My War Diary

DECEMBER 7, 1941
TO
FEBRUARY 3, 1945

by
Lucy Hardee Olsen
Permission to copy this diary was granted by Mrs. Lucy Olsen of Durham, North Carolina on March 16, 1977 in a telephone conversation with her niece, Mrs. Charlotte Bethea of Rock Hill, South Carolina.

(Russ A. Webb
Professor of History
Whitman College)

(Copies also available in Duke University and UNC-Chapel Hill libraries.)
Presented to

LUCY HARDEE OLSEN

on the occasion of
her eightieth birthday

April 23, 1976

by

Fred and Roberta Slivon
In retrospect, Sunday December 7, 1941, stands out very vividly in my memory. It must be one of the ways nature has of storing pleasant things for one to dwell on in times less fortunate. For that was a happy day, and I remember well so many small details which I shall keep with me always. For that was the last day of the good old days in the Manila we knew and loved before the war. It was made especially happy because Dave had promised to spend the day with us. Dave, my brother, a colonel in the U. S. Army, had arrived from the States only a little more than two weeks previous and had been so busy getting settled, meeting with and renewing old acquaintances in the Islands that he had not been able to give us a whole day before this. He was to arrive in the middle of the morning. Carl, as usual for Sunday, left for the Golf Club immediately after breakfast so that the chauffeur could get the car back in time to take the children to Sunday School at 9:00. After that they came by for me and we went out to Fort McKinley, which is about five miles out from our side of the city. There we found their Uncle Dave and brought him home with us. The rest of the morning he spent in the garden with the children and Winkie, the little Toy Bull pup whom they adored, while each performed for him on swings, see-saws, slides, bars, skate and bikes. My garden, though only three years old, was a lovely one and Dave was interested in the plants and trees and flowers I had growing there. At Christmas time the gardens of Manila are at their loveliest, and my poinsettias were then just beginning to show their first bright red flowers. My gardenias (which were my special pets) were bearing a few blossoms and my orchids were never prettier than they were that day. At noon all of us went out to the club for Carl, who had finished his game and was ready to play host. So Dave met the friends at the Club and after a couple of drinks we went home for lunch. After our siesta we went for a tour of the city and out-lying suburbs and residential sections which had been built up since Dave’s departure from the Islands in 1932. In our tour of the city we commented on the beauty of it, traveling down Calle P. Burgos with the old Walled City, its sunken gardens and gold course lined by Royal Palms and Flame trees on one side and the Legislative Hall in all its beauty on the other. With the Post Office and Jones Bridge in the distance really it is a most imposing sight. I said as I beheld it that it was lovely and one could feel the peace and friendliness that prevailed. It was far too lovely for one single Japanese bomb to ever fall and mar the beauty and serenity of it all.
After taking the children home we went to the race club but did not stay very long there - just long enough to see a few of our friends. We left with Emily and Doc, our good friends, for a cocktail at the Army and Navy Club before we went for dinner at Jai Alai. At the Army and Navy Club the atmosphere was changed, for there was a charged air of war, and war preceded the conversations of all with whom we met. Coming events were casting their shadows before them - though none of us knew more than the other.

Among our friends was Colonel Gilhouser, who was in charge of evacuation and had that afternoon come down from Baguio where he had been in conference with President Quezon and other members of the evacuation committee. He strongly advised me to lose no time in going to Baguio with the two children, for it was there that the committee had decided to send the evacuees and everything was in readiness for all American mothers and children, and the site there was ideal. It was agreed that with the first sign of trouble, to Baguio we would go.

December 8, 1941

This morning we got our first telephone call at five-thirty, telling us of what had happened at Pearl Harbor, Aparri and Baguio. To confirm this we had tuned in on the San Francisco station and then I called Dave’s quarters, but only to find that he had already gone to his office, and, as the line to Fort Santiago was busy all morning, I did not contact him before noon. I had things to do for a friend in Cebu, as she had sent a shopping list to me, so I went down and shopped until ten o’clock. At that time I was glad to get off the streets, as the natives were getting panicky. I stopped at Carl’s office for a few minutes talk with him before going home. While at his office the news came through that Fort Stotsenburg had also been bombed and that the Davao radio station was not coming through. I reached home at eleven and found a list of telephone calls, but did not get them answered before a neighbor came in to talk it over with me. Carl came in at twelve-fifteen, while I was completing the calls and told me to get the Rhudies in Lusacan and tell them that we would be there this afternoon. Long distance was impossible, nor was I yet successful in getting Dave. We sat down to lunch which none of us relished and while eating decided that we would make the start for Lusacan (103 km.) at two-thirty. This would give me time for some hurried packing, and Carl time to go back to the office for a few minutes. The servants helped with the packing, while I gave orders to them to carry on the house for Carl until I returned. We attended to all details such as putting up the blackout curtains and getting the blue bulbs in, special orders to the grocer, etc.

At two-forty we were off and the car filled with baggage, what tinned goods we could pack in, and a newly cooked leg of lamb, the chauffeur, the amah I was taking with us, and the four of us. Carl had asked permission to drive as fast as the chauffeur could safely do, so he could return before dark after getting us settled. To this I consented but wondered how we could do it. The Rhudie’s house is about sixty miles from ours and darkness at this time of year comes before six o’clock. Our house is on the south side of the city about one mile from Nichols
Field (our Army landing field). This field being one of the prime objectives of war, we knew that we were in the danger zone. Once on the way we passed guard after guard in full wartime attire until well past where the Nichols Field road came off the highway. Now on the road we found ourselves in a long line of cars, trucks, taxis and vehicles of all kinds and descriptions, bearing refugees as ourselves, and for the first fifty kilometers or more our speed was slowed down considerably. We looked about us at the line and held a kindred feeling for these people who were taking with them all supplies and possessions that were possible to pack or tie on to their conveyance, the same as we.

Long before we reached Lusacan we decided to abandon hopes of Carl's return that night, and it is well that we did, for it took two and a half hours to make the trip, as not only the traffic slowed us but we were stopped by guards at every bridge and on entering many of the small towns through which we passed. They were looking for Japanese, arms or bombs that might be smuggled. So when we reached the Rhudie’s gate and blew our horn, out came Oscar and Ada to meet us vowing that they were sitting there looking for us, though we had been unable to get them by phone. We were tired and dusty so were quickly established in their guest house where we had time to wash off the dust and freshen up a bit before supper that had to be eaten early on account of the blackout -- a continuous blackout that would last for the duration of the war.

Now for a word about the lovely retreat into which we took refuge. Oscar and Ada are among our oldest friends in the Islands, wonderful people they are -- the kind to whom a friend turns in time of trouble, knowing that the need will be met with understanding hearts. Ada is an ex-Army nurse and Oscar an engineer. They have no children of their own, but every body's children belong to them. Oscar is in charge of the Blue Bar Coconut factory here, one of the largest on the Islands, which employs twelve hundred workmen. Ada keeps herself occupied with looking after the house and the guest house which sit in an enclosure of some five acres with a beautiful lawn heavily shaded with coconut trees. She gives much time to her flower garden, orchid bower, chicken run, pigeons and her wonderful companion Hannah, an English Bull Terrier. Nor does she forget to keep a watchful eye on the hospital, often making calls on the nurse and her attendant in charge. The hospital is small, but equipped to take care of dressings or any accident that may occur in the factory. Lusacan is south of Manila, while Baguio is north. We are more fortunate in being here with these dear friends than I can express in words. The last thing I did was to get in touch with Dave before leaving Manila, and he was so happy over our decision, but when I told him that I thought that we would be away only a few days, he said to pack plenty of clothes for at least a three week stay.

Tuesday, December 9, 1941

Up at six o'clock this morning so as to see Carl off, getting an early start on the return trip after a nice breakfast on the lovely big porch at the Rhudie’s house. He had been gone only a few minutes when the news came through that Nichols Field had been bombed during the
night and that successful landings were effected by the enemy at Vigan and Aparri. Some bombs had also fallen at Fort McKinley (a few miles from Manila) and some at the landing field at Ft. Stotsenburg. No harm much in either McKinley or Stotsenburg but fires were started at Nichols Field. This was startling news and all day long we stayed by the radio, but nothing further developed. Ada and I made plans for a regular routine to which we would try to settle into after the Ivorys come. The Ivorys are members of Oscar’s company and live in Manila close to us. We expect Mrs. Ivory to come at any time with the three children (the oldest, Helen, is seventeen and a senior at the American school; Marcia thirteen, and George, a fine little fellow of nine, a classmate and playmate of Bobbie’s).

Wednesday, December 10, 1941

After breakfast this morning Ada, the children and I went down to the store and bought twenty yards of black material. As there is to be the continuous blackout we decided that we may as well be as comfortable at night as possible. So windows were measured, lamp shades measured, and the amah (Priscilla) put to work at the electric sewing machine. Ada’s bedroom was to be our sitting room at night, as the radio is there. All curtains up, and everything even to the servants’ quarters well blacked out so that there is no need of fear and there is still ample light in each room for comfort. Everybody has his own flashlight, so we feel that we are very well fixed indeed.

No further news had come through during the morning hours, but many planes were heard in this vicinity — though none have passed directly over. We have tried to impress on the children’s minds to come in immediately at the faintest sound of a plane, but having lived so close to Nichols Field with numerous planes taking off and landing all through the day at such close quarters, it will be some time before they can be expected to catch the first faint sound. But without being warned, they have come in several times during the day when they were at play in this lovely big garden. At noon during the broadcast the commentator interrupted himself to say that planes - thirty of them in number - were approaching the city headed towards Nichols Field, and before any accounting could be given the station went off the air. Try as we did we could not get it back until about four-thirty. The thoughts that kept passing — Nichols Field, our house, Carl there at lunch, my friends in the same compound, our servants, and our little dog “Winkie” — what of them all? And when the news came through it was bad; Nichols Field had been badly hit and Cavite (our Navy yard) left ablaze — fires in our section of the city, emergency calls for eight doctors and all nurses not employed to report to the Red Cross. Parañaque, the residential section next to ours on the Nichols Field side, was also being evacuated by the Army. So we knew that it was terrific! As we waited for flash announcements and all news that came over the radio, rumors were already reaching us. A car horn sounded at the gate at seven-thirty, and the Ivorys had arrived. They fled at four o’clock before the all clear had sounded after a terrific dog fight right over their roof with shrapnel falling all around. They had packed as we had and brought with them all supplies they could pile in. They were badly worn and the strain told on them, not only the experience in Manila,
but the last hour and fully a half they had travelled in total blackout. Mr. Ivory was marooned down town and could not get to them except by phone, so we set to work to give them comfort, made them wash the dust off, served them with hot soup and got them to bed. Their stories were very bad; for the first fifty kilometers they could still see the glow from the fire at Cavite. Many of the houses near them had gone up in flames. Mrs. Ivory had told her servants (chauffeur and the amah she brought to stay with her) not to mention the fact that there was a fire on Park Ave. (our street) but it was not long before my amah came an told me that our house had burned, and no one was sure that it had not. All this time and not one word from Carl – it is impossible to get a call through as the Army has priority on the lines and are constantly using them. There is a small detachment of soldiers a few miles north of here and the intelligence corps are at work all over the Islands. So to bed we went but no sleep for me. I drew what comfort I could in the fact that the children were well and that we were safe with friends, and had supplies with us that should last for several months.

Thursday, December 11, 1941

It took all morning to get the guest house rearranged so as to take care of the two families. That house contains two big bedrooms, big sala, enormous porch and kitchen. We have eight beds which takes care of us beautifully even when the fathers come up (and we hope that they come often). The morning paper at ten o’clock gave a list of ruined houses. And while our compound was in the midst of it, it was spared – and how thankful I am!! The noon news gave descriptions of the raid and told of Jap losses, 9 planes downed (some manned by Germans), and three transports destroyed while landing the troops in northern Luzon and further destruction of the Jap troops that had landed. Evening news told of our further gains on the American side, successes in Moscow as well as in Libya. So we felt very much better. The fact that Italy and Germany declared war on us that evening did not lower our rising spirits. So we drank to “confusion to the Japs” and went to bed and rested.

Friday, December 12, 1941

All are jubilant over our successes today. Eleven planes downed without any losses and two of the Jap’s capital ships sent to the bottom. A raid at noon on Manila was repulsed. Morale has picked up everywhere since America has come into the war. Even Singapore shows signs of improvement.

John McCord, the owner of the Blue Bar, and a good friend of ours, came up from Manila, arriving in the middle of the afternoon, and he brought glowing descriptions of our defense. John came to the Islands during the Spanish-American war as a trooper, and he has every confidence in the ability of our men to take care of the situation out here. Manila is shaping up for a real war, evacuation is still in progress, even the Walled City is being evacuated of the non-essentials. People are going to the provinces as fast as they can thus making room for the defenders in Manila. The trains coming through from Manila have been loaded with people getting out. And that is the right thing to do.
Saturday, December 13, 1941

Nothing of importance up to noon. John returned to Manila after breakfast, not feeling too well, and at 10:45 Oscar came over from the factory saying that he had called the Manila office and they told him that Mr. Ivory had just left for Lusacan. A note from him yesterday said that he and Carl would come up together if they could arrange it. However, still no word from Carl. I will have to scold him, and tell him that he must keep us informed for we are so uneasy about him and others who are left in the city.

Carl and George arrived about three-thirty. And how glad we were to see them!! They came with the car loaded with supplies. They were tired, and the strain of the war was showing on Carl, he was so nervous – though he did not realize it. They left Manila during a raid, and said they thought that McKinley got the worst of that one. They had a pass issued by Gen. MacArthur so that they could get through and return without the car being confiscated, but said that on return to Manila he would let them have it if it would in any way help them. I just hate so to see our nice Lincoln Zephyr go, but I must think only of the country. Business is at nil, and Carl says that he will give half of the day to it and the rest of the day he will give to the Army or Navy as a civilian employee. Carl says that if our lines can hold out ten days longer, by that time help will have arrived and from then on he thinks the pinch will be over. Our lines are holding, with consolidation and cooperation between American and Filipino troops. This country is right behind America in every step she takes except, of course, for a very few fifth columnists and they are being rounded up as fast as possible. The laws are strict, and the fifth columnists have not much chance when caught. The Germans, Italians and Japs have been interned. Orders are to shoot to kill violators of regulations in regards to lights, flares, etc. But in the face of that there have been violations and Carl said that he saw a flare go up from Military Plaza!! Hope they caught that one. The news tonight: Singapore holding, Hong Kong holding, the Philippines holding, Russia making gains, and gains being made in Libya also.

Sunday, December 14, 1941

We all awakened fresh after a restful night's sleep. Carl was a different person, calm and collected. Everybody was hungry for breakfast, and how Ada's fresh eggs were enjoyed!! Carl and George returned to Manila, leaving here about eleven with promises to write and keep up informed. The night's news said that the Nichols Field area had been bombed again with fires started, and Eleanor (Mrs. Ivory) and I are hoping that our houses are still standing. The rest of the news is good, with the exception that Hong Kong is not holding out so well. Our score for the week is forty planes downed and fifteen ships sent to the bottom. Not bad when considering that we were fired on while peace negotiations were still in progress. We have rallied, and how, in a week's time! The Japs' plans were all laid weeks ago (very probably in Berlin) and German aces brought in the first fleet of planes over Manila. They were ready to go when the zero hour was up, and so they got off first and to a great advantage. But give America time. The boast tonight from Tokyo was that up to now no bombs had fallen there. God pity what will happen to her and the whole of the Japanese Empire when we are ready to start our offensive.
Monday, December 15, 1941

Thank Heavens!! The morning paper brought word that the bombing of Nichols Field and the fires started there did not get our houses. We are all orgnaized this morning, and this week Eleanor takes over the superintending of the kitchen. We have a Chinese cook and all food is rationed, even to the servants. The children eat every particle that is served to them and it's a wonderful experience. Esten doesn't quite understand and has been sent from the table once for complaining about the food, but bless her little heart, she took the punishment like a little trooper, and I do not think that there will be a murmur out of her from now on. The children have played like little angels, not an argument among them. We fixed a nice play room in the basement of the guest house. It is a big airy open room and there they have their toys and what playthings we brought, including a phonograph with records for the children. They just love it. Oscar brought over a box of balls and they have played at golf (in their fashion) until Bobbie has blisters. They are at play all day, then get their baths and are put to bed about seven o'clock. Our hours are: breakfast at seven, dinner at twelve, and supper at five. Tomorrow we go on daylight saving, so our supper hour will be five-thirty from now on. Everything is so harmonious; it is like a lark for us except for the war. Carl and George and Dave, if he can get away, will be up Christmas Eve. Carl said that he may stay on till the first of the year, as he thinks that the company will close for that length of time. That will be great!! It is so lovely here. Oscar is having to close the factory because of shipping, and he and Carl will have a wonderful rest. We can't do so very much for the children, but we have planned simple things for them. And Eleanor and the children will give a movie and have a little program. Ada and I are going to make a fruit cake, Carl is bringing a couple of turkeys, and we will celebrate to the "confusion of the Japs" in great style – if our lines are still holding at that time, celebration will be in order!! Tonight's news says that we are still holding on all fronts but the situation in Hong Kong is "grave". That is the only bad news coming from all of the stations – English and American.

Tuesday, December 16, 1941

Today the children have dug ant hills all day long until they have blisters in their hands!! We told them that they could have five cents for each queen they brought in, and so they have dug. It is wonderful how well they have played together, playing all day long in group play without dissension. And it is such a great help that they do this, for if there were quarreling and arguments it would be different. We are so fortunate in having these good friends and this nice place to come to. The other evacuees are not so fortunate. There is a convoy at Pagsanjan, and there the mothers do all the work for no servants are allowed, and we hear that there is a shortage of food. So I will never cease to be thankful for these blessings.

There is a lull in Army and Navy activities throughout the Islands. The authorities are rounding up fifth columnists and a few Japs every day. Secretary Knox is in Honolulu and there, it seems, will be found more casualties than was first estimated. Today's paper says 3,000 dead and injured; and the paper also stated that the officials in charge there will be relieved of their posts – we heartily approve this step, for they should not have been caught asleep. The Filipino
continues to show signs of being a good soldier. And I am very happy with the whole hearted support the natives are giving America and the Filipino government. John and George gave us a happy surprise by arriving about four o'clock this afternoon. John says that Manila has got so quiet that he was getting bored!!

Wednesday, December 17, 1941

John and George returned to the city soon after breakfast and they said that George and Carl will come up Saturday afternoon – I hope so. Sent a note to Carl asking him to come if he could. Ada and I spent the morning getting the supplies that John and George brought put away, the onions regraded and the potatoes sprouted again. My, the nice supplies we have. John said send to Pagsanjan and get the other refrigerator. They have another factory at that place, and up till now have been keeping a house there. But they will give that house up and so the furniture and equipment there will come over here. That will make three refrigerators, and all of them are large ones. But we will need them for meats. We have to get our meats from Manila, and when we get meats in there is a lot to be taken care of. Bob went down today for meats (Bob is John's nephew by marriage), and is here at this plant as Oscar's assistant. A very nice likeable young man, and the children are so fond of him for he takes up lots of time with them. He misses his own two young sons who are in the States with their mother.

No special war news – the saddest thing today was the sinking of the “Corregidor”, one of the largest interisland ships, which ran into a mine last night about midnight. The steamship company had been asked not to sail but people who had been caught in Manila, and others who wanted to get out had pleaded with them until it was decided that they would make a try at it. The boat left the pier at ten o'clock last night, loaded to standing room. They do not know just how many were on, as people kept running to the gang-plank without tickets until the boat pulled off. There must have been a thousand, and of the thousand only two hundred and eighty five have been accounted for -- so sad and so very unnecessary. Among the number were Government officials, representatives and families. We had one friend who has not been heard from. No special war news – the situation at Hong Kong seems to become graver, as the British have retreated to the Island of Victoria which is Hong Kong proper. I hope that they can hold it, for if not that will mean that we get it worse here, though by that time I hope that we will have received more aid from the States.

Thursday, December 18, 1941

Nichols Field had another raid. The city of Iloilo was raided and so was Carde -- some damage to all. In Iloilo the people on the streets were machine gunned. Hong Kong is not doing so well, but all other fronts are holding. There is not much activity in the Islands, thank Heavens. This afternoon Ada and I made a couple of fruit cakes. We must do something for Christmas. When Carl comes Saturday I think that he will bring a couple of turkeys, and we have plenty of everything else. Do so hope that Dave can come up for Christmas day. When Dave arrived November 20th, he brought with him a big carton of gifts from all the folks at home, and Carl
will bring that box along this week-end. That will be our Christmas, and I am so so happy that we have that much for the children. This morning Ada, Eleanor and I went down town here and picked up a few things but there is not much here that can be bought. Just so the children have something. We had promised Bobbie a bicycle for Christmas, but when we explained that it would be impossible this year as the Army had taken over all the bikes, she said that it would be all right, that in 1943 when it was all over her daddy would buy her a bike then. I thought that was pretty swell of one so young. But we will have enough for them to know that it is Christmas, and after all that is plenty!! And I feel that we are blessed to be able to do that much for them – bless their hearts they have been so very, very good. After finishing the fruit cake I went to bed with a headache, which lasted all night and made me quite miserable.

Friday, December 19, 1941

Headache all day, have not kept up with the news, but I know there is not anything special. Bob brought in the refrigerator from Pagsanjan, and tomorrow Ada plans to get it working.

Saturday, December 20, 1941

Up this morning, after still another miserable night. My amah is making a house dress which we bought here. It will be our Christmas gift to Ada. She says that she is in need of house dresses. She had let her supply run low as she and Oscar expected to go on home leave in January. Bob is scrubbing out the refrigerator and if Carl does bring the turkeys this afternoon, we will have refrigerator space for them. Do so hope that the two husbands come up as they did last Saturday. By afternoon my head should be a very great deal better. No news, except that Hong Kong is desperate. Landings there have been made by the Japs. And more troops have landed on our Island of Mindanao, a southern port named Davao. Davao is a rich hemp growing section and for years there have been many Japs there. But our forces are there, and I hope holding them in check. There is no fresh news from there as the landing was preceded by bombing that put the radio station out of work, and so the news does not come through. But I have confidence in our Army and Navy, and hope that they will make quick work of it as they did in Lingayen.

After lunch we all had baths, and a short siesta, so that we would be fresh when our daddies arrived. We had just finished dressing when we heard their horn at the gate, and there they were – same car and chauffeur – loaded with provisions, and special things for the Christmas dinner.

Sunday, December 21, 1941

Carl and George spent the day Sunday, and what a time we had! Bob promoted a bridge game and right after breakfast we started, playing right up till lunch. And after siesta we finished up. Bob loves bridge and plays a good game, but he and I lost to Carl and George – and what a game -- Bob and I will never live down that defeat!!
Monday, December 22, 1941

This is my week to supervise the preparation of food. So as Carl and George were returning to Manila, leaving with the first rays of light, I was up at five o'clock (still black night) to see that they got bacon, eggs, toast and coffee. They left in the gray dawn and arrived safely, as Oscar had conversation with George in the Manila office around nine-thirty. They will be back the day after tomorrow which is Christmas Eve, and I do so hope that they bring Dave with them. Dave is worrying about us but once he comes up and sees and feels the quiet, peace, beauty and solitude of this place he will not worry longer. And I think that if he can get away from the strain of his office (he is in MacArthur’s office) he can let down and relax and have a good night’s rest. It will do him worlds of good, and I have sent him that word. It will all be complete if Dave comes with them; the invitation has been extended; he knows that he is welcome and wanted; and I know that he will come if he can possibly get away – but this is WAR time, and he a high ranking official in it.

Ada has gone to spend the day with friends at San Pablo, a town sixteen kilometers north of here. I was so glad that she made that decision, for it is bound to be hard on her with all of us here, and she is so used to her quiet way of living – she is such a peach, and so is Oscar.

Eleanor, who is a teacher in the American school has all the children busy this morning. She is preparing a Christmas program and a movie, so they have asked us to stay away while they make everything ready. She came over (to Ada’s house) a few minutes ago and said that they were all working like little Trojans. I don’t know just what it is all about. They are to make the movie themselves, so I can imagine there are many things to draw. And Esten’s special job is to draw a Santa Claus. Eleanor is a wonder when it comes to managing children. She is such a sweet, tenderhearted, understanding person. And does she know her child psychology!

And now the war is on in a big way. Yesterday the Japs flew over and wantonly bombed President Quezon’s home town without any excuse whatever, except to be insulting, for there was not a military objective in miles and miles. President Quezon has been a peach. He was in Baguio the morning it was bombed. He has called for full support of America and we are getting it from the whole nation. The same day of the bombing, a school bus taking girls home from schools, colleges and universities in Manila, was attacked by Japanese soldiers in the Vigan area, the driver, conductor and men passengers were machine gunned and the girls assaulted. The morale of these people (the Ilocanos) is very high. So fathers and brothers are furious and have sworn to avenge their honor and are ready to tackle any Jap that comes their way and are waiting for an opportunity to have a crack at the invaders. We wondered this morning why the eight o’clock news did not come through; at noon we learned another air raid was in process at eight, the bombing of Nichols Field area again. We were also told that a huge convoy of eighty Jap vessels was sighted off the Lingayen Gulf. Tonight’s news says that they were able to land from 30,000 - 50,000 – but from our headquarters saying, “Our troops more than held their own; our troops behaved well”. Now we await tomorrow’s news.
Tuesday night, December 23, 1941

Christmas is in the air. Everybody is doing their part. The children’s play room (the basement) at the guest house is being dressed out in paper chains of red, red lanterns, and green palm leaves. The children have different parts to do in the Christmas program, but the movie is the big thing. Ada has done a tree which is a beauty. She made it by putting together and tying to a standard many blossoms from the coconut trees -- she had a man over early this morning climbing trees for her. My part is to see that the food is adequate, and it will be. Priscilla has been making another house dress for Ada today. Just a little more and we will have it ready for her to wear. The one we made for her Christmas gift turned out nicely. Our Christmas will be a simple but sweet one, for the children have made just about everything in the way of decorations and programs.

Our noon news stated that the Japs in their attempted major invasion had succeeded in landing some of their troops and tanks, but we had driven the rest of the eighty to one hundred thousand back from landing. They have taken a stand at Damortis and heavy fighting is in progress there where men and tanks are engaged. We have brought down eight of their planes in that sector. There were two raids on Manila yesterday but both driven off. Landings have been successful in five points of the Islands: Aparri, Vigan, Lingayen on the Island of Luzon; Capiz on Panay and Davao on the southern tip of Mindanao. But just give us time and they will go out faster than they came in – those that are left, though I doubt if they ever live to retreat.

At two o’clock a big truck of soldiers arrived here. Oscar had given them permission to be housed in the factory. They are to use our phone and the office as their headquarters. A few minutes after the arrival of the troops, John came for the night with us. We were in hopes that he would be with us over the holidays, but he said “no” he would have to return and stay near the phone as George would be coming up to be with his family.

Wednesday, December 24, 1941

John left early this morning, and as there was a chance of getting to the city before Carl and George left for Lusacan Bob went with him. In case he fails to get in touch with Carl and George, he will return by train tonight. That dear, he just had to have Christmas gifts for the children – he’s such a sweetheart. Then came the eight o’clock news telling of successful landings in Tayabas (not so far from us) and also reinforcements were landed in Lingayen. This was disturbing and I knew that Carl was moving heaven and earth to get to us if it was that serious. So Oscar, Ada and I held a conference and decided that we would go right on as per schedule with our household plans, and if it were possible that the children would have their Christmas. And while I must have felt a very great deal as our earliest Grandmothers did in times of trouble, we went right on with our work; shampooing, Xmas parcels, program to rehearse, turkeys to stuff and cookies to coat. Eleanor took charge of the children and Ada and I took over the kitchen. Miss Gaiety came by about eleven and said that it was not so bad up Atimonan way. Lunch and then baths: I was just finishing Bobbie’s hair when we heard the daddies at the gate and with them was Bob. Carl said on arrival that we must pack and return immediately, that
he had not stopped even long enough to pick up from his desk the Christmas gifts he had there for us. But I said no, we would wait longer, that I did not want to leave before Christmas dinner the next day at 1:00 if it were safe for us there till then. We talked it over and it was decided that we would stay. Then we gave the men lunch and proceeded to relax. Whatever news there was would be broadcast immediately over the radio. So that was that. After the lunch the children put on a rehearsal for the servants, and the remainder of the afternoon passed very nicely. About five o'clock a truck load of native soldiers arrived for rest and we sent over by the children under Carl’s care, coffee, cigarettes, and the children’s own offering of chocolates which Carl had brought for them. After supper and the children’s usual romp with Bob we helped them hang their stockings and saw them off to bed. Then the tree which Ada had made (description) was brought up and gifts laid around. I was tired and so had a good night’s rest.

Thursday, December 25, 1941

Day dawned bright and clear, and as I was in charge I went immediately to the kitchen but Ada had beat me to it and already had one of the turkeys in. (We had to cook one at a time as they were so large.) Then came the children with their stockings. After a substantial breakfast, we had our Christmas tree — and what a happy time the children had!! The Ivorys had no gifts except what we had got for each other here in Lusacan so our lovely big Christmas box which Dave had brought all the way across the States and the Pacific Ocean to make sure that we received our gifts from all of the folks at home, we did not open, as I expect to take it back to Manila. After the tree came the program, and the children were so sweet. Esten was the announcer, and every child had a part. Bobbie recited the poem as George turned the Movie. Each child had made pictures representing the poem — and it was good. Esten’s Christmas Tree, fireplace, and Santa were all there. Bobbie had done shepherds. After this we left the guest house for the children and after getting things in order with the cook I went out to join Bob, George and Carl in a bridge game. We were having lots of fun when we heard boom, boom, boom and a fleet of planes go over. The radio went off the air and we did not know where the damage was done, but in a very few minutes time, the watchman on top of the factory said that it was San Pablo. So Bob and Carl set out to see what help they could render as the town was going up in smoke. They were back for dinner but from then on there was much traffic and passing of Army trucks, tanks, etc. It was decided that our things would be packed and that we would return with Carl the next morning. This, I thought a good idea as it would make ample room for the Rhudies. The Ivorys decided to return with us, but Oscar and Ada would stay on.

Friday, December 26, 1941

Unfortunately, in the rush of Christmas things, I had forgotten to give Esten a needed treatment of Castoria, and the little dear was nauseated and vomiting in spells up to about two o’clock. The little darling had never been sick like that before, and it made me feel so badly because it was all from neglect on my part. She had just settled from her last spell when the guard called me. He had seen my flashlight off and on during the night, and said that he wanted to talk with Mr. Olsen, Mr. Ivory or Mr. Rhudie, so I called Carl. He said that news had reached him that the Atimonan lines were breaking and that we should prepare to leave. I would not disturb Esten for she was now sleeping, but the rest of us got dressed, and the Ivorys packed, we had
coffee and then waited till it was light enough to travel. Everything was ready by the first rays of light, but we were too packed to take with us our big box of Christmas things. The Rhudies promised that they would bring it if they found that they must leave. Bob drove the ivories down so that he could return with that car, thus giving Oscar and Ada ample transportation when they had to come away. By light we were on the road and made beautiful time with the exception of being held up at Sta. Rosa for an air raid, but the planes just passed peacefully over and so we were not there for long.

We could see smoke for miles before reaching the city. There were two fires in different sections; one we rightly guessed was Cavite, the other we could not tell even as we entered the city proper. But we found at the first filling station that it was the oil dump which we were burning. The two families were to meet at the Elks Club and we arrived there a few minutes before ten to find that Manila was to be declared an open city, so the Army was destroying all oil and other supplies that were military objectives. We had been at the club just long enough to get washed up – the children had not yet got the glasses of water which they had called for – when the air alarm went on. And so to the air raid shelter we hastened. The alarm stayed on till after twelve. Then we went up and ordered sandwiches. These had not come when the alarm went on again, so the sandwiches were served to us in the air raid shelter. Every so often we could hear the booms and those that fell nearest shook the building – most unpleasant! This alarm went off about 2:15 and we made a break for our car. It was decided that we would stay with Jane and Bill out in New Manila. We got only as far as the City Hall when another alarm sounded, but we were there for not more than a half hour. While there, we had time to read the funnies to the children and I scanned the headlines of the daily paper. After the all clear, we hurried to Jane’s, reaching there without further delay at about three o’clock. Carl got us settled, had a bath, and waited for Jane and Bill to reach home. Then he left for the Elks Club where he had been living and where his clothes were.

Jane and Bill’s home is on the north side of the city, ours on the south. Their home is very lovely and overlooks the city. It is set in very ornate gardens where Jane spends countless hours with her orchids and flowers. Bill and Carl are associated with the same company. As they have no children, Jane also works. She is a private secretary to the manager of Texaco in the Philippines. For years they have been very close friends of ours and we are fortunate to have them to turn to in our hour of distress. Both of them are so very fond of Bobbie and Esten and it shall be pleasant being here where it is quiet and with these good friends. Jane and I slept in her downstairs bedroom and the children slept in the sala with the amah, while Bill slept upstairs.

Forgot to say that about a half hour after our arrival, Ada called up from John’s house here in New Manila, three blocks away, to say that they are here! They had just had their lunch when the Army notified them to leave on ten minutes notice. Bob having been caught in the alarms here had been unable to return. They met him on the outskirts of the city driving like mad and they could not make him take notice of them. In the one car they brought with them four servants with a child, the radio, sewing machine, typewriter, and clothes!
Saturday, December 27, 1941

Manila is declared an open city. Jane, Bill and Carl go to work. I take over the housekeeping. Spent the day with the Ivorys and Rhudies. Terrific bombing but most of the damage done in the Walled City. When Carl came home this afternoon he brought with him all of his clothes, and we will stay on with the Wolff’s till further developments. The Olsen’s have the upstairs and Wolff’s the downstairs for sleeping quarters; the rest of the time the house belongs to everybody!!

Sunday, December 28, 1941

Bill and Carl are such restless mortals!! Now at this particular time Carl just must have a hair cut, so to the Elks Club they go. This particular club is near the piers, and is not too safe. They got caught in a long long raid but finally turned up here safe and sound. Why must men take such chances? Oscar and Ada came over in the late afternoon and sat with us for a nice long time. LIGHTS for the first time in weeks, lights!! And how my spirits have soared. Lights to prove to the Japs that Manila is an open city.

Monday, December 29, 1941

All are at work today. The children and I spent the day with Ada and the Ivorys. Ada spent the most of the day shopping. There has been very little bombing, this time for objectives along the river -- it must be boats. Bob came back down this afternoon, and were the children glad to see him. One would have thought that Santa was arriving in person the way they howled at sight of him!!

Tuesday, December 30, 1941

The Ivorys have returned to their Pasay home. Today is a holiday (Rizal Day). Carl and Bill played golf. They would not let anything in the way of persuasion stop them. After the game, Carl took us out to our house. Everything there was all right. The cat showed signs of shock and the caretaker said that he could not get her to eat, so we told him to dispose of her in some humane way. The garden looked so pretty -- that garden I had tried so to have ready for Christmas -- well, it did not fail me. The poinsettias were gorgeous and all looked well though I was not so pleased with the looks of the orchids. But that’s nothing to worry over. They are all growing on trees and so they will live. It was marvelous the way our compound escaped fire, for the fire had burned right up to it!!

Wednesday, December 31, 1941

Manila must fall. All day long military supplies and objectives have been blasted till the air reverberated with the boom of dynamite. Smoke in the air, and as night drew on the sky was ablaze. Even the river, so they say, is on fire -- that is, the oil that has been drained on to it has caught fire and from our high hill it all looks so dreadful. Many planes have come over today, but no bombs dropped. Late this afternoon, the Salcts came out to see us and we had a pleasant little visit with them.
Thursday, January 1, 1942

New Year’s Day. Manila has fallen! All Americans must stay close to homes, but we can still see Oscar and Ada -- they are so close. We are expecting the Japanese to occupy the city at any hour, and it is ready for them. We have nice neighbors all around, and staying close will not be hard on any one but Carl and Bill.

Friday, January 2, 1942

Oscar says that we must keep our sense of humor and so find many little ways of playing jokes on each other and in that way we have our little fun. Carl took a quick run down this morning to get my jewels and medicines for me in case there should be a headache. The story he tells of looting by the natives is heartbreaking. Oh, it is awful!! The Japanese have entered the city, and all reports reaching us are good.

Saturday, January 3, 1942

The High Commissioner, Mr. Sayre, ran a notice in the paper saying that all American places of business must open and operate as usual. Carl and Bill, again despite prayerful pleas from Jane and me, MUST go to work!! They left the house before nine with promises to call us on arrival at the office – no call. Finally a Mrs. Berger called to say that she had seen them and they asked her to call and say they were all right. They were in a truck being taken to the Japanese Primary School. Our neighbor went out to see if he could help them. At 2:10 they got home, hungry and foot sore. The car had been commandeered but was returned to them on the way back home. They were told to stay home, and now I hope they obey orders. A company truck that was here at the house was also commandeered. The Japanese men who came to get it were ever so nice. I told them that I regretted that they did not enter the city in time to put a quicker stop to the looting.

Sunday, January 4, 1942

Many of our friends have been taken into concentration for questionings. They are all interned in one of the lovely big universities here near New Manila, and have received the best of treatment.

A Japanese Captain his interpreter and men came this afternoon at 2:30 and inspected our house, took names and asked many questions. All was done in the nicest way and with the greatest courtesy. The children passed cigarettes to the men, and pretty soon they were trying to learn Japanese. In fact, they had so much fun in such a gay way that once I saw the Captain rise and look out the window to see if all was well. When they left they placed a sign on the side of the front entrance which below the Japanese superscription reads as follows: By order the Imperial Japanese Army duly seized these premises or properties being hostile possessions or suspected hostile ones. Anyone who touches these shall be severely prosecuted, according to the Military Laws.

January 4, 1942
Commander-In-Chief of Japanese Army
We were told to all stay home. What the sign means, we do not know, but others do not have it. And so we feel that it is a good omen. The only thing we had that they called for was a couple of cameras. These they locked in an upstairs safe and sealed with their sign. The Elfstroms and Doyles, our dear friends, were interned today.

Monday, January 5, 1942

All stay home. It is perfectly all right for the servants to come and go, so the Captain who was here yesterday said for us to send to market for things in the way of food. Every morning we send the boy to market, where he gets greens and fruits and whatever he can find there for us. Another friend sent several beers and a carton of cigarettes. Oscar and Ada were taken late this afternoon, and we are packed and ready to go when we are called. Sam and Pauline went at eleven o'clock so the servant says. The Salets have also gone. My lavendera failed to show up so today Priscilla has taken on the job. But there really is not much to do as we keep clean. We eat, rest, read and play cards. Esten is learning her numbers by playing “Fish”.

Tuesday, January 6, 1942

Auntie Florence was exempted because of age and so she is home. Plenty of rest, and Carl certainly has a golden opportunity to catch up with his reading!! The news says that MacArthur’s long awaited bombers have arrived. Corregidor has been getting it!!

Wednesday, January 7, 1942

The telephone seldom rings, for all of our friends have been interned. All day long yesterday not a car passed, except for the policeman. What a changed city! Over on the boulevard we can hear traffic that sounds like Army trucks passing, but that is all. Bill was just saying that when we are interned we will probably find life more social. But I am quite happy here. I like the privacy of a home. Today we were saying what lesson we are drawing from this experience. Bill says that this will teach him Humility. Jane says it will teach her Patience. Carl has not expressed himself, but for me it will be a good lesson in Faith in God and also in mankind.
The now famous Santo Tomas Internment Camp is located in the city of Manila several blocks from the north bank of the Pasig River on Calle Espana. Its walls enclose about two hundred thousand square meters, approximately fifty acres of ground. Before the war it was the site of the newer unit of the Santo Tomas University. The older unit, still in operation at the beginning of the war, was located in the Walled City and is the oldest university under the American flag. It was founded by the Spanish Fathers in 1611, or before the Pilgrims had landed at Plymouth.

The newer section of Santo Tomas was built in a low part of the city and the campus filled with refuse taken from city dumps. All of the fill seemed sour and wet, absorbing and retaining moisture for a long time. In the rainy season all of the grounds are muddy and boggy. These buildings are comparatively modern, as the unit was completed and inaugurated on July 2, 1927. It consisted of the Main Building, Education Building, Seminary (which was never made accessible to internees) and the Gymnasium. These four buildings were the largest on the campus. In back of them were two smaller buildings, the Engineers' Building and the Training School. Between the Main and Education Building was a small building – the Restaurant. All buildings were seated in the center of the spacious grounds and enclosed by a fifteen foot wall of solid concrete, except for the front part which ran along Calle Espana. This section of wall was made of tall iron fencing atop a low wall strung between heavy concrete posts. The wall had one gate midway each of its four sides. The front (or main gate) stood at the entrance of an elliptical drive and center walkway leading up to and around the Main Building and on out the back gate (always closed to internees, as were the two side gates). Bordering the drive and walkways were large shady acacia trees which along with other trees adorning the campus gave a cool and lovely green appearance.

Arriving here about 1:30 in the afternoon of January 8, 1942, one month after the attack on Pearl Harbor, little did we dream that this was to be our place of abode for the following thirty-nine months. We had been told that Santo Tomas was being used as a place of registration and that we would not be held for more than three days.

We were ready when the Japanese came for us. For several days they had been taking everyone in the city who held American, British or Dutch papers. Most of our friends had been taken already. They came for us at 11:15 in the morning while we were in the garden at Jane and Bill's playing with the children. There was an officer, an interpreter and a civilian Japanese (who had for years worked as a carpenter on the estate) and a squad of soldiers. They drove up to the gate and announced that they were looking for Americans. Carl met them and invited them into the house where he and Bill discussed papers and nationalities with them. Jane produced Spanish papers and therefore was never interned.

I was not breathing very easily but kept my composure. Soon Carl came out and said "Get ready". I went in and after being presented to them asked how much time I would be allowed to get ready. The answer was "One half hour", and I was also told to take food and
clothing enough for three days. We were allowed one hand bag per person and mats to sleep on. Our bags had been packed to capacity for days, filled with all of the food, medicines, toiletries and clothes I could pack in. Jane had loaned us cushions from her chairs for our bedding. I freshened the children up, got myself ready and called a boy to come up for the bags and bedding. The interpreter came with the boy to inspect the baggage and whispered, “Take food enough for five or six days” – he could see I had already done so!

When I came down I told the officer in charge that our luncheon was ready and asked if he would permit time for us to eat and if he and his assistants would also eat with us. He accepted the invitation, but the three of them plainly showed that they were ill at ease. He did not speak English but we soon managed to make him forget much of his self-consciousness. Jane kept out of sight during the meal and, as the servants were all badly frightened, I served the table myself, and succeeded in getting Carl, Bill and the children to eat well. We made the most of a heavy situation, but as the officer gradually unfroze, the tension grew less and less. Inwardly, I was trembling, nervous, apprehensive and nauseated.

Soon the meal was over and without further delay we started out. I was the last in the line of exodus as I wished to cast an eye around for anything overlooked. The officer was just ahead of me and while going down the front steps skidded and tumbled all the way down. He definitely was not accustomed to waxed stairways and they proved to be more than he could manage in leather. As he fell his booted foot kicked up and contacted my left shin, bruising and breaking the skin. It all happened so quickly and unexpectedly and he looked so comical all sprawled out on the concrete walk below I could hardly suppress a laugh. But for a moment the officer was infuriated and springing up kicked the steps resoundingly while shouting in Nipponese as he did so. I secretly hoped the kick that he had inadvertently given me would bear a lifetime mark and for some time it felt as though it would -- but it did not. I have something better now.

There were the four of us and Bill and the eleven Japanese with only their one car for transportation – what were we to do? Then Carl, spying our own car and chauffeur across the street asked if we could use it, to which the officer consented. Carl and the interpreter were up front with Pio the driver, while the children and I sat in back with the Jap officer. Esten on my knee, the baggage piled in the trunk and with tears in the eyes of Jane and Mrs. Willfarth (a German neighbor from across the street who had come to see us off), we departed. Mrs. Willfarth assured us that we would be back soon. The officer took Esten on his knee and began entertaining the children by counting their fingers in Nipponese and teaching them simple words like head, hands, feet, etc. Then in his native tongue he began singing Auld Lang Sync in which we joined in English. And after a solo from him, which he sang rather well, we reached the gates of Santo Tomas. After reaching there and comparing notes, we realized we had been treated more kindly than any of our friends for most of them had been treated discourteously, roughly and some had even been slapped or prodded along with bayonets, made to wait long hours in the sun and ride standing in trucks.
Santo Tomas was hot and dusty and our friends Doc, Roy, Bob, Sully and others, loitering under the trees shouted greetings to us as we drove up, and came to assist us with the baggage. We had to line up in the sun and wait until the Japanese inspected our bags for contraband such as guns, knives, scissors, flashlights and the like. I had packed my sewing basket and they looked at my pair of nice sharp shears, but I talked them into letting me keep them. After inspection we went in search of room space, and what we found was no good. The room was small, dark smelly, poorly ventilated, but the girls and I could have spaces together here so we took it - the room is to the left when entering the back door of the Main Building. We laid our cushions on the floor and spread our sheets while Carl and Bill hung the big mosquito net. There were about twenty of us in that small poorly ventilated one-window room. But luckily we had a private lavatory, one of the few rooms on the campus that did.

Soon it was supper time and we ate our meal out under the trees seated on the ground. There were six of us now; as Bernice, Jane's sister, joined our party, and throughout the internment remained a joy to us. All across the campus there were other families and small groups eating as we were - seated on the ground. No one was depressed but rather took on the holiday spirit shouting and joking back and forth from group to group. At that time there were no kitchens in operation. All had been told to bring food for the three day stay. There was no organization - either at that early date - things just happened which later took on shape. It was not many days before the restaurant kitchen was opened and was serving light meals to women and children. This was done under the auspices of the Red Cross. I realize now how blessed we are in not being able to see into the future, for had we known on that day of arrival that it would be three years and twenty six days before our liberators came, I doubt if we would have had the fortitude to have taken it.

With darkness the children were tired and sleepy. So I gave them a sponge bath and got them ready for bed while the mosquitos swarmed around us. When their prayers were said in that strange, crowded room so very different from their own lovely, cool, quiet room at home, I prayed that they not miss it or ever feel the fear I felt in my heart. Soon they were sleeping and I joined Carl, Roy, Lou, Emily and Doc and other friends in the patio not far from their door. We had an early curfew and the campus had to be cleared and it was then that life became quite gay in the halls, patio and corridors. No one seemed worried though they had not a chair to sit on, but sat or lounged on straw mats or cushions placed on the ground or side-walks around the patio. But I felt a bit homesick and kept thinking about Mother and Dave. At that time I did not worry too much about his safety as I know that he had left the city with our headquarters and thought him safe on Corregidor. Those first nights at Santo Tomas were filled with fear and terror clutched at my heart and I lay awake, always thinking of our insecurity and wondering what the future held for us. The tramping back and forth of the feet of the Japanese guards held particular terror for me, and I could hear them all through the night. Our room was never molested. However, many of the womens' rooms were, for they would hold nightly inspections and one was apt to be awakened with a flashlight turned full force in one's face. But I soon became adjusted and nature made me sleep - even on my hard bed.
The buildings were dirty; the whole campus was dirty. It had been used as a motor pool by the U. S. Army, which had in turn followed a Filipino ROTC Camp. Each had worked under extreme emergency and moved out in haste leaving behind its accumulation of dirt and disorder. The most of the Main Building had been cleaned by earlier comers when we arrived, but there was plenty more to be done along that line for even a very short stay.

More and more people were coming in daily and the Main Building was filling to capacity, and now organization began to take place; other buildings had to be opened. So the Gymnasium was set aside for men, the Main Building was cleared for women only, the Training School Building was made ready for mothers with children and the Engineers' Building was turned into an infirmary, clinic and dental clinic. An executive committee was elected composed of both Americans and Britzies. Thus with organization, democracy was ushered in and until liberation this form of democratic government remained. The duty of the committee was to act as buffer between the Japanese Commandant and his staff and the body of internees. All Japanese orders and regulations came through this channel, as did our requests to the Japanese. And so were formed different work squads to carry on the work of the camp, and everybody settled down to work. Kitchens had to be opened and operated, garbage had to be taken care of and every kind of sanitation had to be practiced in the strictest kind of way. So many people could not live healthily in such crowded quarters unless every precaution to safeguard health was closely followed. Manila rolled up its sleeves and went to work.

It was nothing short of miraculous what was accomplished that first month. I could hardly believe what I saw – none were too proud to work. Beards began to grow, finger nail polish began to disappear, permanent waves began to wear and even hair began showing its nature color as peroxide went out of style. Men and women had work to do, and the most of it was strange work to them, certainly the crude equipment was something new to all and nothing was private. One's dishes and one's clothes and one's hair as well were all washed in public, and I marvelled at the way our people could “take it”. The ingenuity of the American mind had the “green light” on. And when it comes to making something out of nothing, it is amazing what can be made of an old board or a discarded tin can, if one has a few nails or a short piece of wire. We received no aid from the Japanese, but were glad to be left on our own as much as we were.

The second day we were in camp, Carl and Bill found an alcove off the southwest patio which was stacked with sand bags. They removed the bags, cleaned the place and took it as a room for themselves. It was cool and convenient and it served Carl for fifteen and one half months as his domain. This place was open and airy and much better than the Gymnasium and nearer to his family. I was among the first to move into the building which was designated for mothers with children. We rechristened it “The Annex” and the children and I moved in on the thirteenth. We selected a window space, and, as the door was opposite, we always felt what breeze was stirring and thus received the maximum of comfort. Our room was light and airy as there were many tall windows, and we always felt that it was clean after the first scrubbing and disinfecting was done. It was a small one story building, but we had our own
kitchen and dining room and this kitchen started serving on the fourteenth, taking care of the mothers as well as the children. And the meals were very good. This kitchen continued serving the children throughout the duration, and upheld a high standard for the materials with which they had to work. We also had under that roof our own clinic for children. By a covered board walk which our men made, we were connected with a bath and also with the children's hospital which took patients up to twelve years of age. This hospital had its separate doctors, nurses and aides. In front of the building the children had their playground. Here we had our own guards – they were husbands and fathers, who took turns through the night to see that no harm came to us.

We were crowded, a situation which we never outgrew in Santo Tomas. Each person was allocated so many inches of space: the bed should not exceed thirty inches in width and on one side of the bed eighteen inches of aisle space – thus two beds were pushed together. The Japanese gave us no permission for cabinet or shelf space, so we had to live out of our bags which were kept piled up at first. It was several weeks before lumber was allowed to come in. When it came, platforms were made by our men and we were allowed to buy these for bed steads. So we stopped sleeping on the floor, and the baggage went under the beds. The Red Cross was allowed to bring in some used mattresses and pillows and so we were made more comfortable. I, however, continued to use my cushions as I knew they were clean.

There were eleven mothers and eighteen children in our room at the Annex, representing American, British and Dutch nationalities. I had been chosen room monitor, and in that capacity was held responsible for order, cleanliness and roll calls. The rooms were made up of children as near the same age as could be arranged, and the children in my room ranged from four to nine years, except for one little fellow of two who had older sisters in the room. Our sleeping space was a bit differently arranged from the others in the room. One could do as she liked so long as the allotted space was lived within. There were two mothers with their children from Shanghai who, while in transit, with numerous others, were caught in Manila at the outbreak of the war. Each of these mothers with their two children apiece and I with my two slept under my big room net by pushing our beds together. As we had no aisle space, the nine of us would have to crawl into bed from the foot. But by so utilizing our space we had room for a small chest of drawers which aided materially in the way of comfort in dressing.

The children loved internment. For the most of them it never ceased to be a big picnic. What child would not like such close living with pals? And they were always together waking, eating or sleeping. For the whole duration, the children under ten were given the food which was more sustaining for their age than was received by any other group. I do not think the children were hurt by internment, certainly not the ones who had understanding parents. Many of them, I am inclined to think, must have profited greatly by the experience. For they had many opportunities for lessons in good citizenship that otherwise they may not have learned.
All through camp each person over sixteen had regular camp duties to perform. One could choose what he, or she liked best to do from the many different kinds of work that was to be done, but each must put in at least one hour daily. The heavier work fell to the younger and lighter tasks to the older of the internees. Besides regular camp duty there was room duty also — one’s bed and space to keep clean, neat and tidy. Everyone had their turn at bathroom duty. We felt that this duty was very necessary. We were comparable to a small town of four thousand and the work must be done. The camp was then operating three clinics; two hospitals, one for adults and one for children up to thirteen; three kitchens, the one at the Annex, one at the hospital and the central kitchen which opened the last of the month for the teen age youngsters and the adults — and all of this food had to be prepared, cooked and served. Schools were carried on and functioned as best they could under shortages and handicaps of all kinds. My work was with this group. We had a camp sewing unit which did work for the camp and welfare. Welfare was an organization that was carried through the duration. Then there were the sanitation and clean up crews, the carpenters’ shop, the shoe repairing shop, the emergency squad, the ground police, the guardsmen, and the executive work for the camp, all of which took many, many hours. The first year the Japanese were somewhat more lenient and allowed the internees to run a canteen and market. This also took many man hours.

No Filipino help was allowed to come in except for doctors and nurses. In the Orient one does not do one’s work if one is white and these duties pressed heavily on all. It was particularly hard on the mothers of small children who had never had complete charge of their youngsters before. The children missed the amahs, the mothers missed the amahs. The children got on the mothers’ nerves, and in turn the mothers got on the children’s nerves and there was lots of crying done at the Annex those first weeks, but gradually personal adjustments were made — to the relief of all concerned. I was glad that I had allowed our children to do some things for themselves. Esten, age five, gave no trouble but loved it all. Roberta, age nine, was a delight in her ability to do things for herself and to be of help to others.

Things had taken shape and were beginning to function rather smoothly now by the middle of February. The central kitchen was operating. And the main gate had been organized for the receiving and sending of personal packages. And the Red Cross was organized so that personal shopping could be done through them. Besides that, we had a small branch operating in camp from one of the big down town stores that was owned by a Filipino. This was of great help to the internees who had taken in such small supplies of clothing and food stuff. We had our entertainment committee who, under the direction of a professional entertainer, Dave Harvey, gave many very enjoyable stage and floor shows. The athletes had organized and baseball was in full swing. And at night we got together and sang. So all was going well. Three of our Britishers had escaped. This was followed by the escape of an American. Unfortunately the Britishers did not know the lay of the land and in trying to join the forces were captured by the Japanese and brought back to camp. They were brutally punished and three days later taken out and executed. We were thankful that the American was never caught. Our Executive Committee was forced to witness the execution. This filled us with fresh fear, and after that we
were good. Many thought too good, and toward the end suggested rebellion as a means to accomplish more consideration for our needs. I was always fearful that this might come, but thank heaven no open break ever occurred. Many times I have made the remark that I doubt if there ever had been an internment camp anywhere in the world that gave the enemy less trouble. The only serious offense we gave was the attempted escape of these men.

In the evenings when duties were performed and the children were asleep, Carl and I would gather with a group of friends to compare notes on the latest war news. Rumors, rumors, rumors! The place was full of them. Since returning home and reviewing the magazines and papers of that date which my mother had kept for us, I am not amazed any more that our information was so misleading, for the American public was suffering from the same delusions. So throughout the day we picked up rumors. To make sure I did not fail to give my proportional contribution to that august gathering of optimists I'd take out my note book to assist my memory. In those first days my training in such matters was poor, and were we optimistic? We knew just how far our forces had advanced that day, how many Japanese had been killed, and exactly what our moves would be for the next three days. Always "our boys" would be back by the end of the week. I said in jest one evening we'd be fortunate if we were not so blase' when they did come that we would not be thrilled. Then came the fall of Singapore, and while one Englishman said to me, "This is the end of everything"; our group still expected MacArthur back by the end of the week and had rumors to that effect! I took the news of his trip to Australia as the very best possible sign, thinking how very well he must have Bataan under control to be able to go sightseeing! Like a bang the fall of Bataan came, and with it came an earthquake that shook the buildings to their foundations -- even the elements seemed to have turned against us. I could not believe the first reports of the fall, and would not accept the account of eye witnesses at first. But when I realized it was true, I knew that Corregidor could not hold much longer; and then we were in for it. Nothing could save us but the return of "our boys". That could not be soon, but how I prayed that it would not be too long. I still did not worry unduly about Dave for I thought that he had also gone to Australia.

Then came the fall of Corregidor May fifth. I shall never forget the night before it fell; for the guns 30 miles away could be heard all through the night and I knew that it was the last desperate effort to defend itself. The horrible feeling of insecurity in the immense distance that separated us from protection and the realization of the very thin thread of hope left made me weak. How I feared for my children. I knew that Carl and I could take a lot of punishment, but the thought of the children suffering filled me with horror. I strengthened my resolution not to lose faith. I must keep my morale up, for the very life of my family depended on me to take what came in good grace. That was my stern duty -- that was my role.

Now the Japanese knew they were winning and proclaimed a holiday and held a victory parade celebrating the fall of Corregidor. They floated big posters on balloons so tall that they could be seen and read in camp. American flags were tied to small balloons and allowed to float away. One little British boy told me that one was floating away over the camp, but I could not
look up. We did not know how the Filipinos would react to these facts and to this propaganda. It was a tight spot and I knew it. Our captured men were forced to march through the streets while movies were made for Japanese propaganda by which they planned to win the natives over. But, "It is an ill wind that blows no good," and when the Commandant stated in his victory speech that, "Japan can afford to be generous while she is winning", we took advantage of his words and asked for more privileges. Some of them were granted.

Life moved on as before. But we now realized that our internment was more than a picnic or short holiday. We started preparing for a longer duration than first anticipated. Since the first few hectic days of internment, the Japanese had allowed the "gate" to be open for the receiving and sending of personal packages. So all along, even from the second day of internment, Jane had been sending in fresh laundry and one big hot meal a day for the six of us. Jane's servings were never small, which meant we had good food in addition to what the kitchens served. By the same servant who brought in the food we sent out our laundry to be done. And for the first twenty-five months this arrangement held until the gate was closed. In those twenty-five months, Jane did not miss a day, for the boy came through all kinds of weather. With this one nice hot meal there was little cooking to be done except to mix the salad materials which Jane sent daily and make what breakfast we liked. This we did in Carl's alcove where we had an electric plate and where he had a table large enough to seat us. In those days we seldom ever ate the camp food. Many others were not so fortunate. The people who had lived in Manila long did not suffer too much in those days for there were all kinds of outside contacts to be made along these lines. Funds could be arranged also if one were fortunate to have a good friend among the neutrals—Filipinos, Spanish, Swiss, etc. With funds one could buy almost anything from the cold stores, market, canteen or personal service if one would pay the price—and at first prices were not too bad. There were booths where one could buy sandwiches, milk shakes, cakes, cookies, candies or hot cakes with syrup. Carl realized with the fall of Corregidor that it would be a long time before "our boys" could come back and so he started storing up supplies. We had not only personal Red Cross shoppers, but camp shoppers who went out daily for foods, medicines, toilettries which they would buy for the individual internee. In this way we stored up a goodly number of staples such as milk, meats, oils, sugar, coffee, soap, beans, canned fruits, soups, vegetables, matches, toilet paper and the like.

It was about the first of June that I received a note from Dave saying that he was at O'Donnell and had personally not been treated too unkindly by the Japanese. What a blow this was! Poor Dave, when I had not allowed myself to think of him being anywhere but in safety. What he must have taken and how he must be suffering! His note was cheerful and begged me to keep up my faith and the children's strength.

The Japanese are very much afraid of disease, epidemics and the like. So periodically—from the very first of internment—we had to take injections for prevention of cholera, typhoid, and dysentary. One of the first things they did was a skin test which was run on everybody for tuberculosis. Esten, along with many other small children showed a positive, which alarmed me.
The skin test was to be followed by fluoroscopy but it was a month before the machine for this was brought into camp. In the meantime, I gave up the monitorship so as to be able to devote more time to her. I saw to it that she rested in Carl's place two hours every afternoon where it was cooler and much more quiet away from the other children. The siesta hour from 1:00 - 3:00 was observed camp wide for the whole duration, and this meant quiet as well as sleep for all who could take it. The fluoroscope was supposed to be the last word, and when her time came for this test her doctor was in charge and made a thorough examination of her chest. To my great relief she showed up negative. It was about this time that Roberta came down with jaundice. She had a very bad case so the Japanese doctor permitted her to go to St. Lukes, an outside hospital. Up to this time the camp hospitals were very little more than infirmaries; all serious cases, if the Japanese doctor permitted, were allowed to go outside to one of the good hospitals. So on June twenty-fifth I took both children to a hospital which was run by our American doctor Fletcher and American nurses. Our doctor came from the camp each day to care for patients there. Roberta soon began to recover. Esten was not ill but I wanted to keep both of them with me and thought the change beneficial. From the hospital we hoped to go to Jane's for an indefinite stay. And that was what we arranged. We were released from the hospital on sick pass to our Spanish friend's custody -- good old Jane, what a friend she has been to us. We stayed in her custody until the twenty-sixth of the following March, nine months and one day.

What a joy to be back in a private home -- the luxury of table linen, china, crystal, silver and service and the blessing of quietude, a bedroom and a bathroom all to one's self!! We did not share Jane's house but took a small furnished chalet across the street from her. We did take our meals with her and Bill (he too was on sick pass) and she continued having our laundry done at her place. It was complete rest. The caretaker with his family lived below and kept the house and were our protection at night. Bill was home on sick pass and many of the mothers were given permission to keep their small children out for the first fifteen months. The children missed their schooling that nine months, but they had little friends living close by and they enjoyed every minute of the time out. We wished for Carl but he could come to see us occasionally -- and that was a gala day indeed. This stay on the outside was what caused my mother's confusion and uneasiness about us. I was an internee out on sick pass, and had to report to Santo Tomas as each short pass expired to ask for an extension at intervals, never over thirty days. My name was registered there with my age and nationality, Mother being given as the next of kin. I had carefully printed her address numerous times over. In sending the report to Washington, our names must have been left off the roster, and I can only attribute the omission to the fact that we must have been out at the time the first report was given.

The children played all day, ate good food, rested quietly in a spacious bedroom at night and did not have to stand in line for the bathroom. In camp one had to stand in line for the toilet and in another line for washing the face, hands and teeth. Sometimes this would take a half hour or more. Days went peacefully by except for the days I must report to camp to ask for more time out. There was always the question, would more time be granted; if so, how much? On these occasions I always had a nice long visit with Carl, and he was always at the gate to meet me.
children had a double celebration of their birthdays which came close together. Jane gave them a very nice little party. For their birthday gift we presented them with a small three octave piano. They had lots of real enjoyment out of this. Roberta started her first piano lessons on it. And she and Esten gave a couple of cute little floor shows that they created for themselves. Having been in one at camp made them very ambitious along this line and, as both of them danced rather well, they just loved it all. Roberta soon learned several little pieces among which was “Sing, Robin, Sing”, which she highly favored and played morning, noon and night. The children grew and kept up their strength. Carl came to see us. And I kept busy with sewing. Good materials were available so I made suitable camp clothes for all of us -- which proved to be very fortunate.

I had permission to go into our Pasay home for certain books, miniatures and cut materials - our house which we walked out of leaving all our possessions behind, the house which I had so lovingly and so painstakingly furnished so that it would be a home of comfort with each selection having been made so as to give personal comfort to each member of the family. Chairs had even been made to individual measurements and upholstered in favorite colors. I was not allowed to go into the place although I had papers to that effect. The home of practically every internee was looted and rifled from attic to basement. We were behind the walls of Santo Tomas and looting ran rampant. Electric stoves, refrigerators and even the bathroom fixtures were torn out and sent to Japan for scrap iron. What could not be used was burned or destroyed; furniture was moved from place to place always being defaced in the process. I was told later that there was nothing left in our house except the grandfather clock. And after the city was retaken by “our boys” we found that too was gone -- a wedding gift to my children’s grand uncle, it had been in the family for years -- a magnificent thing which the Japanese had no particular use for. Why should they destroy it?

It may be that I am too materialistic and that things mean too much to me. I do realize more than ever that I am dependent on things. They do not have to be my things, but some beautiful thing must be near to bring out the best in me. At Santo Tomas I often felt that as a whole we were as much starved for beauty as anything else. I craved beauty, but that craving I could not satisfy. So I'd dream of beauty. The feel of silken things, a bowl of roses, a beautiful rug, a lovely vase of flowers, or a green hill side in a peaceful land or maybe a tree by a brook with lambs at play in a green meadow. Does not God give us this beauty? And is it a sin to love the beautiful? I think not.

I had tried to build beauty into our home so that I could be my best -- beauty in material things as a background to greater spiritual beauty and depth. And I loved it. If the war taught me nothing else, it taught me the full meaning and true value of the word “home”. I was not homesick for our home as possessions go only, but I was homesick for the spirit and atmosphere of it.

Friends have told me that never again did they want possessions for they found that they made slaves of the possessor. But when I think of some lost object, I have treasured, I do not feel
that way. Some homes are outgrown and have filled their purpose. Our home was young and filling a vital need, and such a loss is great. Many of our things will be replaced, many cannot be. Carl’s comfy chair and stool upholstered in his favorite maroon color can be replaced. So can his reading lamp and carved table that held his latest magazine and book. But the rug at his feet will not be the same. We can always have rugs but it can never be the one that “his boys” at the shop gave him when we were married. My lovely high chair with the blue needle point done around its bunch of gay flowers can be replaced. But the nest of tables which stood by it could never be the same. Another nest of tables? Yes. But there can be no other to really take its place, for Sam and Pauline gave it to us -- Sam and Pauline our very dear friends, and Sam is dead. Our shelves of books can be replaced, but they could not mean the same as many of them were given by some very dear friends as were so many other things throughout the house. The children’s chest containing their first little booties and outgrown jackets, dresses, baby locks, books and records and snapshots along with my wedding veil and book – these and many, many other things can never be replaced. Oh the deprivation and desecration we have suffered, and we are only one of the many families! We will in time have another home, we will build again, but it takes time, lots of time to make a home.

The house we were now renting was one that had been built by a large development company that was known as the Magdelenia Estate, which still owned many of the houses in that section of the city. Our house had been bought from the estate by a very fine Filipino who often came with his charming wife to visit with the children and me. In our loneliness I had not realized before meeting this gentlemen just how pro-American the natives were. And the knowledge of this fact remained a consolation to me during those long months till “our boys” did come back. It was soon after internment that the Japanese released all Filipinos who held American papers and all who were born of one Filipino parent from our camp, thus hoping to win their good favor. But the most of the Filipinos could see their insincerity. The Japanese had pledged themselves not to confiscate or bother in any way property which was owned by Filipinos. As we were now living in a Filipino house, we felt somewhat more secure than we would have in property owned by any other national. One morning while busily sewing and talking with Roberta and Esten we heard the gate slam and the stamp, stamp, stamp of feet that we knew could be only Japanese. I looked out and there they were -- one officer and about one dozen soldiers, the officer in the lead and heading for the door. I hastened to meet him, introduced myself and the children, holding the door open. He passed me by as though he neither heard me nor saw me standing there – just as though I did not exist -- and they all filed in to the sala. I quickly followed and, hoping to lessen the confusion, asked them to be seated, pointing to chairs as I did so. Someone spoke in Spanish and not until then did I recognize the old “civilian dog” who had led the party that came to pick us up for internment. I do not speak Spanish so called Juan the boy who was down stairs frightened, for I knew he could speak to this man in Tagalog, the native language, and that he would understand. He was acting as interpreter. One of the soldiers asked for water, in English, and Roberta, Esten and I served water. There was no ice box in the house as the Japanese had taken that before we had moved in. I explained why the water was warm. The soldier who spoke in English went to see. One of
soldiers was trying to thump out a tune on the small piano while another sat on the bench watching him. Roberta talked to the officer but he was a haughty, arrogant young thing who made no response whatever. I presume he had been well trained by his honorable mother that to disdain a woman was the proper thing to do. I am sure that he understood and could have spoken to me but he wanted to mortify me before his men, it seemed. My boy was armed with papers that stated the house and furniture belonged to a Filipino. None of it should have been touched, but they had come for it. The officer to whom the papers had been given for inspection held it at arm's length and without even reading it tore it into four pieces and cast them at the boy's feet. He gave orders for the soldiers to begin moving everything out of the house. None of my pleas were respected. My linens and spreads, rolled up with pillows and mattresses of the beds, were the first to go. It happened that the English speaking soldier was left in the room with me for a minute when the officer had stamped into the next room to see that his orders were being carried out, and I asked if I could not have the linens he was then rolling from a bed. He quickly jerked them from the bed, rolled them tightly and put them in a corner saying, "Leave them there, m'am". The children were on each side with an arm around my waist looking very sad. I whispered to them to cry if they liked and cry loudly for it would make them feel better, so they each began in a loud wail. The officer quickly reappeared and patted them on the head. Roberta looking up said tearfully, "Please don't take my little piano". That got the officer and again he patted them gently on the head and stopped all operations! By this time the most of the furniture was gone but they left the piano and bench. As he was leaving the front door the officer again laid a hand on the head of each of the children, shook hands with me and bowing himself out said in very good English, "Good-bye". They would have cleaned the house out, I am sure, had the children not cried and Roberta made her little plea. As it was our toiletries, our baggage, our sewing machine and two camphorwood chests were saved as well as the little piano. The two chests contained the most of the possessions we had left on earth, as the smaller one contained our jewelry and the larger one contained all of the linen which had not been looted from it before it was taken from our Pasay home. It also contained most of the clothes we possessed, and it held Dave's dress uniform with his Lieutenant Colonel's insignia. Had they seen that uniform we may all have been beheaded; the least would have been Fort Santiago for me. Santiago was their military prison from which very few offenders ever returned. Now there were no beds to sleep on. What must we do? Where must we go?

I went straightway to the Sisters at a Convent about a block away, told the Mother Superior my story and they took us in. We are not Catholics, but such questions were not asked; to her I was a person, a mother, in need and that she could help was enough for her to know. We spent four beautiful months there in that sweet place. They were the best of all of the internment months. We continued our routine with Jane. I felt secure in those Convent walls, and the Sisters were the soul of kindness to us. Never in any way did they cause us to feel we were an imposition, though sometimes the children may have been noisy. We shared a large room with another mother, Mrs. Roy Bennett and her two little daughters, and all became fast friends. I now felt that for a while the Japanese would be out of my hair. The last raid was the second attempt
that the Japanese had made to get the furniture from that house. This was the second day of November.

The first attempt to get the furniture was made on the fifth day of September. And all of the intervening time I felt that they would come back led by that old Japanese “civilian dog”. I had that hanging over my head constantly, day and night. The day of the first attempt I shall not forget. It was about five o’clock in the afternoon and we were at June’s for dinner, when Juan came over saying that Mr. Bonkio (my friend? the Japanese) the “civilian dog”, had come to the house looking for lamps, chairs and furniture. I was furious at this house, so I rushed out into the street and there I saw two trucks. As I approached, I saw that each truck had two prisoners-of-war, “our boys”, for loading. They were waiting in the back of the trucks, each of which had one of “our boys” as a driver and only one Japanese soldier. The two Jap soldiers and the “dog” were standing at the gate. I was hurrying to get between the Japanese and the house for I was determined they should not have the furniture, if I could possibly save it. But I did not hurry so fast I could not make our victory sign V when passing “our boys”. We dared not openly recognize them for fear of reprimands or reprisals the Japanese might inflict. I made the gate and planted myself between these men and the house and then I looked them squarely in the face, just common Japanese soldiers and a dog of a civilian Japanese. It was the dog who spoke first, “Habla Espanol?” My answer was, “I do not speak Spanish”. Again, “Savvy Spanish?” and my same answer was somewhat louder for I was provoked. Again in an accusing manner, “You speak Spanish?”, and loudly answered so that “our boys” could have the satisfaction of hearing, “I told you I do not speak Spanish, and if you have anything to say to me, say it in English!” He then took off his hat, and told me in broken English that he was looking for lamps for the Japanese Army. I asked him for Japanese Army orders written to the effect. He confessed he had none. Then I told him to be off and to be off quickly for I only obeyed written Army orders that were signed at headquarters. The three Japanese crawled into the truck and I turned and left. But not without a glance at “our boys” and for the first time I saw a smile on the face of an American prisoner-of-war. I had given them a real lift and I knew it and with a big wink I passed on.

Mr. Bonkio remembered this. I knew he would and that he would be back. But now we were safe within the walls of the convent and neither the nights nor Mr. Bonkio held any terrors for me. Roberta took up Spanish, typing and piano from the sisters while I helped her with her school work. Esten started first grade, so now her school work was in earnest. Her school experience before had been in kindergarten only. Our move was an excuse for Carl to have ten days with us, and that was a good break. He brought new letter forms on which I wrote Mother.

I was very badly worried about Dave now. I had received three notes from him since the first one in Santo Tomas, making four in all. And in the last he had asked for money, saying he was growing thin and weak on the rice diet. I now knew that he had not received all of my notes and maybe none of the money we had sent to him from time to time. And the fear of these being discovered and held against him almost drove me insane – though in my dreams he
was always smiling. How I prayed for his strength and courage to be upheld and sustained. And then I made a reliable contact, Father Bootenbrook, a German-American priest from the "Ministry of Jesus Christ" -- one of the most Godly persons it has been my pleasure to meet on earth. Near the close of the Japanese regime in Manila, that dear soul lost his head in the block for those good deeds -- he was one of the Saints. He took funds and a big carton packed with vitamins, sweets, powdered milk, fats, meats, chocolates, soaps, toilet articles, writing materials, a well supplied sewing kit, string, a pen knife and all I could send that I thought he needed most. My contact returned with a note from Col. Say telling me that, "Col. Hardee has been transferred to Davao." This had occurred just a few days prior to the visit of my contact to Cabanatuan. Too bad. If he had only received the box before leaving it would have done much to have given him strength. My consolation was that the money and package were left at the hospital and that someone there who needed it might have some of it and be benefited thereby. My contact thought it a good move on Dave's part, as Davao would not be so bad as Cabanatuan, it being further from headquarters. He claimed that as with the Nazis, the further from headquarters the more one could expect humane treatment. And at Davao we knew there were fruit groves, producing gardens, tea, coffee, chickens and cattle. There was no human reason why food conditions would not be better. So I was consoled by the dear saintly soul, and held no other thought but that Dave would now come through. However, my thoughts were incorrect on the food, since in all of the abundance the Japanese continued their starvation program, making the men work in these groves and in gardens but denying them the privilege of eating any of it.

About this time we started getting ready for Christmas. The stores had a number of things which were left over from the last Christmas, as the usual amount of shopping was not done because of the Japanese bombers and war conditions in general. So I did some purchasing of simple things. And the children began rehearsing for a program the Sisters planned to be given at the Convent. There were several children there who, like we, were taking refuge. There was to be a tree at the convent but the children's real tree was to be at Jane and Bill's. On Christmas Day we were invited to spend from 10:00 - 2:00 at camp with Carl. The invitation was general and families were united in this manner -- one of the few really humane acts the Japanese were ever persuaded into permitting. It was not like any Christmas we had ever known but proved to be as satisfactory as could be under the circumstances. The Cebu internees had just arrived after days of a horrible trip up, and while in camp that day I saw many of our old friends from there. I feared an unfavorable reaction on the part of the Japanese, as I had noticed that the least humane gesture on their part was always followed by something drastic.

Then came our first casualty. Santa Claus had brought both of the girls each a pair of roller skates. I knew better, but other children in the neighborhood had them and they wanted them so badly that Santa just couldn't refuse. Roberta knew how to skate fairly well as she had owned skates before. But they were practically new to Esten. Jane and Bill had a beautiful place for them to skate, since the driveway from the street around to the front steps and back to the garage was concreted. There were also nice concrete driveways at the convent. So the children were delighted. Roberta soon mastered hers and all of us took turns in the early mornings and late
afternoon with helping Esten. Jane and Bill were so patient with her. She had learned so well that after breakfast on the last day of 1942 when she asked for permission to skate, after seeing her well started, I told her that I no longer felt any fear and if she would not try any stunts, I would leave her alone that morning. I was standing inside the window watching when she took a gentle fall. Many times she had flopped but this was done gently. As she made no attempt to help herself up I called to her to wait and I would help her. When I reached her she was crying. So I carefully lifted her, took her in and placed her in one of Jane's big overstuffed sala chairs. It was her right leg that pained but there was no bruise, abrasion or sign of any kind of hurt. Jane and I applied compresses wrung from ice water and laid her on a bed to rest. All day she was fretful and as she was not the type to fret over nothing, I called a Filipino doctor in the afternoon. He could find nothing but for precaution put on a splint and left doses of sedative to be used during the night if necessary. She hardly slept that night so I called the doctor again in the morning. He came and took us to his office for X-Ray and found a compound fracture. He then put her leg in a cast and for two weeks she stayed in bed. I called Carl as soon as we got the X-Ray and he was at the convent before we could get the cast on. That enabled him to stay with us for eighteen days. Esten was a wonderfully good little patient. She did not suffer more than the first few days and nights. And her Daddy was home. Before he left she was sitting up; at three weeks she was hopping around, and exactly one month from the day of the break, the fluoroscope showed it had completely knit together again and the cast came off.

We had lots of fun that day when the doctor took us to his office for the fluoroscopy. Esten and Roberta asked their little roommates to go along with us. All of the children were allowed to see their hearts beating and their lungs breathing in the air as each in turn stood before the fluoroscope.

Then came the Japanese SWAT! — arm bands, nice bright red ones for all Americans. And the Japanese very soon began making it very unpleasant for a red arm band. One morning they picked up everyone on the Escolta (Manila's main street) and took them to Fort Santiago for questioning. Mothers who had left their children at home were taken and kept for several days without any communication. Men who had gone down to get medicines for their sick wives, failed to report to their panicky families. Or wives who had gone shopping were taken and not allowed to call their husband by phone. The families who were out on leave were sick families, and this shock and strain was terrific. I never went down town except on extreme business. Bill did the shopping for all of us and I was happier right at home with the children. A short walk around the convent walls was all of the outing I wanted besides going to Jane's for meals (this was a little more than a block from where we lived). Every evening after dinner Jane, Bill, Roberta, Esten and I had a lovely walk just outside of the walls. We enjoyed these walks. The sunsets over the city and Manila Bay were always beautiful and at this height were more so. We shall always remember how delightful those walks and talks together were.

But the Japanese kept moving out our way until they were too close for comfort and when a Naval officer took the house next to Jane and Bill's, I feared I would get them into trouble if
my arm band was seen going into their place too often. My pass was up on the twenty-second day of March so when I went in I talked it over with Carl; I always saw him when I went in for extensions. He said that he was anxious for me to come into camp. I got a four week extension but told Carl we would be ready whenever he came for us. So when I got back to the convent I started packing and getting ready to re-enter camp. I needed beds which I wanted to buy from the Sisters but they could not let me have them. However, they gave me four splendid mattresses and six pillows. I then went down town and bought a bed and chairs for all four of us.

Carl came the next day. We talked it over, then decided to put the children in the Children's Home at the Holy Ghost Convent. The Children's Home was an outgrowth of Santo Tomas and was started in our first days of internment when the Sisters at that convent consented to set aside a wing of their convent for any Santo Tomas children who would come there. There was one of our officials who did much in getting this organized; volunteers were called for in Santo Tomas and under his supervision an excellent organization was set up and went forward headed by a trained nurse and her different assistants. The children there were to have special care. More food (milk, eggs, fruits, etc.) than those in camp, better regulated hours and a closer check on health, growth and development. The schooling there was also considered superior as there was not the shortage of space and equipment which was felt so keenly in camp. Nurses, room mothers, teachers, kitchen crew and aids were all selected, and until it was closed and the children brought back into camp by order of the Japanese these women did a wonderful piece of work — and all deserve commendation for their unselfish efforts.

The wing was spacious, rooms large with only eight or ten occupants, comfortable beds and plenty of room (in comparison to Santo Tomas). There was a physical director for dancing and physical instruction, who also supervised outdoor games and playground activities and indoor amusement and entertainment. Bathroom facilities were adequate and the children’s laundry was taken care of. Carl and I went down for an interview with the superintendent and were conducted through the wing from kitchen to bedrooms and we liked it, finding it far superior to the set up in camp as I had known it. Parents could spend one day a week with the children and for special occasions they were brought in to see the parents. At any time we could bring them in to stay permanently, on an hour’s notice. In view of the oncoming rainy season, we decided it best to place them here, at least until the rains were over. They had raincoats but no boots and as this was all under one roof they would not be exposed to rain and dampness from which we could not protect them in camp. The children were willing to try it. Roberta and Esten were not to be separated and for the six months they were there they slept next to each other. Roberta never neglected her little sister but looked after her like a little mother. Esten was in a room of girls older than she, but she liked the special attention that was given her.

It was the twenty-fifth of March when they entered there. I shall never forget the day Carl and I took them with their baggage loaded on caratells to the Holy Ghost, got them unpacked and straightened out in their room, said good-bye and left them. I had never been away from my little girls before and this nearly killed me, but I knew it was best for their welfare.
We had served fifteen months of internment, when would "our boys" come? We had received no dependable news for months. The Japanese had confiscated all radios, and our only news organ was their Army propaganda sheet. Things looked dark, and I was blue, and despondent.

The next day I went with Carl back to camp. He had reserved space for me in room 3, the monitor was expecting me, and soon I was set. My bed was the thirty inch standard and so I fitted nicely into my space. I never regretted the fabulous price of fifty pesos I paid for that five peso four poster iron bed with its iron rail around the top. My bed was one of the few with springs in camp and that plus a good mattress assured me of rest, which came to mean much to me. I had made a big pocket which hung across the inside of the foot of the bed. This held my small toiletries and the side of it which hung on the outside next to the wall held my shoes and larger articles; the rail at the foot provided adequate hanging space for coat hangers which held my clothes.

The room I was assigned to was a room of adults. It was a corner room and therefore cooler than most rooms in the building. There were about thirty of us in the room. There could be no room for beauty in a room so filled with beds as the rooms at Santo Tomas must be filled. Our only luxury was a wash basin. Lucky to have had that as the bathroom was two hundred and twenty-five steps from my bed. I was on the first floor of the Main Building and this was a convenience. The room had two outside doors, one opening on each side of the building. Carl had not moved from his original space -- the alcove -- and that was only a few doors from my room. This, too, was a convenience.

Living habits had changed as he no longer ate in the alcove. Jane was still sending in the meal to Carl and Bernice. But Bernice and her boy friend shared a shanty with Carl and now all of the meals were taken at the shanty and all cooking done there on a native charcoal burning stove. Shanties were a retreat from the buildings, where all of the hustle and ado was found, and where some home life could be shared. One could at least get away from the public eye while eating or have a private conversation without interruption. The shanties had come into being while I was outside with the children and were the outcome of the over-crowded conditions in the buildings. Men and boys could sleep in the shanties, and this gave more room in the buildings where the rest of the family still slept.

There were about six hundred shanties on the campus. They were individually owned by the people who had bought the materials and built them themselves. They were laid off in sections bearing fancy names in the unused part of the campus nearest the walls. Much pride was taken in the shanty, though they at best could not look like or be very much. For the privilege of owning a shanty the owner paid one peso a month tax, had to maintain and upkeep it, the garden space and the walkways in the section. These shanties were built of very light materials, a native sawali which looked somewhat like split hickory baskets would if one could buy that by the yard. This material was nailed to the frame of the house and a native thatching was used for roofing. The floors were made of boards or split bamboo or just sand -- not altoge-
ther weather-proof but a shelter. They had to be open so that passing Japanese guards could view the whole interior without slowing their pace. Our shanty was cozy but not convenient to the buildings. It was in the extreme northeast corner from the Main Building. This meant many, many steps back and forth since it was almost a quarter mile. I learned to think twice and check always to see that I was not leaving something behind I’d need at the other end before I made that trek. I always carried a basket for small things and it was usually full both ways.

In many ways I found a different camp from the one I had left – a much more highly organized one. It really was remarkable how smoothly it operated, and for this credit must be given to the committee men who handled our affairs before the Japanese. The fourth floor had been opened and was now the school from the grammar grades up. This made a nice, clean, airy and light space for the children. The entire floor was taken for the school except for a chemical laboratory where soaps, disinfectants and other camp things were made. We had also been allowed to take over a convent which was just outside the Santo Tomas walls for a bigger and better hospital, clinic and dental clinic. This was done by opening the gate in the north wall and enclosing that building with a wooden wall, thus extending the Santo Tomas unit.

I was glad to see my old friends in camp again. I had missed them and was glad to be back with them. Lou, one of our dearest friends did not leave camp the whole duration. Though I begged her to come and bring her little daughter and live with us while we were outside. But she said she felt more secure in the camp and wanted to be there with Roy, her husband. And I appreciated that attitude. I, too, felt more secure. These were my most leisurely camp days. My camp duty, until school opened in June, was to help prepare the vegetables for the central kitchen. Not everybody was taking food from the kitchens in those days so there were not so many vegetables to be done, considering the number of women there were on that detail. These workers were divided into groups A, B and C. I was in the C group, Bernice in the B. We did not have to work every day, only when our group was called. The call was made on the loud speaker at news hour on the night before. Rarely was I called more than three times a week. This work was done on clear days early in the morning out under the trees in back of the Main Building. On rainy days we used the tables under the food sheds in back of the Main Building. These food sheds were an everlasting disgrace to the Japanese Empire and that nation as a whole. This miserable shed with its crude unplanned boards with benches attached was all that was ever given the poor internee to eat his meals on – no floor, no sides, roof only. It was continually being scrubbed but still it looked dirty and the sheer ugliness of it is past description.

On returning, I found that the curfew hour had been lengthened to eleven o’clock. We had an outdoor stage for floor shows, a screen for movies and a loud speaker hook-up which was camp wide. The radio room was a work of the ingenious men who ran it. With very little as a starter, they kept working with what could be found until they had a studio. Records had been donated until there was a sizable library of them ranging in kind from “Hill Billy” to the best
classics. Every evening we were allowed a musical program from six to eight forty-five, from then till nine o’clock “our “news hour” — campus news, of course. Until nine we were allowed to sit within certain limits on the front campus, but at nine we had to bring our chairs up to the patio in front of the building with no further passing between buildings. Shanty areas were exempt and the men could visit on till eleven o’clock curfew. At nine we answered roll call and went back to the plaza to visit until eleven. We had many very pleasant evenings then with our friends. We would sit in small groups and as our favorite space was directly in front of the commandant’s office, we had many good laughs right under their noses. They kept their office open and very bright lights on. And many is the time we could see them lounging with shirts and shoes off with feet up on the tops of the desks — they were a dirty looking lot. I used to love to draw mental pictures of the difference that would take place in the dignity of that office when “our boys” returned. I loved to tell the children how differently “our boys” carried themselves and how nice they looked in comparison to the dirty, lousy, poorly clad Jap.

“How did you spend your day? What did you do in camp?” has been asked me repeatedly. As I have said these were my leisurely days, with sewing all done, and at that time the little girls were not with me. We saw them on Wednesdays, and that whole day was given to making that visit to them. We were awakened by a loud speaker at 6:30, at which time I arose, dressed and hurried out to the shanty. Bernice would arrive about the same time and so would Carl. Nicky (who slept in the shanty), Bernice’s very nice boy friend, would be up and have the coffee going. Our breakfast usually consisted of bacon, eggs and toast with the coffee. Sundays and special occasions we would have hot cakes and syrup instead of the toast. Breakfast over, Bernice usually went to the market, Carl for ice for our home made ice box, and Nicky would bring water while I did the dishes. By the time the dishes were done the shanty swept and tidied, Carl, Bernice and Nicky were back. Nicky and Carl reported for camp duties; Carl’s job then was keeping the file of sick records in the executive office, which took a number of hours in the afternoon and some of the morning. Bernice and I would mix a vegetable salad for lunch and a fruit salad for supper and put them on ice, and prepare and cook one vegetable. This went quickly when neither of us had other duties, but usually there was vegetable detail call or shopping to do at the cold stores or something to buy at the canteen or some other thing to attend to that took one or both of us to the Main Building every morning — this was my favorite hour for shopping, and there were many things we always needed! At ten-thirty the food containers had to go to the gate to be checked out. One of the men usually did this for us, but if they were on duty then we did it. At 11:00 our food was checked in. The gate was reasonably near our shanty which was a convenience. And Carl or Nicky would bring the food. Then Bernice and I would make it ready to serve. Jane sent in a meat and a sweet. We bought our bread, vegetables and fruit at the market. So our lunch consisted of a meat, a cooked vegetable, a vegetable salad, bread, margarine and a sweet. We tried to be through at the shanty by the 1:00 P.M. siesta hour. Then to the Main Building for a bath before the siesta, and then I always remained in the room until 4:00. Usually there was some light sewing or some personal job that needed attention. At four I dressed and went to the shanty area to make ready for 5:00 o’clock supper which must be finished and the shanty area cleared of women at 6:30. Our
supper consisted in those days of a big bowl of fruit salad made from the native fruits – and it was plenty good! – bread, margarine, jam, or peanut butter and coffee. This menu hardly ever varied and there was always plenty of it, until February of 1944 when the gate closed and no more individual packages were allowed either in or out. Soon this regular routine was established and nothing broke the monotony of those days except our weekly visit to see the children.

I have been asked many times if we were troubled by the Japanese. So far as personal contact is concerned, I am happy to say, "No, never in any way". Our committee was our contact. They were the ones who took the rap in personally dealing with them. The Japanese had their offices and their quarters and their guards were posted at certain places. We were told to stay away from them, and if one did so and obeyed orders, rules and regulations, one was not molested. I had occasion to go into the Japanese office only when I reported and asked for an extension on my sick pass while I was out those nine months. Only once again did I ever approach that office. That was when Esten was desperately ill and I asked them if they would make a telephone call to the Philippine General Hospital Laboratory for a delayed report on a specimen that had been sent there. My request was courteously dealt with by both Mr. Ohashi and Mr. Hiroi.

So in the way of personal contact we were not in danger of harm. What the Japanese did that hurt and harmed all was the forced labor without adequate food or livable quarters. There was never enough food for the camp and as time passed we realized that they were using a diabolical and systematic process of deliberate, slow starvation.

We enjoyed our little excursions to Holy Ghost. The children were a bit homesick at first, but it did not last nor was it ever severe. Esten gave us a big laugh on our first trip over. She told us that the teacher wanted to know what she was and asked if she were Catholic or Protestant. She replied that she was an American! On Easter Day they came to see us and we had a little Easter party for them. When they came over for the day with us they always came early so as to have hot cakes for breakfast with us – hot cakes was one thing they did not have at Holy Ghost. Their food was good but each Wednesday we took them extras such as fruit, jam, peanut butter and cookies. And they always looked forward to our visits and our basket of things for them with great eagerness. There were always gifts of some kind that I had found at the canteen.

Then came the shocking news of Los Banos. By May 15, 1943 our victories in the South Pacific were beginning to be felt. So the Japanese took from our camp one thousand of our most able bodied men between the ages of eighteen and fifty years to Los Banos which was about thirty miles south of Manila. This group included Nicky. Our good friend Doc also had to go as camp dentist, and thus leave Emily, his wife, behind with us. It was a sad day when we were thus torn asunder. Taking our one thousand strong young men doubled the work for those left in our camp. The excuse of the Japanese was that all of the internees then living outside, who were not hospitalized, must come in and that the space was needed. They refused to build barracks and
forced our young men to go and build their own. We were given to think that the whole camp would eventually be moved there, but as time went by we realized that was too much of an undertaking even for the Imperial Japanese Army. Los Banos was the site of the agricultural experiment station, in the heart of good farming lands. And the station itself was, at the beginning of the war, very well equipped and well stocked. There were numerous fruit and nut trees and gardens which could be brought to production — but as in Santo Tomas the internees there were not allowed the full harvests they brought to bear. Many claimed that had we all been sent there in the beginning we may have fared better. But I do not agree. There was always a water shortage. And there was never a time when the Japanese Army could not have fed us properly or allowed us to be fed had they wanted to. They just did not want us to have food enough. It was part of their plan. Our people at home would have been glad to have sent us supplies in abundance. Our people at home begged for permission to do this, but they were refused for the Japanese did not want us to have proper food and clothing.

We missed our friends who had been transferred. We certainly missed Nicky. Bernice was left to us and we were happy in that. Now that work was heavier, Carl volunteered for a place on the Emergency Squad. This was a crew of hard working men who did the most of the heavy lifting and hauling (in hand drawn carts) and transferring in the camp. It was hard work, but he stuck to that crew until the end. On the eighteenth the women and children and all non-hospitalized internees were brought back into camp. Many old men were among this number and Carl gave up his alcove space to a couple of them and moved his bed to the shanty. He liked this better than the Main Building, and this remained his quarters for the rest of the internment.

Rains began early in 1943. Showers through May increased in June, taking on flood proportions for the remaining months of the year and on into January of 1944. Rain, mud and bananas! I once said that if I should ever write out my experiences in Santo Tomas I would call it "RAIN, MUD AND BANANAS!" I never saw so much rain, never waded through so much mud or ate so many bananas as during those months. My diary does not say mud every day from May till the middle of January, for I tired of writing "rain and mud" but I do not think there was a day during this time that the campus was not muddy. Our shanty was in one of the lowest sections of the campus and, the campus itself being low, our walk ways were the first to get muddy and the last to dry out. I almost wore out my boots wading in mud and water, many times the water was so deep that it spilled over the tops of the boots and filled them. We found our way along in this deep water by walking between stakes which had been driven to mark the pathway. The shanties were all damp and drafty. And our clothes never felt really dry. The first typhoon of the year struck in the night of August eighth. We had a weather bureau in camp but the members of the Central Committee deemed it unwise to make the announcement for fear of panic among the internees, so squelched the broadcast that would have given us warning. This was a sad mistake as they later realized. The wind did little damage, but the waters rose and either floated off, or otherwise ruined, valuable supplies from shanties. This was a terrible blow to the owners, as no one could afford a useless loss. We were fortunate in that our losses were almost nil.
The children were looking a bit thin by the middle of August so I began using my store of oil concentrates and vitamins. And I looked forward to October when rains would cease and we could bring them in with us. We were at Holy Ghost for Esten’s birthday on August 28th. We celebrated properly with a nice big cake, lots of sandwiches and fruit juices. On the third of September, they came into Santo Tomas for a joint birthday celebration to which little friends in camp were invited. We had a happy day together and they thoroughly enjoyed it. Just as they were ready to leave, for word had come from the gate that their chaperone with transportation was waiting there for them, down came the rain in torrents. So we hurried them into raincoats and caps and we had to see those precious darlings off to Holy Ghost in the rain. They did not mind but it nearly broke my heart. My consolation was that they soon would be with us. The schedule did not work out for us to be with Roberta on her birthday, September 9th, but we sent a cake and limes for the juice so that she could have the little tea party she had planned for the day with her little friends there. And from reports, it was all right.

The next big event was the departure of the repatriates. This came on September 26th. There had been special entertainment for them the night before in the way of a movie cartoon drawn by camp talent and a floor show put on by the entertainment committee under the supervision of Dave Harvey. The lucky ones departed early in the morning, but not too early for all of the camp to be up to say good-bye and wave farewell as the trucks pulled off carrying our fellow countrymen on the first lap of their homeward journey. And there was not a heart among the throng that did not long for the time to come when its trek homeward would begin. After the trucks had left and the throng dispersed, Carl and I were standing at the main entrance with our chief executive, Carroll Grinnell, who told us that he thought this was only the first of many ships that would come to take us all home. And we learned from him that the Gripsholm was bringing to us a big supply of medicines, food and clothing – that was good news. Many of the departing internees had offered to write my people at home and I had given Mother’s address to about a dozen different ones. Now I felt sure that our folks would hear from us and feel a great relief. Thanks a million times over to the ones who found time and had the kind and understanding heart to write her. Words fail to state what those messages did for her..... The cold stores, market and canteen were still operating at this time, so the repatriates really had the best of the internment. It was after their departure that the squeeze began that really hurt and things went from bad to worse for us.

It was just before the repatriates sailed that we had received the one and only card from Dave -- that the Japanese allowed to come through. Had Mother only received the message I sent to her that he was well and in Davao, that too, would have been a help to her and to his family. It was about this time that we received a cable from Jean, Carl’s sister, asking if we were well and all together. From this we knew that none of our four messages sent from camp had gone through to them. For we had wired on four different occasions that we were well and all together in Santo Tomas. Whatever became of the messages that we paid such high rates for and that the Japanese continued to collect from us?

We brought the children in on October 13th and were so happy to have them with us again.
Now our routine changed. There was no room for the children on the first floor. That was mainly taken by those in poor health and older persons. I could find no space for us on the second floor, so we had to take space in a large room on the northwest corner of the third floor. This room had formerly been a laboratory. There were eighteen windows and five sinks in this room. And here we were allowed more space than any other room I occupied during internment. The children brought over their case of shelves and we found room for it and all baggage and their little chest which they kept with them through internment. I hated leaving my nice roommates in room three and I did hate that long climb of 72 steps up to the third floor. But the children had little friends in the room, and the extra space plus room shelves, the sinks, the fresh air and the nice view from the windows was an attraction well worth the effort to climb once one was there. I had old friends from Cebu in this room. There were Milicent, Maud and Mrs. Judge. Milicent and her two nice daughters have been so true in their friendship. They will ever be a joy to me. So it proved to be a move that had its compensations. The children were happy to be with us again and very soon put on weight. They liked the shanty and adored Bernice, who was always the soul of gentleness, thoughtfulness and kindness to them, as well as a most jovial companion. They were no trouble to us as they kept their spaces very neat indeed. And they could manage their clothes and baggage. They fitted right into their grades in school. And each got their food from the kitchens. We insisted that they do this as there were certain hot foods we thought that they needed. Cereals for breakfast, soups at noon and if eggs or milk at night they were to get their portions.

It was about the middle of October that we noticed that prices were rapidly climbing. In U. S. currency, eggs were twenty cents each; sugar eighty cents per pound; margarine seventeen dollars and fifty cents per pound tin. So a camp bazaar was opened and anything could be exchanged or sold for cash, if one was fortunate enough to have something for that purpose. I found that I had several pairs of muslin pillow cases which I did not need. Pillow cases were then advertised for seven dollars and fifty cents a pair. This was my one and only deal. The children, however, from time to time sold their outgrown shoes in this way. For one such pair, Roberta received twenty-five dollars. This gave them money for gifts and added to their allowance. Although the most of the gifts were hand made and started early by the donor, many things could be bought already made. Knitted socks, panties, sweaters, and polo shirts were the rage. Roberta bought string and took to knitting easily and from that time on she made all of our socks and many others for gifts.

Our children were allowed so much spending money per week which they usually spent for candy after supper. There were still coffee and cake booths. Home made candies, fudge, peanuts and popcorn was sold at a stand near the front entrance of the Main Building from 5:00 - 8:00 every evening. This was the play hour, and when it was not raining we were always to be found in our spot across the drive from the commandant's office. Esten with her group of friends would play around us doing hand stands, cart wheels or some other kind of activity or game while we talked or listened to the musical concert. Roberta usually walked with her group of girl friends. We noticed that from week to week the children's amount of spending money had to be increased.
to meet the ever mounting prices. But we enjoyed things while we had them. I shall never regret this. One thing the children especially enjoyed was the stage shows which took place quite often, and movie night was an event. They have gone with their daddy and sat through the whole show with rain coats and caps on with a blanket to protect them from rain. Ours was a “Theatre Under the Stars”. It amused me to see an audience sit through a show in rain equipment while it slowly drizzled. I like a good show, but I am not such a fan that comfort does not have to be considered. So I would wait and be ready to assist them in a quick rub down and help them to bed on those Saturday nights when there was special entertainment. Ordinarily lights were out in their room at 8:15 and Esten was then usually in bed with Roberta following no later than 9:00.

The Japanese were now beginning to cry hard times. And we were fed on propaganda about all kinds of shortages. We were forced to spend hundreds of man hours in labor, preparing and planting a banana grove and a camp garden. This was terrifically hard on our men, but they got it done. The southwest territory, to the right of the Main Building, was a huge area growing in cogan grass, except for baseball fields. The grass was uprooted and the whole area (ball fields included) spaded and set in banana trees and vegetables – mostly comotes (sweet potatoes).

Carl’s birthday came on the twenty-seventh of October. Bernice, the girls and I planned a surprise – a cake, the last we made. We had a nice little home party. Bernice and I attempted a corned beef dinner for noon. We had done little of this kind of cooking and were very thankful that we had Jane’s nice tender meat to fall back on as the corned beef did not get done till supper time – that was our last attempt to cook corned beef!!

Then on November 7th, the most wonderful thing happened that happened to us during the whole thirty-six months and twenty-six days of internment. Red Cross supplies really did come in, but until the trucks had unloaded the last case it was an uncertainty. This shipment came on the Gripsholm as far as Goa and was brought in on the returning Teyo Maru which had taken our repatriates there for exchange. From our high place at the third floor windows we could see from both sides those trucks below. That was the only time a Japanese truck ever looked good to me. But those trucks, twenty in number, which made convoy after convoy all day, were with things for us that our people from home had sent in case on case piled high. What thrills and what excitement went around the camp! Everybody was all smiles. The children danced on tiptoe as they walked and the adults took on a livelier pace. The bill of lading was no secret for our men had unloaded the ship and stored these things in a down town warehouse some days before they came into camp. And all knew that there was plenty for everybody. Good old America. And now we could read the lettering on the cases:

Food for American Internees
Medicines for American Internees
Clothing for American Internees
Shoes for American Internees
Toiletries for American Internees
Cigarettes for American Internees
Tobacco for American Internees
Now they were being unloaded in a special room in the Main Building made ready for this shipment and to be locked there against theft and weather until permission was given by the Japanese for them to be issued. This we thought would be immediately.

In the late afternoon of November 14th, a storm which had been raging since noon took on magnitude and typhoon warnings went out. Everybody got busy for already the campus was flooding. Carl, Bernice and I worked getting things in the shanty up on tables, shelves and every available high spot. We knew what happened to others in the last typhoon and took heed, nailing down windows and making everything as secure as possible. Shanty area curfew bans were lifted but by dark all was ready and my only worry was that I could not get Carl to consent to sleep in the Main Building. None of the shanties could stand if the typhoon struck, but he would not consent. So he left us safe at the Main Building. At 7:30 P. M. I went down to see if friends on the first floor were all right. While talking with them there came an emergency call for volunteers. The gas was off as well as the lights, and something must be done so as to feed the people the next day. In the rain and the gale our men went out to build native ovens under the food sheds. The men pulled off their shoes, rolled up their trousers and worked all of that night carting stone from the warehouse and building those ovens. Marvelous! we had breakfast of mush and coffee on schedule the next morning. That was our spirit and just try to defeat it!!

From 7:30 on the wind steadily increased and the rain poured. The wires were down and we had no lights except for small emergency coconut oil lamps placed along the corridors. The children had eaten a good hot supper before we left the shanty and had undressed before dark and I got them in bed under covers as it was chill and damp all through the building. The wind continued to increase; it roared and every window shook. At ten o'clock I went to bed to keep warm. We were safe, as the Main Building was built storm and earthquake proof, but what about Carl? And so I worried, while the storm still took on greater proportions. Could our shanty roof withstand such a gale? I was not afraid of trees as there were none near enough to do us harm. But what if he were pinned under a broken roof, or hit by flying debris, and where was he now? I got up and walked the floor. I held my composure but some of the women who had husbands, and children as well, in the shanties had become somewhat hysterical. One mother was walking the corridor, wringing her hands and loudly lamenting the fate of her son and husband, declaring it would be the happiest moment of her life if they would come to her. Above the storm she could be heard, but at the instant they appeared, wet and bedraggled, instead of rejoicing, she immediately began to abuse them. Strange! My children were sleeping soundly, through all of the din of it; but would Carl come? The storm reached the peak at about eleven o'clock. And shortly thereafter, Carl sent me word that he was safe, but the water was steadily rising. The man (a neighbor) who brought the message feared his wife was worrying about him. I awakened her to say that he wished to speak to her. Strange! By twelve I was sure that the wind was abating somewhat; by one o'clock I was very sure of it. We were safe, so I went back to bed and in exhaustion I fell asleep while listening to the men at work on the kitchens which were three stories down in the eating sheds under our windows.

In the morning we awakened in what, from our windows, looked like a yellow sea. The
toilets were not working. The Main Building was the central and highest spot on the campus. Our north windows over looked the main vegetable garden for the camp. This was older than the southwest territory garden, and was producing nicely for our kitchens. It was about three feet under water and still the rain was pouring down in bucket loads.

Carl came about seven-thirty with plates, cups, silver, a pot of hot coffee (he and neighbors had been drinking it all night) and containers for food from the kitchen. He brought news that the storm had swerved into a direction which meant that it most probably would not repeat. We were not prepared for meals in the building, but friends who were prepared for this loaned us their table and chairs. With a hot breakfast our morale began to go up, though the rain poured and the waters rose. Carl had spent a sleepless night and was wet. So I urged him to back to the shanty and after making sure everything was up as high as was possible to place it, get out changes of clothing for himself and food supplies to last us several days. Everybody else had the same idea, and every available space in the rooms and corridors was taken by cots and bedding brought in from shanties. All of that day and for several days that followed we picnicked. The kitchen declared an emergency and went into reserve stores and the food was plentiful and good. However, we opened some of our choice cans and enjoyed them. The sun came out on the afternoon of the seventeenth. The waters had already begun to recede. I made a tour of the campus several days later when the mud had partly dried. The wind had not done as much damage as I feared it would at 10:00 on the night of the fourteenth. Several shanties were over. Others had been damaged by falling trees. The children’s big playhouse had been damaged at one end by a fallen tree. Roofs had been blown off of some shanties while other roof thatching had been badly wind blown. Many trees had been uprooted. No harm came to us except that a banana tree which was bearing was broken off. The children had been watching that bunch of bananas and waiting weeks for them to ripen. Poor dears, now they were ruined and there would be none off the tree. I have lost all data on the storm except that it rained 22 inches in one forty-eight hours during that period. The rain fall for the month of November was 35.81 inches. And we had thought that the rains would be over by the fifteenth of October -- the joke was on us that year.

It was not so much the wind as it was the water that did us the harm. The banana plants were young and could take the storm. But our vegetable gardens were drowned out. Only cuttings were saved, and we had to start all over again. Shanties began to “settle” and lean in the soft mud and many repairs had to be made. The Japanese claimed that all gardens everywhere were drowned, that fruit was damaged, that bridges were swept away, that transportation was impossible, and for days they allowed only a very small quantity of food to come in. I date our hard era of internment from the flood. It may have been many things -- Red Cross supplies, victories? what? -- that infuriated the Japanese, but at any rate, it was about this time that the squeeze really started and from then on the squeeze got worse and worse as time dragged on. There was never any release after it started.

Another typhoon warning was given on December second, but this one was not so severe.
This one repeated on the fifth and sixth. But the one of November 14-17 so far overshadowed these that I only entered “typhoon” on these dates. The warning at the time given though was a grave matter, for no one knew what was in store at that time. And had one struck, it would have been disastrous as the shanties were in such a weakened condition there would have been nothing left of them. This was a fact we each realized to the fullest extent. Each typhoon brought its part of rain and mud to wade through. We bought wooden shoes for the children to use in lieu of boots. This arrangement made keeping their leather shoes possible, so they wore them in the building only. It took many labor hours to get the storm wreckage all cleared away. The trees which had blown over were cut up and laid aside for later use. We knew that the time would come when all of the cooking would have to be done on the native ovens that had been set up during that night of the storm. The electric current was weakening and the gas was so inferior it choked the stoves and could not be used with any satisfaction whatever. Prices which had been gradually climbing now shot up; food and commodities in the market were scarce. Eggs were now $0.32 each, a chicken (fryer size) was $6.25, coffee $22.50 per pound, Klim (powdered milk) $50.00 per pound, one pound size tin oat meal $30.00. Why would not the Japanese let us have the Red Cross supplies?

Bill came into camp on the twenty-second of November. From then till liberation he remained a member of our family, sharing all hardships and whatever joy or sorrow that came our way. After his arrival soon came Thanksgiving. And there were many boxes and packages of food for us — meats, turkey, cakes, pies, fruits (one big bunch of bananas the storm did not get), sugar, cans of vegetables and fruits, tobaccos and cigarettes. One of our good Filipino friends sent us a great big white rooster on foot. That was a very thoughtful thing as he must have realized that for several days we would have meats enough already prepared. But the Japanese took care of that. They would not allow the fowl to come through the gate alive, so took off his head. And he was delivered to us then. That meant, to save him, Bernice and I must pluck and draw him immediately as it was sunny and far too hot for him to keep long in that condition. That was an entirely new experience to both of us, but we did it, and got him in the ice box in short order. Our Filipino friends — I hope to see all again, and when I do I shall try to tell them how much real good the food they sent, especially the canned things, really did us.

Days went by and still no announcement on the Red Cross supplies. The Japanese had tried repeatedly to get the Executive Committee to sign for them, but the Executive Committee had signed for things before and never got delivery on them. They had learned a lesson and thus knew better, so refused to sign until the supplies were released from Japanese possession to their possession. But at last the announcement came over the loud speaker. “The Japanese were so benevolent, they were doing everything possible to make the happiest Christmas for the internees. They were even allowing them to receive personal and Red Cross packages from the homeland — the United States. And were not the Japanese a kindly people” — or words to that effect. But these packages were not to be delivered until another contingent had left for Los Banos. And then on the 14th every internee in Santo Tomas was to receive a package through the kindly supervision of the Commandant! — (ROT).
Fortunately the most of the 250 Los Banos contingent were volunteers as they were families or friends of the men who had gone up in May. Emily and Bernice were among these. In several days they were ready. How we hated to lose Bernice, but she was happier to go as was Emily. So we saw them off. This caused still further rift and division of our friends. And we missed them.

Then the fourteenth came. The internees did the work under the Japanese supervision. Out came the cases of food and medicines from the storage room and to be lined up on the sidewalk under the north windows of our room - what a sensation. The medicines were taken to the Santa Catalina Hospital. Our food cases were made ready by noon for that afternoon delivery which was to be to all children under ten years of age. Each person in camp was to receive a case each containing four cartons. The case made a complete unit, but the Commandant ordered each case opened and then each separate carton. Everything was gone through and inspected most minutely. The first few cases were destroyed as he ordered each tin of goods to be opened, but after words with our Committee this order was rescinded - thank goodness - or all of our goods would have been spoiled. All cigarettes were ordered to be taken from the cartons. The Japanese had to carefully inspect each brand and for days our cigarettes were withheld. Those brands that advocated the buying of war bonds or made mention of the war in any way were taken from the packages and the wrappers destroyed. Anyhow we were weeks in getting our cigarettes and the beauty of the case of Red Cross food was completely spoiled for us in appearance. Why spoil them for us? Meaneness! That was the only sensible answer we could arrive at. They just could not bear to see us so well pleased. They are a nation of very petty people. Benevolent?

We hurried through lunch so that we could have a bath and a short siesta before the call was given to line up for the case, and Esten was so excited! SHE WAS THE ONLY ONE OF US WHO WOULD RECEIVE A BOX that day. When the call came she was ready, and such a rush of little feet that went out of the buildings!! We were all there to help her receive it. The different comments from the children in line that afternoon were amusing as they waited their turn for delivery. Esten's daddy helped her through the line and carried her case down to the shanty for her while she danced by his side. It was a happy day for everyone from the youngest to the oldest among us. Her box was placed in the middle of the shanty floor and the four small cartons placed there for her to open. She was to select anything she wished for supper, so she went through everything carefully, selecting what she thought would make a good supper for us. It was almost supper time but she did not have to go through her line for chow that night, no one did. She was going to be hostess and give a party for us. It was her party and she knew it. She found that the Japanese had overlooked two packages of cigarettes, and that amused and pleased her immensely -- one was for Mummy and one was for Daddy - the first American cigarettes we had in months. The extras she selected for supper that night were: butter, Spam, cheese, strawberry jam, chocolate, and raisins. And was she pleased? We had our regular bowl of fruit salad, made coffee and toast, cut and fried the Spam to a nice brown. Quite a feast for all, and such an enjoyably pleasant one! The next day Roberta received her box, and the same procedure was followed. And the next day Carl, Bill and I received ours. My case inventoried the following:
14 cans of corned beef, 6 cans ham and eggs, 2 cans corned pork, 3 ½ lbs. butter, 28 ounces of coffee, 12 ounces of cocoa, 1 pt. orange juice, 2 cans blackberry jam, 1 can peach jam, 4 lbs. cubed sugar, 6 “ration k” chocolate bars, 3 lbs. prunes, 1 lb. raisins, 4 packages of dry soup, 1 package of bouillon powder in separate envelopes, 8 bars of Swan soap, 1 box crackers. All of the boxes did not inventory exactly the same as some were regular and some were invalid boxes, but as the most of our boxes were regular this inventory could be multiplied by five to get the total sum of food that we received at that time. This added to the store of food we had on hand made for us a very nice little cachet. After each of us had given a party and the perishables taken out, these foods were carefully inventoried and stored away. We would use the market as long as we could. There was rumor of the gate being closed and already Bernice and I had made home cured lard and had fried up pounds and pounds of bacon and preserved it in its own grease. We had also done the same with pork sausage meat, making our own and frying the patties as we had the bacon. This was stored away against a day of need.

How I dreaded Christmas that year which could necessarily bring fresh reminders of our desperation. The pitiful little gifts we would exchange – and seeing the children do without so much and so many things they wanted and needed and were entitled to have – using wrappings and ribbons left over from former occasions. But I prayed for courage, and with the use of a little originality when the time came, it did not seem so bad. The children really enjoyed it and that was all that really mattered.

Bernice had left some ornaments for a small table tree. And Jane sent those we had left at her house from the Christmas before. We made our two trees by gathering and binding together small branches from large trees on the campus. They were not evergreens but we managed to make them look somewhat like the real thing. The children made and hung numerous paper chains, and those with a few wreaths made the shanty take on a Christmas air. I had ordered what things I could through the Christmas shoppers, each child being allowed three items through this center. I had made each of them a play suit out of new pillow cases I had dyed, Esten’s red and Roberta’s blue. Many times they had tried them on in the process of being made but they knew that they were to be their Christmas gifts from me. Bernice had reconditioned and redressed Esten’s favorite doll. I had made doughnuts and candies. So when everything was decorated and the gifts placed around the tree it made quite a gay corner for Christmas. Nothing was to be opened till Christmas morning. There were books, games, dolls, candies, a new pair of shoes for each of the girls, socks, ribbon, hair clips, and, best of all, the biggest surprise, a nice pair of earrings for each of them – that was our real gift to them. Besides that there were little things their friends had brought in to go under their tree, and Aunt Jane had sent packages also. It was a nice little Christmas morning for us all; the children had arranged a short program which Carl, Bill and I enjoyed. When this was over they put on their new suits, shoes, ribbons, etc. and went calling.

Jane sent in a wonderful dinner. Turkey, creamed peas, potatoes, a salad and a chocolate cake. It was surprising what our Filipino and outside friends sent in. There were three cakes,
two pies, two chickens, fresh fruit, canned fruits and vegetables, candy, sugar, cigars and cigarettes.

At 2:00 the camp Christmas tree — real lights, Santa, a program and every child was presented with one toy that had been made in camp. It was amazing what could be made out of a few bits of material. There were dolls and stuffed animals for little girls. And out of wood and a bit of paint came small wheelbarrows, wagons and animals with rollers drawn by string for small boys. Larger children got games. It was clever. No outside guests were allowed, but we put it across and the children were made happy — and that was all that counted. Thank goodness, it was a clear day.

New Year’s Eve Dave Harvey put on a beautiful floor show “Cinderella”. It did not rain that night until after the show. New Year came and the children looked well. Roberta weighed 78 pounds, Esten 48 pounds. Their heights were 58 inches for Roberta and 48 inches for Esten, passing as normal. But many of the children were running underweight, however. And it was about this time that the whole camp was issued vitamins from the Red Cross supplies.

On the second of January, about 8:00 P. M. the people from the Davao camp arrived. They were glad to be with us and have their long trip behind them. Now all of the camps were assembled on the island of Luzon, and the Japanese told us there were to be only the three; Santo Tomas, Los Banos and the one at Baguio. We had been expecting the arrival of these people for days. They looked strong enough but were terribly dirty from the trip, and the trip on that dirty Japanese ship was a nightmare. These people had been further from supplies of shoes and clothing, and their stock of these things were pitifully low. Roberta was asked to act as a guide in showing the new comers to their assigned places and when she came to say good night she said, “Mummy, we won’t crab any more about not having tenderloins when we look at those peoples’ shoes!” But they were turned over to welfare and were soon outfitted.

I was pretty badly run down after Christmas. My work had increased when Bernice left, there were two men and two children for me to be responsible for. Everyone did his full share, but maybe I took my responsibilities too seriously. I landed in the hospital on the sixth of January with nausea and remained there till the afternoon of the sixteenth. This was my only hospitalization under the Japanese regime. Carl had a one hundred percent record, Thank Heavens. My get well present was a painting of each of the children which was done by one of the internees. And as I came out of the hospital door Esten was there to meet us with hers. Roberta, being older, had been allowed to visit me daily but Esten was under this age limit so I had not seen her for ten days. She was the affectionate member of the family, and she had missed me the most. It was good to be out of the hospital, and back with the family again. There was lots to be done, as we were now sure that the gate would be closed on the first of February and I wanted to continue putting up as much bacon and pork sausage meat as we could.

The next excitement came when the Red Cross clothes were issued to us. This issue started on the twenty-eighth of January. All of us got shoes, which were a most acceptable article, socks,
panties, 2 dresses or playsuits (one could choose), one tooth brush, one tube of tooth paste, 2 bars of toilet soap, shoe polish, shoe laces, 2 handkerchiefs, 2 nighties or pajamas, 2 towels, a hair brush, a can of talcum powder, a box of face tissues, and hair clips—these were the things I selected. Points were given and each could use points as they needed but not in excess of certain numbers of certain articles. There were other things to be had which I did not mention, such as: hair pins, face cream, cigarettes. These things were very badly needed as clothes were beginning to show wear. The Japanese did not issue one garment to us through the entire internment. Several times they did allow materials and some of their cheap clothing to be brought into camp and sold at fabulous prices. What a disappointment these Red Cross things proved to be. They were things made of the very cheapest materials and very poorly put together, for the greater part. They could not stand the wear and tear of internment. The colors washed out in the first and second washings. And the bitterest disappointment of all was that the shoes were right through; many of them lasted little more than a month. I did not know that American manufacturers could afford to make such cheap products as the clothes and shoes that were shipped to us in internment proved to be. The food and medicine were wonderful. It will never be known how many lives were saved by these. But the clothes and shoes were a terrific disappointment and let down to American prestige. All of the dresses and playsuits I ripped out, recut and resewed for the children and myself. And wishing to keep them nice looking as long as I could, I always did the washing to make sure they were carefully hung in the shade to keep them from fading. But it wasn't worth the effort expended. The night gowns were utterly impossible as they were, for they were like a sack that had been slightly cut under the arms so as to form a sleeve and another hole cut out of the top for a neck. However, they were made of seersucker and were in beautiful shades of blue, pink, salmon and white. It was soon found out that two nighties would make a dress or a pinafore or would be good for shanty curtains, so they were in great demand with many shopping around and exchanging things for those terrible looking nighties. I exchanged a dress of Esten's for another to match the one I had and made her a cute little pinafore of it.

Nothing good came out of February except an assurance that the rains could end and that the mud could dry. The dry hot winds were soon blowing dust all over the place. And with the change of weather came many other changes—all of them bad. I now realize how blessed we are that we do not know what the future holds in store for us. For had I known at the beginning of that year what was in store for me, I would have indeed been faint hearted. And looking back on the year of 1944, I wonder now how I came through as whole as I did. Without a sustaining faith in the Great I Am, I realize that I could not have made the grade.

Now it was officially announced that there would be no more receiving or sending of individual parcels, and that there was to be an eight o'clock A. M. roll call effective February 1st, 1944. So after many rumors to that effect, the gate really closed with a bang! But the rumors had given us time to lay in supplies, thank heavens for that. The first of February ushered in what the Japanese called the "new deal". The Military took over all camp affairs and soon the Executive Committee was ousted and a 3-man Committee appointed by the Japanese.
No food, no laundry to individuals, no ice; no one could leave camp. The Filipino doctors and nurses who had been helping us were not allowed in camp any more. The Japanese took over our food warehouse, and the Filipino vendors were barred. Our personal shoppers were no longer allowed to go out. A Japanese was to do the buying for the camp from that time forward. The Cold Stores had about exhausted itself. So that left the market and canteen, and the dependence to keep these supplied was upon a Japanese buyer. Try it; when one needs so much and when the object is to starve the internee, no one could do a better job at keeping up supplies than a Japanese. Already there was far too little, but from that time on there was less and less of everything. Our daily ration of cereal was at that time 400 grams, and it was about this time that the Holy Ghost was closed and the children from there brought into camp. Some invalids had been allowed to remain at a springs near the city which was under the management of a German. These people were also brought in under the "new deal". What the Japanese were aiming at was non-communication. Even the local propaganda sheet was barred and we were to receive no news of any kind whatever.

For the curtailment of former privileges the Japanese gave permission for families to live together in the shanties. Living in the shanty did not appeal to us; our shanty was too small for the four of us; it took care of Carl nicely, but it would cost hundreds of pesos to enlarge it to accommodate the family. We liked it as it was, and the girls and I much preferred our space and accommodations in the building and the safety it offered. The shanty was dark, damp, some distance from the bath house and at night infested with insects and all kinds of creeping things that live in the tropics. So we kept our safe, dry, friendly place in the building. Many of the mothers and children did move out to the shanties, which gave us more room space. So we repaired the shanty floor and were quite content.

Esten came down the chicken pox on February second and for about three weeks had whooping cough at the same time. This added work and rest-broken nights. There were several other cases of whooping cough in the room; so she stayed there and I took care of her. None of those cases had to go into isolation. Neither of her cases were bad, in fact the whooping cough was so light that the doctors and the other mothers in the room wondered with me if she really had it. On the second week, Roberta came down with just chicken pox because she was immune to whooping cough. By this time Esten was up so there was only one sick at the time. So we managed. I even found time for some sewing. I still had some pre-war materials and their clothes were showing wear. I felt that before the hot season I must get their sewing all finished. I borrowed a sewing machine from a friend in camp. I did repairing and making over and made them two new dresses each. This gave them clothes enough till birthday time in the fall when I planned that new outfits would have to do for their birthday gifts.

It was on the eighteenth that the Japanese blew up and would not have the Executive Committee any longer and put in their own 3-man committee which they appointed, not which we elected, called Central Committee. We now became prisoners-of-war, so they told us. Up to
that time our status had been internees “under the protective custody of Japan”, or so they had
defined our position to us. And the nine o’clock P.M. roll call was moved up to 5:00 P.M. This
made two roll calls for the day. An 8:00 o’clock roll call in the morning, and a 5:00 o’clock
roll call in the afternoon were most inconvenient. They accused us of being lazy and said that
we were not working, but would have to work! American women were too lazy and too well
dressed. American children were too lazy. Everybody should work in the garden, and we would
have to do so if we expected to be fed. We must do more and more gardening. We must raise all of
our food. Japan could not keep us in luxuries, and if we did not produce what we ate Japan would
not keep us fat. This was the gist of what they told us, now that the military had taken over. Nice
people! The Cold Stores was officially closed. There were more cuts in our food ration and the
Army took over our food supplies. All of this talk about gardens and gardening when the land had
been under water for weeks! Our men had worked. The campus was low and flooded and the land
still wet and muddy. It was poor and sour and could not produce properly. Our men had made
compost and had done everything possible to produce vegetables within those walls. The Japanese
knew that, and they knew about the floods, but they wanted to be hard and mean. And more work
must be done!!

Since the first of February we had been doing our own laundry except for the bed linens
and Carl’s shirts and trousers, which we sent out to a QUARTERMASTER’S laundry, until that
too petered out. On the twenty second all electric irons were confiscated and the camp went
unpressed and in rough dry clothes. This was solely to get the morale of the American women.
We knew it, so we took it right on the chin. Our clothes did not have to look too bad, for if
hung without squeezing and proper attention given them during the drying process, then carefully
folded and pressed by weight they really aren’t as bad looking as it may sound.

We now were taking all of the food that was served in the food lines, and supplementing
this as best we could from fruits and vegetables from the market. All of the meat that came into
camp, which was very little, went to the kitchens and was made into stews or gravies. Up to this
time we only could get peanut butter and did not miss the meat so much. Peanut butter and bananas --
if only we could have had that much till liberation; or if only we could have had one coconut per
day to liberation, many lives would have been saved.

March started in with a bang. For on the first, three of our Army doctors were brought
in from Cabanatuan to help our badly overworked doctors. And on this day also the individual
packages from the Gripsholm came in and were delivered. We received Mother Olsen’s box. We
were told that everybody in camp was to receive one box. Some families received as many as
fifteen boxes – eighteen was the largest number I heard of. At the time these boxes were being
made up at home the names of the children and I were not on the list so my people were not
allowed to send one. If they had known it would have been different. Some families received
everything from vitamins to clothes, sewing materials and toiletries. It was a treat to see the different
displays on the beds in the room. Unfortunately our one box had been stored in a damp place
and some of it had spoiled. But the vitamins, coconalt, coffee, tea, dry soups, bouillion,
dehydrated carrots and tomato juice came through in good order and served a good purpose.
By the middle of March the black market, backed by the Japanese, was in full swing. Prices were soaring. The market was playing out; if the Japanese soldiers could make money by bringing things into the black market, why load the carts with supplies for the camp market which meant neither money, rings or watches in their pockets. The Committee tried to stop this racket, but in vain. Eggs were now $0.50, 5 lbs. Margarine $0.8250, 3 1/4 yards green Indian Head $2.750, $1.00 for a child's hair cut.

I was now worrying about Dave. On March 30th when I went with my monthly written message to be typed, according to regulations, the man who typed it and brought it to me to be signed unthinkingly said, "I didn't think there was any one that high ranking left in Davao!" If he had pierced me with a Japanese bayonet it wouldn't have hurt more. Rumors were running wild, and it was all too much for me. I developed a killing headache that lasted for days till my doctor had to bring me out of it with a rather drastic dose of something I would not like to try again - but it did the work. But at mealtime, I'd think of Dave and immediately choke so that I could not eat.

On April first the order came through, "No cooking in shanties". Now we were up against it. What were we to do do? This order had caused trouble between the Central Committee and the Japanese. So guards were placed everywhere to see that orders were carried out. A compromise was made for cooking sheds to be erected, and several days later we took our stove out and cooked in the sun. This was the hot season. Could they be more inhumane? Yes, they could stop cooking altogether.

The first letters were received in camp on April 3rd. And for the first time in almost two and one half years I saw my Mother's handwriting and had a word from home - there were two letters - and this was wonderful. These were Gripsholm letters that the Japanese had been keeping all of that time - since October!

The first week in April the third contingent of internees left for Los Banos. People were getting hungry and no one knew just what to do. 250 more were called for and still more friends of ours went, hoping that they would fare better there than they had been doing in Santo Tomas. We had heard that there was more meat in Lost Banos and we knew there was a better chance for vegetables and fruit. And these friends went hoping there would be more for their hungry children. They said to me, "It can't be worse". And so at 2:00 P.M. on the third of April we saw them off in the heat and glare of that tropical afternoon sun, all standing up in Army trucks, men, women and children. Do the Japanese love children? It was about this time that our good friend Doc came for a short stay at Santo Tomas, having come down for dental supplies to be taken back with him to Los Banos. He brought word from different friends, and his reports of the place were not too bad.

Easter Sunday was not what Easter Sundays had been but we put forth an effort; and I have found that when one does the very best with what one has, effort meets with results that are
satisfying. The children found flowers for the shanty, set and decorated the table, and then got themselves ready and went to Sunday School. I made doughnuts. I never have cooked doughnuts when it was not hot work so I just went ahead and did them in the sun! We had our first can of Spam for the year; Spam and doughnuts were the features of the lunch -- I recorded these two items only with candy that was made on the day before. But there were canned things that went with this -- Boston baked beans and peas, if I recall correctly. I remember that it was a surprisingly happy little repast. Esten from that time on was very fond of Spam.

And then on the eighth of April, Roberta went to the isolation hospital with measles, and while there she developed danger signs of bronchial pneumonia, but we had her back with us on the twentieth. Esten did not take measles, for which I was truly thankful. On the tenth of that month the Japanese allowed a little more of the Gripsholm mail to come in and there were two more letters from Mother. And on the twenty-third (this was my birthday) there were two more. All Gripsholm mail was being received in reverse order -- the last letter written was the first received until nine in all came through. The eighth one reached me on September 14th, the day I needed a word from her most of all.

It was about the first of May that irons were re-issued and an ironing room was set aside and equipped for our use. This was a help for with the oncoming rains there was now some prospect of having dry clothes. The room was for ironing only, and all day long it was busy. We took it by turns. And I found that with an hour a couple of times a week we could all keep well pressed. Roberta was the one who did the most of this work. I took the first period on Friday morning, so would rise early and usually be there when the door was opened. I would have my ironing all done by roll call time. Roberta usually came to help me and if all was not finished at this period, she would finish up later.

May first, and with it came a change of Commandants. We always dreaded a change but were always having changes and each one seemed worse than the one before, for he would rub a new sore on our worn tired bodies. The outgoing one I had dubbed "the snooper". He was little, insignificant and dirty looking; wore a Hitler mustache and canvas shoes. He was most unmilitary looking in his carriage; his short stature, plus his dirty uniforms, made him almost repulsive. He went unaccompanied, wearing no insignia and would appear at any unexpected place at almost any time. While he looked like any ordinary Japanese to he would reprimand the whole camp on the loud speaker system for not having received the proper acknowledgement and courtesy due him. It was hot and dry and water for the third floor needed pumps to raise it. Many times he had been asked by our central committee to have the situation looked after or give the authority for our men to get the needed materials. This situation was terrific and gave trouble all the way through camp. Some seven hundred women and children used one bathroom! This Commandant would come out and stand near the door at a time when maybe one person would be under the shower -- everybody else on the campus busy at that part of the day -- and if he could hear a trickle of water, he would declare the water was working fine.
Every Commandant had his own idea; the last one had gardening on his mind. And now that the gardens were again doing well, what would this one do? Lots of exercise and less gardening proved to be his slogan. The first thing he did was to cut the ration 30 percent and the market 50 percent. But he liked sports and he wanted the whole camp to play baseball, and he wanted to be the pitcher - he tried mixing the teams using the Japanese guards, but that did not work. It did not matter so much to him about gardens but exercise did seem a good thing so why not move a few shanties and strengthen up?? So those poor gaunt internees were ordered to have 150 shanties moved the first of June. How could they ever do such strenuous work even before the cut in rations, and do it in the hottest month of the year? Our Committee argued that the food was not sufficient, the weather was too hot and that our men would sicken. But regardless of the argument, the shanties must be moved, the 150 shanties in thirty days. The wall must be cleared 60 feet, and those shanties which were in that 60 feet limit had to be moved out. The limit first given had been strictly adhered to except in one or two instances of infringement. Why not just move those shanties out and put more Japanese guards on the wall (thousands were in the city seemingly unoccupied)? The internees would cooperate and double their guard. No, the shanties go or no food would come in and for three days no sugar and no market was allowed to show us what power the Japanese held over us. They the men asked where to place the shanties. The Commandant grinned and bowed and sucked in his breath and said that after thinking it over, "The garden will be the best place". The GARDEN -- I hit the moon. The men said not a word but went to work - that's when it is dangerous, and I know it! Our men stripped of all but shoes and shorts worked in that hot sun, their brown skin glistening with sweat, moving house after house. They literally lifted them on long bamboo poles across their shoulders, many men to a pole, many poles to a shanty, thus carrying them and setting them on our beautiful garden. I watched when I could bear to do so, weeping and praying for those brave men. What would that thirty days do to them? I feared they would die like flies from heat alone, and what would we do without our husbands and friends? Our only comfort was the hope that this was a measure the Japanese felt necessary to take against future eventualities, and that rumors of our successes were true and that soon "our boys" would arrive and release us from the clutches of this yellow vermin. As I looked on that sight a hatred for everything Japanese was born that I have not yet been able to reason myself out of - I who before had known nothing of such feelings.

The camp was hungrier now than at any previous time. And during this "moving of shanty" period many people finished up their Red Cross supplies. I have record of meat being served only once from the kitchen during the month of June, and that in the form of a beef broth. Stocks were running low and prices still mounting. The last loaf of rice bread was sold in the camp before the middle of the month. It was a terrifically hot month. It is a wonder that some epidemic did not set in with resistance so low, food so scant and the weather so hot. Hunger, heat, overwork and germs rampant and the supply of disinfectants was low. It was fly season and we knew that the city was dirty because the flies were so large and so blue. Fly campaigns were put on and every child in camp was busy with a swatter. On the thirtieth of June both Roberta and Esten came down with bacillary dysentery. Roberta's was checked and in a few days she was well but Esten stayed in the hospital for ten days. It was rather severe for her.
Now that the houses were moved they had to be reconditioned and made rain proof as best possible. It was now June and on the first day my boots were back on – we had mud again. Again we were fortunate – our shanty did not have to be moved. But new paths had to be built through the section. The shanties which had come out of the off-limit section from our district were placed on the small boys’ baseball field and walkways must be thrown up before the rains set in in earnest. Work, work, work. Now that the shanties were out of the 60 foot clearance around the wall, the Japanese said that the fence must be strung with barbed wire, four strands running along the top of the concrete wall, to be held there by poles which were to be staggered first inside then outside. Our men did that also, even to bringing in the poles.

The first of June brought rumors that the market would be closed July first, so now we started salting down eggs. And it was at this time that I realized that we must eat more meat so I started on the oldest stores first. We had now used the last of the bacon and pork sausage meat I had preserved in December and January before the closing of the gate. We hated to see this go for we liked it so much. I still had the fats and would continue using them for months. I took up my school work again on the fifth of June. As the rains were beginning we brought our stove back into the shanty, which made cooking a very great deal easier. The poor men who worked on the central kitchen squad had to move out now and do all cooking on open fires in the huge iron cauldrons. This called for more work, as wood had to be supplied – it was terrible. Fathers’ Day on the fifteenth and the girls had made little gifts; Roberta had made a pair of socks for Daddy and one for Mother; Esten had made a handkerchief each.

On the fifteenth of June the little girls and I moved to the second floor – room 31. That was a good break as we had been forced to use the second floor bathroom for months due to inconsideration on the part of the old “Snoops”. We had had lots of lovely space but that extra pair of steps was too much for me, for I was too, too tired. We went into a very much smaller room. This we were to share with five British mothers and two American mothers all with their children. Altogether we were eighteen. And in every way we found this companionship pleasant to the end of the duration.

No one liked the way the move came about, however. For it was just another way of our Commandant forcing more exercise out of our poor tired hungry men, and churning all of us up again. We were never allowed to settle long enough to work out a routine that would make life easier, but always kept in a stir. This time all of the men must be moved out of the Gymnasium and the Gym closed. That meant a shuffle in every building – more work for everybody. Being one of those persons who becomes a part of what is lived with, I hated giving up my friends and moving in with another group. I think all felt the same way, but the Japanese forced the move and it did work out nicely.

The market closed about July first, and it was about this time that the canteen died a natural death. One cannot operate a market or a canteen if there is nothing to sell, and the Japanese would not allow anything to be brought in. We had known that it would come eventually and had been building up stocks of candles, soap, ginger, oil, and beans, just in case. The Japanese
allowed us a very meager portion of cereal daily, and that with what garden they had left us was our only means of existence so far as the camp servings were concerned. Now orders were sent out that the 60 foot clearing around the wall was to be put in private gardens. We did not bother even to take a plot, feeling sure this was another Japanese trick and that no harvest would ever be gathered before the Japanese would ruin it for us. The southeast banana grove was now considered off limits as it was beginning to produce, so why hope that we would be allowed to reap benefits from a garden that in the beginning was definitely off limits? But in this we were mistaken (who can understand the workings of a Japanese mind?)—many people gathered from these private plots beautiful yields of okra, tomatoes, Chinese cabbage, lettuce, onions and beans. We regretted not having put forth the effort, but we were just too tired for anything but the little plots Roberta attended on our shanty lot. Carl was on the Emergency Squad and had been using too much strength in “must be done” things for the camp. I now counted my store of canned meats, vegetables and fruits and rationed them so as to last till the end of the year—Spam for Sundays and special occasions. It was the guess of the men in camp that “our boys” would be there by the first of January, and with care, our individual family would not suffer too severely if the Japanese did not conceive the idea that our individual stores should be confiscated—that was our worry until the end.

We had hoped that the fourth of July show would be a good one this time, but we found that the Japanese would allow no more shows, so in this we were disappointed. Soon we saw different groups being brought into camp, and learned that these were the religious groups that had gone out of camp during the first weeks of internment. What did this mean? Later we were all photographed in groups of five with numbers on our chests like so many prisoners—what did that mean? We feared that it meant Formosa for the lot of us, Japan or some other foreign port. And I know that if this came we would all crack up, for I did not think that we could take it. But things went on. The children received very satisfactory school reports at the end of the month.

On August first the edict came forth for all private money to be turned in to the Japanese for “safe keeping” (?). Each adult would then be allowed fifty pesos and each child twenty-five per month for spending on the Japanese operated black market. We were given a few days to bring forth the money, and spending went on a spree. Everybody bought everything usable they could—and what wasn’t?—before their funds were to be turned in. Confiscation of funds would close the bazaar. I made a note of some of the prices at that time: butter $50.00 per one-quarter pound, 1 pound powdered milk $250.00, sugar $250.00 per pound, cooking oil $200.00 per quart, 1 roll toilet paper (1000 sheets) $47.50, 1 bar toilet soap $38.50, 1 spool sewing cotton (300 yards) $75.00. Roberta paid $27.00 for a small cone of crocheting thread for knitting socks. Then the money was turned in. The Japanese promised us that small inadequate allowance in the face of such false values. What were we to do? Could “our boys” get to us in time? Rumors gave us hope that there was a chance if we could just hold out long enough—but what rumors could we believe—just what were the rumors and what was the real news? One just had to be level headed. The camp was divided, since the early stages of internment, into two schools of
thought the optimists and the pessimists. I tried to be a realist but was counted an optimist and to the end I was one, for I could not believe that our Army would let us down. I had five brothers in the service (this I had been able to get from Mother’s letters by reading between the lines) and to doubt the Army was to be untrue to my own. So I kept my chin up. Nightly the group of us “strategists” would sit on the plaza and speculate on how and when the first visible evidence of the return would be made. The optimists read good signs in every act of the Japanese while the pessimists could only see defeat. These were nights of long talks of home and what we would do on landing—after the first big feed.

We were now entirely at the mercy of the Japanese. So we threw our whole weight in a letter of appeal to Yamashita, the Commanding General of the Imperial Forces in the Philippines, asking for more food for the children and the letter was signed en mass by the parents. We received no reply in any way. At this meeting of the parents our good friend Bert Holland who from the beginning had championed the cause of the children and mothers made a talk emphasizing the necessity for rest. He advocated that each child lie flat on the back and rest from 1:00 - 4:00 P.M. and every other period available to them during the day. This I immediately put into execution, as our daily camp ration was now less than a thousand calories per day and children need more than three thousand for growth and health. At this time all of the children were examined and weighed and the results were heartbreaking. When this was brought to the attention of the Japanese they brought out our POW cards we had written home pointing out that on each card health was marked “excellent” — those beasts, they were holding our cards for home as evidence against us!! What can one do in a case like that?

At this time an order was given for the erection of an inside fence to be built as a partition between the Seminary and the Main Building. There was no earthly reason why this partition fence should be built in the rains. So our men openly refused to erect it saying it was against international law to force the internees to do work of this kind, and that the Japanese must erect their own fences. This occurred near the end of the week, and again I feared trouble. The Japanese warned the camp that a very important announcement was to be made on Sunday afternoon and that every internee was expected to listen to the broadcast. I stood by an open window and listened with dread as the rain poured down. I was relieved when I found that Mr. Grinnell would make the speech. In it he gave a resume of hours of conferences held with the Japanese in our defense but he could get no further with them than to be told in plain language that, “The Imperial Japanese Army is no respector of International laws. The Japanese Imperial Army is a law unto itself”. He followed this by a personal appeal to the internees and asked that the certain squad of selected men meet him at a given time the next morning and start work on the fence. Our poor committee had spent hours in conference with the Japanese over this. It was a personal appeal from Mr. Grinnell himself who promised to lead the work. Needless to say, every man responded and the squad was there the next morning with tools in hand. They, under Mr. Grinnell’s leadership, had just started work when a Japanese guard, full-armed appeared to take over the leadership. At this time Mr. Grinnell was the first to lay down his tools and every man followed as he led them all back to his office. I feared trouble but the Japanese saw they
had gone too far, so they then said that they would pay the camp for the work our men did and so in short order the fence was erected. But this caused some repercussions in the Japanese Army circles and our “sporty” athlete was removed as commandant of our camp.

The new Commandant turned out to be a great “inspector” of things. So he made all kinds of inspections throughout the camp, rooms, shanties and buildings. One never knew when he would call for an inspection, and thorough searches of everything were made. That was when we really worried about privately owned stores of foods, though he pretended to be searching for delinquents on money submissions. He was for show also and demanded that he have space and quarters for himself and staff. This could only be done by another shuffling of men and this was terrible as it seemed that the old men were the ones who had to be moved. This happened just after a couple of old men’s homes in the city had been closed by order of the Imperial Army and these old men brought into camp. They had just got settled in their new spaces when the reshuffle came. The Japanese camp headquarters occupied the Restaurant Building, a nice small building between the Main Building and the Education Building. This building was large enough for the American Commandant when “our boys” came. But so small a building was not fitting to the style of this Commandant so he started off by taking the first floor of the north wing of the Education Building. This was the men’s building, the only one they had, and the younger men had given the first floor over to the older men when they had recently been brought into camp. So then the Gym was again opened up and those poor old men were the ones to have to make the move. Others followed later, as the one wing proved too small for the Imperial – and he did not stop grabbing off space until he had taken over not only the whole of the first floor but much of the second before the rescue. The move having been accomplished, the Commandant now concentrated on air raid shelters – a good sign even to the pessimists! But the most optimistic of us heard “air raid shelters” until we tired. His particular kind of air raid shelter was nothing, however, but a sod embankment with no roof – imagine that! Why have anything, for the ack-ack would be coming from the air. Furthermore, we knew that we needed no protection from our own boys. There were to be long trenches in front of each building, lots and lots of hard labor, and a perfect target for the enemy should he choose. All we needed was the buildings. Our committee talked the old boy into leaving it up to the internees who said that they would take the responsibility. Then private air raid shelters were built for and by those who occupied shanties. We who stayed in the buildings had that protection. For days and nights blackout and air raid drills were practiced – until we knew just what every man, woman and small child was to do in case of emergency. I feared a plot, as they were also building machine gun nests inside the walls with gun turrets on the corners of the wall. So both the optimists and the pessimists had their day. But why not let our men rest? And why not feed us? Why so much stirring up when we were so tired? Why so many changes of policy?

But now Esten was stricken quickly and desperately with Tb. meningitis. There was no hope. It was a sad, sad world. Everything that could be done was done by the wonderful doctors, nurses and aides who were always on duty with her. They did not let her suffer, and all that Carl and I could do was to stay near and hold her hot little hand until the pulse was felt no longer. She took to her bed on August tenth and stayed with us just five weeks longer till at five o’clock
on the afternoon of September fourteenth she pursed her lips as a parting kiss to us and raised both little arms to some beautiful being of love who bore her gently to a home of everlasting peace.

Carl and I went to the shanty to bear the news to Roberta; and there was Mother’s eighth letter -- Mother who even in this moment’s distress the Japanese could not keep from coming through to me. I rested a few minutes there as friends came while the postmortem was being performed. Then I went back to the hospital to dress my baby for the last time in a lovely white dress that dear, dear friends had made for her with such loving fingers. She was so beautiful as she lay there at rest on the clean white hospital bed. Her friends of all sizes and ages came and surrounded her with flowers she had loved so. She had just passed her eighth birthday so she shall always be my little girl. Her ashes were placed in the “Bride’s Room” at the Cathedral of St. Mary and St. John. I had used this room to assemble my attendants on my wedding night. In the Japanese destruction of the city the Cathedral was partly destroyed but her urn was found intact and is being kept for us in the chapel at St. Luke’s Hospital against the day when we shall bring it home.

Esten did not die of starvation nor do I attribute her death to internment -- Thank Heavens. We did not know she had the tubercular germ in her system. It did not show up in the lungs for they were fluoroscoped three times during the three years, the last time being on the occasion of her mended broken leg when the doctor let the children look at their hearts. He then told me that both of my children had good strong lungs. She showed no signs in any way of being diseased. Her last measurements were made July 1, 1944 with height 49½ inches, weight 49 3/4 pounds, which is considered normal -- and was very good under existing conditions.

On the ninth of September (Roberta’s birthday) we had our first air alert. It came at 5:00 P.M. while I was on my way to the shanty for supper from the hospital. It was that noon that Esten had sunk into a deep coma from which she did not rally. The siren sounded as I was walking across the campus, but to me it made no difference. When I reached the shanty Roberta was so exultant and so happy that “our boys” had given her her “best of all gifts”, and her enthusiastic reaction was so contagious that I too was glad that it had come. That had been the hardest day I had lived through up to that time. It was Roberta’s birthday and I was determined not to let her birthday go by unnoticed since we had missed the double celebration as planned -- the future was too uncertain. It was one of the hardest things I have ever done but I managed a special dinner for the occasion -- hard to be light enough for the occasion when Esten was so hopelessly ill. But we needed the extra food (even if we did not relish it) and Roberta must never be led to feel that death itself is a dreadful thing. And so we managed. She did not know that the doctor sent for her daddy and me just as we were sitting down to lunch, thinking that Esten had only a few minutes longer to be with us, but instead she had rallied when we reached the hospital and we had our last visit with her before she lapsed into unconsciousness, and that is a sweet memory.
Our first air raid warnings we had on the morning of the day Esten died. Nothing but the alert on Roberta's birthday had preceded this. At 7:45 - 9:00 that morning the second alert came. Then 10:00 - 11:00 the alarm came and another from 1:00 - 2:00, the third siren during the day and this time too the alarm sounded. I then knew that "our boys" were somewhere near, and as she lay dying I felt that our darling had seen "our boys" in. So many times she had told me as she jumped up and down, that she would be so happy, "Oh, Mummy, so happy when the Americans come". And they had not let her down.

The funeral was held at 3:00 o'clock on the afternoon of the sixteenth. Her school room was the Episcopal chapel when not used for the school, and it was here that the services for her were held with the Episcopal and Methodist ministers officiating. The latter godly man has since joined her, having been instantly killed during the shelling of the camp.

Esten's doctor put me to bed in the children's hospital right under her care for three days. She had seen me lose twenty pounds during those sad days and she claimed I owed it to Roberta and Carl to stay on my feet. The children's hospital was cool and quiet. Esten had been the only patient since the first alert, the other children having been sent home. Now I became the only patient in her old room. The nurses did everything for me and I was made to relax and rest. This did much for me, as I hardly was aware of what happened during those weeks except what concerned Esten, Roberta and Carl.

It would be futile to try to put into words the appreciation felt for the things done during Esten's illness for us by our friends and acquaintances and Santo Tomas at large. Calls, notes, messages, gifts for Esten and food for her which in many instances was the last mite - milk, sugar, jello, canned fruits, juices and broths which had been saved as a last hope - came to her. That spirit was beautiful and never will I feel that I could lose faith in humanity, for that experience has taught me that man can be trusted to be generous even when hungry and to share burdens when he is so weak that he is staggering under his own. I have seen so I know. And it was that spirit of sharing and of helping each other that brought us through. We were all in the same boat and we must pull and work together. There may have been some dead weight but very little of it. So life took its grind, but it was not the same again. Immediately I gave away all of Esten's things that could be used by other children. All children were in need of such things, especially clothes, so till the end of internment I would meet those little dresses everywhere. On the 21st, just one week after Esten's death, our boys came over and we had our first bombing. And from then on the routine was broken.

On the morning of the 21st, Carl and I had hurried to the shanty after getting B-1 shots immediately after roll call, as I wanted to make a cornstarch chocolate pudding in time to have it cool for lunch. He was fanning up the fire in the little native stove where I was stirring the pudding when all at once I was conscious of many planes in the air and asked him why the Japanese should be putting on such a show, to which he replied that he supposed it was just practice and kept fanning away while I stirred and the droning got louder and louder. I looked at Carl but just could not stop stirring the pudding at that particular moment. Then I heard reports, and while not stopping stirring (pudding was scarce in those days, even a cornstarch one, for our daily ration was
now only 300 grams daily) I looked over the Nichols Field way from where the reports had come. I could see many planes with white puffs of smoke beneath, so I said, "Carl, look, it’s the real thing!" He looked, but neither of us gave up our cooking. Then the diving began and more explosives, plane after plane and explosive after explosive while he fanned and I stirred, then the siren, and I jumped up and down shouting "It is the real thing!!" We managed to get that precious pudding in bowls and out we went to see that show – and what a show!! We had to be on our way to the Main Building and as we walked along we thrilled with the magnificent spectacle. Bombers over Nichols Field, bombers over Manila Bay, bombers everywhere and we knew now that we would not be passed by and that sometime in the not too distant future we would be free again. I stood and watched our glorious boys as they made dive after dive over their objectives while tears of gratitude rolled down and lost themselves in the dust of Santo Tomas, all the while praying that those dear, brave boys all would find and hit the target true and come through safely.

We had been drilled to make no demonstration whatever so we walked very stoically once in sight of the Japanese, but once in the room we wept and laughed for joy and held each other tightly. Carl acted as a guard at the main entrance and while there saw the lone plane which came directly over the tower of the Main Building and dipped its wings in greeting. He saw the Army insignia under the wing and made a trip all the way up to the room to tell me what he had seen – that star looked better to him than any star he had ever seen! And now everybody was a thrill and how happy the children were! I have no record of how long that raid lasted but it must have been about an hour until the all clear – and sweeter music I have never heard than the droning of our planes. They came again at 3:00 that afternoon. The next morning they came and we were under that alarm from 7:50 - 1:30. Now we knew that it would not be long. And how hungry we were! We had made the arrangement that Carl would carry on in the shanty while I stayed with Roberta at the Main Building during a raid. I was allowed to stay in the shanty but I seldom ever did as I felt much safer in the building and much preferred to be there with Roberta. We also saw that it was necessary to divide our supplies so that Roberta and I had something in the Building with us. Bill had some in his room in the Education Building and Carl kept the bulk in the shanty. Raids always made everybody hungry. Carl moved a table up so that Roberta and I did not have to go to the shanty for breakfast. We saved that strength and if a raid came at mealtime we could eat from the Central Kitchen as it was served there on the line.

Unfortunately, some people being over optimistic now went too heavily into their private supplies and suffered from it in the end. I had rationed ours to last till the first of January with a few extra cans -- just in case. The Japanese reaction to the raids was funny; on that first morning going up to the Main Building I realized that there was no need for us to walk to stoically for it was easy to see that they had completely lost their heads. They were racing madly around taking out papers and files from their offices and one befuddled little fellow had a big Burroughs adding machine in his arms staggering with it as he headed toward their air raid shelter. They were terribly rattled for the four guards at the main gate ducked into one of the internee’s shelters and there sat through the entire raid – leaving the gate unguarded. They were a frightened bunch, the whole lot of them. I wondered if they would feel that they had lost face in front of us and “crack
down” on us in some way. We were thankful that they did not. But soon they began bringing in their supplies for storage on our front campus and as ammunition and arms were stored here, I took it that they felt that Santo Tomas was the safest place in the Philippines. They took over the entire front campus for their supply dump. When we complained that they were hiding behind the skirts of the internees they were offended and denied the charge, but soon some of the things began moving out. However, until the end this was used as a sort of transfer place for supplies. I thought that maybe the Japanese could no longer feel that such things were safe anywhere else in the city. For the Filipino was most certainly pro-American and anti-Japanese.

The next pages in my diary carry little else but dates and length of alerts and raid warnings, Suffice it to say no cruel retaliations were taken on the internees for the bombings. It was war and the Japanese were being blasted. Their defense was a joke, even from the first day. Fields were blasted with little or no resistance. Their ships were set on fire. We could see the smoke and hear the explosions as they were blown up in the bay and we knew from these signs that the raids were effective. In all of the visits I saw only one of our planes go down. There were others, so I was told, but I did not see them – I did not want to. We were now under complete blackout rules and there was no movement between buildings after dark. Roberta and I came from the shanty for 5:30 o’clock roll call and remained in the building.

And what did we do on these long dark evenings? We did just exactly what all other internees and war prisoners did. We sat in groups in the corridors outside our rooms and talked about food – as amazing as that is – food was the chief topic of conversation. How to cook or recock what we had and make it taste like something that it was not. Recipes, recipes, recipes! and from this beginning, we grew hungrier, we went into favorite recipes to be used after the war. There were several cook books in camp and in the end the owners had to stop lending them as there were waiting lists of more than a dozen people always who wanted to copy recipes from them. Books!! Magazines with food illustrations were simply worn out from being passed around. Everyone who owned a note book took down recipes. I made a collection of favorite and unusual recipes and made out menus, which I still hope to try out, and took pleasure in giving my friends my mother’s turkey dressing recipe. I later found that the other internment camps and POW camps had done the same things. My brother still hopes to try out his thirty-three different breakfast menus he wrote while in Bilibid. All conversation would invariably end in the subject of food. The whole camp was hungry. It is strange the satisfaction one gets just out of talking about food when so hungry.

Again I say we were among the fortunate. Thanks to Carl’s foresight we had enough extras to carry us till the end of the year without too much pinch. Menu for September lst: Breakfast, mush with butter, coffee; lunch, rice, 2 cans corned beef hash, boiled potato tops, chocolate cornstarch pudding; supper, rice, vegetable soup, coffee – all in liberal portions. The vegetable soup was soup from the kitchen to which seasonings and extra soup was added. Many were suffering but we had to follow the rule of self preservation. Even then we found that we could help and did what we could to divide. I made the remark when the hospitals began to show signs of weakness among the internees that what was needed most was a good bombing
and all beds would be emptied. And figuratively speaking this came true. I failed to realize though that excitement and emotional strain (as a bombing gives) take lots of energy. One needs food to be sustained over long periods of such strain. That was the reason why everybody was so hungry whenever the all clear sounded. And so when the reaction set in the hospitals were fuller than before the bombings began. We were told to stick to our vitamins and to go easy but supplement the camp diet with what supplies we had, for it was hard to make a come back if one got too low physically. We had been doing this consistently. On the twenty-third of October the camp was put on two meals a day, breakfast at 8:30 and dinner at 4:00 P.M. On Carl's birthday we had a special dinner. This was October 27th; I had been preparing for this, and on the day before I had steamed the bread. There were no raids that day and we had a sweet little girl come with us whose mother was in the hospital and whose birthday coincided with his. On that day for breakfast we had cereal, coffee, toasted bread, butter and jam; lunch, rice, 2 cans fried Spam with bouillion gravy, creamed peas, pickled beets, hot apple pie that our dearest friend had made and sent over for the occasion, popcorn balls and fudge. The popcorn balls and fudge were shared with little friends of his. Supper was soup from the line with added seasonings, rice. I had tried to make a jello with mixed fruit for salad but I could not get it chilled enough to jell, so served it as a fruit cup with margarine on bread and coffee. Of course, we did not have this much every day, as one Spam ordinarily served the four of us, but this was Carl's birthday and hence a special occasion.

Carl was beginning to show a loss of weight. His prewar weight was 183 pounds. His work in camp had trimmed him down to 165 and he stayed there for months. After the work increased on the Emergency Squad, he gradually came down to around 150 pounds, this was not so bad as he was all muscle. But with Esten's sickness and death -- which it looked like he just couldn't take -- he just lost the pounds till he was now around 135. The day of Esten's funeral I weighed 93 pounds but had gained up to 97½ on Carl's birthday. At this time Roberta was weighing 77½ which was one half pound less than she weighed on January first. This was slightly under weight but not alarmingly so. She had in that time gained two inches in height. She was getting more than we, as we saw to it that she had one glass of milk daily, usually mixed with coconuts or the like, sugar, and little extras that I made for her. And I was seeing to it that she was lying down every possible minute of the time. It was our job to see her through this until if possible. It was a terrible feeling, as thing after thing gave out and we hit bottom.

We knew when MacArthur landed in Leyte on October 20th, for that was news that the Japanese could not keep out of camp. That was a day of heavy bombings, and we knew that something big was in the air. But it took several days before we knew just what it was. And what a feeling of elation when we knew for sure that we were not to be bypassed, that he was actually back in the Philippines! They would have been most exciting days if hunger had not been so rampant -- daily cereal allowance 255 grams. Now the children were busy with Hallowe'en things and planning their Christmas gifts.

Mother's last letter reached me November 14th which was her birthday. How I had worried about her and what effect all of the grief she had borne from the war had on her. Her letter was the very first one written and bore the date of March 17th, 1942. Why, can anyone tell me?
On the night of November 23rd, while on my way to attend the weekly lecture on religion given by our beloved minister, I had a shock as I sighted a huge fire which looked as though our shanty section was on fire. The horror that filled me through and through! The flames proved to my great relief, to be across the street and were soon under control.

As the bombings continued, they grew in intensity. Every day there was either an alert or a raid. During raids Roberta and I rested. I would read some familiar poem or some book I loved, and relax as I lay resting. There was never any nervousness manifested, only joy with each raid, for we knew that each one brought us nearer to the end of our internment. No harm could come to us as "our boys" knew their objectives. We only had to stay out of the way of the ack-ack. All kinds of rumors, speculations and bets were made as to when "our boys" would be in. Those evenings spent at recipes and discussions of household management, plans for homes and kitchens and a new start from scratch made close friends feel even closer in those last days of hunger. Even in our suffering we knew that when the time of parting came we would be saddened and would miss each other.

This is our Thanksgiving schedule in full: 6:00 A.M. I arose, got a bath and dressed; at 6:15 I awakened Roberta who got ready while I set our table for breakfast; 6:30 Bill came with our breakfast of mush and coffee made of burned rice; 6:45 we cleared the table and Roberta went down to the tap to wash the dishes. Then she joined me in making our beds and cleaning our spaces; 7:15 - 7:45 we ironed; 7:50 - 8:10 roll call; 8:15 Carl and I met in the injection line in the Main Building for B and C shots; 8:20 air alert siren; 8:25 to shanty. I had decided to stay at the shanty even if our planes did come over. Carl and I washed the clothes and got them on the line. We washed every day as we found it easier that way. Then I washed my hair. Then prepared a banana heart Carl had grubbed up for me. We had many young banana trees and did not feel that this was extravagant as we knew that we would not be there to harvest the fruit from them. After peeling, which is a sticky job staining everything touched by the juice, the pieces were dropped into salt water and left to boil till tender. Then I fried them in a small amount of cooking oil and garlic as one would do German fried potatoes. While this was being done, Roberta gathered talinum (a vegetable resembling spinach) which she grew in her garden that she and her daddy had spaded up and made around the shanty. She had growing there: okra, pigweed, talinum, potatoes and tomatoes. It was her pride and a joy to all. Pigweed is edible and grows prolifically, as most gardeners know much to their disgust, but then it was one of our main vegetables. It is usually considered just another pesky weed that is pulled up and cast aside – but not so in STIC. While the talinum was cooking Carl measured and washed our 3 daily cups of rice – we cooked the day's supply at one time to save on fuel and time. I now took time out for special tidying of the shanty, as a Japanese inspection party would pass through our section about ten o'clock, and we wanted an "okay". Our section took pride in its neatness, as did the other sections. Then I sewed and patched and darned for about an hour. Then at 11:00 it was time for last minute details on the lunch. Roberta prettied up the table. I browned cassava flour while Carl sliced the Spam. Only one thing could be cooked at a time. Then we browned the Spam and made bouillon gravy thickened with the browned flour. Lunch was served. After lunch Bill and I did the dishes (an unvariable detail) while Roberta swept and tidied and put the dishes back into the cupboard.
While we did these things Carl took the clothes from the line which Roberta folded, and put our things into the basket we would take with us to the Main Building. Carl then emptied the garbage can and brought buckets full of water. 1:00 o'clock and we were off for siestas, Carl in the shanty, Bill to the Education Building, Roberta and I to the Main Building -- then a bath followed by a siesta till three. From 3:00 - 4:00 I was on bathroom duty. This was a detail which came to adults in our room about every ten days. It meant squeegeeing, mopping and keeping the floor as dry as possible outside the shower area, keeping the drain open and shower water draining out at the drain -- it often clogged with bits of soap, etc. The wash basins were to be kept clean by the monitor on duty and the toilet seats kept disinfected. There was no water on the third floor so this shower room served for the two floors and was crowded. Everyone showered in wooden shoes and while drying took place in the shower area, the wooden shoes of the new comers tracked dust in and those coming out of the showers left wet tracks. So try one's best the floor in the toilet and dressing areas could not be kept entirely clean and dry. Our mops were ones made of rags. As can be imagined, our equipment in every respect was down to nil. This wringing of mops and the other details were not pleasant but were considered very important ones. At 4:00 my relief came and I stepped under the shower, dressed, and made a quick call at the hospital to see sick friends there and then hurried on to the shanty. At 4:04 the all clear sounded. Carl always had the coffee made when I arrived at the shanty so I then took over and made a regular mixture of seasonings with which to “doctor up” the soup when Bill arrived with it from the line. This was done by frying garlic, adding spices and browned flour to mix into the soup -- it gave the soup some taste. The soup was then poured over the rice and made the supper. We were now having 5:30 roll call. So after supper the dishes -- dishes of 10” enamel plates with 1” rim which in reality were large flat bowls and one 1 pint enamel cup and a silver knife and fork each were our dishes -- and always pots and pans, which were smutty from the open fire, had to be washed and put away. The dishes, pots and pans I have washed, if stacked, so I said one day, would be a hill as high as the Main Building. At roll call Lou asked if we would come immediately to their shanty after dismissal. We needed no special urging for this meant a special treat. Our usual daily outing was to call there from roll call time till curfew. Lou and Roy knew that our supplies were carefully rationed only till the end of the year. Theirs were fuller than ours and they were so generous -- how those darlings have shared with us. This evening Lou served tea. She usually served some tid-bit -- always something, and every night something special for Roberta just before going to bed. This she had done ever since Esten’s death -- no one every had truer and dearer friends than Lou and Roy. This afternoon Roy had opened a fresh can of Hills Brothers coffee and it was served with cream and sugar inchina cups (I’ll always remember that Thanksgiving banquet). There were also peanut butter sandwiches -- our peanut butter had long since been a thing of the past. 7:30 news was announced as we were sitting outside the shanty watching the chickens graze. And tonight there was news! The Japanese were turning over to the camp $100,000.00 American Red Cross funds (cheers). People were desperate now with hunger and this was the first news of this kind we had had. We wondered just what was happening -- but at the same time we also wondered just what $100,000.00 would do for 3200 people with prices so high. On the same broadcast came a warning to the internees that our laboratory findings proved that certain herbs, leaves, bulbs, roots and grasses were injurious and that the use of them must be abandoned. We had
used none of them; however, I knew now that my row of cans at the shanty would not tide us over — these I had been saving against the day! People had now started making raids on the garbage cans and picking or scraping up any particles that fell to the floor around the serving tables. This also must be stopped and the parents warned to watch their children and see to it that they did not break these rules. Curfew sounded at 7:50 and so the party all moved toward the Main Building where Carl and Roy left us for the night. Roberta and Gale Ann played Russian Banque till 8:45 while Lou, Boo, Hazel, Marjorie and I chink-wagged more about recipes till lights out at 10:00. No planes had been over, but we were for hours under alert. It had been a pleasant day in its way, and best of all we knew that “our boys” were somewhere near. Not the good old U. S. way of celebrating Thanksgiving Day, but we had done the best we could with what we had and felt safe in the thought that the next one would be different.

December first: Permanent blackout is in effect but no planes over for two weeks, why? Just how close were our boys? What advance had they really made, what was true and what was rumor? There did not seem to be any Japanese planes around, why was that? Had we got them all or were they ganging up on “our boys” somewhere?

But life went on even though there was no sign of war or liberation in sight. And we began making our little Christmas gifts, for it seemed that we would still be prisoners even at Christmas time. School closed the middle of the month for several reasons: first, the children were becoming so weak that we thought it best for them not to take the climb to the fourth floor. And second, the bombings were again resumed, and that made entirely too much climbing of stairs for them.

It was about this time that I saw a most amusing and enlightening sight so far as the strength of the Japanese Imperial Army forces were concerned in and around Manila. It was one of those days when we were under an air raid warning all day. This was now happening so often that for an hour at noon we were allowed to move with freedom about the campus. And it was not until noon that I started out for lunch at the shanty — which I knew that Carl would have nice and hot for us. On leaving the front entrance of the Main Building, I saw that there were numerous troops at rest all under the trees out on the front campus. I quickly judged that it must be a company who was passing when the alarm was given and had sought shelter under the trees where they were lounging in little groups. There were several loaded push carts of the crudest wooden kind, each loaded with things which appeared to be small canvas tents and a few canvas duffle bags. There was one group of eight men sitting under a tree near a bridge on the pathway I had taken. On seeing my approach the dirty little officer bellowed out an order and the men instantly rose. The khaki of their uniforms was past description. There must have been six or eight different shades of khaki in each man's uniform. The uniforms were some sort of woolen concoction, so I judged that a boat must have just landed these recruits. They were a sick looking bunch — one was so sick that he did not attempt to rise to his feet when the command was given. The officer in charge (I never could read their insignia, for I did not see that much of them), seeing that I must cross that bridge, took the center of it and lined the eight sickly looking recruits in front of him on the path. They wore canvas shoes with a divide for the big toe! As I would not
retreat but came on to the bridge, he was shouting orders to the top of his lung capacity, while the men responded with a very elementary drill in handling arms. I had to pause for the end of his command. Not knowing whether I would be slapped or not, but being very sure to make a deep bow, I passed on by the little man who was shouting his importance in the middle of that very narrow bridge. My knees were trembling but I made it. To this day my very courteous bow has not been recognized and as far as any sign was concerned one would have judged that he did not see me or know that I was there, but from the narrowness of the bridge, I know that he had to know it. At least he did not slap my face, even if he did not return my bow. After lunch I took another route. It was not until we were again coming back to the Main Building to report for roll call that I remembered my noontime episode and that I had taken the same path. The all clear had just sounded and all of these different groups were making ready to depart. Again that little man was shouting orders and some of the soldiers were hitching themselves to the different carts, tying themselves to them just as though they had been horses. The little officer and his men were the only ones who carried guns. He paraded himself out in front of these men he had been drilling, the men acting as his escort and away they all strutted. I had my last fling when I turned to acquaintances following at some distance and shouted “mechanized to the teeth” as I met several of the clumsy carts being drawn by. I fear that the face slapping I did not get at noon would have been delivered pronto had the little officer understood what was said and meant. That lousy bunch of raw recruits in winter uniforms in 90 degree weather with hardly any arms pulling their equipment out into the fields to meet MacArthur’s men!

On the sixteenth, Roy and Lou celebrated their wedding anniversary with a tea for the six of us. This time Lou had made the most marvelous apricot pie to serve with cups of real coffee, sugar and cream. What a happy event this was for us, what a break, what an oasis in that huge desert of monotony! These were indeed high spots. Our daily ration was now 210 grams or less than 1000 calories. And on that afternoon Lou had brought gifts to Roberta: there was a big can of Vitavose, a big can of sugar, a can of margarine and a can of cocoa. These things she too might be needing, but she insisted and with tears in my eyes I accepted. We had reached the end of our butter and margarine. Bobbie was still getting a little sugar daily and the vitavose would help greatly in her daily glass of milk.

On the twenty-third we had our Christmas greeting. Carl, Roberta and I were in the garden tidying up for Christmas when we heard a tremendous roar of planes coming from the north. We looked and beheld the most magnificent sight I have ever seen in the way of airplanes. High, high above the deep blue of the sky were our beautiful silver giant B 29s, while around them gamboled numerous small silver fighters. They were so high that they reminded me of tiny white lambs at play around their mothers in a blue meadow. These were the first of our land based planes that we had seen. It was a thrilling sight to see them and to know that our forces were so near. Roberta said, as we gazed above, “Mother, I need nothing else to make this a perfect Christmas”. I felt the same way, and thought of the little Japanese officer and his bunch of recruits that were so highly mechanized (!) and wondered what effect such a sight as that had on them. No bombs were dropped, and we wondered just what it would be like when they did come on a business mission, which we knew would be forthcoming. Those beautiful messengers of cheer and courage
circled the city. Finally a few anti-air craft guns opened up from one side of the city but the shots fell so far short of their beautiful wings it was ludicrous!

It was a busy day. Roberta decorated the shanty and her tree. This time she used the blossom from the coconut tree, which was most effective. When it was finished she said, “Mother, I’ll never have another that I love as much as I do this one, or will look as lovely to me”. She had made many of the decorations herself out of colored tinfoil we had saved and other different things she thought of. We had sent our Christmas tree decorations to Jane for storage at the beginning of the year. When our little gifts were all wrapped in paper that had done service the three previous Christmas seasons and all piled around the little tree it gave a touching scene despite the wear it was Christmas and the three of us were together and well. It could have been worse.

Christmas dawned bright. I was up before the sun and donned a bright red dress I had made for myself. I went to 7:00 mass. Roll call at 8:00. Breakfast now was not served till 8:30 and this morning Roberta and I joined Carl and Bill for breakfast at the shanty. One of “our boys” had been over during the night and had dropped beautiful Christmas cards from General MacArthur. I was not fortunate in procuring one for keeps but I held the handsomely done message in my trembling hands and read the message as follows: “The Commander in Chief, the officers and the men of the American Forces of Liberation in the Pacific wish their gallant allies, the people of the Philippines, all the blessings of Christmas and the realization of their fervent hopes in the New Year. Christmas 1944”. That was a good beginning for the day. Our little gifts to each other were all hand made but most acceptable. Again Roberta got a dress – this one made of dark blue slub poplin and to be worn on the way home. Roy and Lou had sent her cans of tomatoes, juice, vegetables and fruits – and fresh eggs for breakfast from their own hens. I did no cooking that day except to fry two eggs for Roberta’s breakfast. The menu was as follows: Breakfast, mush, coffee (our own); lunch, chocolate rice pudding with marmalade sauce; supper, fried rice (in which there was meat), ham, shrimp and vegetables. We knew someone should be thanked for this but we did not know who. All of the servings from the kitchen were so generous that we did not open the cans we had planned for the day.

Roy and Lou had invited us for a cup of coffee after roll call. Again we had the marvelous coffee and Lou had made another of her famous pies. There was also chicken, imagine it (Roy said that the troops were close enough to warrant it now), and lots of chocolate fudge.

On the 27th Japanese room inspection – this always caused a stir. For we knew that they were looking for something and never knew just what. So far we had been allowed to keep the most of our personal possessions – but what now, was it money, jewels, radios – what? It may have been anything, maybe one of the Christmas greetings. Anyway we had all luggage opened and on top of beds with all curtains lifted from shelves and cases. They came through. The inspection was very superficial – thank heavens, it may not have gone so well with me if they had found my diary – and again I was left with what jewels I had come in with. This tour was conducted by Mr. Herosi and Mr. Ohashi, the most decent of all the Japanese we had in camp. And Mr. Ohashi we had for the duration.
The old year ended and the sun set on a tired old world. Hunger and starvation cast its bony shadow across the campus. In the last three months of the old year there had been an average of a death every other day and we knew that these deaths were coming from malnutrition or starvation and would increase. How long could we last? Who and how many could make the grade? When strong men like Carl began to droop it was bad. Weights had gone down till ribs could be counted and adults did not have the strength to hold themselves erect. The children’s legs and arms were much too skinny and some of the stomachs were too large. Some little faces were beginning to look like old men and women — with sallow skin and eyes that just stared. There were many small children in camp who had never known any but internment life. And to these poor tired, hungry people word was given that further cuts in rations were inevitable. We had ahead of us the transition period. The Japanese claimed they did not have transportation means with which to haul food to us. We knew that their camp food warehouse was full. When men see their families suffer and they are so weak from hunger that they cannot stand straight, can they think straight? I feared trouble. I feared that there were those who just could not take it. But thank heavens we came through, and we came through with flying colors, there were only a hand full — truly such a small number is not worth mentioning — who sold themselves to the Japanese. I do not believe that hardships make character, but it is under strain that character shows up and the real worth of the man can be measured. And the Santo Tomas internee was not found lacking.

I spent the last day of 1944 cleaning up the old year’s rubbish, and getting things all ready for a clean, bright new one by darning, washing and ironing. I had everything clean and in order for the fresh page that Father Time would turn in the night. I had had enough. Carl’s weight was now 122, Roberta’s 73, my own 93. I was not hungry. I was just tired and disappointed for we had thought for weeks that another Red Cross shipment would come through. We believed that it arrived but that we did not receive it. And at that time had one come through many lives would have been saved in the five weeks that lay ahead. There was no celebration on the incoming day. But Carl did much for me when he said good night and added, “I know now that we will see it through, and what a difference there will be this time next year”. Helen gave a reading to our little group when we gathered after the curfew, the title “The Old and New” which I thought very fitting. We then talked till ten, and after exchanging greetings went to bed and to sleep.

New Year’s Day — the sun was shining when Roberta and I awakened. I slept late now that breakfast did not come until after roll call and it was 7:30, as late as I dare stay in bed, for I had to make that awful bathroom line and be ready for roll call at 8:00. With our space all cleaned I could then take my day as it came. At roll call Dorothy met me with a delicious cup of real coffee, strong and black, and what that cup of coffee out of a china cup did for me! The day immediately took on another tone and color. Breakfast was in the shanty again, along with a lovely New Year’s card Roberta had made and placed there for me. Then a neighbor sent over cigarette paper, and the day seemed good — I took it as a sign of better things to come. I was now rolling my own cigarettes, a little tobacco and lots of papaya leaves. Our own stock of native coffee was not so bad and on this morning we decided that we would cook our own mush from
then on. And what a difference! The Japanese were giving us sweepings from the warehouse floors and that was terrific. So we were now drawing our proportional part of rice and cornmeal, toasted it and made our own mush, which was not only clean but delicious as well.

In Japan the New Year is one of the biggest national holidays and for several days this occasion is celebrated. Much drinking, feasting and calling is done. The officers and men of the Army and Navy who were in occupied territory should not expect to have so many days - certainly, not with a formidable foe like America on their trail. So in Santo Tomas it was all crowded together in less time, the New Year's Day only. On that morning I had been at the shanty since roll call and took no notice of what was happening until Bill came with the news of quite a noise they were making in the Education Building. As I have said before, the space they first asked for in the Education Building - the first floor of the north wing - had now expanded until it included the whole of the first floor and very nearly all of the second. It was here that they lived, had their offices, cooked, ate, and slept and carried on the matters of the camp in great style, with a certain few of the internees to work their garden, run their errands and do their drudgery for a few cigarettes or a hand full of rice or a few cents a day - we had only a few of that stripe I am happy to say. The part of the Education Building that the Japanese did not want was occupied by internee men and boys.

As I passed the "Ed" Building on my way up to the Main Building after lunch I could hear a noisy party in full sway - much singing and shouting. Their inside kitchen could not take care of all of the food they were preparing for the feast so some of it was being done in an outside kitchen which they had constructed. This kitchen was just across the driveway under the windows of my room and from this position we could well see just what was going on. They were preparing bread, rice, meat, pork, chicken. As I watched I saw cases of beer being brought in and bottles of what I presumed was liquor of some kind. They had claimed that they had no transportation to bring food to us but plenty of transportation for this kind of thing - it was sickening. During the next hour the din and shouting grew louder till it could be heard far out over the campus, and terror struck me through. What might not those demons be up to, what might not they do? So I told Roberta to stay right with me, not to leave the room without me. And we settled down to rest. But by time for us to return to the shanty, things were quiet again, for which I was truly thankful.

On the fourth came another heavy cut in our cereal ration. Corn and rice was about all that we were being fed by the Japanese all else came from the gardens. And now that the banana grove was beginning to produce again, that was called off limits to the internees. There was no garbage any more except in the Japanese garbage cans, and I have watched from my window men, women and children make raids on the one that stood underneath that window. All of the peelings from the vegetables that were prepared by our women for our kitchens were saved by the workers who almost fought for them. Whatever could be cooked without paring was not pared for the kitchens, as that would give more calories for the whole of the camp. The daily average of calories per capita issued to the camp by the Japanese for the month of January averaged 723.7. The average man requires 3000-3500 daily for light labor. And the doctors say that 2400 are necessary to sustain one who lies quietly in bed.
Our rationing from our private stores had been made to take us safely to the end of the year supplemented, of course, by the kitchen. Now at the first of January we were almost wholly dependent on what we got from the kitchen. At that time our larder inventoried in total: 15 pounds of rice, 15 cans corned beef, 1 can Spam, 1 small can cooking fat, 2 cups flour, 1 qt. vinegar, 1 qt. sugar, 1 small box of tea, 50 small heads of garlic, 1 pound can of salt, several almost empty cans of seasonings and spices. Roberta had 1½ pound can of Klim, the vitavose and cans which Roy and Lou had given her — and these were for no one but her. Aside from this we had the vegetables from Roberta's garden. We held a family conference and took a vote as to how the remainder of our stores was to be rationed: whether to open one can a day for fifteen days, or make one can do for two days? The vote was cast unanimously for the latter. We would use this for our noon meal and thus meet February first with larder completely empty.

Our big planes came back on the sixth and this time with their load of deadly missiles. They came about nine o'clock. Roberta and I went to the Main Building for refuge for I knew what was in store. And what a pasting! The whole earth shook, and the building felt as though it were in the clutches of some huge monster; it lasted all day as wave after wave of planes came over—not a Japanese plane in defense. At noon that day the Japanese announced over the loud speaker set up that they were withdrawing from the camp as they did not wish to cause useless bloodshed there. And were we jubilant. Those days would have been filled with thrills, if only Red Cross supplies could have gotten through to us and there had not been that strain of hunger and fear that we could not hold out to the end. Then the Japanese started their burning of papers and records. And so far as I know the Commandant and his staff really did leave camp. I saw cars leave which I was told took the lot of them. Mr. Carroll was left in full charge of the camp, as designated by the Commandant. But on the 9th the lot of them were back and a statement was issued by the Commandant that due to change of plans he and his staff were not leaving. On the tenth "our boys" dropped leaflets saying that the ... “battle of the Philippines is now in its final phase ...” and warning the people of the city to stay at home. So it was true that "our boys" were near, very near. If only the Japanese had really retired and left the camp to us, in the space of a few hours time Chinese merchants would have filled our food store rooms for us. Why did they return, were they trapped, did they change their minds and prefer to surrender at Santo Tomas or were they ordered back by Fort Santiago, or was it just a ruse to see if they would find disorder and thus have excuse for further punishments? I could never decide, for I never learned whether or not they really left, though I saw baggage and supplies being loaded into trucks in front of the Ed Building.

The next three days were ones of very heavy raids. Dozens of our big bombers came in waves and there were heavy detonations of demolition all through the day and night and all knew “there was something in the air”! At long, long last it would be sometime soon now for us. One morning while Carl and I were at work in the garden just outside the shanty door a piece of ack-ack fell between us. Had it been a foot further in either direction one of us would have been hit. I picked it up to save as a souvenir and as a warning for people to stay in. We had been very careful, so we thought, and had stayed in until after the planes had all disappeared, but that piece of shrapnel fell just the same.
It was in the middle of the month when I began to realize that all of the sounds of explosion were not caused by our planes. Some of these detonations had continued for a couple of nights when there were no planes over; and I realized that it was the Japanese. Were they really leaving the city and burning and blowing the bridges behind them? Carl had claimed from the first that this would be the case. I felt that he was not right. I usually was much more optimistic than he, but I thought I knew the Japanese character better than that. Why should they not leave our beautiful city and go away to some prepared battlefield while there was time to defend themselves in an honorable way, where they might have a chance? I told Carl that made too much sense; that it was the clean, decent, honorable and American-like way of doing things but those little Japanese could be counted on to fight from street to street. They did this, and more! Fires were started and buildings that would not burn destroyed with dynamite or time bombs. It became evident after a few days of demolition and fires what was being done. They took it in a systematic way, starting fully two weeks before the Americans reached the city, building after building until the whole city was destroyed, and then the whole set on fire thus razing 16 square miles.

As early as the thirteenth water came in only a trickle. Whether or not it was being used to fight the fires or whether mains were then blown I do not know, but if the Japanese had started burning the city who would dare fight the flames – another question I did not decide and do not have the exact data. We were told to keep our containers filled with water and this we did at all times. Roberta and I kept our hair and everything washed in preparation of shortage. I did not know but that this was another of the Japanese threats; they had held the threat of no salt for us for months. How thankful I was that our men had dug those emergency wells in different places on the campus which were filled with muddy water. One cannot go long without water and to suffer from thirst in that hot climate is greater than to suffer from shortage of food. When the stomach is too empty I do not get hungry. I get nauseated and food is revolting and sickening to the thought, but water and sleep one must have. We were in a tight spot and I could not think too much about it and keep my balance -- that much I realized. So I took what the day had to offer and tried to see that Roberta came through as unhurt as possible. On the fourteenth the water pressure was so low that water could not reach the second floor of the building. I was on bathroom duty that morning. All I did was to stand guard and prohibit any to enter unless she carried her own container of water. The next entries I copy practically verbatim.

January 22nd - Rumors, guesses, speculations as to what to expect, I now understand what people mean when they advise, "Live one minute at the time". I shall.

January 23rd - Two shells whistled through our shanty section this morning. I heard the one that burst near by our shanty sending its splinters through the Lenox shanty, breaking dishes. Another piece burned Bobby Berman's back. The other shell came through the roof and burst in the bathroom on the third floor of the Ed Building. No one was hurt but Bill said, "It was a thrill".
January 24th -- Continued action and food is very scarce. Breakfast: cornmeal mush, coffee (we are cooking the grounds over these days after sunning, drying them and adding a tablespoon of fresh). Lunch: ½ can corned beef (for four), rice, talinum and potato tops. Supper: Rice, 2 cups soup for the four to which I added 2 tablespoons of soy beans and 2 tablespoons of cornmeal mush.

January 25th -- Many people are sick with the hospital overflowing. Almost everybody has beri-beri. Thank heavens, we are well if we are not strong. No one stands erect and to walk far is an effort -- everyone just creeps along. I take the trip back and forth to the shanty very slowly and find it best to use the rail in doing the stairway -- better to rest for a minute on the landing.

January 26th -- Today there was bombing, demolition, gunfire and fires on all sides and hunger, hunger, hunger everywhere. Our hosts again show signs of retiring. Baggage and supplies are piled high in the door of the Ed Building and all afternoon they have kept two huge fires going in front of that building burning great arms full of papers. Why? Why? Why?

January 28th -- I opened my carton of calcium today. A friend needs it so I opened it to give her six of the injections, thinking that would be half. I found 25 so have suggested that Carl join me in taking the remainder. They will give strength that we both need. But he refuses. I shall go ahead with my injections, for I feel the need of them.

January 29th -- Sam was taken to the hospital very ill with pneumonia. He looks very badly. Pauley is with him constantly. There has been heavy activity today -- but all of the days seem that way. There is so much din and noise. Roy and Lou remain so true -- there are always cigarettes for me and always something special for Roberta at night. What would we do without those faithful friends? We can now see flashes and hear guns at night in the north and in the east. Can our boys be so near or is it that the Filipinos just can't wait -- they are hungry too, those in the city -- and have the guerillas taken over? I hope that it is "our boys".

January 30th -- Sam being very low, I spent every possible minute with Pauline at the hospital today.

January 31st -- Sam passed away a few minutes after I left Pauley at 12:30. I had stopped by the hospital on my way to the Main Building. Pauley is wonderful. Carl and I are helping her all we can. Sam's death certificate gives cause as starvation -- to stand by and see a dear friend and fine man like Sam go because it does not please the whims of the heathen to feed us! What an opportunity Japan is passing up. She could leave all of these internees who represent the Americans, all of the British and Dutch Empires with a kindly feeling toward them. They have had their opportunity during these three long years and one month of internment under them. But what will be the reaction of these five thousand people who will be scattered over the face of the world after liberation when Japan will be on her knees at our mercy. The
response that the Japanese will have conditioned is one of total distrust forever after, wherever an internee is met. What an opportunity Japan had and so callously turned down to her everlasting dishonor in defeat.

February 1st — Planes, rumbles, rumors, and recipes, have filled the waking part of the day for me. A little more food today from the kitchen. I wonder why? Our weights now are as follows: Carl 116, Roberta 70, and mine is 88 pounds. Eleven deaths in the last three days had certificates marked “starvation”. Dr. Stevenson, in charge, was ordered to change the certificates to some other cause but he refused, and furthermore refused to fake the certificates that would be forthcoming — he is now in jail by order of the Commandant. A man after my heart! Fires are still blazing brightly — many heavy detonations. The city now looks as though it is a roaring inferno and as though there will be nothing left on the other side of the river. Come on America, is my prayer. Every night now the Japanese burn records in the improvised kitchen under our window — all night long they work at it. The flashes and reports of gunfire continue, Roberta and the children of the room watch them before going to bed. Those who know the directions say that those from the north are on the main road leading into the city and those in the east are out Mariquina Valley way — are they right or is it just the Guerrilla bands? I hardly dare hope.

February 2nd — A little more food continues. Today we had a lunch of soy beans from the line — imagine that! We had them with our rice and did not open a can of beef. Supper: mush and kidney beans — what is happening? Also sauce and greens. I know that Roberta is hungry now, for I hear her turning at night and I know that there are gnawing pains in her tummy — it is breaking my heart — there is not a complaint out of her. She is too genuine to complain. She knows that her mother and daddy are doing everything in their power for her, and she is far too true to even say that she would like more food; however, inadvertently, she told me a lot today when she innocently asked me if she might have two cans of corned beef one day after the Americans come. To which I promised that if she still felt that way about it she could have them. I would prepare them any way that she chose and would be happy to do so. Later the offer with many smiles was declined — she had many things that were better, thank heavens. Roberta called me at 11:00 P.M. and from a window of the room we watched flashes and heard heavy reports. Definitely the guns were nearer! There were fires both in the north and in the east — it must be “our boys” and they were advancing. At any rate I let myself go to sleep with that thought in mind — only a few more days at the most and we would have made the long hard grade!!

February 3rd — At 6:30 A.M. the guns were still going strong. There were seven huge fires to be seen in the north and the east from our room windows. I stood and watched. Had I known guns I would have been able to determine the make and would have known that they were ours. But I stood and would not allow myself to think or feel that they were not ours. Mary and I were at the window together. We both decided that this was the day and that it called for a celebration on just what we could observe from that window. I dashed down and got hot water and made for us a strong cup of coffee (coffee from the Red Cross kits received more than thirteen months ago). It was good. Then Mary produced a couple of cigarettes. I shall not forget that
morning. We both felt that before the end of the day something big would happen. And so Mary and I began that day with my coffee and her cigarettes as a starter for what was to follow. Everybody though the building was excited over the flashes and the sound of the guns. Not much sleeping had been done. The excitement was too much for many and their weakened condition told on them by the floor being wet all the way to the bathroom. I had slept very well during the night, and at breakfast even Carl said, “not later than Wednesday”. This was Saturday morning. I then decided that I would open and use a whole can of corned beef at noon – that would leave two. I had been so carefully rationing the supplies that the three cans were brought over from January. And I now felt that those three cans were sufficient to last us until “our boys” came with food, good food, and more food than we could use. What a feeling! I celebrated with the one can of corned beef for lunch.

(Siesta) -- Roberta is invited to have arroz Valenciana with her very dear friends the Kosters. A written invitation was delivered by Mr. Koster in person just after breakfast. What angels they have been to her! When he delivered the note, Mr. Koster told me that he had made arrangements with Mr. Ohashi (he had known him for years) to bring in extra food for certain children and Roberta is included on the list. Again I wept with gratitude. Carl and I have now each had two shots of calcium. Already I feel stronger this afternoon. It is raining. I hope it stops before the pathway to the shanty gets muddy. Roberta is getting all prettied up for the dinner and her shoes must be kept dry – no strength these days for colds. Shanties are leaky, drafty and dangerous. She must carry along her sweater.

(After roll call): Something big is brewing. I can feel it in the air, I can see it in the air and I can hear it in the air! Mary and I are standing at the window in the room again and we definitely do hear the drone of tanks. Are they ours or are they Japanese ones that are coming into the city? The whole picture says that they are ours. I am almost afraid to believe, I who have waited so long for this moment – can it be, or am I dreaming? As we were making ready to leave the shanty to answer the 5:30 roll call many small planes appeared all over the campus doing stunts around the Commandant’s office, over the Main Building, the hospital, up and down the drive ways, across the campus and right down over the shanty tops, barely clearing the rooms. As they played around and came over us we shouted and cheered and I took out my red handkerchief and waved it round and round like mad. We were not supposed to demonstrate but we broke bounds down in our section, thankful that there were no Japanese observing us. Carl said that is must mean that they’re coming in and was as excited as Roberta, Bill and I were. On arriving for roll call one of the little girls from the room says that a pair of goggles were dropped in the patio. She knew the man who picked them up and he told her that rolled up in them was a note which read, “Christmas has come. Roll out the barrel. We’re coming in". We can now hear the approaching tanks assisted by machine gun fire. Mary and I are comparing notes, weeping, squeezing each other and giggling. The excitement is terrific. Outside the walls the people are shouting at the tops of their voices, as though they are going wild. And they are not screams of terror. They are shrieks of wild delight! It must be “our boys”. We can now see the Japanese taking supplies out of the Ed Building, sack after sack of rice. “Look”, cries Mary, “One sack has
broken. The Japanese are working feverishly. Now children are beginning to gather and collect the spilled rice. They are filling their skirts and skirts. There is a Japanese now shoeing them away. Darkness is falling rapidly. The tanks are coming in. They will pass on the street in back of the building, I will be able to see them from the balcony of Hazel’s room. I must hurry there.

I am now writing in the dark. I met Hazel in the hall coming to me so excited and so out of breath that she could hardly talk. She said that all at once the Japanese came rushing up to the room and closed all windows and said, “Now keep all children away from windows, windows very dangerous.” “But”, she said, “There is street fighting, for I saw tracer bullets of different colors with my own two eyes! What is it?” she asked. “It can only mean an insurrection which the Japanese are trying to squelch, or that ‘our boys’ have come”, I answered. “How about ham and eggs for breakfast?” but she was lost in the rush! Bedlam prevails. The hall is in complete blackness but I manage to find my way back to the window where Mary and Roberta are. What a night! Flares are around. The first one made me think for a moment that fire had suddenly broken out in the campus, but I now see that they are flares. Boo calls me to the door and in a whispered voice says, “Lucy, ‘our boys’ are at the gate. There are tanks that have lights that look like periscopes. I have seen them”. After she had gone I made the announcement aloud just as she gave it to me, but someone laughed. I am now back at the window – again flares from the front of the building. What can it mean? Mary, Roberta and I decide that we will go to Helen’s room (which is on the front) and see for ourselves just what it is all about. It was now nearly nine o’clock. We had just reached the corridor when all at once the yell, “They’ve come”, almost lifted the roof. Everybody started running for the front door to meet them. Mary and I started and Roberta said, “Mother, may I go?” I told her that I was afraid she might get run over in the rush and asked her to wait in the room till I came back for her as I would do if it were true. She turned to go. Then I said, “Come with me, hold my hand and stay close to me, we will not try running”... I now realized that never again would she have such an experience and did not want her to miss any of it. We had lost Mary in the rush. When Roberta and I reached the top of the stairway there was such a jam I knew that neither hearing nor seeing was possible. So we went into Karen’s room which was almost center on the front, overlooking the front entrance, the whole plaza and driveway. When General Chase’s speech was announced we went to the top of the stairs and the maddening din grew quiet. Then he said in a booming voice that none could miss, “We’re here. We’ve had a hell of a time getting here. And I know that you’re damned glad to see us”. Then again while the roof went off with the noise of cheers, Roberta and I returned to Karen’s room to feast our eyes. I felt that I’d never tire of looking at what I beheld.

We occupied ringside seats in a window (and we knew that they were ringside seats). Everybody was gone from the room. We were not in time to see the very first tanks as they came down the driveway. But we were in time for the most of them – and there they were, our own glorious boys covered with mud and dust and sweat and speaking “American”. Most of them were tall and brown and muscular and looked as though they were just all khaki from head to toe except for the smiles which spread from ear to ear. And the Southern drawl they were speaking took me right back home. They had come. What an experience! Words failed, and so I just
wept with happiness and gratitude. Freedom and food and the security we had waited for so long had come with those Yanks and tanks and jeeps and flares. We saw Mr. Ohashi, Mr. Hirosi and Mr. Tamari come out all dressed in uniform between guards—American guards—and led away to jail, the jail where our doctor was awaiting his release. Abico, the dog who was in charge of roll call and who had recently made the remark, “The Americans do not treat the Japanese with enough courtesy”, was dead and lay in a heap on the plaza near a truck with a shelter half thrown over him. He had been caught by one of “our boys” trying to draw a gun and was shot like the dog he was.

Siragi, the big fat pig who was in charge of our food warehouse, led the Japanese guards who barricaded themselves in with the internees in the Ed Building and would not surrender. One tank turned its guns on the Ed Building for a few minutes to show them who held the upper hand, but still they would not surrender. There were tracer bullets in red and green and yellow — the first that I had seen.

Carl came later with a pocket full of chocolate and gum for Roberta, coffee and cigarettes for me. It had happened. It had all happened too quickly for words. Thank heaven we were liberated before they tried to take the city! Neither Carl nor I could express all we felt, so we just sat in silence. He drank all of the coffee. I did not want it. I did not need stimulation. I had had enough. All I wanted was to go to bed and sleep and rest in the security that “our boys” offered us as they took over and stood guard at the gate that had shut us into this unreal world for so long, and revel in the knowledge that they would be there on awakening in the morning and the gate would from now on be opened to all that was good, and to the new life that lay ahead for us. We were safe now, I must relax and let down. Was I too blase’? No, it was not that. It was a deep gratitude and thankfulness that did not call for celebration. Just to be there safe and with my own was enough. And so with prayers I fell asleep -- a real sleep that comes when worries have come to an end.