

From the translator.

Here follows a free translation from the original Dutch report on the POW camps of Harima and Noda written by sergeant D.A. Visker. He had no specific training as an author, but the report is written in a personal and lively manner. In this translation his writing style has been followed as much as possible though punctuation has had to be altered here and there. Lengthy sentences have been maintained, but typical Dutch expressions do not always have an English equivalent. The numbering of the pages follows those of his original document.

This account tells of a particularly difficult time for a large group of Dutch men who had careers in the Netherlands East Indies (now Indonesia). Many of those were called up in the reserve and during WWII became with members of the professional military forces prisoners of war of the Japanese. In spite of the difficult circumstances the author, sergeant Visker, occasionally tells of things with a somewhat ironic tone. I found that the story sometimes even reads like an account of a group of boys going to boarding school. No doubt the men who suffered under the unexpected circumstances of defeat and imprisonment, with family and loved ones left behind, needed that mindset so as not to be overcome by discouragement and depression.

I undertook this translation for my children and grand children.

About the author.

We owe our knowledge of Harima and Noda camps in Japan to sergeant D. A. Visker. He was born in the Netherlands and had lost his mother when he was in his mid teens. When his father remarried, Visker could not get along with his step mother and left home to join the colonial army (Koninklijke Nederlands Indische Leger or KNIL). He specialised in electronics and was assigned to the Netherlands Indies air force on Java. He then became a prisoner of war in Japan and at some point was assigned to be the Dutch commandant of the camps in Harima and Noda. He was about 26 years old. His documents are in the collection of the NIOD, the Dutch war archives in Amsterdam.

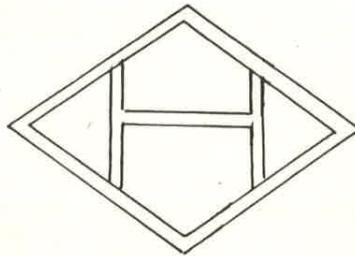
My father.

My father, Wilhelmus Christaan Rampen, number 89 among the list of POWs, was close to middle age when he became a POW. He probably was among the oldest in Harima and Noda camps. I happened to meet Sergeant Visker and he told me that he remembered my father as a tall and very quiet man remaining forever reserved. My father told me that all he was focussed on was to remain alive so that he could again take care of his wife and children. The war had interrupted his successful career. Like many others he had been called up in the reserve. The upscale department store where he was their interior designer was taken over by the Japanese. He could not be certain ever to see his children

or his wife Julie again. Fortunately it all turned out positively in the end. He returned the Indies to his wife and found his children in the Netherlands. Then, after a happy retirement he died at a ripe old age.

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HARIMA 1942 - 1945



400 Nederlanders in
Japanse gevangenschap

door
D.A.Visker
oud-kampcommandant



HARIMA 1942-1945

400 Dutch prisoners of the Japanese

by
D.A.Visker

ex- camp commandant

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To my former camp companions,

This book about the adventures of four hundred Dutch men who were prisoners of war from 1942 till 1945 in Japan is not just a story. It is a summing up of real events as they happened during the Second World War.

All the individuals mentioned are named by their real names, all facts and dates have been carefully recorded and checked. This makes this book of real significance for researchers and especially for those who were personally involved.

The author, as Dutch camp commandant, was able to learn details that were not always available to all others in the camp. Furthermore he was one of the few who was able to keep a record of the most important happenings in the camp and to guard these safely until liberation.

This information became later the source for his "Rapport aan het Leger bestuur" (Report to the Army administration) (Manilla september 1945) and for his volume "Nederlanders in Japan" (Dutchmen in Japan) (Amsterdam 1948/49) on behalf of the Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie (National Institute for War Documentation).

During later meetings with former companions it became clear that there was continued interest in an account of our common camp history. It has been the reason for this project, to review the existing notes, to complete these and to render them in a more accessible form.

The Harima committee, having taken the initiative to search for the surviving companions of the camp and organise a yearly reunion, has also made this publication possible. On the occasion of our fourth reunion it is a pleasure for the members of this committee to offer you this copy as a personal memory about a special period our lives - something we will never be able to forget.

The Harima-Committee

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R. de Haas
H. Kohn
S. Middelkoop
D.A. Visker
G. Wijnschenk

's Gravenhage, March 1966

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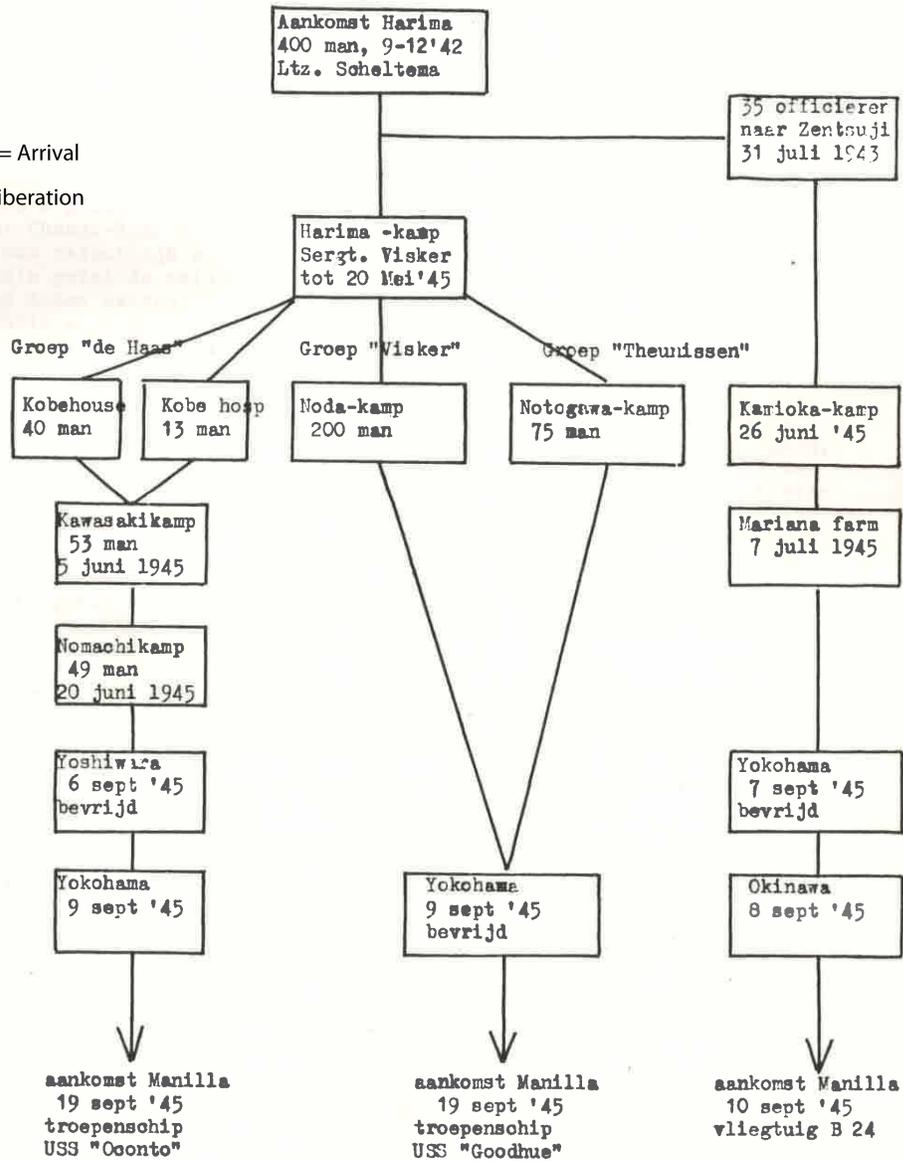
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SPLITSINGEN HARIMA GROEP

(Divisions of Harima group)

Aankomst = Arrival
Bevrijd = Liberation



Graphic overview of the divisions of the original Harima group
400 men arriving at Harima under Lieutenant Scheltema. 9-12- '42

until return to Manilla September 1945

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Chapter 1. HOW WE GOT THERE

In the second half of 1942 the Japanese had gathered many thousands of allied prisoners of war on the island of Singapore. These were concentrated in the previous British military complexes in which Changi camp was the most important. This camp was then mostly built up of army tents. Since Changi was of a rather vast expanse, it offered a certain freedom of movement, but it certainly did not make the camp an agreeable accommodation. The sanitary situation was particularly precarious. The allied medical doctors did their best but often they did not have the necessary means to prevent the larger outbreak of illness. There were therefore regularly a great number of patients and the meager nourishment made it worse. Everyone harbored finally one single important wish: to leave Changi camp as soon as possible!

Of course it was difficult to know beforehand where such a voyage would take us. Rumors about shipping to Japan regularly did the rounds and that was the fate one tried to avoid. One still counted on a rapid military action by the Americans whereby the island of Java would be relieved. In that case the rapid reunion with families that had stayed behind would be quite probable. In any case one preferred to stay in Changi rather than be deported to the home land of the enemy. It was occasionally the purpose for a number of fake illnesses. We knew that the Japanese were excessively afraid about dysentery. A bacteriological check-up was required whenever a group was readied for departure. Everyone had to deliver a sample of his stool. If one delivered an infected sample one could with certainty expect the order to remain behind. Such sample could be obtained from friends in the sick bay. It is a rather strange business thinking about this now at some distance but it really happened. Another aspect of this was that those who remained could not foresee that possibly worse fate lay in their future: the railroad of death in Burma or Thailand...

The group to which we belonged had not been long in Singapore. On October 20, 1942 most had been embarked on the old Japanese freighter "Oyo Maru" at Tanjong Priok, which took us after a roundabout way along the coast of Borneo, landing on November 1 at Singapore. This gives me the opportunity to tell of the manner in which we, prisoners of war, were transported by the Japanese.

Our hosts, as we called them ironically, made us move quite often. Moving even under normal circumstances is no fun, under "Dai Nippon" it was generally a real torment. The Japanese military kept the upcoming departure of a group prisoners of war a careful secret. That information came only the evening before the departure. This made our

disappointment greater since it meant lack of time for preparations; such as warning couriers outside the camp; the taking apart and hiding of certain forbidden items that had made life in the camp a little more bearable (electrical equipment and radios).

If we traveled by train we had to cover the distance between camp and railway station on foot. Everyone had then to carry all his possessions himself. This meant that we could only take what was most necessary; one lost all sorts of things that had been gathered with some difficulty. It happened all the time that one over estimated one's capability to lug the stuff and that after a few kilometers of toil a package or a trunk had to be left at the way side; under those circumstances that was a serious loss....

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We still had to learn that we were to become poorer and poorer and that finally we would be able to manage with the utter minimum....

If a band of prisoners of war left some camp or other on Java, loaded down, there were often some Indonesians who, using a moment lacking in watchfulness of the Japanese, offered their services as porters. One could come quickly to an agreement that the luggage be brought along a different way to the required destination and there be returned to the owner. This would not always work out. One can imagine the self reproach of the prisoner when it turned out that the "good" Indonesian had run off with his possessions, because of course there was no way for redress.

Once we had learned from this experience, new porters were found. Those were companions who were still fit enough and who themselves owned little in worldly goods. They were ready and quite willing if properly rewarded to transport some of that luggage. For this purpose some constructed little carts that could carry their own luggage as well as that from others. (sergeant-major. de Koning).

There were two ways the Japanese used to prepare for a transport. In the first the whole camp or a clearly defined area (such as specific buildings) became identified as the section that would be moved. The second manner was more selective and also more complicated. The Dutch commandant received the order to assemble a group that needed to satisfy certain demands. In this manner a group was selected in the "Jaarmarkt" camp in Surabaya for cleaning operations in the harbour of Semarang. This had to consist of three hundred strong young men for exterior labour. The Japanese also asked sometimes for those who had technical training such as a group of a thousand men under captain-pilot P. Valk. This group, to which we also belonged, was destined for Japan even though we were not told about it. In spite of this it had already been decided while on Java.

It is easy to understand that such an order was a difficult task for the Dutch commandant; according to the nature of the destination it might be preferred or feared and therefore everyone tried to be either included or rejected. The result was that there was quite a fuss

and that the group only could be assembled with great difficulty. There was quite some conflict between the prisoners and angry accusations flew about. It was also the occasion for fake illnesses. On the other hand there was the temptation for the Dutch commander to get rid of camp members who were difficult to handle or who had misbehaved or who generally were less pleasant to deal with. The persistent rumors that appeared after our departure from Surabaya indicate, it seems to me, that such things also happened in the “Jaarmarkt” camp.

A camp is a peculiar world. After a little while one makes it a “home”. One makes friends, conquers a little comfort, one establishes new contacts with the “outside” and tries to adapt as much as possible to the circumstances. Looking back at this now after many years I come to the conclusion that I have never really left a camp with heartfelt pleasure. It was always because it had to be done. Only ONE camp is an exception, the last one.... but then, after all, it had also become peace again!

Allow me to tell first something about travel by train. I have to admit that I myself have never had to travel in a freight or cattle carriage. But as I have been assured these were indeed used for the transport of POWs from Singapore to Thailand. For the groups to which I belonged there were the old fourth class waggons available on Java; wooden waggons and barren except for three long benches stretching along the length of the waggon. Before getting in we were handed buns and we were immediately told that during the trip there would be no more food available. The rations were planned for one single bun per meal per person. That was not so bad even though no spread seemed to be known at all. At some stations where the train stopped the Japanese brought pails of water or weak tea from which we were allowed to serve ourselves. This was the complete care taken of us during the train ride. A cumbersome situation was the unending trip to the little cabin at the end of the waggon where you were obliged to perform breakneck turns....

Smoking was forbidden during the entire journey, in any case it was forbidden at all times (and in all camps) to own any matches or lighters, though the Japanese were not very successful with this prohibition. The windows of the train, consisting of wooden slats remained shut during the entire journey, but whenever the guards did not look we diligently peeped out. That was not so difficult in any case since for every 60 POWs in a waggon there were only two Japanese, one at each end of the waggon. They therefore had little control and there was no possibility for them to move through the waggon. There were attempts now and then to check the numbers of the men; which was done through “numbering” (bango!) The first times this went all wrong but we understood later that the only important thing was for the last man to call out “sixty” (roku ju) . What happened in between was almost not important. Our mental superiority, against the generally rather simple souls who were charged with guarding us, has served us well throughout the time we were prisoners of war.

We travelled this way a number of times with our hosts from Dai Nippon; 19 May 1942 we left Tasikmalaya for Surabaya and on the 25th of October it was the long journey from Surabaya to Batavia. This last train ride took then a little more than 24 hours, more than double than what was normally necessary.

On one of the stations we had to wait for quite some time. This was the opportunity for several groups of Indonesians to jeer at us. These were mostly young ones. We asked ourselves if they had been taken to this station especially for this purpose. It bothered us little, but we were relieved when the train started up again, the temperature was also very oppressive for us.

We tried our best to guess what our destination would be. All sorts of rumours did the rounds but only the facts would be able to confirm it. Known points along the way and the names of small stations revealed finally where we were going.

In 1942, the first year of our imprisonment, the Dutch women were still quite free to move about. From our train we could see them standing on the station's platforms or near the railway crossings where they tried to get a glimpse of their husband or a member of the family.

There were some who in another train (an express) tried to follow the same route and in a way tried to shadow us. They collaborated very efficiently and phoned each other from station to station to pass information. Even when we were in the camps their warnings about planned moves were mostly correct.

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They had good mutual contact and they were most inventive. Messages could arrive as an innocent looking little wad or attached to a stone thrown over the fence. The Japanese on Java were not able to prevent that.

In one perspective the women were just as excessively optimistic as the men: the expectation of a rapid allied counter offensive in South East Asia. In spite of the reality, the many rumours that did the rounds about this were ever so gladly believed.

Another matter was the courage and fearlessness of the women, challenging the Japanese everywhere and showing themselves at the fences. That was a courage for which we always admired them and an example which many of us should have followed. The women could not be subdued, they steadily tried as much as possible to encourage us while they hid their own fears and worries. No matter at what hour of the day or night a prisoner transport entered a town, one could count on finding the women along the route; they refused to be chased away by Japanese soldiers or Indonesian police. They always returned even while being slapped or hit. We always prepared messages so as to

lance those at the right places. These were always picked up and, as became later known to us, reached their destinations.

The police did not leave a strong impression and appeared to keep their distance. It could well be the result of the depreciatory attitude they also experienced from the Japanese. So, travel by train during our imprisonment was no pleasure but transport by sea was much worse. One can be sure that all deported fellow dutchmen will agree on this: one of the worst experiences in our lives was the embarkation of the prisoners who were about to leave Java. It happened in the harbour of Tanjong Priok at Batavia. (now Jakarta) Surely, many dark thoughts passed through our heads, when in an endless file, we had to walk from the station to the quay. It was in that same harbour that most of us had earlier arrived in the Indies, those circumstances had then been so much happier ones. Or possibly one had left here on occasion for a furlough in Europe. It was certainly not the strangeness of a voyage by sea nor the location itself that made now such a deep impression. No, it was more the thought of the personal families and other relatives that were left behind and from whom we would be separated by this endless wide ocean, as well as their fate now that they were left under the control of the occupier.

We could now not count on how we quickly might join them again during the allied landing. There was no more the possibility of a clandestine correspondence by little notes sent over the bamboo fence or through the mediation of former house servants who on Java often acted as couriers for us. Our separation had now become complete. Another worried reflection was that we would be travelling on a Japanese ship in war time! The allies could show up anywhere, what dangers would there be for us during this voyage? Might a torpedo from a Dutch submarine hit us? Would we ever return to Java alive, and then... how long might this still take?

Now when all this has been for years behind us, we may compare things. Fortunately we did not know everything beforehand. Insofar as our own group is concerned we may say that we came off rather well, but it is undeniable that we suffered for years and that for every tenth of us only the charred remains have returned to Java. That somber march under the burning sun from the station to the third harbour of Priok had meant for those the very last they would see of Java...

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The "Oyo Maru" lay at the quay of Priok taking on cargo. It was an old freighter probably an old English coaler. When we first saw the ship the Japs were busy loading horses into the holds. These Australian animals had been the pride of the cavalry of the army of the Netherlands East Indies. Now they faced an uncertain future, maybe they would be finishing their lives in the service of a foreign army. With two belts under their bellies they were winched up. Floating through the air and still writhing these noble animals then disappeared into the darkness of the ship's hold. The second hold was

already closed, probably filled with the plunder of war. The start of the line of prisoners already stumbled up the steep gangway, loaded with luggage, packages, backpacks. The men were pushed alternatively in holds 3 and 4. Circumstances reserved hold 4 for us. Descending the iron stairs it was immediately clear that the ship had no accommodation for this sort of transport. Just as it had in the past carried bags of cement or bales of rubber so it would now carry this living cargo. We were stowed in quite brutal fashion. There was no light except for whatever entered through through the entrance of the stairs. A Japanese soldier stood yelling while pushing us impatiently so as to make us move faster. We staggered, essentially feeling our way down the stairs into those dark depths....

When about fifty men had been pushed together at the bottom and it became quite close we tried feebly to make the Japanese soldier understand that no more could be added. He appeared to understand but did not give a hoot. The wave continued and new arrivals were added to us. More and more Dutch came down those stairs and crowded into the space. When the available space had become truly cramped, the Japanese gentleman came down himself and drove everyone with the butt of his rifle tight into a corner. More travelers came down the stairs until about three hundred men were crowded together. Whatever luggage had been brought along was piled along the sides. For the men there was just enough space to sit tightly, leaning against each other. No one could lie down. Some clever fellows among which our friends Hennie (King) de Koning, Ferrie Kluge and "Skippie" Alderden were clever enough to climb onto a little platform above the propeller housing. They were the only ones who had managed to conquer a modest little place to lie down and they worked hard to keep that beautiful little spot for themselves. But it was quite doubtful that it was such an advantage after all because when the ship left the harbour the vibration of the propeller was so strong that it was quite a business to actually rest.

It was the 28th of October, 1942; late in the afternoon we left the harbour. It was the first time we went on a voyage when it was not allowed for us to see the coast slowly disappear. From our dark hole we could see high above us a couple of Japanese, standing on the deck. They stood in the sunshine and waved a goodbye with their sweat cloths to their comrades on the quay. The propeller housing began to shake heavily, a sign that we were now on our way. Farewell Java! The voyage had started...

About evening someone beat on a tin. Get your food! Everyone looked for his mess tin and we clambered up in a long file to get our ration. How wonderful it was being for a brief moment in the fresh air. No one was unhappy that the handout took quite a long time. That first meal on board consisted of a scoop full of boiled rice and a small piece of fish. It should be mentioned right away that all following meals on the "Oyo Maru" were less grand. In the future we were to receive with the rice nothing more but a little salt.

For that purpose everyone had to present his little tin to one of our own navy officers who scraped some salt from a large block with a knife...

After the meal we had to go back down into the depth. It was boiling hot down there and soon there was a lack of oxygen. Many of the prisoners were suffocating and by midday quite a few actually fainted. Our military doctor managed to convince the Japanese that those few who were most affected could come on deck each on his turn to profit from the fresh air and were allowed a few mouthfuls of tepid water. What a delight we found that then: fresh air and a little water!

The night brought new problems, we were exhausted but did not have enough room to stretch out. We snoozed, leaning against each other, but woke up from each other's movements. Yes, our comrades all suffered in the same manner and if there was any grumbling it was not really meant. We were all in the same boat so to say and we had to share everything. If there was any moment to learn about solidarity it was now. We were forced to do it. This was only the beginning of the beginning...

Meanwhile our navigators sat on the propeller housing. "King" kept an eye on our directions on his pocket compass, "Skippy" helped with reading the map. The first day it was not easy to guess our destination but later it was possible to reconstruct our voyage. The "Oyo Maru" probably first crossed the Java Sea till close to the coast of Borneo. Afterwards we crept along the coast in northerly direction. This made us consider that the Japs were probably afraid of submarines. However there were no incidents and on the first of November we arrived in the harbour of Singapore. For many of us this place was so well known that there could be no doubt.

Once at the quay we were taken from the ship. This happened quite quickly. A heavy set Japanese sergeant, who we gave the nickname "de Beul" (the executioner) drove us down the gangway to a row of waiting trucks. It was all rough treatment, in fact even for his own men the "beul" was not gentle, a soldier driver who appeared not quick enough for him was given a nasty beating right before our eyes.

Once we were all on the quay we had to mount the trucks, each vehicle had to transport forty men and so we went. From the harbour the drive passed through the busy Chinese area of Singapore and after that along rural roads. At a certain moment the column had to stop. It was the moment for a doing of our little business along the roadside. A little further on we saw on the side of the road a large building complex surrounded by high grey walls. The prison! Were we going to be put there? Many of us had new worries now, the building made such a sombre threatening impression. But no, we had to get in again, the first vehicles already started up again. It had been only a short break. when we drove off we saw from the barred windows, high in the building, the waving from white arms. We learned later that the English women from Singapore and surrounding area were being locked up here. Our own destination was the military camp, the former British military complex Changi, where we arrived in the late afternoon. We came down the trucks awkwardly, we had to stand to again and count, count, count.

Chapter 2. TO JAPAN!

We arrived in a vast tent camp. Part of it was indicated to our group as our particular accommodation and that organisation happened very quickly. Every tent was inhabited by a small club of about ten men. These men would be dependent on each other in every possible way. It became camping in all seriousness. In Changi there was a certain freedom of movement that was quite pleasant, there was no regular requirement to stand to or any other obligations. There was an official muster of the group every morning and a team would be assigned as a fatigue detail. This meant mostly keeping the area clean, emptying garbage bins and the cleaning of the W.C.s. These were of a rather strange construction, in fact these were latrines provided with extensive fly traps that always were filled with buzzing masses.

Whoever was not assigned fatigue duties was able to walk around freely inside the camp. Traffic between the various sections happened while passing through gates. If one wished one could join a convoy. This was a small group led by a British officer who carried a special flag. In this manner one could walk around without seeing much of the Japanese. There were tens of thousands allied POWs in Changi. One could find of course many British and Americans, but also Australians and Dutch. We did not meet any of the Asiatic troops that had fought on the allied side. The exterior borders of the area were guarded by Japanese soldiers assisted by British-Indian troops that had changed sides and who in their own uniforms and with their own arms now served the enemy. The prisoners were obliged to render homage to these Indians just as they had to the Japanese soldiers. This must have been particularly difficult for the English officers, but they did that absolutely correctly, straight and rigid, without losing any of their dignity. A little group of the Dutch visited one day a hill where heavy British artillery had been installed. These pieces had been intended to prevent an invasion by sea, but no one had counted on the possibility of an attack on land so that the approaching enemy did not suffer any trouble from it, the pieces could not be turned around.

There was still an English camp store, where it was possible to buy a few items with Straits Dollars. The choice was very limited, mostly coconuts and palm oil. We received from the camp kitchen not much more than a ration of rice and a bit of salted fish. To add a little to this small spread we sought all sorts of solutions and...found those too. There was avid gardening in every corner of the camp and soon one could harvest the leaves of "ketela rambat" (a sort of yam). Those leaves we boiled in a helmet and since we had no access to salt we cooked them in seawater that had been quietly scooped up at a distant corner, a couple of kilometers down the coast. One of our tent companions had succeeded in catching a wandering cat. That animal, after a rather complicated butchery, was also cooked in the helmet and eaten with great gusto.

The sanitary situation in Changi was, as earlier mentioned, especially bad, every day we had more people sick. These were then transferred to the British military hospital. It was often difficult for their comrades to visit the patients, the camp was vast and everything was mixed up. It did not take long or we began losing some of our men, after a short while there were daily funerals for friends who had died from their illness. Sergeant-major Hein Smit who had arrived with us in Singapore was the first from our group who would not recover. Lieutenant Engelbrecht also belonged to those who died soon. He had a substantial amount of money under his care. We have never known if this were funds of the military administration or of his personal property,

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in any case our Dutch commandant was ordered to administer this amount and later on handed everyone a part of it. Since we could not spend this money anyway it was of little use. On Java it would have meant more to us.

The English were in part still accommodated in their own stone buildings where they also had use of a properly built theatre. This was where they gave regular shows. One evening the Dutch also were allowed to attend such a presentation. It was a great occasion, among the British soldiers there were very talented artists who were capable of mounting a great show.

An open area between the tents was the location for Sunday church services. Pastor J. Hamel, who was also with us in the H.B.S. camp in Surabaya led us in most of the services in Changi. We had more than once the opportunity to admire this indefatigable worker. He could be found everywhere, with the sick, in the tents, at the funerals. Pastor Hamel had already shown when on Java that he had no fear of the Japanese, but also in Changi he was the support of many. We were glad to have him in our midst. The Japanese also recognised him and had a special respect for this Dutch preacher.

Our group did not stay long in Singapore, after a couple of weeks we travelled again. On November 30, 1942 the trucks stood ready for us and the men with the red ribbons, a 1000 men under Captain P. Valk, were driven to the harbour. Previously everyone had received an English battle dress, military uniforms of heavy cloth. In addition the tailoring department had used remainders of woolen cloth to make a simple sort of poncho. This all made us assume what our next destination would be. In Japan it was winter wasn't it? We received that heavy clothing and kept it carefully; it would later be very useful to us! This group of a thousand technicals were sent away but some strayed behind: lieutenant-pilot J.W. Verhoeven, corporal van Luyck, sergeant K. Tj. Faber and others whose names we do not remember. These were then in the military hospital. Some of them went later to Japan anyway or had the Burma railway as a destination, some never left Changi again...

A last look at our little gardens, packs again slung onto our backs and we clambered onto the trucks. Again along the women in their prison building and through the busy Chinese area towards the harbour. Motor sloops transferred us in small groups to a great modern passenger liner that lay ready at the roads. We could read the name "Kamakura Maru". So we boarded a motor ship that in peacetime had been in regular service between Japan and the United States but that now had been assigned for troop transport. We learned later that the Kamakura had not survived the war, she was torpedoed by the Americans in the South Pacific Ocean.

We left Singapore in convoy; the two other ships that joined the Kamakura were loaded with Japanese and the war's plunder, there were no prisoners of war on board. Which was fortunate since only one ship reached Japan, it was the Kamakura, the others were torpedoed during that voyage!

Apart from the 1000 Dutchmen there was also group of Australians that had come on board. The prisoners of war had to remain on deck, spread shoulder to shoulder on the floor. It was apparent that all cabins and salons were filled with Japanese soldiers who also simply had to lie down on the floor in fact. On the railings there were constructions of planks that functioned as simple toilets, from time to time a pail of sea water was poured

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through to clear these. No other sanitary arrangements were available. Twice a day there was the distribution of a container of boiled rice and a container of thin soup for each fifty men. Everyone could then receive a modest portion of this. In the beginning there were quite a lot of difficulties with the distribution, some received nothing while others gobbled a lot. Fortunately on the second day we were able to organise things better once and for all. We were already used to sleeping on the hard floor, much more difficult was the bother we experienced from the Japanese guards who walked about night and day. Caring little about people's arms or legs they patrolled the decks.

We passed few other ships; looking out over the empty sea finally had little interest for us. People spoke only very little among each other, everyone was too much preoccupied with his own thoughts, every moment brought us further away from our home and closer to Japan. We were sombre and saddened.

The 300 Australians were worse off than us, they were in the open air on a lower deck than us. Rain and the spray from the sea soaked them all the time. It hardly discouraged them though, these were hardened fellows, deeply tanned, who could handle tough times.

Generally about sunset we noticed that the Kamakura began to follow a zig-zag course. Obviously there was the possibility of an encounter with allied submarines! Fortunately it

was a rapid ship so that our transportation did not become unbearable. On the 5th of december 1942 our voyage was briefly interrupted for a couple of hours in the harbour of Takao (Formosa). Some of the Japanese disembarked here. That same day the Kamakura left again and on december 8 we were in another harbour, the one of Nagasaki. It was the first anniversary of the war; on shore we saw the fluttering of the Japanese flag. Disembarkation happened only the next day so that we first set foot on Japanese earth on december 9th of 1942. Here now follows a description of events that happened then and that were noted at the time:

In any case life on the Kamakura Maru was becoming very boring. It was a rapid crossing alright, from Singapore to Nagasaki in eleven days but other than that we lacked just about everything. What with 1300 POWs on the decks, all cabins filled by the Japanese there was insufficient space to simply lie down: sanitary care was extraordinarily primitive. Quite a few must have caught dysentery because of the dirt and the unavoidable infection. Also, those who were already sick could not be aided according to their needs. The isolation of the patients was impossible. Never more than 2 meals per day, always a hand full of rice and watery soup. Impossible to wash or bathe. Only the roaring Japanese sergeant who passed at any hour of the day, kicking everything that was in his way. At night there were the guards who walked around without stopping, stepping on heads and limbs.

The many flags of the "Rising Sun" that fluttered on shore reminded us that that today was the day a year ago that we declared war on the country. The "people of the gods" are of course still in a conqueror's intoxication, the result of that much too easy march to the Nanyo (land of the south). We were still in a melancholy state about the hopeless battle of 8 days on Java and particularly worried about the fate of the members of our families who entered the occupation lonely and defenseless. The Japanese sergeant complete with high boots and a long sword roars his orders at us, the interpreter, sergeant Baart, does his best to translate all that and to protect his comrades who have difficulties with the Japanese. An extraordinary person this interpreter. He is a Dutch soldier who has a Japanese mother. It is said that the Japanese have offered him his freedom but that he refused it, saying that he wished to stay a prisoner as a Dutchman.

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This is also why between him and our hosts it is often not easy going.

Yesterday we arrived here. Always having been used to the heat we have now dressed ourselves in all our winter stuff. It is not all that much after all; an old English uniform and a woolen shirt that we received in Singapore. Other than that we only own our linen tropical uniforms. We really do not feel warm at all, obviously this is the effect of months with lack of nourishment.

While we wait here in the harbour we can see the great effort the Japanese invest in the war. Nearby there is a large ship's wharf with three slipways where smaller ships are being built. A little further on there are more and larger slipways. We hear the noise of pneumatic hammers, everywhere we can see the flashing of electric welding. It is a buzz of activity all over. One works day and night without stopping. Moored at the quay are a large and a small warship their construction in a state of being finished. A tug drags in a float with chimneys and machine parts that are now to be placed on the hull by a floating crane. We have experienced already quite a lot so far; now we are in Japan itself. How will we manage here? We have little hope. The Japanese flag fluttering on all buildings here appears like an omen, we feel it as a menace.

During the morning we are brought in groups of 50 men in landing craft to the shore. About 11.30 we are all on the quay. We see the Kamakura leave very quickly. Meanwhile we are arranged in fours and are being counted once more by a Japanese officer. It seems to be the beginning of a selection. A group of Australians is already separated; they are being led to a platform on the far side and wait there. We stay on the quay. Each one receives a label with Japanese characters and a number. I have number 86, I am unable to read the rest.

After a little moment the Australians receive overcoats with fur collars. A train arrives and they get in. The first group has quickly left. We remain still behind in a freezing wind blowing in from the sea. We strongly realize that this is winter. For many of our boys from the Indies it is the first winter of their lives. Another train leaves this time with Dutchmen. We saw the departure also of the officers of our air force from the group of captain Valk.

Finally we also go to the platform, 800 men have remained. On the platform we stand chilled to the bone till ten thirty that evening. Around 8 o'clock we were given some food, each three balls of rice wrapped in wood shavings, that was all for today.

During that wait we undo our blankets or sheets and wrap ourselves into those. Some lose courage and simply sit down so that they will get still colder. They are totally chilled and especially our boys from the Indies become demoralised from fear of the cold, which is so unknown to them.

Finally we are about to leave. The train draws in. Fortunately it turns out that it is warm inside and that everyone gets sufficient room. We are happy with very little now! As soon as the train is under way we try to forget it all in a deep sleep. After a ride of a day and a half including our passage through the sea tunnel of Shimonoseki we arrive at the station of our destination. It has become night again meanwhile and we find ourselves in an unreal world. Outside the station we are again being counted and waiting. A couple of trucks powered by wood gas arrive. A Japanese officer wanders about and yelling and shrieking, calls out his orders. The means of transport turn out to be insufficient, by bits and pieces we are driven off into a strange, dark world.

We drive along a curving road through a hilly area and finally arrive at an industrial complex. We see chimneys, cranes and ... a concrete dry dock with a ship inside! A ships wharf, we are therefore at the sea shore. It comforted us somewhat. We had heard many rumours of copper mines, so that's what we had been afraid of. Now it would be the edge of water, something always somewhat less suffocating. For the moment we see no sea, merely a dark brick building around which has been constructed a tall fence. Again it is standing at attention and counting. We have to wait for the other groups. It is stone cold, Japanese soldiers hurry back and forth, making busy. We see now their winter uniforms, these look different from their tropicals of which we had already become accustomed. They do not seem to know exactly what to do with those Dutchmen. However we are chilled to the bone and submit ourselves to all this rather passively.

When all groups have arrived we are still not allowed inside. The trucks now make another trip to the harbour for the luggage. Only after this has arrived and we have all found our own belongings are we allowed to enter. It is nearly three o'clock in the morning, december 11, 1942. We are too tired to really get an idea of our surroundings; we only note piles of blankets and reed mats on the floor. Everyone is allowed three blankets. This sudden luxury surprises us for a moment and we stumble to a little spot near the wall where we drop. That's where we lay in deep sleep until the morning when we are roughly waked by by a Japanese call we still have to learn about: Kisho! (get up). So that is the way we arrived in the land of the Rising Sun! It was still within 1942 and we were among the first who arrived here. Inside Japan almost no preparations had been made for the reception of large numbers of prisoners of war.

Our group counted 400 men. The commandant was navy lieutenant 2nd class S. N. Scheltema. In our group there were 35 navy officers, 2 military doctors, 1 sub lieutenant and 358 non commissioned officers and soldiers, among which 6 English. These had been erroneously included among the Dutch during the divisions on the quay. They later repeatedly requested to be placed in an English camp but were always refused. However they adapted very well among us and at our liberation all could speak quite a bit of Dutch. One of them, the soldier Bong Sye Chong, of Chinese origin, died in Harima.

Chapter 3. IN THE OLD CAMP

The first morning in Harima we were allowed to sleep in a little. It must have been about nine o'clock when the Japanese soldier at the bottom of the stairs started to yell. We cleared our sleeping berths a little and went out into the freezing cold towards a row of taps that had been installed behind the building. We washed ourselves in a summary fashion and moments later stood ready on the courtyard for the roll call.

A small group of our fellows had risen earlier, that was the kitchen team under sergeant-major Theunissen. We could see them busy in the out building that served as kitchen. In the light of the fires they were busy with wooden pails. We had little time to observe the environment because it began right away: Bango! (count) Ichi, ni, san, shi, etcetera, endless counting and calling the numbers and oh, when that went wrong!

That first day there were all sorts of things to be organised; first there was the organisation of eight groups; each group got its own commander (hanchō). At that time that were our navy officers. A photo was also made of each prisoner while seated on a little stool against one of the walls of our prison. How we must have looked on those photographs! It was a pity that we were later unable to get those, they would have been extraordinary documents. When I asked for these at our liberation, it appeared that Sakamoto (our last Japanese commander) had already burned them....

During that morning we were forced to listen to a beautiful speech from our Japanese camp commander, the second lieutenant Takenaka. He mounted a podium and declaimed in his sharp voice a speech that was rendered in English by an interpreter. After that it was translated again by lieutenant Scheltema into Dutch. The story of Jacob (that was our nick name for Takenaka) meant that we should be delighted to be in Japan. The Japanese military had been most kind to us because as enemy they might have killed us just as well. The Japanese Emperor, Tenno Haika, had spared us as an extraordinary favour. If we would now worked really hard we might later on be granted the favour to return home! As far as the war was concerned, we had lost it already, accordig to him.

After such a speech the Japanese always asked us if we had properly understood everything. "Wakatta Ka" was the way that sounded. Only one and only answer was possible, a loud: "Hai" (yes) because we had not been told how to say "no". It was striking, on every occasion, how little remained of such a speech after it had been translated twice. The Japanese interpreter obviously did his best to stretch the lengthy discourse of Jacob into the English text, but the Dutch commander was unable to say much more than: "He says that...." or: "Our hosts desire that...." All of it could then be rendered in a short sentence.

All those speeches meant little to us. We discovered soon that the Japanese considered themselves very important as they delivered speeches for the prisoners of war and that they did that as often as possible.

The second and third day in Harima we received already a temporary assignment; the gates opened for us and we entered the wharf where in the neighbourhood of the camp we were to transport piles of planks. We were quite happy to be outside the fence for a moment. We were able to look around and see where we had landed.. We had the impression that it was a rather small ship's wharf with three dug out docks A few ships were under construction on the slipway and a couple of small destroyers lay at the quay for completion. The whole business gave us a rather primitive impression. The electrical lines in particular gave us the shivers; it was a grab bag of rickety wooden poles with cables from which the insulation hung in shreds!

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There was a lot of personnel. Masses of labourers among which also women and school age children. They all wore some sort of uniform with little caps fitted with different emblems. All workers gave a poor impression; the women wore mostly wooden sandals, the men small rubber shoes with a separate large toe.

The buildings and installations did not inspire much confidence either. It looked like an unsafe operation in spite of the signs as tall as a man attached to the riding cranes and the sheds "Anzen dai ichi" (safety number one). Our camp consisted of a building of two stories raised in red brick. The floors were covered with Japanese straw mats known as tatami on which one was only to walk bare feet. Part of the first floor was separated for the accommodation of the officers; the the little sick bay was also there. There were some tables and banks but most of our life happened on the floor. There was a courtyard surrounded by a high fence, but the space was so small that we could hardly all fit during roll call.

After two days we were permanently organised in work teams. Earlier the Japanese had made lists of the technical knowledge of each of us. They hardly used any of the information they had so gathered. It appeared that anyone who had administrative experience could be sure of being assigned to a team assigned to transport heavy loads. Generally the organisation was according to two main divisions the Zosen and Zoki, namely the the real ships wharf and the engineering works. Afterwards it became clear that the Zoki group had somewhat better work conditions, there was more shelter, a bit more warmth in the winter etc. Assigned were those who had done some industrial work in civilian life, though this did not always work out.

Those two divisions were subdivided again in all sorts of work crews, with their own names. Hoko, Mokko, Tekki, Toritsuke, Imono, Seikan, etc. When we went to work for the first time the Japanese labourers came inside the camp to fetch their new employees.

The work crews left the camp each preceded by a sign with the name of the team in Japanese. These “standards” were soon abandoned again.

The Harima wharf provided us also with work gear and wharf caps. Our camp number was painted on these with red paint. It was a strange feeling to have to walk about with a large number on one’s back, but soon we did not care any more. The Dutch were scattered all over the Harima wharf. We appeared in every little corner and to our surprise the Japanese labourers got used to our appearance right away. The Dutch worked at all sorts of things; welding, riveting, stacking pipes, chipping stones, in the foundry, power sanding, cutting pipes, etc. At first I served in the Hoko section, that was the notorious pipe crew, carriers who had a heavy job. Comparatively, this Hoko crew came to lose the largest number of fatalities. Our first task was to flatten an area of land establishing a new location where pipes could be stacked. Afterwards we laboured for some months at transporting the pipes there from the various depots over the entire wharf where these had been stored. The boss of the crew was a Japanese called Yabumoto who had a servant called Haito. For convenience’s sake we called him like the servant of Saint Nicolas, Piet (*say: pete*), something he immediately accepted. The old fellow was quite agreeable but there were other wharf functionaries who made things more difficult, these were the members of the wharf police.

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Because of their green uniforms they were given the nick name “frogs”. They supervised everything and bothered the Japanese just as they did the Dutch with their cussedness. A particularly bad reputation had the “Sunrise” and the “Whispering shadow”. The frogs wandered the whole day from one crew to the other and meddled with everything. On their own initiative they soon began to tease and maltreat the prisoners of war.

In the beginning at Harima our officers joined in the work. They kept an eye on the various work crews and often served as intermediaries between the Dutch and the Japanese. It was for them also a most welcome opportunity to be outside the camp, staying inside was no fun. But the presence of these officers who naturally did not work themselves, irritated the Japanese. Soon there were conflicts and the officers became also the victims of beatings by the frogs.

Other than the frogs we also came in contact with another group of work functionaries. These were the so-called wharf interpreters. One should not imagine great things of their language skills. They spoke only a few words of rather primitive English, but that did not limit the respect from their own fellows in the least. One of these interpreters was called Kogawa: he was a man with a strangely shaped skull. Before the war he had worked at a Dutch company in Kobe, and there he had learned a cussword, a knowledge which he liked to show continuously. He assumed the leadership of the wharf interpreters and tried to teach us, in his way, proper Japanese manners. Before the meal all prisoners of war

had to say "itadakimasu". We, the prisoners of war, did not like this sort of etiquette and we only mumbled at bit. Generally this was not something flattering for the Japs. The Zosen crew ate their lunch seated on a pile of iron plates in front of the construction shed, it was terribly cold there and we could not find any shelter against the sharp wind. Our kitchen personnel brought there the flat wooden boxes with the buns and the wooden pails with warm water. Those round buns were often pressed close together in the boxes. Whenever these were loaded when still quite warm there was the chance that a bit of crust from another bun remained attached. Once, when one of our camp fellows, Cordier de Croust had received less of his crust he made quite fuss against the cooks. These sent him on to the interpreter Ishiba who did not think it worth the bother and sent him away again. Ishiba was certainly not the worst but after this moment Cordier never thought any good of him.

After a short while the prisoners of war were familiar with every corner of the Harima wharf. The Japanese labourers knew us and it meant that certain contacts could be established. The frogs always tried hard to stop that sort of thing but in any case they could not always prevent it. So the Dutch were able to do a little "business" secretly, the way to obtain some extra rice or condiment. It did remain always quite a dangerous undertaking, which was discovered by those who had been caught in this business and who ended up in the cell. Jacob called his cell the "small box" and that was surely the right name for it. In any case we soon discovered that the Japanese labourers were not much better off than us. They also received their rations in the flat boxes that were fetched by the food carriers from the central kitchen. Some of the carriers transported five or six of these boxes stacked together. On one occasion one of our boys, soldier E. Rauch, walking behind the carrier, brazenly lifted the top box from the stack. He ran off with this and hid it in a large iron pipe. Rauch ate from this store secretly for days, every day a little. It appeared that in the cold it had remained fresh right to the end. In this storage place Rauch once also managed to lay in a crate of oranges.

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The Japanese allowed us our right to a free day per week, but it seemed never to be clear to them why we preferred Sundays. Since at the ships wharf we worked mostly outside, it was for them of course most profitable to assign free days when it rained. Little could be done then anyway. And that was the way they organised it; it happened more than once that while we were ready to march off, we heard at the very last moment that it was a day of "yasume"(rest). There were weeks in Japan when we had two Sundays and others of ten days of work consecutively. When the rain was less severe our Jacob had a special solution. The command was "put on rain hats". Those rain hats were the typically Japanese constructions one can sometimes see in old prints. The hats that Jacob had ordered for us consisted of a weave of bamboo covered with dried leaves. The thing was about a meter in diameter. It must have been a particularly picturesque image, those hundreds of Dutchmen wearing those large hats!

For lots of reasons we all regularly needed a free day. Those who worked outside needed sufficient time to clean themselves properly, wash their garments, mend and also simply to rest a little or to read a book. Our physical condition grew steadily worse. But our hosts thought differently. On working days we were outside and at the disposition of the Harima wharf; now on free days we belonged to the soldiers of the camp guard who then could busy themselves with the prisoners of war.

And that is what they did; they made sure they got their share; they could engage in the most crazy inspections, roll calls (their special passion) and think up any other annoying things, such as if someone might be smoking in the wrong area (that had to happen near the large garbage bins.), if there were perhaps sick men who were sufficiently recovered so that they could be sent to the wharf, if maybe someone possessed forbidden books or papers... if knives were being made...

Especially that first year there was little real rest to be enjoyed on a day off. Most camp mates were already happy when the yasume day was finished. Later this all fortunately changed, but this happened in spite of the Japs....

On a day off there was always one or other little job to be done. Carrying bags for the kitchen, fetching water for the “furo” (hot bath) clearing some shed for the Japs, levelling the ground, or such. One could find enough enthusiasts easily enough for these sort of jobs. The reason for this was that afterwards there was habitually a distribution of “krak”, which was the hard crust of rice in the bottom of the sauce pans. For such a handful of that hard dry rice one was prepared to do a lot. After such tasks one went to receive one’s portion in one’s wharf cap....

We saw almost nothing of the direction of the wharf. Once a high functionary, as we were told, came to the camp and who held a speech that told us little. We could however note that the management of the wharf also had all sorts of difficulties. Sometimes we seemed to note that the wharf also wanted to do something or other for the POWs, they also saw us quite differently, we were workers who needed to be productive. But all efforts by the wharf to improve our situation generally were checked by the refusals of the Japanese military who had the last word about everything. In any case we did not have the impression that the Harima wharf could be of great significance for the Japanese war effort.

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Obsolete processes, too much manual labour incapable personnel. As far as we could see the production went accordingly. We saw more than once that newly cut metal plates for the skin of a ship were badly done and could not be fitted; no worry, the botched plates were abandoned somewhere and new ones were cut. Sometimes there was a stop to the construction of a specific section since the necessary parts had not arrived. If we could

quietly manage we would participate diligently in this, machine sections were carried to the wrong location; a waggon with materials was brought to a distant shed and simply left there; lorries were derailed all the time so that each transport took endless time etc. Complete loads of ferro metal destined for the foundry found a home below the waters of Harima Bay. I do not want to claim here that we were truly engaged in sabotage of the wharf, our initiatives were too small for that. In any case that would have been unwise, if one could have proved that we did such things, our difficulties were big enough already. That some ships were finally delivered from Harima can only be attributed to the enormous numbers of people that were present at the wharf, we estimate the number at 30.000 men. All these had to be able to deliver something. However the management would have to be very capable.

It was a cheerless world in which we found ourselves. In the beginning we felt ourselves very down trodden. From the rare bits of news that reached us it appeared that the proceedings of the war were still in favour of the enemy. Our poor shabby circumstances depressed many of our camp mates and it was difficult to keep courage. Small, actually insignificant, things made deep impressions. One of those, for example was the solitary dandelion that I one day discovered behind a stack of iron plates and that flowered for an unbelievably long time. It was a tiny tender yellow spot in a gray desert of iron. When Winter approached this solitary flower also had to disappear...

Behind the Imono factory there was a steep mountain wall; in it a niche had been carved with a small prayer centre. One day our friend Rauch worked nearby. He was gathering bits and pieces of old iron. A Japanese approached with in his hands two beautiful rice cakes (mochi), a red and a white one. No doubt he celebrated some kind of festive event because he placed those carefully on the little plates of the temple and in the Japanese manner he bowed and mumbled. When he finished this he disappeared for a moment in a nearby toilet cabin. Rauch understood that if the Jap returned that little temple would be closed for the day because it was already late in the afternoon. He therefore moved firmly forward and quickly put the mochi in his pocket. Then he returned to the gathering of iron as if nothing had happened. The Jap meanwhile returned and continued his murmuring. At the end he raised his eyes towards his offering and noted that the mochi had disappeared. His face expressed such surprise that Rauch nearly had to laugh aloud, though he was able to restrain himself. The Japanese must have thought that his offering had been favourably accepted. closed the little temple and went home. Now, thought Rauch is the moment to quickly gobble those mochi somewhere, because he did not dare to bring those inside the camp since they were always severely searched at the entry. He was about to hide behind a stack of iron when a Korean approached who looked particularly cheerful. He showed through gestures that he had witnessed everything and said: Yoroshii (it is good). He seemed to have enjoyed the incident. "Now that as well..." thought our Rauch.

Attached to the Imino was a small rivet factory, it is there that Ed de Graaff worked for a while. It contained a cutting machine that cut iron bars into small sections and a press in which these red glowing sections were provided with a head. The whole thing was kept going with worn out driving belts that had been repaired many many times. Of course business stagnated occasionally and on those occasions Japs and Dutchmen sat fraternally at rest until the belts were fixed again. Should the frogs arrive then it was the rule that they first slapped everyone before asking why no one was working....

When we had been in Harima for a few weeks we were allowed to write a letter to our family. Everyone used this opportunity right away but we have never had any proof that these letters really arrived at their destination. This favour did mean a lot of additional work for the Dutch commandant; all letters needed to be accompanied by an English translation; following which the interpreter Ishiba had to translate it again into Japanese, all so that Jacob could exercise his censorship.

We received a trunk of books, in fact very good books. Apparently Archbishop Paul Marella in Tokyo had gathered these books for the prisoners of war. In this way we obtained a small camp library of about 200 titles from which the prisoners could borrow for their reading on days off. A pity that most of the books were in English. Still it gave us much pleasure. When it became apparent that the library was exchanged from time to time with those from other camps we tried to hide messages in the books. In the notes that we found in the books that we received we learned the names of other camps but this did not really provide us with much.

We soon had to experience that our group would not remain without loss. On 22 december 1942, H. Westerhoff died in our camp of dysentery. When we arrived in Japan he was already ill and very weak, he probably had been infected on board ship. His death was a shock for us all; in our small world we knew each other so well. It was a painful farewell of our comrade. There we stood, all of us, close together in the tiny courtyard; the unusual shape of the coffin, the interpreter Ishiba who really took the lead of the funeral. who (how is it possible!) intoned with his cracking voice "Nearer, my God to Thee". The coffin being carried to the motor boat, the few who accompanied it to the cremation oven in the village... it gave us all a feeling of infinite sadness.....

Every day was now the same to us, roll call, sharing the rations and taiso (rhythmic gymnastics) and to the wharf with worries. At the close of the work day there was the stuffy camp with the awful Jacob and as his right hand the sly paymaster. We became soon completely exhausted and we sure felt that way. No one believed that we would be able to manage this much longer.

It was Christmas 1942. We received a consignment of packages of food from the Red Cross. Our kitchen personnel had brought the packages into the camp. When it came to the distribution it became difficult task for our officers, because we received one package

for every 13 men! In spite of this most appreciated gift, its distribution was a terrible puzzle. Fortunately we did have some time for it because on Christmas day we were not obliged to work. The kitchen furnished an extra ration of rice

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and the Japanese gave us a bag of mandarines. The crew bosses of the ship's wharf even came inside the camp to see how we celebrated Christmas...

On Christmas morning commandant Scheltema standing at the bottom of the stairs held a short speech. Then he called sergeant R. de Haas and invited him to intone the hymn "Praise to the Lord." It was an unforgettable moment. Everyone joined in, and there were only few who could hold down their tears. Fortunately at that moment we could not imagine how much longer we would have to remain in Japan.

On a brilliant day in January 1943 the Japanese took us an excursion. The sun was shining, it was freezing and there was no wind; it was ideal for a pleasant walk. It turned out to be a successful initiative; it was a quiet walk, no hurrying, without yelling and without any blows. The trip crossed hills and followed along forests and farmers' fields. Outside the camp's routine we felt a lot better and gathered new impressions. We saw now more clearly that Japan was really a picturesque and beautiful country; our guards were just as aware and showed their better sides; they became like guides and pointed to the sights, such as the typical gates in the landscape and the finely wrought roofs of the little temples. We climbed a hill and rested and relaxed near a pretty little building. Following another way we returned to the camp.

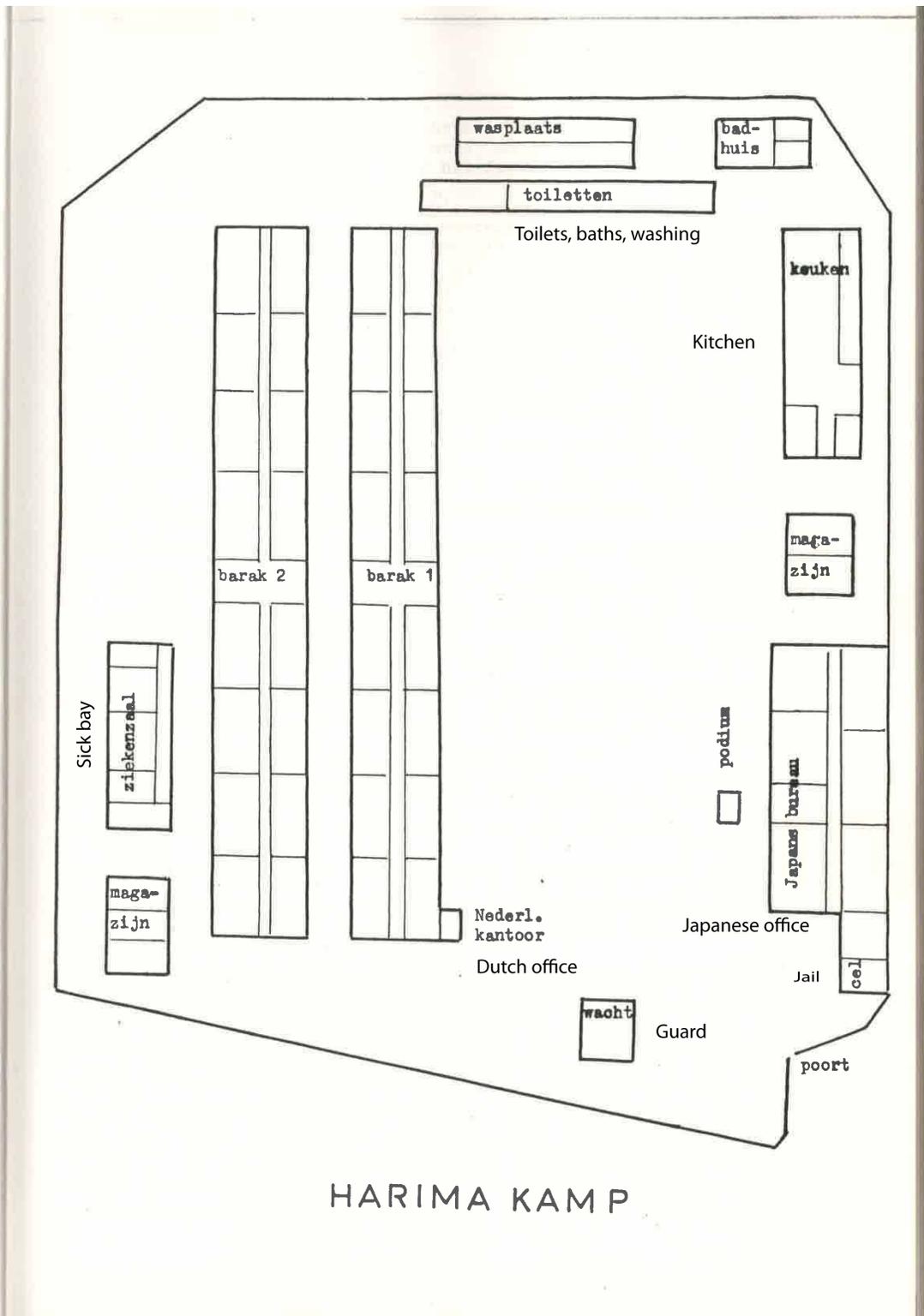
When we entered it became clear why they had wanted to be rid of us for a short while; all our poor possessions had been turned topsy turvy and were scattered everywhere. The Japanese had been looking for forbidden objects. Of course they had discovered one or the other and there would be severe punishments meted out. So every medal had its other side also in Japan.

Some blankets had been cut. That was of course a serious offence, because those blankets were the property of the Japanese army. One was not allowed to damage those without being punished and that was the experience of our naughty soldier Rauch. He had cut off a strip and had fashioned a pair of slippers of it. Quite a nice piece of work, but the Japs could not get themselves to appreciate it. During the inspection that transgression was discovered and Rauch disappeared into the cell for his punishment. During one of his speeches Jacob called this cell a "small box". It was a very small hutch close to the guard, of which the entrance was so low that one had to enter deeply bent over. When one bent over the Japs had a splendid opportunity to send one quickly inside that box with a kick. Rauch therefore went for punishment in the cell (or "eiso" as the official Japanese name sounded). But that was still not the way it was finished for him. He had to keep those cut down blankets and the result was that at a subsequent inspection his transgression was

discovered all over again and he disappeared again in the eiso. In this way Rauch was punished three times for the cutting down of his blankets, and every time the punishment became more severe since he had already been "warned" earlier for the same fact.

Meanwhile there were signs that indicated that one thought keeping us at Harima for a longer period. A new camp, especially for the prisoners of war (furyo) was being built. Since there was a lack of even ground, the surrounding hills were dug off and the soil dumped into the bay. A new plateau was created this way and it spread out more and more. This ground work was done by Korean labourers. Every day we heard the tremendous explosions that separated sections from the steep mountain side. At the very end of the wharf two large barracks and some smaller buildings were being constructed. Of course there came also a high fence to surround all of it!

(here follows a page with a drawing with an overview of the new Harima camp)



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On february 1943 the new camp was ready. That day it happened to be again “yasumé” and the whole troop marched in a long file heavily loaded into the new camp.

chapter 4. THE NEW HARIMA CAMP

In some ways the situation improved for us; we had some more space in our new camp; the barracks, as well as the courtyard, were significantly larger. The old industrial building, which we had left, now housed a group of political prisoners, we soon called “blue shirts”. These also had to work at the wharf. The Japanese guards always kept us carefully separated from these men and I do not know if any of us ever had any contact with them. All buildings of the new camp were constructed of thin wood; the walls were double with a spacing of about 15 centimetres, but very light of construction. The double walls were intended to shield us from cold and draft but because of the moisture the boards buckled and so there developed many cracks and openings. When it rained the roof leaked terribly and during the storms of autumn we now and then lost part of the roof cover. The floor was made of beaten earth, only part of the sick bay had a raised area, used at the same time as the berth for the patients.

In the barracks our sleeping berths were a raised area where in each case six men lay next to each other. Four of such raised areas formed a “coupé” as in a train. At the head there was a little storage space to keep one’s clothing and at the bottom there was a plank where one had to place shoes and slippers.

Between the coupés there were two tables and four rough benches intended for our meals. Those barracks were our only place. There were no halls or rooms for special occasions. The so-called theatre hall about which one will read later was nothing other than a part of the first barrack, emptied because of the departure of the officers and deaths and which after much wrangling had been turned by ourselves into a place for entertainment as well as church services.

In winter we had two stoves in each barrack; of which generally only one was allowed to be lit and then only for two or three hours per day. Fuel for the stoves was another problem we had to solve. It is of importance to underline that neither at the old nor the new camps situated on the grounds of the Harima wharf any of these roofs was marked with a red cross or any other sign that distinguished it from the industrial buildings. The high fence hid any view of the bay but those who worked outside could look out freely over the bay of course.

Inside the camp, in conflict with international agreements that Japan had also signed, the guards were also present in the interior. There was a military guard of six soldiers and one noncommissioned officer who, armed with rifle and bayonet, patrolled constantly day and night inside the camp and often inside the barracks. There was also another guard of the wharf, civilians, who were part of the wharf police and who we called “frogs” because of their green uniforms. They carried bats in the shape of samurai swords which they wielded very busily. They also moved about the camp and the barracks. Generally they were much more troublesome than the Japanese soldiers and they meddled with everything. Those frogs became finally a real pest to us because neither outside nor inside were we without them. Some nick names they received from us: Tinus Taiso, Mustache, Whispering shadow, Sunrise,

Number nine, Balls boy; and these names became notorious among the Harima group. If these frogs found nothing to complain about they invented of course something, especially at the wharf. They loved placing some trap for us, in the shape of small package of rice or condiment.

Tinus Taiso did that once near their guard house and hid himself, laying in wait. When a large group of prisoners of war passed and he paid all his attention to that, Sjoerd Harte approached from behind and snatched the package without Tinus noticing. Such events offered us a cheerful note in an otherwise sad existence.

In the Inomo factory a small crew of Dutchmen were busy with the pneumatic sander. Their task was to polish the casts. The frogs came by quite frequently to verify if one worked hard enough. Our men found their presence only a bother and discovered soon a wonderful way to get rid of those frogs. They disconnected quite suddenly the hose from the muzzle presumably to check it. The sand was blasted in all directions and the frog who did not wear any safety glasses got sand in his face. There were attempts at protest with much yelling, but the frog left at high speed.

Shortly after our move something else important happened. On march 1, 1943 our camp commander S.W. Scheltema was replaced by lieutenant C.A. E. van Rhee. It was never clear to us what the reason was for this change of command. Most of our camp fellows did not like to see lieutenant Scheltema leave his position. He was liked a lot and everyone had great confidence in his leadership. He was particularly admired for his fearless assertions towards the Japanese. He must also have known himself that the whole troop always stood with him. But maybe this was the very reason why the Japanese wanted to get rid of him. This was a lesson for the following Dutch commanders! Commandant van Rhee also tried to improve the circumstances of the prisoners of war but he did so without going against the grain. Using a more "supple" approach he was able to achieve several improvements. One was that the officers stayed off the wharf and that the daily leadership of the work crews came in the hands of our non-commissioned officers. This included the important difference that the non coms were obliged to actually physically share in the labour, something that was less of a provocation to the Japanese .

In this way our non-commissioned officers have done excellent work, they were able to garner respect from the Japanese crew bosses and obtained increasingly a free hand in the assignment of the work which meant that they were often able to protect the weaker fellows. They also often found ways to intervene in conflicts which saved quite a few from being beaten. The Japanese labourers came to know us slowly and so we obtained special advantages such as for example our own fires in winter, which was of great significance. Of course there was a need for fuel but we would learn to take care of that.

Everyone brought some bits of wood, found no matter where. One saved these behind the stacks of iron. The wood appeared only if a fire needed to be made.

A new boss called Okano (the Bear) arrived at the pipe crew "paipu". This chap was a real strongman, certainly the largest and strongest Japanese we ever met in Harima. He had great pleasure showing us with what ease he could handle the heaviest pipes. He was also so dumb that he could not understand that we could never imitate this. That was why there were always new misunderstandings about the number of prisoners of war that were needed to carry a specific pipe. These difficulties caused quite a number of the pipe crew to physically break down.

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This was also the crew that had percenticewise the most fatalities.

Occasionally the prisoners of war obtained some freedom of movement. It happened that someone who felt very ill walked to the camp entirely on his own; someone else was told to do some errand for his boss on the other side of the wharf. The Japanese did not find it unusual any more when at the wharf they met an Oranda on his very own and... there were new opportunities for engaging in clandestine business.

Working at the ship's wharf began slowly to be a case of routine. With summer arriving we had it less bad but the long duration of our stay began to depress us. Our medical officers were quite unhappy and were seriously worried about the physical condition of the Dutchmen. The sick bay, as the the small room was called, was always filled. There were still efforts being made to obtain more and better nutrition and especially the necessary medication. But all that effort had little result. The Japanese delivered suddenly some meat and vegetables to the kitchen only when an inspection was expected from the Red Cross. The sick and those working inside were also somewhat spared on such a day. When that inspection had finished the same dark and dejected mood returned to the camp. From that point of view the outside workers could feel fortunate; they saw a little more of the environment and received new impressions daily. Whoever still had the strength preferred to work at the Harima wharf. Time inside the camp seemed endless and there was no ending to the teasing of the guards.

The outside workers were now and then able to get hold of something extra. One had become less fussy. The wharf had placed at several points large garbage bins, containers with a content of several cubic meters. The prisoners searched these regularly for edible rests. One day one of the Dutchmen had crawled into such a bin so as to thoroughly search it. A friend happened to be nearby and he also had the notion to search that bin. After looking carefully left and right he blindly groped into the bin and grabbed the head of the "diver"! This gave him such a fright that the lid fell closed and hit him on the head. He probably lay senseless in the bin for about ten minutes...

At Imono there was a room for the meals of the Japanese. We knew a Japanese there who felt kindly about the Oranda and who left now and then a remaining package of rice behind on the table. Who ever passed there could, one door in and the other out, snatch that package secretly. But that little game was also discovered finally by the wharf police. Rauch tells how one day he wanted to enter the place and how he saw a frog hiding there. He had laid out two packages of rice as bait. At the same moment corporal Portier entered the other door and approached the rice. The frog appeared and started to give Portier hell. For the moment he had laid the packages of rice aside. Now was the time for Rauch to enter carefully and to snatch the packages. Portier saw this all happen but showed nothing. Rauch had disappeared for quite a while when the frog saw that the packages were gone and searched Portier once and again. Finally he had to let him go anyway. Both friends sought for a benjo where they quickly gobbled their booty. And that Jap kept zealously searching...

When we had been in the new camp only a short while we had to render all books that we had with us for control. The Dutch commander had to offer a declaration of contents and purpose of any books not in English. After a few days, to our surprise, all books were returned. These were supplied with little notes attached from the Japanese commandant indicating that the book was allowed to be kept. It had become now very easy to keep forbidden books in our possession. We soaked those little notes, unglued them and attached them again into a forbidden book. In this way our notes and journals passed safely through our time of imprisonment. They could even openly be read because any Japanese who wanted to remark on this was shown that little letter.

For the use of our religious services in the camp we had made about twenty song albums. These were also supplied with permissions. Since these albums were loose leaf it was easy to add anything without it being apparent!

The Japanese were always worried that there would be a fire. Large containers with wooden pails were placed in the camp. The prisoners had to practice fire extinguishing from time to time. It meant a great deal of splashing and soaking but it gave us little hope of effective extinguishing the fire should there ever be a real conflagration. As a rule smoking inside the barracks was forbidden. This was only permitted close to special bins filled with sand. Over each of these there was a smouldering cord of fibre because matches and lighters were forbidden items. At evening roll call, at eight o'clock, all those fire cords had to be extinguished. Even so our fellows smoked secretly almost everywhere and when discovered there were also beatings all over again.

Against any transgression of their, frequently very strange, rules the Japanese applied punishments that were quite severe. They also punished collectively, this meant that those who had not even be involved in the transgression were punished just as well. One is mistaken if one thinks that only the Japanese handed out punishments. The POWs also punished the Japs who had in some way or other made life miserable for them, though it should never appear that this had been done by the Orandas. In the foundry as an example

many a Japanese has lost his cap, his tobacco box or his shag pipe. During an unguarded moment these had been thrown into the oven; and those chaps kept searching of course ...

Members of the pipe brigade had little interest in carrying those heavy pipes all across the wharf, so they organised a new stacking place and much closer. If there was no supervision during the carrying of the pipes these would arrive at our "own" location. There were small locomotives that rode across the whole wharf to move the cranes about. A group of POWs passed just when one of the stokers wanted to get rid of a scoop of glowing coals. Our comrade de Munck received the whole batch on his back which was a terrible fright. Not only was there the shrieking of the Dutch, but also from among the Japs who almost came to fistcuffs with each other because of what happened. Yes, this was not the sort of thing they could blame us for. Our victim with his ruined clothing and the blisters on his back was received not unkindly in the camp. He was properly taken care of and soon returned to normal.

There were also a couple of crews who with the lorries had to transport all sorts of goods across the wharf. If we found that there was too much pressure such a lorry would "accidentally" run off the rails. By preference this was one that had been heavily loaded so that it would take quite a long time before all was straightened out again. All that time a long file of lorries had to wait: and we had an extra long "yasumé".

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Afterwards it became apparent that from a physical point of view the younger ones among us generally survived the years of imprisonment better than those who were not so young. Of the 40 who died there were 30 older than 40. The professional military of the K.N.I.L. were also tougher than those who were called up in the war. In our camp there were 117 professional against 284 non-professional military of these only 4 professionals died against 36 non-professionals.

It should be noted that there was never a difference made among the age groups. All fellows were ditributed evenly through the groups in the camp and the same happened with the work crews at the wharf. It did happen that those who lacked the strenths for the work outside were placed among the inside workers and had to take care of all sorts of little jobs in the camp. Those included: sweeping the barracks, cleaning the toilets, boiling the clothing (to kill vermin), repair of furniture, and we had fixed crews of shoe makers and tailors, who were under the charge of sergeant Roozen. That inside work was of course quite a protected assignment but it was not particularly liked. Most fellows preferred working outside; the atmosphere inside the camp was depressing and there was much nuisance from the Japanese camp staff. Regularly there was a selction of those who had "healed" and they were sent back to the wharf.

In the small hutch carrying the name of the Dutch office we had to maintain graphic displays showing the numbers of interior and exterior workers. We also had to preparaee

the monthly accounts. Each POW had to receive 10 yen-cents per working day. only the exceptional workers (hanchos) brought it to 20 cents per day. Our main meal in the camp consisted of rice and thin soup. Everyone had received a little bowl "chawan" in which he had to fetch his rice. Condiments generally were rarely seen, such things as meat or fish were definitely a rarity. For camp drink there was weak green (unfermented) tea or warm water. Sugar appeared to be a luxury in Japan only to be expected with great exception. Vegetables were scarce, only when we were able to grow some ourselves did the amount become satisfactory. We had a period of Chinese cabbages that grew very fast and therefore were very useful for us. We received also sometimes strange nourishment; a couple of times the Japanese came with what was called haafen(?) meat. It was quite edible but it had a strange taste of camphor that one had to get used to. For a period one could obtain with advice from the doctor a little dedek. These were the little membranes that had been left after the milling of the rice, and supposedly were full of vitamins. We also ate silk worms a couple of times. One received 4 or 5 of those grubs, slightly salted, on top of our ration of rice.. No one at the time thought that dish creepy and we never had any harmful results.

Via the canteen, that deliciously fictional institution, only designed to mislead eventual visitors, it was possible on rare occasions to buy a little tin of "togarashi" (ground cayenne) or fishmeer(?) or kelp, but that was all.

The food for the POWs was prepared by our own personnel. The bugle sounded at mealtime and one could fetch the food from the kitchen. Rice came in square wooden boxes and the soup and the drinking water in small wooden pails. Each group of 45 men had their own meal boxes., in alternation the strongest were assigned to fetch the food from the kitchen. Meanwhile in the barracks the bowls were placed on the tables and and the distribution could begin. That had to happen very carefully, a great art

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entrusted to very few. The supervision of 45 pairs of eyes was extremely severe. Sometimes there did occur difficulties, when harsh accusations were cast about. Often the insulted person would offer to quit his job. In such cases the group commandant was called to find a solution.

The navy officers, who had come with us to Harima, gave a special tone to the camp. In spite of the fact that the camp contained for 80 percent the personnel from the army and air force, a number of navy expressions became the habit. So we spoke of "bakken" and in the morning the call was for "overal" and one visited the "ziekenboeg" (sick bay).

There were certain Dutchmen who smoked exclusively the tobacco they gathered from butts. They traded their new cigarettes against a larger amount of butt tobacco. This was the way they satisfied their their stronger smoking habit, but of course they had to be less

fastidious. In any case no POW would consider tossing his butts away. If a cigarette had not been carefully smoked till its final bit then the remainder would be saved in a little box for a day of scarcity.

Another difficulty was cigarette paper. In the beginning we could make use of the fly leafs from bibles but when that became impossible we had to find other means. A certain paper was brought to the wharf but it was too porous (it was made so that it was possible to write on it with a brush) Finally the Dutch office obtained the right sort of paper, the use of which rose suddenly a lot.

In Noda, towards the end of our imprisonment, even that was not possible any more and one rolled delicious fags from newspaper. Now a brief note about dried tea leaves. Who ever did that sort of thing sure must have possessed iron lungs, that smoke was so sharp, but there must have been some!

The Japanese cigarettes distributed in our rations came in boxes of 10. The most available brand was "Kinshi" (golden bird) Our rations were generally 5 boxes per month, but often there was confusion in the distribution. There was also too little supply and there were promises to make up for it the next month. Generally nothing happened of the sort.

The little free time we had left was applied to the upkeep of our clothing or the reading of books. A couple of fellows had received permission to carry on some free trade, such as for example Donkel who functioned as a barber and Remeous, who repaired watches. They received a small compensation from their customers, that they saved until it could be called a significant amount after all. Regrettably it appeared after our liberation that Japanese money was worth little or nothing...

Those who had to perform many extra tasks without any remuneration were the group commandants. After a long day on the wharf they had to be of service of their groups again inside the camp. That was why they were "hancho" men of respect and of authority in the camp. They played an important role during roll call, at the inspections and they gave leadership in everything for their groups. Their supervision was very important during the distribution of food and in assistance for fellows who had become ill. Quite a few group commandants brought patients to the hospital. This task of the hanchos has generally not been sufficiently appreciated.

Our officers obtained in the beginning the possibility to make a little walk outside the camp, now and then.

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In this way they could escape from the depressing life behind the high fence for a moment. Through the intervention of the interpreter Ishiba they obtained later on

permission for the possibility of laying out a large kitchen garden in the valley next to our new camp. This undertaking was voluntary and done without remuneration by the officers with the intention that the whole camp would benefit. It was the intention that our nutrition be improved. The work was undertaken with great enthusiasm and advanced very well; it turned out that the valley was very fertile. After only a short while we were able to harvest the first vegetables. The young leaves gave some colour to our soup. Now however there occurred a serious complication. One of the gardeners, the lieutenant 3d class P. J. Uni had been able to gain the confidence of the Japanese guards and was therefore able to undertake little trips through the valley entirely on his own. He did this while pretending to lay traps, and indeed he did now and then catch a little rabbit that then disappeared in the camp's pot. Afterwards it turned out that it was quite different, Uni had systematically reconnoitred the surrounding area with an attempt at escape in mind. Early July 1943 was that occasion, during the night he climbed over the fence behind the kitchen. The next morning at roll call he was immediately missed. The Japanese searched the whole camp but of course found nothing. Reinforcements arrived from Osaka and many soldiers participated in the following man hunt. All Dutchmen were consigned to the camp to prevent any possible contact with the escapee.

It did not take long: the second day Uni was brought shackled into the camp. Of course he would not have had the slightest chance of escape right in the middle of the land of the enemy! Now followed for him a frightful period of interrogation. During that period his already small rations were again halved. We were unable to get in touch and therefore learned little of what happened to him. Day and night he was kept under severe guard. We were left to watch from afar how they left his little bowl of rice outside. We could easily imagine his despair. After about three days he was taken away and no one heard or saw anything of him again. Later on I discovered in the Japanese office the note of his death, showing his name and the date of his dying supplied with the Japanese sign "shibo" for died. At that point we had to assume that navy lieutenant Uni was executed, though we were never informed about this.

It was then also the end of gardening . Our officers were not allowed outside the camp any more; the others however returned to their daily work at the ships wharf. For physical exercise our officers took the initiative to jog daily at a good speed several times around the camp. We compared that somehow to "lions in a cage". Shortly after Uni's escape there occurred another change in the life at our camp. On July 31, 1943 the remaining 32 Navy officers departed with as destination Zentsuji camp. Both military doctors, doctors Klusman and Indorf stayed with us. Sublieutenant A. Onderwater was now the highest in rank and was assigned as Dutch camp commandant. The sergeants B. Quispel and D. A. Visker joined him as assistants in the camp's administration.

Other functions also executed by the officers so far were now covered by the non-commissioned officers, being assigned these by the Japanese. It became evident that these functions were in good hands. The dedication from the group commandants and the

continuing care for the welfare of the fellows they were responsible for was recognized by everyone.

We would however be still more in need of a good understanding, much, very much, awaited us in Japan...

Chapter 6, AFTER THE DEPARTURE OF THE OFFICERS.

When the officers had left we had the opportunity to move up a bit inside the barracks. The space that had been freed was now assigned to other things. The group commandants got accommodation in a small separate section of the first barrack. Something had also happened with the second barrack; during a rain storm a large rock had come tumbling down. That colossus had been threatening when hanging from the outer edge of the mountain wall, though from a distance it did not look all that big anyway. One day it happened. The rains had washed away its support and the rock came down with thundering noise, precisely inside our camp! Fortunately there were no victims among the inhabitants but the second barrack got a serious dint. However we were able to tighten up a bit and so the second barrack was shortened a little. The wood that now became available was useful for the arrangements of the church and theatre hall. The little doors from the demolished cupboards were magically turned into the walls of the theatre and de strong beams became the seats. The artist who accomplished this was our G. Hazenberg who cannot be praised enough and who beyond all this managed to decorate our recreation space with "stained glass" that delivered a surprising effect....

While our officers were still in the camp we were pestered with inspections every free day. In that way the sundays were spoiled and there was no relaxation. There was no time left either to properly wash our clothes. At the beginning of the free day the Dutch camp commandant went to Jacob for a proper report. Then he asked him to call for the "Gonzoku" (the Japanese soldier who wore the red band and who was on duty that day). Then there was a report on the number of men who were ill and of all matters that needed to be done that free day. Finally Jacob was asked what items had to be inspected that day. If Jacob mentioned shoes for example then one came to an agreement right away that the gonzoku would receive afterwards a report on this. In that way we managed to get to control things ourselves. It now became important that the Japanese could confirm that we truly held those inspections. That was rather easy; the group commandants were instructed to bring out all shoes and to be busy with those as soon as the Japanese came to the barracks. During the day the Dutch commandant received then a list of good and worn shoes. With that he could return to Jacob. In this manner the Japanese had no more reason to interfere and we obtained finally some rest on our free days.

Sergeant B. Quispel was sent back to the factory on october 18, 1943; there were too many inside workers for the taste of Takenaka. Some of the patients in the sick bay were promoted to inside workers. Sublieutenant Onderwater became seriously ill and had to be admitted to the sick bay for quite a while. Sergeant Visker became now charged with the command of the camp. A new winter arrived, the second we passed in Japan. Our life in the camp became increasingly dark; our rations were reduced once more and so was the state of our health. Meanwhile 20 Dutchmen in our camp had died, most of total exhaustion. Some, without ever having been taken to the sick bay, had still worked at the

wharf the last day of their lives. Each day the remaining workers dragged themselves along with great weariness. It happened that two coffins with deceased fellows awaited them in the courtyard when a troop marched back into the camp in the late afternoon.

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This was all most discouraging. Our sublieutenant also did not recover from his illness. On the 12th of february 1944 came the end. That afternoon in the sick bay he had still hummed a little, smoked a last cigarette, but his vigor had gone. When the troop returned from the wharf our camp commandant had died. As a sign of mourning the whole camp was silent that evening. Jacob, complete with sword and decorations, came also to offer his respects.

A new camp commander was now required. There were in our camp still 2 adjudants and 10 sergeant majors, but the Japanese did not pay much attention to that. When the outside workers fell in line on the courtyard, sergeant Visker was placed on the podium. Takenake informed everyone that that sergeant Visker would be the new commander and asked if everyone was in agreement with this and would follow the orders of the new commandant. (Japanese soldiers walked in between the lines to supervise the reactions of the POWs). It was a strange situation not least for the newly assigned commandant, but by then we had gotten used to a lot from our "hosts".

It was an advantage that Visker had in fact already taken care of the command for quite some time and had some experience and that everyone had come to know him quite well. That is why everyone quite agreed with the assignment. He remained our commandant until our departure from Harima. When in 1945 the group became split in three sections he also led the main group of 203 men for Noda. This all happened at the time when our stay in Japan had reached the very bottom. The month of february, 1944 was the worst in our entire life in the camp. We suffered a great deal from the cold, there were more patients than usual and it was the occasion for most fatalities. This is the list of the deceased for February 1944:

- feb.1 Gersen and Walter
- feb.7 Corneille
- feb.9 Doeve
- feb.11 Burghout
- feb.12 Onderwater
- feb.19 Muller
- feb.20 Herrebrugh
- feb.22 Rudolph and Hertel
- feb.24 Neyndorff
- feb.27 Braspot and van Dijk

Things were also shifting among the Japanese. The abominable lieutenant Takenaka left us in June 1944. He was replaced by the equally horrible second lieutenant Mori; a fanatic who was in some ways even worse than his predecessor. If Jacob possessed at least some sense of humor, Mori was too narrow minded for that; he was crazy about receiving homage. Therefore he could not be kept away from our barracks, the entire day we had to hear "korei". He also incited his soldiers to hit us. The situation in the camp became darker and darker and a new winter was already near. Fortunately Mori disappeared as suddenly as he had arrived. In December 1944 he was replaced by the ensign Kinari, who gave us much less trouble. He showed rarely up and made a lazy and dejected impression. Wearing his slippers he sat near a "hibachi" (pot with glowing coal) in his Japanese office. Kinari also stayed only with us for about 3 months.

Times were beginning to change.... We felt now clearly that the war had come to a turning point. By the end of 1944 the bombardments of Japan were proceeding in full intensity. It could not be hidden from us. At first we had heard at night the heavy droning high in the sky, but now we saw white condensation lines in the clear skies also during the day... Fortunately for us the Harima wharf was never bombarded. We were however confronted with the results of the war. Heavily damaged ships entered more and more for repairs. There were fewer new ships being built at Harima.

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The Japanese military guards were replaced one day by armed civilians, who undertook this task with little enthusiasm. The soldiers, we were told, went to the front. Well, we were happy to see them leave.. Ensign Kinari also departed and we received as his successor the sergeant major Oshima. With every new Japanese commander we went down to a lower rank...

This new commander was a Christian and we could note that easily. He behaved quite differently, was kind hearted and quite gentle, in any case as far as a Japanese was concerned. He was also able to calm down the guards. We could not establish whether this was possibly a behaviour imposed by higher up and we did not know therefore if the policy towards the POWs was changing. In any case things improved for us. Oshima did walk through the barracks, but he did that while wearing his slippers. Calling out "keirei" he did not consider necessary, he refused all notions of homage. Inside the enclosure of the camp we were allowed to establish vegetable gardens as much as we wanted, fortunately there was quite a lot of terrain available.

It also appeared that our sergeant A.P. van Schieveen, at that time the leader of the inside workers, was able to achieve much with Oshima. From our little office we were able to observe those two potter about near the fence so as to establish new vegetable beds. With their typical "Oké ka?" they understood each other perfectly. Our inside workers planted

as much Chinese cabbage as they were able. The results of the gardening started to supplement our rations quite a bit.

Had we thought of the well known camp rule: when you start a garden it is time to pack your backpack?

The eternal difficulties with our “treasures” were now also finished. The Japanese had of course noticed that quite a few engaged in some clandestine business. At the wharf some Japanese had been caught with possessions originally from the POWs. The result was that we were subjected to repeated inspections about “valuable items”. This included rings, watches, fountain pens, money and such. Such inspections started to take a great deal away from our free time.

There was still more; we suspected that the possessions of our deceased comrades were not treated with sufficient care by the Japanese military. So we found the following solution: all “valuables” were deposited with the Dutch commandant who kept detailed note of these on a long list. Every inhabitant of the camp delivered a little bag with his property. These bags were kept in a special box at the Dutch office and the Japanese commandant received a copy of the list. He also signed the copy that was in the care of the Dutch commandant.

It became now quite simple if the Japanese should wish to inspect the valuables. Soldier L.A.A. van Schooten who had been assigned to the Dutch office, spread it all on long tables allowing Jacob to check it all according to his list. Our fellows were now not bothered any more; they did not even know that there had been an inspection. On our liberation all members of the camp had their possessions safely returned, for which they had to sign the list of the Dutch commandant.

After the war the possessions of the deceased were personally delivered to the surviving family by the Dutch commandant or by one of their own comrades. This was a rather difficult task since in the chaos that prevailed on Java after the war it took months and required many advertisements in the newspapers to be able to find family members. Finally however each and every item that had been deposited was delivered to its destination.

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We never learned however what had happened with those items the Japanese had taken in storage.

We occasionally also had visitors to the camp. In 1943 there came a representative of the International Red Cross. This person made a rather strange impression. We were told that he was a Swiss. In any case he was a man of advanced age with white hair. He visited the camp in the company of the Japanese commander. Afterwards he chatted a little with

some “chosen” camp members. He came to the strange declaration that he considered our camp particularly fine and well organised. He said that he had seen already quite a number of POW camps but that ours was really the best. This was rather unexpected for us and we were left with the impression that he was really on the side of the Japanese.

This did not change our esteem for the organisation he was said to represent; we admired the Red Cross greatly and were always very grateful for the assistance we received through medicine and food parcels. We understood very well that the Red Cross met many obstructions in Japan, and that the organisation therefore could not really fully develop its functioning. Take as an example the mail which ran exclusively through the military and of which therefore nothing ever came out right.

We received more visits as well. A delegate from the Swedish embassy arrived. Previously we had been told that Sweden had undertaken to look after the Dutch interests in Japan. The Swedish representative was a tall, engaging man whose name we understood as “Gawell”. He took a look at the whole camp and chatted somewhat with some camp members who had however been selected especially for this by the Japanese. In the very presence of the Japanese they were unable to tell him much but that did not seem necessary anyway, Gawell had clearly seen through these gentlemen. He was led to the kitchen where a large piece of meat lay ready in an obvious manner. When the Japanese sergeant tried to draw his attention to this, Gawell totally ignored him. Anyway the Swede could do little for us; he tried however to encourage us: we just had to wait patiently through this time; he was not allowed to speak about the war; he would try to send us some sport items. He could not do anything to change our food supply... Even so we were much strengthened by this visit; that evening when the outside workers had come inside, I reported on the visit that had brought some new courage in the camp. There were also inspections from the headquarters of colonel Murata in Osaka. On such a day our doctor was ordered to have a little walk outside the camp with the patients. That happened in a most friendly fashion and the first time we did not catch on what was behind it all. It became an enjoyable excursion during which the guards behaved in a friendly manner. The patients even cheered up a little! On returning home the scheme became clear, the authorities had seen the barracks empty they had not encountered any sick. Jacob had assured them that all had gone to work. And the doctor? Oh he is making a little walk!

On other occasions it happened that our kitchen crew had to carry bags of rice and other food out of the camp and hide those under stacks of wood. After the inspection all that was brought inside again. What did all that mean? Only much later did it become clear to us that they had distributed to little of this food to us. They had kept it for themselves; when they went home for a few days off they all took a little bag of rice for the family. They carried it in their white socks.

In this way we indirectly also took care of their families!

Our greatest worry was the lack of food; what the Japanese made available for us was insufficient both in quality and in quantity, especially considering the heavy labour many had to do. The POWs forever walked about with empty stomachs and many could only drag themselves along most of the time. The first of all these were those who suffered from “pellagra”. We lived from one meal to the next. The thought that “at such hour there will be at least something to eat” allowed us to continue. It surprised us again and again how long we could stand this misery.

A well known element joining the feelings of hunger are the dreams of all sorts of delicacies. Everyone of us no doubt suffered from this, but with some of our fellows it became an obsession. They did not resist it any longer. At any encounter they would bring the conversation to the subject of “delicious food” and they would mention the various tasty dishes that they had enjoyed in the past. There were others who walked about day in day out with recipes of all sorts of dishes, as if that might help us in the slightest.

Meanwhile no garbage can at the wharf remained unexplored. The Dutch looking for an extra mouthful of rice circled like hungry wolves around the Japanese kitchens. The supervision by the frogs was unable to change this.

Our leadership of the camp did whatever was possible to obtain with the intermediary of the paymaster to purchase something or other as additional nourishment with the money we had earned. This had little result; in Japan there was also a distribution system and for the Japanese the rations were also meagre. We were therefore only rarely able to purchase a small quantity of kelp or something else with a little nutritious value.

Soon there developed a trading business between the Dutch themselves. In the beginning this was not objected to, but when excesses were noted the Dutch commandant interceded. The purpose of this was to prevent that our camp mates themselves would cause a reduction in the necessary nourishment. It was soon apparent that there were contracts for the distribution of large numbers of buns, every day one, for items of value. In one case a camp mate was ready to exchange 100 buns for a wristwatch. Measures were taken against such dumb deals; the transactions were annulled and those who were on the brink of being the victim were obliged to eat their daily ration at the table of the commander. Wristwatches and amounts of money would just have to wait till later. Our measures were not intended as punishment but were an attempt to maintain the lives of as many as possible until our liberation. It was simply an attempt to protect the weakest among us.

Another little word about the “canteen”. This was not as one might think a little shop or space where one could freely buy something but it was nothing but a counter at the courtyard behind which there was nothing. When the canteen “opened” the following

transpired: the Dutch commandant was informed about the amount of money he had to deposit to obtain the items that were to be distributed. In most cases he did not even know about what items were involved. He gathered the money and handed it to the paymaster. After this he received the items about which there was no choice possible. It was now his task to distribute these somehow to each of the inhabitants of the camp. Generally the distribution happened precisely and evenly through the groups; each group commandant received his share according to the size of the group. The group commandants often went through a great deal of trouble with such distributions. It was helpful when the items arrived in the same quantity as the number of inhabitants of the camp. Those canteen items might be: Japanese cookies, oranges, tins of fish meal, packages of dried kelp, tins of paprika, but the canteen was a rarity, it definitely did not occur every month.

There were also some more transfers to other camps. In 1943 our medical officer Dr. J.F.C. Klusman was transferred to Kamioka,

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Doctor L. Indorf left on March 23, 1943 for Kobe hospital. We were now for 2 days without a doctor in the camp because it was only on March 25, 1943 that doctor C. Arends, medical officer first class of the KNIL, arrived. He remained with us as the single medical doctor till the liberation. We owe profound gratitude to these three medical doctors for their tireless work. They had to apply themselves with totally insufficient means and a steadily growing number of patients. In spite of the feeling of powerlessness they must have felt, they never abandoned a single patient and maintained their work till the very end.

We got to look more and more shabby because of the long time of our stay at Harima. Our clothing and shoes were completely worn and replacements were a great rarity. If we received summer underwear then it was taken back in at the end of the summer and put back in service the following year! Inside the camp a little team under sergeant Roozen was charged with the repairs of clothing and footwear. It was quite a hopeless job but with their simple means they did what they could. They were not always professionals because the institution of tailors and shoemakers was one of our ways to allow weaker people work inside the camp for a while.

Since we had a lack of clothing, the POWs occasionally made over garments. Artists with the needle fabricated shirts from bedspreads and mosquito nets. Though that also presented some difficulties since there was a lack of thread. Threads had to be pulled out of the cloth and then there was the difficulty of threading it through the needle. Some rather pretty items were created even so. Another problem was that because of the cutting of mosquito netting and bedspreads the numbers of those were no longer correct and that created great problems during the inspections.

In the morning all Japanese workers had to perform gymnastics (taiso) before they entered factory, workplace, or office. No wonder that the POWs were also dragged along in this rage and were forced to engage in rhythmic movements. We did not become any more supple but it was a great opportunity for our guards to tease us once more. In case there was nothing to do then let's do some more counting: ichi, ni, san,shi (one, two, three, four) ad nauseam, turning one's head, swinging one's arms as if we were not exhausted already....

In winter our barracks were freezing; almost impossible to endure. During the day most fellows were at the wharf and the stoves inside were not allowed to be lit. Those remaining inside envied the outside workers who sometimes were allowed to keep a little fire or who worked close to the hot ovens. The stoves might not always be lit even when the workers had returned inside the camp. That depended a lot on the state of mind of the hosts. Each barrack had 2 stoves, that is one per 90 men. That was not much, moreover there was really never enough fuel. These stoves were built for the burning of sawdust that had to be brought inside by the Moko crew. Other crews managed now and then to bring bundles of waste wood as well, which burned more easily and gave greater warmth.

On our free days we had little use of our stoves, generally the day had quite progressed before they were even lit. After much smoke there was some success and everyone crowded around the stoves so that only a few were able to take advantage of it. There were disputes for the best spots to boil a little pot or to toast a bun. Sometimes the bun was first spread with the delicious " sheep (ship) grease" of the ramps, which was really doubtful stuff! When the warning "red" sounded everything was quickly hidden, for there was a frog nearby.

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At the evening roll call of 8 o'clock all stoves had to be extinguished, because the Japanese were terrified of fire. The cold then entered quickly since there was no lack of slits and cracks. We protected ourselves bundled in our blankets like caterpillars in a cocoon. To keep warm some slept with someone else but this was rather rare.

Those nights were our best moments in Japan. It was the most quiet moment of our imprisonment. As we were sleeping we imagined that things were not too bad; to begin with, we escaped from the hands of the enemy and returned in complete freedom to our own country; we experienced again the happy times of plenty and rejoined all our friends and family. Yes, those nights at Harima those were the fast passing hours of oblivion that brought us closer to peace and freedom; finally these consisted of nearly half of the period of our imprisonment. Those were the wonderful, silent hours, in which there were little beatings, where there was little suffering, where hunger could be forgotten for a little while and when there was no talk about food, and especially, when we did not suffer from the cold...

But every night also knew its own dramatic moments, those of the gallery watch avidly noting the numbers, the unexpected midnight emergencies for medical doctors or camp staff, the meddling guards and from the never ending "silent procession" to the "benjo" (toilet). That was not all, sometimes we had to deal with the worst. The Dutch commandant was then poked by the paymaster and he was obliged, still overcome with sleep, to blow the bugle and raising the alarm. Through the Japanese night then sounded the loud call of the KNIL "twice at attention" and the whole camp got to its feet. Everyone dressed in a hurry and ran outside for that annoying roll call ceremony. If it did not go fast enough for the pleasure of the Japs then in the middle of the night it became running along the bumpy courtyard when there were again beatings if someone could not keep up. A spoiled night's rest, not to mention the damage to our health. The only cheering thought on such occasions was "they have no doubt lost another island".

In each barrack two men walked the gallery watch together. One was to note who left or entered; the other patrolled steadily through the barrack. In the beginning a turn at the watch took three hours but that was too demanding; if one remained well awake one lost the night's rest; if one fell asleep it could become an unimaginable calamity. Fortunately we were able later to reduce the watches to one hour per occasion. The Japanese soldiers also came into our barracks all the time, supposedly to check on the watches, as they maintained. Often this ended in some beating or other. Since we needed our night's rest so urgently many POWs tried to exchange their turn with others in exchange for some food. The burned layer of rice from the saucepan (krak) was distributed everyday in turn to the groups, giving everyone a small portion of it. Such a portion of krak was the normal price for assuming a turn at the watch..

The Dutch commandant had to keep in mind that there were two fellows who never would be allowed to be on watch together, those were the soldiers Keyser and Barthelemy. The first one made too many mistakes in writing, the other was (or pretended to be) deaf! All the other camp fellows, no matter what rank, shared in the watch. The group commandants had another watch, they had to walk the picket service, which meant checking on all watches at least twice during the night and walk around the camp. The Japanese commandant had to be provided with a report of this.

In spite of the fact that the Japanese during those years relieved us from all sorts of tools,

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it was noteworthy to see what objects the Dutch always managed to make.

The Japanese ate their rice with chopsticks, a habit we generally did not acquire, but the result was that one could not obtain spoons. Who ever lost a spoon had therefore to construct a new one for himself, from wood, or tin, in most cases from aluminum from the flattened handle of our old KNIL mess tins. All sorts of things were soon engraved on those tins; there was also quite a bit of wood carving. Some had carried with them all this

time small bits of perspex from air plane windows and they made rings or other small decorative objects. Those who were clever with the needle made themselves garments such as shirts, slippers and especially work gloves.

Our camp fellow Barthelemy, about whom we just spoke, had a special hobby. He collected all sorts of pebbles, he hoped later on to polish as “semi gemstones” and to mount those in rings. He exaggerated quite a bit in this hobby and at some point he owned a whole backpack full of pebbles. On the occasion of our move from the camp that bag could not really be carried and most of it had to be abandoned.

There were also collectors of Red Cross stickers. In those well known food packets there were articles from various brands. These labels were carefully soaked from the wrapping and glued onto the outside of the cardboard box. The Red Cross also provided us occasionally with some toilet articles such as shaving cream and tooth brushes etc. It was soon discovered that a certain sort of tooth powder had a wonderful sweet taste. It did not take long for one to eat a tasty bun with “tooth powder”.

In our enclosed male society there was also the one occasion when a female became involved. Most camp mates have never known anything about this. It was a little drama that took place in the heating area of the Japanese bathroom. When most POWs were at the wharf she entered the camp. “Oji-san” (auntie) we called her. She was a Japanese of no great beauty, who did cleaning for the Japanese staff, and so also took care of the bath house. We could see her from the Dutch office, bowing her way past the men of the wharf police. She was always dressed in Japanese costume and on high “geta” (wooden shoes). Oji-san must have had back aches from that bowing. It so happened that among the inside workers there was one who was willing to provide her with some relief through massage. That’s what happened. More than likely nothing more than that did occur. All of this would never have been known had the sly paymaster sergeant Furuya not discovered the business and called in the Dutch commandant. What really had happened was the really difficult question. How much did the paymaster really know? The event was dealt with in the Japanese office; there was much talk and there were many threats until there was a sudden and remarkable denouement. The Dutch commandant had become quite nervous about it all and burst out laughing about the situation. This affected Furuya who seemed having a sense of humor after all and could also not remain serious. He sent the delinquent off with a “keirei” (bow). Whatever may have happened afterwards with Oji-san we do not know and the name of the POW is of no importance...

At the wharf there were also many Koreans, like us pressed into labour. They also were treated in a derogatory manner. They were however not ill disposed toward the POWs. It often happened that a Korean would toss a cigarette in such a manner that a Dutchman could easily pick it up. The Koreans generally were also those who maintained clandestine contacts with the Dutch and who traded some items with us.

Something that happened quite often at the wharf were fights. The Koreans were daily in conflict with the Japanese and had absolutely no fear. Sometimes this led to a fight where the Korean generally was the winner, since these were big strong fellows. The end of the story was always that the Japanese wharf police would take the Korean away to “cool off a bit”.

Regarding the clandestine business with the Dutch the following: Secret agreements were made generally behind some stack of iron in a far corner of the wharf. Property of the POWs were exchanged for food or cigarettes. One of the camp fellows, Cordier de Croust, had once traded in a careless manner and was caught personally by the Japanese commandant. After a lengthy reprimand he was given two hits on his head with the flat of the sword. The sword, not of the best quality, was bent, and Cordier appeared to have fainted. But that was just the way it looked. The Dutch commandant was called and was ordered to take Cordier back to the camp. Jacob had taken a fright himself apparently! So I carried Cordier as well as possible, but hardly were we beyond the view of the Japs when Cordier whispered: Just let me walk on my own sir, there's nothing wrong with me! His thickly lined cap and his well acted reaction had served him well. And those cigarettes, the subject that had started it all, he still had those as well!

The event that occurred with Rauch and the welder is also amusing. At the wharf there was an elderly welder who gave Rauch a little left over rice now and then. Because of the guards this could of course not happen openly. So he placed the container with the left over rice in an obvious place where it could be emptied by Rauch. He did this on an occasion when one of the red bands (a wharf boss) caught him. Instead of beating him, the red band started a lengthy homily. He told Rauch that the furyo (POW) had no hunger and that the Japanese military took good care of them; only that Rauch was a bad fellow who was always hungry. It was time that he should improve himself. Rauch answered to this story that the other Oranda really were hungry as well, but that they did not always dare take that rice, as he did. Now, said the red band, leave these rests, they are no good for eating, come with me!

They went to the hall where the wharf bosses knocked off for their meal and there were still three lunch packages lying about. The red band thinking that this was a great way to teach Rauch a lesson handed him the three packages and ordered him to finish these entirely in his presence. Rauch with his famous hunger did not find this unpleasant at all. He gobbled all this quickly and happily. It disappointed the red band but he could now definitely see that Rauch was really hungry. In any case he did not dwell any further on the matter and sent the starveling back to the factory.

Rauch departed but discovered right away that the box of the elderly welder was still there. He seriously regretted that this would now get lost and in passing hid it all under his jacket. He then returned to the red band and asked permission to go to the toilet. This one thought: Aha you are already suffering from all that, it is your own fault! Rauch said nothing and ran off to the little hut so as to feast quickly on his new prize. Imagine who

unexpectedly opened the door? That red band! He came to check up on Rauch and probably to read him another lecture on how bad he had been. When he saw however that Ruch was feasting on more rice, he did not know what to say; he shook his head in despair and disappeared....

The most appreciated property of the POWs was the old equipment of the KNIL. Our military grey green uniform appeared to be nearly imperishable, the saucepans, spoons, forks,

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canteens, bamboo hats and underwear, all of that could see intensive use for years. Truly a compliment for those who had assembled this equipment. Neither the English nor the American equipment of similar sort that we could compare could rival in this way our own light jungle equipment.

The Japanese provided, as said earlier, not many garments. If per chance there was a shirt for everyone we had to use it through the summer and return it when winter started. These were then returned to us the following summer for further use. This was the Japanese habit to use everything till it was threadbare. Most POWs soon looked like tramps, no wonder that they used all sorts of old bits of cloth to patch their garments a little. Colour was of no importance any more. We were returned every winter the old battle dress we had received from the English in Singapore. We wore those uniforms for three winters in this manner. We wore those at work and on days off. In winter many wore those in bed. It was whispered that some never undressed all winter! Finally there was nothing left of those uniforms that originally had been of excellent quality. It did not prevent us from expecting ourselves to be in the same clothing for the fourth winter when liberation came.

During 1944 the Japanese cleared a section of the clothing shed in Harima. That was the section where clothing and property of the deceased were being kept. Those garments were returned to us with the intention that they be shared by the other camp fellows. In the first place of course for those who needed it the most. We made first lists of items that were available and asked who needed these. If there were several candidates we raffled them. All objects of more personal nature, like photos, books, bibles, jewellery as well as valuable items, we gave in the custody of friends or of family of the deceased with the assignment to take these to the relatives.

Some canteens were sawn through so as to serve as smuggling bottles. This way all sorts of items were brought inside the camp. On Java these served especially for the smuggling of shag tobacco, but in Japan we discovered other applications. While entering we established double precaution against discovery. Since all canteens looked alike they could be easily traded. When a part of the troop had been searched the canteens were

exchanged making discovery almost impossible. The inventiveness of the POWs was ultimately something that knew no limits.

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Chapter 6. OUR SICK AND THEIR CARE

If one wished to believe the Japanese, they were continuously concerned about our health: everything was "for your health". I mentioned earlier the daily collection of gymnastics "taiso" which had to be executed indiscriminately, but the gentlemen had also other methods to show us how much they cared about our physical condition. In summer all doors and windows of the barracks had to stay well shut and worried about drafts and colds we all had to sleep under our blankets. But once it was winter the windows had to remain wide open since we otherwise would not have sufficient fresh air! We were then also obliged to engage for a little while bare chested in massage with small reed brushes especially provided for this. That would stimulate our circulation and protect us against the cold! At the entrance of the barracks they had placed drums with water and a solution of kalium permanganate. Everyone had to gargle with this as they passed. When the outside workers came home that gargling was carefully checked on. Anyone who in that crush tried to escape the procedure was punished.

The first Japanese commandant, lieutenant Takenaka instructed his staff that severe beatings were in order for every misdemeanor. In any case he gave avidly example of this himself. Especially the sick were the victim of this with him. Those who did not go outside to work were called lazy ones (namake-mono) They were not allowed to see the doctor for treatment but were forced to stand at attention for hours in front of the guards' room. It was sometimes so severe that the sick collapsed. The Dutch commandant had to argue for a long time every day before he obtained permission to bring the sick inside and to deliver them to the doctor. On the single occasion that he did this on his own authority the Dutch commandant was himself forced to stand at attention near the guards.

The Japanese soldiers took pleasure at beating or kicking for the slightest offence, or to throw the POWs several times to the ground. It goes without saying that one had to be careful never to respond in kind or do something that might look that such was intended, it was not permitted to make any defensive gesture. This might have very serious consequences, and all camp members were seriously warned against this. Those who were bad tempered by nature had to be told again and again that it might be matter of life and death.

Some examples of punishments that were imposed for small offences: having to stand with bent knees; lying horizontally supported on one's hands; standing holding a pail of water with extended arms...

In the barracks there was also never any quiet. the patients were shooed about all the time; now it could be mustering for the roll call, a little later it was gymnastics that had to be performed or brooms were handed out to clean the camp. For the pleasure of that one particular Japanese soldier it might become necessary to march again and again by men who should be in bed. That marching by a bunch of exhausted Dutchmen must hardly have presented an impressive image. Apart from this, it all happened on the reduced rations of the patients, or on a little bowl of rice water for the patients with intestinal problems. This "treatment" of rice water was even worse when one considers that the rations for the healthy were very restricted. No wonder that most POWs finally knew no better way than to remain silent about their ailments and try to continue working; inside there was no quiet either and one felt the hunger there a lot more.

I remarked already earlier that our rations were inadequate; that was the case even in the beginning, when Japan did not yet have a scarcity of foodstuffs worth mentioning. The necessities were kept from us by the Japanese military quite purposely.

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Supplies did come into the camp but these were saved for so long that they ended up spoiled and had to be thrown out.

It was fortunate that our boys were inventive and had sufficient courage to find stuff in diverse ways outside the camp. As long as they were not discovered this could be considered an advantage for the camp as a whole. Now at least one thing or another was picked up. If this had not happened there would have been even more want, since the smuggled quantity was always of some significance. This however was an advantage only to a limited number of camp fellows.

Though rarely, it did happen that camp fellows messed with their food expecting to render it somewhat better, tastier or a larger quantity. In reality it only turned out to their disadvantage.

If the Japanese thought that one had worked well we were treated to a bath. It so happened that there was no water or wood to make a fire. So to begin with there was a lot of work and a rummaging about; dozens of men carrying wooden pails and there was ample opportunity for conflicts. Once the bath was heated the first team could profit of it but afterwards the water was so dirty that later ones preferred not to make use of it. One needed quite some courage to undress in the freezing dressing hut; doors and windows facing each other were open and people walked in and out all the time. Many did not have the courage and preferred waiting for a more pleasant season for taking a serious bath.

In summer it was much more pleasant; there was no need for heating and sometimes we were allowed to swim in the bay. Of course not all POWs could take advantage of this but for many it was a pleasant event.

Related to the previous was the matter of vermin. After having been in Japan a short while it turned up. Probably some bedbugs travelled with us from the Indies in the folds of our mosquito netting; I won't exclude that possibility, our own camps on Java were not free of those, nor were the POW camps. The bedbugs soon spread all over Harima camp. Since we lay so close together it was of little use to keep one's own equipment clean; if the neighbours did not do the same the evil soon returned.

The summer of 1943 delivered us millions of fleas; These we certainly did not bring with us. Nobody ever thought that there could be that many. It became impossible to sleep quietly, it was itching and catching, even after a pesticide had been scattered around. Fortunately with the approaching cold the plague disappeared just as fast as it had arrived. The following winter the lice arrived, also not brought by us, causing us much distress. In the evenings one could see the POWs searching and hunting for vermin, so that they could at least enjoy some rest. Especially the patients in the sick bay had a difficult time, they rarely had the energy to keep themselves entirely clean and the male nurses were not able to do everything either, they had so much to do already. If someone died we could see the vermin wriggle about on his poor clothing and his body, in spite of all efforts of extermination. For some time one man in our camp was tasked with the boiling of clothing, that was soldier Mathlener, who daily made a big fire under an iron drum. He gave a good go to all clothing that had been handed in. It was of some help for a short while but the lack of clothing was certainly the main cause that we were unable to exterminate the pest.

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The numbers of sick continued to increase but the Japanese simply refused to recognize this fact. No patient could be kept in the camp without their prior consent. It would mean less workers at the wharf, and that was what counted. Apparently the statistics were important to them, not the reality!

If there were some really very seriously ill, the doctor accompanied by the Dutch commandant had to see the Japanese to request permission. After the patient had been yelled at sufficiently as a lazy bugger and the doctor and commandant had been called "no good" as well it was generally possible to arrive at a compromise: the ill person was allowed to stay inside but someone else had to replace him at work. The doctor's experience generally had taught him to have someone already standing by, so that this was not a problem, but now and then it was a most unpleasant mission to have to tell people that they had to return to the wharf; knowing that they really were not capable to do this. It was really quite difficult but fortunately most understood the need for it. On a rare occasion it happened that that mission was not accomplished... that turned into a very special drama.

The doctor and the Dutch commander had each been given a “writer” to assist in the administration. These changed about quite a bit and were generally selected from the weaker ones who were allowed some lighter work. It was an arrangement that resembled that of the tailors and shoemakers in our camp and the inside workers who kept the barracks clean. One had to be careful not to select a person the Japanese did not particularly like, since in the camp one was in continuous contact with our hosts. One day Takenaka introduced a new cure. He called it “moxa”. The process was the burning of a piece of fungus on the bare skin of the patient. It appears that “moxa” is a sort of home remedy with the Japanese, like Haarlemmer oil with us, a remedy applied in many cases. It became a bit much for us when the Japanese began using it as a sort of means to torment the POWs. Guards, sentinels and soldiers wandered through the camp with moxa in their hands looking for patients and so caused deep burns. A number of men from Harima still carry the scars of it today (van Lambaart, Barkmeyer, Rauch). The Dutch camp leadership protested against the use of moxa and after a little while the use of this branding, as we called it, was terminated. We have no reason to be grateful for having been healed by it.

Our camp doctor dr J.C. F. Klusman was the first who diagnose the illness “pellagra” (the result of deficient nutrition) and who protected the patients with painful feet. Some of his most serious pellagra patients were R. de Haas, E. de Graaff and S. H. van Sitteren; these were able to obtain a lengthy rest in the sick bay, where they steadily improved. Doctor Klusman suffered from the illness himself. Takenaka had for pellagra a remedy of his own (why did he not become a medical doctor in the Japanese army?). He ordered all patients to walk barefoot on pebbles; and so the necessary rest for the patients disappeared again! They were chased to this so-called remedy with a stick! Dr. Klusman and his patients were pursued persistently and when the doctor in a slightly less restrained manner finally tried to make the Jap understand that the treatment of the sick better be

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left to him, Takenaka became enraged. He took a stick and hit the doctor and 17 of his patients on their heads. Klusman, with a bandage around his head, calmly continued his way and it became of course not easier for him; he was after all a demonstrative person. He had complete sympathy from all of us of course, but little could be done. His transfer a short time later to the Kamioka camp was seen by many as a punishment for him. That departure from Takenaka, his special enemy, must however have been a real feast for the doctor.

The beri-beri patients had swollen legs. Against this illness Jacob also had a remedy. All were taken to a separate section of the second barrack and told to lie with their legs raised. The result was that the legs did shrink. The patients were considered “healed” and put to work again. The Japs did not wish to hear the objections of the camp doctor and his

attempts to explain that the patients were not cured, even when the the sick returned a short time later stumbling back inside, their legs swollen again as before.

Only one thing was important for our hosts: the largest possible number of outside workers. That was neatly recorded in the statistics and reported to Osaka. These reports indicated surely how well they took care of us. They established a sort of a system of prizes. It was to seduce some POWs never to remain inside, not even a single day. Someone who had worked steadily for a month received a so-called bonus of the month. Generally that meant 2 packages of Kinshi cigarettes. Those who had worked without fail for a year received another bonus, for example a couple of tins of fishmeal or a basket of daikon (Japanese radishes). In any case those bonuses did not mean much.

Another sort of Japanese reward were the “paintings”. Essentially these were pieces of paper on which Japanese characters had been painted indicating in which manner a person had distinguished himself. These paintings were handed out officially and needed to be treated with respect. We hung these things in the barracks because it was there that they could be useful sometimes. If someone had committed an offence, it might assist him if such painting was available to enhance his reputation. If perchance it was really another Dutchman’s the Japanese did not notice and for us it was all the same...

Staying inside or not was in the first place the decision of the Japanese military male nurses. Their names were: soldier Kashiwagi; corporal Matsushita; soldier Asakura and soldier Fujiwara. The Dutch camp leadership always tried to be ahead of them because if they began to seek out the “healed” ones it happened that more than necessary were sent to the wharf and not always those who were most capable...

In any case the circumstances at the wharf were also bad. Lugging iron all day, pushing heavy lorries, stacking boards, tightening nuts and bolts with heavy spanners, rivetting plates together, welding, etc. In reality all the heavy work that had to be done on a ships wharf. All of this happened under the supervision of the frogs, with as leaders the work bosses, uneducated Japanese labourers with a red band around their arm. The POWs were forever bullied, teased. and often beaten with sticks. Everyone went to work in the morning with some interior fear and if after some heavy work there was some relief, there was always still the worry about what might be awaiting in the camp. It was not seldom that the returning workers were met by Japanese soldiers so as to receive another lesson in drill!

One day, when Takenaka was still commander, a couple of workers did not come to roll call, they were simply not able to do it. At roll call a couple of men were therefore missing which excited the Japanese.

That meant beatings. Those who were inside the camp experienced a terrible day, all disagreeable measures were applied at the same time. The whole Japanese staff was assigned to put the patients to work and to select inside workers to send to the wharf. Everything in the camp was thrown into a mess.

Jacob invented finally a new way to show Osaka advantageous numbers; a certain number of patients were considered working and a number of inside workers were marked on the list of outside workers. We thought at first that this would be to our advantage, but that absolutely not the case. Everything was fine in the camp surely, there was less need for special aid in the shape of medicines etc. There was even praise for the Japanese commandant! In this way they led their own headquarters astray.

As winter approached things got worse and worse for us. Some of our POWs started to become dull and without expression as a result of the continuing hardships. These men kept simply stumbling on until their final days. Of course the Dutch leadership tried to prevent this though it was a hopeless task to keep an eye on all 360 men and to offer aid and protection to those who needed it most. It happened often that only the most seriously ill got any rest and this became more difficult because of the Japanese methods. The paymaster entered the sick bay often to tease the seriously ill even the dying (sergeant Boertje).

When there was an inspection from Osaka there was quite a display of medication in our sick bay. These were "lent" to us for the occasion from the hospital at the wharf. After that visit it was all quickly returned. This was the way the Japanese fooled each other quite a bit. For us there remained forever the lack of things; medicine, clothing, food, bandages and instruments. Our camp doctors made incisions with dull Gillette blades. The Japanese did not want to provide medical equipment because, as said by the interpreter Ishiba, those could be used as weapons (?). That was also the reason why pocket knives and little nail scissors had been taken from us. When we asked Ishiba what the reasonableness of this was, he merely said: Shikata ga nai! (can't do anything about it) How could our patients be treated then and what should be done if there were some wounded? If there was an accident the patient had to be transported to the wharf clinic. Treatment was not any better there but they did have access to more materials. In our camp the male nurses often had nothing more than some paper to cover wounds.

Fortunately only two Dutchmen became victim of any serious accident at work. Corporal K. Oost and soldier K.W. Meyer. Through the good cares of our medical officers both came through and stayed alive, though they will no doubt carry the scars of it for their whole lives. There is no doubt however that our medical personnel would have been able to do much more if they had better means and more freedom to work with, especially to extend the lives of those camp fellows who had become ill through lack of proper nourishment.

We had the experience that one of our camp fellows, ill and forced to work anyway, died later that very day (sergeant A.J. E. Dezentjé).

Another one, forced to the wharf with 40 degrees fever, but clandestinely kept inside by us, died already at 10 o'clock in the morning in his berth. (soldier S. Wouters)

Yet another one, having never missed a day's work at the wharf, after a hard day died in his berth that night (soldier K. L. Gabeler).

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And there was the soldier Cordier de Croust who suffered from dysentery, which the Japanese never believed and therefore was forced to work.

The soldier Meyer had fallen of a gantry, broke a foot and a serious fracture of the spine. This meant that he had to lie in a plaster cast. He needed a lot of gauze for this, made available to him by his comrades' mosquito nettings.

Space was always lacking in our sick bay. 12 patients could be accommodated in one section; in the adjoining isolation area four at most. For a long time Stok and Nilant lay here, separated from the others for months. Finally they were joined by van Lambaart, Steinfort and Roukens, all the patients.

The assistants of the camp doctor were, apart from the soldier-writer, a corporal-male nurse B. Boer and the soldier F. Pijpaert, a druggist originally from Bali, who was tasked with the care of the medication. The oldest inhabitant of the camp, corporal de Lannoy (then 62 years old) could not really be put to work at the wharf and he was therefore assigned as a male nurse. He satisfied quite well in that function and never refused the tasks he was ordered to undertake.

The Japanese checked the weight of the POWs every month. Officially it was not allowed to keep lists of the weights, but doctor Arends was in possession of an overview of all weights anyway; he had noted those unobtrusively somewhere.

When, on his way to the toilet, he was found outside the barrack, the soldier J. O. Nelk was so severely beaten by the Japanese guard that one of his eyes came out. He went straight to doctor Arends who replaced the eye in its location. However the damage that had occurred could not be repaired and Nelk lost his sight in one eye.

In our camp there were at least 6 men who lost one or more toes as a result of gangrene. The soldier L.E. Keyser (the tall Keyser) was especially persecuted by the paymaster. He was kept nearly continuously in the cell until he was transported deathly ill and exhausted to the sick bay. Three days later he died there in the arms of his younger brother who also had to suffer much from the Japs. He also had to lose three toes and an index finger. I consider sergeant Furuya directly responsible for the death of his older brother.

Another victim of Furuya was the soldier G.I. de Boer. He was originally punished for a small offense (trading in cigarettes), but after that he became the special target of the paymaster. Some POWs when they came to the magazine for an exchange of shoes might leave with a better pair but de Boer could only count on a severe beating. He came to see me more than once at the Dutch office with the marks on his face. All had once again

gone wrong. He received therefore from me the serious advice to see Furuya as little as possible and to ask others to take care of his exchanges. When he lay ill in our little hospital, Furuya still came to pester him, which aggravated his final days considerably. Three days before his death he stumbled out of the sick bay and came to see me in spite of the fact that I already visited the sick bay at least several times a day. De Boer felt that it was finished for him and had a message for his wife. It was possible to execute that task completely but it was only in the nick of time. Mrs de Boer-Zuidema was just about to leave for the Netherlands, when I met her at the Hotel des Indes....

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Our stay in Harima would not last much longer. The fourth Japanese commander, Oshima, did not bother much with the sick. We could hardly believe what happened to us. The patients were now able to rest properly and in case the doctor considered it necessary, were able to remain in camp without difficulty. The Japanese soldiers of the camp staff were allowed less authority. A new paymaster arrived, corporal Amada, a young chap, with a particular hobby of singing songs. He managed to purchase somewhat more for us and, even better, he left it to the Dutch commandant to take care of the payments, so everything went much more smoothly. Our food increased a little more in quantity since we were able to receive the remainders from the kitchen at the wharf. The quality remained as bad as ever. In any case we began to feel ourselves a bit more comfortable in Harima. It was said that it was because of the gardens we had started. But might it also be because of the many planes that passed over our heads night and day? Who knows? It seemed to us that a little light had come into our existence.

Chapter 7. THE JAPANESE LANGUAGE AND OUR NEWS SUPPLY.

With the exception of the small number of Dutch who studied the Japanese language intending to offer their service as interpreters or to read newspapers, the knowledge of this difficult language among the POWs was very slight. The unpleasant cries of the Japanese during their speeches to the Dutch and the generally unfriendly intentions present in those Japanese words did not encourage that one learned Japanese. On top of that the usefulness of it was rather problematic since we would not wish to have anything to do with Japan later on. So the Dutch generally did not take to Japanese.

Our camp fellow Paul van Schieven managed to obtain a booklet written by Eeichi Kyooka titled "Japanese in Thirty Hours" about which he was very enthusiastic. He began to translate it and after a little while started printing copies on a stencil machine. The intention was that in this manner a greater number of fellows would learn something of the Japanese language. But this effort had no success. The Japanese also did not encourage this study but did insist that all Japanese commands were understood and would be promptly executed. These circumstances allowed us to escape some orders saying they were not understood. If as a result there were difficulties it gave us a way out. Such explanations were therefore of some importance to our "interpreters" As time passed everyone came to know a small amount of Japanese words anyway, learned automatically since the Japs spoke daily of "tenko" and through commands like "forward march" that were always uttered in Japanese. Everyone also had to learn to count in Japanese which was quite easy since we exercised that daily while having to count at each roll call. To facilitate that the POWs always stood themselves in the line in the same position; so that they merely had to call the very same number. Every Harima inhabitant will even now remember that little sequence: "ici, ni, san, shi, go, roku, shichi, hachi, ku, ju", it will be something he'll never forget! Furthermore there were little phrases one had to use when reporting or asking something. May I go to the toilet? (benjo e ikashite kudasai?) and as well: I have returned (koerimashita). These we memorized in our own interest. Before meals the interpreter Kogawa taught us to say "itadakimasu" which really means nothing more than "I take" but which is considered polite by the Japanese.

Our group commandants, the hanchos, were obliged to know a lot more Japanese words since they generally were much more in direct contact with the Japanese and often had to defend their own men. They also had to be able to explain why this one or the other was absent from the job, "byoki" (ill). There were also the expressions the Japanese used repeatedly, such as "yoroshii" (good) and much more often "damé" (bad) or "igan" (forbidden) and the really annoying word "hayaku" (faster) and the even more detested "kora" (hey there!) whereby the fright also added to the meaning.

During roll call the hanchos had to tell a whole story that followed an established scheme:
example: Dai ni han (group number two)

Soin yon ju go mei	(total forty five men)
Jiku ju mei	(absent ten men)
Genzai san ju go mei	(present thirty five men)
Ijo arimasen	(no particulars)

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Should this first part have transpired without problems, there had to be the justification for the absent ones; which could be as follows:

Byoki roku mei	(sick six men)
Suiji ni mei	(kitchen two men)
Sheiki ni mei	(camp work two men)
Kei ju mei	(total ten men)

It was not too difficult but one was not allowed any mistakes or the whole thing had to be started from the beginning. If during that repeat there was a beating that then caused more mistakes and the poor group commandant then could not manage any more. In such cases the roll call became extended endlessly. Finally the whole group was considered no good and the men were to stand in two rows facing each other and slap each other. If those slaps were not given hard enough the Jap himself would give a hand, it was impossible to know how that misery would end.

As first interpreter in Harima we had a somewhat older man, named Ishiba, who, we were told, had worked at a travel agency in Kobe before the war. He understood us better than the other Japanese. Though his English was not spotless we could understand him quite well. We could not give old Ishiba greater pleasure than to praise his knowledge of the English language. Even so, it was still: be careful. Ishiba was and remained a Japanese with a Japanese mentality; therefore he certainly was not on our side, even though he occasionally managed to assist us.

Ishiba was an intermediary and that was the way he should be seen. If he counselled how the Japanese commander had to be approached on a certain matter, such advice should definitely be followed; it was the safest manner and it led most often to the desired result. There was not the slightest possibility of presenting the interests of the POWs to Jacob in a simple and straightforward manner. It was essential to know the Japanese rules of the game and to follow those precisely. It was therefore never possible to submit a request for a specific improvement shortly after one of our camp fellow had committed a "transgression". If one did it anyway the refusal was certain and afterwards it was even more difficult to discuss the same matter. No, a request could only be presented with a chance of success when the Japanese had reason to be satisfied about something or other, such as a successful inspection from Osaka.

If we presented our requests indirectly through the intermediary of the interpreter Ishiba it might take a long time before we learned the answer. That happened because Ishiba

also had to wait for the right psychological moment to raise the matter. Many of our fellows never managed to understand this difficult issue and continued whining at the Dutch commander about stuff they had discussed. Worse, there were some who, afraid that their interests had not been dealt with sufficient energy, undertook some action themselves. They went behind the Dutch camp direction and addressed the Japanese commander themselves (Barkmeyer). They discovered right away for themselves that their action had been not been wise. On the contrary a great deal of “goodwill” was lost for the camp direction. With the Japanese it was important always and everywhere to follow the rules if one wanted to achieve anything.

The Japanese paymaster Furuya noted that the interpreter Ishiba now and then managed to accomplish something on our behalf. This annoyed him particularly. Furuya knew some English and started to exclude the interpreter systematically. Ultimately he managed to eliminate Ishiba from the camp. The old interpreter was re-assigned at the wharf. If the services of an interpreter were absolutely necessary the second interpreter Kagami was used. This man spoke English with a heavy American accent which was why in the beginning he was sometimes called the “American interpreter”. When he learned about this

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he became furious. Kagami (Mirror) was much less kindly disposed towards the POWs. When we had learned a bit of Japanese after a little while we were able to observe that he did not translate honestly. Now came the time for the Dutch to eliminate the Japanese interpreter and to speak for themselves. So after a little while the situation developed where on several occasions when the Japanese commander held a speech it was directly translated into Dutch. Steadily we gained in confidence and our vocabulary increased also. I should not forget to mention that through the assistance of Ishiba we had obtained a small Japanese dictionary that served us excellently.

On the 8th of every month the Japanese commemorated the day of the declaration of war with a special ceremony we called the “autobus”, a term based on the sounds of the words we heard repeatedly used throughout. If the weather allowed all Japs stood in full dress at attention in the courtyard and droned a lengthy declaration in which they confirmed their loyalty to the Emperor “Tenno Heika”. Now and then they bowed in the direction of Tokyo. Later on this ceremony was executed with diminishing enthusiasm and finally was entirely abandoned.

Certain changes happened to the Japanese camp staff. Corporal Amada, who later replaced that nasty paymaster Furuya, thought that the POWs were not cheerful enough during their marches to and from the wharf. They ought to sing a little. He decided to give us singing lessons and we had to learn the following song:

Hitohi, futahi, wa haretare do

Mika, yoka, itsuka
Wa ame ni kaze.
Michi no ashiki ni nora koma no
Fuji wazura i nu
Noji yamaji

Of course we did not understand a word of it and it should not be a surprise that most never learned it. In any case we were not inclined to like Japanese songs and it never happened that we sang when we marched. Most of us were already happy if they had the energy simply to reach the camp, without having to sing cheerfully at the same time!

One day when we returned from the wharf Takenaka told us the story of an American POW from a nearby camp who had saved a Japanese child from drowning. This act was presented as a great example for us all. Near us no Japanese child ever fell into the water and it would have been too obvious if we had thrown it in on purpose! So we finally thought up another good deed. We took a certain amount from the camp cash, it was worthless Japanese money anyway, and stuck it in an old purse. This was then handed by an "honest finder" to a guard. The effect of this on the Japanese was surprising. Jacob personally delivered a kind speech; the finder received a reward and all of the camp had a pleasant day. We have no idea if the real owner of the purse was ever found by the Japs!

As far as the availability of news is concerned the following. As is well known, all real news was totally hidden from us by the Japanese. Only in the beginning did some newspapers enter the camp, but that was when the war still ran in favour of the Japanese. Soon this sort of coverage finished. We only heard from the Japanese sometimes something quite incidental about the war and that was about their victories. Something about which we had good reason to doubt.

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What really happened during the war was just what we really interested us most. To know about the facts many tried to learn a little more from conversations with the Japanese labourers. These were awkward efforts and they became soon too obvious. The Japanese stopped it in a hurry. Afterwards we tried to extract news directly from Japanese newspapers. One of our camp fellows, H. Kohn managed to get quite far in this. It should be realized that being in the possession of a Japanese newspaper was already a serious offense. This was a risk we therefore had to limit as much as possible and never to be in possession of unnecessary papers. We therefore created an organisation to smuggle the Japanese newspapers into the camp. To prevent that several copies of the same day were brought and also to make sure that we got copies of the right date, several people had to be initiated in the art of reading the date in Japanese. Also stealing those papers should not happen at the same location all the time. Several workers were therefore engaged to walk off now and then with a specific paper. Soon this all worked quite well and this way

of obtaining the papers did not become obvious. Once in a while someone arrived with a paper taken on his own initiative but generally this was then no more of use to us.

It will be quite evident that we could not read the whole paper. War news was what interested us most and that was marked, just as in our papers, with big headlines and with sketches of the situation accompanied by explanatory text. Hans Kohn had memorized a good number of Japanese characters. The little book from Ishiba had served him well in this. When a newspaper arrived Kohn took it to read in a certain corner while others had the task to stand watch so that he could quietly scan it all. If in his translation he hit an unknown character that would be researched separately. If this did not offer a solution then it was tried to get the significance from a Japanese labourer. This happened very discretely, hidden between a group of other characters, as if the interested party happened to be merely interested in Japanese writing. It should be considered that all Japanese were very good at writing those characters and it was very common to see a little group of them together drawing those characters in the sand with a little stick.

It was important that the names of foreign persons and locations had no Japanese characters. These were always rendered in a phonetical alphabet (Katakana). This alphabet was quite well known, some camp fellows had completely memorized it. Little sketches of maps with arrows indicating the direction of attack and foreign names were for us clear indications giving us great certainty about the events of the war. Of course one had to see it all in the context of several bits of information over a specific time. It became only more complicated when the war moved onto Japanese islands (Okinawa etc.) where the names gave us more difficulty. After having deciphered the news Kohn passed that information on to a small group of people who in their turn passed this on to a larger circle. News was passed on as it was, no questions asked generally and none were answered.

After liberation it became clear to us that we had always been aware of the important events. This also underlines the fact that the Japanese newspapers (we received essentially the Mainichi Shimbun) contained also the real news.

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Our access to news was of the greatest importance to the camp, it kept our morale high. It was a simple brief report, avoiding all speculation and therefore maintaining the confidence of all camp fellows.

It is hard to know if the Japanese had any idea of this. Certainly Hans Kohn came to know Jacob's cell "eiso"; he was caught once because of forbidden ownership of a newspaper and spent the night in the pen; that was Christmas 1944. Fortunately he took it with calm and insisted on his innocence. This way the situation did not get worse and it finished all right. After this unpleasant experience even greater care was taken but we received news right till our departure.

Chapter 8. THE CHURCH IN JAPAN

There was no minister among the POWs of the Harima group. After having been in Japan a couple of days, I had an exchange with lieutenant Scheltema. It was the intention to propose to him to poll in all sections if there was anyone among the camp mates who felt the call to lead us in religious services. These people were invited to join me. This happened and certain contacts were indeed established. In the beginning we created a little group with Geway, de Zeeuw and Jesse; shortly afterwards we were joined by Samson and de Haas. After some adjustments we assembled a more or less permanent organisation that took care of the spiritual needs of the protestant-christian camp fellows. In the beginning we did it this way: we sat at a table together, read a section from the bible, discussed it with each other and then each in turn led the group in prayer. We discovered soon that other camp fellows joined us around the table and it was something that was encouraged as much as possible. We also received support in these matters from the Dutch commandant.

Since Christmas was near, we believed that it would be useful if we could extend the spiritual care to the whole camp right away. To hold meetings we needed the agreement from the Japanese, who might otherwise get the wrong impression of such a large gathering. That agreement was acquired without difficulty through the intervention of the interpreter Ishiba, except with the understanding that we needed to inform them beforehand of every meeting.

The first official religious service took place in the little hall below the stairs in the old camp. That service was led by me. About fifty camp mates attended, as well as our commandant Lieutenant Scheltema. This certainly contributed to the foundation of the church in our camp.

At about the same time there was also the establishment of a Roman Catholic church in the camp. The leader of this was an ex-seminarian, the sergeant-pilot J. Bakker. He singly took responsibility for the spiritual care of the catholics and did that in excellent manner. We saw that only after a short while he had already formed a little choir. Bakker continued his labours untiringly until liberation and regularly led Catholic services on free days.

Those were the circumstances at Christmas 1942 . Our first Christmas celebration as prisoners. In the morning of the 25th of December our commander placed himself at the stairs in the old building and invited sergeant R. de Haas to begin the hymn "Praise to the Lord" Everyone joined in. It was a most touching moment, for me the most touching of the entire period of imprisonment. I had never seen so many men with tears in their eyes. I am convinced that at that moment we all had the same feeling, that I will not try to describe however....

That morning we celebrated our Christmas service in the space below the stairs. This service was led by de Haas. Again a large number of camp fellows took part in it.

In the beginning it was all still somewhat unorganised; no "church council" had yet been established. So it could happen that there were no firm guide lines for the services. Every leader held the service according to his own insights and as a result a sense of unity was lacking. It gave some camp mates reason to prefer one leader to another.

Another matter was the presence of 35 officers in our camp. It seemed to us that it would be a good thing if at least one officer would take part in our little group, so that also for this category religious services could be accessible. Of course this could elicit objections since we were in a military camp and military considerations played definitely a role. The intervention of lieutenant Scheltema solved this problem pretty soon and we were able to welcome lieutenant de la Fosse as a leader. De la Fosse had already led religious services on his ship in the navy and had therefore some experience in this. Commander Scheltema himself always offered the church strong support, was always present at the meetings and was therefore a great example to the others. It is not surprising that because of this, as well as his natural sincerity, he was respected by everyone.

When we were moved to the new camp and after the officers left us after some months for their transfer to the Zentsuji camp, it became also desirable to reorganize the church. New forces came to strengthen our little group; sergeants B. Quispel and A. P. van Schieveen accepted to act as leaders. They brought a new level to the church services through their special knowledge and serious conceptions. Soldier Ph. Geway had meanwhile withdrawn. Soldiers Rolsma and van Eldik joined somewhat later but their collaboration was only temporary.

The church council Harima was officially founded when all leaders were together at a meeting in mid 1943. We began to establish carefully the guidelines for the church services and for events as Baptism and Communion.

There was also agreement that all leaders no matter what church or sect they really belonged to would be required to put aside the differences and conflicts of those churches and sects.. So one could even say that the church in Harima was a Universal Christian church.

Sergeant Bakker as the representative of the Roman Catholic church was also present at this meeting. It was apparent that a great amount of collaboration on religious matters was possible but one could not speak of a real melding. It appeared that there were just too many objections of principle on both sides. It was possible however to celebrate combined church services and such happened on the occasion of the great Christian feast days. On such occasions as Easter and Christmas two leaders took turns speaking and practically all camp fellows took part.

The church council elected me unanimously as their chairman. I am still not, even now, convinced that I was the most qualified person for this. It did have, considering my camp command, certain practical advantages. I would after all in my daily contact with the Japanese be able to take care of the interests of the church straight away without having consultations first. The general directives were already laid out during the meeting at our foundation, and I could always report back afterwards. I was also able to do something in the case of sudden illness or death since I was always reachable inside the camp. There were also disadvantages to that leadership of course; in the first place

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all the heavy responsibility that already pressed on me as commandant; in addition there was my feeling that both functions were in conflict with one another. It should not be forgotten that a commandant occasionally has to act with severity and that is precisely the attitude one does not expect from a pastor. It did not surprise none of us in the church council therefore that occasionally there was strong criticism. On the occasion of an actually not very important conflict I offered to resign both as a leader of the church and as a pastor, but the church council did not want to hear of this. They wished that I remained in that position. This did happen but it was only possible with the complete support and understanding I experienced from my co members of the church council. The members of the council were:

- Sergeant R. de Haas
- Soldier W. C. Jesse
- Sergeant B. Quispel
- Sailor A. F. Rolsma
- Sergeant A.P. van Schieveen
- Sergeant D. A. Visker
- Soldier C. de Zeeuw

Since according to the Japanese work pattern we did not have a day off each Sunday and our free days were in sync with those of the wharf, the church council decided that the day off would be considered a Sunday and that church services would be held on those days.

All leaders were to be assigned in turn to lead a church service and a schedule was created for that purpose. Leaders were free at all times to let their turn pass as long as they told their successor in time so that this one would have sufficient time to prepare himself.

Working days of the POWs were already so busy and often so hard that one had to abandon any thought of other church services and meetings during the week and on the sundays that we had to work. This does not exclude the possibility that some, alone or in company, read from the bible if the occasion presented itself. Everyone was free to do this.

Our bibles and other Christian literature were at first taken in by the Japanese; but were returned to us after a short while. They had been supplied with the little notes showing permission to own and read these books.

The leaders gathered a number of hymns, most of these by B. Quispel (who knew all these from memory) and on a type writer these were turned into about 20 song bundles that also received the Japanese permission. Those bundles were individually distributed; one of those has been saved and is archived at the Netherlands Institute for War Documentation in Amsterdam. These song bundles have been of great service.

A system was also created to offer spiritual assistance to camp fellows who were ill or in danger. One of the leaders was always, day and night, assigned with this task. The camp doctor had a schedule of this so that he was able to alert who ever had to be warned. It also happened that during the day one of the leaders was called away from the wharf, at the request of the doctor.

In Harima several men were baptized. Among them was also our camp doctor dr. C. Arends. On the 15th of January 1944 the following were baptized by sergeant Visker:

F.W. Wardenaar
Th. Baars
J.P. Allart
R.H. Collard
F. Lotz

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Previously they had received instruction in Christian doctrine and their knowledge had been tested by the church council. Each baptism had been recorded in a certificate, the original of which was transferred after liberation in Manila to Dominee J. Hamel. A copy was handed directly to each baptized person.

A short funeral service was always held when a camp fellow came to die, accompanied with simple military honours. In many cases the funeral was led by the Dutch commandant. It never happened in our camp that the deceased were simply taken away. This did happen in other camps according to what we have been told. After the somewhat less successful debut in the old camp when the interpreter Ishiba had taken the lead, we remained ourselves responsible for the funerary solemnities.

For Roman Catholic deceased the funeral ceremonies were held by sergeant J. Bakker, in other cases it was one of our pastors.

The military honours were always under the command of the Dutch commandant. The Japanese were kept out of it. The carriers were as much as possible his friends or colleagues in rank. The bible text chosen for the religious solemnity was personally marked by me in the bible or any other personal possession of the deceased so that his grieving family and friends could be informed of this. In addition I marked these texts in my own bible where they can still be found today.

For the location of our church services we used in the beginning various corners in the barracks. When the officers had left, however, we obtained some additional space in the camp. A section of the first barrack could then be emptied. This area was then furnished by sergeant R. Hazenberg, an inside worker at that time, as a community hall. The hall served for church services as well as entertainments. It was also the place where we had to meet now and then when the Japanese commandant wished to deliver a speech. Hazenberg built a stage from the surplus wood and also made a couple of rows of seating benches. He managed to glue thin paper onto the windows and coloured these, achieving in this way the effect of "stained glass". It was so pretty that visitors were always quite surprised. That community hall was therefore the most beloved place in the camp. The Japs thought to have some rights to this as well and showed the hall to all visitors.

Christmas was the only Christian festivity we were allowed to celebrate entirely according to our own conceptions. All Japanese did have some vague idea of "Kurisumasu". We obtained some co-operation and were allowed for example to bring in a couple of pinetrees from the mountains and the barracks were allowed to be decorated. The decorations had been made quietly from cardboard and silver paper many weeks earlier by a couple of camp mates. Even our food was a little more elaborate than normally. We received a bit more rice (we suspected that the paymaster had withheld some from us in the previous weeks) and the Japanese gave us also some extras, such as Japanese cookies and mandarines.

The most important was always the distribution of the American Red Cross package, that we received in 1943 and 1944.

The high point of the Christmas celebration was the common church service with all Roman Catholic and Protestant camp mates. Extra care was given to this and the choir of Sergeant Bakker offered excellent support. Finally, before evening roll call there was still a presentation on our stage which turned Christmas for us into a really beautiful and unforgettable day. The Japanese of the camp and even the director of the factory came to look at it all, but they were careful not to disturb us.

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It will be obvious from the previous that on Christmas no POW worked at the ships wharf. The Japanese did little about the spiritual care of the POWs. We had the impression that this was not important enough for them. There was, as mentioned before, no real minister in our camp. The Japanese also did not think it necessary to bring one from another camp. It would be the question anyway if one even would have been available. When the Japs discovered that we had found our own solution for this in the form of a church service by the laity, they were quite satisfied. It was necessary to receive their previous consent for the religious services. It has happened on some occasions that one of the guards made us interrupt the church service unaware that permission had been obtained.

So we received no reaction to our request for the placement of a minister from another camp among us. Towards the end of our stay at Harima we were however visited by a Japanese minister: a protestant minister and a roman catholic priest who each came once and led a church service. This was much appreciated by us. Their sermons were held in English and were translated by our own pastors into Dutch. But that was then also all of it, there was nothing more the Japanese did for our spiritual needs. It is of special interest that all camp mates, the Catholics as well as Protestants, were present at both church services.

The Roman Catholic Church in Japan did seem to attempt to express concern for our fate. An important item we received in that way was the camp library. Though of only 200 books and not more than 20 in Dutch, they were a valuable acquisition for us. From the inscriptions in the books we learned that many had been the personal property of archbishop Paul Marella in Tokyo. We received from this bishop also a package of "holy pictures" with New Years wishes. The Japanese staff of our camp made sure that these were distributed to us three months too late!

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Chapter 9. RECREATION IN JAPAN

Just as spiritual care and regular church services were of great importance to the POWs the camp leadership also tried to support the morale of the camp fellows in other positive ways. When we compare these matters with circumstances as they came to be known from other camps afterwards, it can be seen that our camp has been a positive exception. There was always sufficient care for recreation through which, even only for a brief moment, one could forget one's difficulties. Entertainment had a lot to do with this. In the beginning it was done very simply; on a bed that had not been slept in, someone or another would spontaneously recite something and everyone sang a few songs together. This started while the officers were still in the camp. The inhabitants of the camp always showed an overwhelming interest. A little group soon assembled that applied itself to the presentation of shows. One should not think too little of this; it required preparations, imagination and there was not much time available to rehearse the pieces. The singing of songs, "Community sing alongs" also interested us a great deal. The English on Java and in Changi camp had given us the example. It was however difficult to do this in Japan, it irritated the Japanese too much and led to our get togethers being disturbed. For the same reason we had dissuade people from applauding loudly. We had to keep such peculiarities in mind.

Through the intervention of the Swedish representative we managed finally to obtain some musical instruments. It was not much but we were happy with it. A small accordeon, a guitar, a military bugle, a record player and some discs. These instruments were very intensively used. The accordeon got into the hands of Pieter Leechburg-

Auwers a well-known Dutch musician, who knew to extract much from this simple instrument and who gave us often much enjoyment from his playing. Several camp mates were very capable playing the guitar and so this instrument served us a lot. The bugle was used daily to signal us from rising till sleep. The bugle hung always in the Dutch office and none other than the Dutch commander blew the signals with it. In any case it was much more pleasant to listen to our own Dutch bugle signals than to have to respond to the Japanese cries. Those often caused confusion anyway. This bugle therefore also served us well. The record player had to be treated with great care, we would not be able to deal with a broken spring, so someone was made responsible who had to manage the instrument and the discs. Very often on days off the record player was taken to the sick bay where the discs were played accompanied with an explanation, in the shape of a "classical concert"....

During the religious services the accordion was also used as an organ accompanying the singing. In this way our modest means offered a maximum and useful effect to our camp community.

Entertainment improved even further when the theatre hall was ready and taken into use. A permanent cabaret was now formed with the collaboration especially of sergeants M.F. van der Geer and Chr. Hayes. The company took the name "The Crows Nest" The theme song of this little band was as follows:

"Hello chaps this is the nest of crows
Joining you in our friendly way
Crows croak and caw and

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We'll try our best to make you smile.
Listen on, we begin with music, a story and a joke
Hoping you'll all get to laugh
And make us happy too!

This company gave complete shows on the evenings of our days off. Of course much preparation was necessary; texts had to be thought out, the necessary collaborators had to be selected, rehearsals had to be held, eventually some work at costumes and all that during the little free time available in the evening Every evening roll call was at 8 o'clock after which everyone had to go to sleep. In any case we could not do without that rest. The builder of our theatre hall G. Hazenberg had many other talents. He once wrote the text of the well-known piece "The Ghost Train" and rehearsed this with some associates. This piece was presented in excellent manner also at Harima and became a great success. The Crows Nest presented a series of revues that were a success: "Radio Revue", "KLIM Revue", "Our Indies" and others. We once had an evening of entertainment with the name "Who or What is that?", involving the public in the action.

The most important worker at these presentations was G. Wijnschenk who became famous for his many songs composed by himself and with his exquisite imitation of Peter Pech (Peter Down on his luck). (the prisoners all identified themselves with Peter

Pech!) Every camp fellow remembers even today the funny “ Stone chipper’s song” and the droll ”Jacob and the Buck”, just to mention a few.

Each presentation needed the permission of the Japanese: even though we had such permission it could happen that the whole company was driven apart by some Japanese soldier who accidentally had not been informed about it, or who thought to have noted a transgression of some kind. The best way to safeguard against such disappointments, we learned later, was to invite the Japs themselves among the spectators of our presentations. So it might happen that Jacob or the paymaster assisted at our show seated in the place of honour. We even got the impression that those fellows really amused themselves. Fortunately they could not understand what was being said because quite a few texts were less than complimentary for the Japanese. Especially considering the paymaster we had to be careful, because he was already able to understand a little Dutch. When the show turned out to be a success the Japanese said sometimes; “Continue for a little while we will hold roll-call an hour later”. That was then the occasion for an extra pleasant evening.

Among the camp fellows there were a number of pupils of Pa van der Steur. One of those, the sailor W. Nort, contributed the march of the Steurtjes which became the basis of the Harima march. The words were by Visker, as follows:

Obedient to the call of our Fatherland
We accepted the battle
Then, fate wanted it,
Sad times were our destiny.
But, though prisoner,
We won’t be depressed
We won’t be downhearted.
Stout and strong forever,
We are as POWs
Until better times!

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Chorus:

Far from home and fatherland
We work in wind and weather
Thinking of our beloved land
And our happy return!

After all adventures of our troop
This is where we landed
We came to know it well
That beach of Harima

May it only be a short home
'Cause when peace returns
We'll leave cheerfully
For our old Java.
And we'll wave joyfully:
Goodbye Harima!

This march offered us the opportunity to bring to bear everything we had available. It began with an introduction on the bugle and there followed the lively singing of the couplets and then the chorus that could be shared by the whole camp. No wonder that the march was a success with our camp fellows and was heard again at other presentations later on.

We will also remember our four "KLIM Brothers", a little song group under Rinus van der Geer, with their faces made black so as to look like negro singers. The name KLIM was based on the tins of milk powder from our Red Cross packages.

Our only female artist was a Hawaii dancer, interpreted and danced by Philip Geway in a travesty role. He did this with great merit and success. However he finally felt too embarrassed to continue this performance.

Our humorist Wijnschenk was inexhaustible, his mind was sharp and he composed new songs all the time, all witty and smart. He said that he developed his new ideas while working and that he found this even an agreeable way of passing the time. The most famous refrain we all knew was:

Chipping, chipping, chipping is my fate
'Tis wha happens, early... late
Chipping, chipping, like me chips none
My consolation and my friend a hammer and the stone!

One should know that Wijnschenk was really assigned at the wharf with the stone chippers crew, but also that this song intimated another meaning for chipping ("chipping" is in dutch "bikken" but that also popularly means "to eat")

Another song, by Visker for a melody by Dirk Witte, was "The little land you never forget", was written about the various events on our arrival in Japan. It was brought in reprise during the third reunion of our camp mates.

The success of our Harima shows was a much deserved reward for the amateur artists' labour and trouble. They were quite satisfied themselves and enjoyed it just as much as the spectators. A successful show was a matter of discussion among each other for days even during work at the wharf...

In this way we had, even during the darkest periods, some moments when we could laugh exuberantly, thanks to those in the camp who mounted the stage.

The average Dutch POW in Japan did not have a heroic look and certainly did not have a martial demeanor. When one met such a little troop of men at the wharf one had more the impression of vagabonds or gypsies. Little remained of our uniforms and what remained was some sort of mix. The groups were generally led and kept together by the professional subalterns. Discipline was always kept but not in any excessively severe manner. That was not necessary anyway, self discipline and solidarity were strong with everyone. Of course there were some weaker persons among us but they were treated with understanding and gentleness. Their group commandants (hancho according to the Japanese) warned them in fatherly fashion and protected them as much as possible. We achieved our purpose in this tactful fashion, namely to guide our men to the moment of liberation with as little damage as possible.

We had in Harima some extraordinary characters, remarkable for one reason or another. One of those was A. Leraschi, one of the older ones. Leraschi had spent all his life under the tropical sun and therefore detested the cold. When winter arrived in Japan, Leraschi could be seen attired with the most picturesque headdresses and shawls; all made by himself and certainly not fresh. He was not strong physically and therefore remained inside fairly often. He was not particularly delighted with this: the Japanese soldiers teased him too often. On the other hand he was able to protect himself to some extent through his acting talents; something that even misled our own camp leaders some times. He knew how to evoke pity through a frightful coughing accompanied by the spitting of blood; he could also lie there moaning terribly. No one could pass without seriously worrying about him. The camp commandant went to see the doctor more than once to discuss this patient but our camp doctor knew what was really the matter..... One day Leraschi was at it again when I walked through the barrack. I asked him how things were with him, but when he recognized my voice he appeared to feel better right away: "Oh sir is the Jap gone already?" He had laying moaning only so that the Jap would not put him to work.

The handsome name Cordier de Croust has been earlier mentioned in this report. The name belonged to a gaunt person, who must have been striking to everyone and who did this probably quite on purpose. Cordier detested Jacob our Japanese commandant and our interpreter Ishiba as well. Among our camp mates Cordier had received the nickname "Mouse". After meals the rice containers of the different groups were returned by the food servers to the kitchen and were stacked there for washing. Mouse had the certain habit to scratch in those containers. But... that had been carefully done already of course by the food servers! Thinking of the impression this might leave with the Japanese the kitchen help had told him many times not to do this, but the mouse always returned. One day he was surprised with a shower from a pail of cold water. "Don't do this sir, I only came to ask for a little water." It was impossible to be really angry with him. It was such a pitiful character.

Mouse was very preoccupied with the fate of his friend Leraschi. One afternoon Mouse went to the kitchen to ask for Leraschi's bun. Leraschi was unable to come, he was ill, said the Mouse. Kitchen boss Theunissen did not trust the matter and therefore did not give him the bun."Get Leraschi to come here himself" Cordier left and yes, a moment later they arrived, Cordier supporting the sick Leraschi. Of course the bun was now given and maybe even a bit of "krak" in addition.

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The kitchen hanchō was kind hearted though he did not show it easily. Our Mouse was also not as bad as Theunissen had suspected. All of us tended to be sometimes mistaken about our own camp fellows.

That was certainly the case of the two academics who had at a certain moment had lost all sense of bodily hygiene. They gave no thought to a good personal cleansing even when gentle spring had replaced winter for quite a while. The Dutch commandant had only one solution for this. He fetched two pails of warm water from the kitchen, found a quiet corner and gave the two gentlemen a fine warm bath, which helped them cross that difficult moment. And what would be the importance of their names today?

The navy officers who shared the camp with us the first half year, had two "servants", the soldiers Smith and Ernst, who fetched the officers' food, washed up and kept the place clean. Our own camp staff pulled their legs quite often. In this way they were made to enter some sort of "secret organisation". A very complicated initiation ritual was connected with this, interrupted rudely by the arrival of the paymaster. A very tricky moment about which we had to laugh a lot afterwards!

One of the shoe makers who worked in the workshop of sergeant Roozen was the soldier Ecaubert. This inside worker was unable to walk without a cane, in any case the whole camp, the Japanese included was used to seeing him hobble with his cane. When Japan capitulated however Ecaubert's cane disappeared. He certainly knew how to walk well... For G. Beth being a POW was very difficult. Physically he did not have the strength and how this man was ever judged capable enough for military service is still a real riddle. He was unable to digest rice and was forced to soak his buns in water, he also had an artificial palate. He suffered greatly from the beatings the Japanese often handed out. He finally decided to grow his beard. He confidentially told me that this way he would look older and that it seemed that the Japanese preferred not to touch the beard. In any case it became a full red beard rendering him an unexpected comical figure. In Spring of '44 Beth died, according to the camp doctor as the result of pellagra, but those who spoke to him those last times thought that he had really given up himself; Beth had already seen too much sorrow... Born in Pretoria during the Boer War, living in poverty during the First World War and being a POW in the Second World War. It was more than enough.

At the wharf the Japanese had their own mess and on one occasion there stood a container full of noodles. It had been placed there for the welders who were working in the adjoining place and who were shortly to get their lunch break. Their workshop was separated from the mess by a thin wooden partition.

Rauch, one of the camp fellows about whom we have told a number of anecdotes already, had of course noted that container and had in passing filled his mess tin with it. One of his crew mates, Alexandre, saw this and wanted to do so as well. OK said Rauch fill your tin but quickly. Alexandre, a novice, was rather nervous and asked Ruach what should we do with this container, they will see right away that some has been taken. Oh, said Rauch, don't worry. But Alexandre kept dawdling and he heard the bustling of the coming welders. Without further thought he picked up the container and threw it over the partition and so over the welders. Why he did this will forever remain a riddle, but during the tumult that followed the two furyos managed quickly to escape.

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One of our inside workers, Mathlener, was busy in the fire hut of our bath room, he had to take care of the fire. It was not a disagreeable job, one could sit doing it and stay nice and warm. Once when I came by to see how things were going, he was busy roasting some meat for himself. He had caught a big snake and it was now held by a stick roasted over the fire! It was not really strange because the POWs would eat all sorts of things. Some were able to catch frogs, others ate sweet water shrimps from the ditches. The Japanese sub commandant sergeant Shiozumi and our kitchen personnel went out one day to catch sweet water turtles. It became quite a trip though the hills an along the rice paddies. At a little lake we tried our luck and indeed we caught a few of those animals. We took them with us in a bag and boiled them in the soup. It was however a disappointment; these turtles had almost no meat and this operation was therefore not repeated.

The big boulder that arrived in our camp also disappeared again. That was the work of Bartje Boer our male nurse. Boer was very aware of his muscular strength and never lost an opportunity to demonstrate it. If something heavy needed to be lifted he was always ready; he also was a little too quick with his fists and did not realize that this was not permitted against his much weaker camp mates at least. Whatever, that boulder was a great opportunity to blow off some steam. Bart attacked the boulder with a pickaxe and so managed to chip off a piece every day and to pulverize that. After a short while that boulder was spread over the pits and holes throughout the camp.

When we were in Noda Boer also attempted occasionally to get outside. He made a plan to snare birds but had never any success with that. One day together we did manage to catch a giant carp that had stranded in a shallow area of the lake. The fish must have weighed at least 10 pounds and would have been a welcome addition to our rations, except that Sakamoto confiscated our catch. For us there remained the tough sweet water

mussels we were able to gather in large quantities. There were a few of our camp mates who saved the yellowish little pearls they found in these mussels.

Our most senior camp mate was corporal G.B. de Lannoy. When we arrived at Harima he had already passed the age of 60. He was a kind fellow who wore his grand mustache with pride. In spite of his advanced age he was always lively and was a strong competitor in most matters with the younger ones. Those gray hairs of his had served to deliver him the job of male nurse. He never failed or flagged, lugging pails, cleaning patients, fetching food, washing up, and especially taking care of the cleanliness and hygiene of the sick bay. All of this was in proper shape thanks to de Lannoy.

There was also a non military person in our camp; it was MacGillavry. So he was not a POW, but wrongly picked up on Java and put in the camp. That was the way it remained. "Mac" stayed with us even as far as Japan! Until the bitter end he remained the only civilian who was a POW. He had never in his life ever been included in any military organisation but the Japanese insisted on treating him as a "furyo". Mac did not consider this so bad since civilian internees also had a rough time, and because of his good humor and pleasant personality Mac had many friends in the camp.

We had five Englishmen as well: Coles, Austin and Guy and the two brothers Edwards, who while remaining close, became quite Dutch as time passed. The hope of a transfer to an English camp had been abandoned. In spite of this it was fortunate that they remained together during the separation of 1945. All Dutch were alphabetically listed; the first 200 went to Noda,

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the rest, after the sick ones of Kobe group were split off, were sent to Notogawa. Exceptions were Visker who alphabetically would have gone to Notogawa but as commandant went to Noda; the English who should have gone to Noda went instead to Notogawa where, it became known to us later, there were other Englishmen! And who did not know Dessauvage? The little zestful "Des" who in spite of little physical strength managed to support so many psychologically. A man born and bred in the Indies who had such ascendancy over his compatriots. Who was on countless occasions spokesman to present objections and abuses to the Dutch commandant and who did this always in a modest and proper manner. "Des" was greatly respected and not without reason...

Chapter 11. WE ARE LEAVING HARIMA

When the weather was cold one could see the Dutch wander at the wharf decked out in the strangest manner. Some had wrapped cloths around their head, others had, who knows

from where, scared up a tuque of some kind, again others had filled their wharf cap with a layer of wool, at the same time of great service in catching those beatings with a stick! It may seem strange but most were never able to give up their smoking habits even under those grim circumstances of our camp life. Maybe they saw this as their only remaining consolation. In any case they took sometimes great risks for it and engaged in clandestine cigarette trade again and again. It was not easy either to obtain fire; the possession of matches and lighters was after all forbidden. Some codger would place himself close to the stove touching it with a piece of rope or shoelace until it started to glow. then he asked quickly permission to go to the toilet. Arriving at the hut the others had generally already assembled there, impatiently waiting for the fire. It happened more than once that the smoke was just too evident and a work boss flailed everyone out of the toilets. Even that did not bring clandestine smoking to an end however. One of the camp mates, Wolsak, had his own smoking place; he hid between a stack of heavy pipes. When I was in charge of his work crew I was ordered by Yabamoto to find him since Wolsak stayed away too long. Since I could not find him anywhere I was forced to stay away just as long myself until he had finished smoking and we could appear together.

On a number of occasions we had asked the Japs for restoratives principally for our patients. After much fuss something finally was about to happen; against some payment a goat would come to our camp. Cows were very rare in Japan, so we could not expect that and a goat could provide us with milk also. Of course we were already very happy. We looked very much forward to our new acquisition. However we quickly changed our thoughts when the new arrival turned out to be not a goat.... but a buck! So there would be no milk for the sick and there was now another mouth to feed, because the Japs did not think of providing extra feed for that animal. It took considerable time before the Japanese commandant understood that the animal did not respond to our needs and the buck could be definitely removed from our camp.

But our hosts had thought of something else; we should quickly build some hutches and the Japanese would then bring us chickens and rabbits! Do not imagine that this represented an extensive poultry farm: the quantity could be counted on the fingers of one hand. However when there was an inspection these animals were displayed to the visitors with much ado; it goes without saying their feed was taken from our already meagre rations. Finally the POWs never profited from that livestock;

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we received neither meat nor eggs; after a little while the animals disappeared into the Japanese kitchen.

Every fall, during the month of september, Japan becomes afflicted by the great typhoon (Tai Fu signifies Great Wind). Such a typhoon was always announced early by the meteorological service. The first task at the ships wharf became then the lashing down of the large riding cranes and the removal of all ships to the centre of the bay where they were anchored with the bow towards the wind. Everything that lay outside had to be firmly attached or better still brought inside. When the storm broke, everyone was inside

and places where damage could occur were carefully checked. In the fall of 1944 we very nearly saw the roof of barrack number one fly away; fortunately a heavy chain was ready and sufficient workers were available to attach it firmly. The thin planks that served as roof tiles (sirappen, so called) almost all flew off.

The same thing happened every year with the flowers. Following the great typhoon not a single flower was to be seen on the shrubbery; they had all been blown away. For us it was the sign again that we would spend another winter in Japan because at that moment the season was already too far advanced to allow us to count on an Allied landing.

We experienced also some heavy earthquakes in Japan. The barracks would start to shake quite suddenly and the surface of the inner courtyard could be seen undulating. The Japanese then started to shriek agitatedly and chased everyone outside. This why we did not suffer any casualties of it in the camp.

In the second half of 1944 the Japanese made us dig trenches for shelter inside the Harima camp. Altogether six were constructed; all were covered. With a bit of consultation all POWs could find a place in those. We had a few exercises and a couple of times we had real alarm for an air raid, when we spent several hours in the trenches. everyone had his own place and knew exactly in which trench he belonged. We knew however well that with an actual bombardment these holes would not offer us any real protection. They were situated, just as our entire camp, on the terrain of the ships wharf and the roofs had not been furnished with a red cross or any other identification. With an attack we would not remain spared; we had no wish to be locked up in those trenches. Fortunately it never got that far, but there was a secret plan of the Dutch camp leadership to order the POWs to break out to the surrounding hills, which would hve been a lot safer. In the confusion the Japanese soldiers would have been able to undertake little or nothing and afterwards they would surely have to be grateful to us, when wharf, camp and trenches all had evidently been wiped from the earth. Even so, during our stay not a single bomb fell on Harima, though it sure could have happened; the Americans flew over in large numbers; day and night, only the Japs pretended not to see them! Some nights it seemed an unending tide of planes; as one wave had disappered in the distance another announced itself with a deep roar. From far away one could hear the thunder of the bombardments; we thought probably on the big city of Osaka, quite close by. We did not worry much; slept quietly on the "makuras" (hard blocks of pressed straw) we had received as pillows and tried our best to gather sufficient energy for the working day that followed.

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The men maintained a strong morale, there were no signs of fear and everyone behaved in a firm and dignified manner. The level of personal relations was also very good. In our small community there was notably little friction; harsh words or swearing were rarely heard. Our national festive days were never forgotten, though a public celebration could not be possible. Our cooks prepared a little extra though that also had to remain discrete

since national expressions were strongly forbidden. On the occasion of the Queen's birthday we found an orange letter W in the rice containers, assembled from oranges! On such days the Dutch commander held, if in the least possible, a short speech. That happened when all stood at attention for the morning roll call. Of course it was forbidden to shout "Hurra", because on that occasion the commander pretended to give some directives to the troop.

Contact with our family was absolutely hopeless. If there ever was any mail for the POWs it was generally from the occupied Netherlands. Those letters were generally a year and a half old! Mail from Java, really of greater importance for us since our wives and children lived there, was extremely rare and also from 9 or 18 months old. I myself never heard anything from my family during those 3 1/2 years. Later it became clearly evident that my wife had written me often. It must have been caused by the Japanese military who thwarted the correspondence with the POWs systematically. The Red Cross which could have tried and achieved certainly much more was never given the opportunity. Since we received a bit more mail from Europe we deduced that the Germans took this business more seriously than the Japanese.

We were allowed to write occasionally a letter ourselves. It was done on special paper with Japanese characters. Everyone immediately took advantage of the occasion. The Dutch commandant had to join an English translation to every letter. We saw stacks of all this being moved to the Japanese office and just hoped for the best. Until today no one has ever confirmed that these arrived at their destination.

8 POWs under sergeant major Theunissen worked in the camp kitchen. Working in the kitchen was considered enviable by many camp mates; those who were better informed thought quite differently about this. These were long hours of work and it was not an easy job. On top this meant always staying inside the camp and the sly paymaster was daily present. Even so through the years many tried to be assigned to the kitchen, but only a few succeeded and then generally only for a brief period. This was because one paid more attention to the little more food the cooks might receive than the work they actually did. It must be admitted that the physical condition of the cooks was notably better than the other camp fellows including the camp staff, though among the cooks the typical camp ailments occurred just as often!

Little by little the Dutch commandant was given more and more of the Japanese administration and he worked increasingly late in the little office. That was particularly the case when "impressions" needed to be written. If there had been a foreign visitor or when we had celebrated our Christmas festivities, the Japanese desired that all POWs would note their impression on paper. If we had received something extra; if Red Cross parcels had been distributed; more impressions! It was quite apparent that the Japs asked for impressions when they thought we had reason to be grateful for something. All impressions had to be translated into English, which of course made for mountains of

work, even though most impressions told about the same thing, since they had been copied from each other as it was.

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The work records had to be prepared daily, indicating precisely who had worked outside. At the end of the month long lists had to be typed out with the reckoning of the "dimes". A Japanese dime was what one received for a whole day's work at the Harima wharf! The sub-commander, sergeant Shiozumi, was a great fan of raiding. He would enter the barracks with a couple of soldiers and looking for forbidden items had everything pulled about. In this way he had broken down a part of my sleeping corner hoping to see that I had hidden something there. He knew that I kept notes and he sought for those all the time. In fact he once succeeded to impound part of those notes. Later I found a better solution, those papers were simply left on the table of the Dutch office with other innocent documents. That is where they were utterly safe.

We occasionally thought it unfortunate that we were not fully informed of the International agreements regarding the treatment of POWs. When we insisted on a point of war laws it was always a matter of guesswork; we were not able to quote text or article, nor did we know for sure if Japan had signed the relevant article. While the officers were still with us we had a stronger base in these matters, but for the future it should be recommended that all military should be provided with an overview of the most important clauses. It might be included in small print within their notebook.

The responsibilities of the Dutch commandant were already sufficiently large, even though he had the support from the section commanders who loyally stood with him and who relieved him from all sorts of work. It was anyway a tremendous satisfaction whenever it had been possible to obtain some favour or other from the Japs for some of the men or for the whole camp.

As far as the section commanders were concerned they were truly untiring. During the day they worked on the wharf and in the evening they offered much of their free time to their group. Through their regular consultation with the camp commandant a uniform code of behaviour was established which strengthened our position towards the Japanese. It became clear that we were able to maintain sufficient order and regularity in all matters ourselves so that the Jap would not be given the opportunity to intervene. This was the secret of our relatively positive circumstances at Harima.

As camp commander, I could not expect much quiet when all Dutchmen were inside the camp. Everyone was free to talk to me or to come and visit me in the little office and this freedom was never restricted. Remember well that there were 360 men in this camp! It turned into a coming and going and it could sometimes be tiring and irritating. Some made too freely use of that freedom and came repeatedly with unnecessary or unimportant questions. They also tried to engage with me in a debate about the

desirability of certain already announced and established measures, or they looked for a confirmation of the orders already given by the group commanders. It is understandable that I then became impatient and requested to make it brief. Yes, that was disagreeable for both parties, but it was not possible otherwise.

The wharf police had now also their own guard house in the camp and began to get more involved in all sorts of affairs than the soldiers. They were the ones who adjusted the clock to get us to work earlier and only to rest later! One day they wanted the outside workers for a roll call before their breakfast had not yet been distributed!

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I went to the guard to protest this and pointed maybe a little too demonstratively at my wristwatch. This had disagreeable results; the wristwatch was impounded and in front of the whole camp the Dutch camp commander was given a beating! I myself also occasionally had trouble with my nerves, evidenced by the fact that I also handed out slaps once, it was soldier J. T. Karper who once again dawdled at roll call. It was an unforgivable mistake, no matter how understandable possibly!

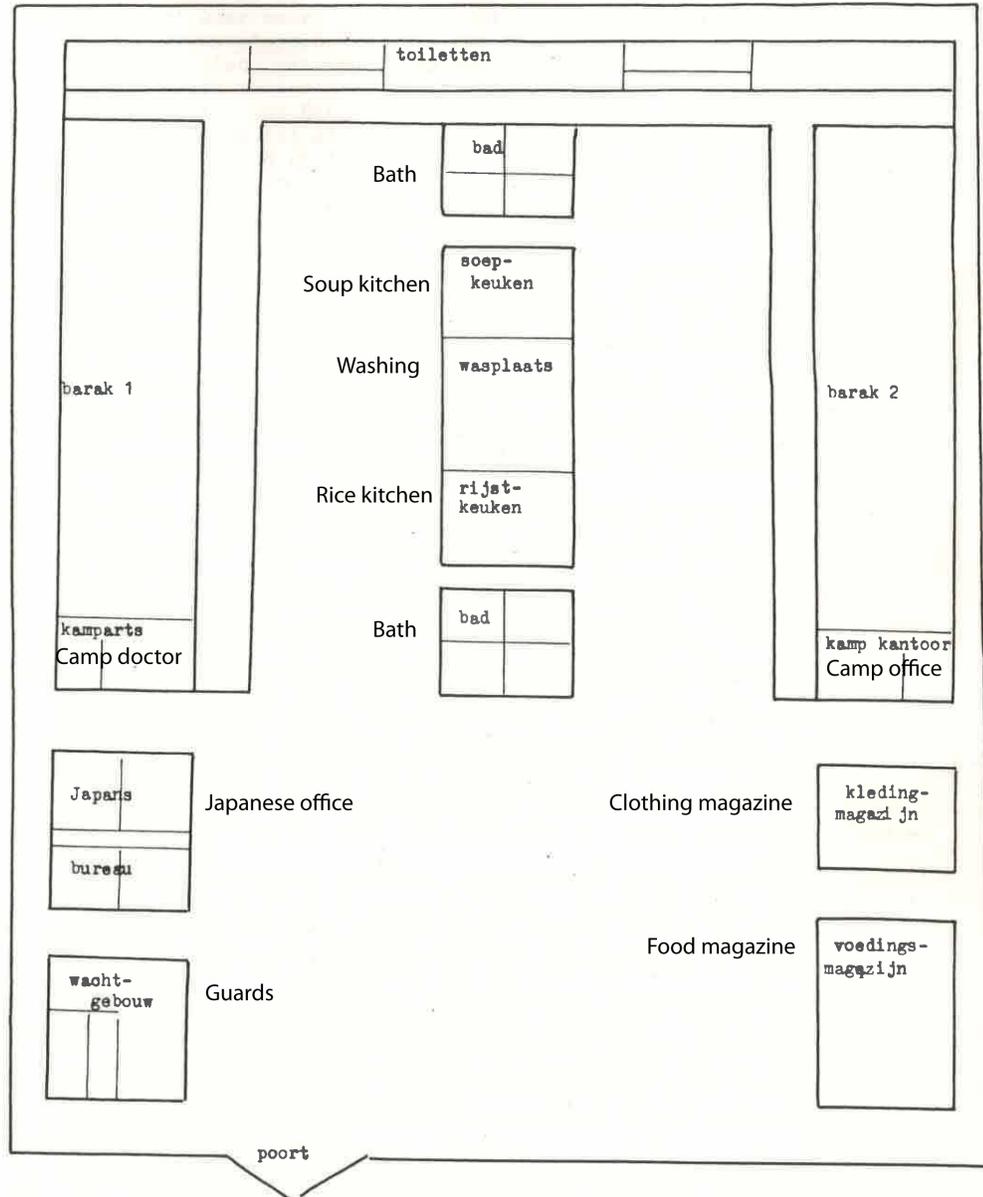
The warning call "Red!" was a remainder from our camp period on Java. When some Japanese entered the barrack there was always someone who wished to hide something and so that a warning was always called out. The Japanese had come to understand this and so it might happen that a guard entered the barrack unnoticed and called out calmly and clearly: "Red" It is impossible to know if he himself understood the joke of it. Meanwhile the Japanese clearly began to be increasingly worried. Air raid warnings occurred more and more often and from the news we knew that the Americans had conquered the first Japanese island. We still spoke of "lange touw" (long rope) since we did not know the name Okinawa. We were meanwhile busy at establishing proceedings at an eventual allied landing, when suddenly our stay at Harima was finished. We had not foreseen this in the least; the Japanese had kept this move very secret.

In mid may 1945 new lists had been prepared where all names had to be appear in alphabetic order. It was apparent afterwards that three sections were created and every section would be assigned a commander.

Our departure was on May 20, 1945: we stood all in the courtyard with our packs. the main group of 200 men under sergeant Visker; our camp doctor Dr. A. C. Arends was also included in this. A smaller group of 74 men came under sergeant major Theunissen who had so far been commander of the kitchen. As last was a group of 52 mostly the weak and ailing under the command of sergeant R. de Haas.

This is how we left the Harima wharf; at the gate stood the old, hoarse, sergeant major Oshiwa to say good bye to us. We did not dislike him, he had done what he could. We also saw there the interpreter Kagami for the last time, and the frogs, but we were happy never to see those ever again....

Map of Noda camp



NODA KAMP

The trucks, powered with wood gas, took us again from the Harima wharf to the little station at Aioi where we got onto the train that stood ready for us. It became a trip of only a few hours via the large town of Otsoe to the little place of Yasu. This where we left the train. On the platform we were received by our new Japanese commandant ensign Mitsujiro Sakamoto. From here it was a march of eleven kilometres to our new camp. Fortunately it went at a modest tempo, Sakamoto marched in front. Now and then we were allowed to rest a little on the side of the road. It was a flat landscape of rice paddies and groups of trees and here and there a single house. After a little while we came to a village and we could see our camp ahead. We were in Noda, a small town on the banks of the great lake Biwa.

The rural environment suggested great quiet; the work turned out to be not too heavy. an inlet of the lake was being drained, the enclosing dike was finished and pumping had started when we arrived. Our task seemed to be the strengthening of the dikes and afterwards, when the polder was dry, the planting of rice. In contrast, there were again serious disadvantages; our rations were steadily reduced: we did not receive pure rice any more but a mixture with soybeans; later with potatoes. Fortunately summer had returned so we did not yet have to suffer much. Even so the numbers of patients again started to grow.

Since at the departure from Harima the sick had been separated from us, the general condition of the men in Noda was somewhat more favorable. The age level was also much lower. In Harima this had averaged between 35 and 37 years old. If anybody became ill in Noda he was always considered to be “at work”. For Osaka this was the way how our situation was painted as unduly favourable. The old trick. Of course this could not prevent that some camp mates became totally exhausted. Among those we can count Hazenberg and Pijpers who were unable to continue working. They needed a longer rest. The situation in the camp soon became still a lot worse. Hunger began to torment us and we lost a great deal in weight. The doctor informed the camp leadership that he feared for a total breakdown very soon. Then the row of deaths from exhaustion and lack of vitamins would begin again., especially since a new winter was again ahead of us. That would be our fourth winter. We very much dreaded the notion!

We tried to make this clear to Sakamoto and tried everything to obtain additional and better food, eventually against payment with the money we had earned. We succeeded a certain day in fetching some vats with salted turnips (daikon) from a neighbouring village. This happened with primitive two wheeled carts. Two of the vats were impounded by paymaster Fukuda the moment the vats arrived at the camp. Later it turned out that the Japanese staff had considered these as a “present” from the POWs! When they had finished these they started at the other vats! When after quite some time we were to start at the turnips it turned out that the vats were half filled with rotting leaves not useful for consumption and so had to be thrown away!

The paymaster had a helper, the soldier Yamada, who missed a thumb and was therefore called “thumbless” by us. This man distributed the food to the cooks, but not only did he give always too little, he regularly came to take back some from the kitchen as well. The last we heard of him was that he had fallen in action on Okinawa, a fact that did not sadden us particularly.

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Our access to news had become much more difficult. In Noda we were much more isolated from the outside world and we saw very few daily papers. The only papers we might get our hands on came from a group of Koreans who had been accommodated in a few buildings near our camp and who also worked at the reclamation. The Japanese interpreter in the new camp was Ishido, a former army officer who also walked about with a samurai sword. He told the most confused things, made us many promises about large quantities of fish we would be given once the reclamation had been finished. We called this interpreter Donald Duck because of his sputtering speech. Now and then some fish had been caught but most of this disappeared right away into the Japanese kitchen.

After a while we succeeded in obtaining permission to assign two “fishermen”, who were to work exclusively in service of the food supply. These were Portier and Andreas. They went to work every day and did their very best to catch fish, on return however they were closely checked. The large fish were then always taken from them and only the small fry they were allowed to keep. Corporal Portier had managed to catch a few very large fish one day and he wished to keep these for the POWs. So he tried to smuggle them in by hiding them inside his trousers. That was discovered when he was frisked. Portier was of course slapped about but was forced in addition to stand some hours at the guards with a large fish in his mouth! Worse still had to happen; he was not allowed to be fisherman any more!

The interpreter Ishido was sickly and therefore often absent. This chap had made himself quite hated in the camp through incorrect translations, something our “language experts” had discovered. He was also most unpleasant in his behaviour regarding the outside workers and so we preferred not having anything to do with him. So we used his services as interpreter as little as possible and generally maintained direct contact with Sakamoto. Besides me, this “liaison” was also maintained by Chris Holtrop who was quite able to make himself reasonably understood in Japanese. We were now, all of us, already three years in Japan!

We knew that a number of Red Cross packages were kept in the warehouse, but we could not dispose of these freely ourselves. Ensign Sakamoto undertook to distribute these and applied a method that was quite inappropriate. From time to time he distributed incomplete packages to so-called “good workers”. I protested against this several times. We were of the conviction that we should receive intact packages to be distributed equitably among the POWs. We considered it unacceptable that Red Cross items,

therefore not of Japanese origin, be used as reward. Sakamoto did not wish to hear this reasoning. Of course to us the real reason was quite clear: in this manner he would not be able to grab anything for himself! These were those honest Japanese of high quality, who never stole, always spoke the truth; we had our own opinion about them, though it was wise not to let that be known!

Meanwhile we kept close records of what was being distributed: those who did receive something brought all of it as well to the office of the Dutch commandant who made sure it was distributed over the whole camp. The solidarity of the Dutch was extraordinary. Something we can still be proud of today.

The kitchen personnel was also helpful in resisting the Japanese swindle with the Red Cross packages. It meant however that the Japanese became increasingly distrustful and made changes in everything.. They first changed the leadership of the camp, later it was the turn of the kitchen personnel.

Our camp doctor dr. Arends had also such disagreeable experiences with Sakamoto, who even tried to forbid him to practice when the doctor

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demanded the available Red Cross packages and refused to sign for medication he had never received. Sakamoto did as he wished anyway and applied new changes. Adjutant H. Hummen was appointed Dutch commandant, under the pretext that he was the highest in rank. Sakamoto took this occasion when there was some disagreement among the outside workers regarding the distribution of the food. In previous years the Japanese had never been concerned about the levels of the ranks.

When the little bay had been reclaimed and the rice seedlings were in the ground, our work turned into just keeping busy. We used this as much as possible to save our energy. We were assigned in groups of three to transport sand from the pump canal. Piet Leeghburg filled the baskets with his shovel while Posthuma and I had to empty them a distance away at the base of the dike. In the beginning we were easily capable of dealing with 50 baskets in a morning, but as time passed we we knew how to work slow enough that we could not do more than 7! While being at "work" we had long conversations. It is evident that there is absolutely no truth to the story that POWs have nothing more to tell each other after a while. After three and a half year of in our small community we still had sufficient material to be able to keep interesting conversations going. Corporal Fukuda remained busy all the time at reducing our rations. It was pretended that this happened following orders from headquarters in Osaka.

When the reclamation had finished we were given four days rest, because we had worked through several of our free days. That rest coincided with the arrival of potatoes that we received now instead of the usual rations of rice. No work, then eat less was one of the Japanese rules. The paymaster allowed us those days the potatoes in a ratio of 2 for 1

kilogram, which we judged very unjust. Those days our feeling of hunger was greater than ever.

In Noda we also regularly saw American planes passing. The Japanese became worried again and made us dig an air raid trench inside the camp. But this was merely for their own use, the POWs just had to manage without such protection. As far as we were concerned that was absolutely no problem.

On August 13 1945 a dogfight took place over the camp. Four Japanese fighters were attacked by six American ones. All Japs in the camp ran quickly to the trench but the POWs stayed looking with great interest so as not to miss anything from this fascinating spectacle. It was quite evident that there was no danger at all of a bombardment. It should just be mentioned as an interesting detail that all four Japanese planes were quickly shot down; after the fight the Americans flew a lap of honour in formation and disappeared from sight. Of course the Japanese knew to tell us that all American planes had been shot down! This time however we had been able to witness it for ourselves, but the Japs were not to be convinced.

August 15 started. It was to be another monotonous day for the outside workers. Dredging the canal of the "pompou", smoothing out the dikes, lugging baskets of sand. Interpreter Ishido (Donald Duck) had been raging again but we were already used to that; of course there had been some beatings but our tempo had not changed. We had learned a long while ago how to rest when the Japs turned their heads. The day passed, we shuffled back to the camp, many barefoot, others on home-made straw slippers, so called "zori". The men were tired and entered the camp where as usual sergeant Fujita, the sub-commandant, stood ready with his stick to take roll call. When it was clear to him that everyone was present we could relax and soon we heard

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the bugle call "fetch food". While the porters hurried to the kitchen to fetch the rice containers, the workers removed their dirty clothes and exchanged a few words with their mates who worked inside the camp. Yes, they had heard the air raid signal also inside the camp, they had seen the swarms of B-29s (heavy bombers) fly over in spite of the Japanese who had shooed them into the barracks. What a brilliant view that had been, the great airplanes shining as silver in the bright sunlight! How impressive had been the thunder of the bombardment that had followed! Would it have been Osaka again? Yes it must have been....

Soldier Bos who lay in the sick bay had allowed himself a naughty joke. When one of the Japanese came to check who all were sick, Bos had answered on the question regarding his camp number with "B-29" (Bi ni ju ku) The Jap was about to be angry when Bos pointed innocently to his number board which really did show number 29.

The inside workers told that the the Japs had behaved very strangely that afternoon. Commander Sakamoto had been busy with an inspection of the shed with foodstuffs when one of his soldiers had come running to call him. Sakamoto hurried immediately to his office, losing one of his slippers on the way. He was in such a hurry that he continued running without picking it up! We were able to see how all Japs stood around the radio. they listened to a speech with great attention. Afterwards they looked most downcast and did not speak to each other at all. It therefore was an enigmatic event with the result that the Dutch dared to start guessing about it.. We knew by then rather precisely what was the state of the war and expected soon an allied landing on Japanese soil. The Japanese were in bad shape. It was still summer, the season was favourable for an invasion. What a pity that we had not been able to understand anything from that speech. In any case we would have to wait till the next day when we might maybe have the chance to grab a newspaper. So we remained quiet and emptied meanwhile our rice bowls because typically we rumbled with hunger.

That is the way the day went and then the evening. At seven thirty there was a normal rollcall and at eight the lights were turned off. I went to bed and was hardly asleep when two men came to to call me. Those were adjudant Hummen and soldier Holtrop. All three of us had to come immediately to the Japanese commander. I dressed therefore quickly and together we went on our way to the office of Sakamoto. He received us in friendly fashion, even politely, something we were not used to from a Japanese so far. To our surprise he offered us chairs and gave us each a cigarette. It was must unusual and we were immediately very wary! The interpreter Ishido was evidently not present: Sakamoto asked me to translate his words.

It was a short conversation. He began saying that he had very good news for us. As of tomorrow, august 16, there would be no more labour required from us. The war had ended and the conflict was finished. We have become “good friends” now(!)

We let Sakamoto talk and listened to him quietly. This way we did not make it any easier for him, something we felt at that moment very strongly. We did not let him know by the least sign what we thought of his words. After a little while Sakamoto stopped on his own. We had of course understood for some time that Japan had lost the war and that the moment so much longed for had arrived. But we kept very calm and did not pose any questions.

Sakamoto was most surprised as a result and asked us what we thought of his report. We said calmly that we were satisfied with the situation. He continued talking somewhat and said that he expected us

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soon to return home, but was unable to say anything more specific.

After this we suggested that we would immediately transmit this news to our camp mates, which Sakamoto agreed to, on condition that everyone remained quiet. That last item we could of course not promise!

We left the Japanese office and adjutant Hummen went to see the doctor so as to inform him, while I went to the barracks to wake everyone so that everyone would hear this important news at the same time. When everyone lay awake adjutant Hummen entered and reported the news.

What happened next is almost impossible to describe. It was a spectacle of great joy, of congratulations, hugs and tears of gratitude. The accordion immediately came out and Piet Leechburgh-Auwers played the Wilhelmus. All stood at attention, in our underwear, and accompanied him singing with great enthusiasm. It was followed by three cheers for our Queen. Sakamoto's wish for us to remain quiet was completely forgotten. The camp was totally in an exuberant mood.

Yes, and it was now also impossible to go to sleep again. Everyone dressed himself and sought out his friends to sit together in little groups. We could not finish talking about this beautiful news. One after another came to see me to ask to tell him first hand what Sakamoto had precisely said and it sure did not tire me to tell it again and again in exquisite detail.

After a little while a few tried to return to bed but no one could now fall asleep. Soon they appeared again and in this manner the night was spent. Surprisingly, some little tins that had been carefully hidden for years, were brought out especially kept for this day!

The Japanese commandant wandered now and then through the camp also, attempting to make himself popular by having a few words here and there with the Dutchmen, corporal van Gijn experienced a funny moment when he lit his cigarette right in front of Sakamoto with his forbidden lighter! Sakamoto reacted with an awkward grin. He must have been aware then that his efforts at impounding all our forbidden items had not been successful! The other Japs sauntered also through the camp and through our barracks; they did this in the friendliest manner possible but were received everywhere with a chilly welcome. Generally we left them simply standing there and continued cheerful conversations with our compatriots.

Sergeant Fujita, the sub-commander, came to see me and sat on the ground next to me. He grasped both my hands and laid those on his head, signifying that he had been vanquished. For that old soldier this moment must not have been easy, but in any case he had to try to go forward. But for the Japs the strangest thing must have been that none among the POWs asked them WHO really had won the war! According to all their utterances during the past years it was they who were winning, we had already lost a long time ago. What could those furryo be thinking now?

We had waited all those years for this day, still it came as a shock. The feeling was for the moment overpowering: we were unable to sleep; that first night we remained awake; the first night after Japan's capitulation, the most beautiful night after years....

Chapter 13. NOTOGAWA CAMP

The group of 75 men under sergeant major Theunissen also settled at Lake Biwa. Their camp was situated at Notogawa on the railway line to Tokyo and their experiences ran generally parallel to those of the main group in Noda. Here follows their story as told by two members of this group, the sergeants J. Tolhoek and D. H. Vrugtman.

We arrived 20 May 1945 about noon at the little station of Notogawa a little town on the banks of Lake Biwa. After leaving the train we went on foot to the camp situated at about 3 kilometers outside the town. The walk was along a quiet country road and we had sufficient occasion to absorb our new environment. A canal ran along the road; the whole area appeared quite a wetland; here and there one could see shallow ponds separated by small dikes. The houses of the farmers lay at quite some distance from each other, here and there spread out in the landscape. When we arrived in the camp it turned out that there were already 125 POWs: Americans, English and Australians. Together we numbered about 200 men. The camp consisted of two barracks with in between the little building that contained the kitchen and washroom. The area in the rear of the camp was taken by the toilets. On the terrain in front was the Japanese guard, the office of the Japanese commandant and a shed which served to store clothing and the rations. It was a very small camp; we had a great lack of space, but fortunately we would not spend much time behind the enclosure.

The next day we started work right away; an inlet from the great lake was to be reclaimed. The POWs had to lay a dike for this and afterwards construct the necessary locks and pump channels. Close to our camp there were some similar buildings that accommodated a group of Koreans. These were also put to work on the reclamation project.

The atmosphere in the Notogawa camp was better than in Harima; the Japanese guards did not scream as much and the much hated "kora!" happened rarely. We were rather rarely bothered with inspections and such. From these points of view our stay here was a breath of fresh air. It was mid summer and we had plenty of beautiful warm weather. When we worked at the dikes it happened at a calm tempo; but there were no breaks. Two men carried the baskets with earth and dropped the contents some distance away where the terrain had to be raised. It was a most primitive job that took really much too long. The Dutch worked here together in a group as much as possible.

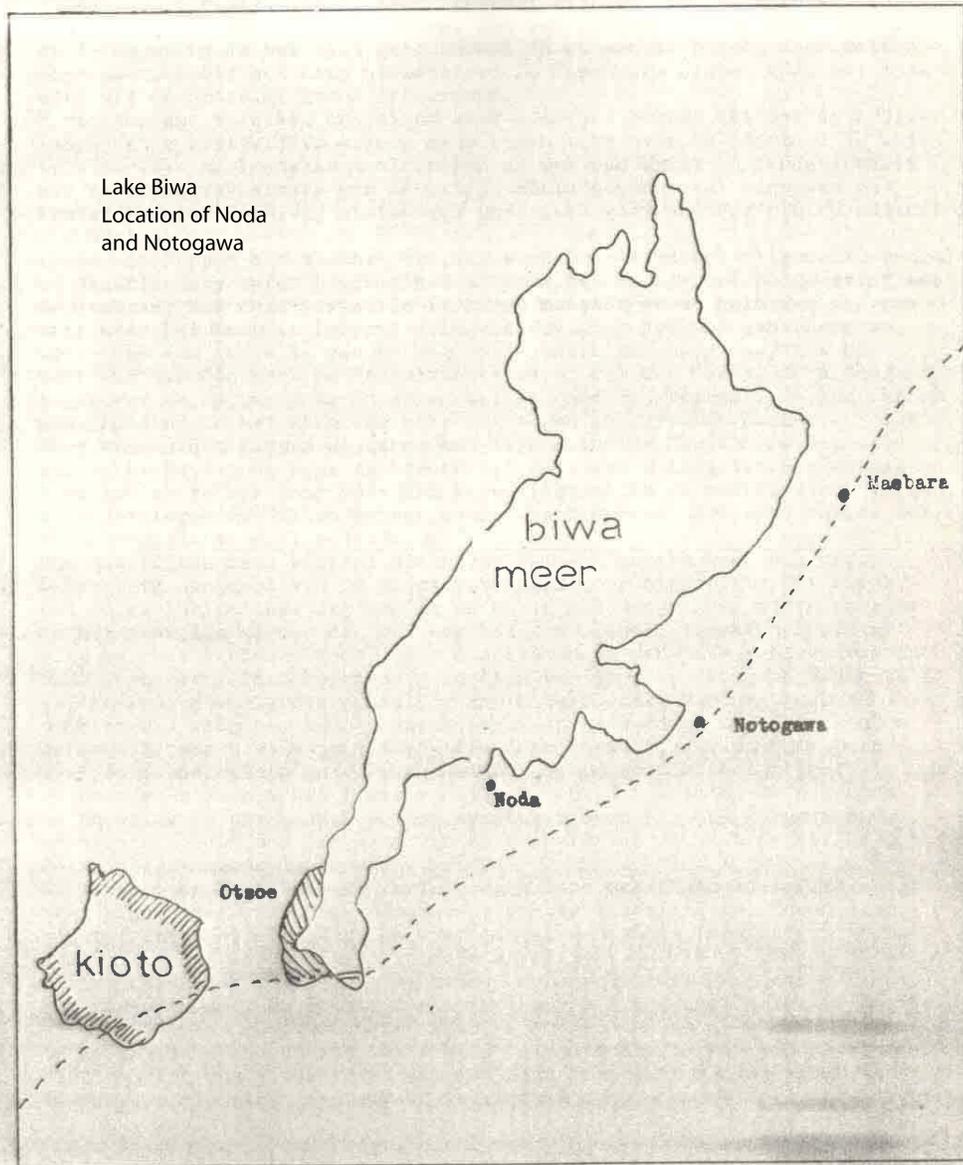
It also happened that it became more demanding for us: that happened during the ramming of the piles. These were placed in the water. A couple of men had to stand in the canal to keep the pile straight up while some others rammed the block on the end of the pile. That was exceedingly tiring for us. During the transport of one such pile the pole was carried on the shoulders in the wrong manner, the men walked on both sides. When

the load was thrown off E. P. Scheepers got into trouble and fell and the full weight of the pile fell on his leg. He suffered a double break of his leg and had to keep in bed for a long time. Fortunately he healed again properly.

One night we had to go outside in a great hurry. It seemed that one of the new dikes threatened to break through; sand bags were filled and in the middle of the night we created a reinforcement. It did not help much however; part of the reclaimed polder came again under water.

Every night we heard the American planes in great numbers

Map of Noda and Notogawa



ligging van Noda en Notogawa

flying over. We had the impression that our camp was situated below the approach route of the bombers. On a cloudless night the great lake must have been like a giant mirror for

the airmen. The corner where we were may well have been taken as a beacon. It never became a raid on the camp or its environs. An American bomber did crash near the camp one night. The Japanese dug the aircraft out of the swampy ground.

News of the war hardly reached us now; it seemed that the Americans and Australians also had little opportunity to know anything about the situation. On very rare occasions we managed to get hold of a newspaper from which we could study the situation maps; more we could not achieve. We sure missed our well organised news service of Harima. When the Japs were in a bad mood they handed out punishments, especially the Dutch were the target of this. An often occurring punishment was doing double time; with our tired bodies we were forced to cover the whole way from the work to the camp on the double. Sometimes it was done for part of the way coming and going; we plodded along as well as possible often for a half hour at a time. The Dutch tended to challenge the Japs quite a bit, in contrast to the Americans whose behaviour in the camp disappointed us rather. When we returned to camp we sometimes entered all whistling. The Jap became then so angry that we had to make right turn out of the gate. On one occasion they forced us all to do push ups in front of the gate. We suffered all this however without grumbling; everyone was pretty certain that the end approached quickly.

Our daily menu consisted of rice with sometimes a little fish. Later on some of the rice was exchanged for potatoes. It turned out that some Australians were very good at catching big carp in the lake, They also knew how to smuggle those into the camp. One could catch some small fish too but those we left swimming in our washing troughs. When certain specific parts of the inlet started to dry up we were able to gather large quantities of sweet water mussels. We were permitted to bring these inside the camp and they were cooked in the camp kitchen. These mussels were quite tasteless and rather tough and rubbery and caused often intestinal troubles. In the evening when we had finished our work the shovels and pickaxes needed to be cleaned in the canal. It was the occasion we also had permission to dive in and so the POWs could have almost daily an opportunity to swim.

After a little while some of us became ill. These were given rest as much as possible within the camp. Our commandant of the Dutch, Theunissen, had been ordered to deliver a certain number of men every day for the work outside. He was however free to select who should stay inside. It was the way in which the sick ones were able to obtain sufficient rest, but it did not prevent that sometimes someone who had not completely recovered yet was sent to work outside.

The American commandant was also the camp doctor. He was not very popular with the Dutch and that had its reasons. We had the strong impression that he favoured his own compatriots. We were also told that he delivered our medication to the Japanese instead of using those for his own patients.. Especially among the Dutch there was a lot of dissatisfaction about this. The relationship between the different nationalities was also not the best. Generally speaking the Americans were especially annoying camp mates, their behaviour disappointed us again and again. The Australians were even worse. As a group

they were intolerable. This does not exclude that we sometimes got along very well with specific individual Americans or Australians. Let me add here

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that there were never any serious conflicts.

After having been in Notogawa a couple of weeks the first intestinal problems already appeared; the doctor distributed sulfa tablets against this of which there appeared to be a sufficiency. When two Dutchmen had serious toothaches (Vrugtman and Sijtsma) they were sent to the civilian dentist in the village. This was a most civilized Japanese who treated his patients in excellent manner and who even offered them tea and a meal afterwards(!) When the Japanese soldier who escorted them began to make objections about this, the dentist told him off quite clearly. Finally the soldier was forced to pay for the treatment as well.

Our health slowly declined. One has to keep in mind that we had arrived in this camp without any sick, these had been sent to Kobe hospital after all. Beautiful weather and the rather calm treatment had kept us standing but it was hard to say how long we would be able to keep this up. Fortunately none of our men died during our stay in Notogawa.

On August 15 it was a strange day. In the afternoon all outside workers returned to the camp. On arrival they heard from the inside workers that the the Japs had behaved very strangely. They had been very agitated and had often gathered around the radio. We received no explanation but just sat without work in the camp while the Japs did not exit from their office. That evening they even forgot to hold roll call.

The next day the Japs also left us totally at peace. During that day a cart arrived with rice and fish. From that moment on we received increased rations. There was no more work outside for us and the guards were also somewhat reduced. On August 16 the leaders of the Americans, English and Dutch were summoned to the Japanese commander. This was when they were told the great news, something we all had guessed already. The war had ended, we were to make ready to for a rapid departure to our own land. Meanwhile we would be free to do as we wished. After this communication the representatives returned to their own men and shared that happy news. Great joy spread throughout the camp. From that moment everyone looked forward towards news of our departure from Japan. We could go out freely. During a little journey into town the former patients visited also their dentist who hospitably received the Dutch at his home and offered a generous meal. It was given their weakened condition hard to take and affected them rather badly. On the way back to the camp it was necessary to find quickly a quiet corner in a field...

By the end of August a mission of the Red Cross arrived at the camp. It consisted of an American, an Englishman and a Dutchman, probably military doctors. They came to record the circumstances of the POWs; quite a lot of photographs were made, especially of the Dutchmen who obviously looked worst. Among those there was for example Schellekens who was strikingly thin. All camp mates were interviewed and the commission noted diligently all details they came to hear from us regarding the treatment at the camp. On this occasion we also presented our observations about the American

camp commander. when the mission departed they immediately took the American with them.

The Japs suddenly hurried to distribute new clothing and equipment, but we had no further interest in those and sold them to the Koreans right away. In this way we obtained some Japanese money that would serve us well for our little trips outside camp.

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On August 31 some of our camp mates made a trip on bicycles to the camp at Noda where the main group from Harima had been established. Among this little group was van Wijk who had been ill for some time; he suffered seriously from diarrhea. He was not really able to manage on a bicycle but he wanted very much to see the former camp doctor Dr. C. Arends and be treated by him. It became a long and tiring bicycle trip partly through hilly terrain. Van Wijk got pulled along for quite a while by his mates. In Noda the men were cordially received by their old pals and were entertained with a wonderful meal by the kitchen personnel. The next day they returned to their own camp.

We learned via radio that all camps needed to be identified with clear letters P.W. so that American planes could find the camps. The Japs brought us this information. Stores of food were going to be dropped. The Japanese commandant arrived the next day with large black cloths on which the letters P and W had been stitched in yellow strips. These sheets were attached to the roofs of our barracks. The next day the first American planes passed by; these were scouts from an aircraft carrier that had anchored in the neighbourhood. They found us right away and dropped messages alerting us to the arrival of the bombers with the stores.

When finally the giant B-29s passed very low over our camp it was almost impossible to restrain the exuberant POWs. They had never seen these enormous planes from so close-up. Everyone ran outside to wave with towels and bits of clothing. When the airmen had found a suitable location the bomb doors opened and down came many coloured parachutes. Originally it looked like small packages but these were double oil drums filled with all sorts of delicious stuff, such as chocolate, cigarettes, canned fruit etc. too much to mention. Such a drum weighed hundreds of kilos and, in spite of the parachute, arrived with a big bang on the ground. That was for us a good reason to be very careful and to watch attentively where it all landed. With might and main we gathered all the packages and brought those inside the camp. Everything was unpacked and after everyone had received a good share it was stored in the warehouse. We suddenly had so much food that the cooks did not need to cook for days.

A particular event during the droppings was the container with tins of grapefruit that had landed without a parachute exactly on the roof of the second barrack. On landing it had exploded and the whole barrack was soaked in fruit juice. One of our camp mates sat in the middle of it holding in each hand a tin of grape fruit!

There was also a double drum that had landed in a swampy area. The colossus was buried about two meters underground. We knew that the Japs were capable of dealing with such jobs since they had neatly dug out the American bomber not so long ago. So we ordered them to dig out our drum, which they indeed did very quickly for us.

In the following days the POWs extended their trips. Some made a journey by train to Tokyo! Commandant Theunissen was quite unhappy about this, he had insisted with his men that they should not go too far away and especially to keep in touch with him so that with a sudden departure he would at least know where the stragglers could be found.

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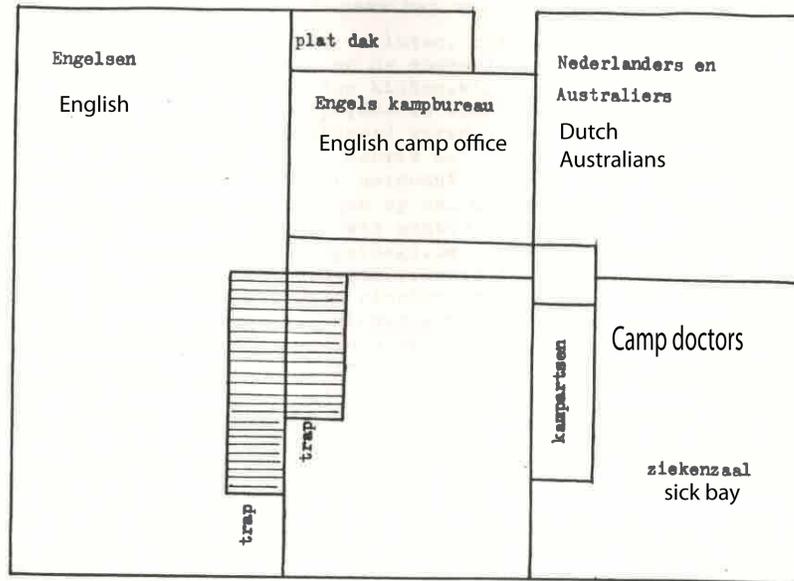
The vehicles came on September 8. We did not need to walk any more, Japanese military vehicles transported us the short distance to the station. At the station however we had to wait for hours. Luck now meant that at that very moment there was another dropping.

There was no other option but to return to the camp and to quickly gather the stores. The result was that we now had mountains of delicacies with us at the station and in the train later hardly knew what to do with all that plenty.

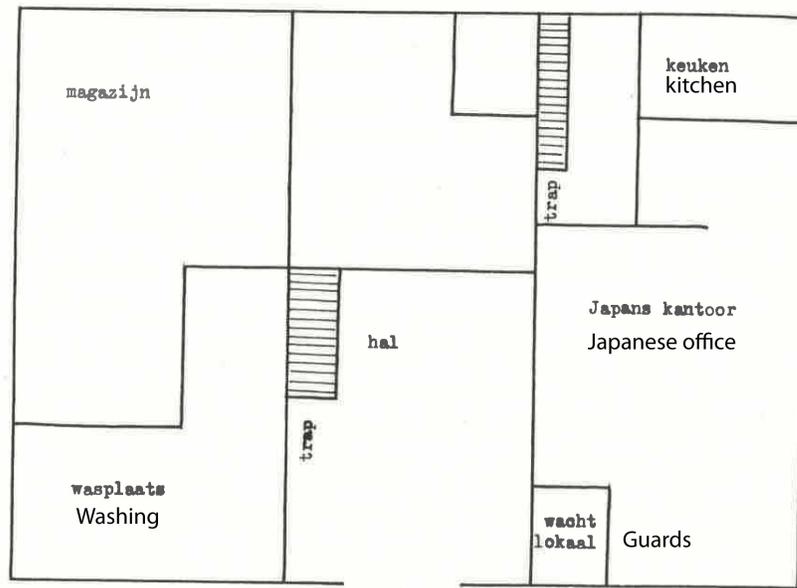
During the wait a fight broke out. An American discovered some former Japanese guards and also the former Japanese camp commandant. With a little band they approached them and a scuffle developed. A tall red haired American was then able to take possession of the samurai sword of the commandant.

The train finally arrived. It turned out that our former mates from Noda were already there. Together we travelled to Yokohama where we would meet the first allied troops.

Map of Kobe House



bovenverdieping
Upper floor



KOBE HOUSE

Chapter 13, THE KOBE GROUP (according to the report of sergeant R. de Haas)

After having left Harima camp we travelled by train to Kobe. Throughout this trip the sun shades had to remain closed for we were not allowed to look out. We were able to see enough of the environment to know that we passed several places that had totally been bombed away. About 10 in the morning we arrived in Kobe. To our great alarm we were fetched here by 1st lieutenant Takenaka and by sergeant Furuya, both well known from Harima. The station was situated on a height and so we got a good overview of the town.

There was not much to be seen however because the whole neighbourhood had been obliterated. The paymaster gathered us outside the station where a lonely truck stood ready. The luggage was loaded and so were the patients. The vehicle drove off and we started the march to the new camp. We passed streets in which not a single house was left habitable. Here and there stood a wreck of a streetcar or some vehicle. We learned that this was the result of the air raid from 16 till 17 march 1945 when 40% of the built up surface of Kobe had been reduced to ashes. After a walk of about twenty minutes we entered a yet untouched part of town. We passed a large hotel and finally came to a big sombre building where we saw the truck again with our patients. We had to unload the truck and then the truck drove away with our 13 patients.

Meanwhile some military in POW dress had come out of the gate while lieutenant Takenaka was also present again. He had preceded us on a bicycle. There was a roll call, a podium was dragged in and Jacob held another speech. At his side stood the Japanese interpreter and as we later learned the English commandant of the camp. Jacob's speech centered on the fact that he knew that all of us were strong fellows, now that the sick had been taken to the hospital. That was why he expected us to work hard and diligently. Who did not or who engaged in what was forbidden would be severely punished.

This is to show whatever happened to the promise that we were intended for a rest camp with much relaxation and proper care, something no one ever had believed anyway.

After the speech the Japs disappeared and the Englishman introduced himself to me. He was the warrant officer 1st class R, Chellis R.S.N. He told me that another 9 Dutchmen had arrived in his camp and that he would be happy if I would also take care of these men. He managed to organise things in such a manner that I was assigned to the camp staff.

The camp consisted of two sombre buildings connected on one side with a wing and enclosing a small courtyard in front. It was a complicated labyrinth of staircases, hallways, lounges and doors and we were there actually too short a time to ever be able really to know our way. On the left at the entrance was the Japanese guard. In the left building were 60 Americans and more than 350 English; while in the building on the right there were 100 Australians and 60 Dutchmen. There were also 9 Greeks, 3

Egyptians, 3 Chinese, 1 Ceylonese, 3 Argentinians and 9 men from British India, all fellows that had been put ashore in Japan by a German raider. The toilets were on the same floor behind the washroom. The hospital was on the second floor and was under the leadership of the Australian captain dr. Boyce and the English captain dr. Longbottom. After our arrival I had a talk with W.O. Chellis. He told that the outside work essentially consisted of loading and unloading of ships and sometimes in performing coolie jobs at factories in Kobe.

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The camp was known under the name of "Kobe House". Chellis had seen right away that my troop really was a bunch of pitious men and he therefore thought of ways allowing us to do light work. To begin with the weakest were assigned work inside the camp. We discussed the possibility of creating a garden crew with the Japanese sub commandant sergeant Mori. This succeeded and under the leadership of sailor W. C. Jesse who was an agricultural specialist in civil life a ricinus planting was established between the ruins of burnt down buildings at some hundred meters distant. The Japanese cultivated this crop in small as well as large scale for the supply of lubricating oil, a great need for their air plane engines. We could place 25 men in the garden crew. The others in so far as they were not assigned to inside work had to go to the docks, where they were spared as much as possible by the English and American crew bosses.

The Japanese interpreter was fortunately of the right kind; it was a civilian and we gave him the nickname Bill, something he apparently very much enjoyed. When in our office he intimated that he also had more than enough of this terrible war. He did his best to help us a little and sometimes that succeeded, but then against the wishes of Takenaka. Paymaster Furuya remained an evil influence in the camp. Now he focussed especially on the Australians who he hit and kicked no matter when. In contrast subcommandant Mori was a decent chap with whom it was possible to discuss matters. Especially W.O. Chellis knew how to wangle things from him.

Nourishment at Kobe house was pitiful; three times a day a small bowl of soggy rice (the English certainly do not know how to boil rice) with some soup made of an infusion of carrot leaves and sometimes some eggplant. Neither meat nor fish appeared here ever. The outside workers had more often the opportunity to grab something extra; in the warehouses at the harbour there were large heaps of tins with foodstuffs and quite a few cans of salmon or sardines got filched and were devoured right there. Some single individual might risk it to take a tin along for his mates who never got outside. But the risk that was attached to this smuggling was particularly great.

The medical care in the camp was especially more favourable than in Harima. The reason was that there was more medication available and there were two doctors who could relieve each other. In the few weeks that we spent at Kobe House there was only one

death, the American Marine sergeant Raye. He had caught a tetanus infection after a rather innocent injury. The Japs maintained that they had no serum available for that and so the poor sergeant was doomed to die of tetanus after immense suffering on June 4, 1945. The leader of the Americans who we called "Ski" since he had a Polish name ending with "ski" asked me to lead a memorial service for Raye. I did that on the evening of the 4th of June. It took place in the attic room of the building on the left.

The news service in Kobe worked perfectly. The outside workers gave the paper boy daily a stolen tin of sardines in exchange for the English edition of the Mainichi Shimbun. In that manner we received all news quite easily, such as the liberation of the Netherlands, the German capitulation etc.

It was most remarkable that the outside workers were always able to tell us ahead of time precisely when a Japanese town would again be bombarded. They heard this from their work bosses who stated that Radio San Francisco always made this known a week before the bombardment. These stories seemed hard to believe at the time until we had the opportunity to experience such things for ourselves.

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On May 28 the message reached the camp that Osaka would be bombed on the 3d of June and Kobe on the 4th of June. A warning had been attached that women, children and POWs should be evacuated. The Japs did not evacuate anybody and we waited tensely for the 3d of June. Kobe and Osaka are situated on the same bay and from our top floor we could see Osaka clearly. On the 3d of June it began already at 7 o'clock in the morning. First the sirens and a half hour later already the B29 bombers passed by the hundreds over Kobe. Our outside workers had just left the camp and remained wherever they were. We, inside the camp, were not allowed to be outside. When the attack took place we clearly heard the heavy explosions and we felt the thudding of the ground. When the "all clear" sounded a couple of hours later we went carefully to have a look from the top floor and saw the whole great city of Osaka in flames. It was one great sea of fire covering a large area and clouds of brown and black smoke rose high into the sky. Our English cook was only able to repeat over and over again "Ain't that a lovely fire". But this meant that we should really count on the fact that tomorrow we would receive a similar raid on Kobe. That the Japs believed that as well became clear when paymaster Furuya arrived the next day at our office with the message that we had to take care to keep our men close at hand.

On the 4th of June some trucks arrived at our camp to fetch some furniture clothing and Red Cross packages. According to Furuya these were destined for the POWs whose camp had been burned down in Osaka the night before. So the evening after the memorial service for sergeant Raye we went to sleep with mixed feelings. We did not know that it would be our last night in Kobe House.

On June 5 it was a brilliant day with a taut blue sky. At half past six we sat at our scant breakfast in our little office when the alarms sounded. Almost immediately Furuya stormed in with the order that everyone should pack up and stand at his bed awaiting further instructions. Everyone had already expected this order so we were ready in no time. W. O. Chellis had however countermanded the order and had determined that the men who slept on the upper story had to come downstairs as a precaution; in case our buildings would be hit by fire bombs. So there we stood close together. The steel shutters of the windows had been closed: the weak electric lights were lit and inside as well as outside there hung an unreal silence. Meanwhile "the shorts" had sounded so that we knew that within a quarter of an hour the planes would be there. Everyone spoke merely in a whisper, the tension was great. We knew that if high explosives were being used we would not have the slightest chance to remain alive, there was absolutely no protection at all.

We heard the approaching roar of the first formations; at the same time the Japanese anti aircraft batteries began firing. Now we heard the screaming sound of a Japanese fighter. The noise was deafening; the whistling of the falling bombs, the dry hard cracks of the anti aircraft guns and short staccato high in the sky from the planes' weapons.... Thankfully, the first wave had passed but we heard already a new wave approaching. We looked at each other, would it pass as favourably as well? Suddenly the lugubrious whistle of a bomb. A hard bang and a scream from the upper story "Fire!" They even begin to extinguish the fire with containers of sand! An Australian is hit by a flying bit of chalk and has suffered a scrape, Nothing serious really. Meanwhile the lights have gone out; then we hear suddenly three four five whistles at the same time and it is apparent that our buildings start burning in different places. The move by W. O. Chellis now turns out to have been wise.

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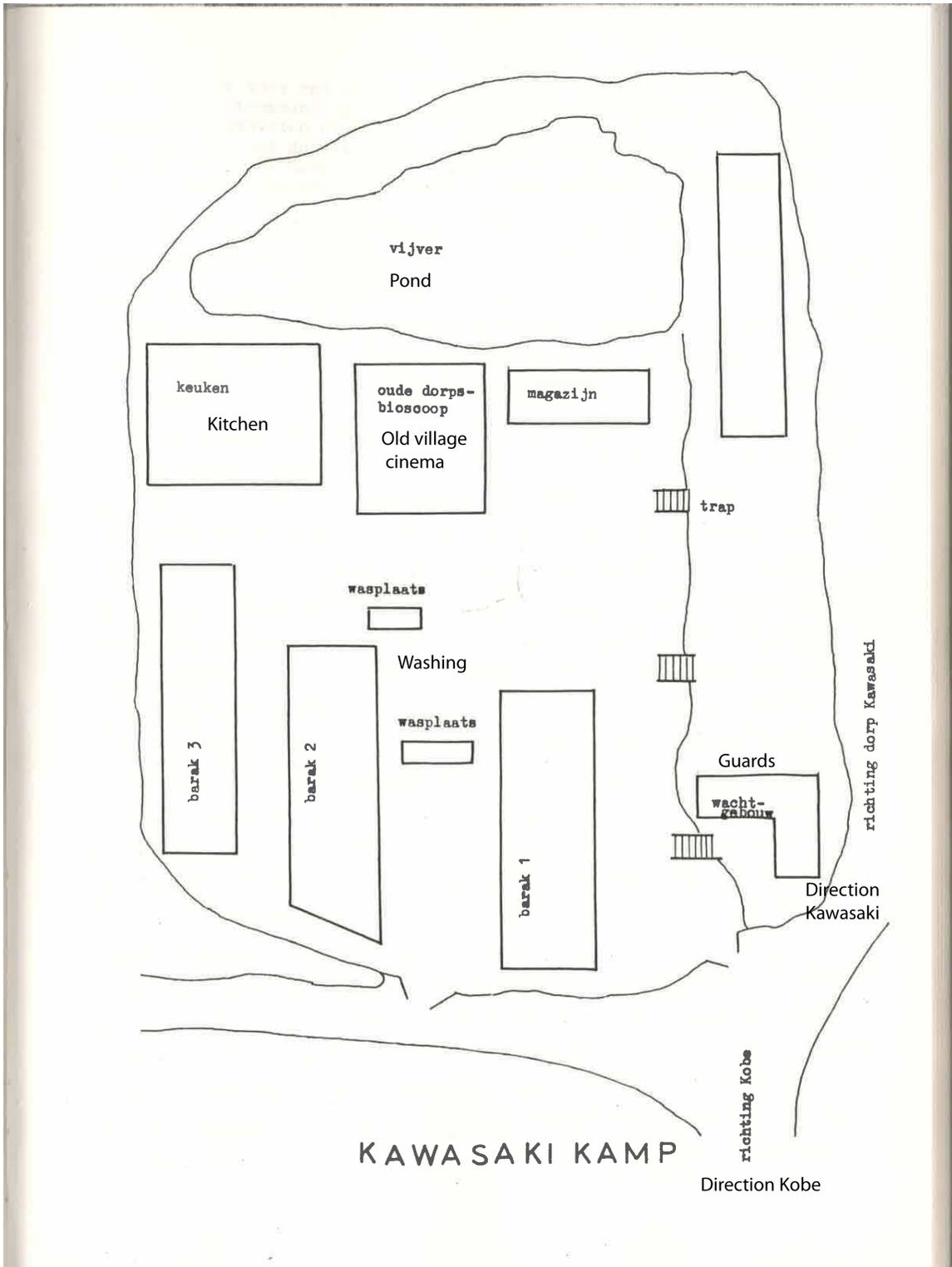
There is a call from downstairs: "clear the building" and in the most perfect order, without pushing or shoving, we come down the stairs and go outside. Until then not one of us had been able to see anything of the outside but what we saw then filled us with dismay. We left our complex from the rear where a large sportspark was situated. In this park stood large apartment buildings, hotels, area offices, etc. All these buildings were now ablaze and that was not all, even the sportspark had become a sea of fire. We could not understand yet how this was possible but later it became clear. Water from a burst water pipe sprayed in the middle of the street. We soaked empty rice sacks in this and in this manner extinguished the fire in the sports park. When that had been done we saw nothing but the cases of the fire bombs that stood vertically in the ground at about 2 or 3 meters distant from each other. In the open terrain there were a few roughly dug trenches and the POWs were allowed as much as was possible to find a little spot. I managed to hurry along the trenches for a moment and ask if so and so had been seen and so I learned quickly that all Dutchmen had been able to leave the building in time. I then dived into a

trench myself and witnessed in terror the rest of the event. It resembled exactly a flight on parade. We guessed the B 29s were at 8000 meters height and passed in waves of 27 to 35 planes. They dropped exclusively fire bombs contained in so called Molotof baskets. As we learned later from American airmen in Manila these were enormous devices each containing 96 firebombs of 25 kilo a piece. Each plane dropped 3 or 4 of these baskets which makes more than 100 per formation. The mother device was so engineered that at a level of about 1000 meters the 96 fire bombs were spread in fan like fashion. When such a fire bomb touched anything at all, even maybe a little branch, it would explode and the sticky contents left the case. This way everything in a radius of 10 meters was set ablaze. (Petrol jelly bombs) It happened that fire bombs touched each other while in the air and it was as if living fire descended from heaven. A frightening sight. In between descended clouds of silver ribbons, which as we learned later served to confuse the enemy radar. The American planes experienced little trouble from fighters or the anti aircraft fire. As far as is known only one B29 was lost during the attack on Kobe; the single Japanese fighter was also downed. This bombardment was proof to us that Japan did not have the means any more to confront such air attacks.

The POWs had managed meanwhile to save a few bags of rice and some saucepans from the warehouse. Just when the last man had left the building almost the total load of a Molotof basket fell with one whack on Kobe House. In the blink of an eye the whole camp burned like a torch. Some seriously wounded Japanese were brought to our camp doctors in the trench but they could help only little. The Japs were badly burned but they did not complain.

Meanwhile the air raid simply continued. A strange natural phenomenon now happened. When the whole city of Kobe had become a burning mass, a hot column of air naturally started to rise. The thinning of the air that this caused was being compensated by the stream of cool air coming from the sea. This stream was so powerful that we suddenly found ourselves in the centre of a real storm, with thick smoke driven along the ground in ink black clouds smothering us and forcing us to cough and gasp all the time. Finally we were all as black as negroes. We were also unable to see any more planes only the sun a glowing red ball right above us.

Map of Kawasaki camp



That red ball looked for us now as the symbol of the setting of Japan's "rising sun". The bombardment continued and we, unaware of "carpet bombing", expected nothing other

than being unable to survive this. Later we came to understand that the danger practically did not exist, when our camp and the sportsfield had had their turn these did not appear again on the maps of any following squadron commander.

The great raid lasted from 7 o' clock in the morning till past half past nine; afterwards we remained on the scorched sports field surrounded by burning buildings and the vehicles from the firebrigade furiously driving around, unable to do anything against this in any case.

With much screaming from the the Japanese guards that had remained we were gathered now and driven towards another open area close to the ricinus planting awaiting there what they planned to do with us from here on. It was a real miracle that of the 600 POWs there was only a single one (an Englishman) who had got a little burn. If we had evacuated the building 10 minutes later we would all have been incinerated. When Kobe House was still one big lake of fire the Americans remarked: "I'm happy that Uncle Sam is cremating Raye". What was the case? Nobody had been able to carry downstairs the coffin in which sergeant Raye had been laid out and so it were the Americans themselves who took care of the cremation of their compatriot.

In the afternoon we suffered the reaction. We sat or lay limp and tired between the debris and even the sentries who guarded us were relaxed and tried to chat us up. I myself suddenly suffered a terrible head ache. I lay down with my head on my field bag and so slept for approximately 1 1/2 hour straight. Just when I awoke a car arrived and colonel Murata the commandant of the Osaka camps got out with the Japanese doctor dr. Nosu. Evidently they came to have a look at what remained of their camp. He ordered lieutenant Takenaka to take care of our food and shortly afterwards the paymaster went with our cooks to an open area to boil some rice on a wood fire. After the meal, at about seven thirty that evening we had to prepare for our departure but it took till half past eight before we could leave.

Among us was a man, the corporal K. Oost who had fallen into the hold of a ship and had damaged his spinal column. He was now invalided permanently and moved only slowly and painfully. It was the reason why he had always belonged to the inside workers. Now the poor wretch suddenly had to march with whatever little strength he had to some unknown destination. I tried to explain to the Japs that this was not possible, but nothing helped, Oost had to march himself no matter how. We took him therefore between ourselves but soon we got behind which caused another rage from the Japs. In this way we trudged on for several streets, darkness falling passing by fiercely burning buildings which no body did anything about since it was absolutely useless. Finally the Japs saw that it was no longer possible and Oost with some other patients was loaded on a truck and disappeared soon from sight.

We continued plodding on, for miles through burning and devastated parts of the city. Electrical streetcars stood burnt out in the streets and here and there there was the wreck

of a car. In this way we reached the suburbs; the road began to rise and about a quarter to ten when we were some distance outside Kobe we were given finally 5 minutes rest. The view of Kobe was unforgettable; as far as we could see there still was a sea of fire, with giant clouds of smoke rising. If the Americans had wished to make an attack that night it would have been a great marker. About half past eleven we arrived totally exhausted at the unknown empty Kawasaki. There was no electricity so no lights and in the dark we managed to find a place.

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The next morning we felt at once that the Japs had some special intentions. And yes, after breakfast everyone had to line up and there began a terrible mistreatment of two Australians. It was said that they had stolen some rice. In front of the troop they were savaged in a horrible manner. Sergeant Furuya was in charge of this punishment, always the infamous paymaster again.

Later in the morning we had a chance to look a little bit better at our new camp. It was a bit more favourable than Kobe House. The terrain had originally been a little park in the little town of Kawasaki. In the centre was an old cinema, now unused. Around were some semi permanent buildings which were the camp. Behind the kitchen was a little pond. The sick bay, the Japanese guard etc, lay about a meter and a half higher. This part was accessible mounting about three stone steps. There were sufficient workshops but the taps delivered no water. The pumping stations had probably been bombed to bits. Our men had to fetch water at a pump, situated at about a 100 meters lower than our camp.

Later that day we learned a little about the fate of our friends in the Kobe Hospital. The whole building was supposedly burned down and a large number of POWs would have been seriously wounded. Later the order came to prepare our sick bay for the arrival of these men. For the moment no one went outside to work, so we concluded that the harbours and docks had been eliminated.

It rained hard on the 7th of June. At about 3 o'clock in the afternoon the transport of patients arrived. Not a single vehicle had been made available, everyone has been forced to walk; those who were not able any more were carried by their comrades on stretchers, planks, doors etc. Quite a few were very seriously wounded. When this group, after a long wait (in the rain) and a roll call, had been accommodated in the sick bay, I had an interview with the accompanying military doctor, our dr. L. Indorf, who we had known in Harima. He told me the following story:

Kobe Hospital was situated in the east side of the city in a hilly area. A broad boulevard separated the lower town on the bay and the residential areas in the hills. When the bombardment began in the morning of June 5 one had from the hospital a good view of

the progress of the fires. They assumed then that it was self evident that the hospital was not in danger and that the aforementioned boulevard would certainly be the furthest limit. In any case outside there were no objects of military importance. So the doctors and patients stood looking more or less calmly at the bombardment, when they saw to their terror that the fire bombs got closer and closer. One still tried in a great hurry to bring the patients to a safer place but it was too late. A rain of firebombs fell on the hospital. One of those bombs exploded between two Dutchmen, sergeant A.R. Roukens and brigadeer Th. Nilant who both were wounded. A couple of Englishmen died instantly. When the bombardment had finished the patients sat in the open between the heaps of smoking rubble. Practically no dressing or medication had been saved, only a little food had been kept. In this hopeless situation they remained for a night, a day and another night in that location until finally there came the signal for the move to Kawasaki. The hospital staff consisted of some doctors, two dentists and a pharmacist, the lieutenant Gonie (from Semarang). During a walk through the sick bay I found again 12 of the 13 patients who had been separated from us on May 20. The thirteenth, brigadeer P, Jansen had died on May 31.

After having been without work for some days in Kawasaki it seemed that Kobe needed labourers again. We had to provide outside workers again.

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It was not easy for them, in the morning and the evening they had to march for one or one and a half hour to their work. On the other hand it was possible at work now and then to grab something or other. After a few days a rumor did the rounds that we were to move again. The Japanese sought an accommodation that would be closer to the work. That this might bring greater danger apparently did not occur to them. On June 19 we all had to line up again and Jacob began to winnow. After a little while nearly all Dutch with a few Americans, English and Australians, stood apart. I was not included together with 3 or 4 men of my group. When Jacob did not look for a little moment I turned to sergeant Mori and asked if I would not be allowed to stay with my men. It looked for a moment if he would refuse but then he said suddenly: I understand you wish to stay with your men, O.K. go ahead. So I quickly joined the "rejected" group. Meanwhile it had grown dark so that Jacob did not notice. The next day I kept busy with the transfer of administrative data, lists of clothing and statements about valuables (no one was allowed to keep valuables such as watches, rings and such, these were kept by the commandant who was also responsible for them). The evening of June 20 at 6 o'clock our group of about 120 men left Kawasaki. There were 49 Dutchmen so that our group remained mostly together. We left behind the 12 patients of dr. Indorf and another 3 men. Even the miserable Klaas Oost had to come along again. Even though he was an invalid the Japs did not judge him to be ill. Since he could hardly walk we had to carry him. Some carrying poles were added to an old chair and so we carried our comrade with us high above our shoulders. It was still daylight and the inhabitants of the villages ran outside to watch us. It was remarkable that no one called out or booed at us, they even looked quite friendly.

The march went over hill and dale when suddenly we came to see again the remains of Kobe. We moved for miles through the empty spaces of town's quarters that had disappeared and we saw electrical streetcars driven by women and completely overloaded with passengers. Here and there some smoke spiralled up, that was where a family lived underground! It was striking that the bombers had spared the railway system. The high level railways were intact and electrical trains passed now and then. A large radio station was also undamaged and stood on the bare plain, untouched.

At 8 o'clock we found ourselves again at the station where we had arrived from Harima on May 20. We were transported in the train with a bit more space and comfort, though it was only a short ride. After 20 minutes it appeared that we were in Osaka where we had to leave the train. Here we waited for 2 or 2 1/2 hours on the platform. We got some impressions of the reactions of the population. Everyone wanted to leave, train after train entered and left again. Thousands of Japanese jostled and hung on with all their belongings, even on the footboards. It was a great exodus of people who fled before new maybe even heavier bombardments.

From one of the platform tunnels emerged a group of POWs. They wore our well known KNIL uniforms and we thought they were Dutch. They settled themselves at some distance but we could not establish contact. Our train came at about 10 o'clock. In a few minutes we were pushed inside, the train departed again almost right away. When we were on our way I stood only on one leg, there was no place for the other. The heat was almost unbearable. The sirens had just begun to wail again as we rode away. After 15 minutes the train stopped; we were still in Osaka and now we could hear at once the "shorts". We asked ourselves if we would have to undergo an attack on the train. We noted however nothing else and heard much later that Osaka that evening had to suffer one of the heaviest bombardments of the war.

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It became a long trip, until about eleven thirty the next morning. We stepped out at a little town and after that continued on in a small local train. Now we could at least sit down normally. But this agreeable trip only took only a half hour when we stood at a simple stopping place. We stumbled from the train tired and hungry and after crossing the road entered our new camp! It turned out to be an abandoned roof tile factory, converted into a POW camp. The group we had seen emerge from the platform tunnel in Osaka arrived at the same time, These were not Dutchmen but Americans from another camp in Osaka that had burned down totally on June 3d and from which absolutely nothing could be saved. The Japs had handed them some war booty and that was fortuitously those KNIL uniforms.

Our new Japanese commandant, a first lieutenant, was awaiting us. He looked like a teacher who was a reserve officer and who did not grasp what he had to do with us, his uniform did not look the best. The sub commandant was a sergeant major with a civilized

appearance who behaved very quietly. It struck us that there was no yelling and beating whatsoever. We were arranged according to nationality and it turned out we were exactly 300 men. The composition was as follows: 150 Americans, 50 English, 48 Australians, 49 Dutch, 9 Greeks, 1 Egyptian, 12 British Indians, 1 Ceylonese.

Under these circumstances it was logical that an American was appointed commandant. That was then Chief petty officer W. N. Saunders, someone who already had been commandant in Osaka. He was about 50 years of age and wore a big mustache, something that looked rather strange for an American. In discussion with him we appointed that same day a representative for the English, for the Australians and I was designated for the Dutch. I was also allowed to take care of the interests of the Greeks. 9 men were assigned to the camp kitchen with soldier G. Poot as the single Dutchman. There was no doctor among the POWs but there was an American Chief Pharmacist named Merritt and 2 pharmacist mates Clayton and Atwood. We discussed the matter with the Japanese hospital soldier 1e class Tamura who without any scruples designated Merritt and me as "doctors".

The name of our new camp was Nomachi and was situated in the Nagoya area; the Japs knew it as sub camp number 10. It was not really ready yet, there was no fence around it yet. Escape would therefore have been very easy. The little hospital was also not ready and the sick remained in their berths in the barracks. The camp was at the end of the inhabited world, no villages or single homes were in the immediate environment. One could see only a little factory in easterly direction. The camp lay at a location where 4 railway lines joined. After having settled in as well as possible that first day, we were ready to finally enjoy the first undisturbed night of rest after the great fatigue we had experienced. This also developed very differently from what we had thought. In the middle of the night we were startled by scads of noise: the roar of engines, anti aircraft fire, thundering blows and clattering on our roof. This last were no bombs but the shards of exploded anti aircraft shells.

On the day after our arrival followed the normal registration. We also registered all the complaints and deficiencies of our men so that these could be sufficiently considered during the assignment of work.

We had to do the work of porters for a stevedore company charged with loading and unloading at a nearby harbour. The ships lay in the entrance to a river that debouched into the bay of Toyama. That firm had to take care of everything, our food, dress and a couple of company interpreters were constantly busy organising this in some unwieldy fashion. At this camp the outside work never became properly organised.

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This was mainly because it had never been properly cleared who could and who could not do outside work. Many who had been assigned stayed simply inside and this led to much yelling, though we were spared maltreatment or even from being hit. The Japanese

Tamura assisted by Koidara instructed us in a curious manner; if a patient was ill in the evening and in the morning had still at least 38 degrees fever then he was allowed to stay inside; in all other cases someone was not to be considered as being ill and therefore had to go to work. In spite of all this we discovered that there were always some who had quietly stayed in the camp. We could often prevent difficulties by putting these people to work inside the camp in some way, so that the Japanese commandant could say little. We had the impression that the relationship between the Japanese military and the civilians was not of the best and that the military did not care much if there were many or few POWs who were working for a civilian company.

Nourishment was, as everywhere else, totally insufficient. We received three times a day a small portion of rice with a little soup with sometimes some soy beans. On an exceptional occasion we received a small bit of fish.

The most important work for our men was the unloading of bags of soy beans from the sea going ships and the loading of these onto the railway waggons. Railway personnel allowed discretely that we cooked and ate some soya beans during our meal hour. Since of course only the outside workers could profit from this we attempted to find a solution. When the mid day meal was brought from the camp we quickly filled the empty containers with soy beans that entered the camp in this manner. Since this became increasingly risky we urged the outside workers each to bring small quantities inside and to deposit these with the camp commandant. In this manner Sanders had 5 bales of 100 kilograms of soy beans within a short time, quietly cooked in the evening and added to our soup. A tremendous advantage of this camp was that it had never accommodated POWs before and therefore was totally free of vermin.

The water supply was very primitive, a supply of water had to be provided daily with a handpump, a job of which 2 Chinese POWs took charge. An Australian, Jimmy Stewart, suffered already for months from a serious infection on his left leg. At the level of his ankle his leg had swollen to 3 times its normal size. My colleague Merritt judged that this could be improved by a small operation. Stewart also had a swelling under his left armpit and this also should be improved by an operation. On July 6th we decided to proceed with the procedure. The quantity of pus the patient lost was enormous and his condition improved visibly. When a little later a real doctor came to the camp, he was quite satisfied with our work and continued with it in the same direction himself, by making a new, long incision in Stewart's leg which completely mended him. This doctor Keeley performed similar incisions on still more patients later on.

Asthma patients, of which we had three, were a great problem for us; the worst was soldier H. Rijke. Unfortunately we had only a couple of vials of Adrenalin, which meant that we could only help him when he was terribly cramped. The most important complaint in the camp was caused by diarrhea. The Japanese made a sandy powder available for this that according to them would stop it. After a little while some POWs got dysentery. We asked then if we might obtain a microscope or that the stool of the patients

might be checked. Both requests were denied accompanied with laughter. So the 4th of July arrived, the American festive holiday, which on this occasion in the camp became a day of mourning.

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During work the American marine Cronin became buried under two bales of soy beans. He had died instantly. On July 5th he was to be cremated. That same day a real doctor came to the camp quite unexpectedly; it was doctor Kenneth Keeley, who fortunately also still owned some instruments. His first task was to ascertain the death of Cronin; he had broken his neck and a couple of ribs had pierced his lungs. That same day the cremation took place and I was put in charge of it. It took place in the open field at about 300 meters from the camp. There was a little shelter over 4 poles and below there were two stone beams. Some small bits of wood had been laid between the beams and afterwards the crate with the body was placed over it. A coffin was not available it would have taken too much wood. Then the fire was lit and was kept going for 4 or 5 hours. After some time they poked with an iron rod to see if there was still some resistance in the mass. If that was not the case the fire could be extinguished. One gathered some little bits of bone in a little box on which later would be marked name and army number. Sometimes it happened that the Japanese considered it good enough after 3 1/2 hours of stoking and had the remainders buried in some hole. These details are only presented to show in what cold and businesslike manner the Japanese got rid of the deceased POWs without any ceremonial on their part. In the short period we were in Nomachi we lost 5 men: 1 American, 1 Australian, 1 Englishman, and two British Indians. Our camp doctor was admirable. He did all he could to help the patients.

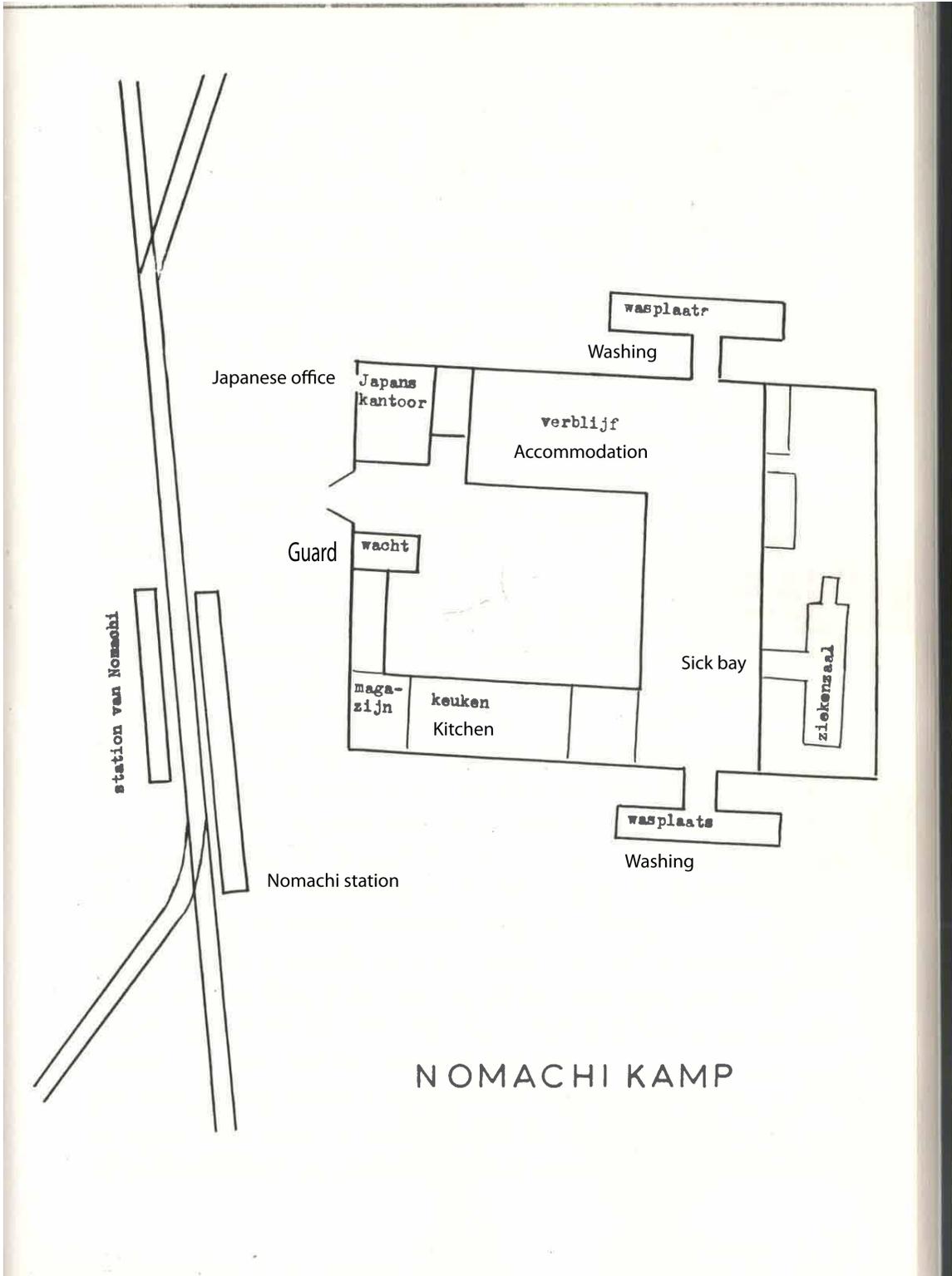
When the Japanese realized at a certain moment that there was a chance of a dysentery epidemic they arrived with a bottle containing a litre of some cloudy liquid and with which the whole camp had to be injected.

The Japanese hospital soldiers poured the contents into four smaller bottles so that four men could work at the same time. In view of this unreliable look and certainly not sterile liquid Dr. Keeley advised to keep injections of the camp mates to a minimum. It then became some sort of sport right under the supervision of the Japanese to let all men walk past us, press the needle against the arm and let the liquid run off against the arm. Only a few received a bit of an injection anyway and became therefore also a little ill.

Meanwhile the air raids on Japan continued; every night the bombers roared high in the sky and we heard the blasts of the anti aircraft fire. On August 3, 1945 we heard the wail of the sirens in the night. Dr. Keeley who had not experienced a bombardment in Japan yet was curious and hoped to see something this time. He stayed awake. In the beginning we heard only one or two machines flying above the camp. The Japanese search lights scanned the sky but at first did not catch anything. Then, as if they asked for it, one of the planes began to blink its board lights. They were now immediately caught in the light

beam. They continued flying calmly along. Then the anti aircraft guns began firing. The shells exploded far below the plane. Suddenly we saw the machine dive straight down in the direction of the anti aircraft guns. There was an enormous explosion and the battery anti aircraft guns had gone. The plane climbed again and disappeared in the distance. In the area around the battery it kept burning for an hour at least; alternating with explosions from the cases of munitions. Later that night a masive roar announced the arrival of a great number of planes. When they had passed our camp and guessing they had reached a distance of 15 kilometers we saw the descent of a rain of fire, and the the rising flames a moment later showed that the bombs had hit their target. Meanwhile a second group of planes

map of Nomachi camp



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had arrived that dropped demolition bombs, attacks with fire bombs alternated with high explosives. It lasted from ten thirty till three o'clock in the night. The next morning the

sky in the direction where the bombers had dropped their loads was totally gray. Our commander Sanders learned from one of the interpreters that that night Toyama, a city with 100,000 inhabitants had been practically wiped off the face of the earth.

The American bombardments of Japan became steadily more severe. In those last days of the war there was practically continuous air alarm over Japan. On the 5th of August, a brilliant summer day, I was occupied at cleaning the sick bay. The sirens had wailed an hour earlier but we had heard only a single airplane and had not paid attention. Suddenly we heard a an enormous whack from the direction of the harbour and we saw a giant column of water. From our outside workers we heard later that an American plane had laid mines in the estuary. A Japanese boat had run onto one and had exploded. There were many dead and wounded but not among the POWs.

Meanwhile the radio at the Japanese commandant was never silent. We were not able to grasp all that was said but we understood the regular interruptions that sounded like Kehageo Osaka, Kehageo Kobe, Kehageo Yokohama and we understood that those got again quite a beating.

During the day of August 9 we did not note anything very special except that we heard from the Japanese soldiers that the bombardments were tremendous. We did not know however that on that day the atom bomb had been dropped on Hiroshima.

In the night of 14 on 15 August we experienced our final adventure of the war. There was an alarm again and we heard a solitary plane over our camp. We saw it being caught in the beams of the searchlights. There was no anti aircraft fire but we heard the sound of a Japanese fighter. We held our breath, what would that solitary bomber be able to do in that sharp light against a fighter about to come out of the dark? However we suddenly saw a trace of light from the bullets come from the B-29 and a moment later that fighter had disappeared in a jet of flame. We learned later from the American air men how this was possible. The bombers were also fitted with radar so the gunner could aim in the dark just as well as during the day.

The next days we did not hear sirens any more, our outside workers did go to the harbour as usual. The same happened on August 17 but then quite unexpectedly they all returned at 9 o'clock. In the little hospital an Englishman came to tell me: "They say there's a peace on". What we noted also was that the markings on the Japanese planes had been altered; they still had the red ball but a white square had been painted around it. The Japs did not tell us anything yet, only that we had a free day for the occasion. It is "yasume".

We again got a day off on the 18th, but suddenly at 2 o'clock in the afternoon the representatives were told to see the Japanese commandant. We sensed that this was an extraordinary occasion. I myself dressed carefully in my one remaining complete KNIL uniform. So, there we stood in the Japanese office. The commandant told us through the interpreter that all of us would be going home soon; it was not really peace yet but that would happen soon. Our camp commandant Sanders got quite angry at this fudging and

suddenly cried out fiercely: You'd better stop telling us all this nonsense, we know damn well that you lost this war!

That was "put it in your pipe and smoke it" for the Jap! There was a moment of silence; it was followed by a heavy dispute between the commandant and the interpreter. Then the interpreter said "The commandant wishes that you tell your people to remain calm."

The Japs had already been overawed and so we were let go quickly. We returned full of delight to our men and told them the good news. Immediately we organized a meeting of the leadership

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to establish our new attitude towards the Japs. Dr Keeley, as the highest ranking allied officer, was officially given the command. We also agreed that we would maintain the ordinary military routine so as to prevent any disturbances. That evening no one wanted to go to sleep. We sat smoking and talked to each other. We did not see any Japs, these had withdrawn into their office. The interpreter came with the news that the next day our camp would be visited by Red Cross mission. That mission came indeed and was under the leadership of the Swedish consul Ivan P. Troedsson; others who were part of it were Dr. E. Ruch, Swiss delegate and Dr. Wittenberg a doctor of the International Red Cross.

They were accompanied by a Japanese colonel, the commandant of the Nagoya area. We informed the commission extensively about our situation and did not give the Japanese commandant a chance to have his say. Our account was carefully noted. After it was finished we were able to tell our camp mates that the next day American planes would visit the camp to drop supplies. When this was finished we decided right away to bring an end to the Japanese supervision of the camp. We summoned the Japanese commandant and ordered him to surrender the weapons. Though he refused at first invoking his responsibilities, he finally agreed after we had declared that we had in fact assumed all his responsibilities. It was now clear that the Japanese were ready to do everything we desired from them. Not long afterwards a big American marine was standing guard with a Japanese rifle. He paid especially attention that nobody would leave the camp without our permission.

5 American planes appeared high above our camp on August 20 at 9 in the morning. It was quite clear that they were looking, but were unable to find us. After circling for about 10 minutes they disappeared. We were very disappointed. That same day there was on the radio the American order that all camps should be identified with the letters P.W. Suddenly there was sufficient material available. Large pieces of cloth arrived and the letters P. and W. were affixed in orange to our roofs. On August 21 the planes returned and found us right away. Everyone ran yelling and waving. The planes returned again and again and finally they dropped a message tube with the news that the following day the supplies for our camp would be dropped. Meanwhile an American officer had suddenly

arrived at our camp. He introduced himself as captain Max Bernstein medical doctor of sub camp 7 situated halfway between our camp and the coastal town Nomachi.

We had seen his camp from a distance and knew also that there were no Dutch but exclusively Americans and English. Dr. Bernstein told us that the Japanese soldier Koidara had fetched him to investigate the stool from some of the dysentery patients with his microscope! It concerned especially Tommy Atkins who had already been sick for 6 weeks and for whom the Japs never had wanted to do anything. It was now apparent that at not even 3 miles distance from our camp there was a microscope available, while Dr. Bernstein also carried the necessary capsules of emetine with him. Tommy was treated properly right away and left a couple of days later by plane. It was a pity that our doctor dr. Keeley also left with him. From that moment on dr. Bernstein also took charge of our camp, he was now camp doctor for sub camps 7 and 10.

On the afternoon of August 17 a section of 7 American planes, originating from an aircraft carrier, came to provide a demonstration over our camp. One of those planes dropped a small parachute with a package of food stuff, smoking goods and some reading material. It was a little preview of what would arrive the next day. In the morning a large

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B-29 appeared at such a low level as we had never yet seen those giant aircraft. When the bomber had flown past our camp a couple of times the bomb doors opened and with great cheers from all POWs there descended a rain of many coloured parachutes. Attached were large packs full of all sorts of articles. Everyone ran outside and brought the stores inside the camp. After all was unpacked the stores were sorted in the courtyard. Everyone received immediately part of the cigarettes and the candy; the rest was stored in the warehouse and the kitchen staff was now able to produce the most delicious menus, which they did with great enthusiasm. We now had suddenly no further need of anything because new clothing and shoes had also been delivered from the air. Whatever was in excess got stored in our warehouse for foodstuffs. In this manner we wanted to prevent people from overeating. At that time when we still had to wait for our departure we organised walking trips in the environment. We maintained a proper discipline all the time; every morning at 8 o'clock there was roll call, afterwards everyone was free to do as he wished. On August 18 we held a combined service of thanksgiving. In this camp we had never had Sundays off so that until now there had been little opportunity for religious services. In addition there was little interest in this on the part of the Americans. It was quite apparent also during the thanksgiving service. Nearly all Dutch and Australians participated but a rather small number of Americans and English (except for dr. Keeley).

On August 31 the day of the birthday of our Queen our corner of the barrack was decorated and we celebrated that day in the proper manner. Meanwhile commandant Sanders informed the Americans that they would receive complete salaries covering the

years they had been POWs and that those who had meanwhile become eligible for promotion could without doubt count on that. We were then completely convinced that such would also apply for us Dutchmen; however it developed quite differently.... On the day of our departure a beautiful train came to the little station in front of our camp. There was a special waggon for our patients. The inhabitants of sub camp 7 under captain dr Bertnstein and lieutenant commander Blinn also travelled with this train.

Commandant Sanders made sure that all Japs from our camp would stay with us, so that the occupation authorities could decide later on what should happen with them. This was to prevent them from disappearing into the crowd. The next morning we were able to enjoy fully the Japanese landscape, even though we did not know where we would reach the coast. During a wait at one of the stations American planes spotted us, they flew back and forth and dropped a message: "if you wait another half hour we will be back with supplies". But we already had so much with us that we really could not use any more. Therefore we spread white cloths along the railway with the letters "no", which was understood by the pilots. We were however very touched by their kindness. At 2 o'clock in the afternoon we arrived at Yoshiwara, a coastal town about 150 kilometers south of Yokohama. We were received here by American officers and sailors. We were organised on the platform according to nationality. The Japanese from Nomachi were parked in the waiting lounge with an American marine as a guard. Since we had all received new clothing and equipment our liberators urged us to to throw onto a heap anything we did not wish to keep as a souvenir. So there lay those piles of old stuff, field bags, mess tins, canteens and whatever.

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We were driven the short distance to the harbour with cars that had been requisitioned. We saw there the warships laying in the bay. We entered the landing vessels that had been awaiting us, taking us on board to the hospital ship "Rescue". Here we received a wonderful clean bath and a medical check up. A number of Dutch were indicated to remain on this hospital ship, the others were transferred to an English destroyer that left the following morning for Yokohama. The crew on board did everything to make us happy and we were allowed to move around freely everywhere. That afternoon at 3 we were in the bay of Tokyo where we saw the gigantic allied fleet. The Dutch flag flew proudly from the hospital ship Tjitjalenka. We said good bye to the English crew and transferred to the U.S.S. Monitor, a landing ship for tanks, that was now being used as a hotel and transfer ship for ex-POWs. Here also we were also taken care of in outstanding fashion; we received excellent food and in the evening watched a movie on the deck. On sunday september 3 an American navy pastor led a church service on the Monitor. I still have the little bible that I received that day. During the morning my friend Jesse and I received permission to visit the Tjitjalenka The first officer Navy lieutenant Algera received us most cordially and told us a little about the mysterious silence that still hung over the Netherlands East Indies. We learned that our wives and children had been in

camps and that there could not be any contact with them. We returned to the Monitor quite downcast. On september 10 we left Japan after having been transferred to the troop ship USS Oconto, that took us to Manila.

Chapter 15. THE ADVENTURES OF THE OFFICERS

Navy lieutenant A. Blankesteyn tells about his adventures, after the departure from Harima as follows:

The 33 Navy officers arrived on August 1, 1943 at Zentsuji camp, the day after their departure. This was a very large camp with several buildings behind each other and surrounded by barbed wire. The substructures were of stone, the buildings above were constructed of wood. It was exclusively a camp for officers, about 800 men, though our group from Harima were the only Dutch. An English colonel was in command. There were also about 40 subalterns and privates especially for the work in the kitchen, the cleaning of the camp and for service to the officers.

The officers remained almost totally within the camp; they did not have to work, in the surroundings there were no factories or ships wharf, Zentsuji was a little rural location. Now and then we could get outside the camp to work in the garden which had been established in the immediate neighbourhood. It was here that we grew onions for our own use. After some time the officers were able to buy 2000 chicks with their own money. The feed for this poultry stock was also paid for by the officers themselves. The chicks grew quickly and after a few months produced 1800 eggs daily. At the outset the officers were allowed to keep these but soon the Japs impounded most of them.

There were only a few sick in the camp. Navy lieutenant A. Arps remained however continuously in the sick bay. The patients received proper care from American military doctors. There was however a shortage of medicines.

The Japanese guards behaved quite calmly; they did walk around everywhere inside the camp, but there were no beatings.

The allied soldiers, mainly American, who served as servants to the officers, got along well with the inhabitants of the village. It was generally known that from time to time they quietly spent a night at the home of a friendly Japanese.

The food rations were very modest; rice and soup. little variation. according to the kitchen personnel no more than 300 kilograms of meat for a whole year was received for the 800 men.

Along the barbed wire it was possible to reach the warehouses where the Japanese army had stored a stock of emergency rations. These rations consisted of small bags of sea biscuit and sugar cubes. Whatever necessary was taken from it, both by the population and the POWs.

At the beginning of 1945 we saw here also the American bombers passing high in the sky, visible through their white condensation lines. Air raids on the camp or the neighbourhood never happened. Our stay at Zentsuji was coming to an end.

On June 24, 1945 part of the camp, among which our 35 officers from Harima departed with a freight train for the little place Inotani and 2 days later the journey was continued northwards where on June 26 we arrived at Kamioka camp. This was not an officers camp, there were also subalterns and privates, mainly English(?)

After about 14 days a group was sent to work at a farm in the neighbourhood, to supply ourselves with fresh vegetables for our own needs. On July 7 a group, among which most officers from Harima, left for Mariana situated at 10 kilometer distance. It was a rather pleasant environment here and we enjoyed great freedom of movement. While working we were guarded only by a single Japanese soldier. The cultivation of vegetables continued in this manner

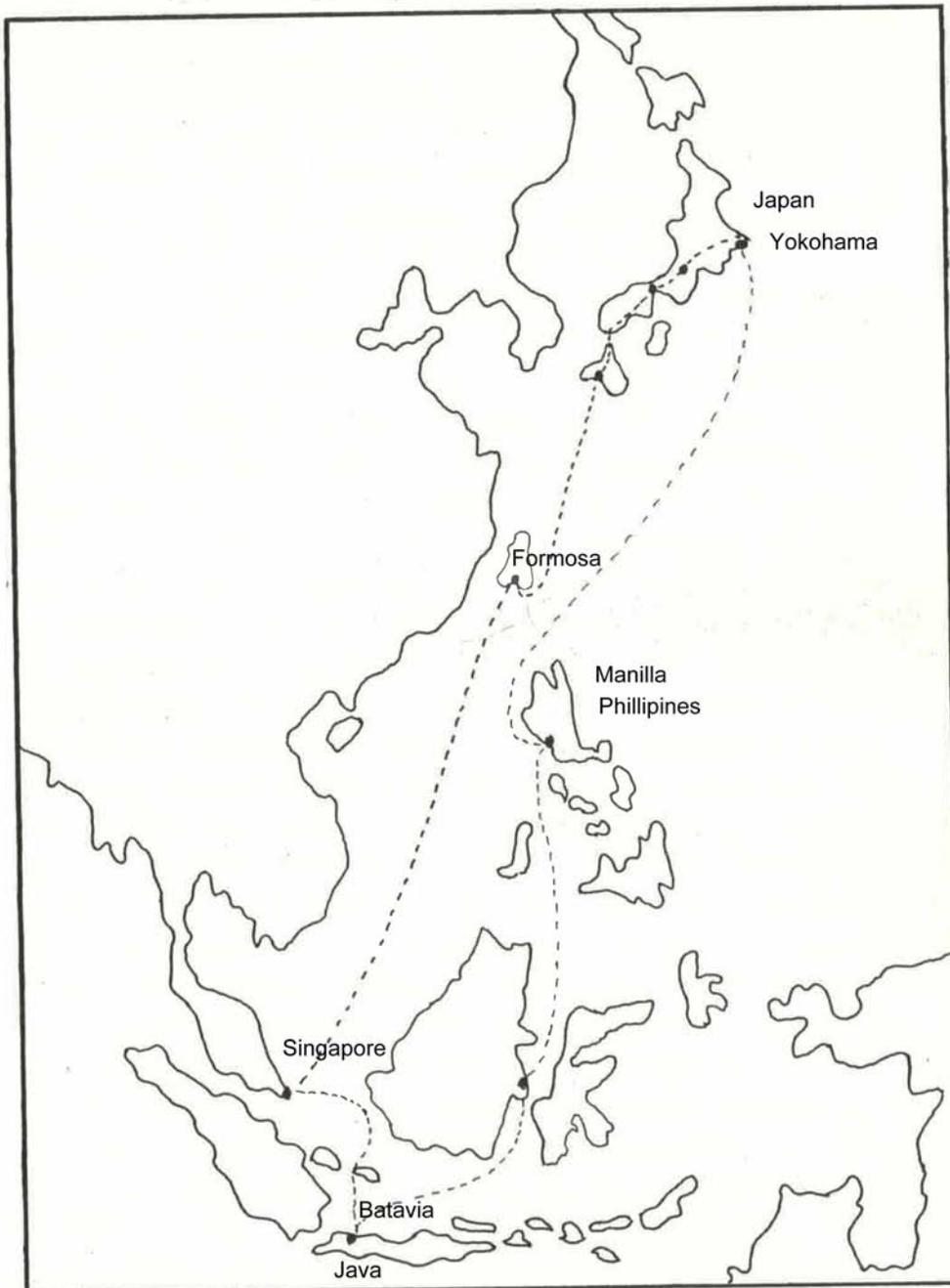
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till August 17, the day Japan capitulated. At that moment the crew was called back to the Kamioka camp. After a couple of days American planes flew over but were unable to find us at first. Kamioka was situated at the end of a narrowing valley at the bottom of a mountain. It was difficult to see from the air, especially since there often hung mist in that valley. Finally the air men had found the camp and the droppings began of food and clothing and treats. So much was dropped that it was impossible to deal with it all. Meanwhile the POWs waited impatiently for the liberation team which would come to fetch them.

This happened on September 6, 1945. The inhabitants of Kamioka camp left at about 11 o'clock by train and arrived the next day at 14.30 at Yokohama. Everyone had a medical check up and was provided with new kit. The next day we all went by plane of the type C-54 from the airport Atsuma near Tokyo on our way to Okinawa. The Harima officers were still together and had not suffered any losses.

We stayed 2 days on Okinawa after which the journey continued with a B-24 bomber to Manila. We arrived there on 10 September at 15 hours. We were first accommodated at the 5th Replacement Depot and on October 5 we transferred to the 29th Replacement Depot where most of the Dutch had been gathered. This is where we also met the others from the Harima camp when they arrived in Manila on the 19th of September with a transport ship from Yokohama.

Map travel route 1942 -1945



REISROUTE 1942 - 1945

Journey of POW,s

After that first joyful night an extraordinary day followed for our main group in Noda. Our trumpeter began the day with an exuberant "French reveille" after which the Japanese sub commandant bluffed us once more by holding a "tenko" in the Japanese manner. In the course of the morning we had a conference with the commandant Sakamoto who unfortunately could not give us any news regarding our departure. Some newspapers came to the camp, an English edition of the Mainichi Shimbun and from these we learned for the first time about the atom bombs, that had led directly to the Japanese capitulation. Later that day we held a common religious service in thanksgiving for our liberation. Sakamoto had told us that according to orders from Osaka everything would continue as before until our departure from Japan. Because of this and especially on insistence from one of the section commandants sergeant L. Mensingh, we organised that evening a meeting of the Dutch leaders, so as to determine our line of conduct. We realised that through our long imprisonment we had possibly become too modest and that right now the moment had arrived not to give in to anything from the Japanese. To begin with we would organise our own internal service without any involvement of the Japanese; furthermore the Japanese sentries should leave the camp and the barracks. They could keep up their tasks outside, at the gate of the camp. While we sat in discussion sergeant Fujita came in and yelled that it was seven thirty and that we had to sound roll call. We still needed to discuss some more details and decided right away to hold roll call an hour later. This gave us the possibility to take action against the Japanese at that very moment. I marched up to Fujita and told him as clear as possible that we would not hold roll call now but an hour later. He was quite taken aback by this and grumbling went back inside after saying once more, but without much conviction; "sound for roll call"!

There was no bugle call and we continued our discussion. When fifteen minutes later we had not heard again from Fujita we knew that our action had succeeded. We had obtained what we intended. Encouraged by this we decided our next move. I entered the Japanese office and asked the interpreter Ishido to come with me. To begin with he refused and started to sputter a bit, while seeking support from the other Japs. I simply grabbed him by the collar and pulled him outside over the courtyard till in front of the Dutch leaders. We kept him standing while I sat down again. We gave Ishido the following instructions: The war is finished. We as allied military are victorious. We give the orders; from now on you are under our command. The Japanese commandant must report to us tomorrow at 9 o'clock to receive further instructions. Services in the camp and roll calls will be organised by ourselves. Since the Japanese military are still responsible for our presence and security sergeant Visker will report after each roll call. Tell this to sergeant Fujita. You may go.

After a deep bow the Japanese interpreter left our meeting, visibly relieved that he escaped without further problems. We saw from a distance how he was mobbed in the Japanese office by the other Japs. He delivered our instructions! At eight thirty we held roll call in the normal Dutch fashion. Afterwards I reported to Fujita, he saluted me properly and said afterwards "go kurosama" (I thank you for the trouble). It was clear that he was relieved that we did not make any more difficult for him. I decided that there would be more to come because we got the taste of freedom.

From the Japanese office I moved to the guard and called the guard commandant. In my best Japanese I gave him the instruction that the guard had to remain as before but that they were not allowed to be seen in the barracks or the corridors and that they should not concern themselves with the business of the Dutch. They were simply present to guard the exterior of the camp and that merely on the outside. The following days it became clear that the guard followed these orders without fail and we had gotten rid of a nuisance!

The next night many of us did not sleep either. There was still too much tension for our nerves and all new impressions needed to be digested. The Dutch leadership of the camp still had concerns about our security and did not know for sure if the Japs could be trusted especially after our action that evening. It was the reason why we watched all Japs of the staff and the guard throughout the night. However nothing happened; the POWs sat in little groups outside smoking and talking; the Japs stuck together in their office and did not think of sleeping either. Maybe they were even more afraid of an attack than us! The soldiers of the guard did their rounds and stayed respectfully at a distance. I myself also made a couple of rounds and each Japanese I met saluted me in military fashion. The roles had been turned around!

The next day was August 17. That morning we had another discussion with Sakamoto. He recognized our right to manage our own internal business. We immediately put some new demands to him, to some of which he could consent. We demanded a declaration about the Red Cross packages and their transfer from his administration. Furthermore we asked for the photographs that had been made of us on our arrival in Japan. It appeared that he had already transferred his administration to Osaka and that he had destroyed the photographs a day earlier. He gave consent to the declaration on the Red Cross packages. Sakamoto crept more and more in his shell.

We bought several things. The Japanese money we had saved over the years was put into one pot and that way we had a rather significant amount with which we could operate. We bought carts full of fruit, vegetables and even a cow (for 900 yen). Our own men butchered the cow and we received suddenly sufficient meat. Since the warehouse provided enough rice we raised the ration from 600 to 750 grams (dry) per man per day. In addition we also received immediately better condiments. We noted that some rice was thrown away; the ration was high enough and we kept it at that. We noted that on 16 and 17 there was no air raid alarm any more. We did not see any planes in the sky either.

The interpreter Ishido was not visible any more. He probably was quite worried. He had misbehaved quite often and would have deserved a beating from our fellows. Now I had

become our “interpreter” in fact. Sakamoto gave me those days a little dictionary, that served us well. Another little book that I received from the civil interpreter Hayashi I gave to Hans Kohn.

By the end of August I fell ill. It was my first significant illness since my imprisonment. My temperature was 39 degrees and I felt nauseous. I simply continued working however since I could not be missed in the service of the camp. I could not participate in the entertainments. I did however present daily an overview of the circumstances for a group of our camp mates.

Under the leadership of Piet Leechburgh-Auwers all camp mates learned to sing the American national anthem

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planning it as a proper welcome for our liberators.

Meanwhile we were worried that it still took so long. On August 23 we received news that the cease fire would officially be signed on August 31. We were very surprised to learn that not a single allied soldier had arrived in Japan yet. The Japanese had however been so beaten that they satisfied all our wishes. On August 23 we bought another cow, this time for 1300 yen. Sergeant Rinus van der Geer borrowed a rifle from the guard and shot the animal in the head. Now we had sufficient meat again for a couple of days. The Japanese staff came to beg and offered 100 yen for a piece of meat! We refused the money and gave them a front leg.

Our cooks were now capable of making decent food and did this with great pleasure. A forage team sent out by us returned with hundreds of tins of salmon, baskets of tomatoes and fresh fruit. We lived in a festive mood. Preparations were made for the celebration of the anniversary of our Queen. Our cabaret group studied new skits and the “band” went into repetitions. The entire camp became decorated bit by bit.

In spite of the increased rations there were some who still did not find this sufficient. We did not respond to these excessive desires. Which was fortunate because they would have eaten themselves to death! It was now just the period when we had to prepare our men to get ready for the time when they would be allowed to eat without limit.!

On August 25 Sakamoto told me that the roofs of the barracks would be provided with the letters P.W.. At the time we had seen the great American planes circling at some distance from the camp but evidently they had been unable to find us. The letters were to identify this as a P.O.W. camp. On August 29 the first shipment of goods entered the camp. These stores had been dropped by the bombers at a neighbouring airport and were transported to our camp by two trucks. It was the Japanese military police (kempei) who had taken charge of gathering it. We were happy as children with all that we received: chocolate, tins with food, cigarettes, chewing gum, etc. It was quite overwhelming all those gifts.

The nylon parachutes with which the stores had been dropped were also present. This provided us with the cloth from which we were able to have a number of Dutch flags sewn up right away.

That same day the B-29s arrived also over our camp and dropped a second load of stores; on the open terrain just in front of the gate of the camp. This time the stores included other than the foodstuffs also clothing and shoes and new equipment. Our old worn junk now got thrown out and whatever was still useable was handed to the Koreans who lived near our camp. All of us could now get dressed in a new uniform. We received so many supplies that we were unable to distribute it all. It was all stored in the warehouse where the section commandants could come to choose for their men when needed.

A delegation of Koreans was invited to report to our commandant. When they arrived we gave them the news that their country had also been liberated from the Japanese and that they could count on our support for whatever they needed. We gave them also a part of our excess stores with which they were overjoyed.

Every day little groups of Dutchmen went for walks outside the camp. They were not allowed to go too far since we knew that our departure might take place quite suddenly. Even so some made little trips to other cities, even as far as Kobe, but everyone returned to Noda in time. It was not possible to keep the men on a short leash, in any case they all behaved decently and in a correct manner and there were absolutely no clashes with the Japanese. In any case the Japs themselves thought it wise not to give any reason for it.

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Members of the administration of the province of Shigaken, to which Noda belonged, visited us and offered us a Japanese fan (!) for every Dutchman. We learned later that this was a sort of gesture of courtesy. We returned the gentlemen without much ceremony to their capital Otsoe.

The chief of police of Moriyama, a little town in the neighbourhood placed a representative with us who was especially charged with transmitting our demands and to execute our orders. The Japanese military were removed from our camp from that moment on. They established themselves in a building in the village of Noda where they were told to remain at our disposal.

On August 30 the Japanese guard received orders to leave. When they stood in line we made them honour our commandant before marching off. We were now finally totally free in our camp. We brought some rifles from the Japanese school in Noda and established our own sentries. This became the responsibility of the men of the Royal Navy under the command of boatswain van der Linden. They remained in charge of guarding the camp until our departure and made sure that uninvited elements would stay outside the camp. The subservience of the Japanese went as far as that the principal of the secondary school in Noda came to offer his services to keep the camp clean with his pupils on a daily basis. Of course we understood that it had to do with a reward, but we

were delighted to leave them this disagreeable job. They came every day to the camp in an orderly little group and they worked hard. At the end of the day they all received some cigarettes, chocolate or a piece of soap, something they very much appreciated.

A couple of fighters from the American fleet came every morning circling over the camp and dropped a little parachute with fresh bread, coffee and sugar. Their visits gave me the idea of exchanging information with the Americans.

At an open area I erected two tall poles between which was attached a loosely hung cord with a news tube. The fighters knew how to grab the cord with their landing hook but were unable to scoop up the tube so that they were forced to return with it to their aircraft carrier. Later there came aircraft that had a grapple, that was able to pick up the tubes and bring them in. These were somewhat larger dive bombers. In this manner we reported on our circumstances and among other things transmitted a full list of our names. The planes appeared to belong to the American carriers "Lexington" and "Maurice Blanchard".

Later on we also got in touch with planes from the "Bonhomme Richard".

A few camp mates were unable to celebrate the Queen's birthday in our camp. The previous day we had received information that there would be a discussion of the Red Cross in Kyoto and that representatives from all Osaka camps should be present. On August 31, Dr. Arends, adjutant Hummen, sergeant Visker and soldier Kohn went to Kyoto, where they lunched at the modern Myako hotel. The discussion followed but was not really very significant. Apart from the representatives from all camps we also saw again the Swede Gawel and the Swiss who had visited us in Harima. The meeting was presided over by Colonel Murata who changed his tune quite a lot from what had been his habit. We were told little really new except the repeat of the order to keep people together as much as possible so as to be ready for a sudden departure from Japan. We also had a little drive through Kyoto and visited a tea house. Towards evening we returned to our camp in Noda. Here we saw an old acquaintance: the sergeant-major Oshima, our last commandant

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from Harima, who had replaced Sakamoto. It so happened that this old soldier against whom nobody had really any complaints, was just the right person for this. He had cheerfully participated at our theatre presentation. The "sake" we had been ordered appeared to have arrived, which was quite noticeable with several of the Dutchmen! A little group of former camp mates from Harima now present in camp Notogawa had come to us that morning on bicycles. That little group was led by sergeant-major L. Silooy.

Another group under sergeant Chr. Hayes had loaded a cart full of excess clothing, blankets, foodstuff and treats and had delivered this at a nunnery in the neighbourhood of Noda. They had been received by the little nuns with great enthusiasm and gratitude! Many things happened of course during those days after the capitulation of Japan but we became quite impatient. It took 3 complete weeks before the liberation teams started

work. They passed us instructions that we should be ready for departure on September 8. We had to get to the station at Yasu, the nearest one, on our own. We requisitioned therefore the necessary cars and separated the camp into two groups the first one leaving at 9 and the second at 11. I remained last in the camp and lowered our flag. I also took the chest that contained the arms of the Japanese guard and the samurai sword of Sakamoto. This chest was handed to the Americans.

The distance to the station was 11 kilometers. During the drive the exuberant POWs scattered all sorts of tins of food and treats to the population that stood along the way waving us goodbye. At the station we saw the first Americans. It was merely a small "recovery squad" under the command of a military doctor. They all carried Japanese swords as souvenirs. Just when we arrived at the station we saw how two sleeping Kempei men had to surrender their swords. At the station we were given all sorts of forms to fill out and everyone was quickly checked by the doctor. This was the way the time passed; at 2 o'clock the train that would take us arrived.

The Japanese commandant Sakamoto was not present; he had trouble enough keeping some order in the camp after our departure. Even when we were still there it appeared that from all sides some intruders tried to penetrate hoping to find something that was to their taste. We had managed to catch a few and had locked those up at the guard. However now Sakamoto had to see for himself how he would manage this situation. The chief of police of Moriyama (Makinoen) and his interpreter (Kitamura) also came to say goodbye to us. It turned out that they also brought a couple of large parcels for us that contained a delicious lunch. We enjoyed this thoroughly on the way.

There was lots of space on the train. those who did not feel quite well were able to lie down. During the ride we mounted Dutch flags outside the windows. An American sergeant did the rounds with forms on which we could note complaints against the Japanese in reference to the investigation of war crimes.

During that ride we got a clear impression of the enormous destruction created by the bombardments. The big city of Nagoya with its many factories made a pathetic impression. For a distance of kilometers all had been flattened; only here and there a bit of wall or a lantern post still stood. The B-29s had executed a job here that the Japanese will remember a long time.

Our train stopped again twice: first in Notogawa where our mates from Harima the group of 75 men under sergeant-major Theunissen joined us again; afterwards another time at Maebara where a group of Americans got in. After this the ride went on in one single stretch, destination Tokyo!

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Night fell while we rode across the main island Honshu. Our route followed the coastline the whole evening and we saw in the distance the shining of the American search lights

with which the warships communicated. At 3 o'clock in the night we were in Yokohama. It was now september 11, 1945. Through the tunnel of the station we came upon a square where a band played. We saw a number of Red Cross cars and nurses who we looked at with admiration. The reception was in one word: awesome. As soon as we were all assembled we mounted the cars that stood ready and left for the harbour sheds. There it looked just like a factory prepared for the efficient treatment of thousands of POWs. We were first urged to throw away everything we did not absolutely need. Along the road there lay already stacks of old uniforms, bags, canteens etc. from those who preceded us. In the shed we were given first breakfast consisting of coffee and "hot dogs". Next we had to follow the arrows that led to a warm shower, a thorough disinfection, new clothing and an inspection by a variety of military doctors. At the end of the line we came to sit at little tables with American nurses who noted our data and also took our pulse and temperature.

Then we were assembled in groups of 30 men. We could wait for a little while in the canteen: here we got everything for free: cigarettes, writing paper, treats. etc. Finally we stood on the quay where each group entered a landing craft with which we were transported to the American USS Hyde (transport vessel # 178) A navy officer led us below deck and took care that we became accommodated in the troop compartments. At mealtime we went to the mess hall for a sturdy lunch. Especially the ice cream was for us a wonderful surprise. Just when we wanted to take a rest in the afternoon the loudspeakers broadcast a message that the orders for the Hyde had been changed. We were to leave the ship since another vessel had been indicated for our transport. The landing craft came to fetch us again and took us to the USS Goodhue (transport vessel # 107). Here also we found ourselves quickly a good berth and meanwhile it was time for the evening meal. That evening on deck a movie was shown for us. When we looked out over the water of Tokyo bay we could see how on the decks of all American war ships the silver screens had been deployed and movies were being shown everywhere!

The next morning, september 12, we left at seven thirty. Our convoy consisting of 5 transport ships with two small destroyers as escort steamed past the countless ships of the allied war fleet. We counted as many as 12 aircraft carriers and hundreds of other war ships. All arriving and departing fleets sailed precisely in formation. We were told on board that there were still some Japanese submarines that refused to surrender and that therefore some security measures were still required.

We were extremely well cared for on board; food was abundant and delicious. In the ship's

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Dutch Camp Leadership Harima
DE NEDERLANDSE KAMPLEIDING VAN HARIMA.

COMMANDANTEN:	Ltz. S.N. Scheltema	9 dec '42 - 1 mrt '43
	Ltz.C.A.E. van Rhee	1 mrt '43 - 31 jul'43
	Olt.A.Onderwater	31 jul'43 - 12 feb'44
	Sergt.D.A.Visker	12 feb'44 - 20 mei'45
KAMPARTSEN:	J.C.F.Klusman	(Inter naar Kamioka)
Doctors	L.Indorf	(naar Kobe hospitaal)
	C.Arends	(van Tsumori-kamp)
GROEPSCOMMANDANTEN:		
Section Commanders	Sergt.majoor	J.Bimmel
	Sergt.majoor	L.Silooy
	Sergt.majoor	J.A.R.Erkelens
	Sergt.	M.F. van der Geer
	Sergt.	J.A. van Tintelen
	Sergt.	B.Quispel
	Sergt.	A.P. van Schieveen

paper we read that General MacArthur, the allied supreme commander, had instructed that all available facilities be made accessible to the liberated POWs and that they were allowed double rations. Everyone on board did their best to provide us a pleasant journey. Every evening there was a movie on deck and the the ship's little orchestra created a cheerful mood.

We approached warmer areas and got too warm in the troop compartments. Many therefore decided to sleep on deck, there was a fresh breeze which was much more pleasant. For me it made however no difference, I was still ill, felt miserable and had a high fever every day.

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I used my free time to keep my notes up to date and to develop those. Just as many others. in my thoughts I was busy with plans for the future. No one could imagine at the time that that future would be so different from our expectations. On september 18 our convoy arrived in the harbour of Manila. Here it was also crowded with many American warships sailing in and out. Here and there we saw masts and chimneys that reached out of the water. A lot of ships must have been sunk here.

Our disembarkation happened only the next day; with a long column of trucks we were brought to the 29th Replacement Camp. This was an enormous tent camp where all former POWs were received and registered. My fever had meanwhile grown a lot worse and I could not remain on my feet. An ambulance took me to the American field hospital where I was taken in right away and given a treatment for malaria. The first who came to visit me there was our former camp doctor from Harima dr. C. Arends. He had brought a special instruction for me; the Dutch military command wanted reports from all former commandants of the POW camps. I began to work on this right away. On september 21, 22 and 23 I prepared a draft report that doctor Arends took to be typed out in the Dutch camp office.

All Harima groups were now reunited in Manila. Our officers from Zentsuji had already arrived here earlier by plane; the camps of Noda and Notagawa had been transported in the same train to Yokohama; the Kobe group had arrived a few days earlier in Manila with the American USS Oconto. A few individual camp mates had been kept on a hospital ship for further treatment and we had lost forty men. These never returned from Japan.

This then is an account of the experiences of the Harima group, from 1942 till 1945; this is the way it all happened; though unfortunately we were not the only ones. There were so many others: POWs, civilian internees; women and children. Only a few fared better than wed did, most had it much worse. That is why our account is nothing but a partial reflection of the reality, of what we had seen, felt, thought; not much more than a small aspect of that inhuman event, something that civilisation will render impossible one day, the war!

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KAMPARTSEN:	J.C.F.Klusman	(later naar Kamioka)
Doctors	L.Indorf	(naar Kobe hospitaal)
	C.Arends	(van Tsumori-kamp)

GROEPSCOMMANDANTEN:		
Section Commanders	Sergt.majoor	J.Bimmel
	Sergt.majoor	L.Silooy
	Sergt.majoor	J.A.R.Erkelens
	Sergt.	M.F. van der Geer
	Sergt.	J.A. van Tintelen
	Sergt.	B.Quispel
	Sergt.	A.P. van Schieveen
	Sergt.	W.Rapmund

COMMANDANT KEUKENPLOEG:		
Commander Kitchen Crew	Sergt.majoor	J.Theunissen

SCHOEN- EN KLEERMAKERIJ:		
Shoe makers and tailors	Sergt.	H.W.Roozen

ZIEKENVERPLEGER:		
Male Nurses	Brig.	B.Boer
	Brig.	G.B. de Lannoy

APOTHEKER:		
Pharmacist	Sold.	F.Pijpaert

Names of all POW,s of the Harima Group

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NAAMLIJST VAN ALLE KRIJGSGEVANGENEN VAN DE HARIMA-GROEP

Nr	Naam	Rang	Van	Naar
1	Scheltema.S.N.	Ltz II. K.M.R.	Harima	Zentsuji
2	Stal.W.	Gez.Gouv.Mar	Harima	Zentsuji
3	Troost.R.	Gez.Gouv.Mar	Harima	Zentsuji
4	Heule.J.P.H.	Off MSD II KMR	Harima	Zentsuji
5	Matthieu.F.J.	1e Off.GM	Harima	Zentsuji
6	Arps.A.	Ltz II KMR	Harima	Zentsuji
7	Blankesteyn.A.	Ltz II KMR	Harima	Zentsuji
8	Hubregtse P.J.	Ltz II KMR	Harima	Zentsuji
9	v.Turnhout A.J.A.	Ltz II. KMR	Harima	Zentsuji
10	v.Rhee C.A.E.	Ltz II KMR	Harima	Zentsuji
11	Wessendorp.B.J.	Off MSD II KMR	Harima	Zentsuji
12	Schmitz A.A.F.	Ltz III KMR	Harima	Zentsuji
13	Roozen P.A.H.	Ltz III KMR	Harima	Zentsuji
14 x	Dasia J.G.	Ltz II KMROV	Harima	Zentsuji
15	Klusman J.C.F.	OvG II KMR	Harima	Kamioka
16	Sax.H.N.	1e Off GM	Harima	Zentsuji
17	Waltz.H.N.	Hwt.GM	Harima	Zentsuji
18	Verkerk J.H.	1e Off GM	Harima	Zentsuji
19	Indorf.L.	Res OvG II KNIL	Harima	Kobe hosp
20	Uni P.J.	Ltz III KMR	Harima	+ 21-7-43
21	Dreyer K.H.C.	Ltz III KMR	Harima	Zentsuji
22	Fenenga.J.A.	2e Off GM	Harima	Zentsuji
23	Siegers J.A.	2e Wtk GM	Harima	Zentsuji
24	Nutters.F.	2e Wtk GM	Harima	Zentsuji
25	de la Fosse D.E.	2e Wtk GM	Harima	Zentsuji
26	Algera.H.	2e Off GM	Harima	Zentsuji
27	Smith A.L.J.	2e Off GM	Harima	Zentsuji
28	de Vogel A.A.	2e Off GM	Harima	Zentsuji
29	Waller-Diemont A.B.G.	3e Wtk GM	Harima	Zentsuji
30	Poppenk Chr	3e Wtk GM	Harima	Zentsuji
31	Teunissen F.	3e Off GM	Harima	Zentsuji
32	Fender K.F.	3e Off GM	Harima	Zentsuji
33	Sasse J.A.	3e Off GM	Harima	Zentsuji
34	Piette F.A.	3e Wtk GM	Harima	Zentsuji
35	Kool. B.N.A.	3e Wtk GM	Harima	Zentsuji
1 x	Arends C.	OvG I. KNIL	Tsumori	- Harima - Noda
36 x	Onderwater. A.	Ondelt. ML	Harima	+ 12-2-44
37 x	Hummen.H.	Adj OO. ML	Harima	Noda
38 x	Theunissen.J.	Sgt.maj.KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
39 x	Bimmel.J.	Sgt.maj.KNIL	Harima	Noda
40 x	Slothouwer D.	Adj.OO.ML	Harima	Notogawa
41 x	Jeltema M.	Sgt.Maj.ML	Harima	Noda
42 x	Silooy.L.	Sgt.Maj.ML	Harima	Notogawa
43 x	Erkelens J.A.R.	Sgt.maj.KNIL	Harima	Noda
44 x	Gillet A.	Sgt.maj.KNIL	Harima	Noda
45 x	Zink.A.H.	Sgt.maj.KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
46 x	Kluge A.H.	Sgt.maj.ML	Harima	Noda
47 x	de Koning H.F.A.	Sgt.maj.ML	Harima	Noda
48 x	de Vries W.A.C.	Sgt.maj.ML	Harima	Kobe
49	Goedhart W.	Sgt.maj.KNIL	Harima	Noda
50 x	Jansen. W.	Sgt.Maj.KNIL	Harima	Noda

51	Vrugtman D.H.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
52	x Alderden M.	Sergt. ML	Harima	Noda
53	x Visker D.A.	Sergt. ML	Harima	Noda
54	x Quaeflieg H.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Noda
55	x Simon C.E.	Sergt. ML	Harima	Notogawa
56	v. Lakerveld J.H.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Noda
57	v. Deemter J.H.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	+ 8-2-43
58	x Wallaart Chr J.	Sergt. ML	Harima	Kobe
59	Harte S.J.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Noda
60	x Middleton G.	Sergt. ML	Harima	Noda
61	Baier H.C.C.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Noda
62	x Hendriks P.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Noda
63	x v.d. Geer M.F.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Noda
64	x Boertje L.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Kobe
65	x Burghout G.H.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	+ 11-2-44
66	Berkholst J.P.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Noda
67	x v. Poppel W.D.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Noda
68	Bartels J.J.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Kobe
69	Kolle J.W.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Noda
70	x v. Tintelen J.A.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
71	v. Roest H.J.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	+ 17-3-44
72	x Moeskotte A.B.M.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Noda
73	x Truijters A.J.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
74	x Slotboom Th.A.	Sergt. ML	Harima	Notogawa
75	x v.d. Berg J.R.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Noda
76	x v.d. Paardt W.	Sergt. ML	Harima	Noda
77	x Klok J.H.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Noda
78	Scheepers E.P.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
79	Bosdijk B.J.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Noda
80	v. Schieveen A.P.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
81	Berkholst G.B.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Noda
82	Stock J.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Kobe
83	Dezentjé A.J.E.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	+ 20-1-44
84	Lotz F.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Noda
85	v. Coevorden C.J.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Noda
86	Gersen J.P.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	+ 1-2-44
87	Burgemeestre R.O.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Noda
88	Hazenbergh G.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Noda
89	Rampen B.C.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Noda
90	x Bettinger H.C.P.	Sergt. ML	Harima	Kobe
91	Nijwit A.S.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Noda
92	Andreas J.M.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Noda
93	Bense A.C.L.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Kobe
94	x van Gameren J.A.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Noda
95	x Tolhoek J.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
96	x van Dijk G.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	+ 27-2-44
97	Rozen H.W.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
98	x Schellekens P.J.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Kobe
99	van Eldik J.F.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Noda
100	Meijer A.B.E.	Sergt. KNIL	Harima	Noda

101	Remeeus H.L.	Sergt KNIL	Harima	Noda
102	Weyne.W.M.	Sergt K.M.	Harima	Notogawa
103	Mijnlieff F.F.W.	Sergt KNIL	Harima	Noda
104	Quispel.B.	Sergt KNIL	Harima	Noda
105	v.Polanen W.	Sergt KNIL	Harima	Kobe
106	Wakkers J.P.M.	Sergt KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
107	x Hofmijster W.J.	Sergt ML	Harima	Noda
108	x Huiskamp B.	Sergt ML	Harima	Noda
109	x Bakker J.	Sergt ML	Harima	Noda
110	x Roukens A.S.	Sergt ML	Harima	Kobe
111	x v.Heemskerken A.	Sergt KNIL	Harima	Noda
112	Roskam H.	Sergt K.M.	Harima	Notogawa
113	x van Es H.	Sergt K.M.	Harima	Noda
114	x Bilderbeek G.W.	Sergt ML	Harima	Kobe
115	x Spindelaar.J.	Sergt ML	Harima	Notogawa
116	de Haas.R.	Sergt KNIL	Harima	Kobe
117	Thörrig J.J.W.	Sergt KNIL	Harima	+17-3-44
118	Wesselman.L.G.	Sergt KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
119	Hayes C.A.	Sergt KNIL	Harima	Noda
120	Burgers J.	Sergt KNIL	Harima	Noda
121	x Mensingh.L.	Sergt KNIL	Harima	Noda
122	x Rapmund W.	Sergt ML	Harima	Noda
123	Hendriks J.E.	Sergt KNIL	Harima	Noda
124	x Wernicke M.E.	Sergt ML	Harima	Notogawa
125	x Moojen. E.G.	Sergt ML	Harima	Noda
126	Middelkoop S.	Sergt KNIL	Harima	Noda
127	x Verbrugge B.	Sergt KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
128	Sijtema G.	Sergt KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
129	de Graaff E.	Sergt KNIL	Harima	Noda
130	Overink W.J.H.	Sergt KNIL	Harima	Noda
131	Eekhout P.F.	Sergt KNIL	Harima	Noda
132	Klaarmond C.L.	Sergt KNIL	Harima	Noda
133	Holtappel J.K.H.	Sergt KNIL	Harima	Noda
134	Fisher W.C.	Sergt KNIL	Harima	Kobe
135	Klaare L.	Sergt KNIL	Harima	Noda
136	Ernst G.	Sergt KNIL	Harima	Noda
137	Sletering V.	Sergt KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
138	Grosfeld W.E.N.	Sergt KNIL	Harima	Noda
139	Smith A.A.	Korp.KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
140	x Lapré R.	Korp.ML	Harima	Noda
141	x Beck.M.M.	Korp.ML	Harima	Noda
142	x Wiersema G.	Korp.ML	Harima	Notogawa
143	x Quivooy.G.	Korp KNIL	Harima	Noda
144	X Verwijk R.C.	Korp KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
145	X Janse W.J.	Korp KNIL	Harima	Noda
146	x Nöllen G	Korp KNIL	Harima	Noda
147	Schut H.N.	Korp KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
148	Haasjes R.	Korp ML	Harima	Noda
149	x Langeveld G.	Korp ML	Harima	Noda
150	x v.d.Pavert J.J.	Korp ML	Harima	Noda

151	x de Lannoy G.B.	Korp KNIL	Harima	Kobe
152	x van Swieten H.R.	Korp ML	Harima	Notogawa
153	x v.d.Burg C.H.	Korp KNIL	Harima	Noda
154	x Hovenkamp A.	Korp ML	Harima	Noda
155	x Schattefor H.M.W.	Korp KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
156	x v.Schaardenburch A.	Korp KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
157	x de Bies W.N.	Korp ML	Harima	Noda
158	x v.d.Meijden J.	Korp KNIL	Harima	Noda
159	x Ros V.W.F.	Korp KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
160	x Roest D.	Korp KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
161	x van Gijn N.F.	Korp KNIL	Harima	Noda
162	x Portier J.Th	Korp KNIL	Harima	Noda
163	x Wasseur B.	Korp ML	Harima	Notogawa
164	x Duyneveld E.G.	Korp KNIL	Harima	Noda
165	Donlou M.	Korp KNIL	Harima	Noda
166	x Jansen P.	Korp KNIL	Harima	Kobe +31-5-45
167	x Boer B.	Korp KNIL	Harima	Noda
168	x Vos J.	Korp K.M.	Harima	Notogawa
169	x Slotboom J.A.F.	Korp K.M.	Harima	Notogawa
170	de la Rambelje H.E.	Korp K.M.	Harima	Noda
171	x Schrier L.	Korp K.M.	Harima	Notogawa
172	x Schot A.	Korp K.M.	Harima	Notogawa
173	x v.d.Schley.W	Korp K.M.	Harima	Notogawa
174	x Muller J.A.	Korp K.M.	Harima	Noda
175	x v Zijl D.	Sergt KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
176	v. Kleef M.	Sergt KNIL	Harima	Noda
177	x Jut R.J.	Korp KNIL	Harima	Noda
178	x Oost K.	Korp ML	Harima	Kobe
179	x Nilant P.	Korp ML	Harima	Kobe
180	x Urbach L.R.A.	Korp KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
181	x Holtrop C.	Sold ML	Harima	Noda
182	Werner D.J.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Kobe
183	Vidal A.J.	Sold KNIL	Harima	+28-1-44
184	Wouters S.	Sold KNIL	Harima	+22-3-44
185	de Lyon H.C.A.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
186	Neyndorff H.	Sold KNIL	Harima	+24-2-44
187	Timmerman R.L.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
188	Nijwit S.J.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
189	Meijer K.W.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
190	Michels C.J.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
191	Herrebrugh O.	Sold KNIL	Harima	+20-2-44
192	Donker Ch.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
193	de Munck W.A.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Kobe
194	Wijnschenk.G.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
195	Mathlener.W.A.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
196	Postuma M.J.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
197	Nolten J.C.	Matr K.M.	Harima	Noda
198	Best J.C.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
199	Donkel E	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
200	Kahle.R.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda

201	Topp J.F.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Kobe
202	x Paulus.J.	Matr K.M.	Harima	Noda
203	x Alberts W.V.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
204	Allart J.P.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
205	Poot G.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Kobe
206	x Karels A.L.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Kobe
207	x v.Schooten L.A.A.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
208	Berens L.H.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Kobe
209	Keyser L.E.	Sold KNIL	Harima	+24-3-44
210	Laernoos J.	Matr K.M.	Harima	Noda
211	Lazar Ph J.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
212	Huiskes A.H. Ch.	Sold KNIL	Harima	+27-3-44
213	Eysink A.J.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
214	Bout A.E.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
215	x Heynen.F.H.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
216	Cramer T.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
217	van Es E.C.W.N.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
218	Bos E.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
219	Smits A.F.	Sold KNIL	Harima	+17-4-44
220	Stam.F.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
221	Felix D.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Kobe
222	Müller.M.	Sold KNIL	Harima	+19-2-44
223	Dirksen C.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Kobe
224	de Bats M.M.	Sold M.L.	Harima	Noda
225	Reiche R.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
226	Mauer K.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
227	Jubido W.T.C.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
228	Steinert F.B.B.P.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
229	x de Visser J.	Sold ML	Harima	Notogawa
230	Klop W.	Sold ML	Harima	Noda
231	Raaff R.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
232	Macaré.E.W.	Sold KNIL	Harima	+29-1-43
233	Zitter J.B.L.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
234	Pietersen K.Ch	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
235	Wardenaar F.W.	Sold ML	Harima	Notogawa
236	Schiffer A.H.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
237	Brune G.J.W.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
238	Frantzmann L.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
239	Vermeeren M.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
240	Barthelemy.W.Ch.F.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Kobe
241	Rudolph.H.	Sold KNIL	Harima	+22-2-44
242	Keyser F.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Kobe
243	Oostenbroek A.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
244	Baars.Th	Sold ML	Harima	Noda
245	Lebert F.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
246	Heyligers W.J.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
247	Jacobs C.A.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
248	Beth G.	Sold KNIL	Harima	5-5-44
249	van Moll F.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
250	Coenraad.J.G.	Sold KNIL	Harima	+25-1-44

251	Wardenaar M.B.H.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
252	Nelk.J.O.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
253	Jordans F.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Kobe
254	Pijttersen M.	Matr K.M.	Harima	Noda
255	Lents M.Th	Sold KNIL	Harima	+27-10-44
256	Steinfort G.O.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Kobe
257	Groen L.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
258	Avis P.M.A.J.	Sold KNIL	Harima	+25-1-43
259	Collard R.H.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
260	Brocx.K.T.R.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
261	Karper T.J.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
262	v.d.Berg N.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
263	Juch C.F.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
264	x Kisman J.C.	Sold ML	Harima	Noda
265	Pijpaert F.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
266	x Barbier L.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
267	Leechburch-Auwers F.C.T.A.C.N.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
268	Ernste.J.G.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
269	Kohn H.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
270	Pijpers E.J.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
271	Monsees F.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
272	Bouwer D.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
273	Piquet J.S.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Kobe
274	Westerhoff H.	Sold KNIL	Harima	+22-12-42
275	x Voogt M.A.	Sold ML	Harima	Notogawa
276	Faintuch F.L.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
277	Hoorn E.H.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Kobe
278	Herman J.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
279	Kretszchmar H.A.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
280	Marks L.A.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
281	x v.d.Sluis J.H.C.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
282	Rapmund Th.H.N.	Sold ML	Harima	Noda
283	Nolle F.H.	Matr K.M.	Harima	Kobe
284	Poppe L.W.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
285	Loos K.E.	Matr K.M.	Harima	Noda
286	Walter A.L.	Sold KNIL	Harima	+1-2-44
287	Nort W.	Matr K.M.	Harima	Noda
288	Rauch E.E.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
289	Jacques H.	Matr K.M.	Harima	Noda
290	Heyes J.R.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Kobe
291	x Daniel F.A.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
292	x Saffrie M.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
293	von Grumbkow.E.H.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
294	x van Gumster.G.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
295	van Sitteren S.H.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
296	Braspot Ph.C.V.	Sold KNIL	Harima	+27-2-44
297	GeeRaards.J.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
298	Aspeling.D.J.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
299	Hamar de la Bretonière,L.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
300	Hesseling,J.A.C.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda

301	Vonck.P.	Sold KNIL	Harima	+4-4-44
302	Gomis.H.A.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
303	Siau J.C.A.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
304	van Wijk.G.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
305	Klock.E.F.Th	Sold KNIL	Harima	Kobe
306	Teheux J.H.P.L.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
307	Rolsma.A.F.	Matr K.M.	Harima	Notogawa
308	Surig K.H.	Matr K.M.	Harima	Notogawa
309	Banke E.J.J.	Matr K.M.	Harima	+9-12-43
310	x Steinfort D.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Kobe
311	Aveling H.A.	Matr K.M.	Harima	Noda
312	de Roock.G.L.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
313	x Mál.H.	Sold M.L.	Harima	Noda
314	x Daalderop.J.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
315	v.Zuylen.L.F.G.	Matr.K.M.	Harima	Notogawa
316	Pipper J.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
317	x van Lambaart G.C.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Kobe
318	Bruinen J.W.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
319	Ottenhof C.G.	Matr K.M.	Harima	Noda
320	Mac Gillavry W.E.	Burger	Harima	Kobe
321	Landman J.	Matr K.M.	Harima	Kobe
322	c.Domburg C.H.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
323	x Ecaubert C.C.K.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
324	de Groot L.	Sold KNIL	Harima	+27-4-44
325	v.d.Voort.E.H.	Matr K.M.	Harima	Notogawa
326	Alexandre R.	Matr K.M.	Harima	Noda
327	Olmeyer C.C.B.	Matr K.M.	Harima	Noda
328	x de Weerd.B.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
329	Heil W.L.	Sold KNIL	Harima	+11-5-44
330	de Zeeuw.C.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
331	Coenraad N.C.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
332	Jesse W.C.	Matr K.M.	Harima	Kobe
333	Guttenberg R.E.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
334	Lubeck L.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
335	Samson A.F.H.	Sold KNIL	Harima	+4-2-45
336	Ernst H.E.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Kobe
337	Kolle J.A.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Kobe
338	Pelt F.J.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
339	Eimers S.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
340	Pelk H.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
341	Rijke H.	Matr K.M.	Harima	Kobe
342	Wats W.J.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
343	Hertel F.A.L.	Sold KNIL	Harima	+22-2-44
344	Marcks J.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
345	Andoetoe D.J.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
346	Geway.Ph	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
348	den Ottolander M.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Kobe
349	Dondorp A.E.H.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
350	Joseph.J.M.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda

351	x van Ling. J.L.	Sold M.L.	Harima	Noda
352	Wolsak. J.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
353	Kanters J.F.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
354	Portier M.E.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
355	Rosenquist J.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
356	Lemaire R.E.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
357	Corneille P.L.G.	Sold KNIL	Harima	+7-2-44
358	Camphuis G.H.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
359	Winter G.J.F.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
360	x v.d.Linden L.	Korp. K.M.	Harima	Noda
361	de Boer G.L.	Sold KNIL	Harima	+28-3-44
362	x van Dalen A.A.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
363	Brand H.H.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Kobe
364	x Keyner. L.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
365	Meyer. P.J.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
366	Andela E.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
367	Cordier de Croust. B.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Kobe
368	Kraag L.F.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
369	Veerman P.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Kobe
370	Valkenhoff J.F.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
371	Marcks J.J.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
372	Binkhuizen. G.E.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
373	de Graaff A.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
374	Sulpio H.S.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
375	Leraschi A.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Kobe
376	Hanssens E.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
377	de Neef M.Th.J.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
378	Bethbeder. L.F.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
379	Nijssen G.Th	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
380	Convens J.B.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Kobe
381	v. Vulpen. J.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Kobe
382	Dessauvagie P.C.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Kobe
383	van Kenpen H.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
384	Rudolph. I.W.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Notogawa
385	v. d. Oudenaller D.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Kobe
386	Coppen J	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
387	Gissot F.L.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
388	van Galen G.J.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
389	x v. Bilderbeek. J.H.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
390	Pattiwael van Westerloo. C.	Sold KNIL	Harima	+25-1-44
391	Brijl. A.	Sold KNIL	Harima	+23-9-43
392	Barkmeyer. C.A.H.	Sold KNIL	Harima	Noda
393	Gabeler. K.L.	Sold KNIL	Harima	+11-1-44
394	Doeve L.W.	Sold KNIL	Harima	+9-2-44
395	x Coles J.	British Private Artillery	Harima	Notogawa
396	x Austin A.	British Private Artillery	Harima	Notogawa
397	Bong S.C.	British Private RAF	Harima	+5-6-43
398	x Guy. H.J.	British Private RAF	Harima	Notogawa
399	x Edwards E.	British Private RAF	Harima	Notogawa
400	x Edwards J.	British Private RAF	Harima	Notogawa

Explanation of Abbreviations -107-

BETEKENIS VAN DE AFKORTINGEN IN DE NAAMLIJST

Asterix indicates professional military.

x achter het kampnummer wijst op beroepsmilitairen

KNIL : Koninklijk Nederlands-Indisch Leger Colonial Army

K.M. : Koninklijke Marine Royal Navy

ML : Militaire Luchtvaart (van het K.N.I.L.) Airforce

Ltz : Luitenant ter zee

KMR : Koninklijke Marine reserve

GM : Gouvernements Marine (van Nederlands Indië)

MSD : Marine stoomvaartdienst

Gez. : Gezagvoerder Ship captain

OvG : Officier van Gezondheid Doctor

Hwt : Hoofdwerktuigkundige Chief Mechanic

Sergt: sergeant. (of bootsman)

Sgt.Maj: Sergeant-majoor

Adj.OO: Adjudant-onderofficier

Korp : Korporaal (of Brigadier)

Sold : soldaat

In de rechter kolom is de bestemming aan gegeven na het vertrek uit Harima. Staat hier een kruisje met een datum, dan is dat de overlijdensdatum.

The right hand column destination after departure from Harima.

A cross indicates deceased.

NAMEN VAN DE JAPANNERS:

Hoofdkwartier van de Osaka-kampen: H.Q. Osaka Camp
Commandant Kolonel MURATA
hoofdtolk (burger) Hayashi

Harima-kamp;

1e commandant 1e Luitenant Takenaka (9 dec. '42 tot juni 1944)
2e commandant 2e Luitenant Mori (juni 1944 -24 dec 1944)
3e commandant Vaandrig Kinari (24 dec 1944 -maart 1945)
4e commandant Sergt-majoor Oshima) maart 1945-20 mei 1945)

1e ondercommandant Sergeant (naam verloren gegaan)
2e ondercommandant Sergeant Shiozumi
3e ondercommandant Sergeant Tarodachi
4e ondercommandant Sergeant Fujita (zelfde als in Noda)

Paymaster Sergeant Furuya (later sergeant-majoor)
Korporaal Amada

Gunzoku (reserve-soldaten)

Takemoto (de rat)
Nakatani (kleermakerij)
Yokoyama (brilslang)
Kondo (de Beul)
Yamamoto (luicaard)
Myamoto (kwelduivel)
Okamura (marinier)

Ziekenverplegers: Male Nurses

Korporaal Matsushita
Soldaat Asai
Soldaat Asakura
Soldaat Fujiwara

Werfbeamten Wharf Administration

Hoofd Fukumoto
Weefpolitie Takenaka (morgenstond)
Yamada

Tolken: Ishiba Interpreters

Kagami de "Amerikaan")

Ziekenverpleger van de werf: Myamoto Wharf Nurse

Werkbazen: Hoofdbaas Kogawa (eierhoofd, ook wel ketoprak)
Work Bosses Yabumoto(oude baas van de pijpenploeg)
Okano (de beer)
Naito (Piet)
Nakao (Mengelberg)
Atoyama (Mister)

Noda-kamp:

Commandant: vaandrig Mutsujiro Sakamoto
Ondercommandant : Sergeant Fujita
Paymaster: korporaal Fukuda
Soldaat keuken: Yamada (duimloze)
Tolk : Ishido (Donald Duck)
Verpleger: Soldaat Fujiwara
Kledingmagazijn: Soldaat Tsuji
Menagemeester: soldaat Aoki

Information about deceased POW,s Harima Group

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GEGEVENS OVERLEDENEN VAN DE HARIMA-GROEP :

AVIS. P.M.A.J.	landstorm soldaat van het KNIL geb te Djocja 24-9-1901 ovl te Harima 25-1-1943 doodsoorzaak: dysentëria Fam. E.P. Avis laatstelijk Soerabaja
BANKE, G.J.J.	Militiematroos K.M. geb te Tjepoe 19-7-1907 ovl te Harima 9-12-1943 doodsoorzaak: Pneumonia Mevr. Banke, laatstelijk te Soerabaja
BETH. G.	Landstomsoldaat van het KNIL geb te Pretoria 14-12-1899 ovl te Harima 5-5-1944 doodsoorzaak: Pellagra Mevr W.C.H. Beth-Beekink te Soerabaja
DE BOER. G.L.	Landstomsoldaat van het KNIL geb Terwispe 26-7-1897 ovl te Harima 28-3-1944 doodsoorzaak: Pleuritis Mevr de Boer-Zuidema, laatstelijk Soerabaja
BONG SYE CHONG	Chinees militair in Britse Dienst geb Bangita 3-7-1919 ovl Harima 5-6-1943 doodsoorzaak: Pneumonia Fam Wang Chin San te Singapore
BRASPOT. Ph.C.	Landstomsoldaat van het KNIL geb Rijswijk 15-8-1900 ovl Harima 27-2-1944 doodsoorzaak: Nephrose Mevr Braspot laatstelijk te Soerabaja
BRIJL. A.	Landstomsoldaat van het KNIL geb te Sibolga Sumatra 14-7-1901 ovl te Harima 23-9-1943 doodsoorzaak: Nephritis werkgever firma Coster-Voorhout te Soerabaja
BURGHOUT. G.H.	Sergeant der Genie van het KNIL geb Utrecht 23-7-1904 ovl te Harima 11-2-1944 doodsoorzaak Broncho-Pneumonia Mevr Burghout, laatstelijk Semarang
COENRAAD J.O.	Landstomsoldaat van het KNIL geb Soerabaja 6-1-1902 ovl te Harima 25-1-1944 doodsoorzaak: Pellagra Fam M.T. Coenraad laatst te Soerabaja
CORNEILLE P.L.G.	Landstomsoldaat van het KNIL geb te Ponorogo 24-2-1894 ovl te Harima 7-2-1944 doodsoorzaak: Pellagra Fam Corneille Zoutwinning Madoera

VAN DEEMTER J.H. Militie-sergeant van het KNIL
geb Groningen 26-1-1912
ovl te Harina 8-2-1943
doodsoorzaak: Diphtheria
fam v. Deemter laatste Soerabaja

DEZENTJE A.J.E. Landstorm sergeant van het KNIL
geb te Soerakarta 30-1-1898
ovl te Harina 20-1-1944
doodsoorzaak: Pellagra
Mevr Dezentjé laatste te Semarang

VAN DIJK.G. Sergeant der Genie van het KNIL
geb Warffum 19-3-1908
ovl te Harina 27-2-1944
doodsoorzaak: Pneumonia

DOEVE L.W. echtgenote was Menadoneesche
Landstorm soldaat van het KNIL
geb Batavia 6-4-1895
ovl te Harina 9-2-1944
doodsoorzaak: Pellagra
Fam Doeve laatste te Semarang

GABELER K.L. Landstormsoldaat van het KNIL
geb te Sidajoe 15-3-1902
ovl te Harina 11-1-1944
doodsoorzaak: Pellagra
Fam Gabeler laatste te Semarang

GERSEN J.P. Landstorm sergeant van het KNIL
geb te Buitenzorg 18-6-1894
ovl te Harina 1-2-1944
doodsoorzaak: Pellagra
Fam Gersen laatste te Bandoeng

DE GROOT L. Landstorm soldaat van het KNIL
geb te Banjoemas 23-5-1906
ovl te Harina 27-4-1944
doodsoorzaak: Tuberculosis
Fam E.H.de Groot laatste te Oengaran

HEIL.W.L. Landstorm soldaat van het KNIL
geb Semarang 10-2-1896
ovl te Harina 11-9-1944
doodsoorzaak: Pellagra
Fam J.W.Heil laatste te Oengaran

HERTEL F.A.L. Landstorm soldaat van het KNIL
geb Semarang 14-6-1907
ovl te Harina 22-2-1944
doodsoorzaak: Pneumonia
Mevr Hertel-Klein te Soerabaja

HERREBRUGH.O. Landstorm soldaat van het KNIL
geb te Bandoeng 17-4-1905
ovl te Harina 20-2-1944
doodsoorzaak: onbekend (vergiftigingsverschijnselen)
Fam C.Herrebrugh Suikerfabriek
Krebong.

HUISKES A.H.C. Landstorm soldaat van het KNIL
geb te Magelang 20-6-1900
ovl te Harima 27-3-1944
doodsoorzaak: Pellagra
fam L.E.Huiskes laatst te Semarang

KEYSER.L.E. Landstorm soldaat van het KNIL
geb te Sitoebondo 10-4-1899
ovl te Harima 24-3-1944
doodsoorzaak: Pellagra-beri beri
Fam Keyser, laatstelijk te Solo

LENTS M.Th Landstorm soldaat van het KNIL
geb te Soerabaja 10-6-1895
ovl te Harima 17-10-1944
doodsoorzaak: Tuberculosis
fam P.A.Lents laatst te Soerabaja

MACARE E.W. Landstorm soldaat van het KNIL
geb te Soerabaja 26-11-1897
ovl te Harima 29-1-1943
doodsoorzaak: dysenteria
Fam E.Macaré-Keynen te Semarang

MULLER.M. Landstorm soldaat van het KNIL
geb te Soerabaja 1-12-1907
ovl te Harima 19-2-1944
doodsoorzaak: Pellagra
Fam E Muller, laatst te Soerabaja

NEYNDORFF.H. Landstorm soldaat van het KNIL
geb Madiden 8-10-1897
ovl te Harima 24-2-1944
doodsoorzaak: Pellagra
fa m.H.Neyndorff laatst te Soerabaja

ONDERWATER;Arend Onderluitenant Hoofdmonteur der Militaire
Luchtvaart van het KNIL
geb te Rotterdam 6-10-1894
ovl te Harima 12-2-1944
doodsoorzaak: Pellagra
Mevr R.Onderwater-van Enter, laatst te
Batavia

PATTIWAE VAN WESTERLOO.C. landstorm soldaat van het KNIL
geb te Batavia 30-9-1897
ovl te Harima 25-1-1944
doodsoorzaak: Pellagra
Fam E Pattiwael-van Westerloo te Batavia

van ROEST H.J. Landstorm sergeant van het KNIL
geb Bottrop (Westfalen) 19-4-1894
ovl te Harima 17-3-1944
doodsoorzaak: Nephrose-pellagra
fam S.Swol, laatstelijk te Salatiga

RUDOLPH.H. Landstorm soldaat van het KNIL
geb te Semarang 8.8.1894
ovl te Harima 22-2-1944
doodsoorzaak: Pellagra
fam W.Rudolph-van Loo te Semarang

SAMSON A.F.H. Landstorm soldaat van het KNIL
geb te Djember 12-5-1902
ovl te Harima 4-2-1945
doodsoorzaak: Pneumonia
mevr E.D.Samson-Verboon te Soerabaja

SMITS A.F. Landstorm soldaat van het KNIL
geb Bandoeng 15-10-1896
ovl te Harima 17-4-1944
doodsoorzaak: Nephrose
fam E.G.Smits laatstelijk te Semarang

THORIG J.J.W. Landstorm sergeant van het KNIL
geb te Palembang 27-4-1904
ovl te Harima 17-3-1944
doodsoorzaak: Influenza-pellagra
Fam Thörrig laatstelijk te Soerabaja

UNI, P.J. Luitenant ter Zee II Kon Marine reserve.
geb te Haren (Groningen) 22-9-1914
ovl te Harima 21-7-1943 (executie na een
ontvluchttingspoging)
Fam M.Uni-Staverman laatst te Soerabaja

VIDAL A.J. Landstorm soldaat van het KNIL
geb Madioen 3-10-1899
ovl te Harima 28-1-1944
doodsoorzaak: Pellagra
fam I.Vidal laatstelijk te Soerabaja

VONCK P. Landstorm soldaat van het KNIL
geb te Bunschoten 10-2-1903
ovl te Harima 4-4-1944
doodsoorzaak: diarrhoea
fam A.M.Vonck laatstelijk te Soerabaja

WALTER A.L. Landstorm soldaat van het KNIL
geb te Bodja 10-1-1895
ovl te Harima 1-2-1944
doodsoorzaak: Pellagra
fam J.E.Walter, laatstelijk te Soerabaja

WESTERHOFF H. Landstorm soldaat van het KNIL
geb te Amsterdam 26-12-1901
ovl te Harima 22-12-1942
doodsoorzaak: dysenteria
Fam Westerhoff-Fey laatst te Soerabaja

WOUTERS S. Landstorm soldaat van het KNIL
geb Pemalang 29-12-1901
ovl te Harima 22-3-1941
doodsoorzaak: Influenza-Pellagra
fam C.M.Wouters-Stok Modjokerto

JANSEN P. Brigadier van het KNIL
ovl te Kobe op 31 Mei, 1945
doodsoorzaak: Endocarditis, T.B.pos en
Nephritis.

NAAMLIJST VAN DE KOBE-GROEP :

1. Naar "Kobe-house" gingen:

Bartels J.J.	sergt KNIL	Landman J.	matr KM
Barthelemy W.C.F.	sold KNIL	de Lannoy G.B.	brig KNIL
Berens L.H.	sold KNIL	Leraschi A	sold KNIL
Bettinger H.C.P.	sergt ML	de Munck W.A.	sold KNIL
Bilderbeek G.W.	sergt ML	Nolle F.H.	matr KM
Boertje L.	sergt KNIL	Oost K.	brig ML
Brand H.H.	sold KNIL	den Ottolander M.P.	sold KNIL
Convens J.B.	sold KNIL	Piquet J.S.	sold KNIL
Cordier de Croust	B Sold KNIL	van Polanen W	sergt KNIL
Dirksen C.	sold KNIL	Foot G.	sold KNIL
Ernst.H.E.	sold KNIL	Rijke H.	matr KM
Felix D.	sold KNIL	Schellekens P.J.	sergt KNIL
Fisher W.C.	sergt KNIL	Slothouwer D	adj OO KNIL
de Haas R.	sergt KNIL	Steinfort G.O.	sold KNIL
Hayes J.R.	sold KNIL	Topp J.F.	sold KNIL
Heemstra S.J.T.	sold KNIL	de Vries W.A.C.	sgt.maj ML
Jesse W.C.	matr KM	v.Vulpen J.	sold KNIL
Jordans F.	sold KNIL	Wallaart J.Ch	sergt ML
Karels L.A.	sold KNIL	de Weerd B.	sold KNIL
Keyzer F.	sold KNIL	Werner D.J.	sold KNIL
Klock E F Th	sold KNIL		
2. Naar "Kobe-hospitaal" gingen: **Sent to Kobe Hospital**

Bense A.C.L.	sergt KNIL	v.d Oudenaller D.	sold KNIL
Dessauvagie P.C.	sold KNIL	Roukens A.R.	sergt ML
Hoorn E.H.	sold KNIL	Steinfort D	sold KNIL
Jansen P.	brig KNIL	Stock J.	sergt KNIL
Kolle J.A.	sold KNIL	Veerman P.	sold KNIL
v.Lambaart G.C.	sold KNIL	mc Gillavry	burger
Nilant Th	brig ML		
3. Aangetroffen in "Kobe House" (niet uit Harima afkomstig)
Found at Kobe house, not from Harima.

Apfel P.L.	Matroos K.M.		
Bernard F.W.J.	Adjo.o. KNIL		
Borgen A.E.	Matroos K.M.		
Jackson W.	Matroos K.M.		
Vermeer L.A.	Korporaal K.M.		
de Vries M.J.	Korporaal K.M.		

en nog 3 anderen, waarvan de namen niet meer bewaard zijn gebleven, omdat zij in Kawasaki-kamp achterbleven, toen de groep naar Nomachi vertrok.-

Names of three men were not kept as they stayed in Kawasaki camp when the group went to Nomachi.