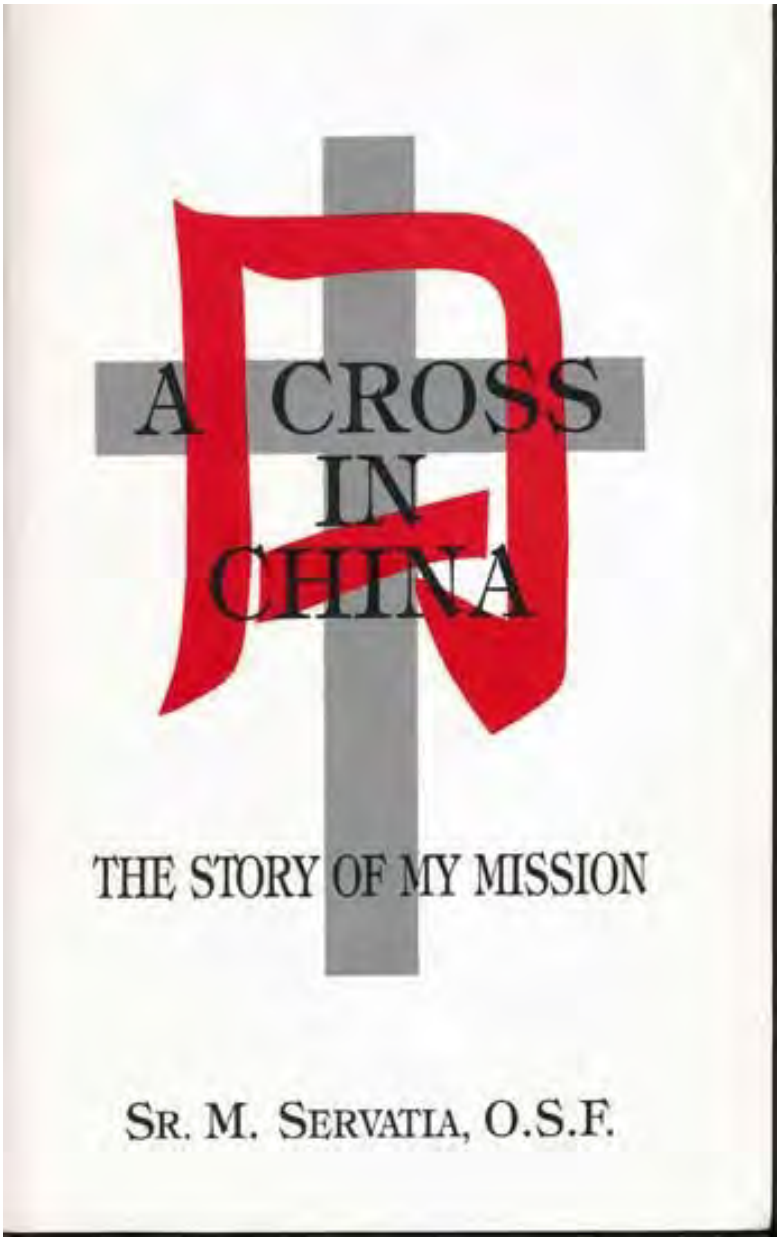

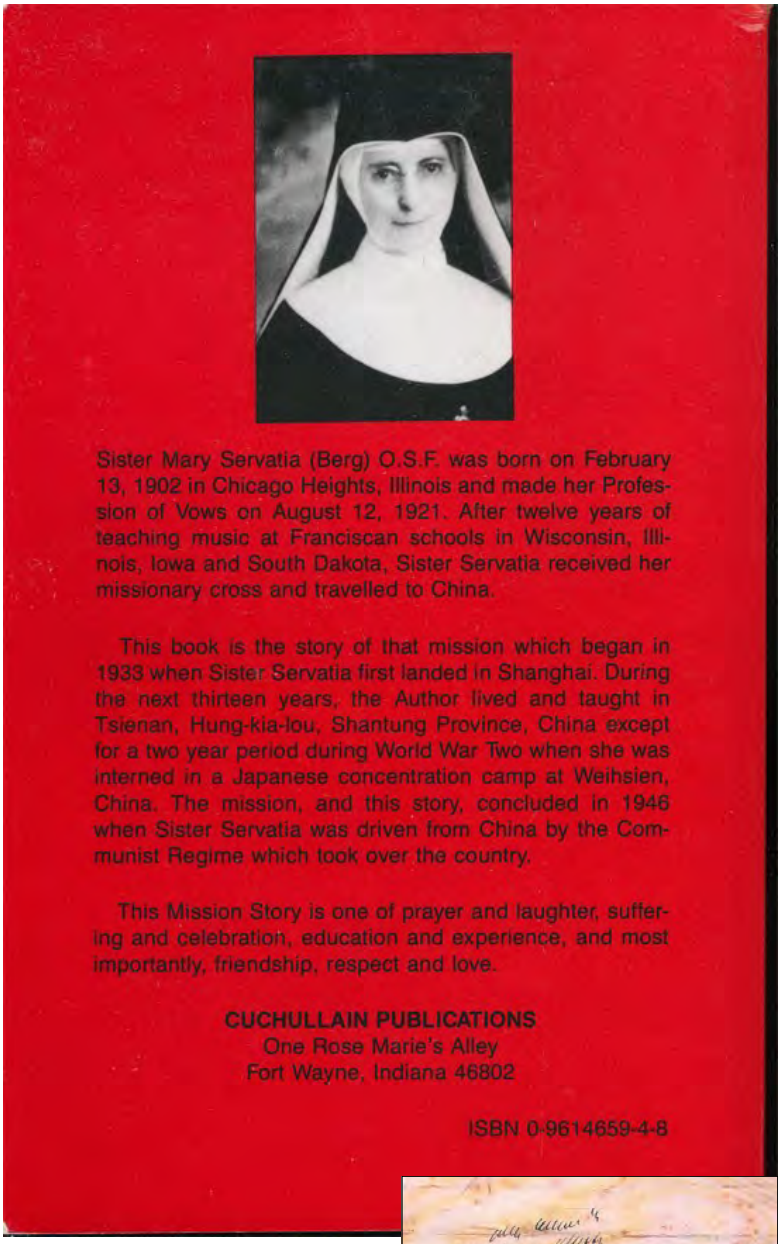

Sister Mary Servatia (Berg) O.S.F. was born on February 13, 1902 in Chicago Heights, Illinois and made her Profession of Vows on August 12, 1921. After twelve years of teaching music at Franciscan schools in Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa and South Dakota, Sister Servatia received her missionary cross and travelled to China.

This book is the story of that mission which began in 1933 when Sister Servatia first landed in Shanghai. During the next thirteen years, the Author lived and taught in Tsienan, Hung-kia-lou, Shantung Province, China except for a two year period during World War Two when she was interned in a Japanese concentration camp at Weihsien, China. The mission, and this story, concluded in 1946 when Sister Servatia was driven from China by the Communist Regime which took over the country.

This Mission Story is one of prayer and laughter, suffering and celebration, education and experience, and most importantly, friendship, respect and love.

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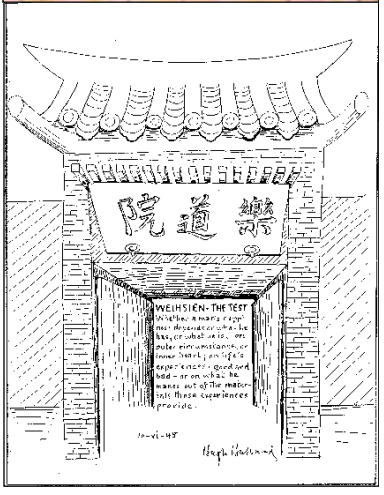
[excerpts]

INTERNMENT BY THE JAPANESE:

A DIFFERENT MISSION

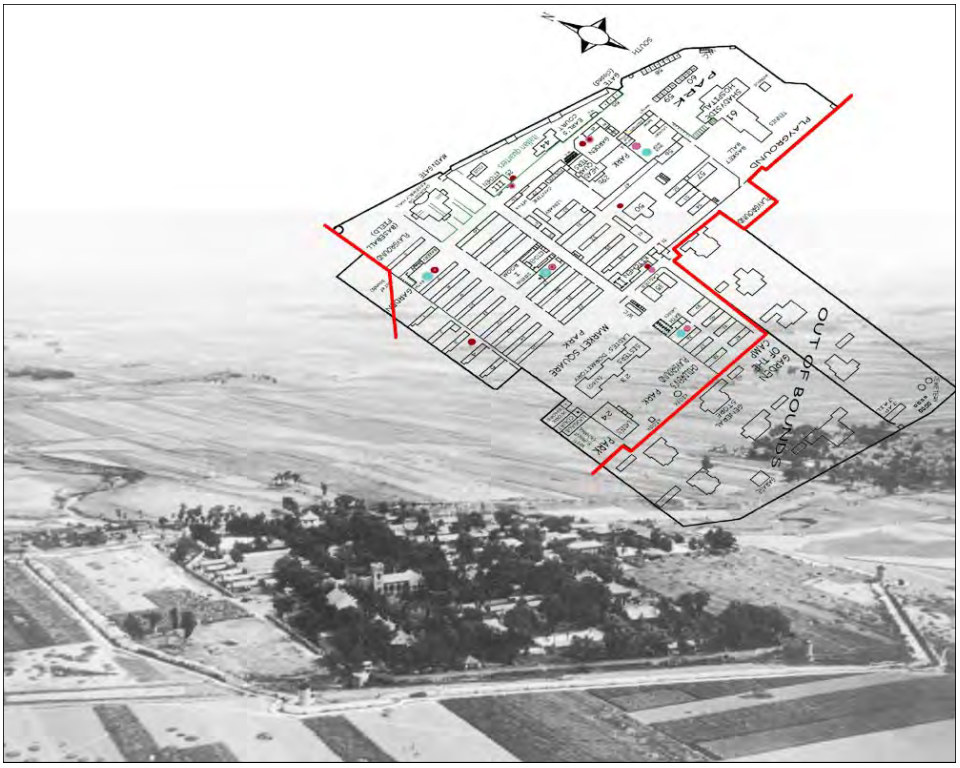
We finally arrived at the ancient walled City of Weihsien. Huge trenches had been dug on the outside telling of wars that had lately been fought there. We were ushered out of the train and into crowded busses and many had to stand. Brother Schlund was one of those standing and since he was so tall he had to stoop most of the time, but as usual, he took it all good naturedly. Then we came in sight of the "Camp" with its own ten foot wall, built for the same reason as all the ancient city walls had been, that is protection.

The compound was sixteen acres in size, thirteen of which would be for our convenience, while the rest was for the fifty Japanese guards who were there for our "protection". We understood the camp would house seventeen hundred to two thousand people, all the Allies in North China. Allies from the south were to be concentrated at Shanghai and Hong Kong.



When we arrived in front of the gate all got out and our Japanese guards ushered us into the compound. When we passed guards at the gate we were formally prisoners of the Japanese. We were taken past the Church which stood near the gate, and over to the ball field. The people from Tsingtao who had arrived the day before were all out to greet us and we felt glad indeed for their welcome, as it was one bright spot in the event.

Included in the welcoming party were Milwaukee



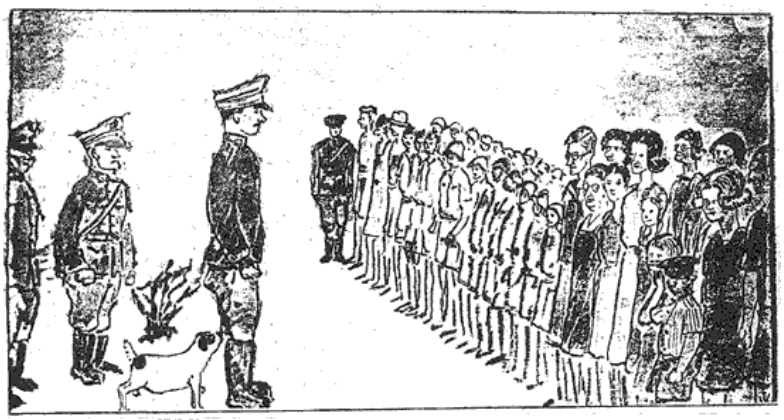
School Sisters of St. Francis, Srs. Eustella, Hiltrudie, Blanda, Donatilla and Verna, also Father Vos, a Hollander who was the Rector from Tsingtao, and about one hundred thirty people of various businesses from that district, the east tip of Shantung.

We were told to line up and were then given a number which was to be worn for identification. We were told that we were now "Enemy Citizens" and that we would have to abide by the laws given us but fortunately, there would be freedom of religion as enemy subject. This was our first Roll Call and we were to have hundreds more. The lights would be controlled by the Japanese and we were not to turn them on or off. They did have a system of electric lighting, admirable for that part of the country at that time, in which all lights went off or on at the same time.

After the assembly we were permitted to get settled with housing. We were led to an upper classroom, which would house thirty Sisters for that first month. After that things would be more settled and we could have a little more room. The Fathers helped bring in our bed boards as well as the trunks which had already arrived. Someone was allowed to get straw from the Chinese outside and we filled the bags to be used for mattresses. We ate supper from the supply of food we had brought along, trying to save because we didn't know what we could get after that.

We had plenty of room that night because some of the other Sisters had not yet arrived. I was beginning to feel almost like a Carmelite, able to do penance by sleeping on boards, but the other Sisters beds had not yet arrived, and so we shared. Two on one board bed is about as uncomfortable as it can get, so I was happy the next day when we saw the other Sisters beds being moved in. I didn't care that they had iron beds, all I wanted was a whole bed to myself so I could roll around, board or iron didn't make any difference. But again, I was to be disappointed because on Monday night there were other Sisters arriving in without beds, and so on during that whole week. After that I very extravagantly had a whole bed to myself for the rest of the camp time.

Each night there would be another group from some other part of North China arriving. They all came on that same train from Tsinan where they had made connections from their part of the country. The Peking group was about one hundred fifty people. Among them were two very good doctors, a dentist who was the only dentist we had for two thousand people and therefore, a very busy man, a former British Consul, Vincentian Fathers, fourteen Scheut Fathers of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and a Benedictine, Father John Martin, whose Abbey was in Szechuan. Father Martin had courageously left his monastery with permission to work with Father Lebbe and his Brothers in assisting Chiang Kai Shek's army, but had been caught by the Japanese and was imprisoned in Peking so he was therefore a double prisoner. The Peking group also included five Trappist monks from two different regions, two Franciscans, one Jesuit, three Daughters of Charity (Srs. Jean Gabriel, Martha and Catherine, who had brought enough starched cornettes to last them for years) and four Sisters of the Holy Ghost from Techny (Srs. Gemma, Immaculate, Ellen and Marguerite). Also included were four Franciscan Missionaries of Mary (Srs. Flannen, Joseph Helen, Eunice and Fridulph), and about one hundred business people. The Tientsin group was the largest with about two hundred fifty people in all. They included nine FMMs, (Srs. Montana, Michaela, Heribert, Thomas, Jose, Idubalda, Joannice, Theotokos), and Sr. Aurelia of the Blue Sisters, also one Jesuit and Vincentian Fathers.



On the morning of March 22nd, one of the American

Franciscans came and said Mass in our room, disorderly as it was, and then we ate breakfast. While we were eating two Chinese boys arrived with a can of red paint and told us they were to paint the side walls of the room half-way up so everything had to be moved away from the walls. For the next three days those boys were painting and we had to be careful to keep away from the paint. The paint had Lysol or some disinfectant in it which was to prevent bugs. I had no doubt that there were enough in the place but at least the Japanese were trying to make it comfortable for us.

On Tuesday night the Kaifeng group arrived and as usual we all rushed down to the ball field as a group to welcome them because we remembered how we appreciated the Tsingtao people being there ahead of us and doing that for us. That evening we happened to be in our room when we heard the cheering outside. I rushed over to the window. Sr. Veronica gave me one look which was enough to scare anyone. "Paint." All day long we had been charitably trying to remind each other to keep away from the paint and here I was with a big blotch of it on my black serge habit. My face fell—how would I ever get it off? Sr. Ludmilla was the help this time as she accosted a Japanese guard and told him in quite effective sign language and he got her some turpentine.

We went down to meet the group and what a wealth of missionary life was coming through those gates! I stood there cheering with the rest praying at the same time that God would bring this all to a safe end for the good of souls and that all these great missionaries would not have to end their lives here.

This group comprised all the Allies of the two Provinces of Honan and Shansi. Further west of Shansi was Shensi, but there were no Allies from that region and perhaps the Japanese were not occupying territory so far inland as yet. From Ho-nan (ho—river, nan—south—south of the Yellow River Province) and the city of Kaifeng, came six Benedictines from Lisle, Illinois, one of whom was Abbot-elect, Ildephonse Bramstetter. These Fathers had come to China a number of years before and started their missionary labors in Peking, opening the Catholic University there, Fu Jen. Eventually, they left Peking and started work in Kaifeng to the south. The SVD Fathers took over the Fu Jen University which is still operating although it has changed its location to Formosa.

There were also seven Benedictine Sisters of St. Joseph, Minnesota in the group as well as ten Sisters of Providence from St. Mary of the Woods, Indiana, and from Sinsiang, which is North West of Kaifeng, came nine S.V.D. Fathers. Their Bishop, Thomas Megan, S.V.D. who knew this country got across the Yellow River and the Japanese were never able to make that crossing because of the turbulence of the river in that district. From Shansi Province (Shan-mountain, si-west west of the Hungshow mountain) came the Dutch Franciscans Bishop Pessers, O.F.M. and nine Fathers. Also twelve Little Sisters of St. Joseph from Kiangchow, and from the ancient city of Luanfu came twenty eight Fathers and thirteen Sisters. Their Bishop, Odoric Timmer, O.F.M., was 84 and too ill to travel so the Japanese allowed him remain there.

From Datung came thirty-one Dutch Fathers of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, with their Bishop, Francis Joosten, CICM. In all there were about one hundred twenty-five missionaries coming in that evening, as well as business people and Protestant missionaries of the area.

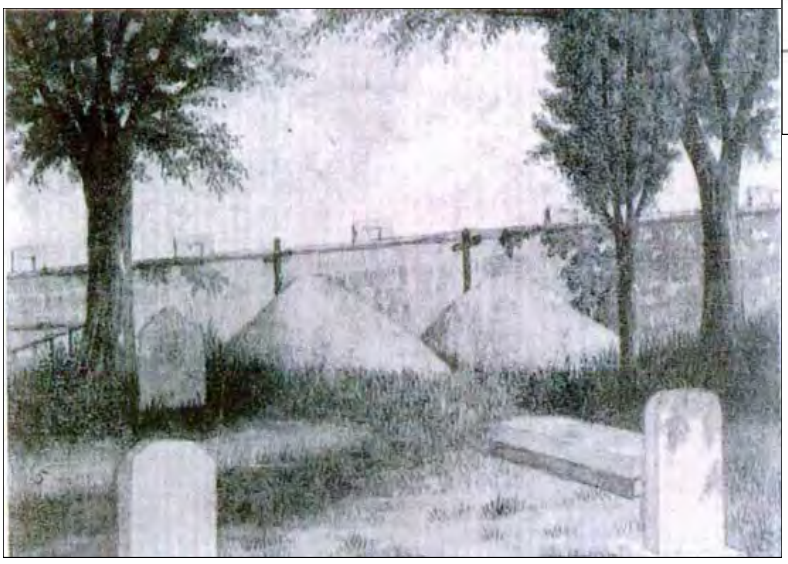
The next evening was yet more interesting as the arrivals were the group from the far North Mongolia, Protestant and Catholic missionaries, and others of different walks of life who had been caught up in the war and were now destined to spend their lives with us who were already "veteran prisoners." At least we felt we knew a little more of the life than they did. We gave them a very warm welcome, and they needed it after their long trek because they were several days on the way, and tonight, their first night in prison, they would rest their weary heads not on soft pillows, but on the floor. The rest of the camp tried to make them comfortable and we shared our blankets until theirs would arrive. Bishop Leon De Schmedt and forty-six of his priests and four Sisters came from Siwantse. From Suiyuan came Bishop Louis Morel with forty-seven priests and twenty-six Canonesses of St. Augustine and from Tsinning came three priests and one FMM. The interesting part of their arrival was the way they were dressed. To us it seemed as though they must have done a lot of bear hunting up in their country as they were covered with skins, and practically all the priests had beards. We had to keep reminding each other to keep on cheering because their appearance had stunned us so we did not want to stare. But in time we got to know them, and once acquainted we discovered that they had practically the same out-look on life as we had.

We had five Bishops in the camp and an Abbot-elect, also an Episcopalian Prelate, Bishop Scott from Peking. Weihsien was in the Chefoo diocese and normally we were under Bishop Prosper Durand (the one whom I had earlier mistaken for a priest when he visited Hungkialou), but he had earlier been interned in Peking and was not permitted to leave. Thus none of the five Bishops present had any jurisdiction. Bishop Durand immediately sent down all the necessary permissions, especially for us so we could go to confession at any time, to any priest in the camp, at any place. At times we had a confessional, at times not. We went on the street, walking along with the confessor, nodding at the people who chanced to pass by, or you called the priest outside the room where Mass was about to be said and made your confession there. It mattered little and the children especially got used to it quickly.

The priests said Mass in their own rooms, or in the Sisters quarters but we had to rise early because the three Masses had to be over before camp work began, and our

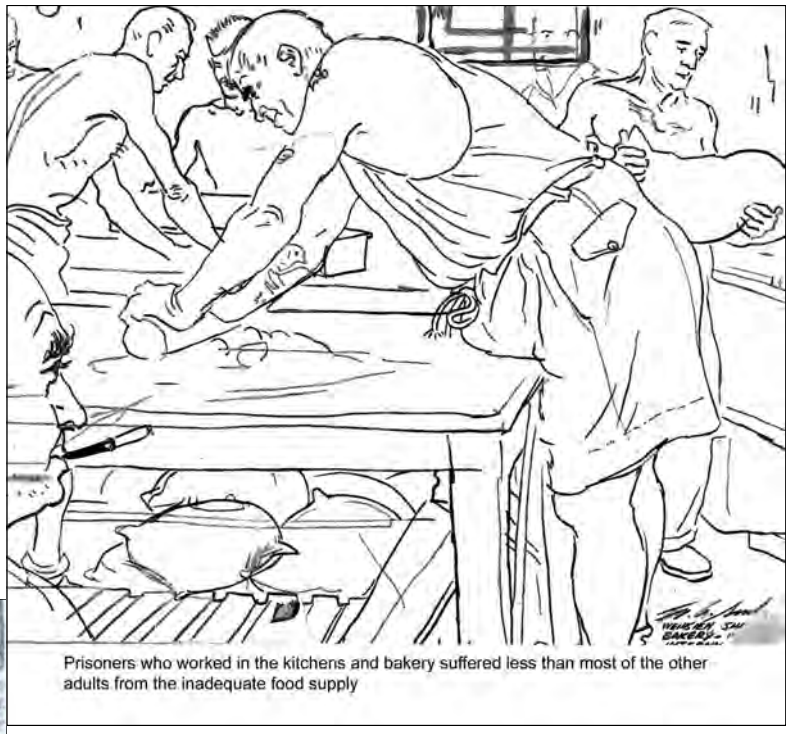
room had to be arranged for Mass also. The church was filled in the mornings with priests in every corner saying Mass, even on the piano, because any place that could serve for a table was used.

The camp was laid out in small streets with about seventy little cottages, large enough to hold two beds and little more. The compound had been a Presbyterian Seminary and was about the most convenient place the Japanese could think of for a Concentration Camp. There was a hospital, that is what was left of it after all the X-ray and other equipment had been removed, two school buildings which had two stories and a basement, and the church, which was made of Chinese brick, Oregon fir beams, German steel binding plates and rods, Belgian glass windows, Manchurian pine pews and British cement. In the back of the compound, which of course was off-bounds for us, were the five or six homes of the former American Missionary personnel, which were being occupied by our Commandant and his fifty guards. The cemetery for these missionaries was located in the south-east corner, opposite the personnel homes and directly in front of the cemetery but also "out of bounds," was a little hut which was to be used for the "jail"



The Commandant of the Camp, Mr. Sukigawa, spoke fairly fluent English, having previously held a consular position in Hawaii. I think he tried his very best to keep away any friction between us and the guards. The guards, being in Consular service, fared far better than those in the war areas, but they were changed occasionally although none of us knew how often or for what reason. Mr. Ibara was the Commandant's aide. He was more straight-laced than was Mr. Sukigawa, but like the guards I am sure he appreciated the position he had.

During that first week papers were being sent around, asking us what work we were most interested in. While we were at the camp, we did not know how long we would remain and some thought that perhaps the Japanese would in time send us over to Japan and we would have to work for them at their pleasure. As a result, this form caused us some concern. We did not realize that the paper was coming from our own side and certain people of the camp were trying to get organized. There was much work to be done, particularly because there were few conveniences. Water had to be pumped in a steady shift of men at several pumps. Cooking and preparing of vegetables, meat, fish was also necessary. The bakery was a problem. The hauling of coal, care of the lavatories, teaching of the children, washing, keeping the grounds clean, etc. etc. were all vital chores.



Prisoners who worked in the kitchens and bakery suffered less than most of the other adults from the inadequate food supply

I signed up for kitchen duty and got it. Each person in the camp was required to perform at least three hours of camp duty. In no time the labor committee organized the camp.

Next came the general organization. The Japanese, always very practical, insisted on nine departments of government with one of our men and one of theirs at the head of each. Those departments were: 1) General Affairs, 2) Discipline, 3) Employment, 4) Education, 5) Supplies, 6) Housing Quarters, 7) Medicine, 8) Engineering and 9) Finance. At first these were taken by someone offering himself for the position. Later they were voted for by the people, with regular campaigning.

When we first came into the camp, we noticed the left -over furniture in heaps outside the buildings. Obviously the former missionaries had much more than what was left there and it will never be known how much had been carried out before we arrived. In no time it was all gone as everybody took what they wanted to furnish their bare rooms. I got a stool and that stool was worth its weight in gold to me. I didn't need it so much in the room because you could always sit on the bed boards, but when you had a one or two hour roll call each day and had to stand in the open, a stool was about the most welcome thing in the world. Also it was convenient when you went to the evening lectures held out under some tree. We needed tables for the altars and during the day it could be used to store the things ordinarily found on the tables.

One little house was kept for storage. We could keep

our trunk or other things in there if there was no room for them elsewhere. This house was kept locked and was only opened on certain days by the men in charge. All the books of the former school were stored in the basements of the personnel houses.

There was a grand piano in the church. Perhaps it had been too heavy to move out, or it may have been left there just to make us happy, but we were delighted to see it there. There was also a large harmonium which was a little hard to pump, but manageable.

A brick wall about eight feet high separated the Japanese quarters from our own, but the gates were always open. There were many venerable old trees which the former missionaries had planted which were marked in Chinese and Latin botanical terms.

All unattached persons were housed in the former class-rooms while couples got one of the little homes, which were about nine feet by twelve feet, and if they had a small child they could keep it with them. If they had two older children the family might also be given the room next door. Those in the dormitories got a space about nine feet by five feet, and most managed to find something to use for a washstand to hold the wash-basins that we had been told to bring along. The housing was one of the biggest headaches of the camp because everybody wanted more space and fought for it. One certainly learned the value of space.

The camp had three kitchens. The largest was called the "Tsingtao" or Kitchen One, next came the Tientsin, or Kitchen Two, then the Peking, or Kitchen Three. This last one was eventually closed and the people using it had to move to Kitchen One. The kitchens were not large as all that was needed for the stoves were two large "guos" or iron cauldrons in which to cook the "stew" with place

for fire beneath them in Chinese fashion. The stove itself was built of bricks cemented together. Attached to each kitchen was a dining room with plain wood tables and long benches. We had been directed to bring our own dishes, so those who had dining room duty only had to wash off the tables and benches after meals and sweep the cement floor. All water to be used had to be pumped and carried in.

Punctually at 7:30 each morning someone went through the camp ringing a hand bell, which was evidently one of the old school bells, to summon us all to roll call. Everyone was required to attend and if a person was too sick to go, he had to be reported by a friend and the Japanese "counter" would go to the home to verify the statement. The same procedure was used for those on duty at the stoves, kitchen, or other important places because every one had to be counted. Sometimes the count would be wrong in one place and all would have to be recounted. Sometimes the "counters" would be late. The best thing was to take a book or some work along.

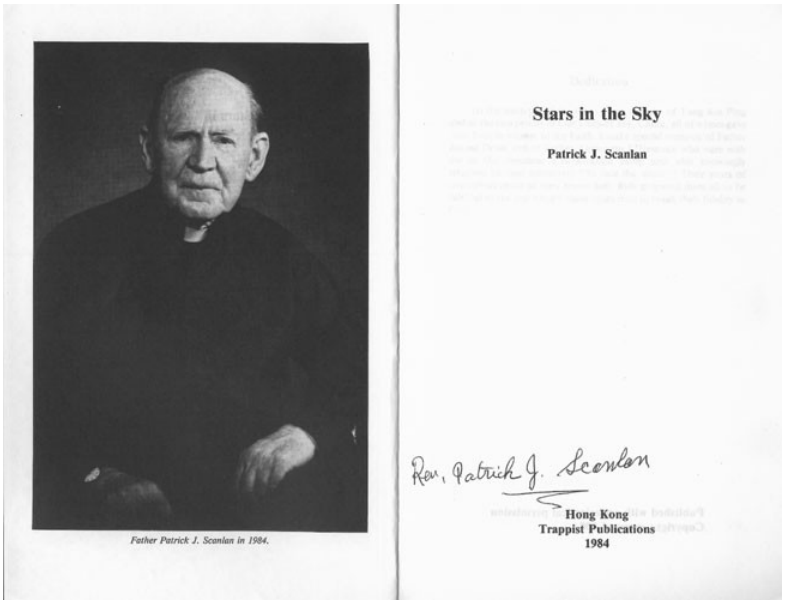
You might see a lady bring along a dish of apples to peel if she had been fortunate enough to get them, and someone might go over to sit next to her, just to get the smell of them. Sometimes the teen-agers would bring their accordions or harmonicas along and there would be singing. Once we got a longer roll call because the boys were using slingshots and one hit a lady right in the eye. She had to be taken to the hospital immediately and lost the eye and that of course, slowed everything up. At another evening time roll call while waiting for the "counters", the boys were standing alongside a building trying to see how high they could reach. One of them, Brian Thompson, a sixteen year old who that day they said had made a wonderful witness of Faith in his morning service, challenged the others to reach a wire above him. He reached out for it and was immediately electrocuted, as it had been a live wire. The mother was nearby but they rushed the boy to the hospital just to keep her from shock. We did not know why our roll call was lasting so long until we found out. If it rained the "counters" would try to hurry, and you took your umbrella.


Mr. and Mrs. R.E. Thompson and their family. Their eldest son Brian, right, was accidentally electrocuted during roll-call in 1944. He was 17.

During our first week in camp Sr. Reginald came in and told us that she heard that one of the Trappists became ill after the first meal cooked in camp. Apparently he was not used to eating meat. She asked if any of us had some food left so she could take it over to him where he was rooming at the hospital. I had a grapefruit left and the others gave what they had. Sr. Reginald asked me to go along and when we got to the hospital we were told that all the Fathers were on the second floor. As we looked in one room it was filled with mattresses, bags of straw like our own, only they were all sleeping on the floor and the mattresses were close to each other. We asked for the Trappists and a priest came out and said he was one.

It was our first meeting with Father Scanlon, who was to become, during the five months that he remained there, one of the most, if not the most, popular person in the camp. His English accent was so different that I had to ask him if he was speaking English or Chinese. He said he was Australian, then he spoke more clearly and told us that the sick Father was all right, but he would be very glad for the food. We gladly gave it and left.

The next week Sr. Reginald asked Sr. Esther if she could do the washing for the five Trappists. There was enough to keep us busy, crowded as we were, but Sr. Esther said she could, on condition that she asks none of us to help her. I felt sorry for her because I thought the washing for five men would be too much so I offered to help. She went over to get the sheets and other wash and came back loaded down. Father Scanlon offered to carry the water and Sr. Reginald managed to find someone who would lend her a twenty-four inch basin and I took our two basins along and we found a place outside to wash. The sheets were made of a material almost like canvas and we wondered when they had been washed last. Sister managed to borrow two scrubbing brushes and together we scrubbed. I had only a small basin so I could scrub about a six inch square at a time, but we felt we were doing good work so we might as well enjoy it while it lasts. Each week after that we did their washing, with Father Scanlon standing by to get us hot water from the boilers about two blocks away. And while we scrubbed he would talk. One day Sr. Reginald got tired because she couldn't scrub and listen intently at the same time to his Australian dialect, so she told him to please go away.



He was hurt and so after that he sent Father Alphonsus L'Heureux instead.

This Father was a Canadian and had come to China as a member of the Jesuit Order, but some time after 1940 he joined the Trappists. He was entirely different than Father Scanlon, and in fact the two didn't always see eye to eye. Father Scanlon complained that Father L'Heureux wanted to be too conventional because he even wanted them to pray the daily Office aloud in their room, while Father Scanlon was of the outgoing type. He was using his privilege to talk after his many years of silence and enjoying it too. There was hardly a birthday party in the camp without Father Scanlon, and Father L'Heureux was getting worried about what the Superiors would say about his activities.

Father L'Heureux brought the hot water and then sat on the ground to pray his Office. If we asked for more water he would tell us to wait, as he had to finish that Psalm first and he must have said them very meditatively because sometimes we waited quite a while. The scolding we did after he left for the water would not have taken place had we known we were dealing with a future martyr to the Faith.

Sometime during those early months Father Scanlon put a notice on the Bulletin Board that he would give a lecture on the "Life of a Trappist". There was more interest shown by the non-Catholics than those of our Faith and the hall was so packed that many could not get in. He gave it a second time and again it was packed so he gave it a third time. Sr. Reginald felt that since she was his "wash-woman", it was her duty to go and she asked me to go along. He spoke very beautifully of their life and he also played some records which were Gregorian Chants made at the funeral of a Trappist. After that the people appreciated him all the more. Sr. Reginald's remarks after the lecture did not strike me much until after her death. She loved the music best and wanted to hear it again.

At first the Japanese could procure enough flour for the camp. There was an Armenian from Tsingtao, who had run a bakery in that city, and so he was given the job of manager of the bakery. The flour was wormy but the men sieved the worms out until finally the sieves wore out and no more were available so the little creatures got baked along with the flour. But fortunately we could have bread and that was something. I hadn't noticed this until one day I was talking to a teenager who was complaining about the food. I said that for one thing we can always eat bread, that we were getting enough of that. He looked at me and asked me if I had ever been in the bakery. When I replied in the negative he advised me to go over and look at the worms going into that bread. I didn't, but the bread didn't taste as good after that. Later on the flour got more scarce but we could always have a slice at each meal. Sometimes they baked a kind of short bread for dessert, or on very special days, coffee cake, with sliced apples on top and you were lucky if you got a piece with two slices.

It would have been interesting to compare what the Japanese Government was spending per month, with what the American Government was spending on the upkeep of two thousand Japanese civilians in the United States at the same time. It is true, supplies were not to be forthcoming from the Chinese for low prices and the Japanese had to pay more than the average Chinese was paying. I think they tried to get what they could for us, but naturally, in the long run, the soldiers and army personnel who were occupying China came first. The kitchen did get some eggs to cook with but no butter and some fat. There was quite a supply of vegetables for those on duty cleaning them, but by the time they were dished out there was a good tablespoonful per person. Potatoes could not be fried and usually got cooked with the meat, about one-half per person.

There were several varieties of meat. Opinions, if polled, would say it was mostly goat meat and one time one of the men said he was sure the material that came in that morning was camel. Be that as it may, it was meat and it was all consumed and none was wasted.

The leeks were interesting things. They were about two feet long, and of course, mostly greens, which the one in charge said were to be cut off and put into the garbage. Gradually we began to recognize the value of these greens and used them in Kitchen One. One day we found Sr. Ludmilla trying to fry onion tops with some potatoes she had gotten somehow. On being asked where she got those from she said "from Kitchen Three's garbage box." She had taken them from the top of the bin and washed them off. One day I happened to be working alone in a room outside the kitchen chopping the tops off. I had a bunch cut off and when I turned to them, they were gone. Mr. Echford was just snatching them away. The British ex-Consul of Peking and here he was scrounging onions! He said "Doctor's orders!" and left. I did not respond as it was better not to say anything about it.

Cleaning of the vegetables was a job for the ladies and we had ladies at it who perhaps hadn't ever done it before in their lives, and now for want of something else, they got that job. They willingly peeled the potatoes and

clean the vegetables but when it came to the leeks there was always trouble. That seemed to be something too demeaning. Some generous soul had donated two potato paring knives but it didn't take long and we had only one, then none. We were given a few knives for use on the vegetables, but the one in charge had to guard them with hawk eyes because they were precious things.

It was the men's duty to bring the vegetables to the kitchen and also to wash the potatoes. Outside the kitchen were two bath-tubs which we figured the army personnel had taken out of the houses in "out of bounds" because they preferred showers. The men were to fill them with water from the well and scrub the potatoes for the ladies to peel. Brother McCoy got that job and he hated it. I gently reminded him of what he said about not having anything to do in a concentration camp and he advised me that his opinion had changed.

Breakfast was served at 8:30 A.M. or after roll call was held. We queued up for it, bringing our dishes and if you happened to leave the dishes there by mistake, they would be gone quickly. Although arriving early meant waiting in line you could always converse with your neighbor and sometimes the queue conversations would get rather animated. For some reason the Japanese never entered the dining room. For breakfast the fare was usually bread cut up and cooked in water and a little sugar, and tea. Coffee was out of the question entirely. Dinner was served at twelve noon, and it meant another wait in line, but it also meant another chance to get acquainted. The serving was usually just a ladleful of stew, a spoon of vegetable, occasionally a kind of dessert. The evening meal, which was "tiffin" (someone brought in the word and it stuck. I think it may have originated in India) was a little less than supper.

It certainly was a mixed group for meals as you might be sitting next to a Bishop, or a night club singer, a minister or a mining business man, a lady missionary or a mother of a family. One Belgian man, who had a family of seven, wore a beard, and he enjoyed having the nuns address him as "Father." You couldn't tell who were priests and who were not and he said he really deserved the title more than the priests because of his family.

Mr. Watts, who had been born in China and raised and trained in the Inland Mission School had a grudge against the school, and seemed to favor the Sisters. One day while in line he asked if we would like to read "Inside Asia" by Gunther. This was a surprise because we didn't think anyone would dare to bring that book along. He had taken the cover off the book and put on a different one and now he was lending it around to the internees. We got it and quickly read it through and I am sure everyone in camp read it.

There was one aged Sister there who used to say her rosary while waiting in queue. Her lips were moving and I don't doubt but that she said a whole rosary, but her eyes were all over and she didn't miss a thing in the dining room. One day, as Mr. Watts was next to me in line, he suddenly poked me and asked "Tell me, who is that nun over there always talking to?" I had a job explaining that.

There was a little lady from Tientsin who just loved to talk to the Sisters and she would always manage to get to sit with one for meals. One day we spoke about the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary in her city and she knew every one, and in fact had done many services for them. Then she told me very confidently that shortly before coming to camp the Mother Superior had called her up and asked her if her two "chickens" were at her house. The two "chickens" were two young Sisters who had suddenly left and the Superior was trying to locate them. She had helped to bring them back.

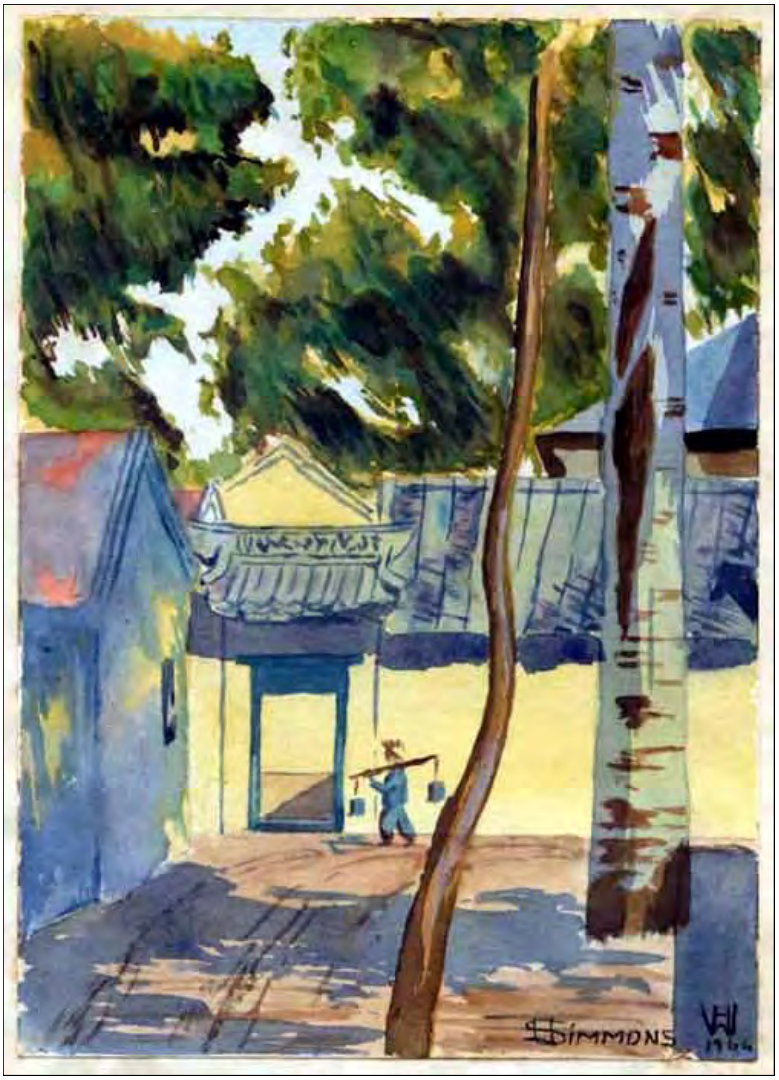
In the beginning of our camp life we could go back for seconds if there was some left in the "guo", but later on this changed and we had to be counted. Mr. Echford was given the job of counting us as we got our ration supplies. It almost looked as though someone's job was to think up other unheard of duties. Some of the ladies were shirking their duties or coming late, so they got a very special man time-keeper.

Father Gus weighed about three hundred pounds and of course could not be given a heavy duty, so he checked the ladies off and on duty. Since he was very humorous the ladies soon got to like having him there and began calling him "Father Time" although to the rest of the camp he was "Father Gus". When he came up for his ration of food he would often say "I'm two" and whoever was dishing out would forget all rules and give him two rations. Nobody ever objected to it. He told the story of how when he was a student at the Seminary the boys gave a play and in it he took the part of a nun. He then had his picture taken and took it home with him on vacation to show his parents. At that time there was quite an article in the daily papers about a nun who had left her convent and created some scandal. His father was ranting about it. The boy said "But at least she is quite good-looking". The father gave him a look and asked how he knew and Father Gus replied he had her picture. The father asked him how he got it, wondering why the boy was so interested in the nun. The boy went to his grip and got out his picture and showed it to the father. He looked at it and admitted she was good-looking, but he added "Can't you just see the evil in her eyes?" We can imagine what happened next.

One of the worst jobs in camp, although there were many other unwanted ones, was cleaning fish. We finally got a little crew together. Sr. Mercedes and I, three of the Protestant missionaries and perhaps one or two others. Each time the fish came in we would be alerted and we clung to the job and if the rest didn't want to do it. . . . well let them go hang. In winter it wasn't less pleasant because the fish were packed in huge boxes of ice and we had to pull them apart and besides the work had to be done out-doors on an old table. It was always interesting to note the different kinds of fish that came out of the box and some-times we wished one of us had studied fish

before we came because there were varieties none of us had ever seen before, even baby octupi.

The lavatories must have been a problem to those who were preparing the place. Generally speaking Japan does not have lavatories such as we have in the States. The ones in the camp were in separate buildings, the men and women each having their own. Each building had about eight toilets, separated by a wall. On top was a water box for flushing, but since all water had to be pumped and there were so many to use them, it took about three days and these boxes were useless from then on, which meant that it had to be periodically flushed with pails of water. There were no seats, just an elongated, enamel bowl on the floor about a foot wide. The matter was flushed to a place outside the room and Chinese were allowed to come and remove to their fields where it was used for fertilizer. Cleaning these places was another duty not to be envied and it was finally resolved that all ladies take their weeks for the W.C.'s and men for the M.C.'s.



Sometime in the beginning of 1945 the Japanese got in a long urinal along the other wall of the room. We wondered why and finally it was thought that since in Japan there is no distinction between men's and women's facilities they expected the men to use ours too, but we dared them and there was no challenge.

In each room there was a little stove and we were given a ration of coal. In April it was announced at roll call that the guards had orders to remove the stoves. Underneath the stoves were sheet iron pans and someone had suggested that these might be nice for ironing, so when they came to our place I asked the guard if I could keep two. We expected the stoves would come back in the winter if we were there that long. I told him I would take good care of it, explained why I wanted it, and that if he needed it at any time he could come and get it. He was most obliging and I kept them until we left. The pans came in very handy for the church wash, and I could even get the long altar cloths ironed by folding the cloth and laying the two pans together in the sun. The wash had to be laid out flat and the hot sun was enough to dry it and the underneath came up nice and shiny, as if laundered. Handkerchiefs came off better than if ironed. Of course, while I had the pans out in the sun I would have to take a book or something to do and watch because we had all kinds of people around and some could not be trusted. We had brought wash lines along and sometimes the wash would be taken off the line if not watched.

Our own washing of clothes had to be done in our basins and for the sheets, during those first five months we borrowed a tub from anyone who was generous enough to lend it. Some of the Sisters had brought electric irons along but they had to be used without the Japanese knowing about it. One never knew when a guard would pop in and so if any-one was ironing someone else had to watch. The electrician, who of course wouldn't give the Sisters away said the one building where most of the ironing was being done was a real fire trap and we were afraid that something might happen, but he tried his best to help and they got all the ironing done for the Fathers besides their own. They started out as soon as they got up, changing off at the iron, while some got ready for Mass. There were several Masses in the room each morning but one had to keep on ironing all the time because there was no danger of the guards coming at that hour of the day.

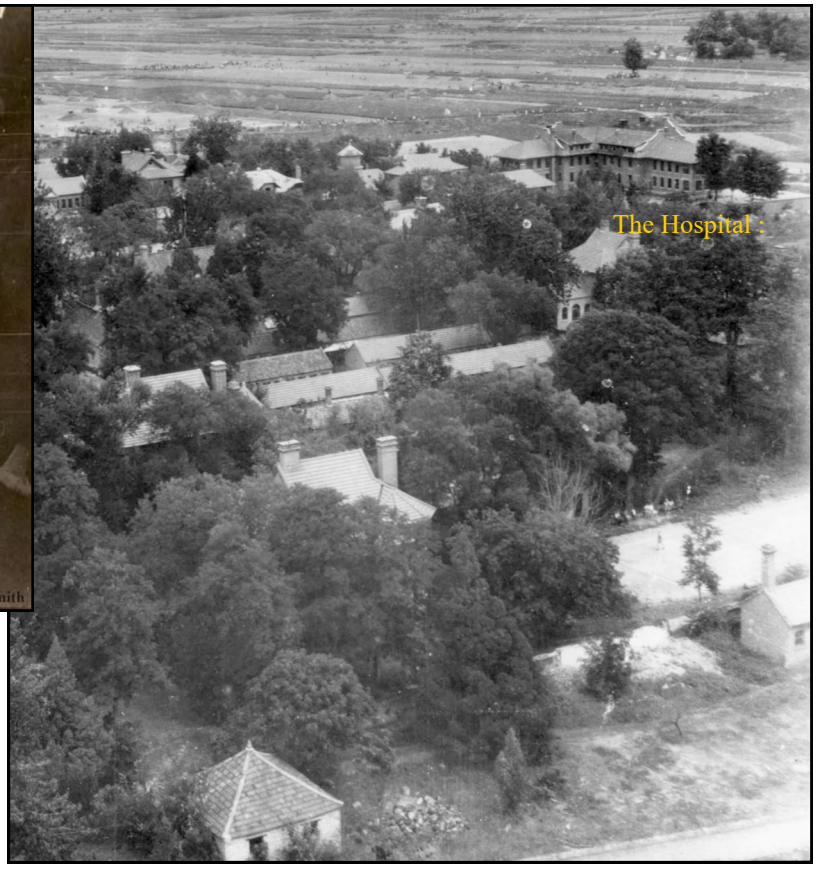
At that time our veils had the long white starched strips. The guimps were also starched but we each had two celluloid guimps and the coifs were not starched. After the first few weeks we took out the white strips, keeping the fore-head band to which the veil was attached.


A former "taipan" named Blackadder

It felt strange and when I got over to the dining room that noon Bishop Pinger looked at me and said, "Why don't you take off the guimp too, and make yourselves comfortable?"

In the end, Sr. Esther

... the nun at left is probably Sister Hiltrudis of St. Joseph School in Tsingtao .



decided that we would keep the guimps. One day Sr. Ludmilla walked over to the dining room without a guimp. If we were in our room very long, we usually took them off because of the heat, and some-times we even removed the veil. As she entered the dining room, she noticed it. When she came back she was telling us how embarrassed she felt. Sr. Bede thought she should be more careful and told her so, but the very next day, Sr. Bede walked outside and halfway down the outside stairs without her veil. She did get teased for that.

Actually we could just as well have removed the guimp also because during the summer the heat became almost unbearable. Additionally some of the Sisters of different Orders who wore celluloid guimps had some that were so yellow, it would have been much more "religious" to go without them.

One day Sr. Reginald told us that she heard there was a priest in camp who had the stigmata. We were curious to know just who or where he was. She told us where she thought he worked. We were about ready to go over and find him, when I happened to ask who told her and when she mentioned the source, I doubted the veracity and suddenly remembered that there was one priest in camp from the Order of "Stigmatines", an Italian Order. The mystery was solved.

There were always new ideas cropping up. Someone decided that the children in camp would not be getting enough calcium, so everybody was to save their egg shells and bring them over to the kitchen. Next we were asked to volunteer some free time in pulling the skin out the shells. We sat there for hours and there were plenty of eggs be-cause everybody was happy to cooperate when they could. Someone had a pestle and crushed the shells, and the powder was given to the parents to be fed to the children. After months of this, it was finally decided that it wasn't a good way to get calcium and the egg shells could be thrown away.

The hospital was also getting organized. Doctors Grice and Robinson, Corkey, and Gault were busy from morning until night. The Swiss Consul, Mr. Eggers managed to bring in some medicines and supplies. All the men and Fathers who had been sleeping in the hospital had to move out and find quarters elsewhere and as it was prepared for the sick. It was a real hospital now with a good staff.

The next thing we needed was a diet kitchen with food of a little better quality for the sick, so one was organized. Mrs. Wormsby was put in charge, and she was good be-cause she could put everybody under her in their place, whether you liked it or not. Rough as she was, I finally got to like her. I was placed in charge of dining room service and she told me just how much to give each so there was something left over and I could give seconds. The work wasn't hard since I only had to be there at meal times. Several of the Fathers had jobs around the kitchen and dining room. Father Corneille Louws, a Dutch priest and Superior of the mission of Yungping, was under me and the tables were his job. I was boss of a Superior, and Mrs. Wormsby told me in no uncertain terms I shouldn't be afraid to tell them what to do. One of the Trappists was sick for a few weeks and Father L'Heureux would come to get his ration for him. He would bring the little bucket, stand it down for me to fill, and then go out. Sometimes it was late when he would return. One day we were all finished in the dining room and Father had not returned. I took the bucket and walked the three blocks over to the Trappists house, knocked at the door. Someone inside said "Ching!" ("Enter"—in Chinese) and there sat the sick Trappist on his bed eating his ration from the kitchen which one of the Fathers evidently brought him, and it looked like a proper portion to me. I spoke a few words

in Chinese but he didn't under-stand. I gave him the dinner and left.

The Abbot-elect, Father Ildephonse, O.S. was ailing and in fact he died about two years later in Manila. Father used to go to the dining room, but he never could eat much. One day we had some rice pudding. I am sure if I served that same pudding today on our table we would have a hard time getting people to eat it but the pudding had more sugar than anything we ever got in any of the big kitchens, so it was something new and he ate a good dish-full and liked it. At last, I thought, here is something he could eat. There was some left over and I asked him if he would like some more and he said he would. I offered to carry it over to his room for him as he was very weak.

Father Philip came around looking for more straw. He complained that all his visitors had to sit on his bed. No doubt he had many visitors and they had good times together, but the result was that his straw in his mattress was quite thin. We tried to help him out by giving some of ours, but there wasn't much to give. With our boards we naturally could afford to have less straw than when the mattress is directly on the spring.

One day as I was coming from the pump house with hot water, I met a man who was Greek, Mr. Piasis, and at first I thought he was a priest, but then he told me he was Orthodox and I knew we had no Orthodox priests in camp. He was a very fervent member of the Greek Rite Church and regretted the fact that we had no Orthodox services in the church. We invited him to our services and he came regularly every Sunday. I lent him my Missal because I did not need it at the organ. A group of the Orthodox ladies were attending instructions given by one of the Fathers and Mr. Piasis got them together and tried to straighten them out. He told them never to leave the church of their birth and he spoke to them as well as any priest could. He was deeply religious and he could not understand the wealth of the Catholic church, and perhaps he was right. He loved the picture of Perpetual Help and had a great devotion to Mary, as all Orthodox do. In time the Episcopalians invited all the Orthodox to come to their services and they accepted, but he remained with us. The Orthodox followers had one problem. Their Easter follows the Julian calendar and no one in camp knew when they should celebrate their Easter so they ended up celebrating it on the same day as the rest of us.

Easter morning dawned. The Protestants had their beautiful sunrise services with singing very early outdoors. In the church the Catholics, as many as could get in church met for one of the biggest, if not the biggest, event ever held in that church. The five Bishops and Abbott-elect came in procession and our mixed choir directed by Father John Sipps, with Father Gilson, an Auxiliary Father of Peking at the organ, singing the Ecce Sacerdos. Bishop Scott had asked if he might be in rank with the Bishops, but this was not permitted and instead he was given a front seat, and was given a missal to follow. The Ordinary of the Mass was the Missa de Angelis which we all knew by heart. This was congregational singing as I have never heard it before or since. The Anglican minister, Father Jones was there also, and after that he came over for the Sunday Mass practically all the time we were at Weihsien.

In getting to know these people of other faiths, we had to admire many things. I especially revered the Anglicans for keeping their "quiet hour" as they called it, each morning before roll call. Rev. John Hayes, the son of the Mr. & Mrs. Hayes who had come with us on the train from Tsinan, was there from Peking. He was a very genial person and one to whom you could speak openly. One time he asked for my St. Andrew Missal and when he gave it back to me, he deplored the Latin translations in it. I had never realized be-fore that they were so poor, as the translation had been done in Belgium. He also told me that on that Sunday he used it in his services, reading the Collects of the day. e thought that made a certain bond of union with his services and our Masses earlier in the church.

Father Fitzgibbons, S.V.D. was on the housing committee so he had to get the Sisters and Fathers placed and had been given the allotted space for it. There were two rooms which would house about six persons on the second floor of a building but none of the Sisters wanted them. He got to Sr. Esther and she accepted and told us we were to move over. Although we felt sort of martyrized, we went and got settled. At least it was roomier than what we had before and we were eleven, with room for twelve. We had a table for Mass and each one had her own stool and our trunks were transported up by the Fathers, who were always willing to help. The move took place on April 30th and the next day at six in the morning as we were having Mass, we were surprised to hear the Angelus from the little Catholic Church over in the city of Weihsien, three miles away. This was May 1st, and our Blessed Mother was reminding us that she also was not far away. We were thrilled. Every morning we would listen to it and it gave us a bond between us and the congregation over there, although we could never see them. The priest, Father Joseph Chang, tried to get into camp to see us, but was not allowed.

One of the most important things or places in the camp was the bulletin board. Almost immediately a large

board was put up outside Kitchen One and that was the only way of reaching the entire population since there were no loud speakers. There was also no paper to print periodicals or news, and the Japanese were careful as to what news was to reach us, although they could not always prevent us from getting things over the wall, or under it for that matter. But it didn't take long before we realized that the bulletin board also needed control because there were all kinds of things being hung on the board. So there was another duty open, Bulletin Board Director, and you had to get his permission to put anything up. On May 1 there was a notice that we would have May devotions every evening after Tiffin in front of

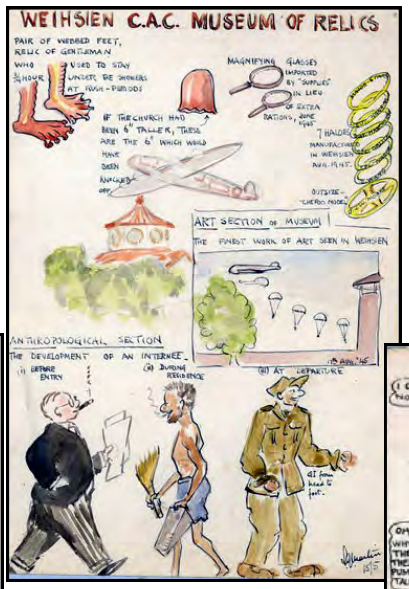
the hospital and all Catholics and others who cared to come were welcome. To those of us who attended these devotions it was something that we shall always remember as "the" May devotions of our life. Someone put up a little altar on the front porch of the hospital with a little statue of Mary, some candles and artificial flowers. The rosary was recited in English or Latin, the Litany, Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, and then the Lourdes Hymn in French. To hear those five hundred priests and religious singing was thrilling and the sound of it must have penetrated the countryside particularly as we could all join in on the Aves.

Brother Jannings, SM, who had gone south, for some reason or other must have been up in Peking when the call for concentration was issued for he was with us at Weihsien. He was in charge of Education and he tried to get as much adult education organized as he could. Anyone who wanted to, or could, lecture on any interesting subject was contacted or invited to help along and there was excellent co-operation both on the parts of the speakers as well as the general public. Classes were enumerated and signed up for.

There was quite a variety offered including French, Chinese, English, Art, Commercial Art, and History. The children also got their regular schooling in the mornings and in the afternoons they were free to help with camp work or do their homework and play.

Father Keymolen taught French and I signed up for his class, but later found that I had to give too much time, so I discontinued. One of the classes that got the most names was soap-making. A Hollander, Mr. Stalk, who had spent his life at that job in Europe and the States, offered to teach a class in it and it was almost like a class in candy-making to children. We all needed soap because it was being rationed to a bar a month, and when the war came, the soap was so soft that it would all wash away in no time if you weren't careful. We learned to dry the bars out for at least a month before using them. So naturally everyone was interested and he got the mammoth class. Some dropped out when they heard they were only learning the tactics but were not getting any soap out of it. But since it was only two or three hours per week, most of us stayed on. He had hoped the Japanese would supply some fat for the demonstrations, but they didn't, and so all he could give us was the techniques. But we all enjoyed being there anyway and I remember promising a class-mate, a Shanghai business man, a bar out of my first batch, if I ever get to make any. He said he would be satisfied with just a "cake" but I had never noticed the difference.

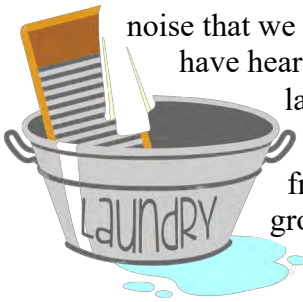
One of the Belgian Fathers was a real artist and some-times he made pictures for the bulletin board. There was one of the Blessed Mother looking over his home town in Belgium. The Commercial Art teacher was from Chicago and he also had a large class. Actually we were at a great advantage, we could have all these classes free as anywhere else we would have had to pay tuition. The Salvation Army gave a First Aid Course which was very thorough and no materials were needed for the course. They also brought their band instruments along and on Saturday afternoons would play hymns. Dr. Lucius Porter of Yenching University in Peking, a history teacher, gave classes on Chinesehistory, his specialty, and across the row from me sat Father DeJaegher, the successor to Father Lebbe, taking down every word Port said. I thought it was a good idea so there-after I did the same, and realized how valuable it is to have the notes. In November 1944 there was also a little notice one day that even if we can't vote in the American elections, we can always bet, no distance



or person can stop us from that. Someone had brought a large cartoon along and had stuck it up in Kitchen One. It showed a group of prisoners at a meal, one with his shirt off, the guard saying "Here we all dress for dinner."

During the first month we were told we could write letters. Although I think there was some little limitation, we wrote and wrote. A month passed and we were getting anxious for answers back but none came. Instead a notice on the bulletin board said "From now on everyone may write one letter per month but there will be no mention of the weather or questionable remarks". The fact was the poor censorer didn't know enough English to cope with the thousands of letters he had to censor, so our first letters were returned to us. At least they were honest about it.

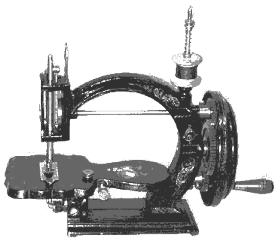
Sr. Reginald had brought a can of "Canned heat" along to camp. One day, during the month of May, while we were still in the "upper room", Sr. Charitas decided to use it. It was a hot afternoon and a few of us were in the room resting. Suddenly she called "Fire!" We ran to see, the thing had caught fire and she had thrown it on the floor. She had it off the floor by the time we got there, but the floor was on fire. The Japanese had put that red paint on the walls and floors and the fire was licking it up fast. Immediately below us was a room with eight ladies, wealthy ladies from Peking, who had all their precious belongings in that room. There were other rooms in the building with ladies who were equally important, so this created havoc. I thought if I had something flat, maybe we could put it out in time. I grabbed my precious stool, the top was flat enough, I rubbed it over the floor. Sr. Veronica stood watching me and I told her to get another. She did and we worked together and finally it was out. During those few moments I prayed as never before in my life, because we all knew that a fire in any of the buildings would be extremely hard to control because the water would all have to be pumped and relayed to the scene. But what a relief! However, we had been making so much noise that we thought the ladies downstairs must have heard us. Fortunately they didn't as I later found out.



The Sisters of Providence from Indiana were a hard-working group and they were doing the washing and ironing for a large number of the Fathers. They called their Superior, Sr. Gratia, "Ma". "Ma" had broken her wrist shortly before coming to Weihsien and she was with us about two months when she broke the other one, but she remarked to us that at least it made her more symmetrical. Sr. Cecilia also fell that first winter and broke her ankle. They treated her for it at the hospital and she got a cane to walk with, which she used for several weeks. We all thought the story of the cane interesting. One of the Tsingtao ladies was a widow who had been concentrated in that city much earlier than we at Weihsien. The Japanese told her to pack all her belongings before leaving her home, so she put every-thing in trunks just in case she would have to leave the country. The Japanese then sealed the house and took her to the place in the city where all the other Allied Nationals were concentrated. Then the orders came that they were all to be concentrated at Weihsien and each was to take one trunk just as we had been ordered. She was not allowed to go home but had to go from there to Weihsien. The Japanese selected one trunk for her and that was shipped to Weihsien in her name. That trunk contained all kinds of window drapes and household goods plus her deceased husband's cane. There was nothing she could do about it. She gave two of the drapes of yellow silk to Sr. Eustella and she gave us one which we used for antependiums on the altars in our room. A few weeks passed and someone needed a cane and she lent it to them. When Sr. Cecilia needed it, she got it and in fact the cane was in use practically the entire time we were there.

Among the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary was Mother Montana, the one who had endorsed the check for me in Tientsin. We were glad to meet each other again. She had brought a little portable sewing machine along as obviously in Tientsin they had been given the same orders as we got, including "one sewing machine for 200 persons". But there they had to prepare a list of the things they were bringing along and she stipulated "one sewing machine". The Japanese returned it crossed out in red . . . not permitted. She re-copied the list and stipulated "one stitcher" and this time it went through.

The "stitcher" was an old-fashioned one, with a handle on the side to turn, so that while one sewed, someone had to turn the crank. But it was constantly in use and she lent to whoever needed it. One of the Dutch Fathers used to come to the dining room dressed in a very dark blue suit. It did look a little classy compared to the rest of the Fathers, but perhaps he had some kind of a white-collar camp duty and no one minded. But one day he came in wearing the trousers cut off to the knees, which certainly looked funny.



When we mentioned it to Mother Montana she said "But I'm not going to be washing that whole suit in this hot weather."

"But what about when the winter comes?" we asked, "He'll freeze".

"Then I'll just sew them back on again," was her prompt reply.

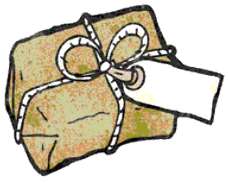
Camp duties could sometimes be fun, even washing dishes. We set up some old tables outside Kitchen One and had two very large dishpans that had been left there. The men carried the hot water and we took turns, although it meant sometimes an hour. As the people finished their meal they brought their dishes out and we washed them and rinsed them. They had to queue up for this too, but one got so used to queueing up for everything that it began to seem strange when you didn't

The morning water queue

have to. The people had to bring their towels along if they wanted them dried. When they didn't, by the time they got to their room the water had all dripped off anyway. One of the first days we were there and came to the dining room a little late, Bishop Pinger was at the dishpan washing his and some of the others' dishes. He queued up just like everybody else. For the first few days the European Bishops stayed in their rooms and had one of their Fathers bring their meals to them but later they also mingled with the crowd. Rev. Connelly, a Baptist minister, made a rubber scraper to help along with scraping the garbage from the dishes before washing and we certainly appreciated that gesture.

There were quite a few babies in camp, so for their sakes a herd of cows was sent to the camp. Of course they had been taken from the internees and one of the men even recognized his own, but could do nothing about it. A Chinese man took care of them and daily led them in and out the gate to where the cows had quarters back near the cemetery. There was usually a goat or two running along. One day, about noon, Sr. Reginald caught the goat because it had been straggling behind. She told me to run quick and get a dish, as she was going to milk it. I did and I held the dish but she couldn't get any milk from the goat. Someone had obviously gotten to her ahead of us further up the line.

Some of the Peking residents and others had arranged to have the Chinese back home send them a parcel about one a month or so. The parcel was sent regularly, we were sure of that, but about two days before they were



distributed there would be a notice on the bulletin board with a list of the names of those who should come at a certain time and sign up for their parcels although you never saw what you were signing for in advance. Hardly any one of the parcels ever came whole. One received an empty box, while others usually had the sugar and valuables taken out. The Japanese blamed the Chinese Post Office personnel, and the Chinese blamed the Japanese but there was no checking on it.

On May 24, the Japanese Emperor's Birthday, we were supposed to celebrate but it was a little difficult to create a festive mood and the Japanese resorted to their own celebration without any assistance from us.

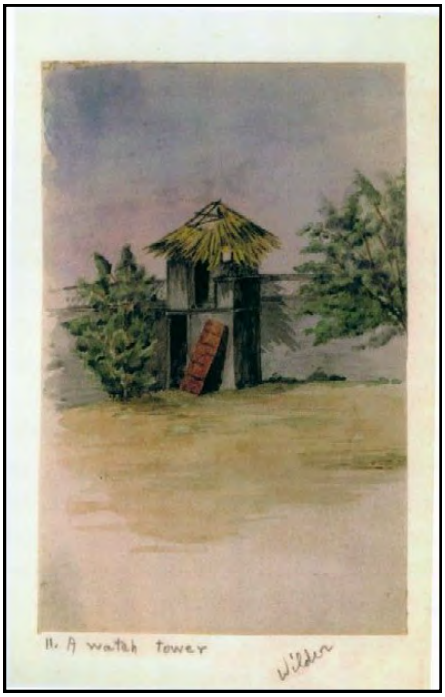
Things would be lost and found in the camp, so a department was set up to take care of that, with a former chief of police of Peking in charge. Each week he would have an auction sale of the things not called for, and the proceeds to go to some worthy cause in the camp, such as the diet kitchen. One day Sr. Mercedes lost her pen and pencil set. She looked for it and finally was told by a lady that she had picked it up and taken it to the "Lost and Found". She went over, looked through the articles displayed. Although there were several there, none were hers. She then told the chief that it had been brought in just the day before and it must be there. He pulled it out of his own pocket saying "You just can't fool anybody around here."

All of us learned much in the camp. There were children of twelve or thirteen years of age who had never washed or dressed themselves because their "Amah" (Chinese nurse-maid) had always done that for them. On the other hand mothers used to be teased that they should be concerned that when their children finally got back to the States or England they would go searching around in the garbage cans as they did in camp, or perhaps the ladies would pick up pieces of coal from a wagon and put it into their fur coat pockets, as they did in camp. Or perhaps they would go around picking up cigarette butts to take out the tobacco and make new cigarettes to sell. The women (at least some of them) did

16. The "White Elephant" where sugar was exchanged for shoes, sheets for shirts etc.

make a little money doing this, and I'm not ashamed to say that I helped them in the business.

There was a canteen, but the things were very expensive. Sr. Esther did all our buying from the canteen. We could buy honey, sorghum syrup, peanuts, Chinese plums, eggs and some fruit. Someone had brought a grinder along to camp and we could borrow it so we ground the peanuts and put honey in it. Since that was the only spread we had for bread, we usually ate it dry. The Chinese plums were something like our prunes as you could cook them without sugar and they were sweet enough. That was our main fruit during the camp duration, and seldom did we get other kinds because when we did they were quite expensive. I remember getting apricots and peaches, and not having fresh fruit for so long, you just long to bite into a fresh peach, but the nurse insisted that they had to be put in boiling water first.



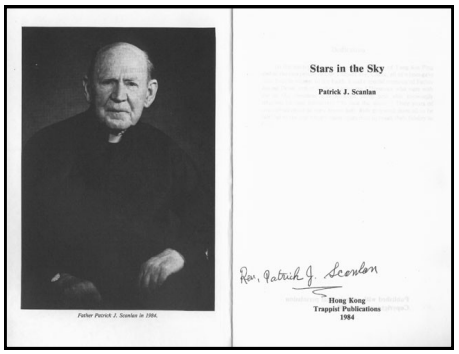
All water had to be carried from the pump house. Drinking water was provided by the kitchens and it had to be boiled first. We got it in containers and kept it in our room. There were shower rooms for the men and women, and although there were separate buildings, there were no partitions. We took our sponge baths in our room after dark. Finally the ladies offered us a time, one hour, in which we could have the shower room to ourselves, but we had to put up curtains and it was rather messy.

Mr. Saberwal, from India, offered to carry our water and he came regularly each day for the buckets. He was very gracious and entertaining, but one day he came with a letter from his wife, a Japanese. He had been an artist in Japan and had quite a number of paintings stored there. She was trying to save them from the bombings and had moved them to a different city since Tokyo was no longer safe. The letter was very pathetic and every one of us who read it felt sorry for him. She said she did not expect to see him again, but that she loved him so much and wanted only his happiness. If he came across another woman who would make a good wife for him, she did not want to stand in the way since she did not expect to live long under present conditions in Japan. But he stayed true to her and I feel sure they were again united after the war. Since he knew Japanese very well, he was a great help in camp to the Japanese personnel and to our side as well.

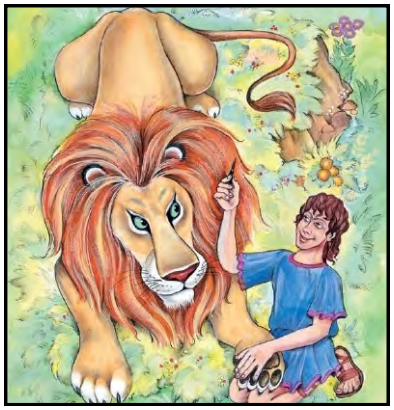
On June 29, 1943 we had our first death in the camp. Father Pierre deLeeuw, CICM., one of Bishop DeSmedt's priests, died. There would be about thirty deaths during those two and a half years of internment, but this one took us all by surprise since he was quite young. A Chinese coffin was ordered from the city of Weihsien and we held the wake. On July 1st the funeral was held in the church which was packed. Although most of us hardly knew him, he was one of ours and in this event we were one. He was laid to rest in the little cemetery, and Father Kashmitter, MM. gave the eulogy.

Sr. Ursula had been put in charge in Hungkialou and the school there kept in operation, as did the ones in Shang Pu, Hai Hsing, Dee-chow and Tai-an. After we were in camp about two weeks she came to see us. The Commandant allowed her to come to his office and we could meet her there. She came once more but after that was not allowed in because the Chinese Sisters of the different Orders were also coming and it was getting too much for the Commandant to cope with and the chief of guards insisted that the visits cease.

Some of the Fathers and men were getting produce from the Chinese outside and selling it to the internees. This was black-market and although the Japanese suspected it, they could never lay their hands on the right person because they never found out. Most "notorious" of the black marketeers was Father Scanlon, the Trappist. He had cleverly managed to get a room against the wall where he could get a few bricks loose and the food could be passed in. Usually the food had to be stored under his bed. He sold it to the people at cost, unlike some of the others, who were getting quite a profit. Naturally there was some jealousy here and one day one of these profiteers squealed. Two friends happened to hear of it and before the Japanese guards could get to Father Scanlon's room, these two managed to get a garbage box, and without Father Scanlon even knowing anything about it, they went to his room, dumped all the food in the box and carried it over to the hospital. They saw the Japanese going to Father's room and later on the food was returned to Father Scanlon and he sold it. Another night they caught him near the wall. He had the money to pay the Chinese in his hands, while they were taking him to the guardhouse. He stopped to make believe he was tying his shoe, but laid the money down by the sidewalk in a safe place. When he got to the guardhouse he was searched, but they found nothing, so he was let go. Finally on June 29th, they decided that he definitely was guilty of black-marketing. The next day at 2:00 P.M. he was sentenced to prison for two weeks. The little jail wasn't much worse than the room he had been living in. The Head of Discipline was to bring him his meals three times a day. It was a real treat and retreat for



him although none of us could visit him. His waiter, however, went to all three kitchens each meal and each gave him a portion. Anyone who had a cake or other dainty would also remember Father Scanlon during his imprisonment. He amused himself with singing and reading so that all in all he was better off there than he had been before. After the two weeks, he was allowed to go back to "civilian" life.



I think any one of us would have preferred that little prison to the prison of the city. The Peking people told us of a lady living in Peking the year previous who suddenly was missing. No one knew where she went nor was there any way of finding out. Then another lady was taken by the Japanese and put in jail. She was put into a cell with another woman who looked to her like a mad-woman as her hair was one mess and she looked quite wild. It frightened the second woman to think she would be in the same room with this woman. But the "mad-woman" recognized the second woman and identified herself as the one whom they thought was lost. The Japanese had taken away all hairpins or anything that she could kill herself with, more or less for her own sake. One never knows their intentions, but often they were human enough.

In order to keep the people busy and entertained, the Fathers started a little orchestra for Sunday evenings. They duplicated songs and we could have community singing. Bishop De Smedt also played violin in the orchestra. One song the Belgian Fathers made up was a round about bean sprouts. Since bean sprouts were one of the more common vegetables and you put the beans under wet dishcloths for a few days and they sprouted and thus were a little more than the beans would have been, this song with the words "Bean sprouts without end," certainly was appropriate

Other entertainment included an occasional production staged for the benefit of the "residents." One Priest became quite famous for his portrayal. Father Schneider's mission was in the Deep South but he had been studying in Peking and that was his only reason for being in the camp. His brother, Father Siegfried was in the south and had been to visit us at Hungkialou several times. Fr. Schneider was tall and lanky and could usually be seen walking around with his "bodyguard," a small Chinese boy of about twelve who took a special liking to him. When the H. G. Wells play "Androcles and the Lion," was being prepared for production in camp, he was chosen for a unique part, to be the roarer for the lion. The play opened up with the MGM lion roaring and one of the young men dressed as a lion while Father was back stage doing the roaring. For several weeks the camp was entertained by his practicing and it got to be very realistic. The lion's costume was very artistically done with whatever material was on hand.

Percy Gleed, a British internee, managed to get copies of Elijah by Mendelssohn and formed a chorus. Although that took quite an amount of evening time for rehearsals, it was worthwhile. By this time we had changed to our white habits. The Benedictine Sisters also wore white shoes while we had black. Percy advised me to borrow a pair of white shoes so that the Sisters could be completely in white. One of the Benedictines lent me hers, but I had to fill out the toes because the shoes were too long.

On July 2, 1943, Sister Charitas had her Silver Jubilee, twenty-five years of Profession. Sister Leola of the Chowtsun group, Sister Blanda of the Tsingtao Franciscans, and Brother Schlund of the Brothers of Mary also celebrated theirs. A special High Mass was celebrated in the church and we tried to make things as nice as we could for them. In the afternoon as soon as he could get off duty, Father Madian Schneider came over from the bakery with a unwrapped loaf of fresh bread under his arm. This was his gift to Sister Charitas.

That week it had rained heavily and the flood on the eve of the Fourth of July washed almost all of the north wall of the compound away. We were forbidden to go near it in the morning and extra guards were stationed. The Japanese tried to order our men to rebuild the wall, but they refused saying they didn't wall' themselves in in the first place, neither could the Japanese force them to rebuild it, so extra forces of Chinese had to be brought in for the work. The whole affair was a disappointment to us as we had planned on celebrating the day, which was ironic enough as we were non-independents! The Fathers, especially the American ones, had planned an outdoor program for the evening but there could be no free day, excepting where school was concerned, because the camp duties had to be

-- Excerpt from Ida Talbot's diary of the 4th July 1943 Weihsien.

We had hardly returned from supper when the rain started pouring. Sid was holding the baby who was crying very badly. Peter & Gay were creating a terrific din when thunder & lightning flashed & drummed and a tremendous crash was heard. Gay looked out and said that the Carters' sunshade had collapsed. Then Sid looked out of our little back window and shouted "there was no wall".

For several minutes, it did not seem to penetrate into anyone's head that it was the wall which was keeping us in. I jumped up on the box under the window to see; I did and immediately painted it. Sid was chafing with Christine's howling. However when I had finished and he saw the result he was proud.

No one in the row thought to look out of their back window until Sid convinced them. However the zinc roof of the water tower situated between one row of buildings in front was blown into our courtyard by a rain spout.

Stan A. was witness to this phenomenon. He said a sheet of water came down followed by another and before it had time to reach the ground, the previous sheet of water lifted it right into air, taking the roof of the water tower with it and when its strength was spent, dropped it in our courtyard.

I have never seen such activity on our highway. People just keep on massing to see the broken wall and to look out onto freedom. Then people sang "God bless America". It is very touching time, and how we longed with all our hearts that this was all over.

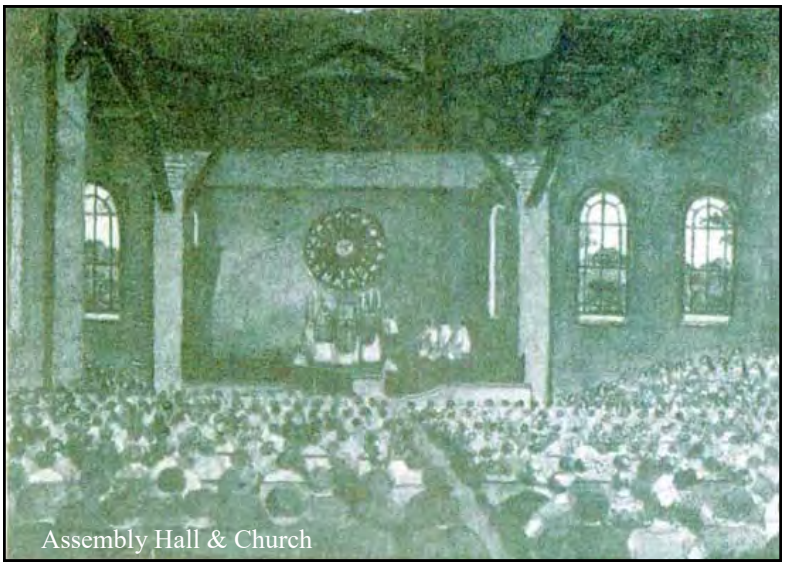
The Japanese were the last to know, and after a couple of hours they came with a bale of barbed wire.

The American Fathers then had a sing song of old favourites. They sat on the stage wearing blue shirts, white pants & red ties. Some wore the letter "V" shape.

At God bless America, the Stars & Stripes was unfurled. It was impressive.

What a day!

carried on. Finally it was decided to have the program in the church, which was our largest meeting place. The Japanese permitted extra lights, but no national anthems of any nation were ever permitted on the campus. The Fathers had the stage for the evening. Father Cary, Superior of the Canadian Scarboro Fathers was directing.

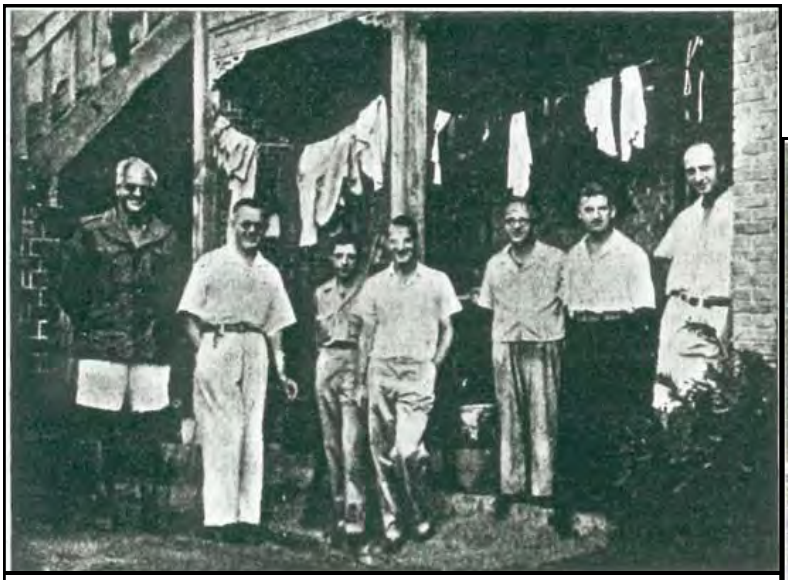


Assembly Hall & Church

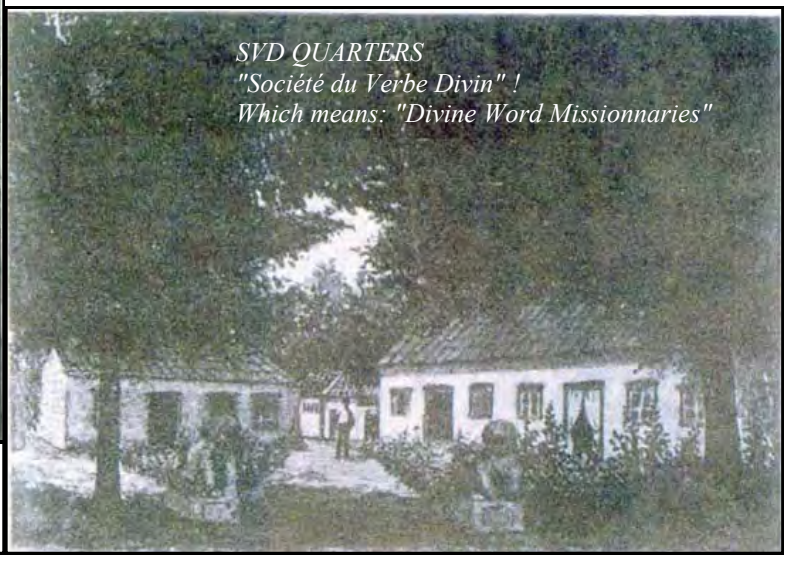
The word was whispered around that there was going to be a surprise at the end, but no one knew what it was. The Japanese guards came, they enjoyed only what they could understand and they finally got tired and left. Father Plummer, OFM of the New York Franciscans, and a former ex-marine (who was renowned as the best clothes-washer in camp) sang a parody to the Prisoners Song, made up by some of the Fathers and Sisters, telling about Father Scanlon who at the time was a double prisoner and could not be present. There were tears in the audience as he sang it, verse after verse. There were other songs and acting and then "God Bless America." This song was new to me as I had first heard it a few weeks previous in one of the Sunday evening get-togethers, when Mr. Hannigan, an Irish tobacco man, stood behind me singing it with his lovely tenor voice. It thrilled me then, but now to hear that packed hall singing it was thunderous. Then came "There'll always be an England" and we reciprocated by helping them out. We couldn't help with the Dutch or Belgian, but they had enough voice themselves and didn't need help. Then silence . . . and the surprise. A curtain hung on the back wall of the stage was pulled and a large American flag was displayed! No Japanese were there to see it, nor did they ever know it was there.

The next day as we sat in the dining room chopping leeks, one of the ladies suddenly remarked—"Why are all those Catholic Fathers so good-looking?" and the others thought the same. I hadn't given it a thought but after that when we had programs and the Fathers were on the stage I realized how true it was.

Some time after our arrival we faced an important decision. In the south, in Shanghai and Hong Kong, the Priests and Sisters had been gathered into the convents and monasteries and concentrated there and only the North had the Japanese got all of us concentrated together. The Bishops were opposed to this policy, but the authorities in China seemed powerless to change the decision, so the case was sent to Tokyo and it took Tokyo six months to respond. They finally did, saying all the Catholic priests and Sisters could go up to Peking to be interned there in various monasteries which were specified, but those who went would have to provide their own food and also pay for their housing. It was up to us to decide whether to go or not. Many chose to leave and on August 16, 1943, two hundred twenty-four departed to Peking. One week later on August 23, two hundred twenty-six more left. We talked it over. Would we get better food in Peking than at Weihsien? Would we be able to write or have better contact with our Chinese mission? Sr. Esther was undecided but finally she, together with Superior of the Chowtsun Sisters, decided that we should all stay. Later the Chowtsun Sisters changed their minds and left with the crowd. Those who departed were permitted to take their luggage and trunks along. We had a farewell dinner and packed a lunch for them, even meat sandwiches. I shall never forget the talk one of the ministers gave, commending the Fathers for their willingness to take on the harder duties of the camp, also the Sisters, especially the Dutch Sisters of St. Joseph. He said one hardly ever saw them without a bucket or at some other work, and although we could not speak to them now that they were leaving us, we could



Nos abbés *au camp de concentration de Weihsien en Chine*
De gauche à droite ; Abbés De Jaegher, Wenders, le Père Martin de l'Abbaye de Lophem, les abbés Hanquet, Keymolen, Unden et Palmers.
Cette photo portait la mention ; « Septembre 1945. Bloc 56. Notre palais ».



SVD QUARTERS
"Société du Verbe Divin" !
Which means: "Divine Word Missionnaries"

not help feeling sad at the parting. As Father Kowalski, the Superior of the SVD Fathers went out the gate he called back his parting words, "Ladies, keep up the black market!"

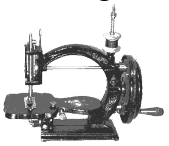
To us who were left it was indeed a sad parting. So many great missionaries had chosen to depart, and the questions in our minds were "Should we have gone along with them? Is it the best thing to stay?" But the decision had been made and so we had to carry on as before, which we did. Seeing the negotiations had worked with the missionaries, some of the business people went to the Japanese and asked to go to Peking also, but the answer they got was that those Fathers and Sisters were to be compared to the spirits that go round at night—they do not really belong to any country, theirs is a different life entirely and Tokyo had to give in to them!

Now that one decision had been made there was yet an-other to be faced. There would be an evacuation and any of us left in the camp could be repatriated, beginning in September. We figured that the war could not possibly last much longer because Japan could not hold out against the States much longer, considering her size. True, according to the paper from Peking, which some of the internees could afford to buy, the Americans losing heavily. Why one ship had been sunk six times, miraculous indeed. But one just had to follow the line of the American Fleet and it was clear the Americans were coming closer. So perhaps it was best to stay and see the end.

Srs. Charitas, Veronica and Elaine decided they would repatriate. Three out of the five Tsingtao Sisters also went. There were more stringent orders for those who repatriated than for those who had gone to Peking. These were to take only as much as they themselves could carry. The Japanese knew that there would be times when they would have to walk and carry their own luggage. Those departing were to take no pictures and no books, only clothes and necessaries. Many of the Protestant missionaries had their Bibles with notations but were not allowed to take them. The Sisters wanted to take their prayer books. They asked Mr. Ladow to intercede for them and he did and so they would be al-lowed one prayer book, which certainly was a concession.

Mrs. Dobrinina, a Russian ballet dancer, who had a boy about ten, was leaving. She had her Russian icon which she said was about five hundred years old, and had been displayed in front of all the weddings, baptisms, funerals for many generations of her family. She put it in her suitcase. The luggage was to be in front of the church two days be-fore so that the Japanese could censor it. They threw out the icon. Mrs. Dobrinina was crying over it. Finally I suggested to Sr. Bede that she and I go to Mr. Sukigawa and ask for it and perhaps keep it for her, possibly there would be a way of getting it back to her later on. We went and he was very gracious and sorry but we were told to wait a few days and he would get it for us. He never did, most likely he couldn't and our guess was that by that time it was already sold to a Chinese market or kept by one of the guards as a souvenir. The problem was that the head of the guards and Mr. Sukigawa were not on such good terms. Some internee had put money in the lining of his suitcase and the guards had found it. That had angered them, and Mr. Sukigawa's intercessions were not well received.

The evening before they left, Sr. Eustella called me over to her room. She closed the door and told me that she was sending a report to the Mother Superior along with one of her Sisters and she wanted me to help. She had written the report on a long piece of white goods and she wanted to sew it inside the hem of Sr. Verna's habit which she would be wearing home. She had Mother Montana's "stitcher" and my job was to turn the handle while she sewed it in. It was our secret so naturally we were anxious to see if it went through. In the morning as the repatriates left after breakfast we were all there to see them off. It was the morning of September 15, 1943, bright and sunny. The front of the church was roped off. One by one they entered this area now "out of bounds" for us. Some of them were going out of our lives forever and we would never see them again. Sister Eustella had agreed on a signal from Sr. Verda if she got through safely. As the queue moved through the church they were



CHURCHYARD

searched after which they came out the other door and then moved slowly out the gate to freedom.

Unfortunately they were buying that freedom at a greater price than they expected as they had no idea how hard the way back to home was going to be. Our three Sisters came out of the church and gave their sign that all was well as far as the censors were concerned. Then Sr. Verda came out and also gave her signal, three waves. Everything was fair in war, even to fooling the enemy. Across the road outside was a green hill and the repatriates went over and sat waiting for their bus. We could still talk to them over the wall. Eventually the

buses came and took them away.

The day before they left Rev. Connelly gave a party for the Sisters who were leaving. He had brought an ice cream freezer along to camp and he managed to get some cream and milk from the black market. That freezer was turned practically all day as he got the men to take turns at it, so that the Sisters could have ice cream. Needless to say, it was appreciated.

Father Rutherford

by Father Hanquet ---- July, 2005
"Father Rutherford, a Franciscan as was Father Schneider, chose to stay in camp to help the Catholic prisoners.
The same decision to stay was also taken by 6 other Samist Fathers (Société des Auxiliaires des Missions). They were Fathers deJaegher, Keymolen, Palmers, Unden, Wenders, and myself, E. Hanquet. At 90 years old, I am the only one alive today. In camp, with us, there was also a Benedictine Father, John Martin, and two Jesuit Fathers: Fathers Dallaire and Gyselinck.
There were also 3 Catholic nuns and about forty laypersons.
For this little Catholic community, it was important to have someone in charge. This was requested by our Japanese captors as well as by the Catholic Church in Peking, represented by the apostolical delegate: H.E. Mgr. Zanin
Father Schnusenberg, a German Franciscan Father living in Peking had arranged with the Japanese for the transfer to Peking of all the Catholic missionaries, Fathers and Nuns (except ourselves) to be re-interned by oath in their respective convents. Doing so, he named Father Rutherford as the principal priest responsible for Weihsien prison camp.
Father Schnusenberg came to visit the camp with the Swiss delegation about every month with a new provision of wine and hosts all packed in a box, which he insisted to be returned to him --- empty --- on every next visit. This enabled us to smuggle messages ? unnoticed by the Japanese.
A few words about Father Rutherford's personality:
He loved to laugh, and laughed heartily and loudly. This happened when he told us about the time he had to undergo surgery: a trepanning ---
He said: "They opened my head and they didn't find anything in it" HA! HA! HA!
As a priest, he presided our Sunday Eucharist at 8 o'clock in the Assembly Hall. During the first months, he was the only one to give the sermon. Later on, he asked other Fathers to replace him."

Father Clementine OFM was also leaving but had no suit to wear, only his Chinese gowns. He didn't mind going to the States in one of those, but Sr. Ludmilla thought different. One day standing in queue for dinner, she asked the man next to her if he was going. When he said no, she asked him if he had any suit that he could possibly give up, or knew of anyone who had. He brought two suits for Fr. Clementine.

Four hundred fifty priests and Sisters had left for Peking, and now two hundred ninety more left for the States. While we hated to see them go, there was one great advantage, we had more room now, and could spread out a little. Of the Fathers, we had eleven remaining, two Franciscans including Father Ildephonse **Rutherford**, OFM from Chowtsun. Also, Father John Martin, O.S.B., Father Julien Ghyselinck, S.J., Jean Dallaire, S.J. and six of Father Lebbe's Auxiliary Fathers including Nicholas Wenders, Michael Keymolen and Raymond De Jaegher.

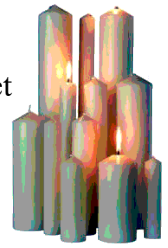
Fr. Ildephonse was appointed Acting Ordinary of the Catholics in camp and he now had about two hundred fifty parishioners. He could confirm when needed. In the beginning months of the camp he was Head of Discipline, and later when voting was the method he was out by about ten votes. His camp duties were then garbage collecting, hauling coal and cleaning the out-house. With such onerous duties, he managed to maintain the respect of the people in general. He was considered one of the best cooks in camp and was especially an expert in baking pies, which talent he had little chance of exercising.

Fr. Ghyselinck was from Tientsin where he worked for the Catholic Press. He had printed some of the plays we translated so I knew of him from our prior correspondence and he took over the choir. The Fathers had left us seven large Graduals containing Gregorian Chant and he came to me and asked if I could play from the square notes. I had never done so before, but said I could try and I found out later that it was really difficult but with two years of practice, I learned. He had about five Belgian Fathers singing the Propers and it was here that I first learned to appreciate Gregorian Chant. I had always had a natural dislike for it but now I realized that it is really for men's voices and it was not composed for women's voices. They sang the full Propers at High Mass every Sunday. Fr. Ghyselinck also organized a mixed choir for the Ordinaries and Motets and fortunately there were several women and Sisters with good voices left. Sr. Eustella got the music from her own choir in Tsingtao and we had our regular rehearsals weekly in the church. The use of the church for practice was subject to a schedule and anyone wanting to use it for choir rehearsal or any other use, or special services, had to apply for permission.

I was also asked to take care of the church work, which meant that on Sundays I had to carry the materials to the church and get them ready for Mass. I would stop at the Davies' on the way and they would give me their eighteen inch silver crucifix for the altar which I would also return to them after Mass. Our High Mass was scheduled for 9:00 A.M.

At 10:00 A.M. the Episcopalians had their service in the church, so I would have to clear everything away before they got there. Father had told me to take the crucifix and candles off since they did not want them, but leave the rest. The first Sunday I mistakenly left the alter cloth but Father told me after that I could leave it on for them and they were grateful for it. Bishop Scott usually celebrated the Episcopalian services. Rev. Jones usually attended our Mass each Sunday, then stayed for their own or celebrated at theirs.

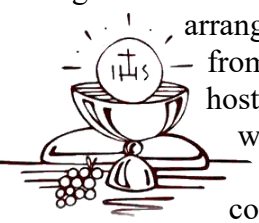
One of our big problems was candles. Although we had brought some along they were quickly gone and while we also rationed about two short stearine candles every two weeks these were so soft that they would melt right down. At this time we had a good pailful of wax drippings left, so I figured if I could have some kind of pipe, perhaps we could make candles of the stearine plus the harder drip-pings. Father Dallaire happened to be present when I mentioned it and he offered to get the pipe any length I wanted. In a short while he was back. I asked him where he got it so



quickly but he said I wasn't supposed to ask, but he didn't have to tell me. It was from the upper wall in a lavatory. Now I needed string and a stopper at one end which was easy enough to obtain. I then melted the wax and poured it in the "forms". After it was hard all we needed to do was dip the form in very hot water for a few seconds and the candle rises up and out. I was proud of my candles until we had burned them for three Masses, by which time they had melted down and filled the bottom of the saucer. The next thing we tried was to wrap a piece of hard paper around the top of the candle. This helped considerably and, in fact, it saved the situation, excepting for the times when the paper would catch fire and I would have to get up to the altar in the middle of the Mass and put it out. I made quite a few candles and gave some to the Fathers.

There were eight sisters left in camp now, Srs. Esther, Bede, Ludmilla, Cecilia, Julian and I, also two of the Tsingtao Sisters, Eustella and Hiltrudis. We moved down from the upper room, so the six of us had a larger room than before, and the two Tsingtao Sisters moved in a small room right next door to us. On the other side of our room was another very small room which was vacant. We asked for a chapel and were allowed to have that room. Some of the Sisters who had gone to Peking had a little harmonium in their room and they gave it to us before they left. We put it in the chapel and we could have our choir practice there so it was very handy. We had a little altar, also a tabernacle that had belonged to Mother Montana, and we could have Mass there. People could come for visits and all were happy about it. But it didn't last long.

The White Sisters had also left their iron for making hosts, plus a twenty five pound sack of white flour. Now I was supposed to make the hosts, but although I tried, it wouldn't work. The little stoves we had were not the thing we needed to get the irons hot. Finally it was arranged that Father Ladislas would come from Tsinan once a month and bring us hosts. This was a blessing in more than one way as it gave us a little contact with the outside world. Each time he would come we would be alerted and Sr. Esther and I would go to the Commandant's office. There in the presence of Mr. Sukigawa and his aide, Mr. Ibara, we could talk to him and the guards led him in and out again. He brought the hosts. Father Ildephonse took care of the wine and he had all the priests down to a minimum, one tea-spoonful only, with an eye-dropper for the water, and water only for the ablutions. Deaconess Sworder, the Episcopalian who was sacristan for Bishop Scott, asked for some of our hosts, but Father Ildephonse said he could not permit it al-though I was permitted to allow her use the iron and teach her how to bake them. I did, but she must have had trouble with it also so they used bread from the bakery.



We Sisters agreed to do the washing for the eleven Fathers since we were now allowed Wednesday morning of each week at the laundry. There were three stationary tubs and also a large tub for rinsing. Our biggest problem was soap. The second problem was that the clothes were very black as a result of the dirty jobs the Fathers were taking on in camp. Srs. Eustella, Mercedes, Bede, Reginald and I did the washing, or I should rather say, scrubbing because we actually used scrubbing brushes to get most of the things clean. During the summer especially this was one of the hardest duties because the clothes we had on were almost as wet as those we were washing as we perspired so much. The Fathers took turns in hanging out the wash and watching it on the line so no one ran away with any of it. Father Madian's seminary training showed up here as he would have the wash all hung up in very straight lines. Sr. Bede was the supervisor of the laundry and she had quite a job teaching

the Fathers how to rinse. When Father Ildephonse had his turn he wanted to tell stories the whole while and although they were interesting enough, he wasn't doing justice to his rinsing and Sr. Bede had to take him to task at times.

One day however, it was Sr. Eustella who took him to task. The Fathers used to bring in their wash and put it in a heap on the floor in the middle of the laundry. This day I pulled out one very black sweat shirt. Sr. Eustella immediately guessed it was Father Ildephonse's, so she was waiting for him to come in. I started scrubbing it and it really was a challenge. After about ten minutes I had a piece about six inches square all nice snowy white and I was proud of my accomplishment and kept on until I had the whole thing clean. Finally Father Ildephonse came in and Sr. Eustella gave him a piece of her mind for wearing that shirt until it got so black. He simply said he hadn't worn it at all, it wasn't his. Nobody wanted to own the shirt until finally it came out that Father Hanquet had bought it at the "Lost and Found" for five dollars, a bargain indeed. Now he had a nice clean shirt and was happy.

Sr. Bede being in charge, was constantly telling us not to use so much soap, a most natural thing for anyone in her position under the circumstances. So whenever she would leave the room or wasn't looking, Sr. Mercedes would take a good rub off Sr. Bede's bar. I used to tease Sr. Mercedes that if I ever got mad at her, I could easily have my revenge by telling Sr. Bede what she was doing. Sr. Ludmilla took care of the mending, and the ironing was no problem. All the church wash was put on the two tin pans, plus our own coifs and handkerchiefs.

On September 20, 1943 the American repatriates arrived in Goa, the end of a long unpleasant voyage. The exchange from the Taia Maru, the Japanese ship they had

boarded at Shanghai, to the Swedish Gripsholm, was made at Goa. In that town is preserved the body of the great missionary of the East, Francis Xavier, but they did not have the chance to visit his tomb. While our people came out of the Taia Maru with whatever each one could carry by hand, the exchange Japanese, one for one, were leaving the Gripsholm for the Taia Maru, also loaded with as much as they could carry, but with this difference, the hatches of the ship had been stocked with pianos, sewing machines, radios and all kinds of appliances so that it almost looked as if each person had brought one of each along. The second difference was that the persons coming out of the Gripsholm were not just civilians as ours were but most of them were coming to help their country. The Gripsholm docked in New York harbor on December 1, and it was a happy homecoming for the weary travelers. Although the food was excellent, most of them had been too ill on the first part of the journey to enjoy it.

One of the White Russian ladies requested an English teacher. She didn't want to attend classes so I went over to her room a few times a week. Her husband, Johannes Johannsen, had been a sea captain, and had traveled around the world working in different countries. He was quite ill, but he loved to have company and I often thought that was his wife's main reason for not wanting to leave him alone while she went to class. He had many stories to tell and he used to joke about the fact (and we all knew it was true enough) that he had always felt best on sea and now that he had to stay on land, he was ill, while it was just the opposite with the rest of us. The English lessons were interesting indeed. I listened to more sea stories than she to English. The captain got gradually worse and finally passed away. I continued teaching and one day she told me that she had come to China with her ex-husband to escape the Revolution in Russia but later they separated. Then she met the captain and married him. She had a servant girl in Shanghai, also a Russian, who married, and later left her husband and married another. She scolded the girl for doing so, not realizing that she herself had done the same thing. Probably she thought because she was of a higher class, it didn't make so much difference. One has to marvel at the way the faith of the Orthodox Church is handed down from generation to generation. Although most of these didn't care about Sunday services, still there must be Baptism, weddings and funerals according to the rites of the Church.

The people at Goa had sent cards back to those in camp and we could read between the lines that the trip wasn't pleasant. Mrs. Johanssen asked me to interpret a card she had received. It said something about a nice trip, good food, etc. and below "Tell it to Sweeney." She wanted to tell that person but she didn't know of anybody by that name in camp, and she obviously did not understand that slang.

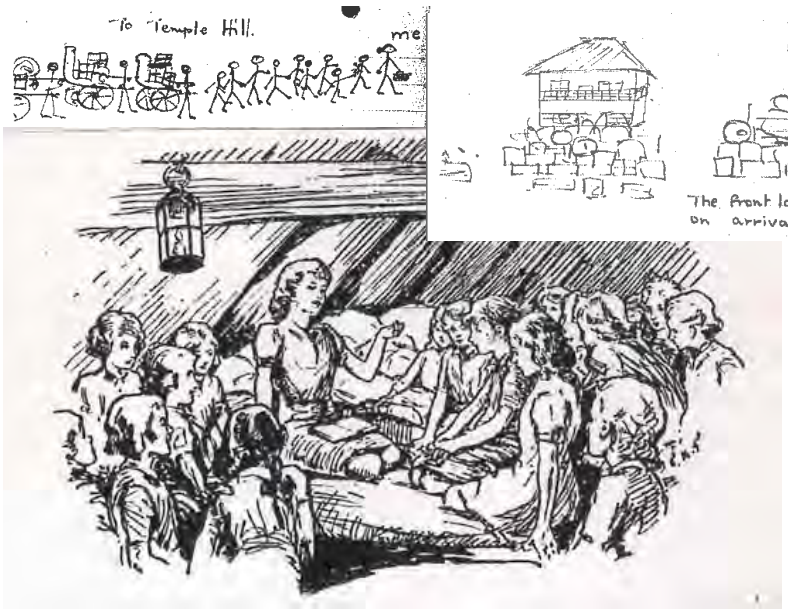
Back in Hungkialou school was going on, but there were also other things going on. Mr. Du was taken by the Ba-lu (the Communist guerillas) on August 15 and kept for a few days. The Sisters refused to pay any ransom money and they eventually released him. Then on the evening of September 24th, Feast of Our Lady of Ransom, the Ba-lu came again. They got passed the gate to the front door and wanted Sr. Ursula. Father Lucien went out to them and tried to talk but they took him instead. He had to walk for miles, until finally he didn't know where he was going any more. He was taken to the soldiers' quarters, his clothes taken from him and he was given some of theirs to wear instead, not very clean either. They kept him until December and by that time he had no sense of time anymore, no idea of how long he was there or what day of the month it was. One night he saw his chance to get away and he did. He walked several miles and came to the railroad. He managed to board a freight train and rode until he realized he was getting near Tsinan. There he jumped off and got into the city where he walked to the Bishop's compound and entered. They were glad to see him again and got clean clothes and a bath ready. The Bishop asked him if he

wanted to say Mass, as he was still fasting. They told him it was December 8th, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. He was overjoyed to think he had been taken and released on a feast of the Blessed Virgin.

A notice was tacked on the bulletin board asking for books to organize a library. That was one article most of us had brought along and it was surprising to see the number of books available. The variety was another surprise. Actually it was a wonderful idea because the books were circulated and it gave the people something to keep their minds on. During my spare time I translated the book "One Lord, One Faith" into Chinese, intending to get help on it after camp, but although I reached the end of the book, it never got corrected, but it did give me a lot of practice in Chinese.

We had more room now, but were going to lose some

of it. There were still people outside who were of the Allies and they all had to be brought into the "fold". Up in the northern part of Shangtung, in the city of Chefoo was a rather large school for the children of the Protestant missionaries in China, called the China Inland Mission School. The school housed about one hundred fifty internees. They arrived one day and quarters had to be arranged for them, since they were a very select group, the school being run by British. They brought quite a number of large boxes with them and these were stored on the ground right outside our room. One

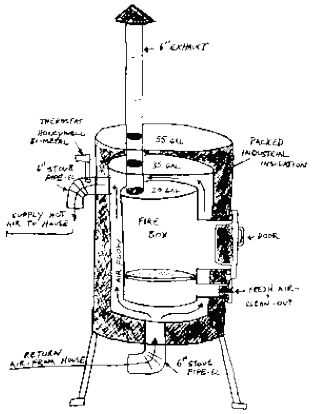


morning Sr. Cecilia noticed the head-master standing on one of the boxes peering into our chapel. We expected our chapel would be going and we were right. The next day we got orders to vacate the church.

Fathers Wenders and Schneider offered to move in together, although they each had a tiny room, so that we could use Fr. Wenders room for a chapel, but to get to it you had to pass through Father Madian's room, or through the Jesuits room. None of them minded if you came through during the day as the people also went in to make visits. One Russian Orthodox lady made her hour of adoration there every day. Father Ghyselinck had brought along a tiny monstrance which folded up flat and Father Ildephonse had a specially thin set of vestments which was handy for the summer. One day as I passed through Father Madian's room, I thought the room was empty when I heard a voice which came from under the table. Father Madian was scrubbing the wood floor and he stuck his head out from under the table. Father Wenders was seemingly just another priest, but no one knew how many degrees he had, and I think he sat up until after midnight in many a little home in camp talking on different subjects to people. Up until then I had given little thought to the little country of Belgium, but here I was to realize what talent and learning there must be there in spite of its size. The Belgians in camp earned all the respect we could give them.

Thanksgiving Day was another special day for the Americans and we got together in a hall and had apple pie. It cost each of us $5.00, but it was the only thing we could think of, considering the resources we had, that would make the day look like Thanksgiving. There were speeches and anyone who wanted to say something fitting for the day was invited to do so. It seemed to tighten the bond between us and all our fellow Americans at home.

December, 1943 arrived and it was getting cold. We were rationed coal, a bucket of coal dust, more or less, per person something like every two weeks. People were beginning to make stoves and of course they needed material to make them. The material was right on the campus, and we naturally made use of it. The good Presbyterians like all Americans, (unlike the Chinese) had eavetroughs on their school or other buildings. Someone realized they would make nice stove pipes and in no time they were off the buildings as far up as man could reach. Bricks were needed and there was plenty of wall around to pull bricks out of. Before long one inside wall had most of the bricks pulled out. No one was ever caught at it but each day more were gone, until the entire wall between the "out of bounds" and the "in-bounds" was gone. The Japanese didn't seem to mind really as long as it was making us comfortable, and that they wanted us to be.



A stove needs a hot-plate and guess where we got those from? One man had a room with his boy who was about 15, but a rather good-for-nothing. In this event he proved that he did know something. One evening as the boy was out; a note was slipped under the door. The man took it and read, "We saw you in the lavatory taking out the iron tops of the boxes." The water boxes were on top, but by this time were of no use to anyone anyway. The letter continued, "We want two composition books, or the money to buy two and if you don't give it to us, we will tell the Japs on you. Put the money outside your door and close the door so we can get it." The man was still reading it and wondering, when the son came in and he told the boy about the letter. The boy then told him about the two lads he had just seen around the corner outside and he ran out. In a short time all the "hot-plates" were put to better use and the blackmail ended.

One man was an expert at making stoves. He made one for us during his spare time for $100.00 which at that time was the price of a half dozen eggs. It was a good bargain, because we could do a little cooking when we wanted to in our room. Of course, one could easily imagine what happened in the next spring when the heavy rains came, with the eave-troughs gone.

Sr. Reginald had been having periodic pains and so she went to see Dr. Gault. She was told she had a tumor which would not have to be removed in the immediate present and she could keep it two or three years if she so

cared or it could be removed now. She decided on now because she figured that perhaps by the time we got out of camp she would be all over the effects of the operation and ready for work. Dr. Gault then said she could come as soon as she could get ready. At washing we teased her and told her she should go on a Thursday and be back at the tubs the next Wednesday, so she wouldn't miss any wash-days. She said she would, but she also said that if she should happen to die with the operation we should sing the Pie Jesu at her Requiem, for Offertory. During the summer she handed me a copy of the Requiem organ accompaniment that she had brought along and we wondered why she should want to bring that to a concentration camp, but more than once I was glad she brought it. She went to the hospital on December 1, a Thursday. The next day four doctors operated; Drs. Robinson and Grise of Peking, and Drs. Corkey and Gault, two lady doctors. Dr. Corkey specialized in obstetrics and of the thirty babies born in camp she had lost only one. Sr. Esther was present for the operation and pronounced it a success. Later that day we saw Sr. Reginald and she was glad it was over. Previous to going, she had asked Sr. Julian to stay at the hospital for three or four days, then the danger would be over, so she thought. Sr. Julian did, although it was an inconvenience on account of the little room in the nurses' quarters. We visited her daily and she seemed to be recovering nicely.

On the eighth day Sr. Julian remarked about 4:00 P.M. that she thought she could get her bedding and came back to our room to sleep now. I offered to go along and help carry. While she went up to get her things I stopped in to see Sister. She was propped up a little although until then she had been lying flat every time I saw her. We talked until Sr. Julian came down but she didn't want us to leave. I said that Sr. Esther wanted to come over as soon as I got home and she seemed satisfied then, and we left. About 8:30 that evening there was a call for Sr. Julian who had home nursing as her camp duty, so we thought nothing of her being called out. Since she was to report at the hospital, Sr. Esther thought it might be for Sr. Reginald so she said she would go along. The rest of us retired. I was sleeping tight when Sr. Esther woke me about an hour later. When she saw that I really was awake, she told me that Sr. Reginald had "gone to Heaven". She and Sr. Julian then quickly left with Sister's habit and clothes to dress her. Srs. Bede, Ludmilla, Cecilia and I were stunned and silent. Finally, Sr. Ludmilla suggested that we pray the rosary. We did and then waited for the other two to return. They came back and told us that the nurse had been with her and noticed the strange sound and knew she was going. As she got up to call someone, Sister squeezed her hand very tightly. She ran out and got another nurse to call Father Ildephonse who was about a block away. He came immediately but she was already unconscious. He gave her Extreme Unction, and then Srs. Esther and Julian arrived. Sister Reginald did not recognize them and passed away. They dressed her and left her on the bed.

BLACK MARKET WALL (EAST)
*The building in the picture would be the **morgue**, and was also the place where the Trappist monk, Father Scanlan, was confined after he was caught buying eggs in a "black market" operation. At the time of his confinement there was a funeral for a priest who had died of cancer, and I was assigned the task of sneaking down from the burial ground (the vantage point of the artist) to the small building and passing a flask of water to Father Scanlan. The feat was successfully accomplished.*

In the morning two of the Fathers helped to carry the body down to the morgue, which was a little hut aside the hospital. Undoubtedly this had always been the buildings purpose. After breakfast we went over to see her. Her face was black, because the Fathers had carried her head downward down the steps. At noon she was lighter, and in the evening she looked normal and very natural.

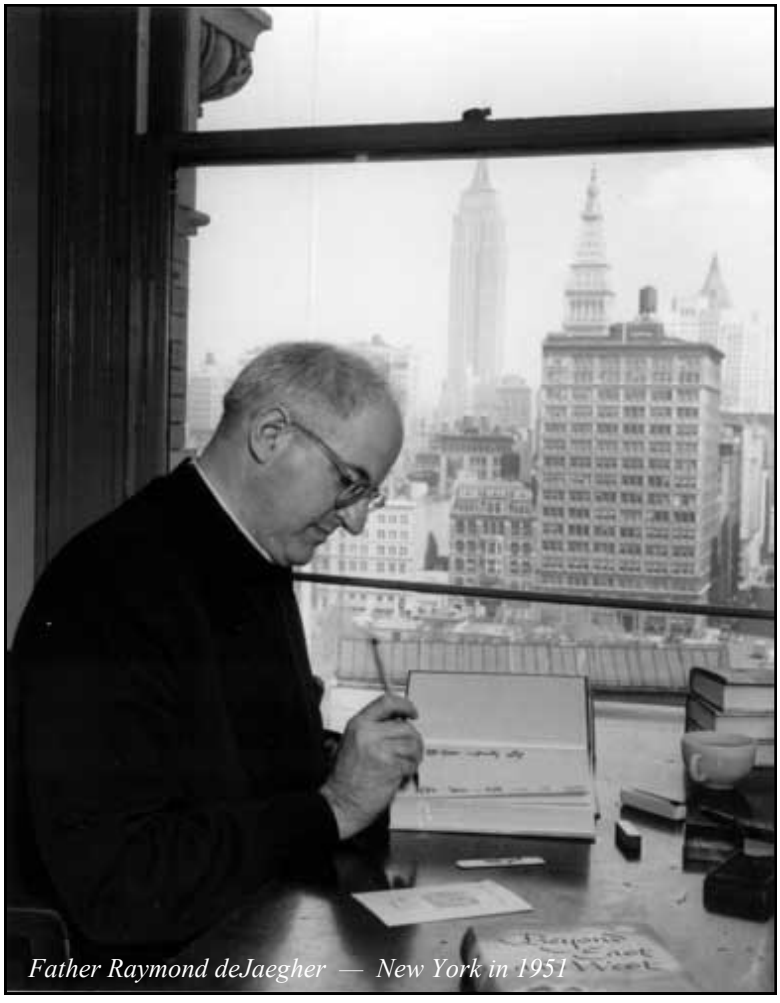
Sr. Esther went to the Commandant and he expressed his sympathy. She asked if the body could be taken to Hungkialou to be buried there and he said that could be done. She asked if two Sisters could accompany the body, he said he could not give permission for that, but he would phone our Chinese Sisters to have someone at the station, he would send two guards along, and he ordered a coffin. It came but was very large and we realized that we were going to have a job lining it. Dr. Gault was a great help and she and I went around begging for pillows or anything that would fill the extra room. It took a day for us to get it ready but in the evening it was finished and carried over. They had laid the body on a sheet in the morgue with candles and she looked exceptionally natural considering that there had been no embalming whatever. One thing rather amused me. When they were to place the body in the coffin, Mr. Hannigan, always a perfect gentleman, pushed through and managed to help lift her into the coffin. During the day the people came to view the body, the children especially came. Later I overheard one of the British mothers say she thought it was a crime to let little children view a corpse. Evidently it wasn't their custom in England, but we didn't know that. We had a Requiem Mass in the church but the guards were waiting for the casket very early that Saturday morning to get it on the train, so the funeral Mass came later.

The Sisters back in Hungkialou were worried that perhaps this was our way of getting her home. She looked so natural that some said they didn't believe she was dead. Finally Sr. Ursula sent word for Dr. Scher to

come out and formally pronounce that Sr. Reginald was dead. He did and preparations were made for a large funeral at the Cathedral. It was a sad occasion for all present. They took up a collection and bought a large tombstone and on it they inscribed that she had been born in Luxemburg, left that country for America, and then left America to work in China. The Communists have undoubtedly removed the stone when they took the place.

The nails for the coffin were large wooden pegs about six inches long. Father Palmers was pounding them in, but finally they wouldn't go any further. We suggested that he cut them off, and it was the only thing he could do. When they put the coffin on the truck, the lid jumped up a little. Someone mentioned that there was no danger those guards would ever lift that lid, but perhaps it was the looseness of the lid that induced the Sisters to open the coffin which caused all the concern about her actual death. Sr. Reginald was the only one ever to be buried in that little cemetery in Hungkialou. Had she known that earlier she would have been very much afraid to go out there because she was always afraid of being buried alive.

Bishop Scott took to carpentry. You would find him at his bench many hours of the day, always cordial, even though he was about in his sixties. It must have been difficult for him as far as his congregation was concerned because the Low and High Episcopalians had to worship together and often their views did not coincide, as I learned working with the women at the vegetables. We were told that one Sunday when a man had been given a host with a cross on it, he threw it back. He must have been rather conservative.



Father Raymond deJaegher — New York in 1951

Father DeJaegher was holding to his one hour per day schedule of Chinese writing with brush. I couldn't see the improvement because he had been almost perfect from the start, but the training he had gotten from Father Lebbe made him strive to be as much like the Chinese as possible. One day he mentioned that word had gone to Rome some time before camp thinking that missionaries could hold Vatican passports. It floored me, the thought of having a passport from Rome meant something beyond all our expectations, a great honor. On the other hand, our passport was our link with the U.S. and how could we give that up? How could we ever decide that? Fortunately, we never had to.

Fr. DeJaegher also gave me my first orientation or hints of the vernacular in the Liturgy. The Chinese had the permission from Rome, but the missionaries hadn't made use of it. Europe should have sent language scholars over to study the language and do the translating, but great minds would be needed for that. I had been just following the stream as far as the Latin was concerned, although often enough I lamented the fact that it was too hard for the Chinese. In the Hymn Book, edited by Father Manfried of our Vicariate, the Latin words of the O Salutaris and Tantum Ergo were printed for the people, but underneath each syllable was put a Chinese word of the same pronunciation. But, Chinese words mostly end in vowel sounds, so that syllables like "turn" had to get a second character to sound the "m". Here is a sample of what they had to sing:

Tan - turn er - go Sa - cra - men - tum Ve- ne - re mur Tang to-mu ai-er gau sa ko-la men to-mu wai neh lai mu-er cer - nu - i Etan - ti - quum do - du - men – turn chai-er nu ee ai-tai an ti kk-um dau- ku - men - to-mu

The "r" is used only at the end, never at the beginning of a word, so the reader will notice that in Latin words beginning with "r" the "1" is substituted. The Japanese is just the opposite here. The Mass servers also had quite a time learning the prayers, and also for the choir it meant a lot of really wasted time spent on pronunciations. Then too the Latin gave the whole religion a "foreign" flavor, and in fact we were the "foreign religion". I think many of the missionaries who were in China have since wondered what different results we would have had, if the liturgy had been translated. One priest trying to impress a rather educated Chinese asked him to come to Mass and view the whole Mass. Undoubtedly he gave him some instructions on the Mass beforehand. But I couldn't see how any person could naturally be impressed by listening to words he couldn't understand and seeing the different motions the priest was going through while saying the words.

Sr. Cecilia's arguments were all for the Latin. She argued that it meant so much to our servicemen in foreign countries to find the Mass the same all over the world, and of course this argument has come up time and again. But what difference would it have made to them to

hear it in Chinese instead of Latin, since they didn't understand either. Besides what percent of American people get to foreign countries, and of those who do, what percent of their lives are they there? Then, why bypass all the advantages the vernacular has to the people at large? As far as China is concerned, the Latin was definitely a great draw-back, in time, effort and results. Later I was glad Father DeJaegher had introduced me to the idea.

The two Jesuits and Father Martin now had a room together. They were quite satisfied, although one of the Jesuits always snored, so the other one got a bamboo pole with which he could reach over and give the snorer a pat when he started. In time he was induced to lie on his side which helped. Then with more of the "flock coming into the fold" they were given another room-mate, Mr. Delare, who was a business man from Peking and had quite a few lady friends. The ladies visited him in the evenings until all hours of the night and sat on his bed, as there was no other place to seat company. But we heard no complaints from the Fathers.

Father Ildephonse, the pastor, had a room to himself which was a good thing because his room was usually the messiest. We said that anybody who wanted to hide anything from the Japs should just give it to Fr. Ildephonse be-cause he wouldn't be able to find it himself in that room. By 1947 he was back in the U.S. and in 1948 he left for Japan which was the closest he could get to China. The ship which brought him to Japan docked at Manila for several days and while there, he went ashore and stayed with the SVD Fathers. They went swimming in the morning and in the afternoon, the other priest asked him if he would like to try the ocean. Father said he would, so a party of three, Father Ildephonse, the SVD Father and a non-Catholic man went together. After a short in the water, the third man noticed the Father was having trouble so he swam over to him and held on to him, when he suddenly realized that Fr. Ildephonse was dead. He had suffered a heart attack. They pulled him to shore, but it had been too late.

During the month of December 1943, the "Bamboo Wireless" was working overtime. Chinese men were brought in, with bricks and a wall was gradually enclosing the northeast corner of the compound from the gate over to the east wall. There were many surmises, including; there were more guards coming and they were going to live there, the Germans were coming into camp, it was going to be a special prison, etc. etc.

All the internees living in that section were told to vacate and find quarters elsewhere which wasn't easy. But if you valued your life, you just don't disobey orders, so the response was "We'll move, but everything goes along with us and we leave no single piece of furniture". As a result, all shelves came down, as well as any fixtures they had put up, and everything was moved out and the bare walls were left for the coming occupants, whoever they were. The mystery, of course, was something else for the men to bet on. It was a challenge to our imagination, but the Japanese kept the secret. Finally in December "they" came; a group of sixty Italians from Shanghai. Now the question changed from "who?" to "why?" Shanghai people were not "of our fold" as Weihsien was for the people of the North only and Shanghai was in the South. But they were there and the people who had vacated the place felt sorry they hadn't left a few things to make their coming more cheerful. The weather was cold and the welcome they got was colder yet. It was not like our first week in camp when we went out to greet the newcomers, or even when the British from the Chinese Inland Mission School arrived. In fact, we weren't even allowed to talk to the newcomers at all which certainly was a problem.

Finally, we learned that the doctors and nurses would be allowed in under guard, as well as Father Ildephonse, because most of them were Catholics. They had little luggage and needed help so we would send things into them, as there were always ways of smuggling outside the vision of the guards.

The "why" was soon answered. Down in the Whang Pu River outside of Shanghai stood the Conte Verde, an Italian ship that had made perhaps hundreds of voyages from Genoa to Shanghai, stopping at all the ports on the way. Now Italy had fallen and the Japanese were losing ships and here was one they could seize quietly. But the captain, Roccocucci and his crew were wiser and determined the Conte Verde was not going to serve as a battle ship, so they sunk her. The feelings of the crew cannot be described as they did so. It must have been hard to sink a ship which had been home to them so long. Perhaps, it was like setting fire to your own homestead. But it was a task to be done and they did it. The Japanese retaliated and notified them that the entire crew and their families would be sent to Weihsien and they should be prepared by the end of December.

Also located in Shanghai was the large Bank of Italy and the eyes of Japan were upon it. The personnel saw the danger and while the Japanese came in the front door

PRIVATE KITCHEN

the money went out the back door and again they were foiled and served notice for the bank staff to be ready for Weihsien together with their families. All their property was to be sealed up but they could take along about as much as we had been allowed.

It didn't take long until this news leaked out to us, but we had known Italy was out of the war. Now it was more difficult for them to get organized than it had been for us because they had nothing. A kitchen was organized and for a bell someone went around striking a frying pan to call for meals. The following Sunday Father Ildephonse was allowed to get them rounded up for church and bring them to Mass. We could see them and smile, but guards were along and so we dared not talk to them, unless you happened to get close enough. Gradually this strict discipline was relaxed and on Sundays as they came to the church we would purposely stand outside or be in the way, so that we could get a word to them. In a few months the barriers were down, very naturally, including the newly constructed wall.

The bricks were always a temptation to the stove makers and once one brick was out the second and third and all the rest had to follow in the same direction. It was better that way because the children had to be in school, and they could hardly live under the original conditions. It was said that they brought along some kegs of brandy and in order to be able to take them along, they put olive oil on top, so that the Japanese thought they were kegs of olive oil, which they knew the Italians needed.

All along each of us had been getting a ration of cigarettes although we took our cards and gave them to the Fathers. They were Chinese cigarettes and although I like the smell of American ones, these were horrible and I can't see why anyone would want to smoke them, but it was all they could get. The SVD Fathers do not smoke according to their Rule, but Father Kowalski had given them permission, saying that they had so little in camp as it was. Later he was sorry he did.

Coal too was rationed, but it was pure dust, so that someone got the idea of making briquettes and we all followed suit. You took ground a proportion of one to three, coal and earth, mixed in water, formed them into balls and laid them out in the sun to dry. They did give a little warmth to the room and it also gave the flock something to do, as well as giving us nice black hands. Some used gloves but it was much easier without, and if you had the time, it was a nice past-time.

MAIN SWITCH *(*by Father Hanquet*)*
During the second winter in camp, we the 12 fathers who remained in camp, were living in block 56.
We used to celebrate mass in the early morning, but that was before the council of 1965 authorizing us to celebrate together in one mass. So at that time we needed around one hour and a half to do so, before going to our daily occupations. Consequently we needed light around 6,30 a.m. The main switch for electricity was located in a cabin situated 50 yards behind our block .While watching the going off the Japanese guard we had noted that one of them came early in the morning to give light to our quarters at 7 a.m.
Being in need of light before that time, Father Palmers and I decided to go to the cabin which door usually was left half open and to put the switch on in order to give light to the whole camp. For a few weeks, that worked all right, one day father Palmers did the work, the next day it was my turn. Everything went smoothly till that early morning when I saw father Palmers puffing coming back to our block in a hurry, telling that the Japs were after him. In fact, a little later they came to our block requesting to get the culprit. Father Palmers was taken to the guard house in the entrance of the camp. The guards started to yell at him and wanted to torture him. Father Palmers remained stoïque. They put chopsticks between his fingers, and while pressing the whole hand, were rageously moving the chopsticks between his fingers.
After that they took him to the Jail where he had to stay one or two days. Since that day, we never got light before seven a.m. sharp. There was no more volunteer to try another attempt.


Emmanuel Hanquet

On New Year's Eve there was a party in Kitchen One. We did not attend although all were invited. While those in attendance were playing cards they got a nice little surprise. Father **Hanquet** had gotten a uniform somewhere and dressed like Hitler. (Apparently he had done it before outside of Weihsien.) He walked into the dining room and around all the tables looking at the people sternly, saying nothing. Most did not recognize him and some of the ladies were even frightened until someone gave out who it was. But while it lasted, it was a good act in more than one way.

The next morning, we Americans got another surprise, although we Sisters were out of this one as well. It seems the English custom on New Year's Day is for the men to kiss all the women they meet, which they did here, surprising those not of their country.

On January 19, 1944 Father Palmers was called to the guardhouse because he had turned on the lights contrary to the orders. There had been a good reason for doing so, as the one who was supposed to turn them on didn't do it. He got slapped in the face for it, and then sentenced to one day in jail. Being winter and with no heat in the jail, this wasn't so pleasant, but he took his bedding over and spent the day without any further ado.

One of the carpenters found a way to earn a little spending money making Japanese shoes or clogs for the people. He got to be quite proficient in it. Sr. Ludmilla bought a pair and wore them in order to save her shoes. I didn't bother because I had two pair of shoes with me and thought they would last. Clogs were getting to be the style there especially during the summer, although many of the children went barefoot.

On the 27th of January, Father Dalaire opened our

retreat which meant that for three days we did our camp duties and tried to keep as recollected as possible and had the three conferences daily. As a sort of preparation for the retreat and because Father Ghyselinck was having a birthday on the day, Sr. Eustella had told us long ahead of time that we were going to have ice cream which meant a lot to us but Father Ghyselinck hardly knew what ice cream was. Sr. Eustella had no way of getting cream, but she did manage to get milk and the sugar was also in short supply so it was pretty far from the real thing. Of course we had to be polite and say it was good and it certainly was better than anything we had for a long time. After one taste, Father Ghyselinck couldn't see why we made such a fuss over ice cream.

Standing: (from left to right)
Eddy Cooke // David ???//Richard Jones//George Wats (Porky)//John de Zutter//Gui Chan//Mickey Marques//Johnny Beaten-Georgiles.
Sitting:
Peter Turner//Alby de Zutter//Father Palmer//Cockburn//Father E. Hanquet//Sotolongo??//???.
Front row:
Jacky Campbell//Michael Turner//???//Eddy Chan//Vova Bonner.

A troop of Boy Scouts was organized with Father Hanquet and Rev. MacChesney-Clark in charge. The minister was of some special American denomination, but he was the only one in camp of that denomination. When we had the Boy Scout's Mass and sang hymns he would be in the front pew sharing a hymn book with one of the boys and singing as though he had done that all his life, and the boys revered him too.

On February 12, Sr. Eustella called for me. She was too ill to teach that day and asked if I would take her place teaching about twelve pupils of the lower grades. I went and opened my eyes to a situation that I had never dreamed existed. If ever there were "mentally disturbed children" these were the ones. There were hardly any books as all the books left by the former missionaries had been consigned to the basements of the "out-of-bounds" houses. Additionally little paper, added to the discipline problems of the day. By the end of the day I was worn out, and glad to give her the room back because I felt she was a teacher and knew how to handle them. But the next morning she went to the hospital and I had to return to the classroom, for the next two weeks. I longed to go back to the kitchen to the leeks and potatoes because they at least were easy to handle and if the ladies didn't want to do the work you could do it yourself.

Then I thought it over. Perhaps she was sick just because of that classroom and if so, I felt I should offer to take some of the youngsters out and form a separate class. I went over to the hospital and proposed the idea. She was delighted and I realized that it was a big favor to her. I was given a classroom of my own with a few benches in it and seven pupils. Manuel Sottolongo was a little Cuban boy but his mother was from Alexandria, Egypt. His father was athletic and had played in the Cuban games. It was difficult for the boy to learn because he would rather play and he would let you know it too. Usually I would have him come over to the yard in front of our room afternoons and give him homework to do. One day, little Billy Strangman a boy of about five who was the idol of the camp and whose father had been a marine before the war but was court-marshaled for marrying his mother, was teasing Manuel. Manuel took the boy and set him in Sr. Hiltrudis' coal jar which was a four foot high earthen jar in which she kept her coal dust although it was then empty. When I came along Billy was standing in the coal jar.

I said, "That's right, Billy, take your punishment like a man!"

He looked at me with his big eyes and replied, "Do man get punishments?"

I didn't care so much what "mans" got but I had to get him out of that jar before Sr. Hiltrudis came along, as well as getting the coal dust off him before his mother saw him.

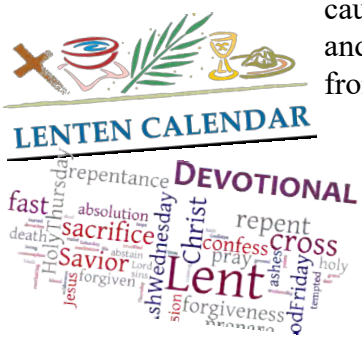
Another pupil, rather interesting, but just as unwilling to learn, was Emmanuel Roccocucci. He could spell his name, but not the simplest words. Because his father was the captain of the **Conte Verde**, the boy had made his home on the ship and now his home had been torn from him and he had watched the ship go down to the depths. I often thought he and Columbus had many things in common as they were from the same town and the same love of the sea coursed through their veins.

Then there was Joe Wilson, from England. His father and mother had

Sinking
Due to the Italian Armistice in 1943, **Conte Verde** was scuttled in Shanghai by her Italian crew to prevent seizure by Japanese forces, preventing ships from entering or leaving a Japanese naval yard where ships were being repaired, until it was raised July 1944. She was then bombed and sunk by a B-24 of the 373rd Bomb Squadron on 8 August before being raised and repaired once more, renamed Kotobuki Maru, converted into a troopship, and towed to Maizuru, a port town in the north of Kyoto Prefecture in June 1945, before being beached by damage from an aircraft raid on July 25, and was finally scrapped in 1949.

parted ways and the mother had quite a time making ends meet. His step-sister was also in the camp and her name was Magdalen Hardcastle. Mrs. Wilson finally made her profession of Faith in our room and received her First Communion and the two children followed.

Each child in the class had a reader. I had none so I learned to read backwards looking into the child's book as he read. One day the boys asked me if I wanted some geographies. I said yes, but when I asked them where they were, they told me over in the Japanese house's basement. I had to be careful and not give them any chance to say that I had sent them, should they get caught. They didn't get caught and we got more books to work from.



Lent came and Father Ildephonse wanted to have Lenten devotions, so he asked for fourteen crucifixes to make the Stations. We then had Stations of the Cross once a week. There was no Friday abstinence because it was impossible with the conditions at the camp. With Lent coming to a close we needed an Easter candle. In the building where we lived there was a large basement in which some Chinese were doing welding, and other construction. We were not allowed any contact with them. I inquired if there were any Japanese there during the day and as far as anyone knew, they only went down occasionally. I had to have piping, so I dared and when I got down there, I found only Chinese and asked one of the men for a pipe about the size needed and he gave it to me. We had a good chance to talk but he could not give me much outside information. Father Ildephonse gave me four candles to melt down. Someone had given me a little red candle and with that I made the four red spikes because by then we had no more incense, but were using punk instead. Punk is made from the sandal-wood tree and is used as incense in the temples so I managed to get some of that inside the red wax, and we had a real Easter candle. When finished I took the pipe back again, not thinking I should need it the next year, but we had another Easter in camp and then I had to repeat the whole procedure to borrow the pipe over again.

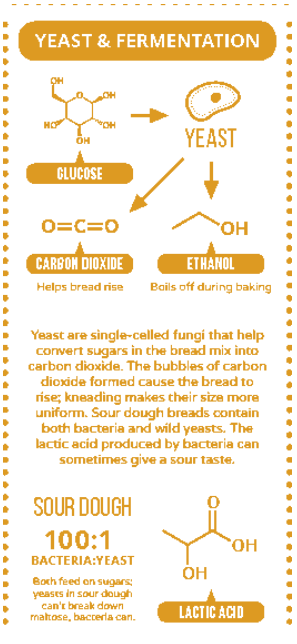
Mr. Ding managed to get eggs to us, although sometimes we wondered if we got all that he sent. Sr. Esther tried to save them, but every now and then, especially when it was warm, one would pop and the odor in the room just wasn't nice. One day he sent two cans of salmon, which was a treat for us.

On June 10, very quietly the news went around that two of the men, Tipton and Hummel, had gone over the wall to the Chinese guerillas and by that time they were quite far away. The Japanese did not yet know it. They had left early and a friend had excused them from roll call. The next morning they could also be excused possibly, but then the guards would be getting suspicious. By the time the guards caught on it was too late to find them. The escape angered the guards and they decided that in order to tighten up, we would have to have two roll calls daily, so another was added to the late afternoon before Tiffin. We knew what that meant; standing another hour every day, but the two men could not foresee this. One of the priests, who knew more than anyone what was going on outside was determined to go along with them, but Father Ildephonse refused him permission, saying that if he left, he would be excommunicated, so he did not go. However, for two days all the men whom the Japanese thought might know anything about the escapees were kept in the church and no one else was allowed in. They were questioned by the Japanese, but of course, the men knew nothing and were finally released.

At the roll calls one day they asked us each to yell out our number, instead of them calling the number and we answering present, as had been done until then. When it got to 222, the young man who had it screamed out "toot-toot-toot" and of course the whole group broke out in laughter. The guard didn't know what was wrong, but he told the interpreter to tell us that we weren't supposed to laugh at roll-call. By this time we were so used to roll calls that we didn't mind it, and besides you could get quite an amount of work done, unless it was too cold, or raining.

A little Italian girl taken outside the camp on Liberation Day

The children were prepared for the Sacraments and we tried to make their First Communion a happy day. Little Amelia Roccocucci, age 5, made a cute little flower girl. She was perfect at practice, but at the real event she did the unexpected thing. After the first communicants had all received she led the last one to the edge of the stage then went straight back, knelt down and put out her little tongue to receive. Father Ildephonse gave it to her while we all looked aghast, wondering how he could do that. He later told us he too was so surprised that he had to think fast



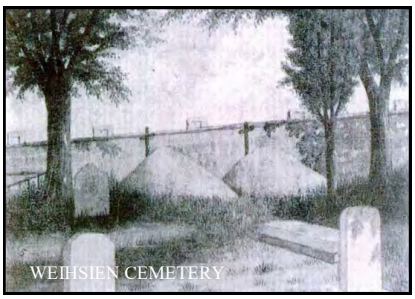
and then decided she was in truth ready for it.

One day the bulletin board had a special request: "The supply of yeast is giving out and there is no way of procuring more. Does anyone know how to make it? Does anyone have any suggestions? The situation is getting desperate ... . Help!"

Everybody read it and shook their heads so it remained there for a few days. Finally, a man offered to try, but he needed a room for his experiment. My classroom went and for a month I taught outside wherever we could find space. He managed to get the secret and the situation was saved.

On July 11, the "fold" was increased by sixteen Italians from Peking. But the very facts that these as well as those who had come from Shanghai were all business people, and big business at that, and that there were no missionaries, Catholic or non-Catholic among the groups, although there were of course Italian missionaries, made it evident that there were reasons for concentrating them other than interning them as enemy nationals or possible war spies. Whether the move was taken by Tokyo or by the local authorities was not clear.

The new group included more interesting people. Mr. Mina had a garage with cars for sale, plus a movie house, with a large screen that he had been very proud of. The Japanese came in, took one car, give him a paper and left with the car. This was repeated until there were no more cars left. His movie house went the same direction. Mr. Di-Giacomo owned a night club but that was confiscated, as were the businesses of many of the others. Mrs. Mina was very ill but she was forced to come and they put her in our hospital. When our doctors protested that she needed other care, they sent her together with Sr. Julian as nurse to Tsingtao. The journey was a rough one; the treatment they got in Tsingtao was not good, so that it did not help. She passed away on October 14 and we buried her in the cemetery. It was a terrible blow to Mr. Mina after all he had gone through. He had an operatic voice and could have gone far in vocal work had he had more training. We asked him to join the choir and he was happy to, saying that he was happy only when he could sing. After Weihsien he went back to Peking and tried to get his property back but it had been sold to Chinese and there was difficulty. In despair he took his own life but that same day his son recovered most of the property.



WEIHSIEN CEMETERY

On July 17 we were asked to give up our passports. There was no alternative and we were afraid we would not get them back. Most likely their intention was to prevent anymore of us from leaving as it might be difficult out-side without a passport, but they kept them safely and after the war we got them back. It is strange how a little book with your picture and description can mean so much to a person.

One day, Miss Clara Hinckley, who had been manager of the kitchens of the YMCA in Peking, came to visit us in our room. Sr. Mercedes happened to mention something about Sterling, Colorado and she was surprised to hear of it, because that had been her home town. Her father had been Judge there and they sold their house to our Sisters after he died. She then went to China. It was a nice surprise for although we had not known each other before, here was some connection.

The Chief of Police, or Head of the Guards as we called him, invited some of the Sisters to a meal at his house. Srs. Esther, Bede, Hiltrudis and Eustella went. While they enjoyed it, it was another question of what the internees as a whole would think of it. No comments were made and the Sisters thought they had at least made a good will gesture. Sr. Eustella even talked of teaching some of them English, but that was frowned upon by the people so she didn't.

On July 25, 1944 we were alerted to the fact that Sr. Ursula and a postulant were at the gate but seemingly were not allowed to get in. Sr. Esther was called to the guard-house and got a severe scolding as possibly they thought she had asked the two to come. But we did in the end get to see them for a few minutes and Sr. Ursula introduced us to the new postulant, Rose Wen, our present Sr. Wendelin, and we welcomed her to the Community. The guards then ordered them to leave.

A few days later Father Ladislas was seen coming into the compound and we were again alerted. There would always be someone who would happen to see him and let us know. I ran up to the Commandant's office immediately, not waiting for Sr. Esther, because I did not

want to miss seeing Fr. Ladislas. It was too good seeing anybody from outside to let the opportunity pass. I walked in and greeted, first the Commandant and Mr. Ibara, according to protocol, and then Father. I asked him how he was, and those at home. He answered rather shortly and handed me the box of hosts (rather abruptly I thought) saying "They want the boxes back." I said all right and then proceeded to ask more questions. He answered as though he were in a hurry and repeated- "They want the boxes back"—I thought they must be hard up for boxes back in Hungkialou, but they should know how few we have here. A light then dawned and I rushed off. On the way to our room I met Sr. Esther on her way to the office. I told her to quickly follow me as obviously there was something else in the boxes besides hosts and by this time I was sure of it.

We dumped the hosts out into a dish and there on the bottom were a pack of letters, some to us from the Chinese Sisters and some to the Fathers. Sr. Esther had one from Bishop Jarre. She opened it up immediately while I was sorting the others out to distribute. I felt I had to act quickly if those Fathers wanted to give him any answer back. Sr. Esther was reading when suddenly she screamed, "My God ... Oh!" I looked at her but she said nothing to me. I took Sr. Eustella's letters over to her and told her we got some awful news, perhaps Sr. Ursula was taken after all, or perhaps they burned down the school. I went over to the Fathers and distributed the rest, then back to the Commandant's office where I met Sr. Esther at the door and we went in together. She was trying to keep cool and composed. She went through the greetings, said a few words about the weather, and then "By the way, some time ago I got a letter from the Bishop; tell him I said yes, he could go ahead". That was all. I gave the boxes back to Father Ladislas and his little ruse had worked. I walked back with Sr. Esther but she said nothing on the way and for that whole day I went around wondering.

Finally in the evening, she told us that one of the novices Sr. Susanna had left. To me that did not seem like material for such a fuss, but then I thought perhaps, being the Superior she was taking it harder than I was. Sr. Eustella asked and I told her but she didn't think it a reason for excitement either. About two weeks later she took me for a little walk and then told me that the Bishop had decided that Sr. Susanna must be sent away and he asked her permission for it first and she gave it. Then I could see why she had been so perturbed. Sr. Susanna had been one of our first postulants and she was one of the most useful as far as teaching was concerned, but now she was gone. She would find work, but I knew the adjustment would be hard for her after thirteen years in religious life. During that month until Father Ladislas's next visit we wrote letters and because these would not be censored we could write more than we usually did in our one-a-month twenty five word letters.

In the meantime Father Alphonse came and we got to see him. One of the Fathers asked him to take a letter along, but he refused to commit himself.

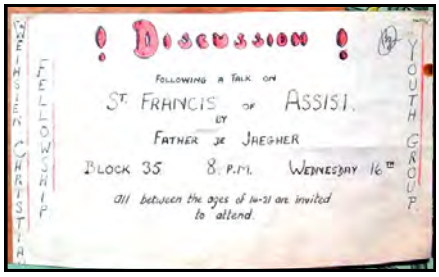
Despite Fr. Alphonse's reluctance we were well prepared for the next visit from Father Ladislas. When he came and I was alerted, and I ran back for the pack of letters. Sr. Esther and I went to the office. I had the pack in my pocket because I had to be empty-handed and Sr. Esther had some "important questions" to ask the Commandant. She had to especially hold Ibara's attention because he was the more suspicious one, while I talked to Father Flesch in very plain English. He was sitting and I walked over behind him casually slipping the letters into his back pocket. He gave me a sign that everything could be all right. I took the host boxes and we left. There were more letters again in the bottom of the boxes and we wrote again. This was a golden opportunity for us as well as the Fathers because it enabled us to communicate with our missions.

The next time we ran into a little trouble. The Commandant was not there and Ibara had in his place another aide. The new man wanted to know all about the contents of the box and opened one. Father Ladislas immediately took it from him and handed him a host explaining what it was for and that Ibara quite understood. Father handed me the boxes and I did not linger that time, and in fact I did not even wait for Sr. Esther. At least the letters were safe and I hurried home to get them out of the boxes because I wouldn't want Father Ladislas to get into trouble. One could feel that the Japanese Commandant and all the guards had a great respect for him because he at least could speak their language and very fluently at that.

On August 2, 1944 Mr. Hayes, the father of the Rev. John Hayes passed away. He had been ailing and Mrs. Hayes took it very nicely. He had a large funeral and it was sad to see that long double life of self-sacrifice broken. The Hayes' had given sixty years of their life to God. In China there had been much enjoyment together and they also had shared their many crosses together. Now for him at least it had ended. Rev. John Hayes moved in with his mother because she was getting quite senile and needed care. She loved to run away from him and often you would see him standing near the women's lavatory asking someone who went in to see if his mother was in there. She knew that was one place he couldn't enter. The two priests who died at Weihsien were buried with a little space between and there was a lovely tree above that space. Mrs. Hayes said when she died she wanted to be buried in that space, but she didn't die in camp. In the end she got back to the U.S.

Dr. John D. Hayes with his mother

something all her life she had never expected to do.



The bulletin board gave notice one day of a lecture to be given by Father DeJaegher on "The Life of Father Lebbe". To the Catholics in camp, Father Lebbe had meant nothing and they were not interested. The lecture was to be under the elm tree outside Kitchen Two. Sr. Eustella and I took our stools and went and during the lecture she nudged me and said "Do you notice that we are about the only Catholics here?" I did, but I realized that the non-Catholic missionaries must have been rather interested in Father Lebbe or they wouldn't have come either and they knew if Fr. De-Jaegher had something to offer, it must be good. In the audience was a young lady from the Chinese Inland Mission School. I particularly noticed her because although I had never spoken much to her, twice she had been brought to my attention.

The first time was when the people from the school first arrived and when she entered the dining room all eyes were turned to the door. The universal question was, "Is that a boy or a girl?" She had very short hair and was in jeans and no one could answer the question. Then a few days later someone was scolding about all the scrounging and stealing going on in camp and she remarked that it was one good thing those Fathers had all left, there might be less of it now. Now, while I was enjoying our library because there were all kinds of books by Protestant missionaries and I was getting a chance to read non-Catholic books, there was another one coming to the same library, searching for all the Catholic books, a Miss Brayne, the same young woman.

One day Father DeJaegher came to us telling us he had a "Nicodemus" coming to him by night and he wanted prayers, many of them. She and her two Catholic room-mates in the beginning had a few arguments on religion and finally ended the arguments by an agreement never to mention religion and thereafter they were getting along nicely by it. Now she was asking them questions so they sent her to Father DeJaegher. She did not dare go to his room openly, so one of them would go with her after dark. She finally decided she would turn. Two weeks before the date set for her Baptism she went to the Head-master of the Chinese Inland Mission School and told him. It was a thunder-bolt to him. "You can't read the Bible anymore" was his first comment. She quietly told him that Father DeJaegher had given her a Bible. They argued and finally he asked her to wait two weeks and not run into "this thing" headlong. She agreed to, and for those two weeks the Mission School people did some very fervent praying, I am sure, and so did we. She was baptized in our room on November 21 and received her First Communion the next day. A number of the other boys from the Chinese Inland Mission had been taking private lessons in French from the Fathers. They were told to discontinue the lessons as obviously the Head-master thought that others may also seek Catholic instruction. While some did others changed their schedule so that it couldn't be noticed.

Sr. Esther felt that she did not have enough contact with the Chinese Sisters and she was also having trouble with her eyes, so she put forward the latter problem and asked if Commandant Sukigawa could possibly get permission for her, Sr. Julian and Sr. Mercedes to go to Peking. There was a good eye specialist, a Hungarian priest, near Peking and she felt he could help her. Mr. Sukigawa said he would try. She made her request on August 16th and it took a month for the permission to come. They left on September 28th, with Mr. Ibara accompanying the three Sisters.

In Peking they were housed with the Spanish Sisters called "Daughters of Jesus". Naturally, they felt they were going to have a little freedom in going about the city, but they found Mother Maria as adamant as any Japanese. She was responsible and wasn't going to get into any trouble. They had to pay for board and lodging just as the others who had left the years previous did, but the Spanish Con-vent had a nice group of Sisters and the visitors were well entertained. A play was presented. It was one that the girls and I had translated entitled "The Blind Nun" by Father Lord, although I had never seen it, because we had never actually performed that play. All in all is was a nice break for the Sisters who went.

About the middle of August there was a very important and welcome notice on the bulletin board. The Americans were to get one parcel each from the American Red Cross. It would contain butter, crackers, coffee, meat and cigarettes. Almost immediately we began bargaining. One Tientsin lady offered me one bar of soap for each of my packages of American cigarettes and I agreed. When we eventually made the exchange I felt guilty because the bars were the regular size of Fels Naptha bars, but she was so glad for the exchange and we needed the soap for our washing so I took them. I felt rich with those eight bars. Now when Sr. Bede would scold about us using too much soap I could retort that it was "My" soap we were using!

Finally after the few days of suspense word went round like wildfire that the parcels had arrived. We waited a day then the notice came to queue up in front of the church and we would get our parcels. Each weighed forty-nine pounds so the Fathers carried ours home for us, and just like little children we had to wait to see what was in them. I have often wondered how much of the contents of those parcels were still in American hands by evening. There were so many friends and neighbors who weren't getting any that you could hardly keep a whole

box yourself. Two of the boys took a can of Spam and butter put them on a piece of bread with the Spam cut as thick as the bread. They then hid behind a house and sat down to eat it, just as though they were doing something wrong. Many of the cans were used for cups in the dining room. While some found their way in the garbage cans, the Chinese outside got them and it wasn't long before they found their way back to our canteen in the form of oil lamps or such and were repurchased.

We had only one dentist in camp, and he was busy constantly as practically everyone visited him at one time or another. One evening I was having a bad toothache and next morning I awoke with a swollen jaw. I went over to his room and asked for an appointment. He was very gracious and took care of it and he gave me some myrrh and glycerin to apply. Being the only dentist in the camp we were grateful for his care.

There were two families of Armenians with us. One belonged to the Orthodox Church and the other to the Uniat, but since there was no Uniat church near where they had lived in China, the second family usually attended the Orthodox services because they felt more at home there than in one of the Western Rite. While in camp they all attended Mass with us. The Armenians had quite a history. In their early days they had to leave Armenia because of the war, so they moved to Russia. Here the language of the Church was the old Slavonic, which was new to them so they had to learn that as well as the Russian. Then with the Revolution they had to leave Russia and set up a business in China and learn Chinese. Many of the White Russians had come over to China during the Revolution, walking and carrying their belongings with them, but always the icons went with them.

Miss MacKenzie, a missionary passed away. She had seemed like an angel to everyone in camp and they said she had a beautiful death saying "Peace, at last, peace!"

November came and another winter was beginning. We wondered if we would spend the whole winter in camp. The Bamboo Wireless was busy again and there was talk of us going to Manchuria, then other talk of us going to Yang-chow. This city was to the south in the next Province. Suddenly everybody got interested and was looking up material in the library on Yangchow. But no one was anxious to go because we knew what we had at Weihsien, and perhaps if we had to go carrying only our suitcases like the repatriates had done, what would life be like there? We prayed harder than ever and finally the Bamboo Wireless died out. That November eggs were up to $3.20 each and apples $5.00. Somebody was making money. On November 22nd, at roll call, Mr. Liddell announced, before the guards arrived, "There is going to be a change of our supervisors. The last time they left, if you remember, they took along some of our clothes and clothes-lines. Be careful this week". The poor supervisors didn't get much that time, thanks to Mr. Liddell.

Thanksgiving Day was on November 30th. There was no hall available, and before most of us knew anything about it, a group had decided that we would meet at certain houses. Sr. Bede was to go to Dr. Chan, while the other Sisters each got an assignment. I was designated to have my dinner with the Reinbrechts. Rev. Reinbrecht was a very congenial Lutheran minister. He and his wife had one room, while their two teenage daughters lived in the room next door. Each of us took our plates to the dining room and got our ration of stew, plus a piece of apple pie, which had cost us $5.00, and went to our group. When we got there, Mrs. Reinbrecht had moved the beds almost on top of each other and they had a little table around which we could sit. The group consisted of the four Reinbrechts, Rev. Hayes and his aged mother, a Dutch Reformed Church lady minister, and myself . . . four denominations. Later Bishop Scott came by and talked a while but would not stay. Rev. Reinbrecht said grace, a beautiful prayer which made us all feel united with the whole American nation all over the world even though we were of the Diaspora. Then we ate. The two girls were allowed to have coffee, which they would not have had otherwise. The coffee was so weak that it couldn't have hurt them anyway, and this time it didn't keep me awake all night.

Mr. Sims-Lee, who had been ill the whole time in camp suddenly passed away. We mourned him with Mrs. Sims-Lee. Together they had been missionaries and had adopted a little Chinese boy and raised him and he was with them in camp. Mr. Sims-Lee was an artist and he used to draw cartoons of incidents in the camp. After he died his wife had quite a collection to show us. He was buried in the cemetery and she would often go out to the grave. One day the Japs declared the cemetery "out of bounds." She protested vigorously and threatened to tell the American Government after the war so they allowed her to go in after that.

Our second Christmas in camp was nearing, and Father Dallaire had an idea to work out. He found out that some-one had brought a large wood carved crucifix to camp and he thought it would be nice to use it hanging high above the altar, if he could get some drapes to cover the window in back of the altar. But, of course, drapes are hard to come by in a concentration camp. He started visiting houses and asking for them but no one had any. Finally in desperation he came back to us and asked if we would give up the yellow ones on our altars, so we gave them to him. He worked all day getting the altar ready and we all thought it was

beautiful and artistic. We were having mid-night Mass and the Japanese had promised us lights, although otherwise all lights would have to be out at that time. The Italians donated a dozen candles for the altar. One of the choir members luckily brought along two candles. Father Ghyselinck had prepared the choir and we were all keyed up for it. In fact to me it was the most thrilling Midnight Mass of my whole life, even if under those circumstances. The Japanese allowed us only candle-light and so the Mass was done by the light of the Italian candles and the two in the choir. There was another High Mass at 5:00 A.M. and then I had to clear the altar for the Episcopalians. Bishop Scott was there early and I asked him about taking the crucifix down. He said "No, leave it there. It is too beautiful to remove".

For Christmas dinner we had our good old stew and wormy bread but perhaps it was more than many others in war-torn countries were having and we knew it.

Our "education" continued as we were learning new words. Few of us had heard the word "scrounging" before, but you immediately knew what it meant from the way it was used. The children would ask, "Is it a sin to scrounge?" What could you answer? And nobody wanted to define it or theorize on it. We only knew that at certain times it must be punished, that is, when it did harm to the community. The general meaning that the term took on was, "taking something from the Japanese or the camp." If you took from one of us, that was stealing, pure and simple. The men would come in pushing wheelbarrows of coal for the Japanese, which usually had good lumps of coal, not the dust as we were rationed, and all you had to do was walk behind and take off a few pieces when no one was looking. We were only helping the man by making his awful load a little lighter. This was also scrounging; however it was certainly not stealing. Eventually this practice got to be just too common and so the Head of Discipline had to call a halt and anyone caught was brought to his office and given a punishment.

One day a sixteen year old boy named Marinellis was caught. Of course, everyone knew that he had not only taken pieces but a good supply of coal. He had been the opposite puzzle of Miss Brayne in the beginning as he had a very girlish, innocent looking face, so that in the beginning we just guessed, boy or girl?, But he always followed Goyos, the chief of black marketeers and the camp's number one profiteer. Maybe Marinellis even sold his coal to Goyos. Anyway, he was called in and given a sentence of water pumping, three hours a day for several weeks. The hours had to be separated during the day, because one hour in itself was a good punishment, as it was hard work. He did a few of the hours, then just quit and walked down the street. There some young men were cutting down a tree, and having trouble with one of the branches. Marinellis said he could help and he climbed up and stood on the branch. The branch broke and he fell to the ground, dead. Another sad funeral and this time for a young boy. He had two sisters in camp and for their sakes we attended the funeral.

It was said that Goyos made a million dollars on the black market while in Weihsien, but even if that were so, when eggs were $5.00 apiece, a million dollars wasn't what it was at that time in the States. It was also said that he had four passports and we all believed that story. One night we were awakened by a noise in the little corridor outside our room. It was a hot summer night and we had not locked the door; there was just a little sliding half-door which was hooked. Then a loud knock on Sr. Eustella's door. There were a few more quiet noises and all was still. In the morning I asked Sr. Eustella about it and she said the guards most likely were after Goyos again and that our quarters was one place he thought was safe for hiding. The Japanese would not easily come into the nun's quarters. But try as the Discipline Department could, they could never stop the scrounging any more than they could stop the breathing of the camp. Those who worked in the bakery took home flour, those in the kitchen meat, and the ladies at the vegetables stuck some vegetables in their pockets. It was nice to have a job where you had a chance to scrounge something to cook on your little stove at home, and it just meant a little less in the dining room and fewer seconds.

*Fr. Hanquet is too kind in pointing out **Goyas** was simply 'involved in the 'black-market' business'! Because in our Weihsien terminology, camp 'black-marketeering' was almost considered an honorable 'profession' but there was nothing honorable about our FAT 'friend' Goyas' activities there.*
You see, even in camp he was not adverse to doing a bit of trading (solely for his own benefit) in jewellery, preferably of the golden variety. I've got no idea where his money came from, but no surprise, he always came out the winner in each of his lop sided deals.

But what Goyas was more notorious for in camp, and Fr. Hanquet may remember this, was his blatant avoidance of any work detail and shamelessly refusing to do his share of work in camp?
I'm sure Langdon Gilkey covered this episode in his book, and who better placed to report on the fat man's LAZY trait than the author of 'Shantung Compound', who just happened to be on the 'Work Detail Committee' himself, at the time. Finally, it was also common knowledge the WDC discussed various options to try and force him into complying with his obligations but for one reason or another, it was all to no avail.
© Zandy.

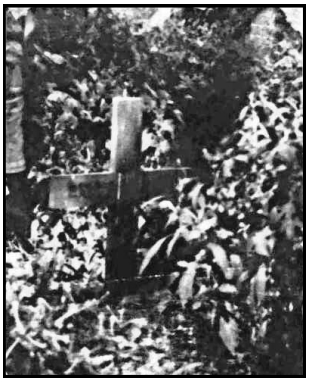
Both the 1944 and 1945 winters were cold and we tried to dress accordingly. My feet were always cold, so one morning I was practically running around the little block trying to warm them by exercise when I met Mr. Beck, the Hawaiian. We greeted and he saw that I was almost in tears. He asked and I told him what was wrong. He said "I'll tell you what to do. You go right back to your room, fill your basin with cold water not hot and put your feet in, then take a cloth and rub them well". I went back, It was a few minutes before I could plunge those cold feet in colder water, but it worked and ever after I followed his advice. He was glad it helped.

New Year's Day ushered in the year 1945 and we wondered where we would be at the end of it. The war just couldn't last much longer. One of the very big events of the month of January was the arrival of fifteen hundred more Red Cross parcels but now there was to be one for each person in camp and one and a half for the Americans. The Red Cross had been sending them ever since we had gotten the first ones, but since the other nationalities had complained that they got none, the

Japanese kept them until there were enough for the whole camp instead of giving them to us each month. We were resigned because there was nothing we could do about it, but one group of young Americans were not. They went to the Japanese and put in a complaint. The Commandant referred the matter to Tokyo and the parcels were left unopened until the answer arrived. The eventual response was that every internee was to get one parcel, including the Americans and the left overs were to go to the diet kitchen and hospital. Again, it was the will of "the gods in Japan". We each got our parcel and there was great rejoicing. There was no soap left in camp this time to trade my cigarettes for, so they just became gifts and not hard to get rid of either.

The Palestinian Jews couldn't eat pork so they were asking for an exchange. I took my canned corn beef and as many others as I could collect and went over to their house. In exchange the lady gave me liver paste, not exactly what I would have liked but better than the kitchen fare by far. She was a young woman with a baby about two months old. I sympathized with her on account of having to get so many diapers washed and so little soap. "Oh!", she said, "he doesn't need any diapers because I have him toilet trained".

One of the ministers had always been against the cigarettes coming into camp. He would tear up his ration card, not giving it to anyone, and he had even asked that all bring their cigarettes and sacrifice them to a bonfire. Of course, he got very little response, if any. Now he had cigarettes in his pack, so before he had the parcel open, he had a host of visitors offering him food from their parcels in exchange for his cigarettes. The answer he gave was that his wife would not allow him to give them away.

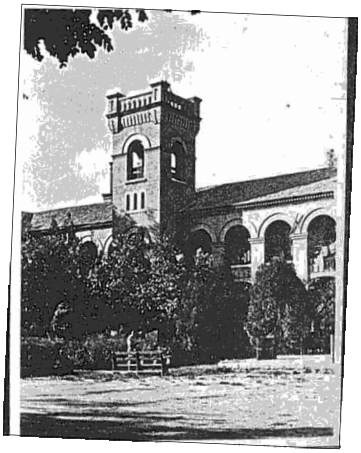

Eric Liddell's grave in 1945.

The news leaked out that the Canadians had received Red Cross parcels some time after our first ones, but it had all been kept very quiet as most probably the Japanese were trying to avoid a scene.

On the 2nd of February, Mr. Liddell our faithful friend and interpreter passed away. We mourned him, attended the funeral service and he was buried in the cemetery, one of the twenty-nine who were to swell the number of the former missionaries who had been buried at the camp be-fore we arrived on the scene. Someone else took his place at roll calls.

While we did not talk usually to our guards, they seemed more friendly. Perhaps they realized that they were losing the war, but at least they knew much more than we did, and maybe they were glad the war was coming to an end. Certainly they could feel much happier than their brothers out in the war zone or those even in Japan because even Tokyo was getting its bombings. I don't think we ever needed to be afraid of the guards, even at night. Out alone at night I should have been afraid of some of the people on our side, more than of the guards because we had people of all walks of life and some of these walks weren't the most admirable.

One of the guards was more or less disliked by the internees. It seemed whenever anyone asked him for some-thing, the answer they got was "bu-hsing", which in Chinese means "not-do," in other words "it won't work." So the camp dubbed him "Bu-hsing". One day a little puppy came into the compound through one of the holes. The children grabbed it, and at last they had a pet. They fed it and took care of it for a few weeks. They called it "Bu-Hsing". It happened that big "Bu-hsing" was walking along the street towards the guardhouse, when a little child called "Bu-hsing". The Japanese love children and he felt rather flattered that the child was calling him, even though she did use his nick-name, but then, turning around, he saw that the child was calling the dog which was directly behind him. Angrily, he grabbed the little dog and threw it over the wall. The children managed to coax the dog in again, but after that they kept him hidden.


Bell Tower : Block-23

March, 1945 came in like a lion, with rumblings about the war in Europe and the Allies imminent victory and the men took to betting again. On the night of March 30 or 31, we were awakened at midnight by the big bell on top of our building ringing loudly. Suddenly all lights went on and then the roll call bell. Someone was going though the compound ringing it. We all got up. It could mean nothing else than roll call but why in the middle of the night? We shuddered at the thought of an hour out there in the cold and we shuddered more at the thought that this might be our final end, perhaps we would never return to this room. All of us knew how the Japanese had taken whole villages of Chinese out to the threshing floor and shot them down with machine guns. Was it our turn now? Quickly we dressed, and we prayed. We took blankets and everything possible along. Everybody out on the plaza was as perturbed as we were. No one had any idea what it was all about. We sat there anxiously waiting for the guards.

Finally they came, three of them. They were very animated and angry. They fairly yelled at the interpreter and he interpreted "They want to know who rang that bell?" One young man called out "I wish I had!" and everybody laughed. The tension was broken. But the question remained about the bell ringing in the tower . . . who did it? No one knew. We were counted and told not to laugh during roll call. Then they went to the other groups to check. It was a long time before they returned. In the meantime the young people began to dance. One had brought his accordion and there in the cold night the rest of us huddling in our blankets as the young folk were dancing to keep warm. It angered the guards that they could not find out who rang the bell. We were told to go back to our rooms which we did willingly, still wondering.

The next day word was passed around quietly that Germany had fallen and one man had bet another that he would ring that bell at midnight if Germany fell, which he did. He confessed and it was all taken care of quietly and the camp in general did not even know who he was. But the Chief of Police whom the internees called "King Kong", and who had been expecting a promotion, lost face by the incident. The ringing of the bell had scared him too and he had surmised a riot and had called for help from the neighboring troops. Of course, when they came they weren't needed.

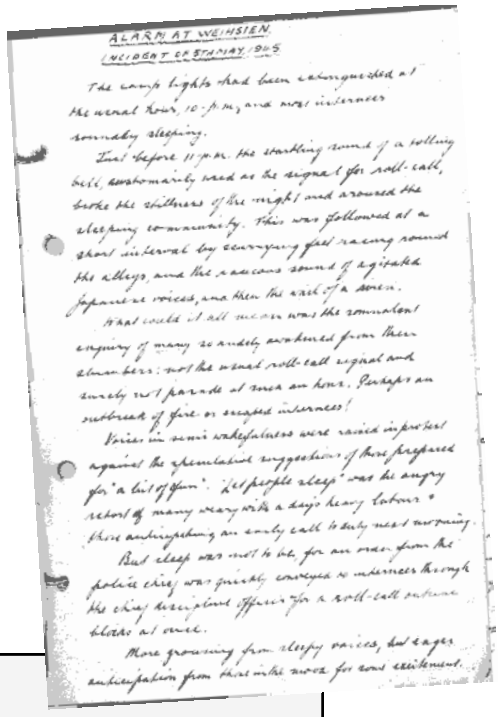
Dr. Gault received news from her folks in the United States that our Sisters had arrived safely and were at the Convent, which we were glad to know. Others too were getting letters from the States, but there was little word on the trip itself. It was only after the war they could tell us what they had suffered on the Taia Maru and especially on the way from Weihsien to the ship.

By this time the people in the camp were getting restless. The older ones especially would tell us it was all right for us because we had plenty years ahead of us, but they had perhaps only a few and were afraid that they must spend them all in Weihsien. It was upsetting them and we couldn't help them out.

Once again for several weeks the Japanese kept us wondering. They were measuring off the spaces in front of the little houses but no one could guess what they were up to now. In the end it came out. They wanted us to plant "victory gardens." Evidently the Japanese who had returned on the Gripsholm had told the country how the Americans were using their little plots of ground for "victory gardens" and they thought we should do the same. Well, those who had the room did plant, but the tomatoes would come up, get nice and ripe and then were stolen. This wasn't scrounging, it was downright stealing, but was it by the internees or Japanese? No one knew, and it took all the enthusiasm for gardening away from the camp.

Sadly, the years of internment began to cause a great despair among many of the people. The Rev. MacChesney Clark was found with his wrists slashed but fortunately, they saved him. A young man went to the hospital, complained of sleeplessness and they gave him sleeping pills. He kept them until he thought he had enough, and then took them all at once. It nearly killed him too, but they got him to the hospital in time. Another man was caught trying to do away with himself. I was talking to Mr. Davies who was half British and half Chinese about this man. He believed they should be punished. He said anyone in England attempting suicide would be eligible to five years imprisonment. We argued the case.

Mr. Davies had asked me to give instructions to his wife, who was Chinese and a Catholic but had little instruction in the Faith. I went over several times a week and found her very interesting. Once she asked me about the Pope. She had seen the movie "Fabiola" in Shanghai and the question in her mind was, "Since those Italians were so cruel in persecuting the Christians as shown in the movie, how could we ever want an Italian for Pope over the whole Church?" It was easy to explain


ALARM AT WEIHSIEN
INCIDENT OF 5TH MAY, 1945

The camp lights had been extinguished at the usual hour, 10 p.m., and most internees soundly sleeping.

Just before 11 p.m. the startling sound of a rolling bell, customarily used as the signal for roll-call, broke the stillness of the night and aroused the sleeping community. This was followed at a short interval by scurrying feet racing round the alleys, and the raucous sound of agitated Japanese voices, and then the wail of a siren.

What could it all mean was the somnolent enquiry of many so rudely awakened from their slumbers: not the usual roll-call signal and surely not parade at such an hour. Perhaps an outbreak of fire or escaped internees!

Voices in semi wakefulness were raised in protest against the speculative suggestions of those prepared for "a bit of fun". "Let people sleep" was the angry retort of many weary with a day's heavy labour. Those anticipating an early call to duty next morning.

But sleep was not to be, for an order from the police chief was quickly conveyed to internees through the chief discipline officer for a roll-call outside blocks at once.

More grousing from sleepy voices, but eager anticipation from those with the mood for sound excitement. A weary wait for more than an hour in the cold of the early morning whilst the guards checked numbers only aroused further speculation and discussion of the alarming incident, ending in no more satisfaction than the hope of an early resumption of sleep.

"Did YOU ring the bell" *was the query one met with throughout the camp the next day, and the usual discussion of the war news contained in the newspapers issued the previous day was completely over-shadowed by the night's events.*

The mystery was still not solved until a threat of punishment by the authorities brought for the following confession:-

"The bell was rung by me last Saturday night as an expression of joy & thanksgiving for peace in Europe. I regret any unforeseen inconvenience caused to anyone."

*PEACE! Not yet for us but still the great joy and happiness of knowing that the Old Folks at home are at last released from the miseries and horrors of war and for us – **NOT LONG NOW**.*

16/5/1945

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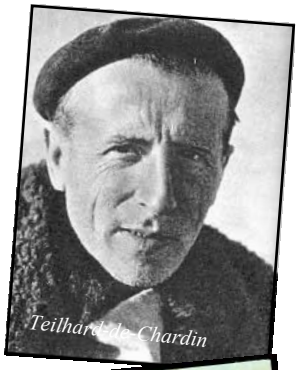
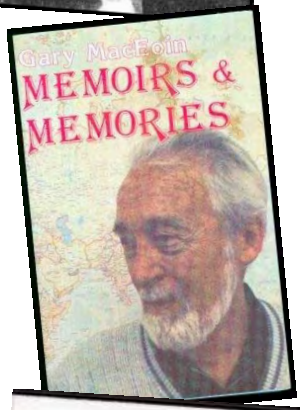
because there were many Italians right in camp who were good and she knew them.

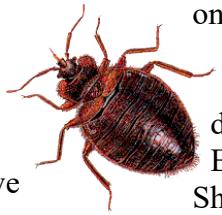
On the bulletin board one day in April there was a short notice that President Roosevelt had passed away but no details were given. Once again the camp was astir with rumors about the matter, but no one had any real information.





It was up to all of us to try to keep body and soul together and help keep up the morale of the camp, which certainly was deteriorating. It was not an easy task. Father Ladislas was coming only every two months now and we kept on smuggling letters back and forth through him. And all this time, unknown to us, **Teilhard de Chardin**, was only 175 miles north of us, as the crow flies, writing his "Phenomenon of Man" as well as continuing with his studies on the evolution of the universe, all in spite of war. Later these would all be brought before the entire world, and so much so that **Gary McEoin**, the Irish reporter at the Council, later said that the Vatican Council was his "show" more than that of Pope **John XXIII**. De Chardin was the theoretician of the dignity of man and Pope John was the politician who brought it before the church and the world. At this time de Chardin was still under his cloud, lonely as the great usually are, but dedicated to the work that only he could do. Like Vincent Lebbe, he towered above his Superiors as they knew he was the greater. But unlike **Vincent Lebbe** whose relationship with his superiors was strained to the breaking point so that to continue in his work, he had not choice but leave his order, Teilhard de Chardin could and did remain a faithful Jesuit all his lifetime. Unfortunately, his name was not mentioned in the camp, at least I never heard of him until I got back to the United States

One day I noticed a dark spot on one of the hosts. It seems the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary back in Tsinan were also having trouble with worms in their flour. I had to take them all to the light and "candle" them because we couldn't throw them all away. It was reported to Father Ladislas and he informed the Sisters who were baking.



The other little bugs to bother us were the bedbugs. Sr. Eustella was complaining that they were biting her unmercifully and she was not getting any sleep at night. We didn't think we had any until we searched, there were plenty. I wouldn't doubt but that the boards we had been sleeping on were filled with them when we brought the boards to camp. Sr. Ludmilla was sure she didn't have any. She had a round mosquito net which went up to a point hung on a hook in the ceiling, the bottom of which would be tucked under her mattress at night. We thought it strange that only she should be immune. One afternoon as I was resting I noticed the corners at the top of my net were quite black. I got up to examine and found them full of bedbugs. That gave me an idea. I went over and looked at her top and it too was black and then she had to believe.

The Red Cross sent us a supply of shoes and blankets. My two pair of shoes were holding up and I could always get clogs made if I needed them. The Chinese Inland Mission School's headmaster's daughters were going barefoot so Sr. Esther said I could sell nine for $500.00. The girls were glad to get them. I didn't need the blanket either so Mrs. Wilson made a suit for Joe which he needed badly because the suit he had was very threadbare and he was always freezing.

Talking to my pupils one day, Emmanuel Roccocucci told me of a woman whom he thought was Chinese, the wife of an Italian in camp, who never went out of their house. The children all seemed to think there was something queer about her. Shortly after Father Ildephonse came to our room and asked if we would take this lady with us for two weeks. Her husband was Amadeo DiGiacomo and at one time he had been a Texas Ranger. Later in the service he was sent to Guam where he was the only white man on the island. He then came to Peking and married Mary, a Korean girl and together they ran a night club in Peking. Both were Catholic. As with all the families in camp, living quarters were just too close and people were getting tired of each other. They had to be separated, at least for a time. Mr. DiGiacomo agreed to pay us two thousand dollars in American money after the war for the two weeks. Sr. Bede being in charge, said we didn't want any pay, but we would take her. Father Idephonse brought her over. She was a perfect lady from head to toe, as cultured as any Chinese or Korean could be. She was also Korean from top to toe and hated the Japanese thoroughly. They had taken over her country and had tried to make the people Japanese and when the Koreans had resisted they were ruled with an iron rod. It was hard and we sympathized with her, but we knew we had a job on our hands. Still she was company for us and we enjoyed her. She spoke Chinese exceptionally; however, she would have her spells and be silent for days at a time. One day she went out of the room. Sr. Bede followed her, sensing trouble and she was right. She found her out on the porch with a bottle of black pepper in her hand and she would have thrown it at a passing guard, if Sister hadn't grabbed it away from her. However, she didn't resent Sr. Bede's intervention and Sister brought her back into the house.

Mrs. DiGiacomo also had learned to speak English fairly well in Peking. One day she asked us why we always called Father Ildephonse "Father Elephant"? It sounded like that to her, but she didn't know half of the

joke. Actually at the laundry we had been calling Father Madian's unionsuit the "giraffe" because it was so long. You started scrubbing at the top and thought you were never going to get to the end of it. We called Father Ildephonse's suit the "elephant" because it was so big but of course that was only among our-selves at the laundry and never in front of her. She had been used to calling him by his last name so she wondered why we called him otherwise. Mary came to us on June third and we kept her until September third when she and her husband were flown to Sian, then to Kunming. The day before, their departure, a Sunday morning at very early dawn we suddenly heard a slight "swish." Mary's bed was next to a window, and she had sliced the screen with a knife and jumped out, then over the wall, out beyond. The guards got her back, but we felt we could no longer keep her. She seemed to have wanted the guards to shoot her. It was a great relief when they took her away because one of us always had to stay in the room with her.

By June of 1945 eggs were up to $16.00 apiece (Chinese National Currency) in the canteen while fresh apricots were $160.00 a pound, sorghum syrup $200.00 a pint, peanuts $125.00 a pound, pencils $30.00 each. It was getting so complicated you had a time figuring it all out. In 1943 the exchange had been about $10.00, but now it was $50.00.

In July we lost our Commandant. In a way we were sorry because he tried to help, was sympathetic with the internees and tried to keep us as happy as he could. It was not always easy for him to deal with the other Japanese who were of the military service, some of whom had perhaps been in the war and were retired to our camp. Naturally they would be filled with more hatred towards us. Father Alphonse came but we did not see him, nor had he asked for us. Since Germany had fallen, he naturally would be rather crestfallen. It was all the greater blow to them because they were so very sure of the war right from the beginning.

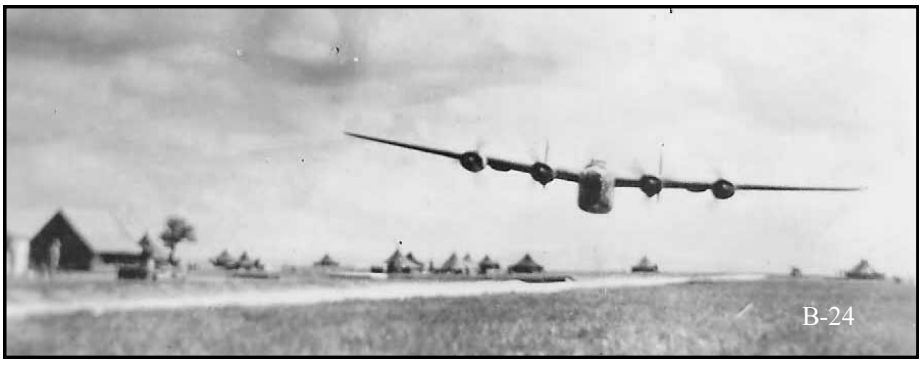
On July 15 we were told that Mr. Daliantz the baker had made $75,000 profit in black-marketing, getting produce from the Chinese outside and selling it to internees. That week in the canteen sugar was $200.00 a pound, peanuts $160.00 a pound, and pencils $30.00 each. The rest of the internees did not resent his profits but were glad to get the products because those in the canteen were rationed.

The bulletin board announced an exhibition of things made in the camp and everyone was invited to furnish material of any kind whatsoever. About the most interesting was the stove section with their drafts as of how to make them. We were all interested and spent time copying them down. I took my copies along to Hungkialou, not that I ever expected to make one, but all the same they were interesting. There were other kinds of crafts and needlework, recipes and many useful articles that only human ingenuity could think of.

Outside the camp there was digging going on, but it was within the outer barbwire fence. Again we wondered what it was going to be. Rumors went round that it would be a cemetery and they proved true. We had to wait for the thirtieth funeral before we really found out. Mrs. Lawless, from Peking, passed away and she was buried in the new area. It seemed awfully cold, but there was nothing to do. Our cemetery really wasn't full, but the authorities had made the decision. She rests there alone, since she was the last one to die in camp.

The Japanese papers from Peking came in to the internees who could afford to subscribe. But more of the paper was missing now because our supervisors even had to censor their own newspapers because they couldn't afford to let us know that there was so little hope left for them. On the 15th of August we had an early High Mass in the church and we were supposed to go about our duties as usual since the rest of the camp was not celebrating the Assumption of Our Lady. The feast was on a Wednesday and after the Mass **Father DeJaegher** came to our room, sat down on somebody's stool and said he had news. Japan had fallen. He had no particulars. He had gotten that from the Chinese through his own methods, one of which was to send letters in tin cans sealed and mixed in with the garbage. Immediately the whole camp was in the highest of spirits. We could not say anything to the guards, in fact now we felt pity for them instead.

The men went to Mr. Izu, our new Commandant but he was powerless since he had no orders, so he left immediately for Tsingtao to find out. We were still under guard and had to be careful. The Bamboo Wireless told us that the Americans would be coming on Saturday to free us. We believed that too because it was good to believe it. Now we could start packing perhaps, but in the meantime camp duties still had to be done. Now however, work was a joy.



Friday morning dawned, just another hot morning, but what a difference! We were all walking around on clouds because the "word" was that tomorrow the American Army would arrive. We all had great faith in the bamboo Wireless, but the Bamboo Wireless had made a slight error this time. About 10:00 A.M. a plane was flying overhead but at first we made nothing of it since they came often. It came lower and circled and

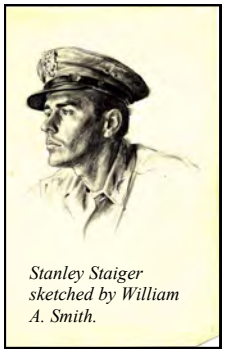
someone shouted, "Its an American plane!" By that time everyone was outside and shouting and waving up to the plane as it kept circling, coming gradually lower, we were all running back and forth with it. Then it went out westward. A wave of disappointment surged upward until we thought they must have heard us up there. It kept going west about two miles, then the hatch opened and a red, then green, then yellow, five parachutes, the first most of us had ever seen, opened up. In the sunlight, it was a beautiful sight to behold. The parachutes gradually descended to the ground. Everybody then pushed to the front gates.

The guards had no orders and they had to hold us back. Two ex-marines pushed them aside saying, "Those are our men out there", and out the gate westward the crowd hurried, across the fields. Sr. Eustella and I happened to be together. The guards went along and we followed behind them. Those who got there first picked up the five men and carried each of them on their shoulders. The guards looked in wonder at the scene scarcely saying anything. As the men who had gone ahead came back carrying the five rescuers, the Russian ladies pushed forward and threw their arms around them and kissed them over and over.

LIBERATION AND MY FINAL MONTHS OF MISSION

Ray Hanckulak, Stanley Staiger, Tag Nagaki, Jim Moore. Tsingtao, 1945.

Major Stanley A. Staiger was in charge of our liberators. The seven had volunteered for this special service and at the same time another plane was going up to Korea. The planes were not permitted to land and had to return to base. Our "rescuers" also included Lieutenant J. Moore, Lieutenant James J. Hannon of San Francisco, Sergeant Ray Hanchalek, Corporal P. Orlick of New York, Sergeant Nagochi and Edward Wang from Peking. The last two were brought along principally for interpreting. The plane had left Kunming on Thursday and stopped at Sian where they spent the night. Then were on their way again at 5:00 A.M. It was a distance of 600 miles from Sian to Weihsien and they made it at 10:00 A.M. The plane was a B-24, equipped with eight, fifty caliber machine guns in case the Japanese would fire back, but the sixteen bomb racks were loaded with twenty-five parcels which were dropped with the men and carried back to camp.



Stanley Staiger sketched by William A. Smith.

Major Staiger asked someone to free him from the Russian women because he had work to do. Most likely he was a little worried about the outcome the confrontation with the camp officials. He was led to the Commandant's office, where Mr. Izu laid his gun on the desk before him, a sign of surrender. From then on, we were under American rule, but we did not realize the difficulty outside. The Communist guerillas had blown up all the bridges and there was the tough problem of getting us out of the camp. We didn't think that day that we would have to stay over a month. But even so that was a very different month from those other twenty nine months. We were introduced to our rescue crew, however those first few days there was little chance to talk to them. The girls managed to relieve them of all badges or buttons as these were prize souvenirs. The boys were willing to give them away good naturedly.

The Weihsien commandant surrendered his katana sword to the American liberators.

The latest Japanese newspaper had said ninety American bombers flew over Nagasaki and Hiroshima and destroyed both cities completely. We had no idea it was one bomb until Major Staiger told us. They put up radios on the grounds with loud speakers. What a thrill it was to hear people speaking from the States and from England again! There were about four amplifiers and at news time people would gather round them because now we had news other than the Bamboo Wireless, this was plain fact.

Father Wenders was discussing the bomb with us in our room shortly after. He said he always had thought Nagasaki would get her spanking some day because it was always the way with nations that had persecuted the Church. Sooner or later it would come back to them, and the Christians of Nagasaki really had suffered, so much so that after the Christians had been put to death, little plaques were made with some Christian image on them. These were taken from house to house and the people and children all had to step on the image. Perhaps it had been a way they could find out if there were any Christians left. When I passed through Kobe, they introduced us to a young novice who had spent some time as a child in prison with her parents for the Faith. Evidently there were still persecutions going on in this

century. So now Nagasaki had gotten her spanking. But what about Hiroshima? He didn't know about that city. None of us had really heard of it, nor did we know if there were any missionaries ever there. It was just about two hours later when I went to get water and was passing the amplifier I stopped because the news was on and so I set down my buckets. I cannot remember whether it was San Francisco or London that the reporter's voice was coming from, but it was one of the two. He was talking about the atom bomb, a thing which was in everybody's mind that week. I was almost floored when he said, in direct response to my question to Fr. Wenders, that if any city deserved the atom bomb it was Hiroshima because of her immorality. Perhaps it was just a personal observation on the part of the reporter. I have not heard or found it in any material on Hiroshima.

On the 18th of July some more news went through the camp like wildfire, Tipton and Hummel were back. Although they were the cause of our second roll call, even after all those months, we didn't bear any grudge against them, because they didn't intend it and in leaving they evidently had good intentions. They had their heads shaved to make them look more like the Chinese outside

From left to right
Larry Tipton//Father Raymond de Jaegher//Arthur W.Hummel
Centre front
Father Tchang// ... and his Chinese friends who helped L.Tipton and A.Hummel to find their way to the Chinese guerrillas ...

and be unnoticeable to the Japanese. The stated that seemingly the food they got outside was not sufficient enough to make their hair grow back so for the time they were stuck with their bald heads.

We were told that the rescue mission to Korea couldn't land there because the Japanese of that area had no orders to admit them, so instead they came to our camp. With them was General Li, a Korean, also Catholic, and Frank Hobbs a member of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Chicago. They visited us in our room. As we were talking one of our guards knocked at the door and asked to see General Li, and the General asked him in. He then said he was a Korean and would like to go with General Li now. I sup-pose he did not see much use in staying on with the Japanese. The General permitted him to go along. Russian troops had landed in Korea August 10, 1945 and eventually the country was liberated.

We did have one more death in camp as Mr. Rawson passed away on August 25, 1945.

On the August 27th twelve B-29's came over from Okinawa with gifts for the camp, which consisted mainly of food. There was a smaller airstrip outside the camp built by the Japanese and the first plane landed but got stuck in the mud. The strip was obviously not built for large planes. The others therefore could not land but they wanted to drop their food.

The planes also flew higher and faster than the B-24's (Armored Angel), and unfortunately the food was not packed for dropping, so much of it was spilt and cans were broken. One can of fruit landed on an empty bed in the hospital. No one was hurt but we certainly thought some one would be during this pleasant raid. Two of the planes dropped messages, with the names and addresses of the boys who were in the planes.

The next day twelve of the sick were flown to Kunming, thru Sian. During the night the two planes came bringing two tons of supplies. The supplies were rationed out and again our happiness knew neither bounds, nor our gratitude towards those brave men who had gone through the horrors of war and now were thinking of us who knew practically nothing but the barest facts of the war.

On August 31, Colonel Hyman Weinberg and his crew of nineteen landed. These were to be our "permanent" super-visors now, appointed officially. The crew included: Commanding Officer; Lieutenant Colonel Hyman Weinberg, Executive Officer; Major J. A.

Staiger, Assistant Executive Officer and Mess Officer; Captain G. R. Kranich, Adjutant; Sergeant A. S. Levy, Special Service; Captain Avery Ash-wood, Transportation and Airdrome Officer; Lieutenant J. G. Griffin, Supply Officer; Lieutenant S. A. Farr, and Intelligence and Communications Officer; Captain R. Brandt. The identifications were all listed on the bulletin board for us. Colonel Weinberg's problem now was to get us out, but the Communist guerillas had blown up the railroads, one after the other, and now the Colonel had to negotiate with them and he was only partially successful.

'Qingdao Railway Station, Sept 25 1945 --- The Swiss Consul' Mr EGGER. "On arrival at Qingdao Railway Station, Sept 25, 1945, we were met in style by a contingent of British naval troops in white summer uniform and by the Swiss consul, Mr Egger. The 3rd class railway carriage is No 6, according to the Chinese character, which is used as an alternative to the usual one. It has some of the Chefoo School contingent - Douglas Sadler et al."

On the September 6th, Mr. Eggers, the Swiss Consul appeared with an American pilot who had been shot down and hidden from the Japanese by the Chinese. Father Maus, one of the SVD Fathers of Tsingtao reported the case and the pilot was taken to Chungking.

Captain Ashwood's work was to orient the camp to what had been going on in the world during our stay in Weihsien. It was a big task because we were completely ignorant and couldn't understand some things. Some of the internees even thought he was Communistic.

One morning at 5:00 A.M. the camp was awakened with Bing Crosby's crooning and although some were provoked at getting called that early, most of us enjoyed the music because it was so new to us as it came over the loud speaker. One of the officers on night duty had simply mixed switches and didn't know he had the amplifiers on. Captain Ashwood asked the forces in Kuinming for a jeep and some movies and we were very anxious for them, but by mistake they were shipped to Manchuria instead and we didn't get them.

Soon after we faced another big decision. The officers wanted us to go back to our respective countries, but most of us did not want to go. The missionaries wanted to get back to their posts and the business people wanted to get back to their homes and get their property back, but at least there would be a ship going to the States and we were invited to repatriate. Should we? Father Ghyselinck suggested that I should take a piece of paper, make two columns. In one column I should put down all the reasons I could think of for going and in the other column, all the reasons for not going. I went back to my room and started out writing.

I had only a few lines down when Sr. Bede came in. I told her what I was doing. She said "Sister, we don't know if the three in Peking are going to return to the United States or not. Even supposing they are not, we will have only we two to teach at I Fan, Sr. Mercedes will carry on at Hai Hsing because Srs. Esther, Ludmilla and Cecilia were not teaching, and Sr. Julian would carry on with her nursing. We do not have enough personnel. You just can't go". That settled it.

I quit writing and went to find Father Ghyselinck. He was just as glad as I was that the decision was made. Sr. Ludmilla decided to go and Sr. Cecilia to stay with us. All unknown to us, Mother Bartholomew was sending us a telegram that all should come back to the United States, but we did not get the telegram until much later. It had floundered around in different cities in China and finally landed on the desk of Father MacGreal, pastor of Christ the King Church in Shanghai. He sent it to Tsinan and when it finally reached us, it was too late to do anything about it.

Sometime during that month, Sir Stafford Cripps and Lady Cripps came to visit the English people of the camp, and Sir Cripps was announced for a lecture in the ball field in the evening. We all went, anxious to hear what he had to say. He congratulated his countrymen on their courage, but then told them they should not expect help from the English Red Cross, because the Red Cross work was left to the United States. Of course, we drew our own conclusions about this.

We were allowed to go over to the city of Weihsien, provided we signed up beforehand just in case anything happened. Sr. Bede, Hiltrudis and I decided to take a walk over on the 13th of September. Since we expected to go east to Tsingtao in the near future and perhaps from there back west to Tsinan, we thought it might be possible to leave our baggage with Father Chang at the parish and later on get it either by train or some other possible way. It felt as exhilirating to get out even for a short period and none of us minded the three mile walk into town. We would have been glad to walk ten, just to be outside that gate. It was also a joy to talk with the Chinese again, even if we didn't know them. The church in Weihsien was very small and evidently there were not many Catholics in the city. I noticed a little plaque in French saying that the church was built in honor of Sr. Elizabeth of the Trinity, a French Carmelite nun who had died in the odor of sanctity but had not yet been canonized. Most likely the church had another name. Father Chang was glad to see us and was willing to keep our trunks for us, so on the 20th we asked one of the workmen to ride us over in the truck with the trunks and beds. We weren't sure at the time if we should ever see those trunks again, but at least there was hope we would. All during the past year we had felt that perhaps it was safer for us behind those walls under the Japanese than it would have been outside among the Communists.

Our passports were returned to us in good condition. We all had to appear separately before the officers and

tell how we were treated during our stay. Our group had nothing to complain of. The date for the first departure from camp was to be the 24th of September. Those who were repatriating were especially chosen, and all the Tsingtao people were also among the group. On the morning of the 24th we were all up bright and early. It had been raining heavily all night so the word over the loud speaker that there would be no traveling that day, because the roads were too muddy for the trucks to get over to the station. So we waited once again.

The next morning the ground was dry enough and the exodus was on. Three buses stood outside the gates at 7:30 A.M. waiting. They were marked "Greased Lightning", "Dying Duck" and "Honking Horace". We bade farewell to the rest of the internees, then out the gate and into the buses. It was a glorious ride, and for most of us the most enjoyable bus ride we would ever have in our lives. Arriving at the station, we saw the train, that train that had been such a headache to Colonel Weinberg, now it would finally be on its way. The second group was to leave in two weeks on the same train and the third group after that, at least we thought so then. The Colonel was to get a few more head-aches before he got his flock all out because of damage to the tracks.

We were permitted to take baggage along with us, so we took one trunk for Sr. Bede, Cecilia and I, since we had no idea how long we would stay in Tsingtao. The American GIs put the baggage on the train and one can imagine their surprise when as one of the boxes broke and out fell, of all things to take along, chunks of coal, scrounging to the end.

'Qingdao Railway Station, Sept 25 1945'

The coaches, there must have been about ten, each had a large American flag painted on the side with three large letters "Mee-chuin yung," for the use of the American forces. Didi Sayles was our coach captain. We started at 9:20 A.M. and what a ride it was. At each station along the way there were groups of Chinese cheering. Some towns had their bands out playing for us, and they must have been waiting a long time there for us to come along. Crossing the bridges along the way as a hair-raising experience. You could see the cracks and the mending and we dreaded coming to more of them. We reached Tsingtao at 3:05 P.M. and got the surprise of our lives. The platform of the station was closed and roped off, but behind there was a sea of faces cheering and yelling, there must have been thousands upon thousands of people. As the train stopped we gazed in wonder, speechless. Then we were told they had also been there the day before waiting and waiting until we didn't come. The clearing started with the last coach and as we were in the first coach we had to wait until the end, but it was no chore to wait with those surroundings.

The passengers were being taken out in bus loads and transported over to Edgewater Mansions, the large hotel near the beach. Tsingtao is on Chiao-chow Bay and out on the bay was the large ship, the U.S.S. New Orleans. As many of the crew as could get out were there for the reunion. Captain Erch walked out on the platform and shok hands with people in the train and when he got to us, he said "Oh, look at the Sisters, wait till I get you my chaplain and he can hear your confessions." He fairly ran down the line and presently came running back with a very youngish looking priest, whom he introduced to us as Father O'Mara. Father was from Chicago, so Sr. Ludmilla and he got quickly acquainted. There was a British navy band out on the platform playing for us and they certainly looked neat, in more ways than one.

Finally, we left the train and got into the buses. Sr. Ludmilla and I happened to get separated from the rest and on the way our bus was having trouble, so we had to stop while the others all got ahead of us. Finally we were loaded off onto other vehicles and both of us were ushered into a jeep. This really was a thrill, just what we had wanted. That was Tuesday, the 25th of September, 1945 and back in the States the churches were celebrating the Feast of Our Lady of Ransom because there it was still the 24th.

All buses headed for the Edgewater Mansions and we had orders to go there first and from there we could check out to wherever we wanted to stay in the city. It was a grand feeling to be driven through the streets of Tsingtao, no matter where they drove us. The hotel looked like a palace to us, after what we had been used to. Carpets and running water, were things we had almost forgotten existed. Very seldom in its history had this hotel so many visitors. We got Sr. Ludmilla established and after that there was much to talk about. We then left for Holy Ghost School, which was run by the FMM's and where we had been invited to stay during our time in Tsingtao.

'Edgewater Mansions'Hotel, Sept 1945'

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--- end of the Weihsien episode ----