



A plan of Weihsien Camp, Shantung Province, China. The camp, located on the grounds of a former mission compound about fifty to sixty years old, was surrounded by a wall and set out in the country, about three miles from Weihsien, a city of 100,000 population.

Within the wall were two areas, one in which the Japanese lived, and the other in which the internees were quartered. The homes which the Japanese occupied were upper middle-class, pre- World War I models

made of brick and which had been the missionaries' residences. The rest of the compound, the working mission, contained living space allocated to the 2,000 internees, as well as schools, a church built some time in the early twenties, a small ballfield, an excellent and somewhat new hospital building, a bakery, and three kitchens. Families in the camp lived in rows of 9 by 12-foot rooms; the single people lived in dormitory rooms in the larger classroom buildings. The scale of the plan is accurate: the compound is only 200 yards at its widest point, and 150 yards long..



*A small Chinese summer house in an area between two of the large classroom buildings.*

*The hospital. To the right, one can see clearly the wall with its electrified barbed wire, the guard-house, and the countryside beyond.*



*A classroom building. One of the largest buildings in the compound, this was probably the administration and classroom building of the middle-school. Here men and Toomen's dormitories filled all the rooms.*





*A typical row of 9 by 12-foot rooms where the families lived. This sketch shows a patio in front, a stove and table where the woman is working, a small garden where vegetables might be grown, a line for laundry, and so on.*

*The yard of Kitchen I, the largest kitchen of the compound, where the author was cook and later manager. Two men are shown working, preparing lunch on the table.*





*Inside Kitchen I. which fed 800 people. This shows large cauldrons in which all the cooking was done ( the man is stirring one here) , the various pots used for serving the food, the stoke hole below the cauldrons where the striker kept his fires, the Pot for water on the right hand side, and a lot of dirt and mess all around.*

*The camp bakery (on the right) and one of the men's latrines and showers beyond it. The bakery held large ovens and a room for making bread. The water tower on the left is for the men's showers; a man is pumping water into the tower.*



*The ballfield and a good view of the wall showing the electrified barbed wire, the guardhouse with the machine guns in it, and the defense stations of the Japanese guard. They never had to use these stations.. The very small softball diamond was so close to the wall that there was some problem of losing balls over it.*



*Looking down the main road of the camp past the rows of houses toward the gate. The internees went outside the gate only to dump the garbage.*



*View of Blocks 21-22, showing two rows of 9 by 12-foot rooms and a women's latrine with the water tower behind it.*



March 1942

Since not much has happened here in this calm, enclosed life, there has not seemed to be much point in keeping a day to day record. Nevertheless there are some aspects of a life like this that are interesting and so are worth putting down. But first the general circumstances of our interned existence should be recorded.

The main factor that stands out is that relative to what we all expected should war with Japan break out, we have been extremely fortunate. In the first place the majority of us, those who were already living in the South Compound, have been able to stay in our own houses and so to keep up the usual basic comforts of life as well as retain all our belongings. Since we had all rather expected to be carted off somewhere, presumably to some sort of "concentration camp" with only the things that we could carry in our hands, this fact has been a pleasant surprise.

Of course, those foreigners who had been living in other parts of the main campus had to move into this compound into the houses already occupied with the inevitable result that there has been a bit of crowding. Fortunately however, each of the separate groups has found they

... it is the real business manager? And are  
... of business in Hong Kong - ...  
... money ... for their living ...

Just a note on prices as of May 1945: eggs  
\$13.50, cigarettes \$26.00, peanuts \$55.00 (formerly \$40),  
soap \$10, broom 20.00 (30¢), ping bats 250.00 (100¢ before), milk  
600.00 a lb, sugar 200.00, Am cigarettes 100.00 a pack, equivalent  
of a roll of toilet paper 29.00. And then a fine stock of broom  
came in at 600.00 a long broom! And as it goes! In June  
peanuts \$20.00 a lb, I spent in other words \$60.00  
on 8 lbs of peanuts. Out \$100.00 a lb, Am cigarette  
\$250.00 a pack or at the present exchange \$1.00 gold.  
We are now dealing in \$5,000 bills as if they were  
fifty dollars.

Where does all this money come from? This  
brings up the whole question of extra-legal dealing  
which is one of the most interesting chapters of my  
history.

### BLACK MARKET

During the first few months of camp most of us were  
astounded to find that food was coming into camp  
'over the wall'. It took quite a while for this information  
to seep into the consciousness of all, at first only a few  
friends of friends knew about it. But gradually it  
became known all over. It started up in several  
places - wherever there was a sheltered corner of the  
wall with no guard in sight: Chinese contacts were  
made, notes were placed, and the stuff was thrown  
over one way, as the money side thrown over the other  
way. The volume of business done in this manner  
was truly staggering that first summer & winter.  
Thousands of eggs came over regularly, game, peanut  
butter, sugar etc. For a period of about six months you  
could buy these things almost at will if you went  
to the right people.

Along with hordes of private individuals, who could  
be seen watching as near the wall daily waiting for  
some sign from outside, there was a black market



A drawing by Miss Marie Regier, a missionary at Weih sien, showing women (who could be missionaries, hankers' wives, gay ladies, and so on) scrubbing and culling the vegetables and washing them in the old bathtub.