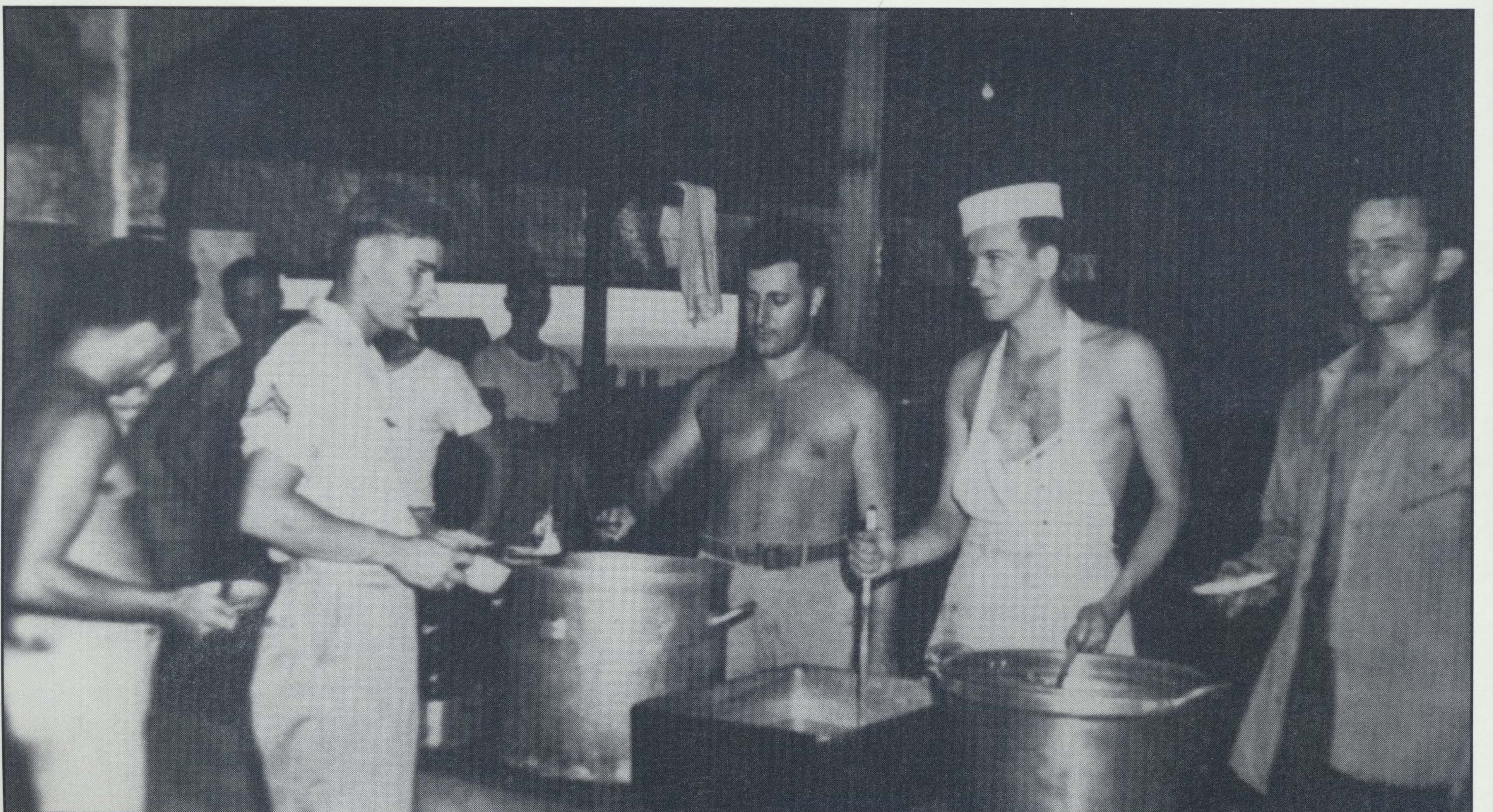




*Above: WWII scrap collection at Cranmoor School. From left. Rear: Marjorie Smith, Celia Bennett, Jo Ann Wirtz, (?) Topping, Carol Smith, Doris Wirtz, Ruth Wirtz, (?), (?). Center: (?), Charlotte Ward. Front: Inez Damme, (?). (RCM)*

*Below: Okinawa, August 25, 1945. Pete the Lip, Swiger, Doc Bernel, Yours Truly, Jack, Jr. (Ed Barten)*



## TORTURE FARM

After the Japanese surrender August 14, 1945, came published reports, probably edited or expurgated, about mistreatment local soldiers had received in enemy prisoner of war camps.

S/Sgt. Raymond Toelle, 21, son of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Toelle, Wisconsin Rapids, had been a tail gunner on a B-29 during the end-of-war bombing of Japan. Shot down May 29, 1945, over Tokyo, he spent the last month of the war at the Ofuna "torture farm," near Yokohama. "Now that the war with Japan is over and some folks are being lulled into thinking that those little people aren't such bad Joes after all," said the *Tribune* when the aviator arrived home in November, "here are a few notes on the 'enforced vacation' which Toelle spent in Japan."

In wooden barracks, the prisoners slept alone in small rooms on straw mats rife with lice and vermin. Rice, tea and seaweed soup were standard fare, three times a day, supplemented occasionally by potato peelings and marigold soup. Privileges were dispensed perversely. The camp was filthy with flies, and the prisoners had to kill 100 to receive one cigarette.

Because a prisoner left a book in the open when he went in to eat, 50 men were questioned. With no confession forthcoming, the guards made the entire group stand in a crouched position facing the sun. Anyone who started to pass out was kicked until he revived. After all still refused to divulge any information, the guards set the prisoners to "work." If they didn't kill 1,300 flies, there would be no food the next day.

Each morning, the roughness of treatment by guards proved a good gauge of how hard Japan had been hit the night before by B-29s.

After the Japanese surrender, and the emperor's speech that ordered decent treatment, nothing was too good for the prisoners. The guards brought out fresh meat, fish, milk and other delicacies. Afternoon walks were permitted, and townspeople invited prisoners in for meals.

Another inmate of a Japanese camp was Marine Cpl. Chester Jakubzak, 27, son of Mrs. Milhaline Jakubzak of Port Edwards. "Yes, it's every bit as bad as you've heard it is," he told the *Tribune*. Jakubzak had barely escaped the "Bataan death march" before his capture at Corregidor in May 1942 and transport to Camp No. 3, a two-day march from Manila. Companions who fell out of line were bayoneted and left to die.

While at Camp 3, four prisoners found they had brothers at nearby Camp 1 and set out to visit them. Captured, they were tied up and left in the hot sun for 48 hours before being taken back to camp and shot in front of the other prisoners.

If anyone else attempted to "escape," he and the nine men who slept next to him would receive the same treatment.

"You may be sure," Jakubzak said, "that we watched our nine closest neighbors from then on!"

After three or four months, the prisoners were taken by ship to Japan, packed so closely they had to eat and sleep standing up. Many died from mistreatment or dysentery and were cast into the sea.

At Osaka, they were put in a large prison camp to work 12 hours a day breaking up pig iron for a steel factory. With nothing to eat but a little rice, many were stricken with dysentery and beriberi. The only meat was garnered on snake hunts, unless you counted roasted grasshoppers favored by some natives. Failure to work up to par brought 20 lashes. Some prisoners were stretched on ladders, feet just out of reach of the ground, so lack of circulation caused arms and legs to turn black. The "culprit," when released, would die from the sudden rush of blood to the heart.

After three winters at Osaka, only 156 of the original 412 survived to be transported to Kyushu Island at the south of Japan. There, they worked in dangerous coal mines.

When the Allied bombing of Japan began, prisoners gloried in the sight of B-29s flying over.

On September 15, the men were freed and taken to Nagasaki, where Jakubzak saw the area that had been devastated

by the atomic bomb. "Nothing remained except a few stone walls," he said.

Details of a somewhat less traumatic life in a German prison camp were described in the journal of Lt. Lyman A. Beeman Jr., formerly of Wisconsin Rapids. Beeman had been captured on a strafing mission along the Danube. Parachuting into the main street of a Slovak village, he was accosted by several civilians with rifles and Tommy guns. They turned him in at the German headquarters.

While being questioned, the officer who led him through the building, "a tall, spare Prussian with close-cropped hair," noticed Beeman had his hands in his pockets and yelled something in German. Beeman took his hands out of his pockets and was struck in the jaw.

On December 4, 1944, he was shipped to the prison camp at Barth. "The food situation is serious," he wrote, surviving on our regular one-sixth loaf of bread per person per day, plus some jam and a bucket of stew for 24 people."

The prisoners received Red Cross packets, read books, played cards, talked, boxed and took part in a glee club. They were aware of the progress of American, British and Russian armies. In April, the war was considered nearly at an end, and the food situation improved.

"Took a few turns skipping rope (calisthenics), and working an arm exerciser," Beeman wrote. "At least I don't black out any more when I stand up. Food makes quite a difference in ambition.

"About five o'clock this morning, a big shouting in the barracks woke us up to our first free morning," Beeman said in the final entry of the initial journal. "The Jerry pulled out last night at 10:30."

Later, he wrote that when the Russians arrived May 2 and ordered the Americans to tear down their fence, the place went wild. Wearing uniforms retrieved from the camp warehouse, Beeman and friends went into town to watch the Russians enjoy what he called "their systematic looting." The war, it seemed, ended differently for each soldier.

# BURMA ROAD

## *There is a day to die*

*In 1942, the Japanese conquest of Burma cut the only Allied ground route to China. To help reopen the Burma Road, a special U.S. combat team, known as "Merrill's Marauders," arrived in February 1944.*

*Bernard Janskvich, now of Wisconsin Rapids, enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1942 at his hometown of Saginaw, Michigan, and later became a battalion scout for General Merrill.*

*This is part of his story, told in his words:*

About 40 miles from Bombay, India, they showed me the map and said, "Lead 'em out." So, I took off, and they came behind.

I didn't know where I was going. I never heard of Burma before I went there.

At first, we didn't know anything about jungle fighting. We didn't have any carbines, no artillery, and we didn't have tanks. The only thing we had was mules for ammunition.

The Japs drove us like a herd of cattle. We walked 2,000 miles in 23 days. We went all night long and all day long into China.

Then, the Army give us all new equipment and we came back and took that land.

Going into Myitkyina, we were on one side of the strip; the Japs were on the other. We'd gain about 15 feet, then the Japs would drive us back. That's how we fought until some more guys came in, and we got Myitkyina.

The first American killed was Jim Landis. After we won the battle, we made a clearing along the Irrawady and called it Camp Landis.

I was battalion scout. We'd get together, and the officers, General Merrill, General Stilwell, Captain Robinson and Lieutenant Young, would show me on a map where we were going next.

I'd walk about 400 yards ahead of the rest. The Japs wouldn't shoot at a scout and give away their position. They ain't worrying about you. They want the guys behind you.

They called me "Pappy" or "Sag" for Saginaw. Ever see the movie, "Merrill's Marauders?" Peter Brown, the actor, he played the battalion scout, and that was me. He was called "Pappy" and "Sag" in the movie.

Sometimes, when we'd come to a village, the natives would run out and greet us. They'd give us fruit. But you could see them sneak through the jungles while we're in the village.

We'd get down three or four miles, and hell would break loose. The Japs had an ambush set up for us.

The Kachins and the Gurkhas were the native people. When we were going down toward Myitkyina, the Kachin chief's son fell into the Irrawaddy River.

I went and dragged him out. Now, I'm a blood brother of the Kachins.

Next time I went on patrol by myself, I heard a noise, turned around, and there were Kachins, standing and grinning at me. They wouldn't let me go alone after that.

On the Burma Road, you're in the clouds, and you start down the other side, and there's a village. We'd get in the brush and sleep or, if we weren't in the brush, we were walking down the Irrawaddy with water up to here.

You'd go to bed at night covered with your poncho, and the cobras would crawl under to keep warm. You would see them sunning themselves along the river.

We moved a lot at night. You could hear tigers and elephants blowing their trunks, and monkeys chattering all over the place.

We sat down to eat, and the monkeys come out. We had this hardtack that we dipped in coffee. A monkey came up and grabbed it, sat on my lap, putting his paws out. He wanted some more.

The natives showed us how to live off the land. We ate what they did: monkey meat, wild rice, lots of bananas, the heart of the banana stalk, lizards, snakes

roasted in banana leaves. The Army would drop food to us but, by the time we got to it, the Japanese had it. We traded with the natives.

For one Atabrine pill, they'd give us a chicken. Once in a while, we'd have goat meat.

The Air Force dropped a menu for Thanksgiving, with turkey and everything, but, when Thanksgiving come, I was eating a monkey.

Another Thanksgiving, they took us for a rest to Calcutta. General Stilwell said we were gonna eat.

"Get that truck over there," he says, and he got food for us. He walks in the officers quarters and took all the beer cases. He says to some of the enlisted men, "You and you and you are cooks."

I was laughing like hell. He says, "What are you laughing at? You're the mess sergeant."

I was up all night, preparing the Thanksgiving meal: making bread, raising buns, making "punkin" pie and roasting turkey.

My mother had taught us boys and my sisters how to cook. "It'll never hurt you," she said.

The Air Force offered me a job as a cook for the officers. I said, "No way. I'm waiting for that little piece of paper, so I can get out of here."

My first leave didn't come for six months. For something to do. We just sat there and talked. You would get an old newspaper and read it and read it and read it.

You would read your mail over and over. If a letter was written in January, you'd probably get it in June.

After I got out of the hospital, I come out. I get on a Piper Cub. I figured I'm going home. Where do I land?

Back in Myitkyina, in my old outfit. They were sending guys back home with 95 points, and I had 215. I was in 24 battles in Burma and China.

When we were done fighting in Burma, we went into Calcutta, and we were going to go home.

Lord Louis Mountbatten come out and pinned a medal on me. Then, he told me, in a nice way, we were "essential." We were going to China to train Chiang Kaishek's army.

We volunteered, they told us, but nobody had opened their mouth.

I was with Chiang Kaishek and his wife. I was supposed to guard them, but he'd grab a gun and go right in the front line, and lead the men.

He was a good guy. He could speak English. His wife could speak English good.

One time, I told him I'd rather be home than setting over here.

He just laughed at me. He patted me on the back and laughed.

### *Part Two*

"Take that rifle off your shoulder." I told my second scout. "We got all the Japs."

About that time, I looked over and saw three guys standing together. I waved at them and started going and it dawned on me. I turned around and started shooting.

They were Japs. I shot the three of them and went and crawled under a little bridge. The chaplain came up.

"You think that's gonna save you," he said. "Look, that bridge is made of bamboo." I just went to pieces, lying under that bridge, crying and everything. "That's the first person I ever shot in my life," I told the chaplain.

"You're alive and he's not," the chaplain said. "Forget about him. Always watch out for your own life and your friends."

When we first came into one valley, the Japanese were cooking rice down in the bottom. General Merrill gave the order to attack and we came out of there like Indians in a movie. You didn't put your gun up to your shoulder and squeeze. You shot from the waist, screaming all the way.

That's the first time I ever saw Japanese run. They dropped everything. We'd go by and put our hand in and scoop up a handful of rice and eat it.

About three months before the war ended, we had to go in the hills and free some guys who were trapped up there. Me and Challis Branch were going up the hill. He was my best friend; he watched me and I watched him.

We got near to the bottom and hell broke loose. I heard him say, "Oh Lord, save us."

He was shot all the way down the front. He was killed outright. I carried him up the hill with bullets hitting at my heels.

I cried with Challis in my arms. Cried and cried all night.

We had a guy with us who had signed a contract with the Cincinnati Reds. We got in a battle in a little village in northern Burma. A couple shells landed pretty close to him.

Next morning, he was on his hands and knees in the grass, eating with the mule. He had a gun and he was gonna kill us if we took that grass.

I was going up a hill by myself. They said, "Nips to the left of you. Nips to the right of you." I hit a great big foxhole and spun around.

There was a Japanese soldier with a gun pointed at me.

As I'm trying to shoot him, the clip to my Tommy gun drops on the ground. I couldn't do nothing. I looks at him and he ain't shootin'.

It's funny now but it wasn't then.

Somebody had pinned him to the bunker with a broken-off bayonet.

You could trust a Gurkha. I seen a Gurkha, he was standing behind a black palm. All at once he took that Gurkha knife, drew it and got that Jap right there.

It was a sentry so I went and got our outfit. We caused as much trouble and killed as many as we could and that was it till we got pinned down

So many of us were sick with everything. They kept us fighting until it got too bad and then sent us to the hospital.

After a little recuperation, they sent us back to combat. That's when the guys were ready to revolt.

The army promised and promised we'd go home. We knew they were just stringing us along.

When I got sent to the hospital, I was standing talking to Robinson and that's all I remember. They hauled me out and sent me to the 125th station hospital in Calcutta.

I had malaria, dengue fever, typhus and everything you could think of. And I was shot up with shrapnel. I woke up packed in ice. I had a 107-degree fever.

In the hospital, I'd get so hungry I could eat the table. The nurse would bring me the food. I'd look out the window and all these poor Hindus. I'd hand 'em the food. The nurse caught me and strapped down my arms and I got fed. She laid an old horse pistol on my chest.

"You're going to eat or else."

I called her "Simon Legree."

We were most afraid of walking into a trap that was mined. Or of being taken prisoner. I seen some of their prisoners, nothing but skin and bones, all bloated up, bones sticking out all over, eyes sunk in.

I captured one soldier, a colonel.

Walking one night, I saw a light—here's one going to the can.

I walked up behind him, took the machine gun and hit him, "Bam!"

I tied him up and dragged him out.

The Kachins took him and I never seen him again.

Till this day, I can't tell how Tokyo Rose knew our outfit. She knew our officers' names and everything; Stilwell, Merrill, Young, Robinson. One time, she said our whole outfit got wiped out. We were sitting and eating. We sat there and laughed.

"Maybe I'm next," you keep on thinking that every time you hear a gunshot. "Is that me? Is my name on that?"

Of 3,000 Americans that went into Burma, 300 came out.

How did I survive? It just wasn't my time to go.

You figure, well, you made it last night, maybe I'll make it today. Maybe I'll make it the next day.

I used to tell the guys there was a day set for me to die and there was nothing in the world going to save me from that.

# HARBORING JEWS

## *Netherlands Christians risked home for others*

As a child, Bernie Zylstra knew that at any time, his father and mother could be dragged from their home and shot to death.

Zylstra, formerly of Nekoosa, was born April 6, 1935, in Friesland, the Netherlands. During the German occupation, the Zylstras, to fulfill what they saw as an obligation of their Christian beliefs, harbored Jews in their small farmhouse.

Following several lesser visitations, two sets of Jewish couples came to the farm for what was to be two weeks. They stayed two-and-a-half years.

"On day one, the Jews wouldn't pray," Zylstra said. "Dad couldn't handle that and made a rule, 'When you're in our home, you do as we do.' They said they couldn't pray unless they had their heads covered. Dad said, 'Well, cover them,' and they did."

In the small farmhouse, lived Bernie's parents, Herman and Wilma Zylstra, their seven children, a grandmother and the four Jews.

The population was lessened when two Zylstra brothers were sent to work on German farms. A third brother was ordered into the German army but escaped and returned home. He was also hidden on the farm, for six months, although young Bernie was not aware of his presence.

In normal conditions, most of the residents, family and Jews alike, slept in the one-room second floor which had

been partitioned wall-to-wall with sheets hung from the ceiling.

The years of close confinement caused considerable stress. For one stretch, the Jews stayed in a hiding place under the haymow without seeing daylight for 14 days.

The four spent a lot of time in the barn loft, said Zylstra, playing cards and trying to amuse themselves. They also peeled large numbers of potatoes. "We had potatoes breakfast, dinner and supper," he said.

"We could plant potatoes, whereas bread we would have to purchase. From that, the bakery man would know you had extra people."

Zylstra said the older man, a photographer, often would taunt the younger, a scientist. Bernie's father had to separate the two "time and again when they were peeling potatoes, and they were going with knives at each other.

"We kept them busy polishing shoes to prepare for the Lord's day," said Zylstra. "All the children had shiny shoes."

As schoolchildren, Bernie and friends admired the way the occupying Germans marched past the school in time to music and singing.

"It was beautiful. We would get out of the classroom and walk down to the fence to watch them go."

The Germans posed a consistent threat. Toward the end of the war, two hungry German soldiers came to the front door as the Jews were in the kitchen, drinking coffee.

Zylstra's father and brother were armed and ready to "take care of any emergency," but his mother placed herself in the doorway, and "there wasn't a German who was going to get by her," he said.

At another time, Germans searched the house. With rifles, they shot through a stack of peat fuel in the attic without finding anyone.

When an English plane crashed, the Zylstras were first on the scene. The pilot had escaped, and Bernie's dad

retrieved confidential papers from the wreck.

That night, German soldiers came to the house. After a futile search, one soldier stayed behind and said in fluent Friesian, "We are the underground. We know you have the papers."

"Dad said he did not have the papers," Zylstra related. "He did not trust them."

As the Germans faced invasion by the Allies, they began to flood the occupied Netherlands to make attack difficult. In the process, water reached the corner of the Zylstra homestead. The high water made the already remote house more inaccessible and German inspection less likely.

Combat nearby became a common occurrence as Dutch cities were bombed and Allied troops, many in tanks, cleared out the remaining Germans, who often holed up in strategically located farmhouses.

When a messenger said the Netherlands had been liberated, the four Jews wanted to leave immediately, Zylstra said. But there still seemed to be a war going on.

At 10 a.m., two German bicyclists were doing battle from foxholes and canals with seven Canadian tanks. By late afternoon, the fighting quieted, and the Jews no longer could be contained. "They whooped and hollered all over town," Zylstra said.

In 1952, Zylstra and his family immigrated to the United States.

Reviewing the effect of his childhood experiences, Zylstra said, "War puts a fear in you and a respect in you that is unlike anything else that you've experienced.

"When your parents said, 'Silence about this,' that is what they meant. Silence was silence. If somebody asked you, you told them a lie."

He still has dreams, Zylstra said.

"Nazis or police are always after me. I am constantly on the run. It has been with me since the war. That fear, you just don't get rid of it."

December 7, 1941

*Where were you  
on that fateful day?*

## PEARL HARBOR

*In January 1992, a United Methodist breakfast group recalled what they had been doing December 7, 1941.*

*Gina Walters:* It was a Sunday evening and we (Harris and I) were listening to a radio program (Jack Benny) with our family when an announcement was made that Pearl Harbor was bombed by Japan. This was in Wausau.

*Kathryn Green:* I was in Neenah visiting my grandparents. The women were doing dishes in the kitchen. My grandfather was listening to the radio in the bedroom. He called out in a shocked voice with the news.

*Phyllis Ritchie:* I was at home in Vesper with my family. W.W. Clark was my father. We were listening to the radio when the news came on. We did not believe it at first. John was in the service and my first thought was that his leave would be cancelled.

Monday I was to return to my job as a rural school teacher. I had five brothers and a brother-in-law who were all in the age range where they might be called.

My brother Bill went into the Air Force, Bob went into the Navy. Jack went into service in the maintenance branch. My brother Max and my brother-in-law were ready to go when a ruling was made that fathers did not have to go. Each of them had one child. My youngest brother was too young. He later entered the Air Force and was in the Vietnam War.

*John C. Ritchie:* Sitting in the Army barracks in Fort Sill, Oklahoma, singing "I'll be back in a Year Little Darling" (My year was almost up). I decided to go to town (after chow) but found a mouse had chewed a hole in the back of my civilian suit which I figured I'd wear for one last time.

*Sally Engel:* Don and I were with another couple, friends of ours, planning their wedding, which was to be on December 18 of the same year. On the way home from our home town, Seymour, to Neenah, where I was employed, we heard about it on the late afternoon radio news. Needless to say, not much was accomplished at the office where I worked the next day. Also the fellows were concerned about either enlisting or being drafted.

*Iola Cox:* Just a routine Sunday: church in a.m. (where I was organist). Family day, until evening when we turned on our radio and heard the dreadful news. I was a senior in high school at the time. I was with my parents at Park Falls, Wisconsin.

The event I remember the most is the Declaration of War the next morning. In school, in German class, we listened to President Roosevelt declare war on the Japanese.

*Percival Cox:* I was at home in Calumet, Michigan, studying for Monday at Michigan Tech at Houghton, where I was a sophomore. I heard about it around 1:30 p.m. or 2 p.m. and we kept the radio on most of the rest of the day and evening.

*LaVerne Anderson:* It was a Sunday morning and I was lying on the floor in the living room reading the Sunday funny papers. The radio was on, as it usually was, to hear the war news. It was quite a surprise announcement. I was 15 years old at the time.

*Nila Anunson:* It was Sunday afternoon. I was with the Arv. Frestedt family in Minneapolis. News came over the radio.

Didn't want to believe it. Must be a mistake. Angry. How could this happen? I was working at Donaldson Department Store.

*Alice Otto:* I was living in Chicago. My neighbor and I went into the Loop. Just to see what reaction people had. My husband and his three brothers later were engaged in the war.

*Harvey Fidler:* Was to a movie. It flashed on the screen about 7 p.m. Gas was 18 cents a gallon or six for a dollar. Was with my wife. We were single

then. Everyone was very serious. The people were very much behind the effort in the Rapids. They had collection places for aluminum.

I then served in the Army Corps of Engineers.

*Gordon Harmon:* I was 10 years old. My brother and I were playing in the snow. When we got home my parents said we were in the war because Pearl Harbor had been bombed by the Japanese.

*Warren Rhynas:* A friend, whose birthday was December 7, and I, were calling on a friend who was sick. We were at her house when we heard the news.

We were 18 at the time and on the trip home from her house we talked about which service we would get into and decided, the Navy. We both joined and were there in the Navy (Okinawa) till the war ended.

*Paul Fleming:* Having entered the U.S. Air Corps on a one-year enlistment in 1940, I was already in service—Scott Air Corps Base, Illinois, lying on my bunk when the news came.

That was the start of four more years in the Air Corps. Not married yet but courting Marcia Nelson whom I married after completing officers school in 1942.

*Marge Urban:* My aunt and uncle from Spencer were at our home in Pittsville for dinner. Bud and I were dating. He had come over and we'd gone in his '36 Chevy for a ride, listening to the car radio when we heard the news again.

I was teaching—my first year at Rocky Run School (rural, all eight grades) west of Pittsville.

*Bertram Urban:* I had stopped for gas and found we were at war. Went to Pittsville to see my girl friend (now my wife). Entered service September 1942 after having been rejected earlier in 1941.

*Hazel Mayer:* My husband-to-be, Frank Mayer, and I were riding, sightseeing around the Bancroft marsh area and listening to the radio. The news interrupted the music and our pleasant afternoon was ended.

## CIVIC SECRETS

Only after World War II ended in August 1945 could the exact nature of their activities be revealed. Like comrades all over America, yeoman papermakers, plastic men and seamstresses had been busy outfitting the war effort.

"We found out we could do the impossible," said Henry P. Baldwin, Consolidated's assistant director of manufacture. Early in the war, national defense authorities had placed other industries before the paper industry in the allocations of materials, causing shortages of raw materials, machines and replacement parts.

As the wartime bureaucracy inflated, paper, particularly for mimeographing, became more important, and by the end, was regarded as one of the most critical materials. In order to use less raw material and fuel, Consolidated made a lighter-weight coated book paper and increased the use of locally cut poplar.

Not generally known was the fact that the Consolidated machine shop ran three shifts for 14 months on a sub-contract for a large builder, making mounts for guns and other combat equipment.

A plastics division was organized in 1942 and required an entirely new plant. Its product was Consoweld, a paper-based plastic used for gliders and aircraft cargo flooring.

With peace came an unprecedented demand for coated paper. Consolidated increased production by converting the recently acquired Wisconsin River Pulp and Paper Co. newsprint mill near Stevens Point and launching a \$1 million expansion at Biron. The new projects would swell the Consolidated payroll to more than 2,600 people.

Nekoosa-Edwards Paper Co. also experienced changes caused by the war, said John E. Alexander, president. With sulfite bond, printing, duplicating, ledger and high-grade wrapping papers pouring from its mills at Nekoosa and Port Edwards, the company found an average of 92 percent of its production

ticketed directly for government agencies. Through its machine shop, "Nepco" also was a subcontractor for the Manitowoc Shipbuilding Co., making submarine parts.

Alexander said the company would continue to make same grades of pulp and paper as before the war. Under construction was a new bleach plant and water filtration plant at Nekoosa.

The entire output of the Ahdawagam Paper Products Co. was swallowed up by the war effort, according to Frank Walsh, president, who said shipments in 1940 totaled 11,000 tons but in 1944 zoomed to 17,000 tons.

The four main products were cardboard containers, corrugated containers, folded cartons and paper tubes. Boxes were used for dried milk, K-rations, ice cream mix, soap and walkie-talkie batteries. Ahdawagam also supplied corrugated material for packing radar equipment and paper tubes to protect the noses of large shells. A weatherproof, laminated "V" box was invented that could withstand beachhead environments.

The plant went into war with about 100 employees. The payroll soon rose to 150 on a two-shift basis. Walsh expected a steady postwar employment level of 160.

According to A.E. Bark, secretary, \$10 million in government war contracts were completed by Prentiss Wabers Co. during the war without a single shipment being rejected by the armed forces.

Before the war, the company manufactured gas stoves, fuel oil circulating heaters, blow torches, lanterns, picnic lunch boxes and camp stoves.

The first war contract came in July 1942, for bombs, detonator fuses and field-kitchen fire-unit equipment, some made on special government-installed machines. The company subcontracted with Ahdawagam Paper Products Co. and the Central Electric Service Co. for the machinery of parts.

Along with war products, the company made kerosene stoves, trailer stoves and fuel oil heaters for a civilian market.

The war brought a 300 percent increase in employment—from 300 to 911. All employees had been fingerprinted and given courses on prevention of sabotage, and their character histories were taken.

More than 500 employees were expected to be retained for postwar production.

Superintendent Samuel W. Palay said Harvard Clothing produced more than 175,000 overcoats and blouses for the armed forces during the war.

Bolts of cloth were received from the government, cut into patterns and directed to one of many sewing machines, where women quickly sewed the pieces together.

Most Harvard employees were women, many of whom had husbands in the service.

Harvard had increased its payroll from 80 to 140 during the war and professed no plans to discharge any for some time. In fact, they expected to add one or two factories in Wisconsin Rapids at some later date.

More than \$1 million worth of war contracts were filled by the Nekoosa Foundry and Machine Works Inc., said Ted Olson, vice president, including work for shipyards in Massachusetts, Manitowoc, Sturgeon Bay and Milwaukee.

Nekoosa had converted from making paper and pulp mill machinery to making parts for destroyer-escorts and submarines, parts for diesel engines, pumps and generators, and equipment used to make atomic bombs.

Employment increased from 60 to 110.

After the war, Nekoosa reverted to the manufacture of machinery for paper and pulp mills.

"Some of the equipment we made for the atomic bomb factories was very touchy," Olson explained to the *Tribune*. "A lot of the parts we made had to be precision-tooled as exacting as watch parts. We knew we were working on something secretive but had no idea that we were instrumental in making parts for factories making atomic bombs that were loosed on Japan and brought the war to a sudden end."