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Nietzsche Nansen Laotse Ipsen Liebknecht Ringelnatz
Marx Lassalle Gorki Klett Leibniz
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Blood Brothers A Medic's Sketch Book

Colonel Eugene C. Jacobs

Imprint

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DEDICATION

To

my wife, Judy, a beautiful person.

PREFACE*

The purpose of Blood Brothers is to acquaint the reader with a series of harrowing incidents experienced by the isolated U.S. Armed Forces in the Far East during World War II.

We might well be voicing the words of Saint Paul which were recorded in his Second Letter to the Corinthians, Chapter I) verse 8:

"For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life!"

Of his First Guerrilla Regiment, General Douglas MacArthur stated that "He had acquired a force behind the Japanese lines that would have a far reaching effect on the war in the days to come"; that it had kept "Freedom's Flames burning brightly throughout the Philippines"; that it had produced a "human drama with few parallels in military history"; and later, during the landing in Lingayen Gulf, had "accomplished the purposes of practically a front line division."

MacArthur further stated that "the courageous and splendid resistance maintained by you and your command filled me with pride and satisfaction."

Of the Hell Ship Oryoku Maru, Gen. James O. Gillespie stated "it was probably the most horrible story of suffering endured by prisoners of war during World War II."

Gen. John Beall further stated, "You say a lot of things that need to be said, lest the United States forgets the horrors of the way the Japanese treated our prisoners."

In writing Blood Brothers, I found it necessary to resort to frequent flashbacks; and to keep the reader aware of the history taking place around the world, I tried to make reference to these events as they happened, even when they were merely rumors.

This story has not been pleasant to write; I'm glad it is finally finished.

In Blood Brothers, there are no heroes. The survivors of the Philippines arrived home in 1945, quietly and without recognition, to be admitted to hospitals near their homes.

With winners and heroes everywhere, there was no time for "Losers."

Eugene C. Jacobs

"Our senses can grasp nothing that is extreme! Too much noise deafens us! Too much light blinds us! Too far or too near prevents our seeing! Too long or too short is beyond understanding! Too much truth stuns us!"

Blaise Pascal

*General Harold K. Johnson, a former Chief of Staff of the United States Army, had been a former Japanese prisoner-of-war, had experienced each and every event as it happened to other P.O.W.s, and had been an excellent friend through more than thirty years of Army service; he had agreed to write this PREFACE; unfortunately, this was followed by a long hospitalization ending in terminal cancer.

CONTENTS

I Bombs Fall on Camp John Hay, Rest and Recreation Center, in the Philippines

II The Orange Plan (WPOIII)

III MacArthur's First Guerrilla Regiment

Col. Warner Surrenders the 14th Infantry

Japanese Prisoner of War Camp No.1, Cabanatuan

IV Japanese Atrocities

V Americans

VI "Old" Bilibid Prison

VII Japan Detail - Oriental Tour - Strictly Third Class

X Japan

XI Camp Hoten, Mukden, Manchuria

XII Japan Surrenders

XIII Start Home

XIV The Good Old U.S.A

XV Borrowed Time

Appendix

Acknowledgments

*MY SKETCHES

During the first few weeks of our incarceration in Japanese Prisoner-of-War Camp No.1 in the Philippines, 1,500 (25% of our 6,000 captives) died of starvation, malnutrition, various vitamin deficiencies, malaria, diphtheria and various wounds that would not heal. I knew that within another 6 to 8 months, we would all be dead, and there would be no record of it. There was no paper to keep any record of events.

Within a few weeks, I was able to obtain a" nickel school notebook. In it, I drew many sketches, depicting the lifestyle in prison camp.

Of course, I had to be secretive. There was a penalty for keeping records in camp; if I'd been caught, I would have been beheaded.

By the time we were being processed for transfer to Old Bilibid Prison in late October 1944, I had made some 110 sketches. I rolled them up and placed them in a Mason jar. I buried the jar at the east end of building No. 12, planning to come back after the war and dig it up.

...

When the war was over, I was flown from Mukden, Manchuria to Kunming, China and on to Manila, P.I., where I was housed in a tent at Reple Depot # 29 south of the city. The next day I was flown in a Piper Cub back to Cabanatuan to look for my drawings, landing at an airfield we had built as prisoner-labor. A battalion of Engineers furnished a bulldozer.

The camp buildings were all gone. I figured out where building # 12 had been. We dug for hours and found nothing.

As fate would have it, one year after I returned to Active Duty at Walter Reed General Hospital in Washington, D.C., I located my 110 sketches at the Pentagon. MacArthur's Sixth Army Rangers had retrieved the buried drawings when they liberated Camp #1 in late January 1945.

All of my sketches had been carefully numbered, and marked on the back

"Unidentified Artist." I had been officially declared an artist.

INTRODUCTION

In Japanese prisoner of war camps, all prisoners were divided into groups of ten, called "blood brothers."

If anyone of the ten "blood brothers" made any attempt to escape, the other nine would be punished "Sevelery!"

Typical punishments:

Tie the blood brothers to fence posts and require each passing Japanese soldier to slap and kick them.

More severe punishment required recruits to use the bound brothers for bayonet practice.

The most severe punishment required an officer to unsheathe his samurai sword and behead the "brothers."

My ten blood brothers, all Medical Officers of the Regular Army, were:

Lt. Col. William Draper North

Major James Bahrenberg

Wilbur Berry

Wesley Bertz*

Eugene Jacobs

Emmert Lentz

Steven Sitter

Clarence Strand *

Clarence White*

Captain Robert Lewis

The blood brothers with the asterisk (*) were killed or died on "Hell Ships" enroute to Japan.

The other brothers survived the rigors of Bataan, the "Death March" Japanese prison camps, labor details, the "farm," and "Hell Ships" to return to the United States. Since the war, all have died, except the author, who is anxious to tell his story before the first reunion of the "brothers."

STAFF Camp John Hay Baguio, Mountain Province, P.I.

Lt. Col. John P Horan, Commanding Officer

Capt. Hubert (Sandy) Ketchum (Cav. Adjutant)

Major Henderson Allen, (Q.M.C.) Supply

Major James Blanning (Cav.)

Major Ronald McDonald, Company A

Captain Ralph Rumbold, Company B

Captain Francis Fellows, Post Exchange Officer

Captain Everett Warner, Provost Officer

Captain Parker Calvert,

Captain Eugene C. Jacobs, Post Surgeon and Hospital Commander

Captain Ruby Bradley, A.N.C., Chief Nurse

Lieut. Beatrice Chambers, A.N.C.

Lieut. Clifford Simenson, Enlisted Men's Dormitories

Lieut. Harold Everman, Signal Officer

Lieut. Cowan,

Lieut. Evans,

Sgt. R.M. Trent

Sgt. Bennet

Sgt. King

Sgt. Hayes

Sgt. Beck

Sgt. Farmer

Sgt. Sibert

Sgt. Adkins

Regret that I can not remember the names of some 200 others on duty at

Camp John Hay; they were all very dedicated personnel.

Chapter I

BOMBS FALL ON CAMP JOHN HAY, REST AND RECREATION CENTER IN THE PHILIPPINES

The phone next to my bed was ringing with a great deal of determination. Half-asleep, I raised the receiver:

"WE ARE AT WAR WITH JAPAN! PEARL HARBOR IS BEING BOMBED! REPORT TO HEADQUARTERS AT ONCE!" It was 0500 hours, December 8th, 1941.

Hawaiian time, it was 1030 hours, December 7th. The bombing was still going on, lasting from 0755 to 1050 hours.

Greatly surprised and quite groggy, I tried to collect my thoughts while getting into my freshly starched uniform, Medical Corps, U.S. Army: "Knocking out the Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor could clear the way for Japan to conquer the Philippine Islands, without any outside interference. Of all the Pacific territories of the United States, the Japanese most wanted the Philippines. General MacArthur, as well as the Japanese, believed that the Philippine Islands were the 'Key to the Orient'; Japan would have to take the Philippines before attempting to conquer any other countries in Southeast Asia. Some Navy admirals had recently remarked that the 'Pacific Fleet belongs in San Diego!' If the Japanese should sink one ship in Pearl Harbor (the so-called Mouse Trap), they could bottle up the entire fleet. Now, with the Pacific Fleet crippled, there could be no rescue attempt. For several years we had been aware that in the event of an invasion, all our defending military forces would hole-up on the Bataan Peninsula, where supplies and equipment had previously been stored, until the U.S. Navy, the most powerful in the world, could come to our rescue (Orange Plan-WPO III). "

By 0530 hours, I was standing in the office of Lt. Col. John Horan, Post Commander of Camp John Hay, waiting for instructions. I was

a captain and a doctor, the C.O. of the thirty five bed station hospital.

Saluting the colonel, I was told to sit down and wait for further instructions. It was dark and cold. Maps and orders were on the colonel's dimly lighted desk. Other officers were beginning to arrive.

Don Bell's voice blared forth from Radio KZRH in Manila: "Those dirty little bastards have struck Pearl Harbor! Reports remain sketchy, but there is no doubt! "Oh God!" Bell was actually crying, near hysteria, as he continued: "The yellow-bellied Japs have hit our ships at anchor!"

Everyone was extremely excited; the air was becoming blue with cigarette smoke. No one was talking; we were all intently listening for any late news. Several junior officers were openly nipping on pocket flasks. I thought to myself, "This is one time when I'm going to need all my marbles." We had recently returned two junior officers for alcoholism; they couldn't cope with the tropics even in peacetime. Or did they outsmart me and get back to the States to sit out the war?

No news was coming in; we were all anxious to get back to our units to make necessary preparations for war, but had to await instructions. For months we had anticipated war with Japan. We were the nearest U.S. base to Japan, so were very sensitive to any war-like talk or gestures. Actually, the thoughts of war hadn't bothered me too much; a farmer had once told me, "If you are going to get kicked by a mule, it is best to be close to the mule!" Over the last forty years, we knew the Japanese had been preparing for war, taking scrap iron and raw materials from the Philippines to Japan. Now, we had a strange feeling that we might be getting some of these materials back in a more sophisticated form.

We had no idea how, when or where this war would begin in the Philippines. The last place we expected it would happen was Camp John Hay, a Rest and Recreation Center (R.&R.), offering a delightful climate for military and naval personnel and their dependents on duty in the Far East, desiring temporary relief from the intense heat and humidity of the lowlands.

Camp John Hay was pleasantly located one mile above sea level amongst the pine trees of Mountain Province in Baguio, the summer capital of the Philippines. It was only twenty miles from the beautiful white sand beaches, the stately palms and the sweltering sun of Lingayen Gulf. Camp Hay actually had no real military value. It had been set

aside in 1903 as a recreation area by President Theodore Roosevelt, and named after his Secretary of State, John Milton Hay. The same year Roosevelt designated Baguio as the summer capital of the Philippines.

In December, 1941, there were only two companies of the 43rd Infantry of Philippine Scouts (P.S.), a housekeeping detachment, stationed there. The camp had no fortifications and no large weapons, only a few wooden barracks and some one hundred or so obsolete rifles of W. W. I. vintage. There was one small salute cannon for raising and lowering "Old Glory."

Looking back several months to July, 1941, when General MacArthur was appointed Commanding General of the U.S. Armed Forces in the Far East (USAFFE), he recruited 110,000 young Filipinos for the Philippine Army (P.A.). It would be many months before they could be trained as they spoke some sixty dialects. They looked more like boy scouts than soldiers with their fiber helmets, sport shirts and tennis shoes.

About the same time, War Plan Rainbow 5 was adopted by Roosevelt's Joint Army-Navy Board: first the Allies would conquer Germany and Italy. As for Japan, the Allied strategy in the Far East was purely defensive. MacArthur opposed the idea of the Philippines being abandoned, but agreed with the plan "to defend all Philippine soil." He told his officers: "The beaches must be defended at all costs; prevent the enemy from making any landing!"

We at Camp John Hay believed ourselves reasonably safe in this mountain resort, even when war seemed imminent. President Manuel Quezon also must have considered himself secure in Camp Hay as he was in residence at the beautiful presidential mansion.

Finally, Colonel Horan, standing tall behind his desk, announced: "I have been unable to obtain any new information from USAFFE in

Manila. I understand the damage done to the Pacific Fleet in Pearl Harbor has been extensive. Captain Warner (CO. of Military Police (M.P.): take your M.P.s and any scouts that you need, round up all Japanese civilians in the Baguio area, and bring them into camp!

"Lieutenant Velasco: build an eight-foot fence around Barracks 8 and 9; confine all Japanese internees there!

"Other officers: acquaint your troops with the present war situation, and War Plan Rainbow 5. Stay near your telephones!"

At 0730 hours, with a lump in my throat and a complete loss

of appetite, I tried to swallow a few bites of breakfast at the Officers' Mess, overlooking the gorgeous valleys below. Everyone was excited, wondering what the next news would be. Normally I would have walked the few blocks from the hospital to the mess hall and back, just for the exercise; this morning I drove my 1936 Model A coupe. Time might become very important at any moment.

At 0800 hours I was in my office in the hospital, on a hill overlooking Camp Hay, carefully studying my orders and maps.

At 0805 hours our two Army nurses, Captain Ruby Bradley and Lieutenant Beatrice Chambers, entered my office. I inquired, "Do you know that we are at war with Japan?"

Before either could answer, bombs were falling on all sides of the hospital. "There they are!" I exclaimed. Not yet realizing how dangerous the bombs could be, we casually walked to the windows and watched the tremendous explosions moving across the camp-toward headquarters-raising clouds of dust to the rooftops. The war arrived at Camp John Hay at 0809 hours, Dec. 8, 1941. Between twenty and twenty-five twin-engine bombers were overhead in a diamond formation. Soon some 150 bombs of various sizes were bringing disability and death to many of our soldiers-drilling on the parade ground-and to their families in their small homes. It seemed unreal that Camp Hay could be the first target of the Japanese bombers, actually starting World War II in the Philippines.