

The survivors of Wake Island—Marines, men of the Merchant Marine, and Army personnel—line up in the prison camp at Hokkaido. The slender, emaciated officer at the extreme right is the author.

ALEX MARTIN

This is How it Was

By Col. JAMES P. S. DEVEREUX, USMC

As Told to Lt. Comdr. J. BRYAN, III, USNR

"We never doubted our victory; we doubted only that it would be in time." After years of imprisonment and abuse, Jimmy Devereux and his Wake Island comrades are freed at last.

PART FOUR

THE director of the Woosung prison camp was Colonel Yuse, a little man who had a trick of pushing his cap back and rubbing his hands over his wrinkled face exactly like an organ grinder's monkey. When he had talked himself into a rage, which was his normal mood, the resemblance was still stronger.

Second in command was Captain Endo, the camp manager, a complete nondescript. Almost my only recollection of him is the day that Yuse died and Endo invited all the officers among the prisoners to pay their respects to the coffin. We did it willingly enough; it didn't make any difference; the man was dead. But Endo was so moved by our presence that he began to blubber.

Third in command, Endo's assistant, was Lieutenant Akyama. He was supposed to have charge of the outside work, but when he wasn't drunk he was in a stupor. Eventually he was relieved by "Tiny Tim," whose favorite recreation was putting

Otera didn't pay much attention to us or to anything else. In fact, it was his chauffeur who was our best source of contraband, especially electric hot plates, which were strictly taboo in the barracks.

Our truest benefactor was one of the guards, a young Formosan who had been a hotel clerk in civil life. "Pop-Eye" gave us cigarettes and even money, and refused to accept anything in return. But Pop-Eye was unique by a wide margin. The other guards and all the officers went out of their way to harass us and punish us. We had to salute the officers every time we met them. They ordered us to salute the noncoms, too, but we never did, unless one was officer of the day. Failure to salute meant a slap or a beating. So did dropping ashes on the barracks deck. So did scores of other trivial offenses.

Of all the Japanese we encountered, at Woosung or elsewhere, the most malignant and most brutal was not a serviceman but a civilian interpreter—Ishihara, "the Beast of the East." Ishihara appeared shortly before Colonel Yuse's death. He

ward—this time with a sword—he threatened attack Sir Mark Young, the governor general of Hong Kong. Maj. Luther A. Brown, the commander of the Tientsin barracks of the North marines, chanced to be present. He was urged but he wrenched the sword away and made Yuse back down. After that, Colonel Yuse ordered him to carry a sword, and he had to do his ening and slashing with a riding crop.

Such indefensible cruelty, of which Ishihara was merely the prime exponent, may not have been ordered by the camp officials, but they were aware of it and they did nothing to discourage it. Yuse had the shamelessness to post this notice in the barracks—most of it is typical Japanese pomposity but the last line is typical Japanese hypocrisy.

NOTICE

Feb. 11

Today is the anniversary of the (Jimmu Tenno). Therefore we have given you some bread and clothing by the authorities celebrating this August.

The anniversary is the auspicious day that the Japanese Empire observed the grand ceremony of accession of Kashi (illegible) Shrine in the Yamato district two thousand and six hundred and two years ago. The Mikado thus fixed celebrated day as the first year of the Japanese Empire.

Since that day the Empire has passed 2602 years into all over the world. The nation has been loyally living in a death defying manner the prosperity of the Imperial Throne with a single mind.

True, The Greater East Asia War is a holy war to such lordly ideals. You should meditate upon what the war and I hope, you will understand the real spirit of the Japanese Empire, who simply desires the humaneness and peace in the world.

THE END

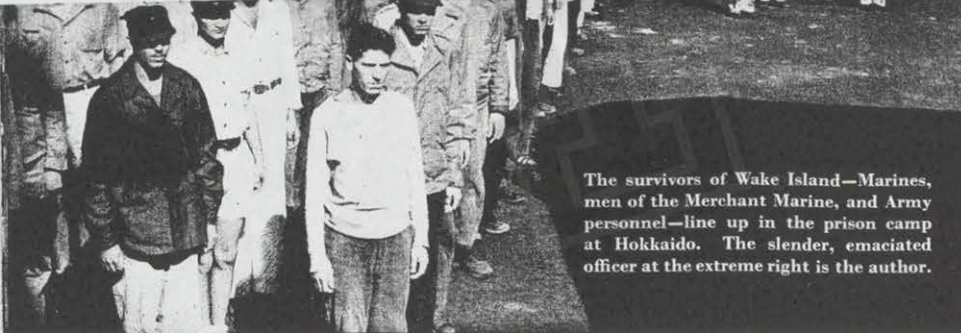
The arrival of the North China marines was a tremendous thrill. They were marched into camp a week after us, eighty of the Tientsin guard, 120 of the Peking embassy guard, under command of Col. William W. Ashurst. We envied their smart uniforms, with overcoats, fur hats and gloves. The cold was our greatest hardship in the period of imprisonment, but it wouldn't have fected us nearly so much if we had had food.

Our second thrill came on March twelfth. Commander Cunningham and Mr. Peters, Lieutenant Commander Smith and a Chinese mess attendant from his ship, and Commander Woolley, a Field officer, crawled under the outer electric fence made their way across country.

Cunningham took the risk because he had information which he considered vitally important to the Navy. Unluckily, they were recaptured within twenty-four hours and brought back to where they were paraded as warning before.

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Third in command, Endo's assistant, was Lieutenant Akyama. He was supposed to have charge of the outside work, but when he wasn't drunk he was in a stupor. Eventually he was relieved by "Tiny Tim," whose favorite recreation was putting us through sudden drills and inspections. The men didn't take long to cure him. He sprang a fire drill on us, and one of the extinguishers "happened" to get out of control just as Tiny Tim was passing in his best uniform.

Yuse died in the fall of 1942. His successor was Colonel Otera—"Handle-bar Hank," because of his mustache. Like Akyama, he was a heavy drinker. Scuttle butt said that this was why he was only a colonel, whereas many of his classmates at the Officers' School were major and lieutenant generals.

Otera didn't pay much attention to us or to anything else. In fact, it was his chauffeur who was our best source of contraband, especially electric hot plates, which were strictly taboo in the barracks.

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Of all the Japanese we encountered, at Woosung or elsewhere, the most malignant and most brutal was not a serviceman but a civilian interpreter—Ishihara, "the Beast of the East." Ishihara appeared shortly before Colonel Yuse's death. He was about thirty-five years old, slightly built, and wore horn-rimmed glasses. He had learned English in Honolulu, where he had gone to school and had later been a truck driver. One of his first victims at Woosung was Second Lieutenant Huizenga, a former Annapolis football star, who had been brought in along with the rest of the North China marines. Huizenga had borrowed tools from our own carpenters to make some repairs in his quarters. Ishihara heard of it, seized a club and beat him into unconsciousness. Soon after-

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In Washington, D. C., Colonel Devereux greets his son Paddy after almost four years of separation.

THIS IS HOW IT WAS

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taken into Shanghai for trial. We heard that they had been sentenced to ten years' confinement for, of all crimes, desertion.

I don't think there was one of us from Wake who didn't contemplate escape, but I never tried it. I had no such incentive as Cunningham's. The only contribution I could make to our military intelligence—the fact that the Japs' final attack on Wake was a sneak rather than a power drive—I had already covered by oral instructions to some officers who were being repatriated. And without a patriotic incentive, I did not feel the risk was justified. The odds against success were enormous. Moreover, as one of the senior marine officers present, I considered it my duty to stay with my men, to represent them to the Japanese, and to preserve as many of them as possible for return to their families when the war was over. I realize that my attitude flouts the tradition of derring-do, but events justified it; no one ever escaped from Woosung.

The main work at camp was road repair. However, the working parties did such a deliberately slipshod job that the Japanese abandoned the project in May, and assigned the men to preparing a garden. Once the seed was planted there was little to keep them busy, so I asked permission to organize a school for the Wake Islanders, with the officers as instructors. We covered only high-school subjects, and attendance was voluntary, but it helped the days go by. Our pastimes were few enough, and any diversion was welcome. We laid out a baseball diamond. American and British residents of Shanghai sent us books. Some of the men built model planes. An old master sergeant of the Army carved cigarette holders for sale.

Every third month or so, the Jap equivalent of our USO would come to entertain the guards, and "volunteers"

were selected to attend. Once was a relief from the monotony; after that, we preferred the monotony.

Newspapers reached us occasionally, and we were even allowed to have radios, with which we could receive English-language broadcasts from the French, German and Russian stations in Shanghai. Soon we were receiving broadcasts from the States. I don't know how; you don't ask questions about things like that in a prison camp. All I know is that Lieutenant Kinney took our barracks radio away and tinkered with it, and presently he was telling us the States-side news. It wasn't very cheery in the spring of '42, except Doolittle's raid. But when we heard about the Battle of the Coral Sea, we agreed that it was the turning point of the war.

Not until that summer did the Japs let us send letters. My first ones were to my wife and Paddy, my young son. Then I wrote Bishop Doi, of Tokyo, asking if he could arrange for a priest to say mass for us. His answer never came. The International Red Cross had notified my wife in June that I was alive, but before my letters could reach her, I learned in August, also through the Red Cross, that she had died in July. The Japanese were very sympathetic. They told me I could knock off work for three days, provided I had "the proper attitude"—whatever that meant. I think they were trying to do the right thing, but, as usual, they succeeded only in being left-handed and intrusive.

Our first letters from home arrived in the fall of '42. We received mail about a dozen times in all. The Japs censored it sometimes by cutting out passages, sometimes by confiscating the entire letter without even notifying us that they had done so. Another of their infuriating practices was to hold up delivery. The last of a batch of mail that arrived in November, 1943, was not distributed until the following March.

At Christmas, 1942, we received our first boxes of Red Cross supplies—

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about thirty cents. Chinese money was worth roughly a tenth of ours, so it took a private three days to earn the price of a package of ten cigarettes or a loaf of Jap bread, half the size of an American loaf. Some of the men, though, particularly the North China marines, had been able to bring in American currency. It was readily changeable for the Chinese money or military yen in which all purchases had to be made, but the official rate was so low that they refused to deal, and looked around for a black market. They found one through the Chinese coolies at Mount Fuji. Ishihara got a cut, of course, but his greed was insatiable, and when the men shut down on him, he squealed to the camp authorities and demanded an investigation.

It was less an investigation than an inquisition. Lieutenant (j.g.) Foley, a medical officer from Tientsin was one of the first called in for questioning. He was carried out on a stretcher, unconscious. Officers and men alike were beaten, had their thumbs wrenched and were given the water cure, which consisted of having a tube jammed into their mouths and water poured down it until they fainted. Not one of them admitted anything.

Colonel Ashurst and I were among the few officers who weren't interrogated. His seniority spared him, but I attribute my own escape to the fact—absurd as it may sound—that I speak a little French. Colonel Otera, who also spoke a little, liked to exchange a few words with me during his inspections, and I think the sight of us chatting together convinced the guards that I was under his special protection.

The Japanese eventually pieced together the story from confessions by the Chinese go-betweens and information from a civilian "white mouse" in our own number. The "guilty" men were put in the brig overnight and confined

to barracks for a month. The white mouse's reward was a promotion to *honcho*, or straw boss, but none of the other prisoners ever spoke to him again.

The black-market affair was only a short, violent episode in a long narrative of slow attrition. Overworked at Mount Fuji and underfed at camp, the men began to decline almost at once, and by the summer of 1943 their condition was pitiful. Husky marines and sailors dwindled to skin and bones. I saw belts tightened as much as eight inches. Tuberculosis moved in. We segregated the patients, but the only treatment we could give was complete rest; we couldn't even obtain an instrument for collapsing the infected lungs.

We developed a form of patience that was almost numbness, stagnation. The present was always monotonously gray, and the only difference between the succeeding weeks was that each was darker than the one before. We never doubted our victory; we doubted only that it would be in time. Now, after a year and a half of captivity, we knew the third kind of death, the death of the spirit.

Some relief came in the spring of 1944, when the Mount Fuji rifle range was completed. We still had to work, but our new jobs were less exhausting. One group of men was assigned to a garage, and another to a gasoline-and-alcohol dump. The officers were apprehensive about this second group; we knew they would manage to tap the alcohol, and because they weren't in physical condition to handle it, we were afraid it might make them dangerously brave with the Japanese. They drank it, all right, even in their barracks, after an ingenious piece of smuggling—they stole a section of inner tube from the tire-repair shop, sealed one end, filled it up, sealed the other end, and wore it in like a girdle.

Naturally, it wasn't long before a marine was arrested for drunkenness. When he was sober enough to talk, the Japs insisted on knowing why he had stolen the alcohol.

"It's like this," he said: "I've got aches in my bones and I need it for massage."

The fatheads not only believed him but when they confined him in the brig, they let him take a bottle along, and he turned his punishment into a magnificent beano. A week or two later, he was arrested again, of course. This time he was hauled up before Colonel Otera, who pointed out that it was his second offense and asked what was to be done with him.

"I don't know, sir," the marine said. "I reckon you better shoot me."

The colonel was so dumfounded, he let him off with a warning.

The group in the garage were rather boastful, at first, of their prowess as saboteurs. Later, they admitted that the Japanese mechanics, as on Wake, could ruin a car not only in less time but more thoroughly. They



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The Jap said, "Burma. They'll be broken up soon, so it's O.K."

The prevalence of this defeatism became increasingly plain as 1944 ended. We understood it. We had been able to follow the war fairly well on our returned radio and with information from fresh drafts of prisoners. All through 1944 we believed that our

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THE SATURDAY
EVENING POST

and if you wanted a sock in
Then what did you say?"

(Continued from Page 101)

forces were closing in fast, and we were sure of it when the B-29's began bombing around Shanghai that winter.

Spring gave our morale its strongest stimulus—a flight of P-51's buzzed over us so low that we waved to the pilots. Army fighter planes meant an American base near by. We started smiling and whistling around camp. Everyone said, "It won't be long now!" The more frequent the raids, the more hysterical our guards became. They herded us into the barracks, jabbing us with their bayonets and screaming. Once they did something that was an arrant violation of the rules of war: they fired at the planes through our barracks windows.

By March, scuttlebutt was saying that we were going to leave Kiang Wang. For once it was right. Early in May, the Japs sent off an advance detail consisting of civilian carpenters, electricians and plumbers, plus several Navy hospital corpsmen under Lieutenant Foley, and some eighty marines. Foley is fluent in Chinese, and when the detail entrained at the Kiang Wang station, he was able to send us word that they were bound for Fengtai, 700 miles north, near Peking. This was the only time we ever knew our destination until we got there.

The rest of us, except about two dozen tuberculars and mental cases, followed in a few days. The officers were lucky. Only twenty-five of us were loaded into each boxcar, so we were comparatively comfortable, but the enlisted men and civilians were loaded by fifties. An American boxcar may be roomy enough to let fifty men lie down at the same time; I don't know; I know that these cars weren't. They were not only shorter and narrower than ours but the whole thwartships section between the sliding doors was wired off, to keep us from rushing the guard posted there. Each car had four small windows, also wired. If, at night, a man happened to hang his

clothing in a certain way near the single oil lamp, he couldn't help noticing that the windows were thrown into darkness. From there it was only a step to noticing that the wires across them were loose, the guard was drowsy, and the train was making barely twenty miles an hour.

It happened our second night aboard. The train suddenly stopped, and two Jap officers came in, squeaking with rage. They yelled at us to stand up, and while they counted heads, they hit out with their pistol butts and slashed around with their swords. We didn't get the explanation until the next day. Five officers had escaped from the car ahead: Lieutenants Kinney and McAlister from Wake, Huizenga and McBrayer, of the North China marines, and Bishop, a Flying Tiger.

The guard in charge of their car was punished, the senior American officer was promised a court-martial at Fengtai, and Colonel Otera announced that he was placing himself under arrest. Precautions were doubled; the windows in our car were wedged shut and an officer with a drawn sword stood in the guard's passageway. Nevertheless, two more men, both civilians, escaped the very next night. All five officers and one of the civilians made their way to friendly troops, but the other civilian was caught and maltreated so viciously that he had a breakdown.

It took our boxcars five days to reach Fengtai. The camp had fewer facilities than even Woosung or Kiang Wang, and the food was worse. There were only a few bed platforms and straw ticks; the rest of the men slept on the barracks' brick deck.

On June nineteenth we started another boxcar tour. This one lasted four days. It took us into Manchuria and down through Korea, and ended at the port of Fusan, in a cloudburst. The camp was three miles away, and the mud was ankle-deep, but we marched it. Some of the prisoners were

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elderly. Many were weak with illness and starvation. One of my officers had a sprained ankle. They all made the march. Paper bundles rotted in the rain and broke open. Men slipped and lay where they fell. Along the whole three miles I thought of the one-legged pilot, trying to manage the crutches we had made for him.

The flies at Fengtai had been thick enough to give us dysentery. Here we had to brush them off our plates with one hand while we ate with the other, if we could make ourselves choke down the garbage they gave us. The third day at Fusan, they marched us down to the docks and packed us into the airless lower deck of a ferry steamer. The trip across Korea Strait was only twelve hours, but the jam, the stifling heat and the lack of ventilation, not to mention the risk of air and submarine attack, made it far worse than our nine days in the boxcars.

We landed at a small town on the west coast of Honshu, Japan's main island, and transferred to day coaches, 170 of us to a coach built for eighty-eight. Still, the trip had its compensations. Although the guards made us keep the blinds drawn, we caught occasional glimpses outside. The Nagoya area was rubble; for miles along both sides of the track, the ground was level with ruins.

As usual, we didn't know where we were going. All we could tell was that we were traveling north. This leg of the trip lasted two days and was notable chiefly for a variation in our diet; instead of raw fish with our rice, we were given cooked food: fried grasshoppers. We rode the train to the tip of Honshu, rode a ferry to Hakodate on Hokkaido, and rode another train to Takagawa, which we reached on July sixth. Here the officers and men were put into separate barracks, and here occurred the saddest event in my whole imprisonment. The morning after we arrived, thirty-five of us officers were told to be ready to move in twenty minutes.

"Where are we going?"

"You're going to a new camp. Never mind where."

I minded where we were going far less than I minded leaving the Wake Island marines. Small drafts of them had been sent away from the other camps from time to time, but I had always had a chance to shake their

hands and tell them how proud they had made me. Now I had no chance at all.

The new camp, Nishiashibetsu, was twenty miles from Takagawa. It was my last prison camp, and the most primitive. Our barracks was hopping with fleas. The deck was naked earth. Each man's sleeping space measured seven feet by two and a half feet. The only supplements to our eternal rice were pickled squibs and a soup made of wild rhubarb and horse bones.

Forty-five Australian officers, taken captive at Rabaul, were there when we arrived. They were shambling skeletons after their years of starvation in the camp at Zentsuji. When the Japs made us "volunteer" for manual labor, these Aussies were the first to agree, simply because it meant their being given an extra ration of rice. We were set to clearing ground for a garden, but this had lasted less than a month when a number of prisoners were switched to work in a lumberyard, muscling timbers and gravel to a coal mine near by.

Enlisted men from other camps around us were forced to work below ground on twelve and fourteen hour shifts. The mines were old, wet and improperly shored, and the men's inexperience at the job made it all the more dangerous. Momentarily I awaited news of a fatal accident. Instead I got news of a totally different sort. It came from a pair of British Tommies who passed Lieutenant Commander Greey and me on our way back from work one afternoon. They said, "We're having a bowl of caviar tonight."

We could guess what they were hinting, and our guess was supported by something we heard when we reached camp. That morning—it was August fourteenth—another Tommy had muttered to a British officer, "Sir, Joe is in."

Russia had declared war.

For several days previous, the guards had been showing more lenience. They had allowed us to swim in the river below the camp, where, one day, a Jap soldier had told us, "Very soon we'll all be friends again."

But now things began to happen too fast for us to savor each new bonus as we received it. Every day became Christmas. Our cigarette ration, which had started at ten a day in Woosung and had shrunk to nothing, was suddenly restored. All work was knocked off. Potatoes, carrots, even sugar were

issued. It was obvious that the war had taken a tremendous step, but we still didn't know in what direction—armistice, negotiated peace or unconditional surrender.

The facts were told us officially on the eighteenth. At once, of course, we were on fire with eagerness to start home, but the word was passed that our authorities wanted us to remain there until transportation could be arranged and representatives of the Red Cross could check the camp records. The day the representatives arrived, the Japs pulled one of their typical tricks. All the medical supplies we had managed to bring with us from China had long ago been confiscated, but now the Jap hospital corpsmen rigged up a "first-aid room" in the vestibule of our barracks and decked it out with equipment that none of us had ever seen before.

Their snide little face-savings didn't matter now. We were too excited to bother about them. Almost hourly something new would raise our spirits to an even higher pitch.

One night the Japs gave us a dinner party at the mine officials' club. They spread themselves on good food and wine, and everything went reasonably well until the top official proposed a toast to "everlasting friendship between America and Japan."

Major Brown responded. The memory of Ishihara was too vivid for him to say anything but what he did: "If you behave yourselves, you'll get fair treatment." That was all.

Between then and my arrival home in Washington, where I saw my son again after almost exactly four years, there is little to tell. I left the camp on September thirteenth, hopped from ship to ship, reached Guam on the seventeenth, Pearl Harbor on the nineteenth, and Washington on the twenty-sixth. One very small incident, though, stands out in my mind. The first American possession that I felt under my feet since the moment Wake surrendered was the deck of Rear Admiral "Beauty" Martin's flagship, the escort carrier Hoggatt Bay. Admiral Martin is an able and perceptive officer. He is also a friend of mine. And yet, for my first American meal, he served me rice.

I didn't eat it. I haven't eaten it since. I will never eat it again.

Editors' Note—This is the last of four articles by Colonel Devereux and Lieutenant Commander Bryan.

"FIRST STOP— OMAHA BEACH"

(Continued from Page 26)

and softball championships of the ETO.

The men groused that they had so much amphibious training that they were getting webbed feet, but late in

ten pounds that German resistance would cease in three months, and had trouble placing the bet. As the men moved into the marshaling area at Plymouth, they chanted, "Twenty-Ninth, Let's Go!" interminably. Battle-tested veterans of the 1st Division, who spearheaded the invasions of North Africa and Sicily, yelled: "Go ahead, Twenty-Ninth! You can have it!"

At 0630 on D day, the 116th Beach

doughfoots. "Hell, we're getting killed here!" he yelled. "We might as well go in farther and get killed there!"

Groups followed him through the mines and mushrooming 88's to the protecting cover of the cliffs. The 116th lost 800 men, 30 per cent of its strength, securing that grubby stretch of sand.

Detailed plans for the first phase of the invasion filled a book as thick as a mail order catalogue. On the beaches



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