. To further complicate matters he has dysentery and is nothing but a bag of bones. I mentioned earlier in this diary that we in camp had been allowed to write postcards to our next of kin. Well, this privilege has just reached the hospital and I asked this patient if I could help him by typing his message on the card for him. He was agreeable to this (actually he was quite unable to write) and with difficulty, as he was almost inarticulate, we composed the following message: "Dear Nan (his sister), At last I am able to send you a few lines which unfortunately leave me in poor health. I regret to say that I have a recurrence of my old lung complaint but hope for the best. Communicate with Mary (his wife) if her whereabouts are known and convey to her my fondest love. Look after yourself, mother and family. Love to all from your affectionate brother....", and here with an almost superhuman effort he managed to sign his nickname which I followed with his full name in type. Life is full of tragedy these days.

Wednesday, 8th July, 1942.

Am I superstitious? I never used to think I was but something happened which made me think that maybe I retain some of my mother's failing in that respect. She was very superstitious and full of second sight; she was a Scottish highlander and they are uncanny in some of their superstitions and previsions. Anyway, this is what happened and the future will prove if there is anything in it.

As I was lying on my bed yesterday morning I saw a spider emerge from behind the storm shutter of one of the ward windows nearby. Near my head was another shutter of another window, distant, I should say, about five feet from the shutter where the spider had emerged. On the Robert the Bruce principle I said to myself "If that spider gets from where it



now is to behind the window shutter close to my head, all will be well in a reasonably short spell of time", meaning that relief would come to us in some form towards the end of this present year. The spider, I might say, at this time had given no indication of its probable course.

The spider set off, at first in the desired direction, then it swerved and changed its course, while now and again it would drop entirely off the wall and hang suspended by a silken thread before drawing itself back to the spot whence it had dropped. This went on and on and kept me in an agony of suspense, and there were moments when I was tempted to chivy the spider along by making some gesture which would drive it in the right direction, but no, I mustn't cheat. For the best part of an hour the battle went on, the spider hesitating or changing course to such an extent that I would all but abandon hope, while I would concentrate all my will power to drive it along. I found myself getting quite hot!

Now and again I would resume the reading of my book, pretending that I had lost interest, but I knew that it was only pretense and I could not concentrate on my reading. I said to myself that this was a foolish game, but no matter, back my interest would come to the wall to see what progress the spider was making.

At long last the spider romped home past the finishing post and I lay back with a sigh of relief. We should be relieved before many more months had passed! The strain was lifted!

And there you have just another superstitious Celt.

The bad T.B. case along the verandah, the man for whom I wrote the post card, died on Monday. Under the conditions in which we live now there was no hope for him.

The Japanese have suddenly closed down on visitors coming to see the internees. We used to be allowed to send parcels in to our colleagues in camp, and this too has been stopped. An order has been posted in the ward to the effect that internee patients may not receive visitors nor may they send parcels of any description into the camp. The Japs are determined to make our existence as miserable as possible; one wonders why it should be necessary to deprive us of the innocent privilege of sending a few odds and ends of food-stuffs to friends in camp.

I remember well when I was convalescing at Stoke Poges from a wound received in the retreat of 1918, we officers who were able to do physical work went haymaking with some German prisoners who were billeted in a large house in the neighbourhood. The Germans were well treated and looked fit; one or two of them spoke a little English and told us how well off they were. I am afraid that we got on quite friendly terms with them and handed them cigarettes and sweets and had friendly chats now and again. We were sorry for them and would never have thought of making their lot unduly hard.

G. Albuquerque, Simon de Souza, Miss Schelkis and Miss K. Armstrong, all of the bank local staff, came up to the hospital today but could not see me under the new ruling. The two girls were the ones who stood by us foreign staff men at the end and did the cooking and washing for us.

G. Klass of our Current Accounts Department called yesterday and brought me a bottle of some sort of cordial. Poor little devil, he must be finding it hard to make ends meet under present conditions yet he brings me a present. I was very touched.



53.

Sunday, 12th July, 1942.

When I came in here I weighed 148½ lbs: I now weigh 157 lbs., which isn't so bad after only three weeks.

About ten days ago the local paper predicted the fall of Alexandria within 24 hours and we all felt a bit depressed about it. Since then there has been no mention of the Egyptian front so we presume that all has not gone according to the German plan. Now the news is that the Russians are in full flight and the impression given out is that they will not long remain in the war. This persistent cry of "wolf! wolf!" begins to savour too much of wishful thinking and I suspect that even the native mind may soon begin to read between the lines and wonder why these successive "victories" do not bring the desired result - the defeat of the Allied Nations. My own impression is that the Japanese are not too happy. True they got away to a flying start due to their treachery and the incredible state of the U.S. unreadiness at Pearl Harbour. Since then they have met with very little real resistance and as a result of this, the Japanese soldier has got the impression that he is irresistible. They will, however, come up against much stiffer resistance as they progress and in due time their advance will be stayed and held until Britain and the U.S.A. are ready to deal with them. At the moment we must not take our eyes off the main target - Germany. Finish with Germany and the rest will be easy, but the fighting may continue for a further year if the Japanese wish to go on alone.

Monday, 13th July, 1942.

My hopes (if I ever had any, which I doubt) of raising a loan from Mutch of the Yokohama Specie Bank have been shattered. The Bishop (Wilson) came to see me last night and told me that he had called on Mutch and that the latter had been very sympathetic but had regretted that he was quite unable to help me in this way. Nor could Mutch furnish me with my old X-ray photos as the contents of my room in the office had all been removed. So that's that; there was no harm in asking!

I am still endeavouring to borrow some money and feel that I shall be able to raise the wind somewhere. Cash in hand is very necessary these days; we were fools not to bring some into internment with us, but being bankers we considered that the Japanese would take it all away from us and we didn't want to be caught. This was one occasion when we were just a little bit too clever.

The Americans are making an exchange of internees, I read in the local paper. The Japanese repatriation ships passed through Singapore the other day. They were the "Conte Verde" and the "Asama Maru" and I hope they carried our post cards. Perhaps negotiations are in train for an exchange of British civilian prisoners. I sincerely hope so, and that they will come to a successful and speedy conclusion.

Friday 17th July, 1942.

Life in hospital is beginning to pall a bit and I don't think I shall be sorry to return to camp and my pals. Knock down the dreadful prison walls and give us somewhat better food and there wouldn't be so much to complain about. The overcrowding is always bad but Stringfellow and I have been lucky to date in that respect as we are only two to a cell instead of the usual three.

I have a lot of time for thought these days, and my



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thoughts are all of the future. If we go straight back to Singapore from internment, which to my way of thinking is extremely unlikely, I have plans for the reopening of the bank. This should be a comparatively simple matter if we find our records intact, but a somewhat difficult one if not. All such forward plans will no doubt have to be adjusted to meet contingencies I have not foreseen but I shall have a full staff of Europeans and that will help a lot.

If we are repatriated to South Africa (which seems to be the likely place) I may be recalled to London to report, while on the other hand we may all be left free to take some leave after our imprisonment.

Monday 20th July, 1942.

When this war started, and for some time after our surrender, there was a certain amount of excitement attached to it all, and no doubt when it nears the end - if we are still here - excitement will return. In the meantime, however, life is deadly dull and the time is passing all too slowly.

Perhaps when it is over we shall look back upon it as a great adventure, provided of course that we survive it, and had I been younger I might have found it thrilling. In my youth I always had rather a hunger for adventure and looking back now I can recall many exciting incidents, some of which I am not particularly proud of and others which make me wonder how I survived them without disaster. But I suppose we all go through life in much the same way and my experiences may only seem to have been exciting to me.

Let us get on with the war and roll along whatever excitements and adventures lie in wait for us, because I am getting very impatient. I know we have been interned only five months whereas prisoners in Germany have done over two years, but that is no consolation. Comparing our lot with that of so many others should make us appreciate how fortunate we really are, but it doesn't seem to. I long for relief.

I have just heard that Sir Shenton Thomas (Governor of the S.S.), General McRae (Camp Commandant), Sir Percy McElwaine (Chief Justice of the S.S.), Sir Harry Trusted (Chief Justice F.M.S.) and C.G. Howell (Attorney General S.S.) are to be sent to Japan. No one knows why. The Governor, as His Majesty's representative, should never have been subjected to the indignity of life in this internment camp and this may be a belated realisation by the Japs of this fact. On the other hand it may indicate that we are to be exchanged, but not these five who are sufficiently exalted to be held as hostages.

A wealthy Indian merchant in this ward (he was in one of the rooms) died last night. He was operated on a few days ago for cancer of the throat and has been groaning horribly, day and night, ever since. I woke up last night and heard Oriental chanting going on and on, which sounded weird, and I was informed this morning that it was a Mohammedan priest reading the Koran. The unmusical monotone thrilled me and brought home to me that I was in a strange land. It was a beautiful moonlight night which spread out before my vision as I lay in my bed on the verandah and everything was still, nothing but the chanting could be heard, and I thought how strange life was. The whole world at war, misery universal, and all because of one man's insane ambition. Surely something can be done to prevent a recurrence of such madness?

Soon after the Indian was removed on a stretcher, a Chinese went out feet first. When people die in here they are immediately removed to the mortuary in a stretcher covered



with a blanket, and we patients who are fortunate enough to be still alive see them all go!

Wednesday, 22nd July, 1942.

I have been warned that I return to camp today week and I can't say I'm sorry. Life in here has become monotonous. I feel like a million and hope I shall be able to maintain this for the duration.

Mike Turner of the bank is a patient here. He had been ill for a long time in camp and the doctors there couldn't seem to be able to do anything for him. He was under treatment by Smith, the peace time bank doctor, and I suggested to him (Smith) that they make a test for hydro-chloric deficiency, but he poo-pooed the idea and said Turner was suffering from a vitamin B deficiency and so he was treated. When Turner came in here some days ago I put forward the same suggestion to the doctor here and he decided to give him a stomach test. This revealed the complete lack of hydrochloric so that now, with the addition of the necessary quantity of hydrochloric to his diet, Turner is a different man altogether. He can eat practically anything, he has a good appetite again, and he is putting on weight. He is very pleased and seems to have taken on a new lease of life; he was very low before, and no wonder - it seemed that there was no cure for his trouble and I honestly began to think that he would never see freedom again. He was as near to the human skeleton as anything I have ever seen.

The latest entry into our ward is a Chinese youth of about 15 with bad gonorrhoea and his eyes are terribly swollen and oozing pus. He's a mean little bastard and keeps on trying to creep past my bed to the communal lavatory to bathe his eyes, which is against the doctor's orders. He is supposed to keep to his bed and receive treatment from the nurses. I stop him every time I catch him and order him back to his bed in no uncertain terms as I loathe the idea of his using our bathroom, dirty as it is. Last time we encountered one and other I told him that if I caught him again I'd kick his backside so hard he wouldn't be able to sit down for a week! He is a well educated youth and speaks English perfectly, so he understood all right. It's a bit hard having to cohabit with V.D. patients and we are all up in arms against it. I think he is to be removed tomorrow.

When I get kind of low I think of the men in camp whose wives left Singapore during the last week of the fighting and I realize how much worse their lot is than mine. In the bathroom the other morning one man asked a new arrival if he had slept well and the latter replied "No, I never sleep well these days. I am worried about my family who left Singapore just at the end and I have no knowledge of what has happened to them since. I fear the worst. I do not even know what ship they left in". No, my lot is not so bad.

Sunday, 26th July, 1942.

I have tasted one or two dishes here which never came our way in the Changi Gaol. Fresh fish, for example, has been served to us pretty frequently of late in lieu of meat and, although it is only shark and coarse shark at that, it has tasted good to a fish starved man. Then yesterday the hawker who sells us milk, jam, cheese, etc., produced some icecream at 10 cents a spoonful and I stood myself 20 cents worth. We get a goodly amount of spinach too which is good for us I suppose; this takes a bit of eating as it is always full of sand.



I imagine the food situation all over Malaya must be getting bad, particularly as it affects the European who depended so much on imported articles. Reserve supplies cannot last forever and as we were supposed to have about six months reserve in hand at the time of the capitulation, and that was just over five months ago, the outlook for the civil and the military prisoners cannot be too bright. Nothing can be brought in now except from Japan or Indo-China and I cannot see the Japanese setting aside much needed shipping to care for our needs.

Anyone at home would be horrified with conditions in this ward. All sorts of diseases are herded together, eczema, beri-beri, athlete's foot which has spread all over the body, T.B., old age, surgical cases, malaria and anything else except dysentery which is herded in a separate ward. The result is that when one goes to the bathroom one has to be careful not to touch anything, except the floor, if one does not want to pick up some beastly skin disease. The lavatories are fortunately the native squat ones which are quite safe.

I wonder if this term of imprisonment is improving my disposition? I have always been a moody sort of cuss, and intolerant. Could it be that I am learning a lesson now which will stay with me after relief or have the Japs caught me too late in life? We shall see when I get out.

Tuesday, 28th July 1942.

And so my little holiday in Miyako Hospital is to come to an end. I have been happy in here and go out quite reconditioned. When I came in I weighed 148½ lbs. and I go out tomorrow weighing 159½ lbs. which I ought to keep me going for a bit.

A little incident happened tonight which I thought very touching. I was sitting on my verandah reading when an elderly Malay woman idled along from the paying patients' end of the ward where she had been visiting her son who is a patient. She first leant over Bedinton's bench (next to mine) where he keeps his baggage and also uses as a table, and from under her robe she produced a small loaf which she surreptitiously slipped on to the bench close to Bedington who was reading there. Then she came along to me and did likewise and so quietly moved back to her son; no comment, no gesture, no sign of recognition, nothing, as she knew that if she was spotted by a Jap she would be beaten or worse. We have had no bread now for about two weeks; the supply suddenly stopped and none can be had for love nor money. The Malay woman must have known this.

It was an astonishing gesture from a poor class woman who had nothing to gain and a lot to risk, and it impressed me very much. The Japanese will find it hard to kill the respect, and in some cases love, which the local inhabitant has for the old regime, in spite of superficial gestures of cooperation which are stimulated by fear rather than by any spirit of friendship. British rule has brought with it prosperity and a much greater independence than the native of the country can ever hope to find under the Japanese.

We internees are forbidden to have any contact with the outside world, so the Malay woman risked quite a lot by her action.

Friday, 31st July, 1942.

I returned to camp on Wednesday.



57.

I am back in my old cell with Stringfellow but am sleeping out in the yard at nights. In fact I spend about 22 hours of the day in the open now unless it rains hard. Stringfellow met me on arrival and helped me carry in my baggage.

During my absence the Japanese have brought in new regulations to stop internees from buying from hawkers when on outside fatigues. They have stated that any man going outside the prison gates will be liable to search and on more than one occasion the search has been carried out.

On the other hand Jap sentries are now coming openly into the camp with sackloads of provisions which they sell to particular internees who in turn run a sort of shop where they sell to other internees. When I say shop I mean that the goods are stored in their cells and one goes along to the cells to see what they've got. It might therefore appear that the Japanese wish to make whatever there is to be made out of this traffic.

The result of all this is that I come back and find my cell mate has stocked our larder, and, with the addition of the stuff which I have brought in from hospital, we should be able to do ourselves pretty well for several weeks. Food is the principal consideration here so we shall be free from worry for a bit anyway! The extras one can acquire in this way, combined with our ordinary rations, help to make life quite liveable. The camp food has, if anything, improved since I left for Miyako.

Apropos of the above, the first fatigue to go outside after the search order was actually searched. One man, no doubt thinking that the order was one of the usual threats and could be ignored, carried a few dollars in his pocket which he produced when asked if he had any money in his possession. The Japanese sentry appropriated the money, slapped the man's face, and reported him to the camp committee for disciplinary action. The effect of this is that a regular search is now made by our own camp police of all the internees who daily line up for outside fatigue.

One individual of the name of Follitt, an officer of the Malayan Police Force in ordinary life, swore that he would find means to smuggle out money and hoodwink our local police force, so he proceeded to stitch some notes into the collar band of his sports shirt. The ruse did not, however, succeed and the money was found on him so he is now waiting punishment by the camp disciplinary board, our local court.

Tuesday, 4th August, 1942.

I sleep out in the yard every night under the covered way adjacent to the building. Quite a lot of internees sleep out in this way and the name of the man in the next bed to mine, strange as it may seem, is Wallace Duncan.

Last night, after lights out, a fellow came along in the dark and stopped at my bed for a moment, then moved on to the next bed and stopped at it. Then he turned back to me (I was lying in bed by this time) and peered into my mosquito netting to see if he could recognise who was inside. I felt he was looking for someone and asked if he wanted Wallace Duncan or Duncan Wallace, which appeared to make him a bit peeved as he thought it was a leg pull of some kind. It turned out he was looking for me - he was the man who had helped me to rig up my mosquito net over the camp bed and wanted to see what it looked like. All was well when I