

**DIARY NOTES 1942** Karl Kirsch

**16/2/42** : Last evening I received the news from Rev. Willi Hertle that a ship with Australian soldiers was already on the way to pick us up. Soon after I received this news, a pinnace sailed into Finschhafen. Right away I sent a reliable messenger to Maneba (the ship's wharf) to see how many men would be disembarking from the boat, but it was already too late, as all had disembarked and were in the shed quarters there. The messenger could only report that there were quite a few soldiers. I informed the brothers on Sattelberg and in Wasutieng immediately. Throughout the night I tidied things up and packed some items. In the morning I went through the wards and attended to the sick; and there was much distress and wailing. Later I distributed medicines to the villagers and the elders of the congregations, in order to still help the people a little. Other medicines, which the medical orderlies could use later, I hid. I made Zozinggao responsible for administering them. We cleaned out the store and the workers were paid. All the files were put in order and some personal items were given to near-by villages. Kamlauwa village received our bell which was tolled a last time in our small Kakoko church.

In the afternoon I discharged all the patients from the hospital, or more accurately, they were 'put out on the road'. What happened next was very sad because many said goodbye with the words, "Oh Papa we will die". I could only put them "Into His hands Who never leaves us. He will be with them and me even through the world's storms." I had the feeling they knew what was happening. Others said, "You have helped us a lot and we will pray for all of you." All the people from Jabem and Quembung had come to say goodbye. Toward evening I quickly went to the cemetery. I was relieved and happy that I still had had it cleaned so beautifully only the week before.

At 4.00 p.m. Rev. (Wilhelm) Willi Zischler arrived and shortly afterwards Uncles Rev. Herrmann Boettger and Builder Johann Hertle (senior) came, and Rev. Willi Hertle arrived a little later. I still locked up everything, and after we had eaten the evening meal around 6.00 p.m., we made our way to Maneba. Leaving our beautiful Kakoko, and the few people who remained, was extremely difficult. Never before in my life had a farewell been so difficult. "Truly our God is a hidden God." Many such thoughts went through my mind : "Was our Father displeased with our work? – Does He want to continue to build His Kingdom without us?" His ways are holy and this is what I want to learn and believe, even at times like this.

In Maneba we encountered further problems, because all the Christmas Cheer for the Helpers and Evangelists, – which we had assembled and distributed with much difficulty in the last weeks, – was still standing there. We had especially requested that Adolf Obst (Agriculture, UELCA) send them to Heldsbach, if at all possible. But now we had to take everything out, and transfer it into Helper Asang's house. We couldn't give all the New Testaments away. I gave the keys of Kakoko to the Official in Maneba. The Official told us that all houses were to be burnt if the Japanese came any closer. Adolf Obst gave each of us £5 sterling, and all the rest he had buried.

In the evening at 8.00 p.m. we sailed in the direction of Lae on the *Bavaria*, which had become dear to us. Everybody was on board, except for Adolf Wagner who had

fled into the bush. Four soldiers and Adolf Obst had searched for him all day without success.

Suddenly the flourishing work of the Mission had come to an end. Truly He reigns and governs well. He knows our way and future. "Lord, abide with us for night approaches." (cf. Luke 24:29)

**17/2/42** : After a pleasant trip on a good sea, we arrived in the morning in Lae at 7.00 a.m.. En route we did not pick up Uncles Rev. Stephan Lehner (at Hopoi) and Rev. Johann Decker (at Deinzer Hill). On arriving, we immediately had our breakfast on board.

Around 9.00 a.m. an Officer and some soldiers boarded the *Bavaria* and informed us what behaviour was expected of us. When we wanted to have some clarification about what to expect, Adolf Obst immediately suggested that we refrain; and we had to be satisfied with the catch-all English expression, "We only want this for your good". They could promise us nothing!

Soon after 9.00 a.m. we were able to go ashore, – when the first Japanese planes appeared. We were hardly on firm ground, when we had to look for the air-raided shelter trenches for safety. As soon as the sky was clear again, we were loaded into a vehicle with our suitcases, to be driven to the Administrator's residence, which was unoccupied. Since the road had been bombed, we could only be driven to the bottom of the hill, from where we had to carry our suitcases up the hill in the intense heat. The younger ones of our group also had to carry other items up the hill, like food for us.

Uncles Rev. Willi Zischler, Rev. Herrmann Boettger, Rev. Martin Helbig and I were thought to be especially dangerous, and we weren't allowed to take one step outside of the residence's yard.

As far as we could see, much of Lae had been destroyed. The airport and the workshops were hit especially hard. The residential quarters had been spared. Adolf Obst assumed for himself the role of the "Big Boss", and I had a run-in with him, because he tore my torch out of my hand when I was going to the toilet. The situation was very tense.

And only English was to be spoken!

At night there were myriads of mosquitoes; and because Willi Zischler had no mosquito net, we slept under my net for the whole trip.

**18/2/42** : A beautiful morning! After breakfast we had our Devotions.

Immediately after this Dr Agnes Hoeger (Medical, ALC), Uncles Johann Hertle and Rev. Herrmann Boettger, Paul Deutscher (Supply, UELCA) and Röss Boettcher (Administration, ALC) were taken away. They were taken by car to nearby Gabmazung, from where they believed to be taken on by aeroplane.

The rest of us waited until 2.30 p.m. in the afternoon, and then we had to carry all our things back to the *Bavaria*. Adolf Obst and David Rohrlach (Shipping & Builder, UELCA) didn't have to help; they could write letters to their wives; otherwise they were aloof and kept their good distance from the rest of us.

We boarded our old friend, the *Bavaria*, which had never done us any harm, for the last time. Nobody told us where we were sailing, but soon we could tell that we were heading to the mouth of the Buang River. There we had to disembark with our entire luggage to be taken ashore. Adolf Obst and David Rohrlach didn't take the time to say goodbye; we thought that they would be following us.

Three Buang men in their canoes were very surprised to see us disembarking, and picked us up to row us ashore. The three Buangs called out loudly, and suddenly many of their people showed up on the beach to help us unload, much to the anger of the Officer in Charge. Later, all the people were chased away and they weren't allowed to help us gather grass for the night's bedding, or carry our luggage up from the beach.

Now there were only five of us left : We were Willi Zischler, Willi Hertle, Rev. Martin Helbig (UELCA), Edwin Tscharke (Medical, UELCA) and I. We boiled the billy for some tea and opened two tins of meat for the evening meal. For the evening devotions we sang the hymn, "Hinunter ist der Sonnen Schein, (EG 467), ["The sun is set, its light is gone", LH 534], and commended ourselves and all we had into the LORD our God's protecting hands.

One matter I still need to mention is, that when we arrived here the officers and soldiers were bathing in the nude, and then for quite a while they walked around like that among the local villagers. We could clearly see how the locals were repelled by this. Repeatedly the people tried to get close to us, but they were always ordered to withdraw.

During the whole night we were heavily guarded! The bedding in our camp – in spite of the grass we had gathered – had been hard and uncomfortable.

**19/2/42** : In the morning we prepared breakfast for ourselves, and had our devotion at which we sang, "Die güldne Sonne voll Freud und Wonne" (EG 449), ["The golden morning, nature adorning", LH 524]. Then at 7.00 a.m. we broke up camp for the march to Bulwa.

On the march our suitcases were carried by conscripted natives, but we had to carry our rucksacks ourselves. A long train of carriers and guard-soldiers followed. The guards in front of us and those behind us marched with fixed bayonets.

The **Buang River Track** was rough and it was hard for us to trekking up river, we had to cross from the left to the right side again and again. It was hot walking in the sun, and when we crossed the Buang River for the last time on a log, we begged the guards to let us bathe there, and it was permitted. We dropped our gear quickly, pulled out our togs, and refreshed ourselves in the river. When the C.O. arrived he chastised the guards; but our will to live was renewed and strengthened.

We now had to ascend a very steep mountain range, which was a gruelling exercise. Toward noon we heard Japanese planes over Lae and Salamaua. Every hour we had a 10 minute rest. For the last stretch of the ascent Edwin Tscharke and I stepped up our pace, and at 12.00 noon we arrived at Recha village, where we got some tea. Until the other Three arrived, we lay down on the grass and rested. The villagers also gave us a coconut to drink; – we were rather exhausted.

A little later some of the Malal Helpers crept up closer to me – and looking back over my shoulder – we were able to converse in Yabem with each other. They were upset by the way we were being treated; and they told us that Emil Wagner had passed through here a few days ago.

Everybody in the villages was very unsure about what was happening : There were so many soldiers around; – and then there were all those men ("finish-timers" = 'their work permit had expired'), who were on their way home from the goldfields.

It was the last time that I could speak with the Buang natives.

At about 1.00 p.m. the march continued. This section of the track mostly passed through beautiful forest, and we walked in the shade! until we arrived at a Transit Camp at 3.00 p.m.. The Five of us were accommodated in one house with a glorious view of the Buang Valley, and our last view of the sea.

The soldiers gave us a fish and a pumpkin, which we prepared for our noon and evening meals. After a rest and the evening meal, we relaxed and sang some songs before we lay down to sleep. One of the guards who had a guitar along with him, sang songs he had made up about the *Blitzkrieg* and Hitler; but most of the text we couldn't understand.

**20/2/42** : Early, at about 8.00 a.m., we continued on our trek. A number of the carriers had run away, so Martin Helbig's, Willi Hertle's and my suitcase was left behind. We just couldn't carry them ourselves, because the mountain ranges ahead were steep, and it was very hot.

The supposed three hour march became six hours, and we were much tormented by thirst. We heard the mountain stream rushing along its bed below, but weren't close enough to quench our thirst, until at last at 12.00 noon we could scoop up water to drink and cool off. We continued for another hour along the mountain ridge, and then descended for an hour until we reached the village of Mapus.

Here a completely new vista opened up before us : Beautiful, high grass mountain ranges, and deep down in the valley, the Senek River, meandering in many twists and turns. There were many villages on the slopes, and it all looked like a big garden. It was very fruitful land! I just couldn't get to see enough of this magnificent part of creation!

At the Evangelist's station there were many soldiers; and the local natives had to vacate their houses. All of us were accommodated in one house, and grass for our bedding was brought to us, so that we wouldn't come in contact with any of the local natives. One Evangelist, whom I knew, wanted to come to us, but he was immediately banished from the place. Again we were reminded that it was strictly forbidden to talk with any of the natives.

At noon we ate in the soldiers' mess, and in the evening food was brought to our house. We washed at the water-pipeline, which the locals had built out of bamboo. Since Mapus was a very cold place, the water was also very cold! Blisters had developed on Martin Helbig's feet, and "Dr Iron-Beard" (*'Dr Eisenbart'*) put iodine on them. The rest of us didn't want such treatment from this "Doctor". Edwin Tscharke is a very nice chap, but he kept his distance from us; because he was afraid. Our suitcases still haven't arrived. Martin had no blanket, so the soldiers gave him two bags into which he could wrap himself.

**21/2/42** : We were to be ready at 8.00 a.m. in the morning, but only got going at 9.30 a.m.. Martin Helbig now had nothing to carry, because the bread which we still had, was all eaten up. So that he didn't travel with an empty rucksack, he packed the two bags he had received in it, for future use.

The baggage clerk, a kind, elderly man, who already on the previous day had shown his concern for us, saw to it, that we got carriers. A big Mr Papua, who didn't carry anything yesterday, had to carry a double load today. We were thankful that we could walk without our baggage burden, because in the grass covered mountains it got very hot.

We descended down the steep mountainside for about 1500 metres, passing through several villages, to the Senek River, and then walked on along the steep slopes. The wind was strong and we had to be careful not to be blown off the track.

At the river we had a break, and Officer Hitchcock, a beast of a man, ordered that we had to carry our baggage ourselves again! He had been very angry that we could walk without a load; so our carriers could now walk along without a load. The sun beat down mercilessly on us and at 1.00 p.m. we got to a small tributary where lunch was cooked; and we were allowed to have a swim.

After eating lunch, the "Honourable Officer" told us we would continue the trek for an other hour, and he added a second load to the one we were already carrying! We walked and walked and got nowhere! We were at the end of our strength!

By 7.00 p.m. in the evening we had ascended another steep mountain range. By then it was too late to cut grass for bedding for us and for the guards. We didn't even put up the tent, but just collapsed in the grass and lay there for quite a while. Then we went to the first available field-hut and crawled in. We hung our mosquito nets, cooked something to eat because we were very hungry, and lay down to sleep. We were so jam-packed into the hut that one couldn't even turn over; our heads were under cover and our feet stuck outside; but we could observe the stars from our 'camp-bed'. Martin Helbig and Edwin Tucharke slept in another hut. We could hear water rushing in the distance.

**22/2/42** : We got up very early today. During the night it had rained a little, fortunately not much! Edwin was bitten by a centipede and had severe pain. I gave him 'Luminal' which I had along with me, but he could hardly walk, so we took turns carrying his net bag. We could see the Mumeng Mission Station in the distance, but we never got there.

The track turned off to the left and we had to trek across a huge mountain range. The track became steeper and steeper, and we were relieved of some of our rucksacks and the rest we distributed among us.

Again we were supposed to walk for two hours, but it ended up being close to six hours. En route we could take a swim in a small river; the soldiers swam in 'Adam's costume'. We had nothing to eat at noon for lunch. Finally we crossed a fast flowing river and followed it, until we arrived at the Bulwa Hydro-Electric Power Station at 3.30 p.m..

Here we waited nearly an hour, until a vehicle came and took us the last six miles to Bulwa. We were taken directly into the Main Camp where our personal information was recorded, and our registration cards were taken. After we were released there, we were taken to the mess, where we received plenty delicious food and much good, cold milk. The guards then led us to a house where there were mattresses on the floor for the night. We could even have a bath and shave ourselves. Even though it was Sunday, we still washed some of our dirty laundry.

We were allowed to go to the evening meal without a guard!, and we were treated like gentlemen! We could even have a beer!

Jokingly we said : "We think that we'll stay here!", not knowing that this was going to happen. Willi Zischler wasn't feeling at all well; very likely he had been affected by too much sun.

**23/2/42** : Dawn brought a beautiful morning in the mountains.

Right after we had eaten breakfast, we had to take our suitcases to the front of the Main Camp Headquarters, and line them up there.

After requesting permission to write to our wives, this was granted; but we had to stick to communicating only personal matters. With Edwin's help, we wrote a few lines in English, and handed the letters in at the Camp Headquarters; however, later we found out that they never arrived at their destination!

It took a long time before our names were called up for us to go, but Edwin Tscharke and Martin Helbig had to remain behind. Our luggage was loaded on a vehicle with us, but then we could still quickly bid farewell to Martin and Edwin. We shared greetings with each other, to pass on to our wives, not knowing who would see them first! We waved Martin and Edwin farewell, and drove off along the road following the river bed, skirting miles of stony scree, the spoil left after the gold-washing, on the road to Wau. We were hoping this should take us to an aircraft which would bring us to Port Moresby. The whole goldfields' area had been shut down, and the huge dredges and machines lay idle.

After 30 minutes we passed through Bulolo, where a few wrecked aircraft were lying on the airstrip. The whole airstrip had strong wire cables fixed tautly across it, so that no aircraft could land on it.

We continued driving through the goldfield area towards Wau, which was a beautiful small town. In Wau we were taken to the Army Commander in Chief for an interrogation. After a few minutes we were dismissed, and then called in, one at a time; Willi Hertle was first, then I, and last Willi Zischler. It was proposed to us to swear an oath of neutrality. We asked for time for reflection, secretly hoping to have opportunity to consult with each other; but this was not possible, because each one of us now had to wait in a room by himself.

Then we were called in again individually, – and were told: “If you swear an oath of neutrality, you can walk free!” When I asked whether I could return to my work, the reply was in the negative! This answer implied to me, that consequently I was considered a prisoner; and as such I couldn't swear the oath.

The Three of us had had the same experience, and after getting it behind us, we were happy that we could still be together. We were taken to have a meal, which we ate very quietly at a wobbly table.

We got back into the vehicle to return to Bulwa. The guards had something to eat in Bulolo, but we weren't even allowed to get out to go to the toilet. It was hot, and a sympathetic soldier, standing near by, brought us some cold water. Then by 6.00 p.m. in the evening we were back in Bulwa.

When we alighted from the vehicle there, we were met by five heavily armed soldiers, waiting to take us into custody. In single file we were marched to an empty storeroom to be locked up. The room was very hot, and had strong mesh across all the openings. Everything was taken off us, except mosquito net, blanket, toiletries, and pyjamas. When the door to the place was locked, we had a good laugh first of all, for our nerves were tautly stretched. Guards were deployed around the building, and a heavy steel bar was placed across the door. If one of us had to go to the toilet, then all Three of us had to go, because it took nearly five minutes to get to the facility. There was no access to water for a wash. The evening meal was brought to us. Three mattresses were lying on the floor. The whole room was extremely filthy. Willi Hertle had forgotten to unpack his mosquito net, so the three of us slept under one net. Now we were definitely prisoners!

**24/2/42** : At 6.00 a.m. in the morning we were woken up, and taken to the toilet, one at a time! It was a real running the gauntlet through half the town. We were glad to

be back in the cage. We couldn't and weren't allowed to wash ourselves. Breakfast was at 7.00 a.m., and was brought to us. The cook himself inquired whether we had received enough. He was a very nice gentleman from Lae, called Jacobson, who had a good association with Lutheran Mission. Afterwards he even brought us ice-water. Toward noon it became really unbearably hot in the hut, but we tried to remain lively, singing songs and playing games.

Then at 4.00 p.m. the door opened suddenly, and a Japanese man (Sasaki) was pushed in, and immediately the door was closed again. The Japanese man bowed three times, his forehead nearly touching the floor, and then he sat down in a corner. He gave the impression of being a very sick man, and he actually was very sick! He had a high fever and looked miserable. We were able to converse quite well with him in Melanesian Pidgin, and he could tell us a few things.

Toward evening his fever rose, and he had to vomit a lot. We requested an empty tin, but never received one, so all the vomit went on the floor. We demanded that a doctor come to see him, but this didn't eventuate, rather some sort of assistant arrived, who didn't understand too much. I gave him quinine and some other medicine, which Sasaki vomited immediately.

He begged for some hot water and brewed some medicine for himself : He said, he had some dried snake's liver, of which he sliced a few slivers into the hot water, stirred it and drank it. He maintained that it was very good against Blackwater fever, which he had had five times already, and it had always worked for him. As soon as he had taken it, he fell asleep, – and broke out in a sweat. Again we asked for water to wash, but we didn't receive any.

**25/2/42** : Sasaki's condition had improved, but he wouldn't eat. Towards noon an officer arrived for an inspection. When we heard he was coming, all of us quickly took a coffee cup, put a little of our drinking water in it, and began to wash ourselves. They did catch on to this behaviour, and we were supplied with a wash-basin and a bucket of water. A toilet was put up close to our storeroom.

We sat in this cage for the whole day, in stifling heat, with countless mosquitoes. We passed the time with singing songs. Sasaki's fever returned again, so I still gave him Atebrin (Anti-Malaria drug).

In the evening the cook visited us again; there was ample food, and he sent coffee instead of tea. Later the guards left the door open a little, so that we had a bit of airflow. We could even sit on the verandah for a while, but had to disappear quickly, if someone came along.

At 8.00 p.m. we had to get back into the storeroom, and it was locked! We had our evening devotions and were on the third verse of "Now rest beneath night's shadow" (LH 537), (*"Nun ruhen alle Walder"* (E.G. 477)), when a thunderous noise erupted on the verandah, and the old Hitchcock struck the door with the butt of his gun and yelled, "Stop that!" (We had no idea what was going on!) "Lights out!"

**26/2/42** : During the night I was overcome with an attack of dysentery, and had to run to the toilet continually. I felt most miserable!

At 5.45 a.m. In the morning we were taken to a warm spring for a bath; we had to walk for about five minutes to get there. When we returned, our breakfast was already in the room; but before we had finished eating, we were called out to work. We had to build shelters from 7.00 a.m. in the morning until midday, in the hot sun, with no break or rest! I told the supervising guard that I wasn't at all well and had to run to the toilet continually! The guard just replied, "The order is: You are to work!"

The local natives just stood there and watched us! I felt most miserable! All of us had blisters on our hands which made it difficult to hold the tools.

At 12.00 noon we were allowed back into the storeroom. None of us wanted to eat because we were totally exhausted.

When we were called back to work again at 2.00 p.m., we could hear how our guards, especially Long John, an Irishman, spoke up for us, saying : “It wasn’t right to make them work so hard, if we don’t want to get into trouble for it later on.” As a consequence we could stay resting in the storeroom. There we weren’t game to make a noise, lest we draw attention to ourselves. Then at 4.00 p.m. the two Willis were called back to work again, and I was allowed to remain lying down because of my dysentery. But the two Willis only had to fetch a few boards, and then they returned again.

Only later toward evening, before the evening meal, our spirits got a real lift, when the door opened and Osi Wallent (Supply & Aviation, UELCA) and George Radke (Technical Service, UELCA) were ushered in! They and we were greatly surprised! The two were perplexed that they landed in jail, since both were Australians, and had been promised that they would be flown to Port Moresby. They were not expecting imprisonment. They told us that Singapore had fallen to the Japanese.

Willi Hertle asked again for a mosquito net, but the Officer in Charge insisted that a blanket was enough. So we had to continue to lie under one net. I continued to give Sasaki Atebrin and he is feeling better. However, my dysentery and severe body pains weren’t letting up.

Towards evening we saw Edwin Tscharke (Medical, UELCA) from the window, as he went by in the direction of the mountains. We think he had to join the army. We recognized him by his green tropical helmet.

**27/2/42** : Again we went early for a swim, had breakfast and off to work. But today there were five of us, which made things easier; and the carpenter who was in charge today allowed us some time to rest. In the afternoon Willi Zischler and George Radke had to set the posts for a barbed-wire fence around our accommodation, while the rest of us dug post holes. In the evening we were even allowed to have another swim. From our room we listened to a conversation about what was to happen to the prisoners in case of a bombing raid. The Officer said that they should simply lock the house and then get to safety themselves. Long John again interceded for us, and as punishment he wasn’t rostered to stand guard over us for a few days. We asked whether we could get to our luggage, but this was denied us. I would have liked to get some hydrochloric acid for my upset stomach.

**28/2/42** : Today we had to dig trenches in our yard, which were meant for us. They were 3 metres long and 1.5 metres deep and 60 centimetres wide. We were divided into two groups of three. Willi Zischler, Sasaki and I had sand, and the other three had quite a few stones; and to their horror they had to dig their trench much deeper. We were finished in 1.5 hours and could then sit in the shade, but we weren’t allowed to help the other three, which really angered them. Willi Hertle came over and asked for a drink and was sent back to work with these words, “You can come and have a drink when you are finished!” The Englishman only wants what is best for us! On Saturday afternoon we were free, and were allowed to have access to our luggage and get some things, among them was *Rook* (a card game). But my suitcase was not there. In the evening we could again go swimming.



The cook visited us nearly every evening. A guard demanded that we sing, but we didn't oblige.

**1/3/42** : Sunday, and we don't have to work. At 10.30 a.m. there was an air raid alarm and we had to go into the bunkers we had built! The bombers flew across over Bulwa, but in Bulolo and Wau bombs were dropped. For a whole hour the Japanese were in the area and we stayed in the bunker.

**2/3/42** : Everything was in a great uproar; it seems as if the rats are deserting the ship. Everything was in departure mode! Long convoys of carriers were carrying things away across the airstrip towards the mountains. Fully loaded trucks were heading in the direction of Sunshine (a small town).

Toward evening Osi Wallent recognised Dr Agnes Hoeger (Medical, ALC) on one of the vehicles and she waved to him. The rest of us were too late to see her. Some time later the other Mission Co-workers also passed; we recognised them by the green tropical helmets they were wearing, but only Uncle Paul Deutscher (Supply, UELCA) did recognize us. Now we got very excited, but we couldn't draw any conclusions from this.

Then, when we were already asleep, a commotion on our verandah caused Willi Zischler to wake me up and tell me, "I heard Uncle Johann Hertle" (Willi Hertle's father). The door was unlocked, and a person was pushed inside, who turned out to be Uncle Johann Hertle (Builder). It was 10.00 p.m. at night.

George Radke switched on his torch, – and there in the light stood Uncle Johann Hertle! We could hear that the guards outside were eaves-dropping, as we asked each other how we had been faring; but we mentioned only everyday matters. Indeed, we had had a better run, than the old gentlemen had. Uncle Herrmann Boettger wasn't along yet, because he was in hospital in Sunshine, and was very ill with a high fever. As there was no mattress for Uncle Johann Hertle, the Three of us, the two Willis and I, slept on two mattresses pushed together under one mosquito net. This worked reasonably well, but all this excitement didn't really lead to a restful night for us.

**3/3/42** : Old Hitchcock had to return to Mapu, which made us happy; and another Officer was assigned to us. Osi Wallent complained to him, that we couldn't get access to our luggage, and that he and George Radke were wrongly locked up here. But Ossi stayed sitting down, while he addressed these complaints to the Officer. The Officer yelled at him, "In future you better stand up, when speaking to me!"

Then at 10.00 a.m. three guards took us to the nearby Bulolo River in order to get away from the air strikes. It was very pleasant there and we could take a swim. Willi Hertle could try on his new swimming togs which we had acquired yesterday. Then at 12.00 noon we were marched back to our quarters in single file; then we spent the afternoon in the storeroom.

**4/3/42** : Throughout the night all of Bulwa was on the move. We were picked up at 6.00 a.m. and taken to the hot spring for a bath, and at 10.00 a.m. we went to the river, where we washed our laundry; but couldn't drape it out on the reeds to dry, because planes were continuously flying overhead. While we were at the river our accommodation was searched. Willi Hertle's briefcase with contents disappeared, as well as George Radke's torch and tobacco. When they enquired about this, they were told that everything was as it should be.

In the afternoon we could get to our suitcases. Mine was also there, but it had been forced open, and money, medicine and medical instruments were gone! *Everything would be more useful to the 'Englishman'!*

Uncle Johann Hertle's keys were not handed over, so he couldn't get into his suitcase. Today we had a very peculiar guard. He said that he would prefer to be with us in this cage, than to be free. He made various key-impressions and gave them to Sasaki.

**5/3/42** : From 10.00 a.m. to 12.00 noon we were at the Bulolo River. We were hardly in the water, when an air raid alarm forced us to get out, and sit in a small shelter hut. When the planes had passed Bulwa, we got out of the hut and sat in the reeds, because we thought this would be safer. Bulolo and Wau were severely bombed. We heard the heavy bombs explode, and the ground trembled where we were. One of our guards trembled so much that the reeds around him actually vibrated. The attack lasted 45 minutes, and soon after it, five heavy bombers flew over us in formation on their way to the coast, or further. We quickly went for a short swim, and then back to camp. The companions of the guard, who had trembled so much, poked fun at him. In Bulolo an oil depot had been hit, and for hours afterwards explosions could still be heard, and there was plenty of smoke.

**6/3/42** : We were down at the river, when a Japanese reconnaissance plane flew over Wau and Bulolo at 11.00 a.m. At 12.30 midday, the alarm sirens sounded, and we had to rush to the bunker trenches before we could have our midday meal. Apparently the reconnaissance plane had spotted an Australian aircraft on the airstrip at Wau; however in the meantime it had taken off. Therefore there was another bombing attack which lasted 45 minutes, and many bombs were dropped. We have now been having a Bible study every day.

**7/3/42** : We couldn't sleep much during the night, because everything was on the move. At 4.00 a.m. we were woken up, and had to be ready in five minutes. We, with our baggage, were loaded onto a truck with four guards and one Officer. A car followed right behind us, with its head-lights beaming on us. It was cold and we shivered. Our truck drove too fast, so that the car following us couldn't keep up. The Officer on our truck yelled as loudly as he could, but our truck driver didn't hear him. Osi Wallent joined in the yelling, but then the Officer screamed even louder at Ossi, "Shut up, will you!", and Ossi didn't know what to think.

Soon we figured out that we were heading for Sunshine, along a very rough road. We arrived in Sunshine just before 5.00 a.m. We were taken to a house, in which we huddled together in a corner, because all of us were freezing cold. There we tried to sleep some more.

A large number of the soldiers were drunk, and leading them all was the cook. Therefore we now had to wait until 9.00 a.m. for breakfast. Our guards grumbled, because they too had to wait! At 9.00 a.m. a native kitchen hand brought us a tin of sausages, and each one of us got an asparagus tip. Down in the mess the cook was arguing with other drunks. He came and asked if we smoked, and without further ado he wanted to shove his lit cigarette into Willi Hertle's mouth. However, Willi quickly put his pipe into his mouth. Then the cook veered toward me, because I wasn't smoking. I defended myself strenuously with hands and feet to the amusement of the others. When I finally got rid of him, he tried it with the others.

Toward noon the sun broke through the cloud cover, and it warmed up. We could see Uncle Herrmann Boettger sitting in the sun in front of a house. I wanted to make him

aware of my presence, by following a track to the toilet that passed close by him. But I was closely watched by a guard, and Uncle Boettger just didn't see me. Because aircraft flew over us, we weren't allowed out of the house, but at 1.00 p.m. we were taken to the mess to eat, and there we met Uncle Boettger. He looked very ill, was completely emaciated, could hardly speak, and had trouble breathing. He told us that he hadn't taken the oath of neutrality; and we were all relieved to hear this.

The noon meal was good and sufficient, but the meat was so tough that one nearly had to swallow it whole. Even tobacco products were offered.

Then Long John and another guard took us to a stagnant waterhole, a leftover from the gold sluicing days, to have a bath! It was a mud -bath, everything but a bath to get clean.

We also collected some grass for our bedding; and then we really had to hurry back, because a thunderstorm was approaching.

**8/3/42** : It rained during the night and there was a storm. In the morning we were woken up at 5.00 a.m., and had to get ready to go right away, but then waited around until 8.00 a.m., when we were taken to have breakfast.

At 9.00 a.m. we were again loaded on a truck and driven back to Bulwa. Twice the truck got bogged on the road, and we had to get down and push. When we arrived in Bulwa there was an air-raid alarm, and we had to sit in an air-raid shelter trench from 9.30 a.m. until 12.00 noon. Our guard was dead drunk, and still held the brandy bottle in his hand. For lunch at noon everybody was given a tin of fish or meat, cheese, butter, cold potatoes and water.

The trip was to continue immediately, but guard Long John decided of his own bat to take us to our suitcases to pick up some things, because the journey ahead of us was to be a long one! The suitcases were supposed to be delivered later.

The caravan got going at 2.00 p.m. The drunken guards had to remain behind. The track took us across the airstrip, onto a cable bridge over the river, and up into the mountain ranges. We had to carry our own luggage, and we younger ones shared in carrying Uncle Johann Hertle's gear. Up on the first range we had a short break, and the guards told us that we could leave our loads here, and they would be brought to us later. But we didn't trust this suggestion, and continued to carry our gear. One mixed race man left his luggage at the resting place, and he never saw any of it again.

There was another air-raid alarm, and everybody went for cover in the tall grass; but only for a short time. The second mountain range was much steeper, and at its top we could follow a well constructed ditch in which the old diggers had run the water they needed to wash for gold.

As we came around a curve on the track, Hitchcock was sitting there like a poisonous toad. As soon as he saw Uncle Johann Hertle without a load, he screamed at the guards to find out why he wasn't carrying one; but was satisfied when he realised we were carrying it for him; but his poisonous looks followed us.

We encountered many soldiers and among them was Edwin Tscharke. For the last hour we went through forest in heavy rain, and we were thoroughly soaked. We continued following along the water ditch until we came to a flooded, swiftly flowing creek, which we had to cross on a log, and finally arrived at a Camp. It consisted of a row of barracks with green roofs, and also many bush huts. Things were piled up everywhere; and all over it was a sloshy, muddy mess.

We had to trek all the way to the other end of the camp to find our hut, which was enclosed by a barbed-wire fence. The hut had to be vacated first, and then we had to share it with our guards. We were crammed in really tightly. When we needed to go

to the toilet, we had to clamber up a hillside first to get there, but then we had a great view over the whole camp from up there! (I certainly didn't want to get dysentery here, for all privacy inhibitions would have had to go.)

For the evening meal we were in the mess hall, where Edwin Tscharke served us and saw to it that we had the best choice of food; but we couldn't speak with him. I ate a whole tin of pineapple by myself; and there was also a substantial amount of bread. Willi Hertle didn't bring a plate along, but could pick one up at the entrance; and I was able to organize a cup for him as well. Our night camp was hard and cold, yet despite the cold, the mosquitoes were innumerable. In the middle of the night we had to put up the mosquito-nets.

**9/3/42** : It rained the whole night and everything was wet and cold. From the guards' conversation, we concluded that the Japanese had landed in Lae and Salamaua.

After breakfast we were taken to the creek where we could wash and shave. Planes flew around the area, and a few stupid soldiers thought they had to shoot at them.

Other soldiers were sent back to blow up the bridges between Bulolo and Wau.

We slept throughout the afternoon, and so did the guards. A kind young student, who was guarding us, was caught sleeping, and to punish him, he was sent back to the front to fight. We were sorry for him!

The rain became heavier and we couldn't continue the trek. The guards became quite merry, and even brought us a bottle of wine and a bottle of beer. Another one filled a bottle with brandy for us from his canteen; this we kept for iron rations! Cigars were also distributed; all items which we didn't get in normal circumstances. They said, "We are in the same boat as you", (meaning us). The noise at night became ever more deafening; and Long John sang, "Oh farewell my pretty young girl".

**10/3/42** : We were woken up at 5.30 a.m. in the morning and had to get ourselves ready to move on. At 7.00 a.m. we had breakfast. Then they gave us khaki shirts to wear, as nobody was to wear white, lest we would be spotted from an enemy aircraft. At 8.00 a.m. we headed off, and we had a struggle to get at least Uncle Johann Hertle's gear carried. Soldiers were on the move all around, and to us it seemed that the whole main camp was on the track.

We now have assigned guards, under the leadership of Sergeant Carpenter from Sydney, a horrible fellow, who constantly put us to the test, and made life very difficult for us.

The track we had to follow became very steep, and in places we had to get down on all fours to move along. Toward noon we met a soldier who told us that the Japanese had inflicted much damage in Lae and Salamaua. For hours we followed a creek bed upstream, and had to clamber around over the rocks continuously, carrying our rucksacks. At 4.00 p.m. we had a cup of tea, and then continued on until we arrived at a camp on the Watut River at 6.00 p.m.

However, we first had to cross the Watut River on an old steel-cable bridge, of which the steel cables were quite perished, and all of us lacerated our hands badly. It took a long time for everybody to get across on this cable bridge. And then we still had to walk 15 minutes to the Camp.

Here many brown and white people were assembled; and to our joy we caught up with Uncle Herrmann Boettger here. He had arrived via a different route, but also had to walk for the most of the journey.

We were accommodated in a barrack where many soldiers were already quartered. Willi Zischler, Osi Wallent and I had to sleep in the bathroom, the others in the

storeroom; George Radke was up in the ceiling space under the roof, where at night he encountered a snake.

A soldier brought us a big tin of biscuits, and we could help ourselves to them. Willi Hertle took only a handful for himself, thinking the tin would remain here for us, but when our Carpenter saw the biscuit tin, he took it away immediately.

For the evening meal we received next to nothing.

**11/3/42** : The night was very cold. We were woken up at 5.30 a.m. in the morning, and then sat on our rucksacks until 8.00 a.m., when we continued on our trek. The whole ridge was one big sweet potato garden.

It was 11.00 a.m. before all of us were across the river. In the meantime we could have a swim, always two of us at a time. We had to carry our own gear, including Uncle Johann Hertle's. The guards also had to carry their own gear. At long last we continued, always along the steep slopes and rocky cliffs cut by the river. The track was bad and often dangerous. Once when we halted for a while, Sasaki even threw away some of his things.

At 1.00 p.m. we arrived at a rope bridge constructed of lawyer cane, and it took three hours until everyone was across. The whole transport situation was poorly organised. At noon everybody received a slice of pineapple, and a soldier gave Willi Zischler and me a mouthful of water from his canteen. It was 4.00 p.m. before everybody was across the river, because only one man at a time could be crossing the river on the lawyer cane bridge. The track went up and down continually until we arrived at the river again, where this time we had to cross the river on a rope bridge that endangered our lives. We thank God that everything went well.

Then we arrived at an old gold diggers' Camp with lemon trees, that were bearing many lemons, and we called the spot Lemon Camp. We received tea with milk and sugar, and each person a sardine. We were accommodated in a barrack and could gather grass for bedding to sleep on. Then we could have a good swim. The valley was surrounded by majestic mountains.

In the evening a storm with heavy rain drenched the valley. The evening meal was plentiful and good. We had sweet potato stew, and even a dessert of custard and pineapple. It turned out that this would be the last time for quite a while, that we would get enough to eat.

**12/3/42** : Late last night Carpenter came to us and begged us not to try to escape, so that the guards also could get some sleep; but there was still a guard around at all times. It rained throughout the night. We were woken up at 6.00 a.m., and at 7 a.m. we had breakfast; and then we were off again, in heavy rain. The track followed along the river, and often we had to clamber over fallen tree trunks, which could endanger life. Big John often sat down on the logs and rode them across the river. I came down with dysentery again and felt rather miserable. All along the river people were still sluicing for gold.

At noon we came to a creek and had to stop and wait for the stragglers. Fortunately we could have a swim in the creek while waiting, which was very refreshing after the exertion of the march.

We had arrived in the upper reaches of the Watut River, an extensive gold mining area, where one expatriate mining settlement followed the other. We halted in a small patch of bush nearby, because this was the time that the Japanese planes flew around. For midday lunch we received half a tin of meat per person, and we could pick small tomatoes which were growing prolifically here. After this snack we could rest a little.

Then the track first followed along the river, and then over grassy ridges, until we arrived at Slate Creek at 6.00 p.m. This whole area had been turned into a slag heap from the gold sluicing. A gold diggers' store served as our accommodation, but we were very cramped in it. We got our camp site set up and collected grass for our bedding. Then we had our devotions. Very late in the evening Carpenter still brought us a few bites to eat, probably the left-overs from their evening meal; and every one of us received half a cup of tea to drink!

**13/3/42** : We were to remain here for a few days, so we washed our laundry in the morning, but we couldn't spread any clothes on the grass in the sun, because of enemy planes flying around.

We received only a little food to eat, and it was quite unpalatable. Carpenter tried to tell us that there was too little food delivered from the kitchen, but we could see what was being taken out, and how others were munching food all day long. He even suggested to Osi Wallent that we should also pray for him in our devotions. Then we informed him that we also pray for him, when we pray for our enemies.

At noon there was an air-raid alarm, but nothing happened, other than, that the doors were locked, and we weren't allowed to look out. Late in the afternoon we did see Uncle Herrmann Boettger.

For the noon meal we got a tin of meat to be shared by the eight of us, that was all! During the day we had only water to drink. Later Sasaki picked up some green pawpaws and scored their skin with a knife to hasten their ripening.

We were now in the hinterland of Mumeng; only grassy ridges and mountains.

**14/3/42** : We managed to speak with a more senior Officer about the food situation, which resulted in an improvement in the meals.

Uncle Herrmann Boettger came to join us today.

At 10.00 a.m. a beautiful formation of 18 aircraft flew past us in the direction of Port Moresby. We observed this through a crack in the door. The guards tried to tell us that they were American planes, but at 1.00 p.m. they all flew back.

For the evening meal we cooked a big tin of sweet-potatoes with green pawpaw, which at least filled us.

**15/3/42** : In the morning at 6.00 a.m. we went to the river to swim; and we stayed there until 12.00 noon, because aeroplanes were overhead continuously. We sat in the tall reeds and played Rook. At noon we had canned fish, which had spoiled, and cold sweet potato, with the result that all of us were sick – George Radke, Uncle Herrmann Boettger and I were the worst.

Willi Hertle and I received military boots, because we only had rubber shoes. We also found a can of salad oil and everyone rubbed oil into their shoes.

**16/3/42** : The whole morning we were at the river, and none of us felt well. It had rained heavily during the night and the river was running a banker. We even had our Bible Study at the river. Everyday now we cook sweet potatoes with green pawpaw. Toward evening Willi Zischler developed a fever. We were taking a lot of antimalarial pills now.

During the night many soldiers and some of our guards left to go back the way we had come. In the morning Jack Pireder and Carpenter were gone.

Now Long John became the Officer in charge of us, and we were happy about this.

**17/3/42** : In the morning we were again at the river and had our Bible Study. Willi Zischler was not well at all. Then at 4.00 p.m. we had to get ready to march on, and around 6.00 p.m. we left. After trudging for an hour up the mountain, we arrived at Berens Camp, the Headquarters. Berens Camp was once a hotel, and there were many people around. All of us were accommodated in one room on the first floor, where all of us sat down on the floor. The evening meal was good; we even received cauliflower – and all sorts of things. The good cook from Bulwa, who was well-disposed toward us, was on duty there.

**18/3/42** : We were awakened at 3.30 a.m., and had to pack up everything right away, and go for breakfast, which consisted of sweet potato, cauliflower and meat, and sweetened tea. For the march we received a ship's biscuit, which was actually only meant for the soldiers, but Long John allowed us to take one each. By 4.00 a.m. the caravan got underway, because we were to be under the cover of trees by daybreak. The caravan would certainly have been several kilometres long. The track followed the Upper Watut and was quite good, but there were many ditches, and one had to be very careful not to fall into one.

With so many people on the move, it was difficult to walk with lamps to light the way. Soon we had to cross a tributary river and we got wet to the knees. Sasaki was sick and had to vomit frequently, but we weren't allowed to take his load off him. The track became steep and slippery. I fell and bruised myself badly. By daylight we arrived at the Kiap (Patrol Officer) Station at Otebanda on the border of the area belonging to the Kuka Kuka, the Stone Age people.

Shortly before 8.00 a.m. we had a short break, and we could wash ourselves a bit, but then continued on the trek immediately, – an awful and difficult clambering along. At 10.00 a.m. we had breakfast at a creek. Cook Jacobson had gone ahead and boiled up tea, opened some tins of meat, – and even gave us some dried sultanas. Whenever and wherever we caught up with him, we were treated well.

Then we continued on the trek until 12.00 noon, when we arrived at Rekwa, which was a Military Station on a mountain spur at an altitude of nearly 1500 m. Here we stopped and had our midday meal, which consisted of rice and stew. We were taken into a soldiers' barrack which was at least 40 Metres long. It began to rain. In the barrack we found Martin Helbig, – as a soldier. We were very surprised to see him here. We tried to talk with him, and he told us that he had been here for a week already, but didn't have to take part in any military exercises; and that he was very lonely. Later we were forbidden to talk with him, and Martin had to report to the Officer in charge. All of us were of the opinion that he now would have to join us, but this didn't eventuate.

As the heavy rain set in, we had to remain here. Long John distributed a few extra blankets to us, because it was very cold. So now we spread one blanket underneath us, and wrapped ourselves in our own.

The evening meal was good and sufficient, and we also had dessert. Right after our evening devotions we lay down, but there was so much noise around us, that we couldn't fall asleep for a long time.

**19/3/42** : It rained heavily the whole night. At 10.00 a.m. in the morning we left and continued on our trek up the steep mountain. Everybody, including the soldiers, had to carry their own gear. Some of the soldiers threw everything away. I again had a strong attack of dysentery, and had to muster all my strength just to keep up. We also had to carry the gear of the older men.

At last at 3.30 p.m. we reached the top of the 2500 m high mountain range. The huts were very dilapidated, and it was icy cold in the clouds and rain. We tried to repair our hut somewhat. The meals were unsavoury and meagre. Big John had to remain in Rekwa, and Jacobson became a member of our guards.

During the night we and our gear were completely soaked and we froze. I could hardly leave the toilet and felt really awful. Jacobson cooked me a cup of coffee, which improved my condition somewhat, and he also allowed me to sit by the fire for a while.

**20/3/42 ff :** We also continued repairing our hut. Everything around the hut had become a bottomless quagmire. Yet in spite of all the rain, there was no water to wash ourselves, so we tried to fasten lengths of bark from a tree to the grass roof, and made a small hole in the ground for the water to collect. Now at least we could wash our hands. The wet blankets and clothes we tried to dry around the fire. Later in the day we had to go about 3 km to get a tent for the soldiers, and because we complained about our hut, we were allowed to get a tent for us as well. Now we could cover a part of the hut roof where we slept.

The continual wet, combined with the fog, made all of us quite melancholy.

We had a batch of stew that had gone off, and immediately everyone in the Camp became sick; but we were so desperately hungry that we forced ourselves to eat some, which made it all the worse for us!

I continued to massage the arm of a soldier, and it improved quite well.

We were also taken to a creek, so that we could wash some laundry. But to get it dry, we had to hang it by the fire; where the clothes were smoked rather than dried.

Willi Hertle had a bad toothache, and I requested dental forceps. A soldier brought us a needle holder, and he insisted to us that they use this to pull teeth. I couldn't do that and wouldn't even try it!

Then Jacobson knocked a gash in his head while crawling under the house; and I applied a pressure bandage on him. And I gave Willi Hertle and Jacobson some luminal (barbiturate) and they fell asleep very quickly.

Rain, rain, day and night!

Yesterday evening we again had bad stew. I just couldn't recuperate from my dysentery. I was taking Yatren and charcoal, but nothing helped. When we complained, Jacobson really supported us, and the small amount of food we received improved somewhat.

An Officer came to the Camp to inspect the conditions there. And he ordered us to go and get another tent for our house. But because it was Sunday, we declined to go; after all we had been sitting in the rain for 10 days, and we could wait till Monday. The Officer became angry, but we refused to go. On Monday we requested to see the Commander, who actually did come, and we presented all our complaints to him. We then had to go to get two tents, one for us and one for the guard soldiers. Now we could really waterproof our hut nicely!

Besides that, we had told the Commander that we wanted to leave this place.



Now for the first time that we were here, we had a dry night and we could sleep. In the morning we made a drain around the hut, so that the water wouldn't all run under the hut. We also relocated the fireplace, so that the smoke could get away and didn't all stay inside. Then we thickened the grass walls to better protect us from the cold wind outside. We also built a small table out of bamboo, and a small bench to go with it. And we gathered a lot of firewood.

**1/4/42 :** It was the first of April now. We rested at midday until we were woken up at 4 p.m. to pack up our gear and be ready in half an hour to get on the move again. For a start we thought they were putting an 'April Fool's Day' joke over us. Guard Jacobson would be remaining here; because he had been supporting us too much.

We did actually leave at 5.00 p.m. We demanded that the old men's baggage be carried. The descent from the camp on the mountain was worse than the ascent had been. Martin Helbig also accompanied us to Ekwa. We had only just arrived there, when it began to pour again. We sat down under the awning of a house to have protection from the rain. There we received a good, ample evening meal; there were even fresh vegetables and plenty of Marmite.

Toward 8.00 p.m. we continued our trek, still in the rain, but soon the weather improved. However, there were only two lamps for the whole column of marchers and the track was very bad.

We were glad when we arrived at grassy ridges that the moon was no longer behind clouds; and we could walk without relying on lamp light. The track was also much better. As it was a very clear brisk night, walking was much better than in the hot midday sun. Just before we reached Otibanta, we had to negotiate a nasty swamp which was difficult to cross; and so we didn't make it to Otibanta until 11.00 p.m.

Otibanta was a very nice Patrol Station, beautifully situated. We had a short rest in the yard and here our new leader brought us hot coffee with lots of sugar and some biscuits, which strengthened us. Our new leader is John Cook, a pleasant fellow, my patient, whose arm I have been massaging. At 12.00 midnight we continued over grassy ridges and through water, always trekking downstream along the Watut River.

**2/ 4/ 42 :** At 2.00 a.m. we were in Slate Creek, where we had a short rest, received coffee with lots of sugar, a tin of jam and a tin of asparagus.

We continued on until we arrived at a gold digger's house an hour later at 5.00 a.m. in the morning. We rested a little and at 6.00 a.m. a meagre breakfast was served. We looked around the area a little, until it was time to continue on our way at 9.00 a.m. We were rather hungry and Uncle Johann Hertle showed us some small palms, of which one could eat the seeds. We ate two but that wasn't much to share between us. Sasaki wasn't well at all; and the two old gentlemen were at the end of their strength.

Here the forests were beautiful with magnificent, big pine trees (klinki pines). We descended down the steep track until we arrived at a small gold miners' camp, where John Cook brought us a cup of tea right away.

Then we continued on immediately, until we arrived at a place at 5.00 p.m., where there was a road for motor vehicles. There we waited until a vehicle came to pick us up. While we were waiting, we were provided with shoes and shirts; and a rucksack was supplied to those who didn't have one. And again we had tea, and we were able

to help ourselves to biscuits. We didn't hold back this time and felt refreshed and strengthened.

The vehicle drove us via Bulwa to Bulolo, where we arrived at 6.00 p.m. after a long day's march! The whole area had been bombed. But then we were taken to a building that was still standing! In earlier days during the time of the gold rush it had been the canteen for the gold miners. We were accommodated two by two to a room with beds, and we could wash ourselves and put on clean clothes. We could also attend to our laundry, and together with our guards we had our evening meal in the mess hall. Sasaki had a fever again, and I gave him Atebrin and Aspirin. One of the guards promised to get us to our suitcases in Wau; but this didn't eventuate. Then before we lay down for the night, I still had to massage my patient. Because all of us weren't together in one room, each one of us had to have his evening devotions by himself.

**3/4/42 : Today is Good Friday.** In the early morning there was serene quiet, but not for long. At 7 00 a.m. we had a good breakfast, and at 8.00 a.m. we were on the move again. With our baggage we were loaded onto an old truck. After half an hour's drive we came to the river and had to disembark, because the bridge had been blown up. On the remnants of the old bridge we managed to cross the river. When we reached the other side, another truck waited for us to take us on; and this happened two more times! Each time we had to wait a long while, until we finally arrived in Wau at 2.00 p.m. As we were driving through the town, the wind blew my hat off my head: – The hat in which I tucked away all my travel diary notes since leaving Finschhafen! – A New Guinea native brought the hat to us later.

We were accommodated in the Hospital, where we received good food, could wash our laundry thoroughly, and have our hair cut. Willi Hertle finally had his tooth extracted!

To our consternation Carpenter appeared again during the afternoon, and declared to us that he would be our guard leader henceforth; and all of us became totally discouraged!

The situation in Wau looked grim with most structures razed to the ground (by the Australians themselves, as we heard). In Salamaua and Lae they threw tons of rice into the sea, and then they had nothing to eat.

We were also informed that in the morning we would break up camp to begin our march to Port Moresby, so we went to bed very early. Later that evening a guard soldier still brought me a pair of shoes, because I had lost a heel on the pair I had been wearing.

#### **4/4/42 : Departure for Port Moresby!**

I woke up at 3.00 a.m. My body and back racked with severe pain, I was vomiting and had diarrhoea. I felt totally miserable and was shivering constantly! Sasaki gave me one of his blankets, but I couldn't get warm. Willi Zischler packed my rucksack. Some of the guard soldiers were also sick with these symptoms. It must have been caused by something we ate.

Nevertheless we were all loaded onto a truck and driven the first 14 km. Then everybody was to carry their gear. Osi Wallent spoke with Carpenter, and two carriers were found for the old gentlemen, but Carpenter insisted that I should carry my own load. So Willi Zischler went right up to the officer-in-charge, and he authorized a carrier for me. At 8.00 a.m. the long column got going. I straggled along behind with an extra guard, because I had to sit down at the trackside

repeatedly. My guard tolerated this, as he understood my predicament, and occasionally even gave me a drink from his canteen, which was filled with water and brandy.

We crossed the Wau River on a rope bridge, and I got another attack of the colic and had to lie down for a quite a while at the side of the track. But these breaks put us well behind the marching column. The main party had had a noon rest at a Kiap's Patrol Post, and they were about to continue on the trek, when we arrived. The officer-in-charge suggested that I and my guard should remain behind here, but I did not want that. By then the soldier who had stayed behind in Wau to get medicine for me, arrived and brought medicine which I was to take every hour; and taking this I soon felt better. Yet I was glad when we arrived at the place to overnight. There had been talk of whether we should continue for another five hours, but the majority decided to stay.

**5/4/42** : Right after breakfast the next morning we continued on our trek. On the way we found various mountain flowers which we didn't recognise. There were many steep patches to clamber over, and the native carriers didn't want to continue on, but they were conscripted to carry on. We had little to eat, receiving just a quarter tin of meat each.

The highest point to which we ascended was the watershed of the Waria and Purari Rivers, at 2000 m altitude. It was a big area of swamp out of which a strong current flowed. All of us took our shoes off, to wade barefoot through this stream of water. Uncle Herrmann Boettger wanted to throw his shoes across to the other side of the stream, but one fell short into the fast flowing water and disappeared. We just couldn't wade fast enough to retrieve it. Fortunately the shoe got caught on an old tree branch in the water and we found it and were able to pick it up. We arrived at the edge of forest, and there was the Camp.

We were expected to walk for five hours that day, but it ended up taking us nearly eight. And on top of it, this was our **Easter walk!**

In the Camp we saw Uncle Paul Deutscher (Supply, UELCA) from Finschhafen. We couldn't speak with him; presumably he was forbidden to have contact with us.

Here we were on the border of the Territory of New Guinea and Papua.

Tomorrow was to be a day of rest.

**6/4/42** : This day of rest became a day of hard work. Already at 6.00 a.m. we were brought together, had a quick breakfast, and then were set to work digging trenches for the soldiers until noon. Then in the afternoon we had to drag construction timber to the site. And toward evening we could go to the river to wash ourselves. The food was better here, and we even had plum pudding; but Carpenter took more than half of it off us, and ate it as we looked on.

Max Wahlen (who had joined us here) told us that in the Mumeng area, many native evangelists, with their wives and children, had been imprisoned, just because they were in the service of the Lutheran Mission.

**7/4/42** : After we had had a good breakfast, we set off again, going up a steep track following a creek, on to another creek coming in from the left. The last section of the ascent became very steep, but then we had reached the top of the mountain range. A small clearing had been cut in the jungle and a few Europeans were already sitting there. Now we had to build a camp shelter for us. We gathered bits and pieces

together, and we constructed a few makeshift shelters as well as we could, pretty slapdash. And fortunately, rather “Thanks be to God” it didn’t rain during the night. At night we had to lie huddled together like sardines in a tin in our shelter. The only advantage for us was that we weren’t quite as cold as we would have been outside in the cold.

**8/4/42** : The meagre breakfast we received, we took along with us and ate it at a small creek, where we also had a quick wash in the icy water, at an altitude of 3000m. It was the watershed of the Waria and Lakekamu Rivers. The view across much of West Papua was glorious. High up in the Owen Stanley Range we found flowering myrtle, really wonderful. We had to carry our own gear, and also that of the old gentlemen.

At noon Carpenter came and took two tins of our iron rations; but then he ‘kindly’ returned about a quarter of a tin back to us, keeping the rest for himself. (What this implied for us : As we also had to share this food with the old men, the returned ration had to be divided among eight people!)

Then we had to gather leafy branches for us and the soldiers, for the night’s bedding. After we finished the bedding, we could wash ourselves at a spot where a whole river gushed out of the mountainside; that was really exhilarating, but icy cold.

The evening meal, which the officer-in-charge himself shared fairly among us, was good.

At night it rained, but luckily not too much, and not for long, as the roof of our shelter was nowhere near watertight!

**9/4/42** : We got ready very early in the morning; and our baggage was carried for us today. For us the track became an arduous climbing up and down.

Uncle Herrmann Boettger had fastened two tins to his belt, which he could use for a ‘special purpose’. These tins were a thorn in Carpenter’s flesh, and he didn’t let up today until Uncle Boettger threw them into the bush. Yet, the best part was, that others who were following us, picked up the tins and later cooked their tea in them. We again saw many beautiful orchids along the track.

American soldiers on their way to Wau came toward us on the track, carrying very heavy loads. Carpenter repeatedly bowed so deeply to them, that it nearly must have dislocated his back!

Meeting them we wasted a lot of time on the way, and it began to rain. Then for the last hour the descent was frighteningly steep, and at the bottom we arrived at the Camp; pitiful huts, but they were huts. The sun broke through the clouds and we sat down in the sun by a fire to dry ourselves.

Willi Hertle’s and Sasaki’s baggage had not arrived, but that of the rest of us was already here, quite dry. Two carriers were sent back to get the missing gear.

Then we had to gather fresh leafy branches for our bedding, bush building material to make improvements on the huts, and firewood. To get this done, we repeatedly had to cross a river, carrying everything, and this was exhausting and dangerous. (If somebody were to fall into the river, there was no way of saving him!)

Later on it rained and the huts were like a sieve. The rain continued throughout the night, and we sat around like intimidated chooks, partly under Willi’s raincoat.

**10/4/42** : We were to stay here the next day too. Everybody complained, but this didn't help. The whole day we had to work around the camp. The food wasn't good and we didn't get much! Then in the evening in pouring rain we had to wash the dishes for the kitchen and mess.

An officer tried to tell us that our suitcases were coming.

It was very cold and the soldiers and guards took our firewood away to burn it in their own hut, and lo and behold, the thatched roof of their hut caught fire!

The evening meal was distributed fairly by the officer-in-charge, and it was better. When it was raining so heavily, we were told to wear Uncle Boettger's military long coat, but we didn't want to do this, because Uncle Boettger needed it himself, and we didn't want him to get drenched. Carpenter took his revenge the next day, and forced Uncle Boettger to throw his overcoat away. He was a detestable, mean fellow!

Then when a soldier had severe dysentery and was very miserable, Carpenter asked me what could be done. I told him to cook oatmeal gruel for him, and I gave him Yatren for the patient, enough for four days. After some days I met the soldier and asked him whether the medicine helped, and he told me that he had never received any.

**12/4/42** : Another night of pouring rain and icy cold!

In the morning we finally continued on the trek, and the baggage of the old gentlemen was given to carriers. We requested that Sasaki's load would also be carried for him, because he felt very miserable. But Carpenter said: "That bloody Jap can carry his own gear!" This made Sasaki very angry. But the rest of our group took turns to carry his things.

The track now followed the Lakekamu River continually, and was very bad; sections were in the water. We had to cross small tributaries, and often their current was very strong.

At 4.00 p.m. another large contingent of American soldiers passed us on their way to Wau. They wanted to know whether it was a long way yet to Wau. Young and older carriers were bearing heavy loads. We had to wait for over an hour until all of them had passed us, so that we could continue our trek in this quagmire.

In pouring rain we arrived at an emergency camp site at 6.00 p.m.; and there we had to build our shelters for the night. All we could do was to put up a few poles and sticks very hurriedly and cover them with leafy branches. During the night we sat under this "shelter" with drawn up legs; – really just like chickens on their roosting poles.

That night and for breakfast next morning we had practically nothing to eat!

**13/4/42** : In the morning the old men had to go ahead with their guards. However, the rest of us caught up to them at a river, which had to be crossed on a log "bridge" very high above the rushing water. It was really life-threatening to cross this river.

At 11.00 a.m. we arrived at another river, where we met Jack Cook (a former guard-leader) with some natives. They gave us sugar cane which refreshed us.

We continued on down the Lakekamu River, until we arrived in Chinaman Camp at 2 p.m. (The Camp got this name, because a few weeks earlier a Chinese man died there on his way to Port Moresby.)

Here the weather was sunny and warm, so the first thing we did was to wash our laundry; and we were still able to dry it all in the sun. Later we gathered leafy

branches for our bedding, and collected firewood; and then we still enjoyed a beautiful swim.

In the evening was a severe thunder-storm, and we couldn't get to the evening meal at the Camp "mess-hall". George Radke went to the camp kitchen and collected food for all of us; but we couldn't cook a cup of tea for ourselves, because our firewood was wet, and all around us it was flooded. Our hut was watertight from above, but water seeped up through the flooring.

Then late that night we were informed that we were to continue our trek tomorrow, but only for a few hours.

**14/4/42** : We were woken up very early and told to get ready immediately. Then the officer-in-charge asked us if we wanted to take on the last leg of the trek as well. All of us said, "Yes! It was the rainy season here; and we have had enough of these daily heavy rains!"

All our baggage was carried for us, except for one rucksack, and that was mine, and it wasn't the lightest to carry! Carpenter was annoyed about this, and after we had gone a short distance, he took the rifles, ammunition, lunch-bags and canteens of the guard soldiers, and made us carry them!

The track followed along the Lakekamu River to a small camp, where we had a short rest and received tea and a bread ration. Here again American troops came toward us, and we had to wait for three hours until all of them had crossed the river on a long rope bridge. For us this meant a great loss of time. It then took just as long for our contingent to get across the river. (Only three persons could be on this long rope bridge at a time. Toward the far end of the bridge, one felt dizzy when one looked to the water below.) It was toward evening when the last of our contingent got across!

The trail continued through sago swamps, where we waded up to our knees in stagnant slush. Everywhere there was lawyer cane, with its myriads of thorns that were sharp as needles, which tore our clothes and skin; and this kind of track continued for hours! In the last hour we finally got onto a constructed road, and we sensed that we would soon be at the end. As darkness set in, we arrived at **Bulldog**, the first goal of this long journey.

A pleasant older man was at the Patrol Post. Carpenter now gave each one of us a cup of tea and two biscuits; and then he withdrew. The old man stayed and later brought us the tin of biscuits and said we should help ourselves, which we did. He also gave us more tea. We also filled our pockets with an extra helping of biscuits. And later when the two old gentlemen, Herrmann Boettger and Johann Hertle arrived, and they too only received two biscuits each, we could supplement their 'ration' amply! The evening meal was also good!

Then we found out that canoes were already waiting to take us down the river tomorrow.

In our evening devotions we thanked our heavenly Father for all His merciful help and leading; and for keeping us safe.

**15/4/42** : Early in the morning we were woken up, and after a measly breakfast, we set out for the river. It was Willi Hertle's birthday, so we gave him some of the biscuits, we had pocketed the day before, as a birthday present.

At the start we had to wade through 100 m to 200 m of swamp, before we got to the canoes. These were completely different to those we knew from Finschhafen :

These canoes were two large parallel hollowed out logs, fastened together by poles, and on top of these was a big platform made of boards. This provided plenty of room for us.

We made ourselves comfortable on one of the canoes, washed our laundry and hung it up to dry. While having a wash I dropped my soap in the river, and then while shaving, my safety-razor also fell in the water.

We could even lie down in the shade under the shelter of a small roof.

Willi Zischler, George Radke and I with our guard and three Papuans were on one canoe. Altogether there were eleven canoes that made up our fleet.

A good wind was blowing and the current was excellent, because the river was in flood. The area was flooded all along the river, and everywhere there were huge sago swamps. On all the canoes the Papuans were singing, and it sounded beautiful.

At the start we were among the leading canoes, but soon we were third last. As the other canoes all had four or more Papuans to paddle, the three of us also took to the paddles, and quickly we gained on the others. But as soon as the other canoeists noticed that we were gaining fast, they also began to row harder.

And it turned into a rowing race; but we maintained the third position.

Then we were allocated another Papuan from a different canoe; and on top of that, the guard from that other canoe gave us a packet of biscuits. Our guard was a first-class fellow and he shared everything fairly among us.

The river meandered through the flat estuary region, so that we were continually changing compass directions. Soon many canoes came upstream toward us. They were on the way to Bulldog, taking supplies there.

At 4.00 p.m. it rained and it turned very cold; we were very cold in spite of the rowing. Now we passed large banana plantations; until we arrived at a house at 5.30 p.m., where we stopped for the night. The house was already full of people. We were squeezed in as well, so that at night folks nearly came to blows trying to find a spot to rest. On top of that, there were myriads of mosquitoes; and it was difficult for us to put up our mosquito nets.

Carpenter distributed the food for the evening meal, and accordingly it was meagre. We had rowed about 100 km that day.

**16/4/42 :** We were woken up very early in the morning, and quickly found some banana leaves to pad and soften our canoe seat.

For breakfast we had a few biscuits, but when Carpenter was absent for a while, Jack Cook gave us a lot more. But the old gentlemen missed out, because in the meantime the old 'poisonous toad' had returned; and he would have loved to take our biscuits off us again. We then shared some biscuits with the old gentlemen.

It was a very beautiful morning, and in the distant blue haze we saw the mountains across which we had trudged!

A bit later two canoes in front of us paddled into a tributary, and we followed, and very soon we became stuck and had to get out of our canoe and push and drag, and lever it out of the mud and brush thicket.

Then we manoeuvred around a sharp bend in the river, thereby cutting off quite a long section of the journey. At 12 noon we arrived at Mowiawi, a Roman Catholic Mission Station. The Station was occupied by the military, and had already become quite run down. One padre and three nuns were still on the Station. Everything was untidy and dirty. We were accommodated in a school building, where it was very hot; and there were countless mosquitoes! We were allowed to get blady grass (kunai grass) for our bedding. One of the nuns gave us some bread. Later we received an evening meal.

**17/4/42** : In the morning at 6.00 a.m. we had a meagre breakfast, and then we were escorted to the river to have a wash and swim.

When we returned, there was a major inspection. We all had to get out of the building; and then we were summoned in, one at a time, to have one's belongings inspected.

When the first one came out, he gave me a sign that my hat would be in trouble! I knew right away that I would have to remove the notes I had stored in it. Stepping aside a bit, I pulled all the hidden notes out of the inside rim of my hat, and hid them in the kunai grass.

When it was my turn to front up, the Officer immediately took my good fountain pen off me, and stuck it in his shirt pocket, saying, "You aren't supposed to have writing material". Then I was assured that I'd get everything back in Port Moresby. (I sensed that this was a lie, because the others were able to keep their cheaper fountain pens.) Then in the afternoon I could observe how the officers and soldiers wrote letters on the writing paper that had been taken off me.

The food was bad, and there was very little of it. And I was suffering dysentery again!

**18/4/42:** The next day we dug ditches. The food was miserable. When we were taken to the river to have a swim, we asked for a coconut, and each one of us actually received one.

The soldiers told Sasaki that the Americans had bombed Tokyo and destroyed much; whereupon he answered, "Japan i no sik". (Japan isn't down).

A soldier came in the afternoon and asked us how much we would like to give the nuns for their hospitality. We laughed in his face, and asked how he imagined we could do this, after they had taken all our money off us; or rather, had stolen it. As a consequence we didn't get any more coconuts!

**21/4/42** : On April 21 we went on a hunger strike! The food was so unpalatable and meagre, that we refused to accept it. We demanded to see the officer-in-charge, and Carpenter had no alternative but to call him. He tried to tell us how badly prisoners were treated in Germany, and so on.

In the end we were to receive our food separately. The food was packed in cases, one case for 20 men. This implied that one case was to serve us for 2<sup>1/2</sup> days!

When the officer-in-charge had left, the guards and soldiers erupted in an outburst of expletives about those bloody Germans! Those Huns! with soldiers and guards vying to surpass each other with abusive terms.

Then in the midst of this, it was announced, that we would be moving on the next day, as the pinnacle for our transport had already arrived. Now the entire discussion topic changed; and we were dismissed.

George Radke and I were sent off to collect coconuts for the soldiers; and we also got some of them.

**22/4/42** : We were glad that our journey was to continue. Not everybody could go along, and therefore soldier Hill, very sick with dysentery, had to remain behind. I talked to Carpenter again and asked him about the Yatren, that he had never given to Hill. He replied that the nun doesn't allow it. (He got really worked up, because he had such a guilty conscience.)



We took our own luggage to the pinnace, and then had to wait a long while until everybody was aboard. We were at the river estuary in two hours, even though we had to follow minor delta channels, because of the danger of being spotted by enemy aircraft; but nothing eventuated. The main estuary was nearly 1 km wide. We couldn't continue immediately, because of large sand banks ahead, and had to wait for high tide. We made ourselves as comfortable as possible in a Patrol Officer's house, which was quite small. The food we received was not sufficient, but soldier Max still brought us some biscuits later.

**23/4 42 :** We were woken up at 4.30 a.m. and told that we would be leaving at 5.00 a.m.; but we still had to wait quite a while for another European, who was to sail along with us. We didn't leave until shortly before 6.00 a.m.

The captain, a descendant of Neptune, old, with long hair and a large beard, was a worthy representative of his calling.

We encountered huge surf at the river estuary, but we crossed safely. We prisoners were allocated seating at the front of the pinnace, where we sat all day; tightly squeezed together in the hot tropical sun.

All along the shoreline we saw numerous Papuan native villages and expatriate settlements; until we arrived at Yule Island at 4.00 p.m. This island is a mile off the mainland and 60 miles from Port Moresby. There is a Government Station on the island, as well as the headquarters of the French Roman Catholic Mission.

Uncle Johann Hertle, Uncle Herrmann Boettger, Willi Zischler, Osi Wallent, George Radke and I went ashore on the first dinghy, and immediately we were taken up to the Government Station. Willi Hertle and Sasaki came on the second dinghy, with Carpenter, Amooore and Oskar Fuhlbohm. With Carpenter in the lead, Amooore and Fuhlbohm marched along, as on parade. Each one had a different stride and step. It looked so comical, that everybody had to laugh; (and Wilhelm Busch couldn't have sketched it better.) Carpenter then called the guards to order; and this was even more ludicrous.

Then we were led away to the gaol for natives by Papuan guards. Osi Wallent went back to collect food; and Willi Hertle and Sasaki picked up their rucksacks.

We had to cook our own food in the gaol kitchen, together with the natives, using the same pots they used.

We were accommodated in one room and the native prisoners in the next two.

At 8.00 p.m. in the evening we were locked up at the same time as the native prisoners were.

**24/4/42 :** Early in the morning we were taken to a puddle of water to wash. The water came out of a sago swamp, smelled terribly and was brown. We hadn't at all slept well; and the whole body itched. When we checked our mosquito-nets, we discovered that they were full of bed bugs. Sasaki caught a lot of his bed bugs and kept them in a match box, while the rest of us killed ours. Sasaki kept his ready to show to the Officer, when he came for an inspection, and held them under his nose.

Some time later a friendly padre from the Mission brought us four loaves of bread, but Carpenter took two away as soon as the padre had left, because we weren't allowed to have that much!

The gaol was surrounded by a 1.5 m high wall; and on top of it there was barbed wire that went up quite a bit higher.

Most of the native prisoners had foot-shackles day and night. We put in a petition requesting that we could sleep in the open. It was granted, and so we younger ones slept on the lawn grass and the two old ones on the verandah.

**25/4/42** : Today Carpenter distributed our food, and we received only a small portion of what we had received from the kitchen the day before. All good items, such as butter, sugar, cheese and jam were taken away, and a large tin of curry was added for us. The Papuan native guards gave us two pumpkins which we cooked with our food.

The whole day we had to dig air-raid shelter trenches, but the native prisoners had off, because it was ANZAC day. We had to dig in solid coral and were making very little progress; and on top of that, it was a very hot day. A small, good-natured Frenchman passed us and exchanged some friendly words with us.

At 4.00 p.m. we were allowed to stop working and were taken to the sea to have a swim. To us it seemed that Carpenter couldn't finish all the bread he had taken off us, so that now he gave us half a loaf; and to Sasaki he offered just a small lump, which he refused to accept. But we then shared our half loaf with Sasaki.

**26/4/42** : On Sunday morning we were taken to the sea again to have a swim and wash ourselves, and we saw that the pinnace had returned a second time from Mowiawi. This raised our hope that our journey to Port Moresby would continue immediately. But that was in vain!

**27/4/42** : We had to stay another night on Yule Island. During the night it rained, so we had to go on the verandah again to sleep. I woke up in the middle of the night with severe body pains, and immediately my dysentery started again. I was critically ill, and didn't expect to see the morning.

I took Yatren and sipped the last bit of the brandy we still had. Willi Zischler negotiated with the guard, who gave him some coffee which he made for me.

**28/4/42** : In the morning Willi Zischler packed my things for me, because I could hardly leave the toilet. And I feared the march ahead of us!

At 7.30 the pinnace brought us to the mainland, and to my horror we were told to march off! Our gear was carried for us, which Carpenter tried to prevent. But this time he was overruled by the officer-in-charge!

As soon as all the baggage was gone, we also set off. I was rather concerned how I would manage, but our Father in Heaven heard my pleas and gave me strength. During the first hour I had to disappear into the bush repeatedly, but it soon got better. The track was good, taking us through bush areas and grass land. After two hours we arrived in a village where the people gave us coconuts to drink. Again and again we had to wait quite a while, because some of the guards didn't keep up; thus I was able to eat the piece of bread, which I hadn't eaten in the morning.

At 1.00 p.m. we arrived in a village, where we met two Europeans. The Papuan natives there gave us something to drink. The women were all dressed in European clothes, and had very modern hairstyles. Here one could see more mixed race children than Papuan brown ones.

By 2.00 p.m. we got to a spot in bush land, where two trucks were waiting to pick us up and our luggage. The road was bad, and some way along we even drove along the beach for a while, until we came to an abandoned plantation. We had just arrived at

the first house when our truck's motor gave up. We waited around for two hours before we got going again.

In the meantime tea was brewed, and we also had a few biscuits. On top of that we could scrape a coconut. The whole area had mixed race children running around.

We just got to the next plantation when our truck ran out of fuel, and another truck had to tow us to the next plantation, where we arrived in darkness at 8.00 p.m. We disembarked at a huge residence; already full of people. We were accommodated under the house. There were such swarms of mosquitoes that one hardly dared to go out to the tank to get water.

The guard had to share the evening meal with us, and because there was so little of it, he complained very loudly, and soon more food was brought.

At this place we met a policeman from Gingela (a village in the Yabem speaking area of Finschhafen) who recognised us, and we could speak Yabem with him, which was great, and made us happy. He told us that he had been in this area for eight weeks already, and that there were other Yabem people in this district too.

I was most thankful that I had been able to travel this far in my state of weakness; and I certainly felt very much better.

**29/4/42** : Early in the morning we looked around a bit in this area. The residence was surrounded by a large park, with everything landscaped beautifully; but it was completely deserted. Then at 7.00 a.m. we got on the trucks again, and they drove us to the border of the plantation, which was a river.

We had to cross the river in a canoe, and on the other side was a large Papuan native tent camp, for Papuans that had been evacuated from Port Moresby.

We sat down in the shade until everybody arrived. At first we were ordered to walk on, but then canoes were used to transport us further; with ten Europeans to a canoe. We were sailing along happily, until an enemy plane appeared at 10.00 a.m., when our guards instantly disappeared into the log-troughs of the canoes!

At noon we arrived at a large village on a big river; another extensive tent camp. A pinnace was anchored in the harbour, and all of us hoped, that it would be taking us to Port Moresby. All the soldiers were in a good mood too, as this would mean the end of our journey! Even food wasn't rationed anymore!

We sat down on the verandah of a Papuan's dwelling, and made ourselves comfortable. Our luggage was taken to the beach, and we were separated from one another. Now Carpenter tried a practical joke on us. Coconuts were brought for the Europeans. However, when Sasaki and George Radke also took one for themselves, this arrogant person took it off them, saying, "The Papuans didn't want that you to take some too." Every word out of his mouth was a lie!

Many of the native Papuans here live on their canoes, having built quite nice cabins on them to live in. Yet everything had an air of impermanence about it, like a gypsy camp.

Now we had to wait for a long time, because one of the sailors from the pinnace hadn't arrived yet. Therefore we had several free cruise laps around the harbour. It was a very beautiful evening, and over the distant mountain ranges we saw a storm brewing. We all sat at the front of the pinnace and sang.

For the evening meal we received burnt stew; but also good coffee with sugar and milk. Max Wahlen didn't want to give this to us; but rather called us "bloody bastards"!

Towards 9.00 p.m. the storm was upon us and it poured! Everybody withdrew hastily below deck, except me. I found a spot right at the back and ducked under a tent roof and sat on my rucksack, where I even managed to sleep a little off and on. The others couldn't take it too long in their hideaway down in the hold, because the air became very stale. Everything on the boat was wet and cold.

We stopped sailing at 4.00 a.m. and lay at anchor, because nobody was allowed to sail in the vicinity of Port Moresby during the hours of darkness.

**29/4/42** : At daybreak we continued to sail slowly between many islands; and we could see a big ship sailing toward the south. We regretted very much that we hadn't been here a day earlier; perhaps we could have been sailing on that big ship now!

At 7.30 a.m. we docked at the wharf in Port Moresby. We had to disembark immediately, and then sat near the wharf, until an air-raid alarm was sounded at 10 a.m. Several soldiers had given us some tinned meat and a biscuit. The soldiers were having a big breakfast on the other side of the road. When the air-raid siren sounded, everybody immediately ran for the air-raid shelter. Sasaki and I quickly ducked across the road and picked up the remains of the soldiers' breakfast, and then also ran to the bunker. While we were hearing bombs falling, all of us still had a good breakfast of cheese, bread and jam. A few bombs actually did fall quite close to our bunker.

We were hardly out of our bunker, when we had to rush right back in again. Then we were loaded on to an army truck and brought to a large Army Camp outside of the city; and on arrival there we immediately had to run for our lives again!

We had to go to the Registration Office, and while we were there the alarm siren howled again, and it was back into the air-raid ditches.

Without giving any alarm, the Japanese dived out of the clouds and bombed and strafed, and caused enormous damage in Port Moresby. Some of the barracks of the Camp had been hit; also the hospital received a direct hit.

After the registration we received plenty good food to eat.

Again, a rush into air-raid ditches, but this time the bunker was half full of water!

When we returned to the Office now, we were released from the troop of soldiers, who had been guarding us until now.

Then right away we were loaded onto a truck that took us 25 miles out of Port Moresby to a prisoner- of-war camp. We drove in a southerly direction past the big airport, where many camouflaged aircraft of all sizes stood.

The large ship that we had seen in the morning had 2,000 American Negroes aboard; headed for New Guinea. Out here we now saw Negroes everywhere!

There was much flooding out in this area, and often our truck barely got through flooded sections of the road.

Ammunition was stacked up along both sides of the road.

After driving for 25 miles we arrived at a small camp, surrounded by a high barbed wire fence, which served as a gaol for prisoners of war; as well as for us. We were treated well here, and the service was good.

This camp was situated in a beautiful spot at the foot of the mountains. There was a small river really close by, where we were allowed to swim twice a day. The toilets were on a rise, from which one had a great view of the camp and the main road, which passed by two to three metres lower. The camp director was a very likeable older

gentleman who was good to us. Unfortunately dysentery still bothered me, and every now and then I felt terrible, so I decided to take a course of Yatren to cure myself. Today at noon we watched a Japanese air attack on Port Moresby, and we saw a plane shot down in flames.

**1/5/42** : Overnight I became ill again and was very miserable, with severe backache and abdominal pains. I could hardly get up the hill.

In the morning we saw the mailman and asked him if any mail had come for us, and he promised to inquire at the main camp.

In the afternoon intelligence officers came, and again recorded our personal data, and inquired how we were faring.

Then suddenly, out of the blue, they asked: "What is your opinion about the war? Where do you stand?"

I replied that I was a German, and as such I belong to my people. Each one of us was interrogated individually. They were exceptionally amiable toward us.

There were new air-raid attacks over Port Moresby, and from the conversation among the guards we overheard, that a Japanese aircraft flew unrecognized among the Australian planes; and flying very low over the airport he dropped his bombs.

My dysentery was getting worse, and I had no relief day and night. Maybe it was caused by the continual lying on the cold floor, the coldness making it worse.

Uncle Johann Hertle had a huge carbuncle, so both of us made an appointment with the doctor, and we were actually taken there, but we didn't get much relief. Uncle Hertle was given some bandages, and I received some hydrochloric acid for my stomach. On the way back we had to sit on a load of firewood.

Soon after we arrived back at the prison camp at 3.00 p.m., the mailman came and delivered letters to Willi Zischler and Uncle Johann Hertle from their wives.

And I received a letter from Mission Director Otto Theile with the news of the birth of our little daughter Heidi (*born February 28 in Tanunda*).

All my loved ones were well, for which I am thankful from the bottom of my heart. "Die Güte des HERRN ist's, daß wir nicht gar aus sind; seine Barmherzigkeit hat noch kein Ende, sondern sie ist alle Morgen neu, und Seine Treue ist groß."

"The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases, His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness." (Lamentations 3:22-23, RSV)

Osi Wallent and George Radke were picked up late at night and taken to Port Moresby to help as interpreters. A Japanese plane had made an emergency landing, and the pilot spoke a little Pidgin-English, which Osi and George were to translate. Very late that night they all returned to our Prison Camp. The Japanese pilot prisoner was in leg-irons. He was stuck into the cage next door to ours, and sometimes we could see him when he was allowed out to go to the toilet.

**2/5/42** : The next day the poor fellow still had his leg irons; and we couldn't talk with him, that was prohibited! He looks still very young.

Today we again observed fierce aerial combat. Japanese bomber squadrons flew in precise formation over us toward the airport, where there was combat and many

bombs were dropped. The bombers flew too high for the anti-aircraft defence, but when they were returning, American aircraft pursued the bombers. However, the Japanese fighter-plane defence was too strong, so that the Americans couldn't get near the bombers.

After a few minutes two Australian aircraft crashed to the ground in flames. It was ghastly!

A third plane that must have been damaged, returned and wanted to land. It came under fire again, and veered off in a big arc and plummeted in flames into the bush. We never heard how much damage had been inflicted, but the soldiers were most critical about the insufficient defence.

**4/5/42:** In the morning we heard that a ship had arrived.

In the afternoon two officers from the Red Cross visited us and gave each one of us underpants, a singlet, two pairs of socks, one pair of pyjamas, one pair of sandals, toothpaste and brush, and handkerchiefs; and I also received a safety-razor.

We could also write a 25 word note to Germany; but not to our families in Australia. Today I had a fever, and my dysentery hadn't got any better. Beside Yatren, I took one gramme of Quinine and Plasmochen (another anti-malaria drug). Uncle Johann Hertle's carbuncle didn't look good at all.

The mixed race Max Wahlen has now joined us in the barbed-wire enclosure. We had washed a big lot of laundry today down at the creek, clothing, blankets and mosquito nets. We wanted to be sure that all the bed-bugs were killed!

Our health in general could be better. Willi Hertle wasn't well; he collapsed this morning, but has recuperated. All of us are quite malnourished.

**6/5/42 :** This morning Osi Wallent (Supply, Australian – UELCA) was called to see the prison camp supervisor, and was informed that we were to get ourselves ready to be taken to the ship at 4.00 p.m. We were very happy about this, but when we got news at 3 p.m. that we had to remain at the camp, our high spirits plummeted to zero.

**7/5/42 :** The next day we moped around despondently, until we got the news late in the afternoon that we were to go on board ship at 7.00 p.m. We quickly packed up our gear.

The Japanese pilot was the first to be taken away, hand-cuffed to an Australian soldier and surrounded by six additional guard soldiers. All of them were loaded onto a truck; and all of us, with our guards, were taken in another vehicle. The pilot was even blindfolded. Actually one couldn't see anything, because blackouts had been imposed. Therefore we too couldn't see what damage had been inflicted by the bombing.

There was a lot of traffic on the roads, and so we arrived in Port Moresby only just before 9.00 p.m. However, now we still had to wait another hour on the vehicle, before we could go on board the ship.

And the first encounter we were to have on the ship was with our former guard troupe! We lost all courage!

Our cabins were in the stern of the ship, accommodating four persons per cabin. The bunk beds were good. Across the passage from us, the Japanese pilot kept his guard on the move, because he rang his bell every ten minutes.

The officer-in-charge told George Radke (Technical Service, Australian – UELCA) we were to converse only in English, which we didn't do.

We had our evening devotions together and placed everything in HIS hands.

**8/5/42** : In the morning at 3.00 a.m. we sailed!

All passengers had been issued life-jackets, and may be some even wore their life-jackets to bed!

Our Carpenter saw to it that we didn't get too much to eat. He wanted us to believe that there wasn't enough food on board; however, a kindly guard, and even the cook himself, indicated the opposite to us.

We couldn't even wash ourselves.

So we sent Osi Wallent to present our complaints; which was to no avail.

Though forbidden, the cook sent us some extra food now and again. Occasionally there were also some good people among the crew. After meals we had to wash up our plates and cutlery ourselves. Apart from Carpenter, the guards were fair to us.

Our ship was a New Zealand tourist ship, named "Taruna".

We had to remain in our cabins and weren't allowed out into daylight. The cruise was smooth and quiet.

**9/5/42** : From 8.00 p.m. in the evening to daylight the ship lay at anchor, but we couldn't tell whether it was at sea or in a harbour. Then we were taken on deck between 11.00 a.m. and 12.00 noon and were blinded by the sunlight, because we had not seen daylight for two days.

We were sailing between islands and were accompanied by two small cruisers.

**10/5/42** : This time we sailed through the night. Between 11.00 a.m. and 12.00 noon we were taken on deck again, and we could see how baskets full of bread were tipped overboard, and yet we hardly got anything to eat!

The area in which we could move around was very restricted.

In the distance we saw the hills and trees of Cape York, the northern tip of Australia.

The two cruisers were no longer shadowing us, but we could see the cannons and machine guns mounted on our ship.

Everybody was still walking around in life jackets.

**11/5/42** : This morning we sailed into Townsville harbour; but were kept in our cabins until 5.00 p.m., when we could finally disembark. Then we drove through town to the police station where we were unloaded, and taken into custody and locked up.

The whole complex was enclosed by a 3 m high wall. We received some sandwiches on old, buckled tin plates, and a cup of tea in mugs of a similar vintage!

Then an elderly gentleman still came and rerecorded our personal data; and he said to us, "Don't feel as though you are under arrest! This is only for your good!

Tomorrow your accommodation will be better!"

Then we asked where we could sleep for the night, and we were told, "You will have to sleep on the concrete in the yard, because the cells were all needed during the night for drunken soldiers!"

Then our money, rings, pocket knives and other items were all taken off us.

Later, two Italians joined us; and an Italian woman that had been imprisoned here for five weeks already. The Japanese pilot was locked up on his own in a cell and was guarded by soldiers from the air force.

From 10.00 p.m. onwards, drunken soldiers were brought in; one even had to be carried in! There was yelling and singing in all pitches and decibels.

Later in the night we too were locked into a cell, but after a short time we had to vacate this again, because two drunken American Negroes were brought in. The night was icy cold.

**12/5/42** : At 6.00 a.m. in the morning all cells were opened and the soldiers were released. Breakfast was served at 8.00 a.m. and then we sat around reading old newspapers. The Japanese pilot was picked up and taken away.

Then our entire luggage was inspected. Our passports and other items were taken off us; and after all our personal data was recorded again, we were declared prisoners! Now Osi Wallent and George Radke were separated from us, and taken away with their luggage by several soldiers. We continued to sit around, until an hour later both appeared again to say “Goodbye”! They still told us that they would be leaving by train that night.

After our midday meal, we too were taken out of this walled enclosure, but not to the railway station, as we surmised, but rather a few miles out of town to the Stuart Creek Prison, to keep us for sure!!

Again we were submitted to a thorough inspection, our personal data was reviewed, and everything was taken off us again! Finally each one of us was given an old grubby pot in which, -we thought – were just a few leftovers of someone’s food. But by the time we woke up to it, that this was given us as a meal, it was taken off us again.

Then for a short while we were taken into a small courtyard surrounded by a high wall. There was a table and bench in it. From here we were incarcerated individually in cells, each one to his own cell. My cell was Number 3, next to Uncle Johann Hertle’s; and the others followed down the line!

The prison-warder took our belts and braces off us, and stomped out and slammed the door shut with a loud bang, and we were locked in! At first I didn’t know what had happened; and then I laughed! There was a hammock with two blankets in the cell, and in a corner a bucket for my needs. Three metres up a wall was a securely barred window. The night in the hammock would have been fine, if there hadn’t been so many mosquitoes.

**13/5/42** : At 6.00 a.m. in the morning the cells were opened and everyone had to appear with their bucket for the roll call. Names were called and we had to answer with “Yes, Sir”. The buckets were put down in a row, and we were led into the small courtyard.

For breakfast we received a little cold rice, some bread and water. Because of all the mosquitoes, they had poured a little petrol into the water tank, which tainted the water, which we couldn’t and wouldn’t drink it; it all tasted like petrol.

And now to work, or rather, to that which was to keep us busy for the day :

There were two big brooms, which we, two of us per broom, had to drag up and down the yard all day. Every quarter of an hour the four resting of our group, relieved the four dragging. The only time for a spell was for the meal at noon. If at times we pulled up for a breather, the guard would yell from his tower, “Keep going, you bastards!” So we continued dragging.

At 4.00 p.m. we again received cold rice and water; and then we were picked up and taken to the administration to collect our baggage, and sent back to the Police Station. Here we waited until 8.00 p.m. in the evening; and then we were taken to the Railway Station in two vehicles, together with other prisoners, Italians and a Finn.



We embarked on **the train to Brisbane**. There were six persons per compartment, and guards stood in the passageway in front of the doors. The night was long and we did not get much rest. At every train station more prisoners were brought on board, all of them Italians. On top of that, the train must have stopped wherever milk can was standing alongside the track.

**14/5/42** : We were glad when it became day and we could look out and see something. It must have rained heavily here, because all the rivers were in flood. On much of the route we passed through extensive sugarcane fields, and the weather and countryside were beautiful.

The train arrived in Rockhampton at 4.00 p.m. On the trip we received refreshments twice, – sandwiches and a cup of tea. We continued on into the night when it became very cold for us.

**15/5/42** : At 8.00 a.m. in the morning we arrived in Brisbane.

We were loaded onto a vehicle with our luggage and taken to the Internment Camp at **Gaythorne**. Again we had to submit to an inspection of everything we had, and our personal data was rerecorded for the umpteenth time; that we can rattle our parts off by-heart!

Barbed wire enclosures surrounded us in all directions, and finally we were taken to the Camp's Compound for German Prisoners. By then it was 12.30 p.m., and we were very hungry. We received a meal right away, tasty and plenty of it!

In our Compound there were still 15 internees; the others had been transported south the day before.

The Camp was clean and tidy, and nicely situated on a gentle slope, Italians in the east, and Women and Japanese in the west. Often we chatted with Sasaki across the barbed wire fence!

Several fellow internees filled sacks with straw and brought them to us, as well as blankets. We were accommodated in barracks and bunked down on the floor.

Right after the mid-day meal we had a long siesta.

All of us had to take all our khaki clothes off, and whoever had no other trousers, was supplied with maroon ones. Uncle Herrmann Boettger, who no longer had his coat, received one, with POW (Prisoner Of War) in large letters on the back. (But we translated POW with "Prince of Wales"!)

Today was a letter writing day, and we could write to our families on a prescribed form, which only mentioned immediate personal matters. We were allowed to write two such letters a week!

The language of communication in the Compound was English; as the internees were English, Australian, Finnish and German.

The cold weather really affects me; and my dysentery has gotten worse again, that often I feel I won't get over it.

**16/5/42** : Today, one day after our arrival in Gaythorne, is Karl-Heinz's birthday. "God's blessing and all the best!"

The nights were icy cold, and all of us felt really cold!

The lights went on at 5.00 a.m. in morning, and at 5.30 a.m. we got up. In spite of the cold, we had to wash ourselves outside in the yard.

Right away then we were assigned our daily camp-jobs.

Today five of us, under guard, had to fetch our food for the meals, which had been prepared in the army kitchen. The Italians had to cook their own food. The food was plentiful and good.

After the meals we had to wash up the dishes and sweep the dining room. Others were assigned to clean the bathroom, rather the laundry and the toilets.

By 8.00 a.m. everything had to be finished for the roll call and inspection. All of us had to line up for the roll call, and as one's name was called, one had to take a step forward and call out, "Yes, Sir!". At 5.00 p.m. in the evening this drill was repeated.

We also requested a meeting with the Camp Commanding Officer today; and when we met with him, we asked for an additional blanket for each one of us. We were given these blankets!

As I wasn't at all well, I started another course of Yatren and Quinine.

There also was a newspaper to read, but one had to be lucky to get hold of it, because it was very much in demand.

We had a White Russian among us, who also spoke German.

It was unpleasant that the army training area was so close by. From it we were subjected to the hellish noise of continuous shooting and explosions all day. One could hardly converse; and one got quite nervous from it.

For our showers there was only cold water, so we tried to have our showers at midday, when the temperature wasn't quite so low; and afterwards one would feel comfortably warm.

We cleaned our barrack rooms and had air-raid drill.

Willi Hertle was sick and had the flu.

One afternoon Pastor Max Lohe (South Brisbane, QLD.) visited and brought us apples, cake and tobacco. He told us that Osi Wallent and George Radke had been released and were free now; and that all our families were well. This made us happy. He also told us that Mission Director Pastor Otto Theile (Brisbane, QLD.) had had surgery, and had delegated him to visit in his stead.

We wrote to Mrs Theile to see if they could get warm clothing for us. She wrote back that one couldn't purchase anything in the stores for us, until our ration cards were issued.

We could also write 25 word messages to Germany via the Vatican Delegate.

**2 ff./6/42 :** The days slip by more peacefully now, and bring us new joys and excitement every day.

Pastor Ernst Gutekunst (Toowoomba, QLD.) and Aunt Emma Boettger (Herrmann B.s' wife) were here to visit Uncles Johann Hertle and Herrmann Boettger.

The Swiss Consul visited all of us, and we could discuss various matters with him. He will intercede for us that we get transferred south.

At long last we also received mail from our families, and we were very thankful for the good news. I received a parcel of warm clothes in the mail from Aunt Emma Boettger, and two days later a parcel of clothes arrived from my loved ones, so I didn't have to be so cold any more; this made me very happy! Uncle Johann Hertle received some good coffee, and immediately cooked some for all of us, which was a real treat for all of us!

Quite often we went over to the Italian Compound in the Camp and played skittles.

There were some nice cats in Camp, and kookaburras frequently visited us here. A new kitchen was under construction in our Compound, and soon we were to cook our own meals.

Sadly, there is nothing much to read here, except the daily newspaper. Fortunately the Swiss Consul arranged that we received our Bibles and Hymn Books again. Pastor F. F. W. (Franz) Finger (Kalbar, QLD.) also visited us and brought a box of apples; we really enjoyed these. We were to share these with the old Missionary Georg Heinrich Schwarz (known as Mr. Muni) from Hope Valley in North Queensland, but he didn't want any; actually, he didn't want to have any contact with us.

The Camp was filling up in all quarters, with many Italians and Japanese arriving. It was great that we were receiving mail regularly now. Aunt Emma Boettger also sent me a good overcoat and hat.

**18/6/42** : In today's newspaper it was reported that the Japanese submarines were in Sydney harbour, and this caused great excitement.

**23 ff. /6/42** : This morning Willi Zischler and I were called to the Compound Administrator, and we thought that we might get access to our suitcases, but not so. However, we were pleasantly surprised and really happy to be visited by Mrs Frieda Helbig and her little daughter Else (Rev. Martin Helbig's family). We conversed in German until the guard noticed it, and a storm erupted for us! We were even threatened with 28 days in solitary confinement! In spite of it all, we had a very happy visit; and she told us that Martin would probably come soon.

The Swiss Consul also called here and reported that the civilian clothes we had ordered from or through him were simply unavailable.

The construction of our compound kitchen was complete, and now we had to cook our own meals. We have been rostered one day a week on kitchen duty and one day on camp duty. This works well; and the coffee also tastes much better!

One of the soldiers told us, that we were to be heading south in the near future! Now we were waiting anxiously for suitcases which Aunt Emma Boettger had bought for us, and Uncle Paul Deutscher (Supply, Australian – UELCA) brought to Brisbane. Uncle Johann Hertle's sister-in-law (Mrs. Gutekunst) visited him today, and he asked her to phone Director Theile's wife, and tell her to have our suitcases delivered to us immediately, please!

**30/6/42** : At the evening roll call, we were told to get ready immediately, because tomorrow morning we would be transferred south. We could even still write to our wives and inform them of this development. Then we also had to pack up everything in the store room, and hand in our red trousers and shoes. We lived in the secret hope that we were going to Tatura.

**1/7/42** : We were woken up very early, and had to hand in our sacks of straw and blankets. Then we had breakfast, and we could make a few sandwiches for ourselves for the journey. Also, I still received a letter from Anna Eiermann (Agriculture, Linus' wife).

Yes! Just before 9.00 a.m. we started our **journey south!**

The first leg was to the South Brisbane Railway Station, where we had to wait; while the train shunted back and forth for quite some time. About 200 Italian internees had to board the train ahead of us, then the women boarded, and finally it was our turn. Sasaki joined our group again.

The journey and the weather were good.

**2/7/42** : At 10.00 a.m. next morning we arrived in Sydney, and straight away we were transferred onto big trucks and brought to the Camp at Liverpool. This Camp was very dirty and crowded with people.

A gentleman said that all of us were to go to Tatura. This really lifted our spirits; but our joy lasted for only a short time. Each one of us had been registered with a number, which was called up now to sort us out. Then we were taken to the Railway Station, and there on devious routes to the platform to board our train.

We were eight to a compartment, and each one received a blanket. Curtains had to remain drawn and windows closed.

**3/7/42** : The night was cold, and at 8.00 a.m. in the morning we arrived in Albury. It was a beautiful region through which we had travelled.

A German Australian was separated from us, as well as the Japanese, who were to go on to Tatura. Now our dream had ended; we were not destined for Tatura!

We travelled a long distance on the flat plains, and everywhere we saw flocks of sheep. There were floods in the area, and farmers were trying to muster their sheep onto higher ground. The weather was wet and very cold.

The names of all the railway stations had been removed; therefore we didn't know where we were. But at 11.00 a.m. we did arrive at a larger town, where the people bound for Tatura had to change trains.

Some time after 1.00 p.m. we arrived in a suburb of Melbourne and had to disembark. Now we had to walk in pouring rain to the Camp at Broadmeadow, where we had lunch. Here we waited till 4.30 p.m., and then walked back 45 minutes to the train. Again we had to stand around for a long time in the rain and cold before we continued on to Melbourne. Now we were nine persons in our compartment and it was a tight fit.

**4/7/42** : By daybreak we reached Murray Bridge. We were taken to breakfast, which was excellent and ample. We also had to change to another train, to be taken back toward Tailem Bend, not heading to Adelaide as we presumed.

At 5.00 p.m. we arrived in Renmark, which is a very beautiful area with extensive orchards. The journey continued for a few more stations, until 30 minutes later we arrived in Barmera.

Then we travelled by truck for another 15 minutes, and we arrived at a barbed wire enclosure with the name **14D Camp, 4<sup>th</sup> Military District, Loveday, S. A.**

All of us were assigned to the Italian Compound of this Camp.

We were supplied with a plate, cup and cutlery, and also received the evening meal.

Now we were again subjected to a thorough inspection! We had to undress, and wait completely naked in icy cold, until a doctor examined us. The soldiers inspected our belongings.

Then we received a sack of straw as a mattress, blankets and a ground-sheet to put under it, because we had to sleep on bare ground in a tent for eight men. We asked a

fellow prisoner where the toilets were, and when he heard us speaking German, he asked us right away from where we had come. When he heard that we came from New Guinea, he introduced himself as Pastor Ludwig Dohler (Lowood, QLD.). Now we were friends immediately, and were all happy! Later on we heard that on Monday we were to be transferred to the German compound of the Camp.

**5/7/42** : At 6.30 a.m. in the morning we heard the signal to get up, but we could only get up one after the other, because there wasn't enough space in the tent. For the morning's toilet we had to go to the common bathroom.

At 7.30 a.m. was the roll call. At first we were counted, and then our names were called and we had to step forward with a "Yes, Sir".

After breakfast we went for a short walk. As it was Sunday today, we attended the Divine Worship Service, where Pastor Ludwig Dohler preached in English. After the Service Pastor Ludwig Dohler introduced us to Pastor Edward Steiniger (Melbourne) and Pastor Alfred Zinnbauer (Adelaide).

After the midday meal we were called, because somebody from the neighbouring Compound wanted to speak to us. When we got there, we found Emil Wagner (Agriculture, Australian) there. It was very difficult for us to communicate with him, because of the din and distance, while everybody was yelling as if in competition. But at least we knew where he was. It all seemed to be like a circus.

The Loveday Internment Camp complex was on a very flat plain. To the north, east and west, there were farms and orchards, and to the south were the other Camp Compounds.

Our Compound was divided into an Italian section with about 400 internees, and a German section of about 200. On the Italian side two dormitory barracks had been built, nothing as yet for the Germans. All the others were accommodated in tents!

At 9.30 p.m. an Italian blew the signal for bedtime, and soon thereafter it was time to turn out the lights, but this did not apply to the tents, as there was no power for lights in them.

**6 ff./7/42** : Willi Zischler and I had to go to the dentist today. While we were there, the others moved into the German section of the Compound. Willi's tooth was extracted and mine got a filling. The dentist was a German Jew, and very kind to us. Here we were only six persons per tent now, which made it much better. A Mr Lang from Queensland, who was a very calm, nice man, was allocated to our tent.

The Camp's internees were men from many different countries; many came from the Foreign Legion, especially out of Indochina.

I went to the store, where clothing was issued, but could only get a few items, and had to return there the following day; but now I am well provided for. Also, I asked the doctor to prescribe a fifth blanket for me, and I got it immediately.

Pastor Ludwig Dohler came and informed us of the news that Uncle Rev. Karl Wacke died of a stroke in the Tatura Internment Camp. This news shocked and paralysed all of us. "LORD, remain with us all our days unto the end of the world!" (C.f. Matthew 28:20 & Luke 24:29<sup>b</sup>) I had lost a fatherly friend. He was to be buried in Tanunda; and I was glad that at least our families could take part in the Funeral Service.

Pastor Ernst Stolz (Appila, S.A.) visited us and brought us a whole bag of oranges, which tasted very delicious.

The weather is unfriendly – wet, cold and very windy.

Uncle Johann Hertle received his bed, but the rest of us have to wait.

**12 ff. /7/42 :** It is Sunday today and Pastor Eward Steiniger preached in German. At noon we had Emil Wagner paged, because we hadn't seen him for a long time. He told us that he had already heard in Wau, that we hadn't sworn the neutrality oath. The Major who had prosecuted us, also prosecuted him, – and gave a good account of us.

Today is Marianne's birthday! "Heavenly Father, protect her in the new year of her life. I commend to You all my Loved Ones".

All the Jewish internees among us were to be provided with beds ahead of us. Therefore we have now ordered some timber; and an Italian, who worked outside of the Compound, was going to get it for us. Pastor Alfred Zinnbauer also offered to organize some second hand sheets of iron for us. Already on the following day we had our timber and the sheets of iron. We had no hassles at all acquiring nails from a building site in the Camp. We borrowed a saw and hammer from the carpenters, and everybody got busy making beds. The beds turned out somewhat primitive, but they were stable, and we no longer had to bed down on the ground.

Because Willi Zischler and I pushed our beds closer together, we had a little more room on our side of the tent, and thus our tent became quite comfortable.

The days passed quite monotonously. There was nothing to read, only some games of Rook and Chess to play.

**18 ff./7/42 :** Today was Willi Zischler's birthday. For the birthday party we bought cake, coffee and sugar in the canteen; and for the birthday table we picked flowers along the Compound fence during our walk. Our old lantern had to serve for candles and we also sang to him! So that he would receive mail from his wife, I took one of her old letters to Willi and handed it in to the Compound Administrator, who gave out the mail during the roll call. We others held back a little, and when we came into the tent Willi was reading his letter, and wondered why his wife had written everything a second time.

Some days before we had received a parcel from Light Pass; and we opened this at the birthday party, so we had more cake and even some cocoa with it.

On Sunday Pastor Johannes Materne (Point Pass, S.A.) preached, and after the Worship Service mail was distributed, and we could rejoice to have received a letter from our families. The delivery of mail to this Camp is very bad; for three weeks we hadn't received any mail.

We submitted a petition to the Swiss Consul, that we wanted to go to Tatura, where the other missionaries (from New Guinea) were interned. It was disappointing that we couldn't be together with our wives and children.

At noon I had a very bad toothache. During the night the pain got worse, so right away in the morning I made an appointment with the dentist. My appointment was at 2.00 p.m.; at the same time that I was to collect a parcel at the Office! So I authorized Willi Zischler in writing, that he was to pick it up for me!

When I returned, Willi was already waiting at the gate with the news, "Your wife has sent a suitcase with a suit and other clothes for you." My first thought was, "What a pity! I'm sure you would have needed such items more urgently than I do." But then I was very happy about it!

The following day, luggage left behind in Brisbane by Willi Zischler, Willi Hertle and me, arrived in Loveday! As I hadn't brought the key along for my suitcase, I couldn't take delivery of it, but a soldier brought it to our Compound, where I had to unlock it for inspection.

**24 ff. /7/42 :** I was at the dentist again, and now finally I can rejoice to be rid of my toothache. Three teeth needed fillings!

It was Pastor Johannes Materne's birthday, and we serenaded him, and this caused quite a storm. One internee, who didn't live in our row of tents, said to Willi Hertle, 'No was habts den sunga, habts for Hitler sunga, oder habts for Martin Luther sunga' [Dialect German : "Now what did you sing, did you sing about Hitler or did you sing about Martin Luther?"] In the evening we celebrated in our tent with cocoa and doughnuts [Berliner Pfannkuchen].

Our tent was becoming the meeting place for the Lutheran clergy!

Today Uncle Herrmann Boettger led the Divine Worship Service and preached about the Mission of the Church.

In the evening the Italians invited us to a concert and theatre production. It was really enjoyable, especially the music was pleasant.

The almond trees are flowering in the orchards, so spring must be coming.

When we went to breakfast this morning, all the tables, – except ours – had swastika graffiti on them. There was an enormous commotion, and we were accused of being the perpetrators. Everybody accused us, yelling, "Nazi pigs"; but we remained calm, and quietly only insisted that we hadn't done it. Everybody crowded around our table, yelling and accusing. Also the Camp Administrator was very nasty to us.

A bit later the Major also appeared; – previously he had served in the Secret Service – and was able to decipher the graffiti, and tell that it wasn't written by Germans; rather it had to be the work of an Australian.

In the evening there was a big assembly with heated agitation, excitement and accusation. The claim was that the clergy were the worst. Then later, when we went back to our tent, we looked around for some sticks, and we closed our tent securely.

Mr. Lange, the Queenslander in our tent, still transferred out into the barrack.

Throughout the night we sensed that men were eavesdropping on our tent.

This Sunday Willi Zischler preached on "The Destruction of Jerusalem".

The uproar in Camp was subsiding. At noon I received three letters at the one time, and I was very happy about the good news from my Loved Ones.

The weather had become very cold here, with rain and storms, which nearly blew our tent away. We had to get out, in pouring rain, to fasten our tent down more securely.

At the dentist I became acquainted with a Mr. Schmalz, who has now invited us repeatedly to his tent in the evenings. He is an older gentleman and very pleasant. He is from Melbourne. Quite regularly we have been served afternoon coffee and cake in the mess hall now.

The days have been passing monotonously, so today we signed up for a Course in English, and we are to have daily instruction.

The days were getting warmer now, and the sandstorm season was upon us. Already now we were experiencing the second day of a sandstorm. Everything was covered in a cloud of dust.

Willi Hertle and I have volunteered to work in the gardens.

**21/8 42** : Today, on August 21, we moved into the barrack, because the sandstorm drove us out of our tent; even though it was more comfortable in the tent. The Italians presented another beautiful concert, for which they had built a very good stage.

**22/ 8/42** : The letter which I received today from my wife didn't sound encouraging, and I am concerned how they will continue in this situation, if something doesn't change soon. We can only hope and pray. In the evening we still played Skat with two internees from Singapore. It was quite enjoyable, and later we had fried sausages [Bratwurst] and fresh rolls.

**23/8/42** : This Sunday Pastor Eward Steiniger preached on "And the Truth will set you free" (John 8:32). This encouraged and strengthened us! I forgot to mention that Uncle Herrmann Boettger made a beautiful stool for me. That made me very happy. Further, we also talked with Emil Wagner at the fence.

**24/8/42** : We were called to the Commanding Officer, where we were informed that we were to be transferred to another Camp. However, he didn't tell us which Camp; – yet we hoped it would be Tatura 3. We were very pleased, and Pastor Eward Steiniger would have loved to be going with us!

We were to be ready for departure at 2.00 p.m., but then we got the news that our transport had been postponed for 24 hours. We were somewhat disappointed; and Willi Zischler had to go and fetch his box back from the gate, where he had already taken it. We still drank a farewell coffee with cake and biscuits which Pastor Ludwig Dohler had donated.

Quite early in the morning we had everything ready for departure, but then had to wait until 3.00 p.m. in the afternoon before we were picked up. Pastor Steiniger helped us carry our belongings to the gate.

Everything was taken to the guardhouse, where it was inspected, and we were accommodated in cells. For the evening meal we were taken back into Camp; and we could even still meet our friends there. Soon after 7.00 p.m. we were again picked up and taken to the guard-house where there was another thorough search, – and the diary was taken away. We could keep the letters. Then we received bags of straw and blankets, and camped on the concrete floor.

**26/8/42** : All of us had a restless night. We received a very good breakfast in the guardhouse. Immediately after this we were loaded onto a truck, and our friends from Camp still waved farewell to us. In the adjacent Camp Compound more than 60 Japanese joined our convoy toward Melbourne. We caught the train in Barmera; and the train trip and the service were good.

At 5.00 p.m. we arrived in Murray Bridge, where we were taken to have our evening meal. After that we waited on the platform for the express train from Adelaide, which arrived at 10.00 p.m., and we boarded. There were eight of us in the compartment, and the night was uncomfortable and cold.



**27/8/42** : At 9.30 a.m. we arrived in Melbourne, and from there we were taken to Broadmeadows, where we had already been once before, on our way to South Australia. We received something to eat and had to stay in the yard, until at last a vehicle arrived at 4.00 p.m. to take us back to the Railway Station in Melbourne. Here we had to drag our luggage for nearly a kilometre along platforms to another train; apparently there were no luggage carts available at that time!

We were relieved when our train got moving, and at 9.00 p.m. in the evening we arrived at the Tatura Railway Station!

We were taken to **Internment Camp for Men, Tatura 1**, in two vehicles; and there we had to face the whole process of inspection anew, but luckily it was only the few of us and our few bits of hand luggage!

By 10.30 p.m. we got into the Internment Camp, Tatura 1, but nobody was up any more. Finally the leader of Compound B showed up and took us to a vacant barrack, where we could stay overnight.

**28/8/42** : It was Friday morning! After breakfast we set off to look for our fellow compatriots from New Guinea, who were in Compound A. We were hardly at the Compound fence when we met brothers Rev. Matthias Lechner and Rev. Hans Wagner. They were astonished to see us, and couldn't immediately comprehend it that we were here. They led us to Barrack 39, where most of them were housed, and men came from all directions, – also those who lived in Barrack 33 came running. Dr. Alfred Stuerzenhofecker (Medical) embraced me and just didn't want to let go of me. They accompanied us to Compound B and helped us fill our bags of straw. Willi Zischler and I immediately moved into Compound A, Barrack 39. The others were also accommodated in different barracks. Later we had to pick up our baggage, – when it was again searched! Because it was raining rather heavily, I picked up only one of my suitcases, and got the other one later.

Rev. Gustav Bergmann shouted me to the canteen for coffee and cake, so that we could celebrate and rejoice!

In Compound B there was a fight during the night. The Commanding Officer of Tatura Camp 1 demoted the Compound B Leader, and this caused great upset. When the Compound A Leader tried to interfere, he too was demoted. Now there really was pandemonium in the Camp, and it was demanded that the troublemakers be removed from the Camp, especially a Dr. Becker.

**29/8 42** : In the morning Ernst Guth (Administration) took me to the canteen for coffee; and in the afternoon Rev. Leo Goetzelmann. Uncle Kaspar Doebler (Agriculture) gave me apples. Everybody was so pleased that we were here.

**30/8/42** : Today was Sunday, and Rev. Georg Horrolt led the Worship Service in the mess hall.

The Commanding Officer (C. O.) informed us, that he would control the Camp without the Compound Leaders.

To honour us, the newly arrived, there was a big coffee party in the afternoon in our barrack, which was very sociable and enjoyable.

In the evening a big assembly was called at which the Compound Leader demanded strictest order and discipline.

**31/8/42** : This morning the Compound A Leader left to transfer to the **Family Camp, Tatura 3**, because his wife was interned there.

United all the Camp internees turned up at the gate to say goodbye to Compound A Leader Junge; but they also insisted that the troublemakers be at the gate to leave the Camp. Therefore there was no alternative, but to get the troublemakers out too.

During this tense time the C. O. struck an internee, thus 'turning the pistol on himself', so to say. The C. O. had to give in to the internees' demand to reinstate Compound A Leader Junge. However, Junge himself had applied to transfer to the Family Camp, Tatura 3, and left in honour!

This episode was a victory for the Camp on all sides!

**1 ff./9/42** : Peace and quiet settled into the Camp again.

Uncle Linus Eiermann (Agriculture) gave me some wood and helped me make a stand for my suitcases, and a table. Later he took me to share a cup of coffee.

During the night Rev. Matthias Lechner and I were on guard-duty at Barrack 27, where the remaining troublemakers were housed.

In the morning I began to braid a belt from some yarn which I had received from Rev. Hans Streicher.

Then later in the day Rev. Georg Horrolt took us to the canteen where we bought wood to make folding stools; and after this he invited us for coffee.

In the evening was a social gathering at which a new Compound Leader was elected; and the old one was farewelled. We made music and sang songs and had coffee and cake.

An internee from Compound B escaped and all of us internees had to assemble and line up on the sports ground for a roll call check up, and stand there from 10.00 a.m. to 12.00 noon, until they found out who the escapee was. An Australian Aborigine was called in to track him.

Despite the additional guards that were deployed now, three more internees escaped from Compound A during the next night. This caused a great upheaval among the guards. Again we had to stand for hours on the sports ground, but luckily the weather was better, and no longer so cold.

I received a letter from my Loved Ones, saying that the children were sick; and the situation was becoming ever more stressful for all.

I went for a walk with Ernst Gut (Administration), and he took me to the canteen for coffee.

In the evening Rev. Herrmann Strauss still invited me to his birthday party.

Really, there is no end to the invitations!

Rev. Konrad Munsel had the sermon today at Divine Worship.

This afternoon I went for a walk, and then finished reading my book 'Der Fehmhof' (by Josefa Berens, 1934).

Hubert Stuerzenhofecker (Agriculture) invited me for coffee, cake and whipped cream.

I was plaiting belts, and helped Uncle Herrmann Boettger who was making my chair. Deacon Brother Ernst Dahlhaeuser (Agriculture) has been in the hospital, and his condition is improving slowly.

The three escapees from the Camp haven't been seen yet; and today in the middle of the night was a roll call check, and two guards also appeared in our barrack. I received a letter that had gone to Loveday. Rev. Gustav Bergmann invited me for potato pancakes and apple sauce, very delicious.

In the presence of the Commanding Officer we had to sign that we have been transferred from Loveday to Tatura. Further, the Swiss Consul sent a diplomatic note that we could apply for an exchange to Germany. The suggestion of an exchange had its problems, and we soon lost our initial enthusiasm.

I received a letter from my Loved Ones; and a jumper from Sister Helene Moll. All of this mail made me very happy. I braided another belt, with yarn from Deacon Brother Martin Boerner (Agriculture). Today was a big spring-cleaning day.

**13 ff. /9/42 (Sunday) :** Today Rev. Leo Goetzelmann preached on "The Raising of Lazarus – The time of Jesus and God's time".

In the afternoon I went to the café with Leo Goetzelmann and Linus Eiermann (Agriculture); and later we played a game of Rook.

On Monday I had duty with Rev. Lorenz Methsieder. At first we had to clean the bathrooms, and then we had to prepare vegetables in the kitchen.

In the afternoon I went to work in the garden, but the weather was bad.

I received two letters from my Loved Ones, and one from Sister Helene Moll (Medical).

The next day an internee from Compound B died, and everybody lined up along the road, when the corpse was taken away.

Mail arrived regularly now, and we were allowed to write twice a week.

The days passed quietly, and I hadn't written up my diary for quite a while!

**31 ff./10/42 :** Another month had passed, and life in Internment Camp, Tatura 1, had become quieter.

The conflict in the POW Camp, Tatura 13, which had resulted in one death and eight injured, has obviously affected both prisoners and guards.

Otherwise I have worked diligently during the last weeks making a trunk and toys for Christmas. Now everything, the trunk and toys, has been sent to my Loved Ones.

And now the news came from the Swiss Consul, that citizens of the German "Reich" (reichsdeutsche) wives and children were eligible for exchange. This caused renewed upset among all of us. After much discussion on the pros and cons of such an exchange, we unanimously came to the conclusion, to advise our wives to nominate for the exchange. All of us were of the opinion, that this would be the best for them, because the present circumstances were very trying.

Today I received a package and letter from my Loved Ones with greetings for my birthday (November 3, 1906). I was very happy about these, especially the beautiful wreath and flowers. On the following day I received a beautiful photo of them, which I immediately placed on the shelf near my table. And now I could always see it. It makes me very happy that all look so well.

We had received no mail whatsoever yet from Germany, even though I wrote quite often.

It is the Festival of the Reformation, and we sang “Erhalt uns Herr bei Deinem Wort” (EKG 193), [“LORD, keep us steadfast in Thy Word” (ALH 197)]

We hear very little about the state of the war, only what we can read in the newspaper and much of this has been severely censored and cut out!

My last Christmas gifts have been sent off, and my Loved Ones have informed me that everything has arrived safely.

**29/11/42** : The First of Advent!

Yet outside in the world the war rages on. The news reports here surpass each other, but most of them probably had their source here in the Camp itself. One just doesn't know what to believe.

From my Loved Ones I received Advent and Christmas greetings and gifts, which made me very happy. They sent me many very useful things!

Thanks be to God! All are well!

We can now write airmail letters to Germany. The letter costs one shilling.

This is the end of the report of my experiences in the Camps!

Internment Camp, Tatura 1