



*Here are the authors of this story—Captain William Lloyd Osborne (left) and Captain Damon Gause. They are shown examining a Filipino paddle which helped them in their escape.*

**W**E have escaped the Japanese, and we have escaped the hell that was once the peaceful Philippines. For seven long months—since the day Bataan surrendered for one of us, and since the day Corregidor surrendered for the other—we have been like hunted animals.

We have lived for hours in the shark-infested waters of Manila Bay. We have lived for days and weeks in the barren, rugged, friendless mountains of Luzon. We have spent nearly two months since Corregidor's fall in a 20-foot motor sailer, ploughing our way 3000 miles from somewhere in the Philippines to Australia.

We are, we believe, the first American officers to escape the Philippines since that tragic day the gallant men of Bataan.

incurs to escape the Philippines since that tragic day the gallant men of Bataan, with whom we lived and worked and fought for nearly six months laid down their arms for the last time.



**General Douglas MacArthur, who was in command in the Philippines before his escape to Australia.**

We have seen the tattered but still proud flag of the United States of America torn down from its guardian post over the pitifully small garrison of Bataan and trampled on by the Japanese invader.

We have seen American officers and enlisted men reduced to the rank of humble, almost medieval, slaves by an enemy who fears no God and respects no white man.

On that afternoon of April 9, when our troops had fired their last shots as free men of a free army, we saw arrogant, merciless Japanese soldiers bayoneting our wounded with the lust of tigers let loose for the first time.

We saw that same afternoon an American officer, who had courageously and fairly discharged his duties as a leader and as a soldier through six months of heart-breaking setbacks, forced by well-fed, grinning Japanese to put his nose into a pile of filthy manure, while other sneering Japanese prodded him on at the point of stiletto-like daggers.

That is the enemy we eluded, as men virtually imprisoned on Luzon by geographical barriers and material shortages, and that is the enemy which hounded the small boat as we crept from island to island and from village to village on the hazardous and exhausting voyage to Australia.

Many times during those three months on Luzon and during the voyage it seemed certain our desperate chance to gain full freedom would be nipped by the Japanese.

Once one of us was placed in a concentration camp on Bataan, only to break away again only a few steps ahead of a virtual deluge from Japanese machine-guns. Time after time Japanese searching for us have been so near we could have touched them from our hiding place in a clump of bushes, or amid tangled protective jungle vines. Once, as we fought our way southward from Bataan Peninsula to a rendezvous point, we hid for hours in river mud, our faces and heads covered with foul-smelling muck as the Japanese combed every inch around us.

Minutes before we gathered at the point we had selected to meet and prepare for our journey to Australia, we discovered a man we believed to have been a trusted friend was, in fact, a Japanese spy.

spy.

\* \* \*

ALWAYS we had to keep our eyes peeled for friendly natives. Every man or woman we met was a potential friend, but he was just as much a potential enemy.

We slept by day in caves or in bushes. We learned to play the game of hide and seek the way the Japanese played it—deceit and treachery every minute. We doubled back countless times to throw any pursuers off our trail. We walked by night, the knife-

one entire Philippine province was evacuated of all its young women by the southward moving Japanese army.

We saw Philippine newspapers published after Bataan's fall printing pictures of our tired, raggedly clothed troops after the surrender with captions ridiculing the American defence of the Philippines.

From one of our friends we learned how American officers and soldiers alike were forced to march nearly 60 miles only a few hours after Bataan's fall, without food or water. Those that fell out

like rocks along the treacherous trails of jungle-covered Luzon slashing at our bare feet with almost every step.

We went without food or water often sometimes as long as five days, while the broiling sun of sweltering Philippine days burned us almost black.

We had no clothes except our underwear and a pair of tropical shorts, and the cold mountain nights were almost as bitter for us as the steaming tropical days.

We entered isolated native villages by night, sometimes awakening natives the "bamboo wireless" had told us were friendly, and were given food and water. Sometimes we were afraid to chance making our presence known—particularly after entering one village and finding hundreds of Japanese soldiers asleep in all the native huts—so we would sneak quietly in, get what food we could find on the outskirts of the village, and hastily retreat to the mountains.

Our "bamboo wireless," a strangely, almost mystic way of learning news that has taken place hundreds of miles away in a few hours, brought us word of other Americans who, like ourselves, had refused to surrender, and had taken to the mountains.

We met a few isolated groups of these Americans, who told us they were as determined as we to leave the Philippines, but suggested we keep in small groups and as widely separated as possible to avoid detection by the Japanese.

From the "bamboo wireless" we learned of the atrocities Japanese were committing in the Philippines and on Bataan. How Filipino women were being almost continuously assaulted by Japanese soldiers, sometimes on the very streets of Manila, and how one entire Philippine province

Starting today is this thrilling story of two U.S. Army officers' escape from the Philippines to Australia in a 20-foot boat. They arrived in Australia on October 11.

# We Escape

or became sick were immediately bayoneted.

We heard from Manila how American soldiers, already terribly weak and almost starving, and without water for days, had been forced to march through the city in almost endless streams while Japanese civilian and military police restrained the pro-American population from giving the soldiers either food, water, or cigarettes. Those men had to walk in their bare feet, another pleasant Japanese trick for lowering the white man in the eyes of the Filipinos.

\* \* \*

**B**UT the Filipinos were suffering for their outspoken democratic ideals, too. One officer we knew on Bataan was shot to death by a Japanese firing squad because he refused to bow to Japanese soldiers on the streets of Manila.

He was gaily yelling out a long list of Filipino curses directed at Emperor Hirohito when his death volley was fired.

But although the Filipinos were on the surface taking the Japanese reign of terror and the brutal Japanese assaults against Filipino women quietly, there was smoldering wrath growing in the hearts of the Filipino men. We heard more and more stories of dead Japanese soldiers being found stabbed on dark Manila streets or beaten over the head and killed along lonely province trails.

One of us spent July 4 in an isolated village, where natives, remembering the day and its importance to Americans, played "The Star Spangled Banner" on makeshift guitars, while an American flag they had carefully hidden near the village when the Japanese forces overran Luzon, was

near the village when the Japanese forces overran Luzon, was brought out and proudly and ceremoniously hoisted to full-mast. It was probably the only American flag which flew in all the Philippines on Independence Day.

Only a few miles away Japanese patrols were scouring the mountains for any signs of fleeing Americans. Native participation in our July 4 ceremony was their way of showing defiance to the Japanese invader.

We found out through simple kindnesses of the illiterate, uneducated people of the Philippine interior that a feeling of deep loyalty for America still exists strongly in their hearts.

At a lonely bivouac we made we met Marine Private Buddy Henderson, who had given one of us help the day after our fortress toppled. He told us his "bamboo wireless" system had confirmed the safety of Lieut.-General Wainwright in Manila.

Actually we were brought together by underground messages, meeting in a lonely spot far to the south of Manila in the middle of July, where we planned our escape.

It took almost a month to locate a boat capable of carrying us through the typhoons of the China Sea, and then to earn enough money to buy the boat, fuel, and supplies. We came down with malaria once, and used our rapidly diminishing quinine supply to stave off the disease, which would have ruined the hope of escape. We heard rumors that Japanese patrols were operating in the vicinity, and had to hide out often for days on end while Nipponese troops roamed through the villages we frequented.

Finally, on August 16, everything had been completed for the start. We had boiled wild pig,

start. We had boiled wild pig, and put it in airtight cans. We had stocked our small vessel with rice, coffee, and fuel, and we had repaired our temperamental diesel engine as best we could.

★ ★ ★

**F**IRST night out we began a series of misadventures which trailed us from the time we left the Philippines until we arrived in Australia.

Once we sailed between two Japanese warships signalling each other by searchlight from a dis-

## *By Captain Damon Gause and Capt. William Lloyd Osborne as Told to Lee Van Atta*

tance of perhaps five miles, not realising our danger until the lights began flashing to the right and to the left of us.

We were caught in a large typhoon in the China Sea for two days, and another time we were becalmed a few miles from a major Japanese garrison on an island in the lower Philippines.

When we left the Philippines natives told us we were absolutely crazy. We couldn't possibly safely reach Australia. Sometimes during the 3000-mile journey it looked like the natives had been right, but somehow neither of us ever gave up or ever dreamed of anything but Australia and freedom and the chance to hit the Japanese again on at least fairly equal terms.

Both of us during those seemingly endless months on Bataan, enduring our slow, dangerous progress into the interior of Luzon, felt a hand far greater than ours guiding our destiny.

We prayed many times between the Philippines and Australia, as much for the men we had left behind us as for our own safety. They weren't audible prayers, but they were there just the same. We realise now and perhaps even more vividly than we did then, how many times we were close to our Maker.

The story we are going to tell—sometimes individually—because many of our most harrowing experiences happened before we became fellow escapees and later to-

gether during our last days in the Philippines, will sound unbelievable and perhaps a little fantastic to the ears of civilised people, who will find it difficult to comprehend the barbaric and inhuman conduct of the enemy with whom we are at war. But they are as true as Bataan itself.

Our stories you will read are the stories the men of Bataan and Corregidor will tell when they are free again. It is the simple truth as we have known it and have seen it during five months of bloody, uncompromising war, and during almost six months as fleeing refugees from the hell of Japanese prison camps.

[Captain Gause now takes up the story, and tells his own personal experiences on Bataan.]

★ ★ ★

**I** COMMANDED a machine-gun unit in the front lines of Bataan. For four months, in knee-deep dust, often without food and water, always under a constant barrage of enemy artillery and bombs, my unit defended our most advanced positions on the right flank. We pumped mil-

lions of rounds of .30 and .50 calibre lead into wave after wave of green-clad Japanese troops.

We took up our positions on January 15, and we were still holding them the morning Bataan's defenders were forced to give up the struggle. Day after

... were forced to give up the struggle. Day after day, week after week, we fought in the sweltering jungles, a nerve-racking, exhausting battle against mass enemy units, against prowling snipers infiltrating into our lines under cover of darkness and against grenade-carrying Japanese patrols, which we often mowed down when they were less than 15 feet from our trenches.

Air corps youngsters, uneducated in ground or infantry tactics, but brilliant marksmen with machine-guns, formed the heart of my unit. Some of them were barely 18 years old—youthful, carefree striplings when the war began, but tired, haggard veterans the morning they were ordered to desert their guns and surrender to the overwhelming numbers of Japanese who had broken through the heart of our Bataan defences.

Our machine-gun nests were set up in anything and everything that provided some semblance of camouflage—in trees, in haystacks, even behind the protecting coverage of jungle vines.

We lived in constant fear of surprise attack by the enemy. Often we would find our men holding most advanced positions bayoneted to death when our relieving parties arrived.

I was a pilot without an airplane when the war began last December, attached to a medium bombardment unit at Nichols Field. We were still awaiting the arrival of our dive-bombers from the United States when the first legions of Nipponese troops landed at Legaspi Bay.

I was assigned to communications at our headquarters at Fort McKinley, and the remainder of my group was evacuated to Bataan on December 23. There was hardly an American left in Manila last Christmas Day, and Second-Lieut. Leroy Coward and I were the only officers who ate Christmas dinner at the McKinley Officers' Club.

\* \* \*

ON December 26 I received orders to fly an antiquated observation plane to Bataan. On December 28, as we were preparing basic defences of Bataan, I received orders to take a convoy of 20 trucks into Manila to secure vitally important signals supplies for the various units on Bataan. We arrived in Manila on the night of December 28, beneath a

rain of enemy steel. Many sections of the city were in a shambles,

rain of enemy steel. Many sections of the city were in a shambles, and the population was confused and frightened. Manila had already been declared an open city by General MacArthur.

We found our way to the docks by the light of tremendous fires licking along the entire waterfront. Fortunately the place where our supplies were stored had escaped a devastating bombing attack launched during the afternoon by the Japanese.

Loading the trucks was a two-day job—most of the native laborers had been forced away by the continued bombing and shelling. New Year's Eve two other officers who had come from Bataan on special missions—Major Jack Sewall and Lieut. William Conners—went to a special dance at Manila Hotel, former headquarters of General MacArthur.

\* \* \*

WE were the last Americans to set foot in the famed hotel before the arrival of the Japanese forces. There was only a handful of Filipinos there that night, and most of them were women. Despite the shelling, there was an atmosphere of gaiety and laughter in marked contrast to other sections of the city still under Japanese bombardment. There was no blackout on New Year's Eve because of the "open city" declaration, but it did not stop enemy cannon pounding ceaselessly against targets they had been shelling for days.

Already reports of Japanese atrocities against Filipino women in the northern provinces had reached Manila, and frightened, anxious women came to our table to ask our help and to beg us to win back Manila as soon as we could.

About 10 o'clock New Year's morning, Japanese aeroplanes renewed their bombing attacks against the city. It was in full swing—it seemed as if thousands of bombs were falling on the city—when our truck convoy, with Sewall, Conners, and myself started on the road back to Bataan. Ten minutes after we crossed the connecting bridge between the Bataan Peninsula and Manila, General Wainwright ordered the bridges blown up.

I helped in the installation of the signals supplies I had secured for the Far East Air Corps Headquarters until January 14, when, at my request, I was sent back to my old outfit. We were ordered to the front immediately.

the front immediately.

Our positions were in the Zambales Mountains, and our job was to keep the mountain trails in American hands. We stayed there for about two weeks while Japanese planes bombed and strafed us daily, and enemy troops infiltrated into our lines. Finally we fell back to the main lines running east and west between Olan and Bagch, which we held until the last day of the Bataan campaign. The days of fighting on Bataan were living hell.

It was a mosquito-ridden "no



This is what Japanese bombs did to Cavite, American naval base at Manila Bay.

man's land," with nature as much our enemy as the Japanese themselves. It did not rain enough to wet our faces in all the weeks we lay there stemming the Japanese onslaught, and the dust choked our throats and noses and kept our eyes rimmed with cakes of reddish mud.

None of us had anything but the clothes we were wearing. There was one razor in the whole company, and only occasionally enough water to shave in, if we had the strength to do it.

There was hardly any food either, rice mostly, with sometimes gravy, if we were lucky enough to bag a small animal, or if we received a share of the "carabao" meat which was being held in other sectors.

Our supplies were destroyed by the Japanese as rapidly as they were prepared for shipment to us far down on the peninsula tip.

Colonel Long, commanding officer of the air force group, lost 40 lb. from malnutrition, but even though he was so weak he could not leave the makeshift bed we had prepared for him in a fox-hole, he refused to be relieved, and stayed with us until the last day.

Colonel Long was later taken prisoner by the Japanese.

We had no blankets and no mattresses. We used tree leaves or vine matting as our only bed and our only cover. Nods of the men had mosquito nets and night after night they were horribly bitten by the raging pests.

\* \* \*

COLONEL I. E. DOANE, of Bangor, Maine, a veteran of the last war, was commanding officer and he was a great one. Well loved by everyone for his courageous, optimistic outlook when the going was the toughest,

when the going was the toughest. Colonel Doane was especially respected by the Americans who served under him on Bataan.

Lieut.-Colonel Hardy, of Charlotte, North Carolina, was executive officer for the regiment. Many nights as we kept our eyes peeled for the typical Japanese trick of crawling on their bellies to our lines and bayoneting one of our men or hurling a surprise grenade, Colonel Hardy and I would sit in a machine-gun nest reminiscing about days of peace, and wondering when we would see home again.

All of us kept looking for the reinforcements that never came. I don't think that one of us up to the last ever believed the United States had not done everything possible to get everything possible to us. We did not expect very much, but we hoped and prayed something would come.

★ ★ ★

OF all the men who served with me during those first heart-breaking days of Bataan, the name of Private Oestricher, of Eastman, Georgia, stands out as the most brilliant. It was Oestricher who, when we set up a machine-gun position far in advance of our other lines, camouflaged only by rice straw, volunteered to take up the suicide post.

It housed a dual 50-calibre machine-gun, and it protected our patrols even as it repelled the enemy. Oestricher stuck by his guns until the very end. I watched him mow down Japanese after Japanese as they attempted to reach his position and knock out probably the most destructive machine-gun killer on Bataan.

The only thing I ever heard Oestricher ask for in all those weeks he single-handed covered our lines was more ammunition.

I watched him shoot down dive-bombers attempting to kill a company of our men setting up a barbed wire entanglement, and I could see the spitting tracers of his shells lobbing in the Japanese advanced concentrations with an almost uncanny perception of the enemy's presence.

Oestricher was one of the real heroes of Bataan. He was the greatest hero in our sector. Oestricher knew. I think, his days were







**Brigadier-General Clinton Pierce, U.S. Army,  
questions Jap prisoners before the fall of Bataan.**

numbered from the time he went into that rice straw to play a lone game of death.

Finally the Japanese located his well-camouflaged position, and a bomb hit it direct, completely destroying the machine-gun nest and burying Oestricher as he sat with his fingers pouring out defiance.

As the days wore on the condition of our men and the general situation on Bataan steadily de-

teriorated. In my diary for April 2 I wrote: "No reinforcements—men tired and weak—don't think will hold much longer. Japanese shelling our positions without a break."

I think I knew as I wrote those words that the fate of Bataan was sealed.

Next Sunday: "In Bataan men fought 22 hours out of 24."

teriorated. In my diary for April 2 I wrote: "No reinforcements—men tired and weak—don't think will hold much longer. Japanese