

# Prisoners Given 'Banquet' on Hirohito's Birthday -- Half an Egg; Torturous Days Finally Ended With Strange Liberation

Editor's Note: Herewith is the twelfth and concluding chapter of the series by the three recently liberated Doolittle flyers on their experiences during 40 months of imprisonment by the Japanese. The co-author, Sgt. Jacob De Shazer is a native of Marion county.

## Chapter 12 (Conclusion)

By Capt. Robert Hite and M. Sgt. Jacob De Shazer  
(Written exclusively for International News Service)  
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After more than two years in solitary confinement at the Nanking prison we still dreamed of eventual release, but our spirits were wearing thin. The real torture was the solitude. We had to fight ourselves to keep from going mad.

The Japs celebrate New Year's with great enthusiasm and on each of the two New Year's we spent there we got a special treat of fish cakes. That was awfully important to us.

### What a Banquet!

Another important day was April 29—the emperor's birthday. The guards told us we would be royally treated that day. We were in Nanking for three of Hirohito's birthdays. Once we got a half an egg each, another time half an apple and another time a couple of sweet cakes about the size of a silver dollar.

We had about decided that we'd end our days at Nanking.

Then, suddenly, we were transferred to a prison at Peiping. This was on June 12, 1945.

About 6:30 that morning the guards put hoods over our heads and we were handcuffed and taken to the railroad station.

We boarded the train at 11:30 a. m. and began a 48-hour trip to Peiping. It was pretty grim. We were not only handcuffed, but tied to our seats in the train. Although our hoods were removed, we were bundled in Japanese raincoats and nearly suffocated with the heat.

### Car Was Filthy

The train was first class by Japanese standards because a large number of officers were traveling on it. The seats were cushioned, but our car was filthy.

The food during the trip was all right because we got the same fare as the officers, which included a few pieces of beef for each meal. It was the best food we'd had in three years.

But our guards declined to give us any water. The result was that we had nothing to drink for 48 hours. Those 48 hours were among the worst we spent during our entire imprisonment by the Japs.

The heat was terrific and when we got to Peiping we were literally sick with thirst.

We arrived there at noon on June 14. The hoods were slipped over our heads again and we were transported by automobile to our prison. We later found out it was about four miles out of the city on the north Hataman road.

### Again in Solitary

We were placed in solitary confinement again, and in Peiping we didn't even have the half hour exercise period that was part of the Nanking regime. Our cells were just as primitive.

We spent two months and six days in Peiping. We had no real news of how the war was going except for the few messages Sergeant Battles, the marine, had been able to send us via the "tin cup" news service in Nanking. We were confident the Yanks were winning, of course, and our confidence was strengthened by the attitude of the Japs.

You could notice a difference in their actions. They seemed to



SGT. JACOB DE SHAZER  
His First Meal in Salem

have lost some of their cockiness. Last Aug. 16 the Jap soldiers at Peiping did not have their usual drill. That had been a morning ritual and we always listened to them outside, marching around to band music. Often we'd pull ourselves up to the edge of the single window in the cell to watch.

### Watch Papers Burn

The next day we saw some soldiers in the prison courtyard burning maps and charts. We watched them from our windows and called to each other from our cells. During the day truck after truck drove up loaded with papers, and all were burned.

It was a rainy, nasty day, but our hearts were happy. We knew something was going to happen.

The next day, the 18th, there was a lot of activity. We noticed that all of the guards had new uniforms and that prisoners were being transferred from one cell to another. On the evening of the 19th a guard came to each of our cells and said:

"Ima amata watachi tomoduce." This means: "We are now friends."

### Officer Aids Release

That same night we saw Cmdr. Winfield Scott Cunningham of Wake Island fame, being taken out of prison.

It was the first we'd known he was there. Scott knew about us, though, and he set the wheels in motion to release us.

On Aug. 20th the Japs gave us a little extra food during the day and about 6 p. m. we were taken out of our cells and our beards were clipped. Our beards were heavy and matted and it was quite a job.

We were put back in our cells, but a few minutes later we were taken out again and shaved by a Jap barber with a straight edge razor. We had to stand up during the shave and he lathered our faces with cold water. Our faces were pretty sore.

Fifteen minutes later we were

permitted to take a bath in a bucket of hot water. George Barr wasn't there. He had been very sick for several days with dysentery. While we were bathing, a Jap officer, a poker faced little guy, came in.

"You can go home!" he said. "You can go to your country now," he said.

We looked at him suspiciously and asked him to repeat.

"You can go to your country now," he said and paused. Then he added: "The war is over."

Just then a guard brought George Barr in. We were so happy and excited that we slapped each other on the backs and cheered, but poor George was too sick to comprehend. He kept asking us where we were going.

The Japs brought us our belongings, loaded us into a truck and took us to the Grand hotel in Peiping. That was a beautiful evening—Aug. 20. We met a lot of other released prisoners at the hotel and we sang, talked and ate all night.

A smiling little Chinese caterer brought us four lovely, heaping plates of Irish stew and nothing ever tasted so good. The Grand hotel will always be associated with paradise in our minds. We were there three days and we ate most of the time.

### Teeth in Bad Shape

Then we boarded a B-24 which was brought in for us and flew to Chungking and from there to Kunning. We had our teeth fixed there. They were in bad shape because of our diet. We had to leave George Barr there. He was too sick to make the trip home.

We had one peculiar experience.

We found our vocal cords wouldn't stand all the talking we were doing. Our throats ached with so much talk. We heard from our folks while we were in Kunning. We flew to Calcutta on Aug. 29 and began the trip home by air. We arrived in Washington at 12:45 a. m. September 4.

We've been through a lot together. We have memories we can express only to each other. They will be with us always.

We want peace and quiet and love now. But if what we've suffered will help, even a little bit, to make this a peaceful world, it will have been worthwhile.

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(THE END)

## Condit's Observe 65th Anniversary Quietly at Home

STAYTON—On Tuesday, September 18, the 65th wedding anniversary of Mr. and Mrs. H. B. Condit of West Stayton was observed; no celebration having been had on account of the serious illness of Mrs. Condit.

Ella Wells of Viola, Ore., and H. B. Condit of West Stayton exchanged their wedding vows at Oregon City with only witnesses being members of the immediate family. Upon returning to West Stayton, the couple farmed for a short period before Mr. Condit became the Southern Pacific agent at West Stayton, which he held until his retirement recently. Mr.

Condit is now 87 and Mrs. Condit 82.  
Mr. Condit is a 65-year Oddfellow and a 30-year Masonic lodge member.  
The condits are parents of five children, Mrs. Archie Caspell, West Stayton; Mrs. I. R. Hammer, Mill City; Mrs. Ocie Grant, Newport; Everett Condit, Tillamook, and Ross Condit of Portland.

## NEIGER HOSPITALIZED

LINCOLN—Mrs. Katie Parsons and son Henry Anderson of Portland, Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Hammer and H. J. Neiger of Lincoln visited Kasper Neiger at the Deaconess hospital Monday night. Mrs. Parsons and H. J. Neiger are sister and brother of Kasper Neiger, who was entered as a patient at the hospital Sept. 16 because of an infection in his hand.

## Recreation Project to Be Talked

MT. ANGEL—The Mt. Angel Business Men's club has been fathering the idea of a recreational program for the city, and at the regular club luncheon at the Mt. Angel hotel Tuesday noon Ed Stolle gave a resume of the proposed project and announced a meeting at the city hall Friday night which is to bring the matter to a head.

The meeting is to be attended by delegates from community organizations and they are to give a definite answer as to whether or not the project, which is to

cost approximately \$3500, is to be carried out. The money for the first year is to be subscribed by the organizations; thereafter, according to the plan, it will be placed on the tax roll. The major part of the outlay will be the hiring of an experienced man to have complete charge of the program.

The Rev. Damian Jeniges, new Mt. Angel pastor, was asked to speak on the subject and expressed himself as being wholeheartedly in favor of such a program and yet fearing the difficulties it encounter.

He endorsed Stolle's suggestion that the program be tried and if found wanting, discontinued with a frank admission of its failure.

Committee members working on the program and will meet with the organization representatives Friday night are Ed Stolle,

Louis LeDoux, Louis Schwab, Sylvester Schmitt and Peter Gores.  
Support Voted  
The club voted to back the project with its share of the necessary money subscriptions.  
John T. Bauman read a pro-

posed letter to the United States chamber of commerce acknowledging the club's willingness to keep them posted regarding Mt. Angel's viewpoint on national and legislative measures. The club voted that the letter be sent.

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Be sure to ask for complete mailing instructions when you purchase your gifts. Heed Santa's advice. "Shop now!"—for that soldier boy of yours overseas. Make his Christmas merry!

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