

REPORT ON AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR INTERNED BY THE JAPANESE IN THE PHILIPPINES
 Prepared by OFFICE OF THE PROVOST MARSHAL GENERAL 19 November 1945

CABANATUAN, CAMP ONE

The 7,000 American prisoners of war from Corregidor fared somewhat better than did those captured on Bataan. After being interned for a week in a small, crowded area on Corregidor they were placed aboard transports and taken to Manila, where they were first paraded through the streets and then thrown into old Bilibid Prison. They had been there only a short time when they were packed into freight cars and sent to Cabanatuan.

The first group, comprising about 2,000 officers and men, was taken to Camp 1. They were forced to march on foot the entire 12 miles between the town and the camp. Anyone who fell by the wayside from heat prostration or exhaustion was severely beaten by the guards. If, after having been beaten, they still insisted that they were unable to continue the march, they were thrown into trucks and were permitted to ride the rest of the way.

Conditions at Camp 1 were fair, the camp being, on the whole, well organized and administered.

The Headquarters Staff at this camp comprised the following officers:

Camp Commander:	Lt. Col. Cdrtis E. Beecher, U.S.M.C.
Vice Camp Commander:	Lt. Col. Charles Leinbach, U.S.A. (FA) 011578
Camp Executive:	Lt. Col. Arthur Shreve, U.S.A. (G.S.C.) 011176
Statistical & Personnel Officer:	Major Frank Pyzick, U.S.M.C.
Camp Supply Officer:	Lt. Col. John Brettell, A.U.S. (2 MG)
Camp Adjutant:	Major Gilbert Reynolds, A.U.S. (FA)
Work Detail Officer:	Major James Vincent Bradley, U.S.M.C.
Chief, Medical Service:	Lt. Col. R.W. Craig, U.S.A. (MC)
Supply - Medical:	Lt. Col. Orin W. Kemp, U.S.A. (MC)
Medical Adjutant:	Major Carl Houghton, U.S.A. (MC)
Other Staff Personnel:	Lt. Col. Harold K. Johnson, U.S.A. 019187
	Major Harry Leighton, U.S.A. (V.C.) 016296
	Major John Brinkmeyer (Probably alive & recaptured at Bilibid.)

Prisoners who were seriously ill were sent to Camp 3 to die. Consequently, the death rate at Camp 1 was very low. Several of the prisoners there were executed for attempt to escape, and one officer was killed when a group of Filipino guerillas ambushed a truck in which he was riding with 2 Japanese officers, and, not recognizing the American, opened fire and killed all 3 occupants of the truck. Several details were sent to Japan from the Camp between June and Sep 1942. It was closed in September 1942 and the remaining American prisoners removed to Camp 3. A short time later the Japanese reopened Camp 1 as a rehabilitation training camp for Filipino prisoners of war.

Diet: The daily ration ...was somewhat better. Here, about 16 oz. of rice, per man per day, 4 oz of top greens (similar to spinach, somewhat) was issued. Once per week, 1 oz of caribou (water buffalo) meat was issued. For about 1 month, while in season, each man received 1 slice of cucumber (1/4" x 1 1/2" diam.) per day. About once per week 2 oz of coconut was issued and this was utilized with cornstarch and sugar, of which there was almost always a fair amount available, to make a pudding. Also, once per week for one month 1 small banana was issued and this also was used for pudding. For a period of one month, each man received a total of 15 limes. All the vegetables, except the cucumbers were boiled, with the further exception of fried sweet potatoes on 2 occasions (from July-Nov). For the soups, 50 lbs of Purico per week (coconut oil fat) for 500 men or 1/10 lb per man per week was issued.

Analysis of these data readily demonstrate the reason for the high death rate of these two camps and explain the reasons for the tremendous number of cases of dietary deficiency diseases. In no single respect was the diet adequate, not even in calories, which in O'Donnell was approximately 1340, and at Cabanatuan, 1989.

At Cabanatuan, a commissary was available for these who had money. However, these fortunate ones were by far in the minority; perhaps 10% had some money and about 1%, only, had enough to adequately supplement the diet to basic minimum requirements.

Organization: Camp 1 was divided into 3 groups of approximately 1500 men each. Each group had its own kitchens, administrative group and dispensary. A central camp administration and field medical supply headquarters were in charge of the whole camp. In addition there was a large hospital separate from the camp, but next to it, of 2,000 patients

and 400 medical personnel. Those prisoners of war who were very ill were sent to the hospital, not so much for treatment (due to lack of drugs) as for isolation from the relatively healthy. Medical supplies and equipment were very, very limited.

The dispensary in each group had a staff of 4 to 6 physicians and dentists, and about 5 enlisted medical corpsmen. Here, a daily sick call was conducted for diagnosis and minor dressings. Very few drugs were available unfortunately. The dispensary kept careful records of diagnosis and treatments of every patient in the group.

Conclusions--

1. Starvation, "nutritional and actual" was present among American Prisoners of War in the Philippines in 1942 and was the direct cause of the great majority of the excessively large number of deaths which occurred.

2. On changing from a balanced diet, at the beginning of the war, to a nutritionally deficient one, Beriberi was the first nutritional disease observed, occurring after 3 months departure from a balanced diet; Pellagra was observed after 9 months; Ariboflavinosis after 9 months and Scurvy was still questionable after 9 months and began to definitely appear in ten months. Xerophthalmia and nystalopia although difficult to diagnose microscopically was definitely present in ten months and very severe thereafter, increasing in intensity to complete blindness in many cases, cleared up by massive doses of Vitamin A and thiamin.

Severe and sharp "shooting" pains in the feet and legs developed during the winter months of 1942-43 and resulted in gangrene of the toes and many deaths. It was definitely cleared up by great doses of thiamin in test cases, administered intra-spinally and intra-muscularly.

4. The efficiency and fighting capacity of the Filipino-American troops in Bataan was markedly lowered by a very poor diet, affecting military capabilities, their morale, and fighting capacity.